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When Necessary is Not Enough A Study in the Effectiveness of U.S. Military Force to Combat Terrorism in the Middle East

Lora Christine Vonderhaar
University of Dayton

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When Necessary is Not Enough

A Study in the Effectiveness of U.S. Military Force to Combat Terrorism in the Middle East



Honors Thesis

Lora Christine Vonderhaar

Department: International Studies and Spanish

Advisor: Natalie Florea Hudson, Ph.D.

Director Human Rights Studies

April 2018

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Abstract

This thesis will examine the relationship between the number and size of U.S. military bases in the Middle East and instances of terrorism in the same region. It seeks to analyze the complex set of impacts that U.S. military presence has on the area and determine if U.S. presence is overall more helpful or harmful to the situation on the ground. While size and number of U.S. bases is not a perfect measure of U.S. presence, it is a fair representation and a useful empirical starting point. This thesis will focus specifically on terrorism as a non-state actor and not on state-sponsored terrorism. Using quantitative data to find general correlations, this research will examine whether U.S. presence in the area is correlated with more or less terrorist attacks and provide possible explanations for both outcomes. Building from this statistical analysis, the research will then look in-depth at five case studies in order to examine this relationship more closely: Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Turkey. By examining the U.S. base's size, community engagement, and relationship with local militaries in these cases, the research will allow a richer discussion regarding the effect of military bases on instances of terrorist violence. As these military bases represent a significant portion of U.S. resources, it is important to look at their impact more carefully and in a more nuanced way. This thesis will speak to ending the war on terror in the Middle East and discuss how the U.S. military can better contribute to establishing peaceful, democratic governments in the region strong enough to protect its people.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction:

Since the tragedy of September 11th, the question of our national security has become preeminent throughout the nation. Phrases such as ‘the global war on terror,’ ‘Islamist radicalism,’ and ‘lone wolf attack’ are becoming commonplace, as everyone wonders whether or not any of us are safe. Many raise the question: how do we win the global war on terror? Posing such a question forces one to make several critical assumptions. First, it assumes that this war can be won at all. This means an understanding of what conditions or event would signal one side having won, which assumes that the other side had lost. Additionally, it requires a line to be drawn in the sand, in order to determine concretely who is on which side or how many sides there in fact are. The question also necessitates a definition for the term ‘we.’ ‘We’ the United States is different from ‘we’ the West or ‘we’ the developed world or ‘we’ everyone who is not a terrorist. Which raises the final quandary; how does one define a terrorist? Is it only those who have committed acts of terrorism, or does the term include all those who might eventually become sympathetic to the radical cause?

Because of the many caveats needed to answer the vital question, “How do we win the war on terror?” I choose rather to analyze the effectiveness of a counterterrorism strategy that is already in place and has been for a considerable amount of time. In this paper, I will evaluate if the presence of U.S. troops abroad, as measured by number and size of military bases in Middle Eastern countries, is correlated with a decrease in terrorist attacks as intended, or if increased U.S. military presence correlates to an increase in radicalization and terrorist activity, as measured by the number of terrorist attacks quantified by the Global Terrorism Database. This paper begins by first outlining my

methodology, then analyzing public opinion in order to pinpoint the American public's perspective on the effectiveness of different types of counterterrorism. Next, this paper will emphasize that terrorism is not supported by the true Islamic faith and will then summarize and synthesize leading scholarly conclusions in the literature review. Finally, my research examines instances of terrorism in 5 specific countries in the Middle East where the U.S. military presence has varied in recent years: Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Turkey. This section also considers the perspectives of the soldiers on the ground, in order to highlight a more individualized account of the relationship between U.S. military presence and instances of terrorism in the Middle East. This paper concludes by arguing that we should care about the swift and just resolution of the threat posed by terrorism because it is our moral responsibility to do so and will offer possible solutions to achieve this end.

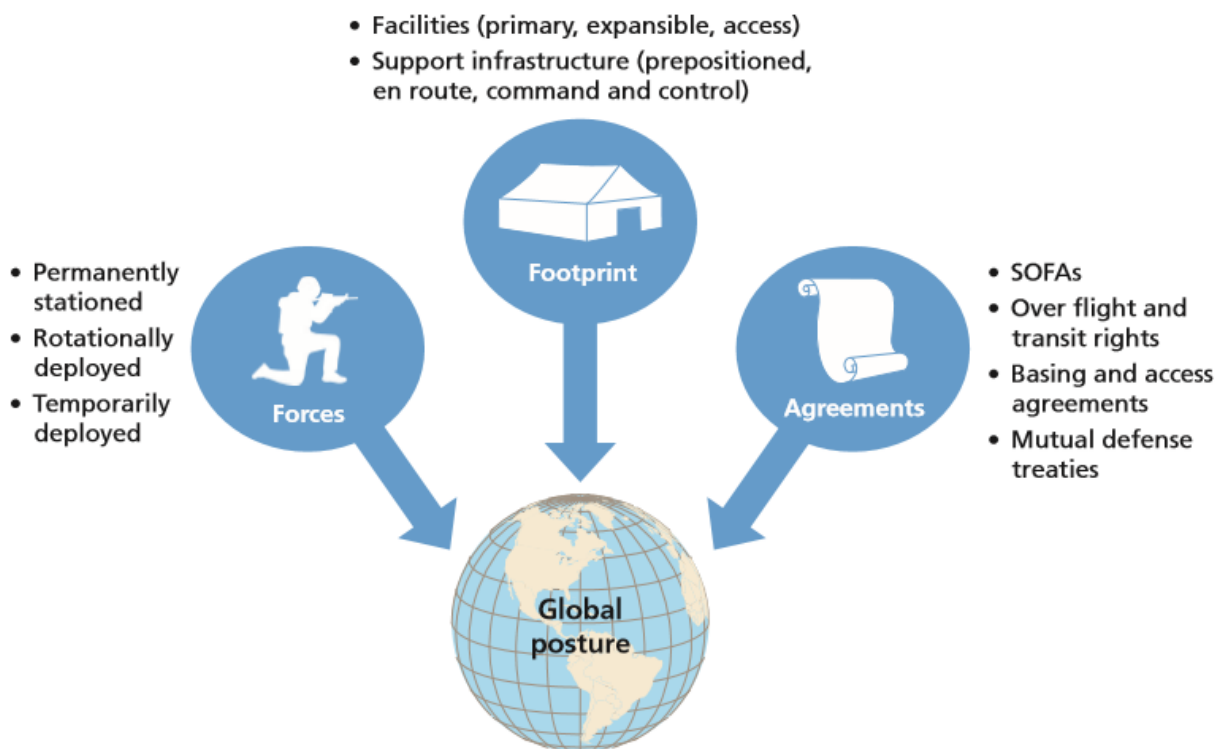
Methodology:

The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether or not any correlation exists between U.S. military presence and either an increase or decrease in terrorism. In order to achieve this purpose, I employ a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data, as well as primary and secondary sources. In this analysis, I will focus only on terrorism committed by non-state actors, and not on state-sponsored terrorism. For the purposes of this research, instances of terrorist activities within each country are analyzed using the research of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). As of today, the database includes cases from 1970 until 2016, and currently includes more than 170,000 instances of terrorism worldwide (Global Terrorism Database 2017). The GTD is the most

comprehensive, unclassified database cataloguing terrorist activities throughout the world, and includes information on the type of attack, the group responsible, the date, location, weapon used, and intended target. Begun by retired Air Force researchers under the name Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services (PGIS), the project continues today through the University of Maryland. All the information of the GTD is verified and checked for accuracy from a variety of open media sources such as news websites, data sets, books, journals, and legal documents (Global terrorism Database 2017). This paper utilizes the GTD to measure increases or decreases of terrorism within a country over time because it is the most all-inclusive, open source data available on the subject.

These increases or decreases of terrorism are then compared with changing U.S. military presence within each country, as measured by the opening or closing of military bases as well as troop levels, when available. Military presence is a dynamic concept and can be measured in various ways. Some scholars use the term 'Global Posture.' As Figure 1 shows, Global Posture is comprised of more than just troops on the ground, it is also affected by personnel, facilities, treaties, agreements, and statuses of foreign agreements (SOFA's) (Lostumbo, 2013, 6). I have chosen to analyze military bases because there is not sufficient open source data available regarding exact U.S. troop numbers to adequately conduct this type of research. Most of the information regarding U.S. bases comes from government websites, such as the United States Air Force website, the Department of State website, and the CIA World Factbook. When available, I have employed data from the Congressional Research Service and peer-reviewed articles to supplement this data, but unfortunately this data is infrequent and not always up to date.

U.S. Global Posture (Figure 1)



RAND RR201-1.1

Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

One way to shed light on the relationship between U.S. troop movement and instances of terrorism is to look at the empirical data. The GTD compiles detailed graphs of terrorist instances, and when available, this paper also includes graphs of U.S. troop presence within the country. When information on troop movements is less available, this paper includes information as to when the U.S. entered the country, when the U.S. left (if applicable), when military bases were built or closed, and when the most troops were stationed in the country. Moreover, I will include survey data from both military and public opinion sources. Most of the public opinion polls included are from Gallup and are pertinent in that they provide a small sampling of American civilian opinion on this

international issue. Military opinion is included because to discuss an issue so intrinsically tied to military service and not include the opinion of those most affected by this issue would be not only a grave misstep and incredibly naïve but would also be an insult to those who defend our country every day.

Additionally, the reader will note that I refer to ‘Islamist’ terrorists or terrorism, rather than ‘Islamic’ terrorists or terrorism. This is because none of the violence perpetrated by these extremists is at all Muslim or Islamic. Radical terrorists are no more Muslims than members of the Ku Klux Klan were Christians. Throughout this research, I try to make this distinction abundantly clear, and correct the all too common misconception that Islam is anything other than a religion of peace.

Public Opinion:

The opinion of the American people is an important aspect of the issue of counterterrorism because terrorism affects civilians as well as military personnel. While partisan lines divide Americans on many key issues, it is worth noting that both Democrats and Republicans support U.S. military intervention in the Middle East to fight ISIS. “Notably, there is little partisan difference in opinions of the U.S. military action, with 64% of Democrats and 65% of Republicans approving. Independents are somewhat less likely to approve, but a majority (55%) still do” (Gallup 2014) (See Figure 2). Approximately 34% of Americans say they follow ISIS’s actions on the news “very closely,” and 41% say they follow it “somewhat closely.” (Gallup 2014). In addition, “Approval of the U.S. military action is significantly higher among those following it very or somewhat closely” (Gallup 2014). This detail is compelling because it shows that those who are informed

about the terrorism in the Middle East are more likely to support America's actions to combat it.

Furthermore, while party alliances divide the American public on community, private, social and economic issues, not to mention political ones, the majority of both parties are in accord on this critical issue regarding U.S. military intervention to combat ISIS. These results also indicate that military action is perceived as successful, or at least as a viable option for combatting terrorism, to the American public because those following the issues realize the threat posed by ISIS and agree that the U.S. military is an effective means of combatting the threat.

Approval Ratings of U.S. Military Action Against ISIS by Party (Figure 2)

Next, we have a question about the military action the United States is taking in Iraq and Syria against Islamic militants, commonly known as ISIS. Do you approve or disapprove of this U.S. military action?

	Favor	Oppose
	%	%
Democrats	64	28
Independents	55	38
Republicans	65	27

Sept. 20-21, 2014

GALLUP

Source: <http://news.gallup.com/poll/177263/slightly-fewer-back-isis-military-action-past-actions.aspx>

Partisanship comes back into play when discussing the use of ground troops, however, with Republicans being twice as likely to back the use of ground troops than Democrats. Thus, it is important to clarify what is meant by 'military action.' For some, this can mean an

aerial assault or drone warfare, while for others, it is infantry patrolling the streets. Nevertheless, this overall American support for U.S. military action against ISIS is a rare instance in which both Republicans and Democrats are in agreement.

In another Gallup poll from December of 2015, Americans were asked which of 11 ways to combat terrorism they perceived as most effective. The vast majority of Americans surveyed, 79%, said that increased airstrikes against ISIS were somewhat or very effective (See Figure 3). Sending more U.S. special forces to fight ISIS was seen as somewhat or very effective by 70% of those surveyed, and 59% said that sending more ground troops to the Middle East to fight ISIS would be at least somewhat effective. For each of these military options, more than half of Americans surveyed believe that they are valid actions to take to combat terrorism (See Figures 3-4). “The study includes four proposals related to the use of military action against the Islamic State. More than half of Americans see all as potentially effective” (Gallup 2015). While the average American in all probability has not traveled to the Middle East to see any of these strategies implemented, it is noteworthy that most Americans see our military as an effective means for fighting terrorism.

Public Opinion of Counter Terrorism Strategies (Figure 3)

Effectiveness of Actions to Combat Terrorism

How effective do you think each of the following will be in the U.S. campaign against terrorism -- very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective or not at all effective?

	% Very effective/ Somewhat effective
Increase U.S. airstrikes against the Islamic State or ISIS to take out their leaders, heavy weapons and infrastructure	79
Overhaul the federal visa waiver program to provide tighter screening for people who come to the U.S. temporarily for travel or business	79
Ban gun sales to people on the federal no-fly watch list	71
Send more U.S. special operations forces to fight the Islamic State or ISIS	70
Send large numbers of U.S. ground troops to Syria and Iraq to fight the Islamic State or ISIS	59
Intensify diplomatic efforts to pursue ceasefires and a political resolution to the Syrian war	56
Provide more U.S. training and equipment to Iraqi and Syrian forces fighting the Islamic State or ISIS	55
Pass new laws making it harder to buy assault weapons	55
A new law that would prevent any Muslim from entering the U.S.	38
Require Muslims, including those who are U.S. citizens, to carry a special ID	32
A new law that would impose a religious test for entering the U.S., banning those who identify their religion as Muslim	28

Dec. 11-12, 2015

GALLUP®

Source: Gallup.

http://www.gallup.com/poll/187682/anti-terror-visa-control-airstrikes-seen-effective.aspx?g_source=sussess+of+troops+on+the+gound&g_medium=search&g_campaign=tiles

Of the above choices, the first, fourth, fifth, and seventh most supported options involve military actions, including air strikes, special forces, ground troops, and support for local militaries. The other approaches focus on nonmilitary means such as visas, gun sales, diplomacy and legislation. The last three options are significant in that they

specifically single out Muslims in relation to combatting terrorism. For many, banning all those who identify as Muslims from entering the U.S. or forcing all Muslims to wear special identifications strays dangerously close to Nazi-era tactics. Fortunately, less than 38% of Americans surveyed supported any of those options, signaling that the majority of Americans understand that terrorism and Islam are not equivalent.

Public Opinion of Effectiveness of Counter Terrorism Strategies (Figure 4)

Effectiveness of Actions to Combat Terrorism

How effective do you think each of the following will be in the U.S. campaign against terrorism -- very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective or not at all effective?

	% Very effective	% Somewhat effective	% Not too effective	% Not at all effective
Overhaul the federal visa waiver program to provide tighter screening for people who come to the U.S. temporarily for travel or business	46	33	11	9
Increase U.S. airstrikes against the Islamic State or ISIS to take out their leaders, heavy weapons and infrastructure	44	35	11	7
Ban gun sales to people on the federal no-fly watch list	42	29	9	16
Send more U.S. special operations forces to fight the Islamic State or ISIS	38	32	14	14
Pass new laws making it harder to buy assault weapons	34	21	14	30
Send large numbers of U.S. ground troops to Syria and Iraq to fight the Islamic State or ISIS	26	33	22	17
Intensify diplomatic efforts to pursue ceasefires and a political resolution to the Syrian war	25	32	20	19
A new law that would prevent any Muslim from entering the U.S.	22	16	18	42
Provide more U.S. training and equipment to Iraqi and Syrian forces fighting the Islamic State or ISIS	18	37	23	18
Require Muslims, including those who are U.S. citizens, to carry a special ID	16	16	20	46
A new law that would impose a religious test for entering the U.S., banning those who identify their religion as Muslim	15	14	16	52

Dec. 11-12, 2015

GALLUP®

Source:

http://www.gallup.com/poll/187682/anti-terror-visa-control-airstrikes-seen-effective.aspx?g_source=sussess+of+troops+on+the+gound&g_medium=search&g_campaign=tiles

When looking at the precise breakdown, 46% of those surveyed believed that creating more strict screening procedures for those attempting to enter the U.S, whether temporarily or to apply for a visa, would be the most effective way to combat terrorism (see Figure 4). This is a non-military action and the wording does not specifically single out Muslims. The solution does not take into account, however, how harsher immigration policies would negatively affect refugees, especially children, the elderly, and the sick. It also does not define what “tighter screening” would entail and how much extra time it would take. On the opposite end of the spectrum, over half of Americans surveyed, 52%, believe that instituting a religious test to those wishing to enter the country and banning all those who identify as Muslim would not be effective at all. This is a logical conclusion, as immigrants could easily lie about their religious leanings, and because Islam is not synonymous with terrorism.

Islam and Terrorism:

While the violence incurred by acts of terrorism is appalling, it is important to note that these terrorists and their actions are not representative of Islam. At its root, Islam is a peaceful religion founded on equality and love. The word ‘Islam’ is itself based in the word ‘salaam,’ which means ‘peace.’ Terrorists today have misconstrued sacred texts and scriptures to meet their political ends. Upon further research into the Quran and the works of revered Islamic theologians and scholars, it is plain to see that true Muslims abhor the violence being perpetrated in their name. Additionally, “the vast majority of Al Qaeda’s victims are Muslims” (Groves 2012, 29). True followers of a religion would never support any group who openly kills civilians, much less adherents of their own beliefs. Moreover,

“85 percent of Al Qaeda’s victims from 2004 to 2008 were from Muslim majority countries . . . Despite Al Qaeda’s attempted justification of these attacks and suicide tactics, the killing of innocent people, the targeting of other Muslims, and suicide are all forbidden in the Koran” (Groves 2012, 37). Put simply, a Muslim is not more prone to be a terrorist than any other individual.

One common term found in the narrative of terrorism is the word ‘jihad.’ While radical groups have used this term to justify fighting their holy war against ‘American infidels,’ its true definition is not at all violent. As John Esposito of Georgetown University states, “In its most general sense, jihad in the Quran and in Muslim practice refers to the obligation of all Muslims to strive (jihad, self-exertion) or struggle to follow God’s will” (Esposito 2016, 40). This includes personal development and having a close personal relationship with God, as well as spreading “God’s rule and law through teaching, preaching, and, where necessary, armed struggle” (Esposito 2016, 40). But contrary to popular belief, the conquests of the Muslim world centuries ago sought not to force conversions to Islam, but to expand the reign and scope of the Muslim empire. It was actually economically advantageous for the Arab empire if the conquered peoples did not convert to Islam, because non-Muslims paid a higher tax than Muslims did.

“The Muslim conquests were neither for the sole purpose of conversion nor annihilating the infidel. In addition to the fact that non-Muslims paid higher taxes – and thus non-conversion operated to the financial advantage of the state – the rules of jihad stipulated that non-Muslims remained free to practice their religion upon payment of the so-called jizya, or ‘income-tax,’ in exchange for which the Muslim state incurred the responsibility to protect them from outside attack” (Jackson 2007, 400).

Not only were non-Muslims free to practice the religion of their choosing, but they were also protected by the Muslim Empire, allowing them to live in peace.

While Islam is a political religion by nature, the aim of its political involvement is to establish just and virtuous societies. Islam was founded on the principle of equality, because Muhammad sought to close the social and economic gaps present in society. “Guided by the word of God and the Prophet, the Muslim community has a mission to create a moral social order: ‘You are the best community evolved for mankind, enjoying what is right and forbidding what is wrong’ (3:110)” (Esposito 2016, 31). While it is encouraged for Muslims to be politically active, the aim of this political activism is not to bring violence to a nation or to eliminate other religions. Rather, its goal is to establish just societies that help the poor and less fortunate.

By striving to create just societies, Muslims also seek to achieve peace. Sherman Jackson, a renowned scholar of Arabic and Islamic studies, states that Islam is in fact a peaceful religion. By this, he means that “contrary to the belief that Islam can only accept a world that is entirely populated by Muslims and, as such, Muslims must, as a religious duty, wage perpetual jihad against non-Muslims, Islam can peacefully coexist with non-Muslims” (Jackson 2007, 401). First, he says, that Arabs and Muslims of that time were constantly in a state of war, which is why the Quran references fighting so frequently. But, “one of the most consistent Quranic criticisms of [Muslims] is directed at their unwillingness to fight” (Jackson 2007, 397). So, while the sacred Muslims texts do mention violence and war, it is only because they were addressing the current state of affairs. “Moreover, peace, i.e., the repelling of aggression, rather than conversion to Islam was the ultimate aim of this fighting” (Jackson 2007, 398). Furthermore, during this period filled with war, Muslims were safe nowhere, and continually were under attack. “The purpose of jihad, in other words, is to provide for the security and freedom of the Muslims in a world

that kept them under constant threat” (Jackson 2007, 401). By this argument, if Muslims can exist peacefully with non-Muslims, then terrorist organizations have no right to call themselves followers of Islam.

Moreover, Shaikh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, a prominent Shia scholar and reformer born in Najaf, Iraq, argues against armed violence because, in his opinion, it is both ineffective and destructive to the Muslim community. “A close look at the results shows beyond all doubt that armed violence is not a successful experiment for political action, neither as a means for expressing political opinion and obtaining legitimate presence in society nor for gaining political victory in a dispute” (Shams al-Din 2007, 444). Shams al-Din states that terrorism is damaging to the Muslim community because it resurrects the misconception that Islam is spread by the sword, and because it undermines the use of dialogue between Muslims and other religious groups, and amongst Muslims themselves. “Islam is free of these two accusations; it prohibits terror and deception even in times of war and it represents the largest and broadest appeal for dialogue known to human history” (Shams al-Din 2007, 445). Shams al-Din dismisses terrorism as a viable option because violence is a futile means of achieving political gains, and because it is outright forbidden in Islam.

Another justification for the differentiation between Islam and terrorism can be found within the Quran itself. Khaled Abou el Fadl holds degrees from both Yale and Princeton, and he emphasizes the difference between the words ‘jihad’ and ‘qital.’ Jihad refers to striving and struggling to live a life pleasing to God, while qital refers to warfare and fighting. “Every reference in the Quran to qital is restricted and limited by particular conditions, but exhortations to jihad, like the references to justice or truth, are absolute and

unconditional” (Abou el Fadl 2007, 463). The American media today has associated the term ‘jihad’ with something it is not. Furthermore, Muslims were not allowed to engage in qital until God gave them permission to, after they had been the victims of aggression. Even in times of war, there are certain people that should never be targeted with violence. “Relying on a precedent set by the Prophet, classical Muslim jurists held that non-combatants, like children, women, people of advanced age, monks, hermits, priests, or anyone else who does not seek to or cannot fight Muslim, are inviolable and many not be targeted even during ongoing hostilities” (Abou el Fadl 2007, 464). This statement alone renounces any claim that terrorists might have to being Muslims, because a key strategy of terrorism is targeting civilians. Abou el Fadl similarly rejects terrorism, saying that, in a state of terrorism, “What prevails is an aggravated siege mentality that suspends the moral principles of the religion in pursuit of political power” (Abou El Fadl 2007, 463). Essentially, terrorism has never been about religion, but has always been about power.

Muslims also believe in the Day of Decision, or the Day of Reckoning, when each will stand before God and be held accountable for his or her own actions. Each person is responsible for his or her actions and deeds; as the Quran says, “the ultimate moral responsibility and accountability of each believer” (Esposito 2016, 33). Every person will stand before their Creator and answer for their actions, to see if they lived their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Quran. As previously discussed, the Quran advocates for the establishment of peaceful, just societies founded on equality and the caring for those less fortunate. Conversely, “the Quran teaches that the act of destroying or spreading ruin on earth is one of the gravest sins possible” (Abou el Fadl 2007, 460). Abou el Fadl continues by saying “Those who corrupt the earth by destroying lives, property and nature

are designated as mufsidun, who, in effect, wage war against God by dismantling the very fabric of existence” (Abou el Fadl 2007, 461). As such, one who claims to fight for the promotion of Islam but does so by breaking the doctrines of Islam and by killing people would not pass judgement and should no longer call themselves a Muslim.

Through all of these arguments, it is clear that for anyone to commit acts of terror, they are not following Islamic doctrine and are not truly Muslim. These terrorist actors abuse the name of Islam, which is a peaceful and just religion, to bring about political gains of ruin and destruction. While religion might not be directly related to the effectiveness of using military force to combat terrorism in the Middle East, it would be negligent to discuss such a topic without making this clarification. Terrorists may try to hide under the guise of Islam to commit their acts of violence, but the truth of the matter is that nothing terrorists do can be defended by religion.

History of Basing:

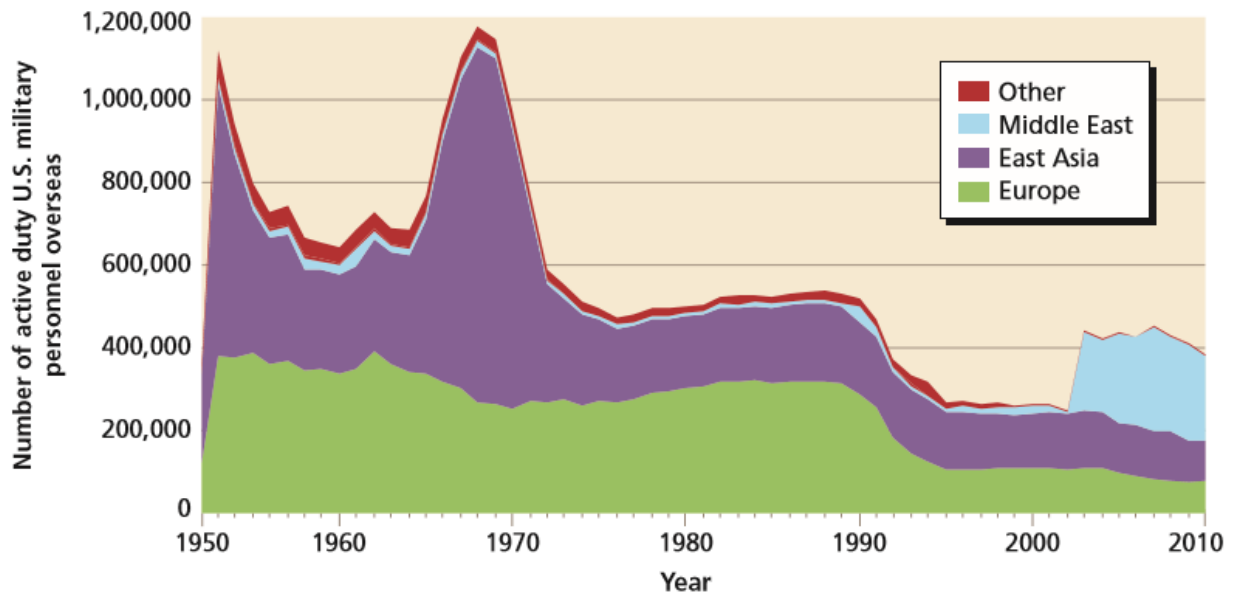
The United States first began building permanent military bases overseas after America won the Spanish-American War in 1898. At the war’s end, America gained substantial land in the Far East and the Caribbean, and constructed bases with the purpose of defending these newly acquired territories. Until World War II, the size of foreign bases was limited by public opinion and the Washington Naval Conference’s Five Power Treaty (Lostumbo 2013, 6). All this changed, however, after the Second World War and specifically the attack on Pearl Harbor. This event “created an enduring sense of American vulnerability that dispelled the past assumption that the United States would be safe if it remained aloof from world affairs” (Lostumbo 2013, 6). In the 1940’s, the Joint Chiefs of

Staff proposed a network of military bases around the world that would undeniably project American prowess and be able to respond to any threat that arose anywhere in the world. Since then, America's military forces abroad have grown, from deterring Communism in the Cold War, to combatting terrorism in the Middle East today. After Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in 1990, it opened the door for America to establish a permanent military presence in the Middle East. While the Pentagon maintains that this was never their goal, others question the legitimacy of that official statement (Baker 2004, 168).

Historians have dubbed the years in the 1960's until the end of the Cold War the 'garrison era,' because during this time many of the military bases built during World War II became permanent installations (Baker 2004, xi). When servicemen were stationed abroad for extended periods of time, their families often moved with them. This led to the creation of 'Little Americas,' the addition of housing, stores, shops, schools, hospitals, chapels, gyms and golf courses, to give these families a taste of home (Baker 2004, 47). These Little Americas made those living in them feel as if they were still within the borders of the United States and gave them little reason to ever leave the base (Baker 2004, 53). As such, the familiar installations improved morale among soldiers and their families and mitigated controversial interactions between servicemembers and their host communities. It also created an ease of mobility as soldiers and their families moved bases and countries frequently. In each Little America throughout the world, families found familiar stores, radio stations, and recreation facilities, creating a more comfortable lifestyle, and bringing a piece of America to every corner of the world (Baker 2004, 58).

Today, the United States has controversially assumed the role of ‘global policeman,’ rebuilding war-torn countries and promoting democracy throughout the world (Baker 2004, 173). As Figure 5 shows, there has been a steady level of active duty American troops in Europe since 1953, until just after 1990, when presidents Bush and Clinton began downsizing the American military force abroad. Troops stationed in East Asia spiked dramatically during the Cold War and have been declining since then. The Middle East, statistically speaking, has seen less American troops compared to Europe and East Asia, with the exception of the years following September 11th. While critics complain that America is sending too many troops to the Middle East, it should be noted that this number is lower than the number of troops America had sent to Europe for decades, and much lower than the number of American troops stationed in East Asia during the Cold War.

Active Duty U.S. Military Personnel Overseas, 1953 – 2010 (Figure 5)



SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), "Military Personnel Statistics: Active Duty Military Personnel by Service by Region/Country," various dates.

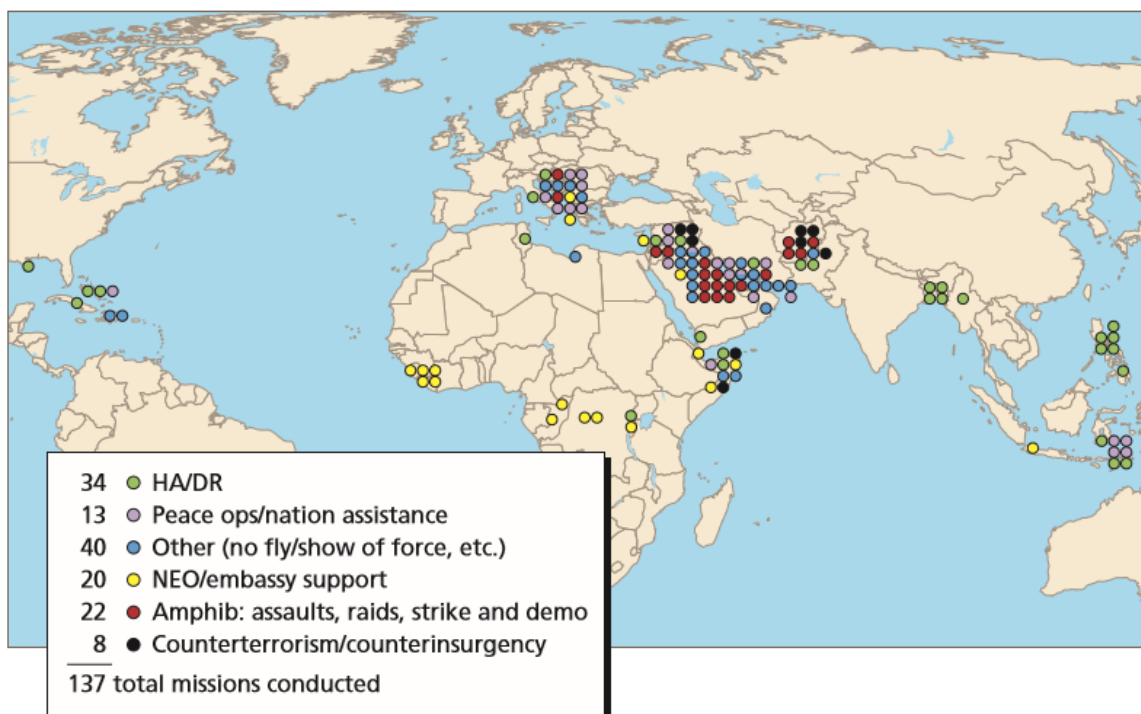
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Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

More recently, Figure 6 shows Marine Corps deployments between 1990 and 2013 based on location and type of deployment. The most frequent deployments were to the Middle East, in the areas of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Figures 7 and 8 illustrate troop deployments specifically to the Arabian Peninsula. In the 23 years between 1990 and 2013, there were a total of 137 missions conducted by the U.S. Marine Corps. Of those, 40 enforced a no-fly zone or were a show of force and deterrence. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief comprised 34 missions, 22 were assaults and raids, 20 were embassy support and noncombatant evacuation operations, 13 were peace operations, and 8 were counterterrorism operations (Lostumbro 2013, 57). This diagram expertly illustrates how Marine Corps operations are not solely focused on the Middle East, and, equally as important, are not purely shows of violence or force. As journalist Robert Kaplan observed

during his time with the American military in Iraq, “To the degree that anything got done in these regions, it was done by the American military” (Kaplan 2006, 339). While the Middle East has seen its share of assaults, raids, air strikes, and counterterrorism operations, as Figure 6 shows, the Marine Corps has also conducted humanitarian aid missions and peace operations in the area. The importance of these missions should not be undervalued.

U.S. Marine Corps Deployments Since 1990 (Figure 6)



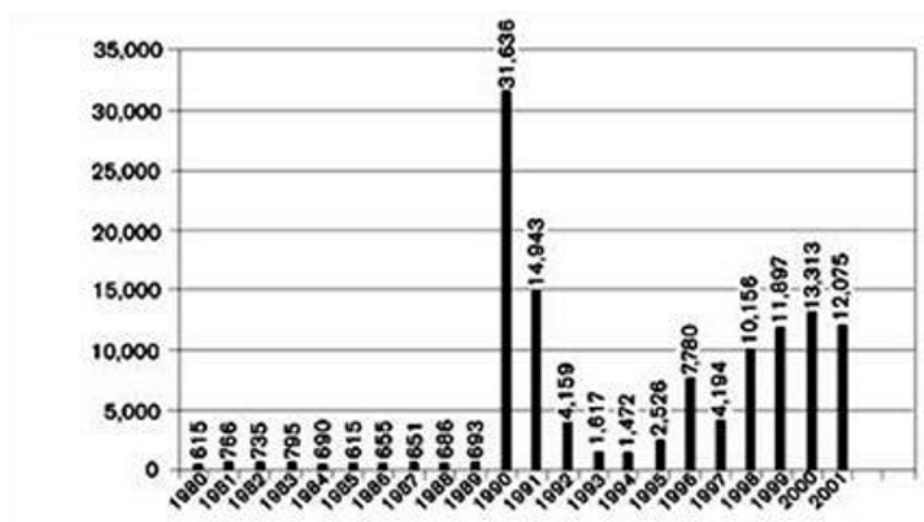
SOURCE: U.S. Marine Corps, *The United States Marine Corps: America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness*, July 2012, slide 13.

NOTE: HA/DR = humanitarian assistance/disaster relief; NEO = noncombatant evacuation operations.

RAND RR201-2.9

Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

Graph of U.S. Forces on the Arabian Peninsula, 1980 – 2001 (Figure 7)



Source: Pape 2005, 53.

Chart of U.S. Forces on the Arabian Peninsula, 1980 – 2001 (Figure 8)

<i>Year*</i>	<i>U.S. Troops in Persian Gulf</i>	<i>Year*</i>	<i>U.S. Troops in Persian Gulf</i>
1980	615	1991	14,943
1981	766	1992	4,159
1982	735	1993	1,617
1983	795	1994	1,472
1984	690	1995	2,526
1985	615	1996	7,780
1986	655	1997	4,194
1987	651	1998	10,156
1988	686	1999	11,897
1989	693	2000	13,313
1990	31,636	2001	12,075

*September 30 of each year

Source: Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, "Active Duty Military Personnel by Country" (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1980–2001).

Source: Pape 2005, 53.

Literature Review:

A Nation of Bases:

In this so-called War on Terror, the United States has implemented several military measures, not the least of which were the invasion of Iraq and the ongoing war in Afghanistan. However, many skeptics say that military options too often produce negative, albeit unintended, consequences for those living in these war zones. Author David Vine is one such person. In his book, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, Vine argues that an increased American military presence is not only ineffective, but that it is actually doing more harm than good (see Figure 9). “In Iraq, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia, foreign bases have created fertile breeding grounds for radicalism and anti-Americanism; the presence of our bases in the Muslim Holy Lands of Saudi Arabia was a major recruiting tool for al-Qaeda and part of Osama bin Laden’s professed motivation for the September 11, 2011 attacks” (Vine 2015, 10). According to Vine, American military presence abroad is creating more instances of terrorism, rather than combatting it.

Vine is not alone in sharing this opinion. Some believe that the military has grown into a beast all its own, uncontrollable by the government and out of touch with the best interests of the American civilians it claims to protect. “Today, the military is an entirely mercenary force, made up of volunteers paid salaries by the Pentagon. Although the military still tries to invoke the public’s support for a force made up of fellow citizens, this force is increasingly separated from civilian interests and devoted to military ones” (Johnson 2000, 223). And while those in support of the military claim altruistic motives

for the wars in the Middle East, whether they be to overthrow an unjust ruler or to rid the world of ruthless terrorists, others believe this claim is a lie.

“American power in Afghanistan and elsewhere may have had universality motives – the advancement of women’s rights, a liberal social order, and so on – but the American military, by necessity, played a significant role in that enterprise. And like all militaries, its ranks required a more aboriginal level of altruism than that of the universalist society it sought to bring about” (Kaplan 2006, 247).

This claim is not outdated, as many disgruntled Americans voice their misgivings of the government and military through social media and various other platforms.

U.S. Military Bases Abroad (Figure 9)



Source: Vine, David. *Base Nation*.

Vine also points out that America holds a double standard when it comes to building bases abroad and not allowing any foreign military bases to be built within our borders. “While there are no freestanding foreign bases on U.S. soil, today there are around eight hundred U.S. bases in foreign countries, occupied by hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops” (Vine 2015, 2-3) (See Figure 9). This number does not include outposts and checkpoints. He continues, “Rarely does anyone ask whether we need hundreds of bases overseas, or whether we can afford them. Rarely does anyone consider how we would feel with a foreign base on U.S. soil, or how we would react if China, Russia, or Iran built even a single base somewhere near our borders today” (Vine 2015, 3). Put in that perspective, it would be easy to see how an enormous American base built within a foreign country’s autonomous borders might feel like an invasion and an affront to state sovereignty (see Figure 10).

Major U.S. Military Installations under CENTCOM (Figure 10)

Major U.S. Military Installations and Units in CENTCOM Area of Responsibility

Installation ^a	Country	Service ^b	Major Units	Personnel ^a
Ali Al Salem	Kuwait	Air Force	386th AEW	
Al Dhafra	UAE	Air Force	380th AEW	
Al Udeid	Qatar	Air Force	379th AEW, 609th CAOC, 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron	
Bagram	Afghanistan	Army	455th AEW	
Camp Arifjan	Kuwait	Army		
Camp As Saliyah	Qatar	Army		
Camp Buehring	Kuwait	Army	3rd Brigade 3rd Infantry Division, 35th Combat Aviation Brigade	
Fujairah	UAE	Navy		
Jebel Ali Port	UAE	Navy		
Kabul	Afghanistan	Air Force	438th AEW	
Kandahar	Afghanistan	Army	451st AEW	
Kuwait Naval Base	Kuwait	Army		
Manas	Kyrgyzstan	Air Force	376th AEW	
NSA Bahrain	Bahrain	Navy	5th Fleet HQ	4,150

SOURCE: Author's analysis of DMDC personnel data, various sources.

NOTE: NSA = Naval Support Activity

^a Personnel counts include all services and all active duty, permanently stationed personnel reported at the facility. In cases where a location/installation consists of multiple locations, all attempts have been made to aggregate and report all the various sub-components of those facilities; however, these numbers are inherently approximate.

^b In many cases, service personnel from multiple services are co-located at the same installation; however, only services with "Major Units" Identified in the next column have been included in this column.

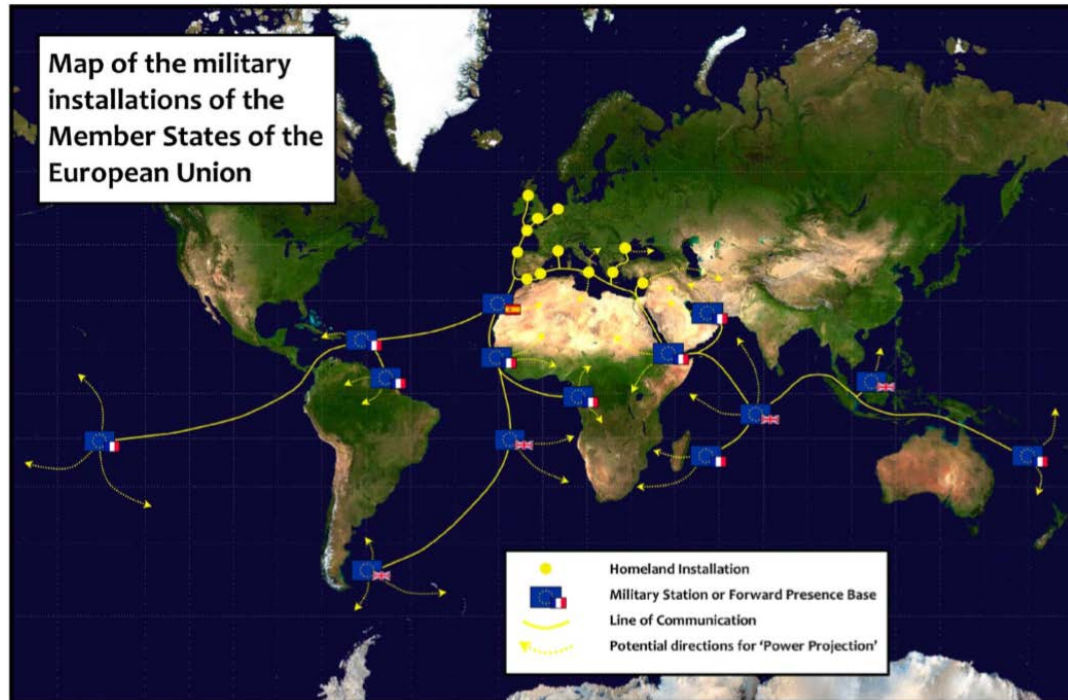
Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

In his book, Vine also describes how large American military bases are, making them feel like a small U.S. city has been packed up and transported into another country. The Department of Defense defines military bases as a “physical (geographic) location that is or was owned by, leased to, or otherwise possessed by a DoD component” (DoD 2009, 4). This includes land, facilities, or both. With these ominous military bases come thousands of military and civilian personnel, along with their families.

“In total, all the non-U.S. countries in the world combined have about thirty foreign bases among them – as compared to the United States and its eight hundred or so. If we add up all the troops and family members living with them, plus the civilian base employees and their family members, the bases are responsible for over half a million Americans abroad” (Vine 2015, 5).

European Union member states operate 16 facilities abroad that are considered major military installations (Rogers 2009, 11). France maintains 9 military facilities abroad, and the United Kingdom operates military facilities in 28 countries and territories overseas (Rogers 2009, 11). Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands have also established military facilities in foreign countries (Rogers 2009, 11). Figures 11 and 12 show the differences in military installations operated by E.U. member states versus those operated by the U.S.

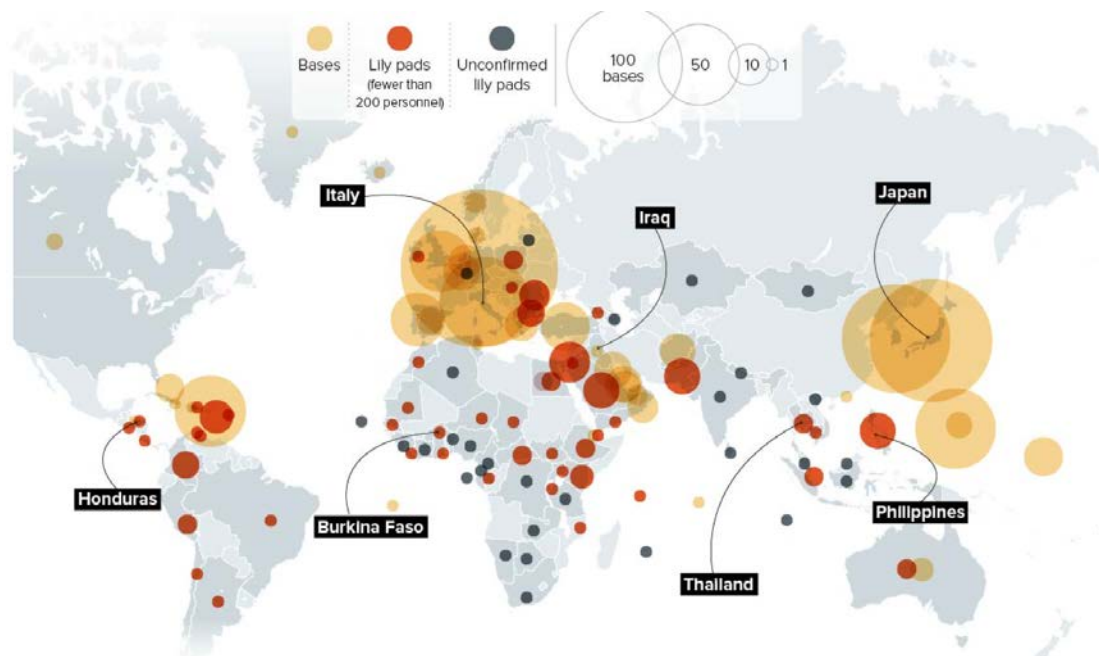
Map of E.U. Member State Military Installations Abroad (Figure 11)



Source: EU:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/sede300309studype407004_/SEDE300309StudyPE407004_en.pdf

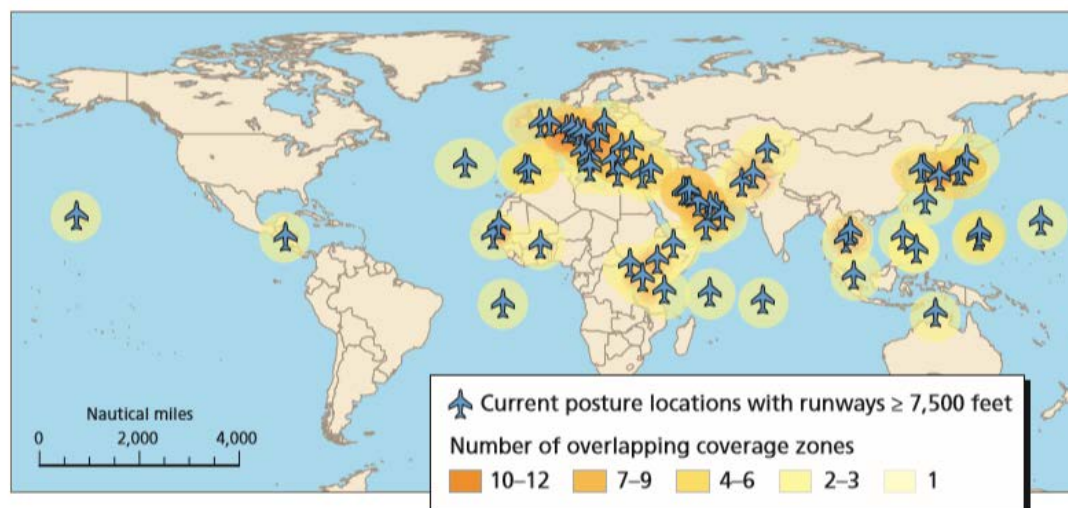
Map of U.S. Military Installations Abroad (Figure 12)



Source: Politico: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/06/us-military-bases-around-the-world-119321>

Additionally, while the U.S. has hundreds of military bases abroad with hundreds of thousands of military and civilian personnel living in them, a disproportionate number of those military bases are located in the Middle East (see Figure 13-15). “At the height of the U.S. occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, the total number of bases, combat outposts, and checkpoints in those two countries alone topped one thousand” (Vine 2015, 3). The U.S. has built bases in every country in the Persian Gulf except for Iran and has up to 17 bases in Turkey. One U.S. News report calculated that the United States is waging its war on terror in 76 countries, or 40% of the planet (see Figure 14) (Besterman 2018). And while there is a Base Closure and Realignment Commission established by Congress in 2005 that seeks to aid in the closure of U.S. military bases, open source information regarding any overseas base closures is few and far between (BRAC 2005). All of which poses the question, are we getting favorable results from all of the time, money, and manpower we are sending to the Middle East, or are we just wasting our resources? Are we achieving our aims, or are we doing more harm than good?

Operational Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Coverage (Figure 13)

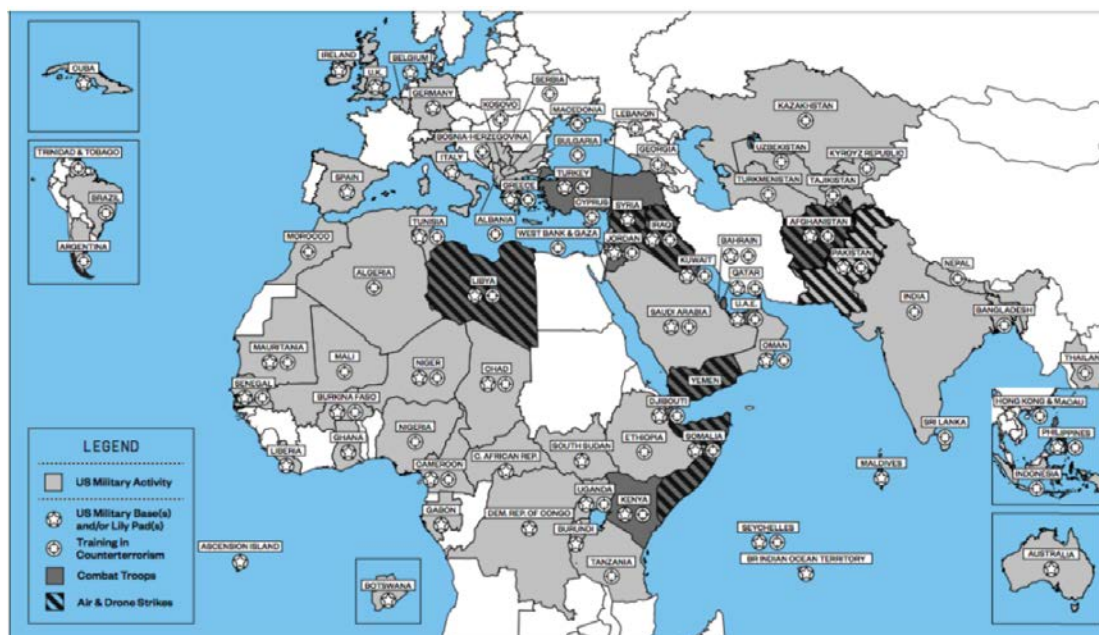


SOURCE: Author's analysis using National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, *Automated Air Facilities Intelligence File (AAFIF)*, St. Louis, Mo.: U.S. Government, 2010, not available to the general public; and Department of the Air Force, Headquarters Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency, *Engineering Technical Letter (ETL) 09-1: Airfield Planning and Design Criteria for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)*, Tyndall AFB, Fl., September 28, 2009, p. 5.

RAND RR201-2.17

Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

American Bases Abroad (Figure 14)

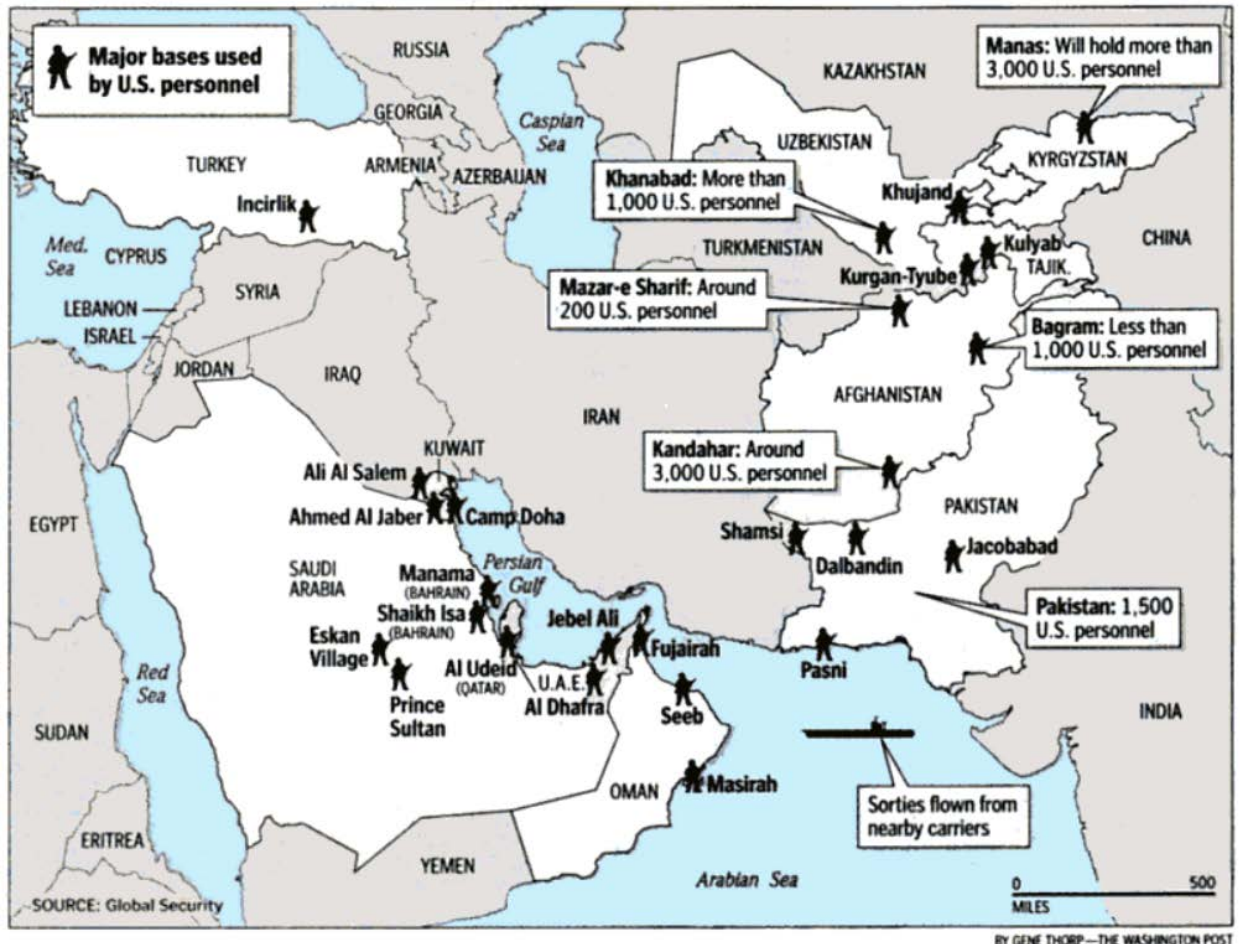


Source: <https://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2018-01-12/us-counterterrorism-forces-are-active-in-many-more-places-than-you-know>

U.S. Deployments in the Middle East (Figure 15)

U.S. Deployments

While U.S. military strikes have tapered off in Afghanistan, a large military presence remains in the region. All told, there are more than 50,000 U.S. military personnel on ships and bases nearby.



Source: <https://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2002/us-deploy010214.gif>

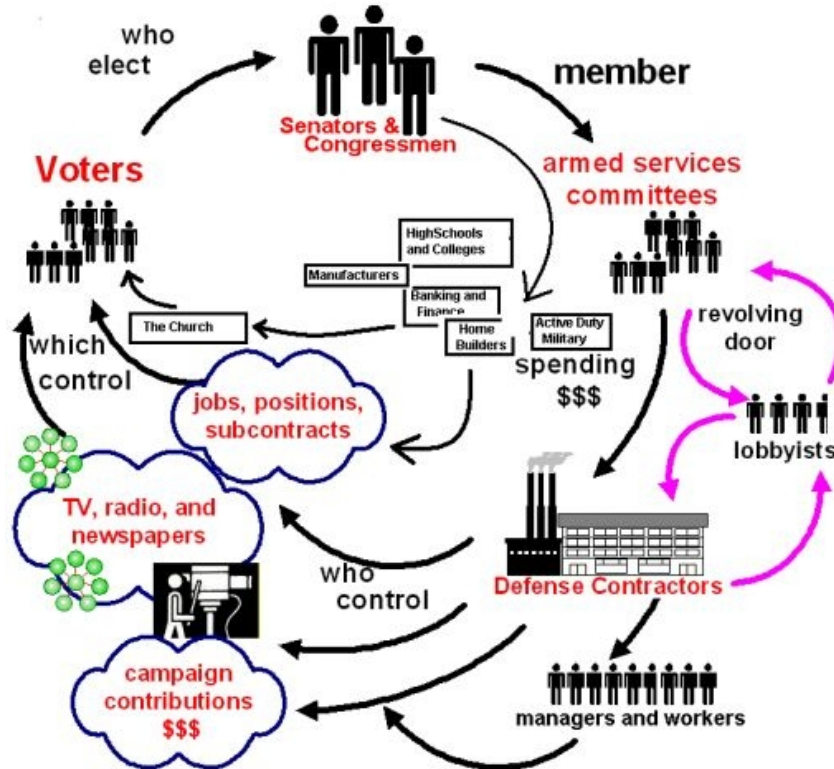
The Cost of Basing:

Another common objection to the U.S.'s plethora of military bases abroad is the amount of U.S. tax payer dollars that are spent not only to build these bases, but also to sustain them for an indefinite amount of time. "We've now invested more than \$14 billion to build housing, stationing, training and deployment capacities at major military

installations,” says Senator Kay Hutchison. “Deployment of U.S. forces from Germany to Iraq, for example, was complicated by denials of air and ground routes through several European countries. We have proved we can best deploy from the United States — and we can do it more cost effectively” (Hutchison 2010). Not only is building bases abroad using money that could be better spent domestically, as some would argue, the United States is aiding the economies of foreign nations, rather than tending to our own economic crisis first. “It costs nearly 15 percent less to build in the United States than in Germany. In addition, the U.S. military has invested \$1.4 billion in German infrastructure from 2006 to 2010, while Germany’s contribution has averaged \$20 million per year — or less than 10 percent” (Hutchison 2010). America would not only save money by building domestically, we would aid in our own nation’s economic growth as well.

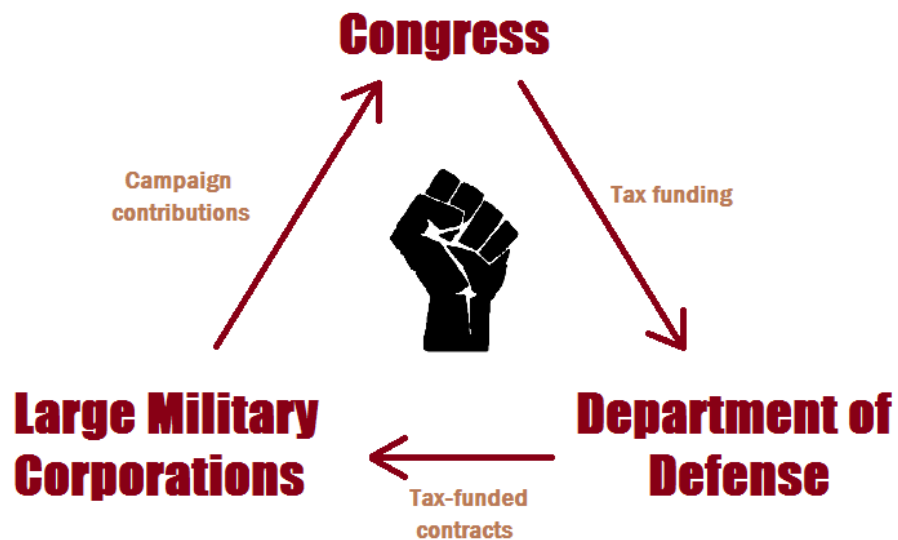
This dilemma is inherently connected to the idea of the Military Industrial Complex, a term first coined by President Eisenhower in his farewell address in 1961. Britannica defines the military industrial complex as a “network of individuals and institutions involved in the production of weapons and military technologies,” and adds that “the military-industrial complex in a country typically attempts to marshal political support for continued or increased military spending by the national government” (Britannica 2018). This notion highlights the interconnectedness between Congress, the Department of Defense, and private military contractors. Taken to the extreme, it can undermine democracy by placing too much emphasis on greed and financial gain. As the saying goes, ‘Once weapons were manufactured to fight wars. Now wars are manufactured to sell weapons.’ Figures 16-17 are a visual representation of the innerworkings of the military industrial complex.

Military Industrial Complex (Figure 16)



Source: <https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=military+industrial+complex+&FORM=HDRSC2>

Military Industrial Complex (Figure 17)



Source: <https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=military+industrial+complex+&FORM=HDRSC2>

In addition to the financial burden incurred by building and sustaining military bases, there remains the issue of nationalism and imperialism. A fierce sense of pride in one's nation, coupled with the idea that an imperialist force has unjustly deprived them of their autonomy, can lead to a volatile situation. These factors together can lead to radicalization and increased anti-American sentiments by those living in foreign countries. Having such a large number of American servicemembers stationed abroad can also lead to the intolerable, yet all too common, reports of military personnel taking advantage of local women. This can lead to an increase in disease and prostitution in host communities. Moreover, bases and Little Americas take up land that could have gone to the locals, while simultaneously creating enormous environmental cost for the host nation (Baker 2004, 174).

Anti-Americanism:

It is no secret that many Americans and global citizens abroad fervently believe that American military intervention increases incidents of anti-Americanism and radicalization. Makdisi sums up the ideology by saying, "Anti-Americanism . . . did not emerge organically in the region, and it does not flow naturally from medieval Islam. It was produced recently, and it has been relentlessly stoked by political and historical realities" (Makdisi 2010, 355). In other words, the cultural and religious tensions did not begin overnight, nor will they end overnight. Indeed, the transpiration of many events combined led to the palpable animosity present between America and the Arab nations today.

"According to one study, the 71 al Qaeda operatives who committed suicide terrorism between 1995 and 2003 were 10 times more likely to come from

Muslim countries where a U.S. military presence for combat operations existed than from other Muslim countries. Furthermore, when the U.S. military presence occupies a country with a larger proportion of Islamist radicals, al Qaeda suicide terrorists are 20 times more likely to come from that country. Although this evidence does not irrefutably demonstrate that the U.S. military presence in the Middle East is the leading source of radicalization, it suggests a U.S. military presence is strongly correlated with the recruitment and motivation of al Qaeda's most radicalized members" (Bowman 2008, 85).

Though this data is compelling, Bowman does not specify what is meant by a "larger portion" of Islamist radicals in a country. There might be more U.S. military in a country because there is more terrorism. This data does not conclusively prove that terrorism is caused by the presence of the military. Bowman continues, "although U.S. Special Forces and intelligence services may assist covertly, in nearly every conceivable scenario, existing U.S. bases and conventional military forces offer little assistance and may actually exacerbate conditions by fomenting radicalism and popular unrest against the U.S. military presence and the host government that condones it" (Bowman 2008, 81). Many in the Middle East were appalled and offended by the "liquor and miniskirts" that came with American bases into their countries (Baker 2004, 72). Cultural differences, nationalism, a fear of colonialism, and America's alliance with Israel compound in many Arab nations, producing fearful and hateful reactions to Americans in their countries (Baker 2004, 167).

Truly, many scholars pinpoint the inception of Arab anti-Americanism to the U.S.'s public support for Israel and dismissal of Palestine (Makdisi 2010, 356). Proponents of this method of thought argue that, by entering the Muslim Holy Lands, and the Middle East in general, we, the United States, have brought this 'war on terror' upon ourselves. Some critics even go so far as to say that these terrorists' actions are justified, that they are defending themselves against unjust imperialists. However, the preceding claims insight a

mixed review. As Pape mentions in response to Bowman's apparent correlation between suicide terrorists and the presence of U.S. forces in their home countries, "we cannot say with certainty that this detailed argument is the main impetus for individuals who volunteered to carry out suicide missions," since that would require interrogating the terrorists after they've blown themselves up (Pape 2005, 104). It is also important to note that just because one may be anti-American, it does not mean that they will become a terrorist. Many Muslims could be classified as anti-American in that they do not support America's political actions in the Middle East, but will never themselves become violent (Nydell 2006, 105). "It must be made clear that Middle Eastern Muslims and Arabs do not 'hate' America. Nor do they hate the American people. But they are very angry at America's government. It is only the extremist fringe that hates America" (Nydell 2006, 114). And anger is something we can work with, because if we put aside our fears and differences in order to engage in constructive dialogue, we can understand the sources of this anger and build bridges rather than burn them. In the following case studies, it is clear that there is no correlation between an increase or decrease in American military involvement and immediate changes in frequencies of terrorism. The opinion that American military intervention sparks more instances of anti-Americanism is a popular one but is without statistical backing.

Opposition to the War:

Another popular claim is that the U.S. is unnecessarily involved in wars in the Middle East. Many scholars and civilians alike actively oppose the 'war' that the U.S. has constantly been involved in since 9/11.

“While the strategic decision to go to war may have been the most appropriate and effective response conceivable in the immediate aftermath of the events of 2001—as well as the only conceivable option politically speaking—the last decade-plus of addressing the threat posed by Al Qaeda has reminded us that even if the decision to go to war was inevitable and non-negotiable, the U.S. decision to indefinitely remain at war with Al Qaeda is a choice” (McIntosh 2014, 24).

Said one Iraqi Sheikh to a Lieutenant Colonel stationed in Iraq, “We need visual examples of progress. The more time that you Americans spend on your own security, the less effort you put into rebuilding, and the less respect the average Iraqi has for you” (Kaplan 2006, 330). And while we have been in this war for more than 16 years now, terrorism has not yet been eradicated. “The fact that the United States has had a military focused strategy for nearly a decade and a half without successfully concluding the campaign suggests seriously considering alternatives is warranted” (McIntosh 2014, 31). Approaching the issue from this perspective leads some to believe that the U.S. is involved in a war that it cannot win.

War and the military are innately intertwined. To be at war, the military is almost always involved. And when the military is involved, we are usually at war. This perception has existed for generations, and for some, it is the only way they have ever known. “So long as the United States remains at war, it will continue to use military force against Al Qaeda if only because that is what it means to be ‘at war’ with an enemy” (McIntosh 2014, 24). But perhaps in this form of ‘war,’ the United States does not need such a strong physical presence to be successful.

“Counterinsurgency is not necessarily the best approach to accomplish U.S. national security interests in Afghanistan. America is unnecessarily biting off more than it can chew with that approach; the U.S. military has the means to conduct kinetic decapitation strikes against Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other terrorist leaders indefinitely and without having a large force presence on the ground” (Groves 2012, 38).

By this, Groves implies that targeting the leaders of these groups is the best method of eliminating them, and that such operations can be done with few boots on the ground. He uses the successful raid and killing of Osama bin Laden to back up his claim (Groves 2012, 38). We must remember, though, that the military does much more drop bombs and shoot guns. As Figure 6 reminds us, the military provides disaster relief, supplies humanitarian aid, and offers economic and educational assistance during times of crisis.

The Unconventional Enemy:

To many, projecting a strong military presence is a crucial tenet of America's history as a nation. However, this 'war' against al-Qaeda is not a traditional war because Al-Qaeda is not a traditional enemy. "National leaders, for instance, have spoken of 'victory' in Afghanistan as if military victory is what they are after, when political outcomes should always be paramount" (Groves 2012, 28). One of the differences between traditional wars and this war on terror is that it must focus not just on weakening these terrorist groups, but on completely eliminating them.

"Up to this point, a counterterror strategy of war may have been effective, but as a tool for ending terrorist campaigns, military operations have generally not been particularly useful. In this particular case, a strategy of war has difficulties, but taking a step back to the level of counterterrorism, history and research on the subject holds that while it may be successful in lowering the threat from an organization, it rarely succeeds by itself in ending the conflict" (McIntosh 2014, 30).

In short, using our military prowess to combat terrorism is an option that America has always taken, but not one that has always been successful. And tradition alone is not a sufficient reason to continue past practices without considering other options.

While martial strategies might be effective in weakening terrorism, as of yet, they have not been able to completely eradicate it. “War, as understood in the U.S. strategy toward Al Qaeda, remains military focused, necessitates the use of force, and calls for the defeat of the enemy in physical terms” (McIntosh 2014, 26). McIntosh continues, “so long as victory is predicated on Al Qaeda’s complete destruction, ending the war will remain an elusive goal because the U.S. conception of war in this case is at odds with the typical process of de-escalation. Ending a war is rarely an outcome, but rather the product of a deliberate decision made on the part of both parties” (McIntosh 2014, 28). The notion of total annihilation with regard to terrorism is further complicated by the idea of democracy. Democracy, the ideal that America so fervently cherishes and defends, necessarily requires the protection of free speech, assembly, and expression. Because of this, truly democratic societies cannot ever totally eliminate any and all possibilities of terrorism without fringing upon the rights of their citizens.

Ulterior Motives:

Another argument against American military involvement is that the United States enjoys being at war in the Middle East, because it allows us to have more military bases and thus more control over the area. In order for the U.S. to be at war in the Middle East, it necessarily requires the existence of terrorist groups. This leads some to question the integrity of the U.S.’s presence in Middle Eastern countries.

“Put differently, without the idea of Al Qaeda as a meaningful organization, the individuals the United States targets would simply be individuals in foreign countries the United States chose to kill rather than members of an organization with which the United States is at war. Others have noted that even the operational successes the United States has had abroad are potentially offset in strategic terms because they provide perceptual support

to the Al Qaeda claim that the United States is a violent, imperialist force that unilaterally intervenes into foreign countries, providing a boon to recruitment. Others have also identified the psychological effect experiencing a loss from a drone strike can create for those individuals and how that can encourage militancy” (McIntosh 2014, 29).

While the United States is not merely targeting innocent foreigners, it is targeting members of an organized and sophisticated terrorist organization. Furthermore, it is true that civilian casualties and collateral damage, as it is often called, feeds into the misinformation that the U.S. is a malevolent entity. “In addition to the oft-cited concern regarding recruitment, inevitable civilian casualties can dissuade individuals and/or groups from working with the United States in terms of providing intelligence” (McIntosh 2014, 32). And in the long run, remaining at war hurts not only America’s relationship with Muslims and Middle Easterners, it could potentially hurt America’s foreign relations with our allies as well.

“Overlooked in this debate is that war itself, due to its inextricable commitment to using force, does not have costs only in terms of civilian death, the potential to alienate allies, and the physical and material costs of war, but also in terms of opportunity costs. By remaining in a state of war with Al Qaeda the United States effectively limits its ability to pursue alternative strategies and tactics, and the longer the United States commits to a strategy of war, the harder it will be to successfully implement an alternative approach” (McIntosh 2014, 31).

Needless to say, military actions by the U.S. in the Middle East have had mixed reviews. While some operations have had remarkable success, such as the raid on Osama bin Laden’s compound, others have been viewed in a less favorable light, usually those involving civilian casualties. The American military is an effective tool, but one that must not be used lightly.

A Case for Comparison - Germany:

While this paper focuses on U.S. military bases in the Middle East, it is worth highlighting briefly the German response to U.S. military bases being built within German borders as a means of comparison. The U.S. has 174 bases in Germany (Vine 2015, 7), and frequently uses bases in Germany to send aid, troops, and weapons to countries like Afghanistan. As of 2010, “about 80 percent of the GIs, weapons, and supplies sent from the United States to Iraq and Afghanistan are routed through Germany” (Rassbach 2010, 123). This country is valuable to the U.S. not only in transporting goods, but also in transporting people. “According to a Department of Defense (DoD) report, at the end of 2008 there were 54,974 U.S. military personnel stationed in Germany, comprising more than half of the 81,582 U.S. troops in Europe” (Rassbach 2010, 122). Of those 54,974 U.S. military personnel in Germany in 2008, 13,300 deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan (Rassbach 2010, 123).

While the U.S. has closed some smaller bases in Germany, the DoD is now focusing more on “enduring communities,” or “Main Operating Bases.” EUCOM defines ‘main operating base’ as “an overseas, permanently manned, well protected base, used to support permanently deployed forces, and with robust sea and/or air access” (Jones 2005). This is in contrast with a Forward Operating Base, which contains less permanent equipment and people. “The plan designates Germany as the long-term strategic and logistical foundation of U.S. forces in Europe for wars in the Middle East, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Africa” (Rassbach 2010, 122). Six such bases are planned, one located in Italy, and the remaining five all in Germany (Rassbach 2010, 122). These enduring communities

show America's intent to maintain a permanent military presence in Germany and as such, make the country an interesting case for comparison with countries in the Middle East.

While many Germans and peace advocates such as Veterans for Peace (VFP) see this as an over-step of the United States, it is not the whole story. "Peace activists argue that the United States is now itself violating and undermining the international principles it then sought to establish, especially the Nuremberg principle against wars of aggression" (Rassbach 2010, 126). Members of the organization Veterans for Peace agree with this conclusion. VFP is a non-profit international organization focused on exposing the true costs of war, healing the wounds of war, and creating a world of peace. In January of 2018, VFP joined scholars and activists from around the world at the University of Baltimore for a conference with the intention of discussing U.S. foreign military bases, and how to close them (VFP 2018).

However, it is worth noting that "while western Germans under occupation developed strong movements against the U.S. military, now that Germany has achieved full sovereignty and actually could challenge the United States, there is no such national movement actively opposing the U.S. bases here" (Rassbach 2010, 126). This fact could be attributed to a combination of several factors, but the most obvious factor is money. American bases in Germany are supporting their economy significantly, and to challenge the 'Great American Superpower' would do more damage to Germany than possible good. Shown through the example of Germany, having American military bases in a host country can be more beneficial to that host country than it is damaging.

The Benefits of Basing:

While both Vine and Hutchison make cogent arguments about the negative and costly effects of maintaining military bases overseas, there are also many convincing arguments in favor of maintaining a robust military presence abroad. As Baker reminds us, we all too often focus on the negatives instead of the positives. The American military responds to natural disasters and emergencies such as earthquakes and floods and connects people from all over the world through cultural and public events, as well as more permanently, through marriage (Baker 2004, 174). One 2013 RAND Report discusses in depth the benefits, costs and risks of maintaining America's military presence overseas. While the authors acknowledge the cost involved in maintaining the facilities and personnel in bases around the world, they also highlight the benefits provided by having an expansive global military force. Namely, the RAND report emphasizes an improved operational response to contingencies, the ability to dissuade enemies and assure allies, and the promotion of cooperation with partner militaries as advantages to having a strong military presence abroad (Lostumbo 2013, xix).

"The presence of U.S. forces in a region shows a commitment and U.S. interest in the security of the area, which speaks to the willingness of the United States to become involved in future conflicts to stabilize situations, secure U.S. interests, and protect the global commons" (Lostumbo 2013, xxi). While critics argue that keeping more troops at home would save substantial fiscal resources, RAND argues that having American troops abroad is beneficial in 2 major ways. Training with foreign partners provides cultural awareness, teaching American troops about the culture, customs, and values of their host nation, as well as benefiting the local militaries by teaching them alternative technical and

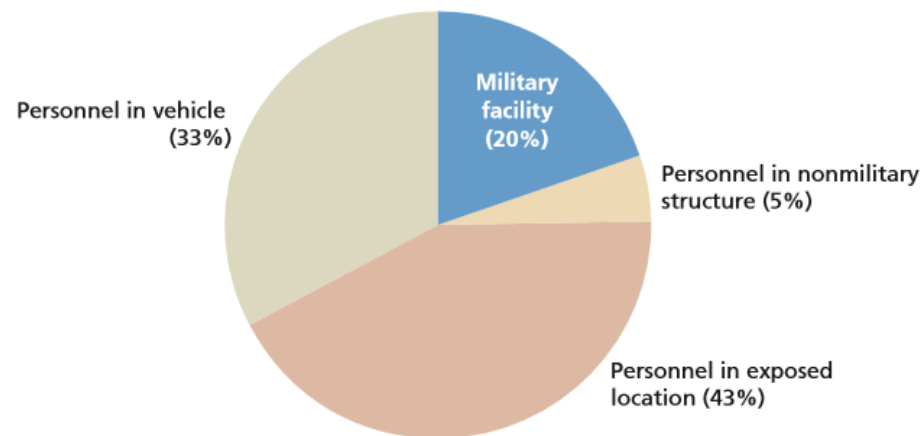
training styles for combatting the common enemy (Lostumbo 2013, xxii). American military bases overseas also benefit the economies of their host nations. This is especially beneficial in developing nations, for example, those in North Africa. Military bases in Morocco and Libya created jobs for locals in construction and agriculture, as well as other goods and services (Baker 70, 2004).

The military of the United States is by definition tasked with a daunting task, to not only respond to world events in a timely manner, but also to shape the world events of the future. “The Pentagon envisions a force of highly trained, committed men and women who can be deployed at a moment’s notice to bases within striking distance of an ‘arc of instability’ encompassing North Africa, the Middle East, and Southern Asia” (Baker 2004, 167). RAND fervently believes that a strong forward military presence is instrumental in achieving these aims. Military bases abroad set the foundation for building and strengthening coalitions and alliances, maintain a readiness to act when disaster strikes, and show those who threaten global security that the United States is willing and more than able to counter such threats (Lostumbo 2013, 1).

This willingness and ability play a large part in deterring those who wish us harm, because they demonstrate both the military might and political will to take action. “Foreign bases and force presence contribute to both of these ingredients of deterrence. They indicate a willingness of the United States to become involved in conflicts abroad, and they shape perceptions about the effectiveness of the U.S. military to project power quickly and sustain it over time” (Lostumbo 2013, 74). In the Middle East specifically, America and its allies must focus on not only countering violent extremism, but also on deterring the development of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction. “To support these

objectives, the United States will continue to place a premium on U.S. and allied military presence in – and support of – partner nations in and around this region” (Lostumbro 2013, 18-19). Perception and deterrence are especially valuable tactics in the Middle East because of the volatility of the region, with many countries facing internal conflicts as well as external ones. As shown by Figures 18 and 19, nonstate actors target our military in a variety of ways, through a variety of methods.

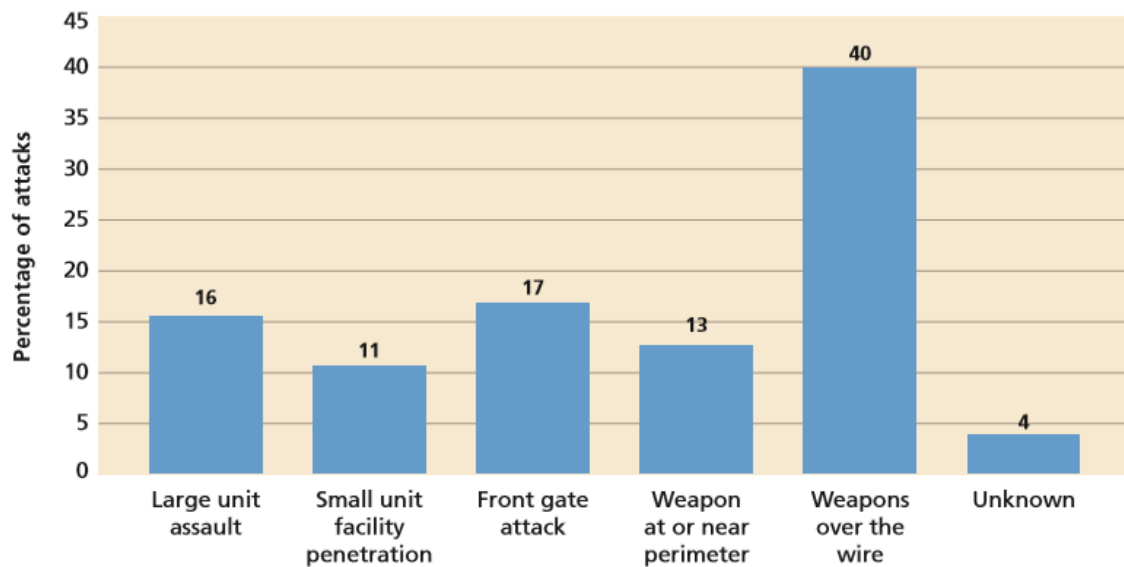
Nonstate Actor Attacks on Military Targets 2000-2009 (Figure 18)



SOURCE: Unpublished research by David R. Frelinger and Brian A. Jackson of RAND.
RAND RR201-5.4

Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

Nonstate Actor Attacks on Military Facilities by Tactic (Figure 19)



SOURCE: Unpublished research by David R. Frelinger and Brian A. Jackson of RAND.
RAND RR201-5.5

Source: Lostumbo, Michael. RAND Report.

Necessary but Insufficient:

There are staunch critics of U.S. military involvement to be sure, but not all scholars believe that the U.S.'s involvement is wholly depraved. "To be fair, the sense of urgency to prevent another successful attack has required concentrated focus—and America has been largely successful in this regard. This is significant and demonstrates the result of excellent efforts within the intelligence, law enforcement, and military communities" (Groves 2012, 27). Even scholars opposed to the idea of U.S. military intervention in the Middle East can see the important value the military provides. "Moreover, U.S. ground forces do have a constructive role to play in the region. The U.S. military can help train allied military forces to secure their borders, reduce 'ungoverned areas,' and confront insurgents or terrorist cells" (Bowman 2008, 83). The emerging dialogue indicates that, while America's current military presence in the Middle East is needed, it is simply not enough. "What is clear is that the tactical efforts the United States has undertaken are necessary but not sufficient elements in achieving success" (Groves 2012, 28). We are currently in a state of limbo; unable to pull out and presently unwilling to do more.

"America's military pressure definitely disrupts the enemy's ability to plan, coordinate, and conduct successful attacks—especially spectacular attacks. But they also contribute to further radicalizing elements of the Ummah (global Muslim population), especially when civilian casualties result from military strikes, though inadvertent on the American part, the perception is substantially different among some Muslim segments. Global jihadists view our strikes as a justification for their struggle. They argue their case to illicit fence sitters among the Ummah to join in solidarity with them and recognize armed jihad as the only solution. And, without other efforts to build bridges with Muslim communities domestically, the United States is in danger of furthering a polarizing trend among average Americans that could lead us in an opposite direction of our long-held 'melting pot' identity. Government at all levels needs to address this issue to foster greater integration and prevent fracturing along religious, ethnic, or socioeconomic lines" (Groves 2012, 32).

Clearly, this is a multi-faceted problem, the solution to which will require a multi-faceted approach. On the one side, American military intervention that causes collateral damage can be a source of radicalization among Muslims. “Ironically, a robust U.S. ground troop presence in the region undercuts this interest, serving as a major impetus for radicalization. Yet, a large U.S. military presence is by no means the only source of radicalization and terrorism directed against the United States” (Bowman 2008, 83). On the other hand, the U.S. military has conducted several military operations that have eliminated high-level terrorist leaders.

“The problem is that U.S. efforts are largely centered around tactical pursuits versus strategic. America will not kill its way out of this threat. Despite significant pressure since 9/11 Al Qaeda has demonstrated tremendous resiliency. U.S. and Coalition kinetic action has decimated 75 percent of the organization’s initial leadership. Yet, the group has absorbed these losses and ‘transformed itself from a small hierarchical organization into a global presence facilitated by twenty-first-century communications that made its reach seem ubiquitous and its radicalization of young Muslims seem unstoppable’” (Groves 2012, 33).

The question of eliminating the threat posed by the mere existence of terrorist groups is a complex one that requires that everyone keep an open mind and focus on the importance of civil dialogue. It is a complex issue that can trace its roots back a century, and must be handled in the correct way, so as to not create more problems for future generations.

The Lion of Saudi Arabia:

It is impossible to discuss terrorism, the Middle East, and America’s involvement there without also discussing the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil: September 11th, 2001. In 102 infamous minutes, nearly 3,000 Americans lost their lives on that tragic day, bringing Middle Eastern terrorism to the forefront of the world’s mind. This research

would be incomplete without addressing the mastermind behind the whole operation, Osama bin Laden. Rumors and speculation saturate discussion of this notorious man, including allegations that America's presence in the Middle East, specifically Saudi Arabia, lit the spark of radicalization in bin Laden's life that eventually led to the catastrophic events of September 11th. Some use this line of thought to go so far as to say that America brought September 11th upon herself. "A look at the rise of al Qaeda as a threat to the United States in the 1990s illustrates the radicalizing effect that often accompanies a U.S. military presence. The U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia represents the primary reason Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda began to target the United States in the 1990s" (Bowman 2008, 84). In his 1996 fatwa, bin Laden himself cites America's continued presence in Saudi Arabia, the land of the two Holy Places, as a reason for his declaration of war against the United States.

This event was justifiably a turning point in U.S. – Arab relations and caused many to question how this could have happened, and what could have been done to prevent such a massive loss of life. "Not only did bin Laden consistently cite the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia as the paramount justification for jihad in the years leading up to the September 11 attacks, but 15 of 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia, two from the UAE, one from Egypt, and one from Lebanon" (Bowman 2008, 84). The U.S. has 5 bases in Saudi Arabia, 3 bases in the UAE, and 2 bases in Egypt. Bowman continues, "In a poll of Saudis taken after the September 11 attacks, 95 percent of Saudis agreed with bin Laden's objection to U.S. forces in the region" (Bowman 2008, 84). Many scholars and civilians alike blame poor U.S. military planning and bureaucratic missteps as the cause of the radicalization of Osama bin Laden, and with it, the rise of Al-Qaeda.

However, few stop to investigate the man behind the name that fills so many with rage, grief, and loathing. Osama (meaning ‘young lion’ in Arabic) bin Laden was born on March 10, 1957 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Osama was the 17th son to his father, who had roughly 50 children between several different wives. His mother was a Syrian, who is reportedly no longer considered part of the bin Laden family (Bergen 2001, 44). Osama’s father, Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden, emigrated from Yemen to Saudi Arabia when he was a young man. Mohammed built a very successful construction company, and eventually became known as the “King’s private contractors” (Bergen 2001, 44). In 1967, when Osama was 10 years old, his father died in a plane crash, leaving his estate and prosperous company to his children. Osama’s eldest brother would meet the same fate as their father 21 years later, dying in a plane he was flying over San Antonio, Texas. By the mid-1990’s, the estimated worth of the Saudi Binladen Group (SBG) was near \$5 billion (Bergen 2001, 46). The group had taken contracts with projects ranging from airports in Egypt and Yemen, to seaside resorts in Syria, to mosques and office sky scrapers in Saudi Arabia. Ironically, SBG also undertook a \$150 million project to construct a military base for more than 4,000 American soldiers in Saudi Arabia, which would later be used by the American military in executing strikes against bin Laden’s hideouts (Bergen 2001, 47).

When he was 17, Osama married the first of his four wives, a Syrian girl who was a distant relative. Afterwards, he attended King Abdul-Aziz University, where he received degrees in economics and public administration in 1981 (Bergen 2001, 47). It was during this time that bin Laden became acquainted with the Muslim Brotherhood and their leaders, specifically Abdullah Azzam and Muhammad Qutb. Bin Laden’s sister would go on to marry the head of the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. When the Soviets

invaded Afghanistan on Christmas Eve 1979, the seed of radicalization had already been planted and began to sprout in Osama's mind. "Unprovoked, a superpower invaded a largely peasant nation and inflicted on it a total, totalitarian war. The population rose up under the banner of Islam to drive the infidels out" (Bergen 2001, 49). At 22 years of age, bin Laden went immediately to Afghanistan and joined the mujahideen to fight against the Soviets. The millionaire gave up his comfortable and lavish lifestyle to fight in a war and donated substantial portions of his own money to the cause. The war in Afghanistan served as a quasi-networking event for up-and-coming terrorist leaders, and bin Laden met many men like himself who shared similar ideologies. In 1989, encouraged by the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden founded his Strong Base: Al-Qaeda (Bergen 2001, 59).

While skeptics of American military prowess claim that the CIA created the mujahideen and thus also created bin Laden himself, this is simply not the case. It is true that America was seeking payback for the Soviet's backing of the North Vietnamese, and thus backing the Afghans who were fighting the Soviets indeed sweetened the pot. However, "American officials did not venture into Afghanistan during the war against the Soviets for fear of handing the Communists a propaganda victory if they were captured" (Bergen 2001, 64). Bin Laden was already expressing anti-American sentiments and because of his family's lucrative construction business, he had little need for CIA money. The CIA, seeking plausible deniability, funneled its money in support of the Afghans through the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence Agency (ISI). Part of the ISI's deal with America was that no American have any contact with the mujahedeen, nor the dispersal of weapons or funds. With this hands-off approach, however, the Pakistanis were able to use

their own discretion when determining which rebel groups received American funds. Naturally, they opted to back the most pro-Pakistani groups, who also happened to be the most anti-American. Here, the CIA could have pressured the Pakistanis to give the American funds to groups who were more pro-American, but the issue was never pressed. Over the course of the war, American investments ranged from \$20 million a year to \$630 million a year, accumulating to a total of \$3 billion when all was said and done (Bergen 2001, 68). While the CIA might have erred in not forcing the Pakistanis to support only pro-American resistance groups in Afghanistan, the United States is certainly not liable for the atrocities bin Laden and others subsequently spread throughout the world.

Clearly, America's involvement in the radicalization of Osama bin Laden is, and will continue to be, a hotly debated topic. Many believe that America's over-zealous militaristic nature and greedy ulterior motives led an otherwise educated, non-violent man to snap, and that because of this, we are responsible for the lives lost on September 11th. Some believe that bin Laden "only turned against the United States in 1991 because he regarded the stationing of American troops in his native Saudi Arabia during and after the Persian Gulf War as a violation of his religious beliefs. Thus, the attacks . . . are an instance of blowback rather than unprovoked terrorism" (Johnson 2000, 11). But in reality, the truth is rarely ever so black and white. "For al-Qaeda, religion matters, but mainly in the context of national resistance to foreign occupation. The fact that the United States and its allies are predominantly non-Islamic societies makes it easier for al-Qaeda's leaders to exploit their own religion to justify the use of martyrdom operations as the main weapon for national liberation" (Pape 2005, 104). The fact that Eastern and Western cultures differ so vastly makes it easier to catalyze both fear of the unknown and contempt for the 'other.'

“Bin Laden is at war with the United States, but his is a *political* war, justified by his own understanding of Islam, directed at the symbols and institutions of American *political* power” (Bergen 2001, 222). Even if bin Laden’s motives had been truly religious and not politically motivated, nothing justifies terrorism. And purposely targeting non-combatants is exactly that: terrorism. In the end, nothing can ever justify the taking 3,000 innocent lives. Nothing.

Case Studies:

Afghanistan:

One of the most critical countries in this debate is Afghanistan. Afghanistan has a population of over 34 million, comprised of Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, other ethnic groups. “From the days of King Ahmad Shah, Afghanistan constituted a fragile web-work of tribes and ethnic groups occupying the water-starved wastes between the settled areas of the Russian Empire in Central Asia, the Persian Empire in the Middle East, and the British Empire in the Indian subcontinent” (Kaplan 2006, 194). Its population is 99.7% Muslim; approximately 90% of which is Sunni Muslim, and 10% is Shia (CIA World Factbook). In terms of social and economic development, only 38% of their population is literate, there is on average less than one doctor per 1,000 people, and the current life expectancy is 51 years. When the Soviets invaded in December of 1979, 1.3 million Afghans lost their lives and another 5 million, a third of the country’s population, were forced into exile (Bergen 2001, 49).

The United States entered Afghanistan in October 2001, one month after the attacks of September 11th, and currently has 9 military bases within the country (Vine 2015). One

such base is Bagram Air Force Base, which serves as the headquarters for Combined Joint Task Force 180, an alliance between America and 33 other countries (Kaplan 2006, 196). Included on the base is a 250-bed American hospital, constructed in just 72 hours, and known for being the finest medical care in the Middle East and Central Asia. Though its intended use was to treat wounded soldiers, most of the medical staff devote their time to treating locals who become injured from the countless mines left by the Soviets when they invaded the country, or who become ill due to the extended drought in the country (Kaplan 2006, 197). Since 2001, 2,247 military servicemen and women have lost their lives in Afghanistan and 20,000 U.S. service members have been wounded (Department of State). While there are approximately 8,400 U.S. troops remaining in Afghanistan this year, “U.S. force levels peaked at roughly 100,000 in 2011 and began to decrease through 2014” (State Department), though America is still deploying troops to Afghanistan today.

Map of Afghanistan (Figure 20)

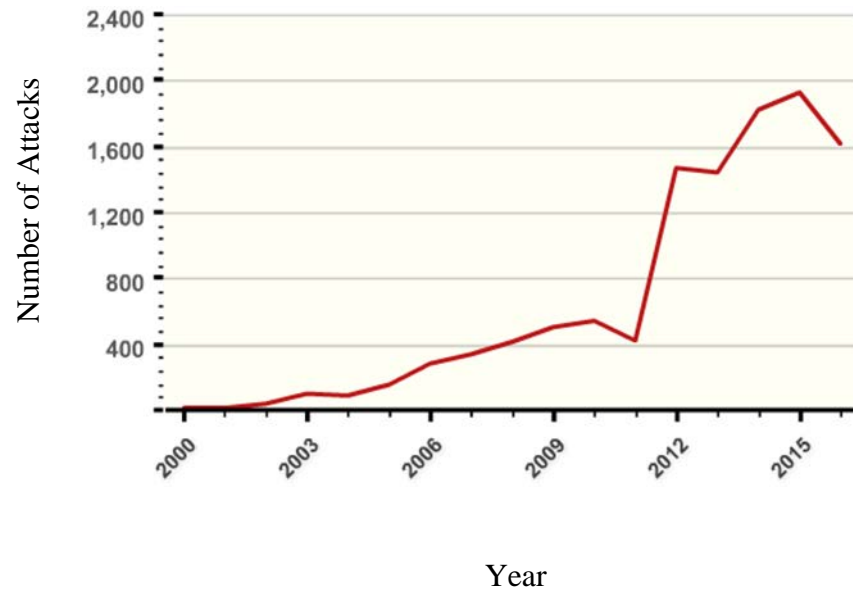


Source: <http://i.cnn.net/cnn/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/maps/map.opposition.advance.gif>

Most of the terrorist incidents that take place in Afghanistan are the workings of the Taliban or local chapters of ISIS. Using the Global Terrorism Database, one can compare the frequency of terrorist attacks with the above information regarding U.S. troop levels in the country. In 2001, when the U.S. entered Afghanistan, there were around 100 terrorist attacks reported in Afghanistan (See Figure 21). As the graph in Figure 21 illustrates, 2010 saw approximately 500 terrorist attacks within Afghanistan, but in 2011, when the most U.S. troops were present in the country, the number of terrorist attacks declined for the first time in 6 years. In 2011, there were just over 400 terrorist attacks in the country. After that, the number rose steeply to around 1,500 attacks in 2012, and peaked at almost 2,000 terrorist attacks within the year 2015. During the years 2011 to present, U.S. troops have been withdrawing from Afghanistan, as the State Department cited (See

Figure 22). However, the years when U.S. troops left the country, the number of terrorist attacks increased dramatically. Based on this evidence, it is clear that the presence of U.S. troops in Afghanistan is not causing an immediate increase in terrorist attacks.

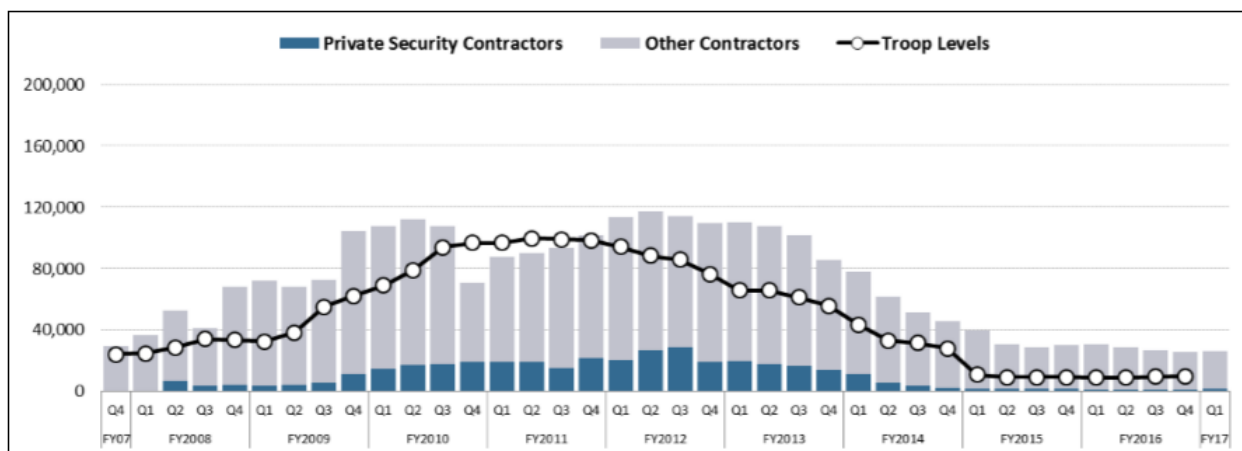
Terrorist Attacks in Afghanistan (Figure 21)



Source: Global Terrorism Database.

http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?page=1&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=&start_yearonly=2000&end_yearonly=2016&ctp2=all&country=4&charttype=line&chart=overtime&ob=GTDID&od=desc&expanded=yes#results-table

U.S. Armed Forces and Contractor Personnel in Afghanistan: Q4 FY2007 – Q1 FY2017 (Figure 22)



Source: Contractor levels drawn from U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Quarterly Contractor Census Reports; troop levels drawn from “Boots on the Ground” monthly reports to Congress.

Notes: DOD did not begin releasing data on contractors in CENTCOM until Q4 FY2007. U.S. Armed Forces personnel figures include all active and reserve component personnel.

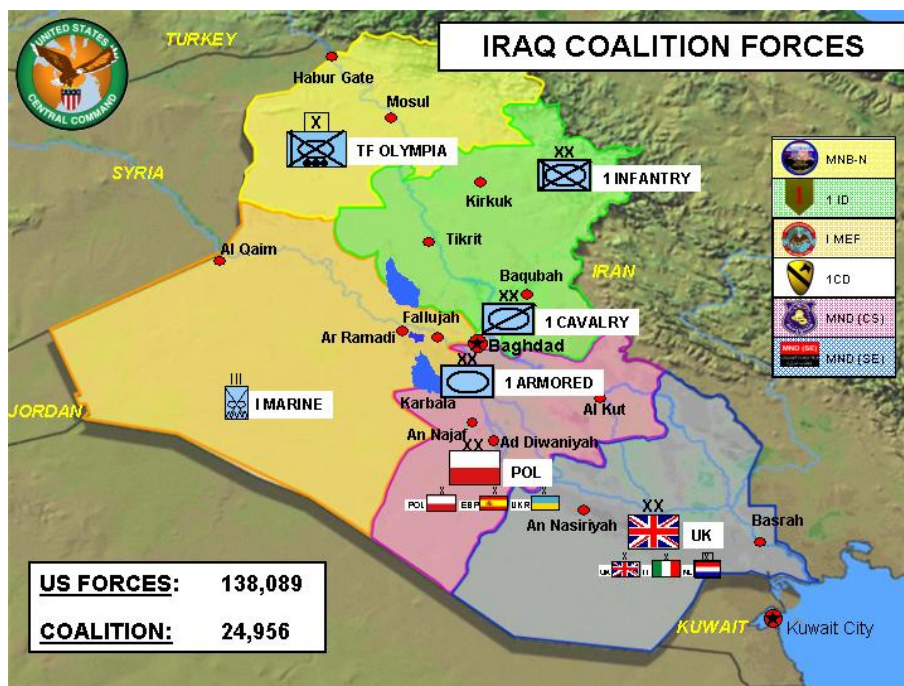
Source: Congressional Research Service. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44116.pdf>

Iraq:

To say that America’s invasion of Iraq in 2003 is contentious would be an understatement. Many debate the true motives for the United States entering the country, whether it be to combat terror, to seek oil, or a myriad of other options in between. The CIA states that “continued Iraqi noncompliance with UNSC resolutions over a period of 12 years led to the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the ouster of the Saddam Husayn regime” (CIA Factbook). While the reasons or legitimacy for invading the country can be debated indefinitely, the violence that has occurred within the country is undeniable. According to Vine, there are 6 U.S. military bases in Iraq as of 2015 (Vine 2015, 328). While the United States entered Iraq in March 2003, which is also when the vast majority of the bases were built, the number of U.S. troops peaked in 2007, and has decreased since

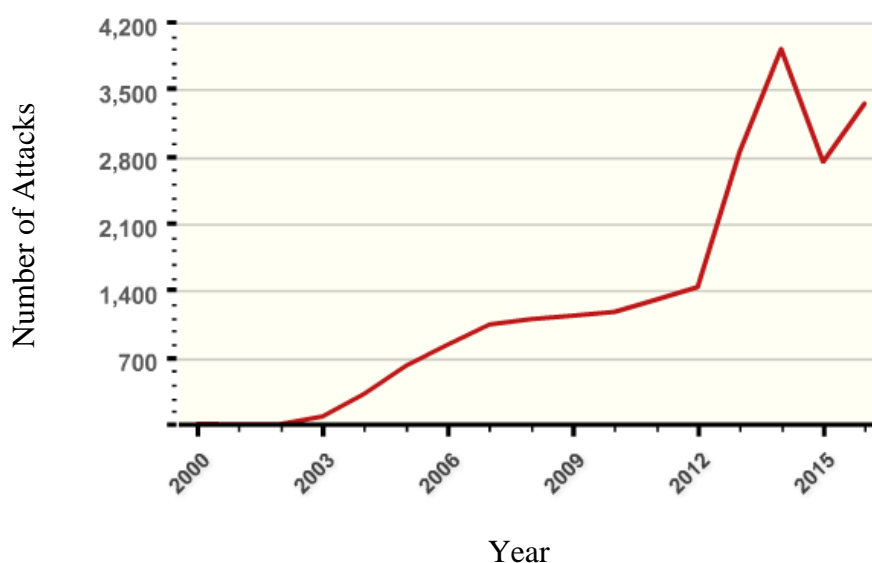
then (See Figure 24). Incidents of terrorism, on the other hand, have risen since 2002, and peaked sharply in 2014 (See Figure 25).

Map of Iraq (Figure 23)



Source: http://origins.osu.edu/sites/origins.osu.edu/files/2-4-map337_0.jpg

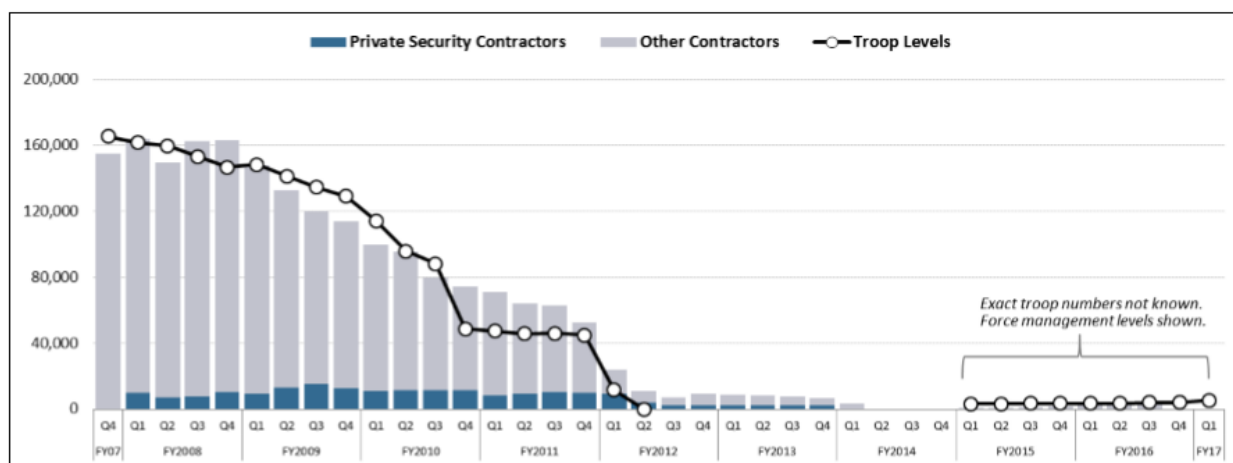
Terrorist Attacks in Iraq (Figure 24)



Source: GTD.

http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?start_yearonly=2000&end_yearonly=2016&start_year=&start_month=&start_day=&end_year=&end_month=&end_day=&country=95&asmSelect1=&dt2=all&success=yes&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=

U.S. Armed Forces and Contractor Personnel in Iraq: Q4 FY2007 – Q1 FY2014; Q1 FY2015 – Q1 FY2017 (Figure 25)



Source: Force levels from Q4 FY2007-Q1 FY2012 are drawn from the DOD's "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress. U.S. Armed Forces personnel figures for Q4 FY2007-Q1 FY2012 include all active and reserve component personnel. Force levels for Q1 FY2015-Q1 FY2017 are drawn from the White House's semiannual "War Powers Resolution Report" to Congress. All listed contractor levels are drawn from CENTCOM Quarterly Contractor Census Reports.

Notes: DOD did not begin releasing data on private security contractor personnel levels in CENTCOM until Q1 FY2008, and ceased reporting data on DOD-funded private security contractor personnel in Iraq in Q4 FY2013. As of Q1 FY2017, CENTCOM has not resumed reporting data on DOD-funded private security personnel in Iraq. See **Table 3** for further discussion of recent U.S. troop and contractor levels in Iraq.

As can clearly be seen, there is no correlation between American military presence in Iraq, and either an immediate increase or decrease of instances of terrorism within the country. In 2014, the year with the most violence in Iraq, the U.S. military was withdrawing its forces. And in 2007, the year with the highest number of U.S. troops present in the country, there were significantly less instances of violence compared to the following years, when the U.S. began to withdraw its support (See Figures 25-26). Which poses the question, if the American military is neither decreasing the frequency of acts of terrorism, nor causing an increase thereof, what could explain these trends? Richard Medina compiled a geographic information systems analysis of the violence in Iraq from 2004 until 2009 and presents several compelling arguments.

Total Number and Average Number of Terrorist Attacks in Iraq per Six Months

(Figure 26)

Time interval	Total number of incidents	Mean number of incidents by district
Jan–Jun 2004	289	2.83
Jul–Dec 2004	584	5.73
Jan–Jun 2005	1471	14.42
Jul–Dec 2005	1942	19.01
Jan–Jun 2006	2815	27.60
Jul–Dec 2006	3679	36.01
Jan–Jun 2007	3568	34.98
Jul–Dec 2007	2505	24.56
Jan–Jun 2008	1825	17.89
Jul–Dec 2008	1385	13.58
Jan–Jun 2009	1113	10.91
Jul–Dec 2009	1300	12.75

Source: Medina, Richard, et al.

<http://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=66825498&S=R&D=a9h&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLr40SeqLI4zdnYOLCmr0%2Bep7FSr6a4Ta6WxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGvrkixrbBQuePfgeyx43zx>

According to Medina's research,

"The last half of 2009 shows a slight increase in attacks and another rise in the number of districts with more attacks. This is likely due to the onset of the U.S. withdraw and plans to return a sovereign Iraq. For purposes of draining U.S. resources, terrorists may work to maintain conflict in Iraq and other places throughout the world, as well as start new conflict in other regions" (Medina 2011, 872).

In other words, terrorists might create more instances of violence in order to drain the resources and weaken the resolve of those military and local forces fighting them. This transfer of power also raises the issue of the power vacuum created by the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the area, which terrorist groups could use as an opportunity to take more power.

Medina also realizes the possibility of other explanations for the increase or decrease of terrorist activities.

"The decline in number of attacks and area of affected districts after 2007 may be a result of the Baghdad wall construction in Ad Hamiyah in April 2007. The Ad Hamiyah wall separates Sunni and Shi'a communities. A similar wall was built in Ghazaliya, Baghdad, also in 2007, much of which was constructed with temporary barriers. Following the wall construction there was a large decrease in terrorist attacks" (Medina 2011, 873).

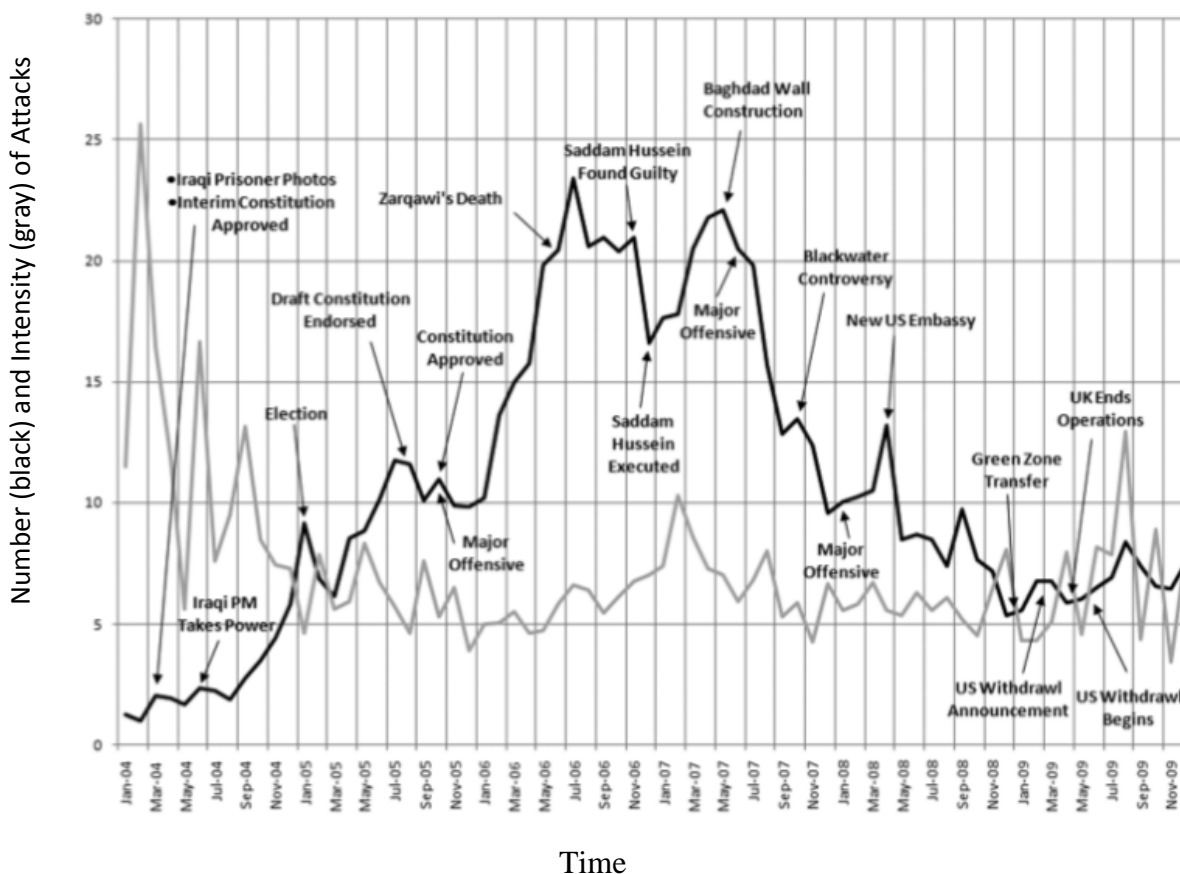
It is essential to note when debating the effectiveness of military means to achieve peace that terrorism and peace are linked to much more than just military advances or withdrawals. Terrorism can also be sparked by sectarian differences. This is especially true in Iraq, which is home to significant populations of both Shia and Sunni Muslims. The political arena also seems to have an impact on terrorism in the country.

"Beginning in 2004, there are small spikes in attacks, but the largest spike occurs in the first half of 2005 with the Iraqi elections. Following the elections, there is a small dip in attacks, but a rise follows around the time of constitution activity. It seems that these political actions are responsible for triggering at least some of the terrorist activity. Following the constitution approval the attacks increased to their largest spike in mid-

2006, which may have been driven by the death of Abu Mussabal-Zarqawi. His death on 7 June 2006 may have been a trigger for heightened terrorist activity in Iraq, but the lack of his leadership following his death, and the spike of activity, may have led to decreased overall activities until the end of 2006 where an increase is again recorded” (Medina 2011, 874-875).

In short, Medina’s research proves the point that terrorism, and the absence thereof, are affected by a myriad of factors, including but not limited to, military actions. Terrorism is a multi-faceted problem, affected by many factors, that requires a multi-faceted solution.

Average Intensity (gray) and Attacks per Day (black) in Relation to Major Events in Iraq (Figure 27)



Source: Medina, Richard.

<http://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=66825498&S=R&D=a9h&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLr40SeqLl4zdnyOLCmr0%2Bep7FSr6a4Ta6WxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGvrkixrbBQuePfgeyx43zx>

In mid-2007, terrorist incidents began to decrease slightly. This could be due to an increase of troops in the area, or the recent construction of the Baghdad wall, or a combination of both (See Figure 27). But in 2009, the monthly average of instances of terror again began to increase. As Medina notes, “This increase in activity coincides with the shift of power from coalition forces to Iraqi forces, including the Green Zone transfer, the end of operations for the United Kingdom, and the initiation of the U.S. withdrawal” (Medina 2011, 875). From this viewpoint, the withdrawal of U.S. troops in Iraq led to an increase in terrorism. The goal of this violence, Medina states, is two-fold. Increased instances of terror lower the morale of those living in the area, and also bait the coalition forces into staying longer, in order to further exhaust their resources. “Upon withdrawal of coalition troops from Iraq, some Islamists theorize the takeover of disorganized and essentially leaderless regions” (Medina 2011, 875). While some terrorist activities might be tied to political events or important religious holidays or anniversaries, in the case of Iraq, many times terrorism increases when the coalition forces begin to leave. For a multitude of possible reasons, the counterterrorism work of the U.S. military seems to have made a positive impact on the region on more than one occasion.

Saudi Arabia:

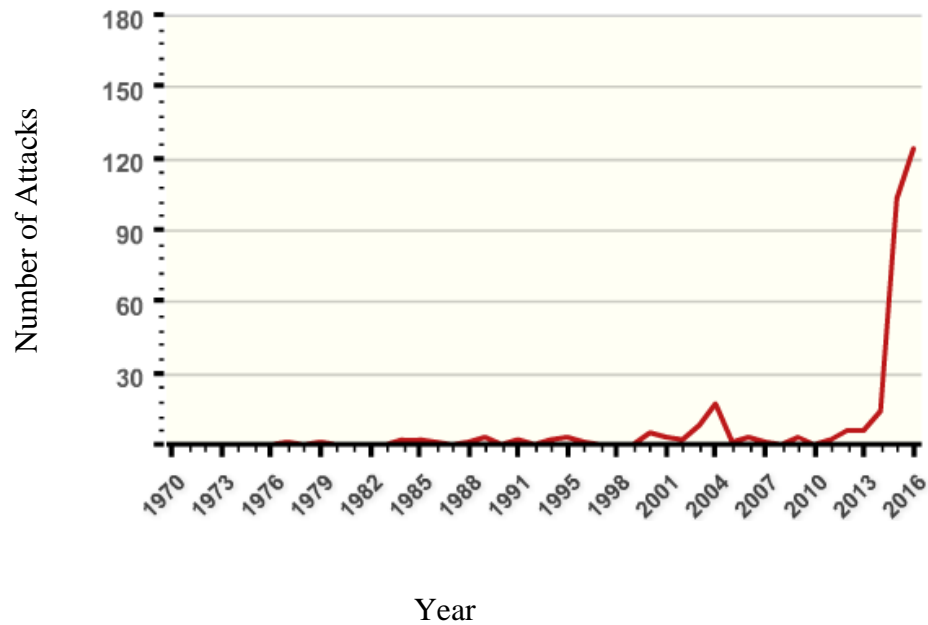
Located on the Arabian Peninsula, Saudi Arabia contains about 16% of the world’s oil, and is also known as the birthplace of Islam, containing both Mecca and Medina within its borders (CIA Factbook). Questions about the U.S.’s continued partnership with Saudi Arabia abound due to the country’s ample access to oil, as well as their questionable views on human and women’s rights. All of this aside, the U.S. has used its bases in Saudi Arabia

as a crucial springboard to reach other nations in the Middle East. America first entered the country in 1990, upon the request of Saudi Arabia, when Iraq invaded Kuwait (See Figure 29) (CIA World Factbook). U.S. forces remained in the country until 2003, when the American presence within the country caused tension between the public and the Royal Family (CIA World Factbook). Since the Gulf War in 1991, close to 5,000 American airmen and soldiers have been stationed in the desert nation, despite allegations that such a military presence inspires radicalism and extremism (Baker ix, 2004). Today, America has 5 military bases in Saudi Arabia: Riyadh Air Base, King Khalid Air Base, King Abdulaziz Naval Base, Eskan Village Air Base, and King Fahd Military Medical Complex (Vine 2015, 328).

Map of Saudi Arabia (Figure 28)



Source: <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/images/saudi-airbase.gif>

Terrorist Attacks in Saudi Arabia (Figure 29)

Source: GTD.

http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?start_yearonly=&end_yearonly=&start_year=&start_month=&start_day=&end_year=&end_month=&end_day=&asmSelect0=&country=173&asmSelect1=&dt2=all&success=yes&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=

Bradley Bowman of the Washington Quarterly states,

“The 2006 U.S. ‘National Strategy for Combating Terrorism’ largely neglects the role of the U.S. military presence in al Qaeda’s emergence or in the continuing radicalization that fuels terrorism, pointing instead to social, political, and ideological maladies endemic to the Arab world, as well as past U.S. support for authoritarian regimes” (Bowman 2008, 85).

The article continues, “For purposes of developing the future U.S. strategy and force posture in the region, one only needs to establish that the U.S. military presence was and continues to be one of a handful of major catalysts for anti-Americanism and radicalization” (Bowman 2008, 85). While Bowman and many others argue that the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia led to the radicalization of Osama bin Laden, and continues to lead to anti-American extremist today, there is no empirical evidence to support the claim that the presence of U.S. troops in the country correlates to an immediate uptick in instances

of terror attacks. When the U.S. entered in 1990, up until the U.S. left in 2003, the frequency of terror attacks within Saudi Arabia remained steadily low. When the U.S. pulled out of the country in 2003, terrorist activities spiked in 2004. It was not until 2014 when Saudi Arabia saw the sharpest rise of terrorism in its history. The GTD attributes most of these attacks to Houthi extremists, a minority group from Northern Yemen, who practice a variation of Shia Islam (Mazzetti 2015). In 2015, Saudi Arabia began fighting the Houthis in Yemen, which might explain the increase of terrorist attacks by the Houthis in Saudi Arabia. But, as Bowman states, whether it be the violence in Saudi Arabia or in America, “Admittedly, there is rarely a single explanation for any phenomenon, and it would be extremely difficult to definitively and quantifiably rank the causes for al Qaeda’s emergence and its attacks on the United States” (Bowman 2008, 85). It would be difficult indeed to link a rise or fall in terrorist activities to one single factor.

Bahrain:

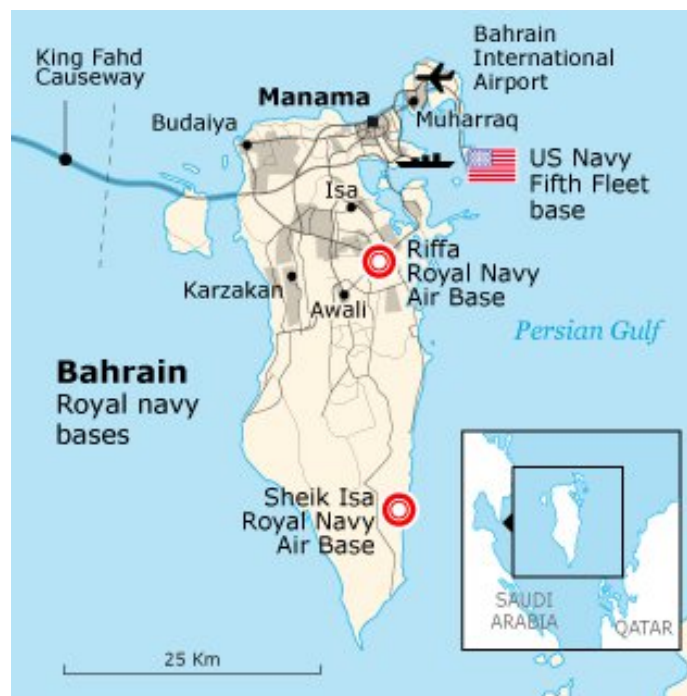
Bahrain is a small island nation off the coast of Saudi Arabia that gained its independence from Great Britain in 1971 (CIA World Factbook). While the government is Sunni, the majority of the population is Shia, due in part to the fact that over 50% of Bahrain’s total population is immigrants (CIA World Factbook). Bahrain was the first country to begin producing oil, which currently accounts for approximately 60% of the nation’s economy (Nydell 2006, 183). As of 2015, the United States has 10 military bases within the country and considers it a vital asset in its relations with the rest of the Middle East (Vine 2015, 328). After the First Gulf War, Bahrain became the headquarters of the

5th Fleet, constituting 1,000 personnel on land and approximately 12,000 patrolling the Gulf on Naval vessels (Baker 2004, 169). According to the Department of State,

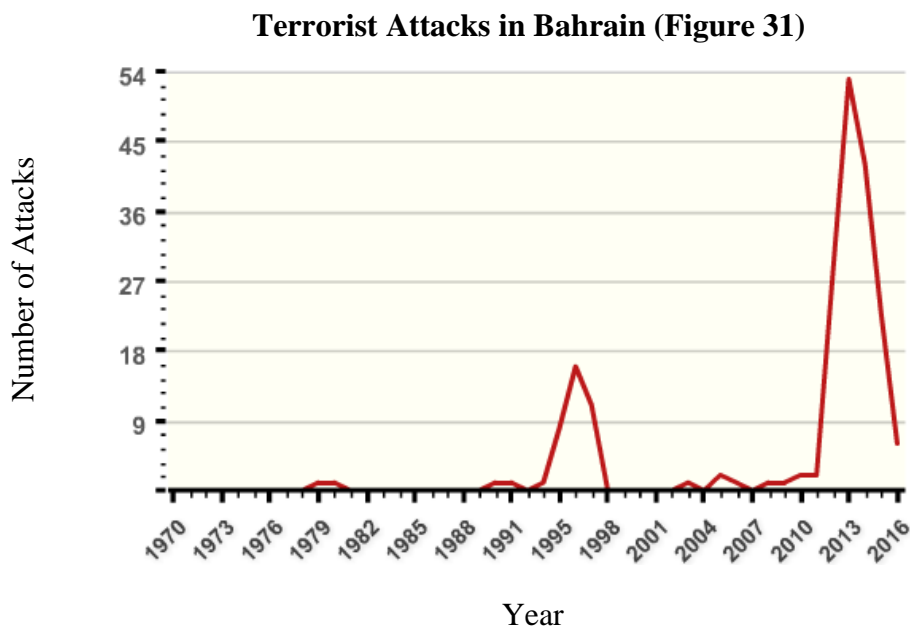
“Bahrain plays a key role in regional security architecture and is a vital U.S. partner in defense initiatives. Bahrain hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet and participates in U.S.-led military coalitions. Bahraini forces have supported the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, providing perimeter security at a military base. Bahrain was the first Arab state to lead a Coalition Task Force patrolling the Gulf and has supported the coalition counter-piracy mission with a deployment of its flagship. The U.S. designated Bahrain a Major Non-NATO Ally in 2002” (Department of State 2017).

Bahrain provides an interesting point of view into this debate in that it is relatively uncontroversial, compared to many of the other countries in the Middle East where America has a military presence.

Map of Bahrain (Figure 30)



Source: https://fanack.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2014/10/bahraini-defence-force_bahrain_map_navy-bases_318px_02.jpg



Source: GTD.

<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?expanded=no&search=bahrain&ob=GTIDID&od=desc&page=1&count=100>

When the U.S. entered Bahrain after the country gained its independence in 1971, there was no increase in terrorist attacks within the country (See Figure 31). The spikes of terrorist attacks in 1996 and 2013 could be related to the Arab Spring, continued unrest within the country itself between the Sunni and Shia sects, or a combination of both factors. According to the GTD, many of the attacks were perpetrated by unknown actors, but of those actors who are known, most of the attacks were committed by ISIS. Moreover, Bowman admits in his article for the Washington Quarterly that, “Despite the U.S. naval base’s central location in Manama, little evidence exists to suggest the U.S. naval base is promoting radicalization. This absence of a radicalizing effect may be partially explained by the tremendous economic boost the navy base provides to the energy-deficient island nation” (Bowman 2008, 86). As noted, U.S. military bases can in fact provide economic

support to the countries in which they are located, benefiting not only the United States, but also the host country and its inhabitants.

Turkey:

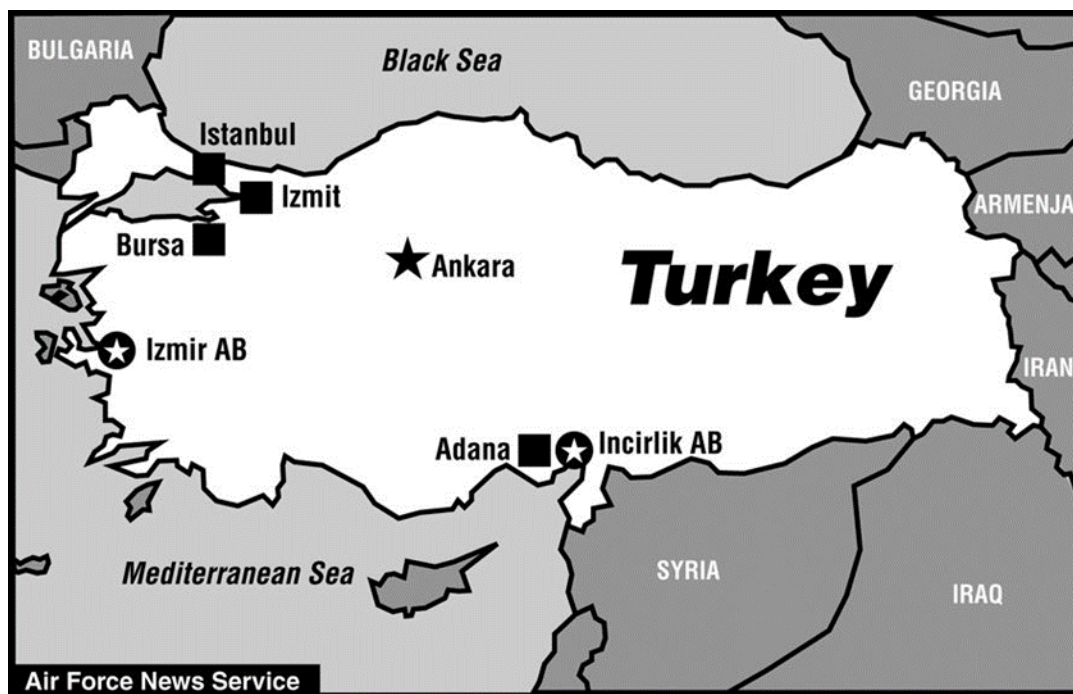
Another interesting case study is Turkey. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire following World War I, Turkey gained its independence in 1923. The country has seen its share of coups and uprisings, many of which attempted to restore democratic power to the people. After the Cold War, many Turks criticized the American presence in the country, saying that America should remember that they were guests in a foreign nation. Some even complained that America was conducting clandestine operations within Turkey's borders that they should not have been conducting even within an enemy's borders (Baker 2004, 75). During this same time period, there were reports of Turks spitting and slapping Americans and their families, throwing stones, scratching cars, and slashing tires (Baker 2004, 75). "A separatist insurgency begun in 1984 by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a US-designated terrorist organization, has long dominated the attention of Turkish security forces and claimed more than 40,000 lives" (CIA Factbook). While negotiations and peace talks have occurred, the situation between the two groups still remains tense. In 2015 and 2016, "Turkey witnessed an uptick in terrorist violence, including major attacks in Ankara, Istanbul, and throughout the predominantly Kurdish southeastern region of Turkey" due to tensions between the PKK and the Turkish forces (CIA Factbook). In 2016, 265 people were reported killed and more than 1,400 injured during a failed coup attempt. In retaliation, President Erdogan arrested almost 3,000 Turkish military officers and judges in a government crackdown(USA Today 2016).

Today, Turkey has a population of over 80 million, making it the 18th most populated country in the world (CIA Factbook). Turkey's population is 70-75% Turkish, 19% is Kurdish, and the remainder are other minorities. Sunni Muslims make up 99.8% of the population, with the other 0.2% being Christians and Jews (CIA Factbook). The literacy rate is 95.6%, there are just under 2 doctors per 1,000 people, and the life expectancy is 75 years on average (CIA Factbook). Turkey has more than 1.1 million Internally Displaced Persons, mainly Kurds displaced due to the violence between the Kurdish PKK and the Turkish military. The country also currently has 30,000 refugees from Iraq, 7,000 refugees from Iran, and more than 3.1 million refugees from Syria (CIA Factbook).

Incirlik Air Force Base is one of the most important U.S. military bases in Turkey and in the Middle East, as it provides support to many of the surrounding countries. It played a pivotal role in America's Operation Provide Comfort, in which the United States sought to protect Iraqi Kurds from Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime after the Gulf War (Johnson 2000, 15). The U.S. began building this base in 1951, approximately 250 miles southeast of Ankara (Incirlik Air Base History) (See Figure 32). In 1954, the U.S. signed a contract with Turkey, agreeing to share the facility. Originally named Adana, the base proved to be an invaluable asset in the war against the Soviets. Renamed Incirlik in 1958, the base proved its value yet again during the Lebanon crisis of that same year. In 1975, in response to an embargo imposed by the U.S., Turkey mandated that all U.S. bases in Turkey would close and transfer all power to the Turkish military. Only Incirlik and Izmir remained open, due to their NATO missions (Incirlik Air Base History). Normal U.S. missions resumed after 1980, and America began improving and expanding the base. In the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Incirlik aided or hosted task forces Proven Force,

Operation Desert Storm, Operation Provide Comfort (I, II, and III), and eventually Operation Northern Watch (Incirlik Air Base History).

Map of Turkey (Figure 32)



Source:

https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=axaGDH1h&id=9BB47ABB1C169C276BF8BC88097C2D0149FB918A&thid=OIP.axaGDH1h_Z8oqtq9VlxSgEsC_&q=incirlik+air+force+base+on+a+map+&simid=608025512383811560&selectedIndex=1&ajaxhist=0

Turkey's Incirlik Air Base has played a pivotal role in American responses across the Middle East. "Incirlik has always served as a hub for U.S. support to the Turkish government in the wake of disasters and humanitarian emergencies" (Incirlik Air Base History). For example, the U.S sent aid via Incirlik after the Van earthquake in 1976 and the consecutive earthquakes in Istanbul in 1999. After 9/11, the base served as the main hub for humanitarian aid to Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. "The aerial port managed a 600 percent increase in airflow during the early stages of OEF" (Incirlik

Air Base History). With the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, Operation Northern Watch officially ended. The final flight “terminated a successful 12-year mission to contain Iraq militarily” (Incirlik Air Base History). In 2004,

“More than 300 soldiers of what would become thousands transited through Incirlik as the first stop back to their home post in the U.S. after spending almost a year in Iraq. Incirlik was part of what was then described as the largest troop movement in U.S. history. Incirlik provided soldiers with a cot, warm location, entertainment and food for their first few hours outside of a hostile war zone” (Incirlik Air Base History).

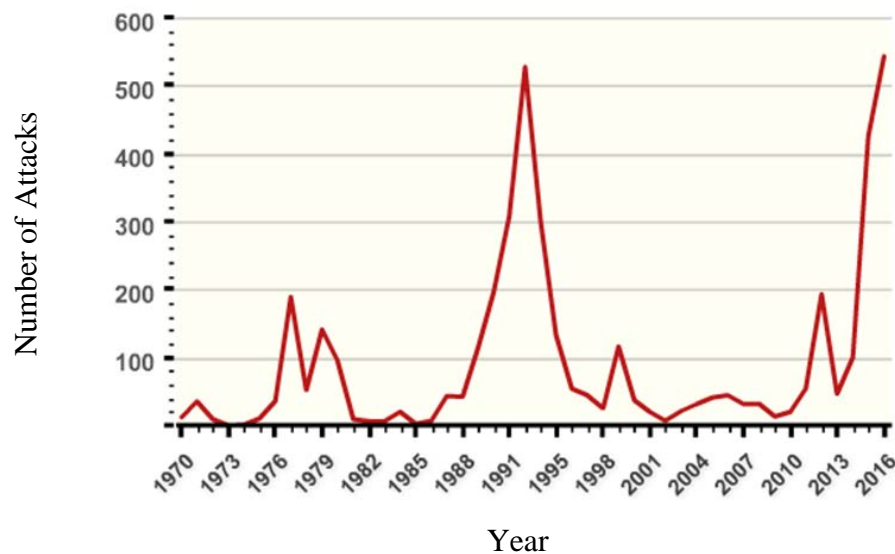
The base was able to serve not only those affected by natural disasters, but it was also able to provide some measure of comfort to the servicemen and women serving abroad.

In 2005, Incirlik provided support for the Pakistan Earthquake Relief Effort, supported by 7 different countries. “Over 100 trucks offloaded supplies at Incirlik that were transported in over 130 airlift missions which delivered 1,647 tons of supplies including heating oil, food and blankets” (Incirlik Air Base History). In 2006, Incirlik served as a safe haven for displaced Americans fleeing the violence in the Israeli-Lebanon conflict. “Incirlik Airmen readied Patriot Village, which provided housing, telephone access, a 24-hour BX/Shopette, a children's play area, chaplain's assistance and medical services for people transitioning back to the U.S” (Incirlik Air Base History). And as of 2008, Incirlik alone moved up to 18% of Air Military Command’s cargo and provided up to 57% of sustainment cargo for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (Incirlik Air Base History). All this to say that U.S. military bases do much more than just facilitate air strikes and serve as logistical hubs for military supplies and equipment. They also enable the U.S. to send aid quickly and effectively to any part of the world at a moment’s notice.

When comparing this data with reports of terrorism according to the Global Terrorism Database, one can see that Turkey has experienced many different periods of

violence at the hands of several different terrorist groups. In the 5 years when the U.S. pulled out of its bases in Turkey between 1975 to 1980, the country experienced years with almost no terrorist attacks in 1975, almost 200 attacks in 1977, about 50 attacks in 1978, and back up to 150 attacks in 1979 (see Figure 33) (Global Terrorism Database). After September 11th, when the base experienced a 600% increase in airflow, the country saw 50 or less terrorist attacks each year from 2001 until 2010 (GTD). This includes 2004, when Incirlik was part of the largest U.S. troop movement in history. Obviously, Turkey has suffered greatly due to the violence perpetrated by terrorists. But none of the evidence supports any type of correlation between frequency of terror attacks and U.S. military presence.

Terrorist Attacks in Turkey (Figure 33)



Source: <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=turkey+&sa.x=32&sa.y=9>

Military Opinion:

As aforementioned, researching this topic without incorporating the views and opinions of our military servicemembers who are actually sent into these countries where terrorism is so prevalent would be incomplete and negligent. Many people debate the use of military force in extremely dangerous areas, but few stop to ask those who have seen these issues brought to life in person, whose opinion is most important reliable. Robert Kaplan, a well-respected author and journalist, shadowed American military units deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, among other places. As Kaplan says, “Despite news reports of low morale in the armed services because of overdeployment, with Army Special Forces and Marines I had met only two kinds of troops: those who were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and those who were jealous of those who were” (Kaplan 2006, 323). This statement speaks volumes to the selfless commitment and dedication of our servicemembers and their relentless pursuit of peace and justice.

Similar sentiments can be felt from servicewomen and men in other deployments. Incirlik Air Force Base was built approximately 250 miles southeast of Ankara, Turkey, in 1951. Today, it is one of the most important U.S. bases in the Middle East, as it provides support to all the surrounding areas (Incirlik History). In February of 2017, the Department of Defense published an article entitled, “Incirlik Airmen Feel Sense of Accomplishment in Counter-ISIS Battle.” In this article, Colonel David Trucksa, commander of the 447th Air Expeditionary Group, said that “Airmen at this crucial base in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria are feeling a sense of accomplishment after Iraqi ground forces cleared eastern Mosul of the enemy” (Garamone, DOD). Incirlik, and all the servicemembers stationed there, play a critical role in the fight against ISIS, Trucksa

stressed, explaining, ““At the height of the East Mosul operation, we were dropping a bomb on an ISIS target every eight minutes, 24 hours a day’” (Garamone, DOD). The Colonel also added that “Airmen dropped 227 bombs on ISIS targets just during President Donald J. Trump’s inauguration on January 20” (Garamone, DOD). But the airmen there believe in what they are doing.

“Morale stayed high because of the progress being made on the ground. ‘A lot of people didn’t want to leave, I got a lot of people who wanted to stay to see this through,’ Trucksa said. ‘They felt this was the most rewarding deployment they have been on. I had no problems getting people to work because they believe they are helping’” (Garamone, DOD).

This sense of fulfilment is compelling; if those serving on the front lines and fighting terrorism head on believe in the effectiveness of what they are doing, who are we to disagree?

Similarly, in an article written in August 2016, Senior Airmen John Nieves Camacho explained how “The actions of munitions troops directly contribute to combined OIR [Operation Inherent Resolve] accomplishments. For example, from July 24 – 30, coalition forces conducted 159 strikes and damaged or destroyed 485 targets in Syria and Iraq” (Camacho, USAF). Camacho explained,

“On October 15, 2014, the United States Department of Defense designated U.S. and coalition operations as ‘Operation Inherent Resolve.’ According to U.S. Central Command, the name Inherent Resolve ‘is intended to reflect the unwavering resolve and deep commitment of the U.S. and partner nations in the region and around the globe to eliminate the terrorist group ISIL and the threat they pose to Iraq, the region and the wider international community’” (Camacho, USAF).

This resolve and commitment is echoed by members of the United States military around the world fighting this global war on terror. “‘It’s really beneficial knowing that what we’re doing here is the real thing,’” said Tech. Sgt. John Winn, 447th AEMXS. “‘We are saving

lives and making an impact in the fight. It's gratifying to hear the strike numbers that come out and see how much of an impact we've had against ISIS'" (Camacho, USAF). Hearing these sentiments from members of our military who are actually overseas, fighting the terrorists we so fear, it is hard to negate that they are making a positive difference in the war.

Not all veterans share this sentiment, of course. Some, such as the members of Veterans for Peace (VFP) and Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), do not support the United States' military actions abroad. Veterans for Peace is an international organization comprised of military veterans and their allies whose goal is to educate the American public on the true costs of war, including economic, environmental, social, human casualties, PTSD, and suicide (VFP 2017). They profess a responsibility to seek world peace, both nationally and internationally. Members pledge to use non-violent means to (1) educate the public about the costs of war, (2) stop the American government from interfering in foreign nations' affairs, (3) end the arms race and eliminate nuclear weapons, (4) seek justice for veterans and victims of war, and (5) abolish war as an instrument of national policy (VFP 2017).

Veterans for Peace was established in 1985 by 10 veterans, and today, seeks to "change U.S. foreign policy from endless war to diplomacy and to help our national leaders have a long-term vision of peace and justice" (VFP 2017). Members peacefully protest the prevalence of Islamophobia, the use of Agent Orange during Vietnam, the current use of drones, as well as the racial tension so rampant within our own country today. VFP also seeks to educate young people who are discerning joining the military and urges them to carefully consider their options. The organization warns against recruiters who will say

anything to get young people to enlist, since they are expected to meet a quota. Veterans for Peace does not, however, outright discourage anyone from joining the military.

Iraq Veterans Against the War was founded at a Veterans for Peace convention and gives a voice to all those servicemen and women who have served since September 11, 2001 and oppose the war in Iraq. IVAW aims to withdraw military support of the war and occupation in Iraq and bring the troops home now (IVAW 2017). In the eyes of the organization, both the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan are illegal under international law, and as such, their members believe that servicemen and women should have the right to refuse to fight in such illegal wars. They support conscientious objectors and those who are active duty and do not support the war. IVAW offers resources for active duty servicemen and women, those considering going AWOL, veterans, and those suffering from PTSD (IVAW 2017). They serve as a resource to any servicemember or veteran who is against the war and seek to give all such people a voice.

Another reason that veterans or active duty service members might oppose the war is due to the enormous loss of life that they suffer. Those who have been deployed to war zones have seen firsthand the genuine cost of war. On August 3, 2005, Marine Lance Corporal Travis Williams, then 22, lost his entire squad to a roadside bomb while serving in Iraq. He had originally boarded the same vehicle as his 11 service members, when he was ordered to ride in the second vehicle just before the caravan departed. He turned to his friends and said, “Hey, I’ll catch you on the flip side” (Phillips 2013). That day, he lost 11 of his closest friends, including his squad leader Justin Hoffman, from Ohio.



Williams recalls that Hoffman “made sure that we all remembered that we weren’t just in that country to kill people” (Phillips 2013). Since that day, Williams has struggled with survivor’s guilt. “I don’t feel like I’ve had a bond with somebody since these guys,” Williams says, and he’s not sure he ever will again (Phillips 2013). Despite all he has lost, Lance Corporal Williams says that his experience “makes me appreciate everything a lot more” (Phillips 2013). “If every moment was a happy moment, what’s a happy moment? It doesn’t mean anything.” (Phillips 2013). Williams continues to cope with the loss of his friends today, as he rebuilds his life after the Marines.

Similarly, Sergeant Louis Loftus wept when speaking about a fellow soldier who lost his life in the line of duty just the week before. “I try not to think about it,” Sergeant Loftus said, “I pray for his family, I pray for his soul.” (Engel 2010). Loftus said he was still numb and tried to put his emotions aside to be strong for his fellow soldiers. Sergeant Loftus, a 22-year-old from Akron Ohio, volunteered to be the point man for his unit. Walking in front of his fellow soldiers, he would be the first to spot an IED, which also puts him in the most danger. But Loftus says he doesn’t allow himself to dwell on such things. He bravely and resolvedly fights alongside others just like him, defending his country and all that it stands for.

Silver Star Recipient Staff Sergeant David Bellavia engaged in hand-to-hand combat with terrorists while serving in the Army in Fallujah. He supports President Trump’s travel ban on seven Middle Eastern and North African countries, saying that we finally have a war-time president who is taking this threat seriously. “These countries have no centralized government, to data keeping systems at all,” Bellavia explains, which makes tracking persons of interest extremely difficult (Bellavia 2017). The Staff Sergeant

explained that these terrorists believe that their eternal salvation is determined by their actions on the battlefield, and as such, they will not leave the battlefield easily. “We are looking at this through Western eyes, [but] this is an Eastern philosophy,” Bellavia said. “They’re going to take as many lives as they can” (Bellavia 2017). Bellavia blatantly stated that there are 8 and 10-year-old’s who are right now preparing to continue this generational fight. “We are never going to kill the last terrorist,” he stated, and added that it is the job of our servicemen and women to make sure that American civilians never see what he and other servicemembers witness on a daily basis (Bellavia 2017). “One tenth of 1% are out there fighting this thing,” the Staff Sergeant stated, adding that, while many are glad that America no longer institutes the draft, Bellavia believes that “we gained a sense of entitlement and a sense of ignorance when everyone didn’t have skin in this fight” (Bellavia 2017). We need to do all we can to support and listen to those who have actually encountered the terrorist threat themselves, for they know far better than anyone else how to stop it.

Just as Staff Sergeant Bellavia reminds us that there are young children preparing to continue this generational fight, Medal of Honor Recipient Florent Groberg knows that there are young warriors sitting in kindergarten or preschool, unable to comprehend terrorists flying planes into the World Trade Centers, but nonetheless preparing to counter their radical ideology and defend our nation. As a Captain in the Army, Groberg and his patrol were approached by a man during a routine patrol one night in Afghanistan on August 8, 2012. Groberg soon realized that the man was wearing a suicide vest and threw the man to the ground as his vest detonated. “I lost 50% of my lower left calf, lost hearing

in my left ear, was in the hospital for 2.5 years and had 33 surgeries,” Groberg says, “but seeing the bodies of my fallen friends hurt more than the injuries I suffered in the explosion” (Groberg 2017). Four servicemen lost their lives that day, one of whom was US Army Major Tom Kennedy. “Before



Kennedy deployed to Afghanistan, a neighbor asked why he was returning to the battlefield despite two previous tours in Iraq. ‘I’m a soldier,’ Kennedy replied. ‘This is what I do.’”

Groberg was born in France but moved to the U.S with his family when he was 12. Soon after, his family received the news that Groberg’s uncle in Algeria had been killed by Islamist extremists. “I knew that I wanted to fight against those type of individuals,” he said (Groberg 2017). That, along with the attacks of September 11th caused him to want to join the army. “As an immigrant, I wanted to earn my place as an American. While serving in the military wasn’t the only way to do so, I felt an intense desire to give back to a country that had already given me so many opportunities to learn, grow and succeed” (Groberg 2017). This desire was so intense that Groberg renounced his French citizenship and joined the American military. And give back to his country he has, in a debt that we will never be able to repay. “I never second guessed my decision to join the service,” Groberg stated, “If there was one sure thing in my life, it was to wear that uniform and go into combat” (Groberg 2017). Despite the physical and emotional pain he suffered, Groberg stands firm in his resolve to defend the United States.

“Sixteen years after the US-led coalition's invasion of Afghanistan,” Groberg stated, “I believe America has found a new ‘Greatest Generation.’”

Without taking anything away from the patriots who fought in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and other conflicts, the current all-volunteer force will likely be forced to shoulder at least two decades of constant war” (Groberg 2017).

Groberg’s perspective is especially unique, not only because he was born in another country and yet chose to serve under the American flag, but also because violent extremism hit home for his family in the murder of his uncle. “All Americans have a sacred duty to not only spotlight the sacrifices of fallen heroes, Gold Star families, and veterans,” Groberg said, “but also to thank the next Greatest Generation of vets. Without their willingness to step forward in wartime, we would be at the mercy of enemies much like the evil men who murdered my uncle and stole my friends from their loved ones” (Groberg 2017). Put more simply, and in the words of his lost friend, “We are soldiers, and this is what we do” (Groberg 2017).

While we will never be able to repay the sacrifice made by servicemen and women like Captain Groberg, Staff Sergeant Bellavia, Sergeant Loftus, and Lance Corporal Williams, as well as the gold star families who mourn the loss of their loved ones defending our country, we can support them and show them our deep appreciation. While part of this involves ensuring that their service is accomplishing its goals and not unnecessarily putting their lives in undue risk, it also involves not questioning matters that people who have never served in the military would not be best suited to answer. It involves not undermining the opinions of those who have seen the violence with their own eyes and who have put their own lives on the line to try to stop.

Why Should We Care?

One might wonder, why should we have this conversation? Why do we care if the U.S. military is an effective means of fighting terrorism? After all, our opinions have minimal effect if any at all on our national military policy. My answer to this question is two-fold. The first reason we should care is because Americans are agreeing that terrorism is a growing threat to our everyday way of life. In 2014, 39% of Americans were concerned about the possibility of a future terrorist attack in the U.S. (see Figure 34). By 2015, that number rose to 51%. Gallup asked Americans about their level of concern for national problems in 15 different categories, and of these 15 categories, the possibility of a terrorist attack on U.S. soil grew the most. “With that increase in concern, terrorism became the third-highest on the list of 15 concerns included in the list, behind only worry about healthcare and the economy” (Newport 2015). As the fastest growing national concern, terrorism is a topic worth researching and one on which all Americans should have an educated opinion.

Change in Levels of Concern (Figure 34)

Changes in Americans' Levels of Concern About National Problems

% "A great deal" of concern

	2014	2015	Change
	%	%	(pct. pts.)
The possibility of future terrorist attacks in the U.S.	39	51	12
Race relations	17	28	11
Illegal immigration	33	39	6
Crime and violence	39	43	4
Drug use	34	38	4
The quality of the environment	31	34	3
Climate change	24	25	1
The Social Security system	46	46	0
The way income and wealth are distributed in the U.S.	--	46	--
Hunger and homelessness	43	43	0
The size and power of the federal government	48	46	-2
The availability and affordability of healthcare	57	54	-3
The economy	59	53	-6
The availability and affordability of energy	37	28	-9
Unemployment	49	37	-12

"The way income and wealth are distributed in the U.S." was not asked in 2014

GALLUP®

Source: Gallup. <http://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/186665/gallup-review-public-opinion-terrorism.aspx>

In 2014, concern about terrorism was tied at 8th out of 15, behind concern for unemployment, the economy, healthcare, size of the government, hunger and homelessness, social security, and crime and violence. In 2015, terrorism was the third most important concern to Americans, making it the fastest growing concern during that

one-year period. Americans are experiencing an increased level of worry that they or someone they know will be a victim of a terrorist attack, with 49% saying they are somewhat or very worried (See Figure 35). This number is the highest it has been since directly after the September 11th terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Changing Concerns Regarding Becoming Victim to a Terrorist Attack (Figure 35)

Worries About Becoming a Terrorism Victim Up in 2015

How worried are you that you or someone in your family will become a victim of terrorism -- very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

■ % Very/Somewhat worried



GALLUP

Source: <http://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/186665/gallup-review-public-opinion-terrorism.aspx>

In a list of 8 possible threats to the United States within the next 10 years, ISIS and international terrorism ranked first in being perceived as a critical threat. ISIS and international terrorism were viewed by 84% of Americans surveyed as a critical threat to the United States within the next 10 years (See Figure 36). Based on this study, Americans see ISIS as more of a threat than Iran's nuclear weapons, the militaries of North Korea and

Russia, the volatile conflicts between Russia and Ukraine and Palestine and Israel, and the economic prowess of China.

Critical and Important International Threats (Figure 36)

	% Critical threat	% Important but not critical threat
Islamic militants, commonly known as ISIS, operating in Iraq and Syria	84	12
International terrorism	84	13
Development of nuclear weapons by Iran	77	16
The military power of North Korea	64	26
The military power of Russia	49	41
The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians	49	41
The conflict between Russia and Ukraine	44	45
The economic power of China	40	44

Feb. 8-11, 2015

GALLUP

Source: <http://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/186665/gallup-review-public-opinion-terrorism.aspx>

Additionally, our actions domestically and abroad effect our foreign relations with other countries, as well as how citizens of those countries view not only the American government, but Americans themselves. As Figure 37 shows, 52% of Muslims in Turkey held a favorable view of the U.S. in the year 2000, but in 2003 that number dropped to 15%. In 2000, 77% of Muslim Moroccans viewed America favorably, but by 2004, that number dropped to 27%. And in 2003, only 1% of Jordanian Muslims held a favorable view of the United States. In an age where many people receive their information from the

media and do not bother to research such topics themselves, perception and image play a crucial role in diplomacy. More often than not, perception is reality.

Muslims with a Favorable View of the United States (Figure 37)

	Percentage of Population			
	2000	2002	2003	2004
Turkey	52	30	15	30
Morocco	77	na	27	27
Pakistan	23	10	13	21
Jordan	na	25	1	5

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Opinion: The Spread of Anti-Americanism," (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, January 2005).

Source: Pape, 2005, 243.

The second part of the answer to the question 'Why should we care?' is of a more humanitarian nature. We should care about thwarting terrorism not only to protect ourselves and our country, but also to protect those living under terrorist regimes, such as when ISIS had control of Mosul and Raqqa. People are suffering, and I believe that it is our moral responsibility as human beings to do everything in our power to alleviate that suffering. Because of this, it is our duty to discover what is plausible and implausible when the military is involved, and based on that answer, whether or not using military force is in fact the best way to achieve these ends. Through BBC's extensive reporting and coverage of the liberation of Mosul, the international community is afforded a unique look into life under the ISIS



Source: BBC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxtJzbT-MT0>

regime. BBC's Yalda Hakim traveled to Mosul and shared some of the heartbreaking stories she heard there. At the height of the liberation, doctors in Mosul were treating 700 patients a day. Not only from shrapnel wounds and injuries, but also from diseases caused by a lack of sanitation and clean drinking water. The only functioning hospital in Mosul also has very primitive security, and doctors and patients alike fear the possibility of an ISIS attack within the hospital. "One of [ISIS's] goals is to bring ignorance as well as hunger and oppression," one doctor explained (BBC Newsnight). He recounted how he was forced to treat ISIS fighters, or else they would come back and take his family. Everyone in the city lived in constant fear and focused only on survival.



Source: BBC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxtJzbT-MT0>

"This is what liberation looks like,"

Hakim said, staring out over the ruins of the city, "trapped beneath these ruins are untold numbers of bodies" (BBC Newsnight 2017). In 2014, when ISIS took control of the city, many saw the act as a liberation from the oppressive Shia government. Today, however, the city is utterly destroyed. As if the fighting wasn't enough, retreating ISIS fighters have rigged 90% of the city's buildings with IED's. Hakim interviewed a mother and children who had been captured by ISIS. The caliphate captured their husband and father, as well as his siblings. The widow cried as she recounted how her husband begged and pleaded to just be allowed to see his wife and children one last time. "They want their father to be around just like any child would. But he's gone" (BBC Newsnight 2017).



Source: BBC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxtJzbT-MT0>



Source: BBC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxtJzbT-MT0>



At Hamam al-Alil camp for internally displaced persons (IDP's), terrified civilians are coming by the thousands every day. Families, children, and orphans arrive by bus, avoiding ISIS sniper fire and air strikes along the way. Once in the camp, men and women are separated in order to ensure that the men are not ISIS rebels or sympathizers. Twelve-year-old Mohammad arrived with his two brothers. At the make shift school, he played outside with other young boys his age. He told BBC that ISIS had killed his father, then also killed his mother when she had tried to flee with her sons (BBC News 2017). BBC also talked with Omar, who, with his wife and two young daughters, had left all of their possessions in West Mosul and quietly escaped in the dead of night. Omar wept as he spoke with BBC, saying that he cannot wait for ISIS to be out of Mosul for good, and that God will have revenge of ISIS and all of its sympathizers (BBC News 2017).



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uyh0LwJeU9g>



Another man recounted how under the rule of ISIS, phone calls and Internet use were banned, and if the rebels could prove that someone was guilty of breaking the rules, they were either imprisoned or killed on spot (BBC News 2017). Eight-year-old Shiva's family of 7 arrived recently at the IDP camp. She explained how they were scared getting to the camp but were happy to be there. Shiva recounted what school was like under the rule of the Islamic State. "They beat us because we were not wearing headscarves or niqabs and because I had nail polish. I don't even know how to wear them. They forced us" (BBC News). Shiva is looking forward to returning home so that she can continue her studies. She wants more than anything to be a journalist. BBC also interviewed a family who lived under ISIS for 2 years. The oldest sister described how ISIS came into their house one night and they all hid. She cried as she looked around at her family, horrified at the thought of what ISIS could have done to them. After that night, they fled, but today are back in their home. All of their possessions are gone; everything that they have now they have had to steal. Their part of the city still has no running water and no electricity. The young woman explained that being declared free of ISIS does not necessarily mean that they are free. And there are still an estimated 400,000 trapped in amongst the fighting in West Mosul (BBC News 2017).



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pla96hiXDY>

But those who inflict such suffering are not always monsters, sometimes they are victims themselves. BBC was given exclusive access to interview a captured suicide bomber in 2015. The young man was blind folded and escorted into an interrogation room by a heavily armed guard. This captured suicide bomber, tasked with killing women and children for ISIS, was 17 years old. He explained that most of the suicide bombers ISIS uses are his age and even younger. Some, as young as 14. This young man was homeless when ISIS found him, strapped a bomb to his chest, and thrust a detonator into his hand. He explained that they showed him how to use the detonator, and “they promised me I’d go straight to Heaven” (BBC News 2015). The cruel reality of ISIS is that they use victims to create more victims. Many have nothing left to live for and feel as though they have no other way out. ISIS feeds off the destruction and desperation that it creates and uses them to further fuel its malicious organization. As he was interviewed, the young man began to cry. When asked why he was crying, he responded only, “I am so sorry” (BBC News 2015).



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYZ-Xd0-cjY>

These are the people living under the constant threat of terrorism. Children. Mothers. Fathers. Widows. Orphans. Doctors. Teachers. Students. Humans. They are the reason we must critically examine how we are ‘fighting’ terrorism. These individuals are not just numbers and statistics. They are names and faces. They are people. They are individuals with families and lives and hopes and dreams just like our own. These individuals are the reason we must evaluate if our actions are helping or hurting the situation abroad, because quite simply, their lives hang in the balance. When some ask,

‘why should we care about terrorism?’ I ask, how can we not? How dare we as humans not look into their faces, learn their names, listen to their stories, reach out to help them? It is our moral responsibility to ask questions, to challenge assumptions, to ensure that our American military presence abroad is in fact helping to ease the burden of those living through this atrocity and not making it worse. Those who refuse to help due to religious differences do not know the true meaning of religion. Those who refuse to help due to political affiliation have forgotten the true purpose of politics. Those who refuse to help due to cultural or sectarian differences must be reminded that we are all one human race. We should care because we are human, and so are those suffering due to terrorism. No further reason is needed.

Possible Solutions:

Ending the Reign of Terror:

Given all of this information, what do we do now? What can ‘we’ the United States, or ‘we’ individuals living in the U.S. do to end the reign of terrorism in our lifetimes? Terrorism may seem endless while we are in the midst of fighting it, but as Audrey Cronin reminds us, terrorism always ends (Cronin 2009, 1). One school of thought believes that terrorists organizations will inevitably collapse in upon themselves. Even so, there are several things the U.S. can do to expedite this process. Dr. Nelly Lahoud, Associate Professor at West Point and Senior Associate at the Combatting Terrorism Center of West Point, believes that if left to their own devices, international jihadists will bring about their own demise. “Since either internal or external factors can lead to the end of a terrorist organization, the relevant question in this case is: how can the United States best use

external factors to precipitate the collapse of AQAM along its internal fault lines?” (Groves 2012, 30). As Pape points out, this can be done by poking holes in the logic used by terrorist organizations.

The United States casually throws around the term ‘radical Islam,’ implying that all Muslims share identical ideologies, and that there is only one sect of Islam. This is simply not the case. Just as there are many different denominations of Christianity, so too are there different sects of Islam. These Islamist terrorists seem to be united under the banner of wanting to form an Islamic State, no matter the cost, but they do not have any plans in place if such a state were to be established, probably because there would be dissent among the terrorist community as to how the state should function, who should rule, and which sect of Islam would be enforced. “Hezbollah and Hamas have each waged numerous suicide terrorist campaigns against Israel, but never for each other and never at the same time. Al-Qaeda has never attacked Israel at all, while Hamas has never attacked the United States, and Hezbollah has attacked only Americans in Lebanon” (Pape 2005, 243). Put simply, these groups are all lumped together under the term ‘terrorist organizations,’ but they do not work together now, and they would not work together in the future either. Spreading this message to recruiting cites and terrorist networks could put pressure on the internal fault lines and cause a quicker demise of such seemingly ubiquitous organizations.

Modern day terrorism is unique in two ways: it is regenerative, the numbers of these groups continue to grow despite successful operations against top level leaders; and its mere existence threatens our safety, many believe that the world will not be safe until all these groups are not only defeated, but entirely eliminated. “Al Qaeda is an idea as much

as an organization and even if one were to decimate the organization as currently structured there will always be an incentive on the part of others to restart under the ‘flag’ of Al Qaeda” (McIntosh 2014, 27). The idea of ending terrorism remains a lofty goal because “so long as Al Qaeda merely exists it remains ‘un-defeated’” (McIntosh 2014, 28). While these statements might sound daunting and cynical, it only means that, because this is not a conventional ‘war,’ it cannot be ‘won’ in a conventional way. “Whether through cease-fire, peace treaty, articles of surrender, or something else entirely, wars end because both sides decide to stop fighting. And a war that cannot end cannot be won” (McIntosh 2014, 28). America must turn her attention to not only winning the war, but more specifically, to ending it.

The Ways Terrorism Ends:

As Audrey Cronin eloquently explains, all those who fight against terrorism must turn our attention not to the *next* attack, but rather to the very *last* attack (Cronin, 2009, 6). Cronin emphasizes the importance of stopping the spread of terrorism not only because it carries with it the possibility of killing large numbers of civilians, but also because it carries with it the potential of threatening and changing states and state systems. Cronin outlines 6 main ways she has encountered in her extensive research that terrorist groups have ended in the past: capturing or killing the leader, entry of the terrorist group into legitimate political processes, achievement of the group’s aims, loss of the group’s public support, defeat by brute force, and transition to other forms of violence. Cronin makes very astute observations regarding these ends to terrorism and the inevitable downfall of al-Qaeda, most of which can also be more broadly applied to ISIS and other terrorist groups in the

Middle East. She argues that these groups will not be ended by capturing or killing the leader; the death of Osama bin Laden has shown that. While some would argue that killing individuals achieves a modicum of justice, these terrorist groups have shown that they are larger than just the individuals who comprise and lead them. The death of bin Laden “catalyzed a movement” larger than him alone, because the ideological issues and rage that lie at the heart of the al-Qaeda movement are larger than just one man. In killing bin Laden, the American people might have achieved justice, but our actions may well have been counter-productive, as other leaders rushed in to fill the void, spurred on by the desire to avenge their leader’s death (Cronin 2009, 194-195).

Similarly, Cronin argues that al-Qaeda will not end by succeeding in its aims, mainly because its aims have changed over time. Through her research, Cronin found that terrorist groups who have succeeded in achieving their aims have done so by having clear and limited aims. Al-Qaeda’s aims, on the other hand, have been riddled with divisions and inconsistencies, such as whether or not to seek compromise, whether or not it is acceptable to kill Muslims, and whether or not to attack the economy of Muslim states, just to name a few (Cronin 2009, 184). Al-Qaeda, as Cronin sees it, is a manifestation of the civil war “*within* Islam over the ideology that will prevail among Muslims,” as more often than not, members share more accord “about what they are *against* than about what they are *for*” (Cronin 2009, 187). If members of their own group cannot agree upon their goals and aims, it will be impossible for these aims to be achieved in an international arena.

Negotiations, or the entrance of the terrorist organization into legitimate political means, is a viable option according to Cronin, not with the head leadership of al-Qaeda, but rather with splinter groups who have recently joined under the banner al-Qaeda hoists.

Offering a way out to disgruntled members would undermine the fortitude of the organization and would provide us with invaluable intelligence. Announcing an alternative to death would sow distrust among the organization's members and would require increased resources and prowess when seeking new recruits. Additionally, treating captured members extremely well, publicizing their treatment, and possibly even releasing them back into their cells would undermine the mentality that the United States is the barbaric enemy seeking to destroy all Muslims, as al-Qaeda would like its members to believe (Cronin 2009, 186).

It is no coincidence, Cronin states, that bin Laden's ideology relied so heavily upon other areas of cultural tension, such as anti-imperialism, anti-globalization, anti-Americanization, anti-Westernization, and anti-modernization. "They tap into a wellspring of anger, frustration, humiliation, and resentment that has built up over the decades of failure for political Islam," which has been "brilliantly channeled" into a discourse about the overthrow of un-Islamic governments, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the presence of Western troops in the Holy Lands (Cronin 2009, 180). Al-Qaeda has transformed their anger, and that of many Muslims, into a conspiracy that Christians and Jews are out to destroy all Muslims, or rather, America and its Western allies versus the Muslims people. Because of this well-crafted discourse, negotiations must be directed at the periphery of the group rather than at its pith. Doing so would have the greatest chance for success and would also cut away al-Qaeda's support system (Cronin 2009, 180).

This leaves 3 other options, as proposed by Cronin: loss of public support, defeat by brute force, and transition of the group into other forms of violence. The latter is the most concerning, as such terrorist groups could move toward insurgency, conventional

war, “or even catalyzing systematic war between major powers” (Cronon 2009, 195). While this might end the terrorist group in its conventional name as the group transfers into something else, this option would be just as bad, if not worse. This option is especially dangerous because of its potential to draw multiple countries into an all-out war. The diminution of public support is foreseeable according to Cronin, provided that America and the West emphasize the discontinuity within the terrorist movement itself. Common ways that terrorist groups have lost public support are: the ideology becomes irrelevant, the groups lose contact with ‘the people,’ and targeting’s by the groups receive backlash by the group’s followers (Cronin 2009, 187).

The United States and the West must hone in on these options to weaken al-Qaeda and ISIS as much as possible. An example of this is when in 1993, a 12-year-old girl was killed in an attempted assassination of the Egyptian prime minister by the terrorist group, Islamic Jihad, led by Ayman Zawahiri, bin Laden’s Egyptian partner. The prime minister was only minorly injured, but the death of the young girl outraged the Egyptian people, so much so that they took to the streets chanting ‘Terrorism is the enemy of God!’ The crackdown and arrests that followed in Egypt wiped out Zawahiri’s entire operation in the country (Cronin 2009, 189). The West must focus on instances like these and show the Muslim community that al-Qaeda is not protecting them but rather is putting them at further risk. In attacks for which al-Qaeda has claimed responsibility, more than 1/3 of those killed were Muslims. (Cronin 2009, 190). These attacks are supposed to protest Muslim oppression, but in reality, are only furthering it. By stressing this point, the West could seriously enervate support for such terrorist organizations.

This leaves repression, or the strategy of crushing terrorism with brute force. As Cronin points out, while our military has made important strides by killing senior level officials, al-Qaeda continues to grow and adapt, demonstrating the limits of this tactic. “As with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the threat will merely evolve and reappear elsewhere” (Cronin 2009, 194). This is especially true when terrorism is publicly justified altruistically, as the pursuit of public good over one man’s vendetta for revenge. Terrorist groups target states, and when states respond in kind, the terrorists’ actions become justified in the eyes of their followers. Cronin points to another approach for combatting terrorism: deterrence by denial. Cronin argues that all too often we assume that terrorists are incoherent individuals, blinded by rage, who impulsively act without thought. However, these individuals consider the costs, benefit, and consequences of their actions. The best way to deter terrorism is to convince terrorists that their goals cannot be achieved by terror attacks, that is, deterrence not by punishment, but by denial (Cronin 2009, 120). The key, Cronin states, is to gain a knowledge of what the terrorist group wants, and to ensure, at all costs, that the state does not concede in any way to them. While the military may be able to assist in this aim, it would not be able to achieve it on its own.

Measuring Success:

To set such a goal requires empirical standards and data that can be gathered in order to measure the success or failure of such an operation. “But how will we know when we are succeeding? Daniel Byman lists three semi tangible indications of success in this war: (1) low levels of death, (2) the level of fear is reduced, and (3) counterterrorism is done at an acceptable cost” (Groves 2012, 31). Clearly, these points are still idiosyncratic.

Would the low levels of death apply only to civilians, or to the terrorists as well? Who would objectively and in an unbiased manner collect this data? How would a reduction in fear be measured? And what would qualify as an ‘acceptable cost’ for counterterrorism? Would it be in relation to the U.S. or the whole world? Who would define the term and how would it be measured? These quantitative goals are still themselves subjective, but they are a good starting point. Department of Homeland Security head Jeh Johnson added that terrorism will end

“Once we have reached a ‘tipping point,’ where ‘so many leaders and operatives’ of Al Qaeda have been captured or killed that the organization ‘is no longer able to attempt or launch a strategic attack against the United States.’ Once that has been achieved, ‘Al Qaeda as we know it’ will have been ‘effectively destroyed’ and the threat from Al Qaeda will have been eliminated” (McIntosh 2014, 27).

Of course, this is easier said than done. There are, however, several options to America’s counterterrorism strategy that merit strong consideration.

Auxiliary Fighters:

One possible solution to fighting terrorism and radicalization while still lessening America’s military footprint abroad is to employ the use of auxiliaries, or local partisan fighters. As UK Defense Secretary Michael Fallon stated, the war against ISIS “‘can only be won on the ground, but it can also only be won by a home army, not by America or Britain’” (Scheipers 2015, 121). To this end, he says, “occupation by Western forces had ostensibly triggered full-blown insurgencies,” when resources would have been better spent training local forces to fight these terrorist groups themselves (Scheipers 2015, 121). The alternative to outside military powers coming into the region, Scheipers argues, is the use of auxiliary forces, “local militia and rebel groups that are willing to bear the brunt of

the fighting, with Western support in terms of materiel, communications and, possibly, airstrikes” (Scheipers 2015, 122). The argument that terrorism can more efficiently be defeated by local armies rather than foreign ones is valid. Fighters who have grown up in the area would have vastly more knowledge of the terrain, language, and culture, than any foreign entity, no matter how researched that entity might be.

However, local forces are usually unequipped militarily to face terrorist groups alone. There is also the risk of the auxiliary forces changing sides, either voluntarily or involuntarily if the terrorist groups threaten the families of the rebel fighters. In Iraq, the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps members were reported to be deserting in droves. As an observer aptly stated, “I had found that the ICDC and the Iraqi police were loyal where the Americans were strong and disloyal where there was a perception of American weakness” (Kaplan 2006, 348). To make this statement is to allude that the American presence is at least somewhat effective in deterring the violence, if local forces will stand by the American military when it has a strong presence in the region. We must also stop to decide at what point violence begets more violence, and the use of rebel forces becomes counterproductive.

Additionally, while some believe that decreasing military visibility within a host country would be beneficial in the fight against terrorism, as Baker points out, “A small, shadowy presence does not have the same opportunity to develop a positive public face through constructive participation in host society traditions and culture” (Baker xiii, 2004). Hiding our military will not dispel rumors or negative sentiments, on the contrary, it might increase them. A more effective way of showing civilians that we are not the imperialist

barbarians they are taught to fear is to increase our interactions with them, not to lurk in the shadows of their cities.

The term ‘rebel’ has embodied different meanings throughout the ages. It wasn’t until 2011, when NATO supported the local resistance against Muammar Gadhafi that the term took on a more positive meaning.

“Western governments had recognized the National Transitional Council as Libya’s new legitimate government. Western policymakers and the media referred to the anti-Gadhafi forces as ‘rebels’, thereby turning a word that in the nineteenth century had been a term of abuse for illegitimate guerrilla fighters into a badge of honor and a conspicuous symbol of political legitimacy” (Scheipers 2015, 127).

Similarly, in the fight against ISIS, the Kurdish *peshmerga*, have “evolved into Iraq’s most effective fighting force,” with training and assistance from the U.S. (Scheipers 2015, 130).

The danger, of course, comes if and when these ‘trusted’ local forces abuse Western friendship in order to obtain arms and weapons for ulterior motives.

“The current debate on the forms that such collaboration could take, and the risks it would involve, is overwhelmingly focused on the vetting of Syrian rebel groups with a view to establishing their degree of religious extremism, and on debating the danger of weapons falling into the wrong hands” (Scheipers 2015, 133).

Using auxiliary forces also employs more of a band-aid approach, rather than addressing the root causes of terrorism, such as the power vacuum created by weak governments and resentment created by American military missteps. While the use of local ‘rebel’ forces may be crucial to the downfall of ISIS, the risks involved are extensive and should not be underestimated.

Changes Within:

In addition to aiding other countries, the United States can make several substantial improvements domestically. One such change could be in how our country approaches this fight to combat terrorism.

“In the case of the United States for instance, it could treat the threat primarily as a legal issue rather than as a war and therefore a problem of law enforcement. Alternatively, the United States could let the intelligence community take the lead and emphasize intelligence gathering and covert operations rather than military force. A State Department–led approach could focus efforts around public diplomacy and managing media outlets or social networks in order to identify and undermine Al Qaeda’s public support and message” (McIntosh 2014, 31).

Obviously, there are advantages and disadvantages to each of these approaches. Treating terrorism as a legal issue is difficult because terrorist groups such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban are non-state actors, and therefore cannot be prosecuted for their crimes under international law. Intelligence gathering is undoubtedly valuable, but it takes time, and still requires a measure of security to protect the officers gathering the intelligence. Focusing our energy on social media holds the most potential because it is the least explored option to date. If America can change the narrative, we increase our possibility of winning hearts and minds. While none of these approaches are a perfect solution, it is worth discussing alternative options to our current methods of operation.

As a Legal Matter:

One option to combatting terrorism would be to treat it as a legal matter, using law enforcement to stop its spread. “A law enforcement approach, on the other hand, treats terrorism as an ongoing threat to be managed, not eradicated” (McIntosh 2014, 32). This

method realizes that terrorism will continue indefinitely, but measures costs and benefits to find the most apt solution, rather than solely focusing on absolute victory. Taking a law enforcement approach to counter terrorism would also put more effort on capturing, arresting and prosecuting individuals rather than killing them. While critics claim that the U.S. is too quick to shoot first and ask questions later, citing the fact that wanted individuals are worth more to us alive than dead because of the information they might provide, we must remember that the situation in hostile territories is not usually so black and white. While it is true that captured individuals might be able to provide relevant information, often times they do not. It is extremely difficult for someone who has never served before to tell America's servicemen and women how to do their jobs. Americans should have faith in their military, and trust that all those who put their lives on the line for ours every day did what they thought was best in that moment. It is the least we can do to thank them for their service.

Focusing on Intelligence:

Another option in the fight against terrorism would be to have an intelligence-centered approach, rather than a military one.

“Much like the legal approach, a strategy that was primarily intelligence oriented would seek to gather intelligence and penetrate organizations in order to gain information to thwart plots as well as manipulate these organizations from the inside rather than pursue the physical elimination of individuals at every opportunity” (McIntosh 2014, 32).

This approach would still involve force, but it would greatly diminish the number of civilian casualties incurred in the fight against terrorism. The downside, of course, is that infiltrating these organizations would take years of planning, with extremely high risk

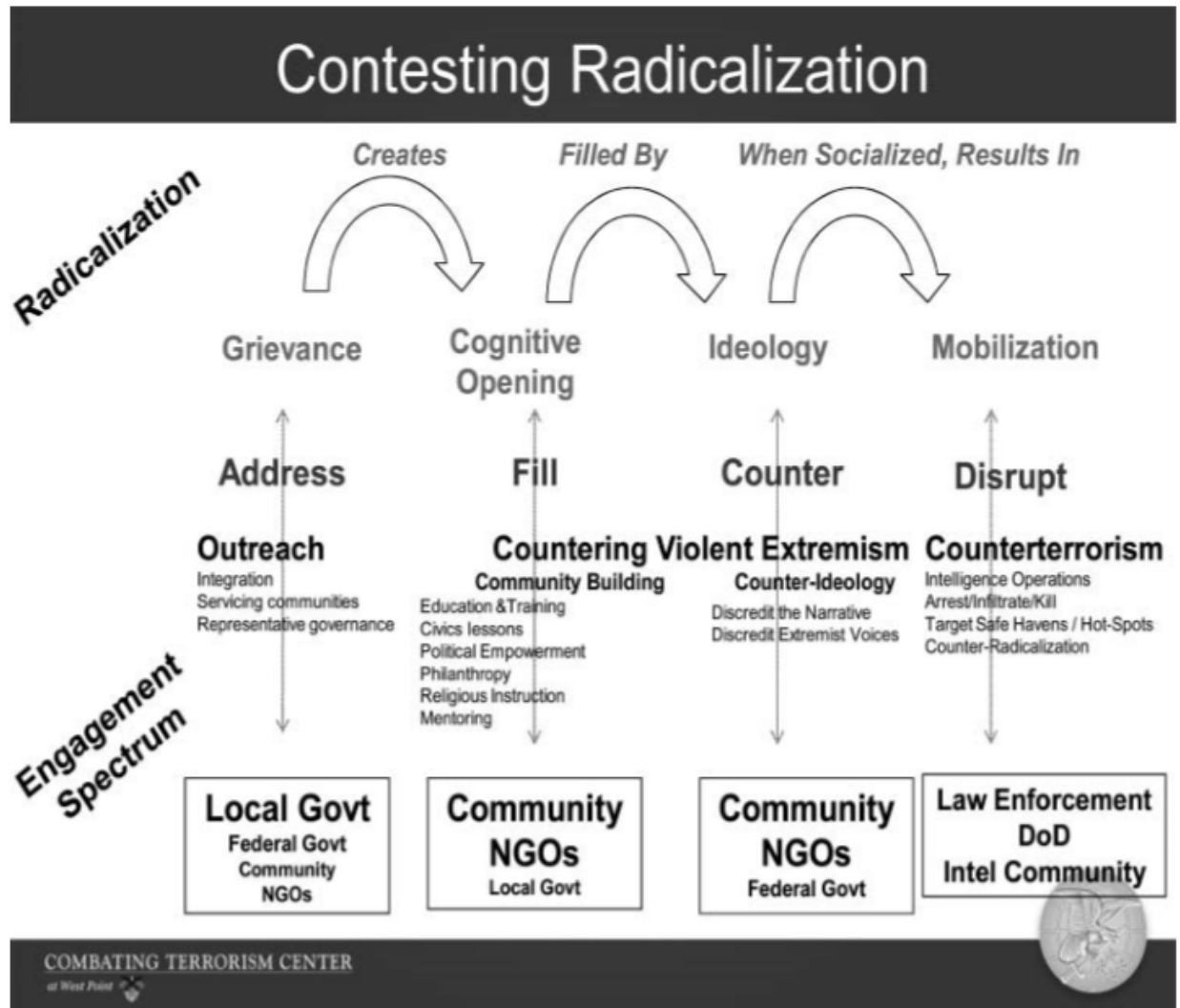
involved. Even if the United States could train and implant undercover agents into these terrorist organizations, in the time it takes to get an operation like this up and running, we risk being vulnerable and unaware of future attacks. This would also involve strengthening communication skills and language proficiencies within the military and its contractors. As Robert Kaplan noted while shadowing American military units in Afghanistan and Iraq, “Here was where the American Empire, such as it was, was weakest. With all of its technology and willingness to send the most enterprising of its soldiers to the most distant parts of the world, it was woefully incompetent in linguistic skills, especially in places and in situations where it counted the most” (Kaplan 2006, 235). In order to solve this problem, we must first be able to communicate with those experiencing it firsthand. To do this, we must place a higher precedent on critical language development and cultural awareness.

Winning Hearts and Minds:

One of the most important ways to combat terrorism is to win the hearts and minds of not only the people living in the Middle East, but also of Muslims around the world. This can happen both in and out of the war zones. When an 11-year-old boy stepped on a Soviet land mine outside of Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, medics quickly went to work saving the boy’s life. As one major on base noted, “That’s the gold standard . . . what that boy tells people back in his village about how the Americans helped him” (Kaplan 2006, 236). If the United States can decrease the numbers of radicalized individuals who join the cause, if we focus as much energy on countering radicalization as we focus on countering terrorism, we can significantly enervate the strength of terrorist groups. “The United States must therefore work with its regional partners to capture or kill violent Islamist extremists

who threaten U.S. interests while addressing the causes of radicalization in the Middle East that are creating the next generation of Islamist terrorists” (Bowman 2008, 80). One of ISIS’s major strengths is its ability to radicalize globally, through the use of the Internet. This terrorist group had an uncanny ability to find individuals sympathetic to the cause and rally them behind their so-called banner of Islam. In order to counter terrorism, we must also counter radicalization. “In the long term and from a strategic perspective, it is critical that the United States work with its allies and Muslim nations to address grievances, counter militant ideology, and disrupt the movement’s ability to mobilize individuals for violence. This will be the means for long-term ‘victory’ against international terrorists” (Groves 2012, 33). Figure 38 is a visual representation of Groves’ interpretation of the challenges posed by radical ideologies, as well as actions communities and governments can take to combat this process.

Radicalization Flowchart (Figure 38)



Source: Groves, Bryan.

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=25907d71-0c35-4ad7-b784-a4fe73dd1b84%40sessionmgr120>

The Silent Majority:

Another powerful tool at America's disposal for combatting terrorism is "the silent Muslim majority" (Groves 2012, 35) living within the United States. We have next to no hope of winning hearts and minds abroad if we cannot win the hearts and minds of those already living within our borders.

“Domestically, American officials at all levels need to reach out to build trust with Muslim leaders and communities, empowering them at the local levels to craft their own narratives, identities, mentor and police their own, and to thank them for their patriotism. After all, two out of five Al Qaeda attacks plotted against the U.S. homeland since 9/11 have been thwarted with the help of the American Muslim community; within the last 2 years, that number soars to 75 percent” (Groves 2012, 33).

Additionally, “A Zogby poll found that 79 percent of American Muslims were registered to vote and 96 percent favored participation in civic life. The vast majority of American Muslims were appalled by terrorist attacks; all of these people have a huge stake in the future welfare of America” (Nydell 2006, 133). America must cultivate trusting and respectful relationships with its Muslim population, both on local levels and at the national level. “This narrative should remind the Muslim world of the evil Al Qaeda has perpetrated and challenge its assertion that armed jihad is the only solution” (Groves 2012, 33). As figure 39 shows, when the survey was conducted in 2004, only 13% of Americans viewed Muslims very favorably, 35% viewed them somewhat favorably, and 32% viewed Muslims unfavorably (PEW 2004). While this data is outdated, it is plain to see that this area is one in which we can make significant growth, and one in which we all should strive to improve.

Favorability ratings of Muslims and Christians by Country (Figure 39)

Favorability Ratings:			
Muslims			
	Very <u>Fav</u> %	Somewhat <u>Fav</u> %	Un- <u>Fav</u> %
U.S.	13	35	32
Britain	18	49	18
France	16	48	29
Germany	5	36	46
Russia	15	38	38
Turkey	66	22	9
Pakistan	87	10	2
Morocco	70	20	9
Christians			
	Very <u>Fav</u> %	Somewhat <u>Fav</u> %	Un- <u>Fav</u> %
U.S.	55	29	6
Britain	36	48	6
France	34	50	9
Germany	15	60	16
Russia	44	49	3
Turkey	6	25	52
Pakistan	4	20	62
Morocco	2	21	73
Questions not permitted in Jordan.			

Source: PEW Research 2004: <http://www.people-press.org/2004/03/16/a-year-after-iraq-war/>

Local Leaders:

In addition to the Silent Muslim Majority, another untapped potential in America's fight against terrorism is utilizing the influence of local Muslims leaders in America.

"Domestically, public and private stakeholders alike need to make serious, coordinated, and lasting efforts to engage communities, Muslim and otherwise, and to both dispute the message of radical Islamic extremists and to offer a viable alternative. The focus needs to be on local actors who know the human landscape and understand the nuanced dynamics of their city better than those that sit in Washington, D.C" (Groves 2012, 35).

Groves emphasizes that local leaders must work towards teaching their communities how to recognize extremists' views, discredit them, and implement peaceful conflict resolution, especially among the young Muslim populations. The government should not tell Muslims which Imams or religious leaders to talk to, for they will resent this. The best source of peace, according to Groves, is a radical Imam who directs his followers to "political discourse and social mobilization" rather than violence (Groves 2012, 35). The Muslim community is an invaluable resource in America's counter terrorism strategy and should be treated as such.

Diplomacy in Action:

The United States can also strengthen diplomatic relations and encourage the governments of these countries where terrorism is rampant to strengthen their economies and societies in order to increase stability in these regions and debunk the idea that terrorism was an individual's only option for income or survival.

"By significantly reducing the U.S. military footprint that often fuels radicalization and by using U.S. political and economic power to encourage oil-producing governments to diversify their economies, invest in their people, and progress gradually toward constitutional liberalism, the United States can reduce the likelihood of domestic instability or revolution that would threaten an oil-producing ally" (Bowman 2008, 81-82).

Diplomacy becomes difficult, of course, when local and national governments are weak, corrupt, or unwilling to admit that terrorism is a serious problem within their country. Using diplomacy offers a peaceful and tactful solution to otherwise messy problems, but it can only be used successfully when both parties are willing to make a change.

Follow the Money:

Finances are also a key factor when countering terrorism. This approach is two-fold, in that efforts must be made to both deplete the financial resources of terrorist organizations, as well as strengthen the economies of countries fighting to stop its spread. “As for squeezing the financial lifeblood of global jihadis, ‘international counterterrorism efforts to control Al Qaeda financing have been robust, including important initiatives under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1373, efforts that have frozen at least \$147 million in assets’” (Groves 2012, 32-33). But because of underground systems like the black market, terrorist organizations have several methods of liquidating assets that legal entities such as the U.N. have difficulty tracking and stopping. “America also needs to strengthen its economy and prioritize its spending to ensure its long-term solvency, thereby preserving its ability to pursue terrorists globally, indefinitely, and with state of the art technology (Groves 2012, 33). Often times this detail is overlooked. While one way to combat terrorism includes focusing on strengthening the economies of nations where terrorism is prevalent, thereby lessening radicalization, we must also focus on our own economy.

Rebuilding the American economic infrastructure is equally as important in countering terrorism, because our economy and nation must always remain ready and prepared to combat terrorism with the best and most advanced tools possible. “The United States must strengthen its national resiliency, adopting and educating its citizenry regarding appropriate expectations of success, how long it will take, and how to respond to the next major terrorist attack that is successful” (Groves 2012, 33). While this may be a cynical outlook, America would benefit greatly from creating and practicing an emergency plan of

action to ensure that no one is caught off guard in the event of another tragedy. We must continue to prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

We Will Rise Again:

One final take away from this research is that an emphasis must be placed on rebuilding the countries we enter. A shift must occur that saves a significant amount of resources and funds for the years after the ‘victory,’ when the unfavorable government has been deposed and terror no longer walks freely in the streets. Putting a greater focus on rebuilding countries through humanitarian aid would create a positive image of America to people who have only ever seen the United States as an aggressor. It would challenge the terrorists’ claims that America is malevolent and should be feared if Americans stayed to help rebuild countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan alongside the Iraqis and Afghans who lived through the war we participated in. Doing so would lessen radicalization, but more importantly, it would be the right thing to do.

Too often, victory is declared before the hard part of the operation is even attempted: building up a country that has repeatedly been torn down. America must focus on rebuilding the war-torn countries so as to establish solid governmental, healthcare, economic and educational systems in order that the country will not revert back to a system of violence and fear. Frustration grew in Iraq after Saddam Hussein’s regime fell because, while the Americans could oust a totalitarian regime, something many believed to be impossible, they could not provide running water to the villages or organize garbage collection. One lieutenant and his platoon distributed bottled water to every person in the

village. “As he later admitted, it was a well-intentioned but ineffectual action. But he felt that he just had to do something” (Kaplan 2006, 343).

Conclusion:

“History may not repeat itself, nor even rhyme, but it does provide us with a rich store of evidence from which we can distil an analytical vocabulary that can help us understand current events. Viewed from this perspective, the study of history cannot offer solutions, but it can help us ask pertinent questions” (Scheipers 2015, 123). This paper does not attempt to answer the question, ‘how do we win the war on terror?’ It does, however, strive to ask important questions related to this goal. Based on the evidence presented in this research, it is clear that increased U.S. military intervention does not correlate to or cause an immediate increase in terrorism. It is worth noting, however, that in the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan, even after the U.S. military left the country or pulled out substantial numbers of troops, instances of terror were still more prevalent than before the U.S. entered. This could point to a trend that American military presence in a country leads to more radicalization and violence in the long term, one year, five years or ten years down the road. This pattern requires more research and open source data to fully investigate, and since such data was not available for Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, no conclusive arguments can be drawn from this data alone.

Globally, acts of terror seem to be most present and more deplorable every time they happen. And every time they happen, we ask ourselves, how can we stop this? To those who argue that the U.S. military involvement is making matters worse, I would respond that the numbers do not support that claim. Both military personnel abroad and

American citizens at home believe that military intervention is an effective way to fight terrorism. Terrorism is not a recent development. It has been written in the pages of our history books for ages. To truly put an end to the violence, we must also work to improve the education, healthcare, and economies of these countries where terrorism is rampant. We must win the hearts and minds of those affected by the violence, and practice respect and compassion at every opportunity. But these diplomatic and peaceful means must also be implemented along with military force, to show those who wish us harm that the world will not fall to fear. Rather, that we will come together to stand up for those who cannot stand for themselves, and fight for peace and justice until every person is free to live a life of dignity and respect, free from fear, just as we all deserve.

“I raise up my voice not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.”

- Malala Yousafzai

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