The New Terrorism
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"But time is always guilty. Someone must pay for
Our loss of happiness, our happiness itself."
(W.H. Auden, from 'Detective Story' in *Collected Poems*, 1991)

It would be interesting to ask W.H. Auden, who called the 20th Century 'the age of anxiety' how he would have seen the first years of the 21st Century. While the possibility of a World War is remote, the world remains a very different place to what visioned as recently as 1992, in the UN's *Agenda for Peace*.

Today, fighting against terrorism has become the facetious couture of a seemingly bi-polar world which is either "with terrorists or against them". Rhetoric and actions that claim to wipe and root out terrorism often disguise a vacuity in some of anti-terrorism's greatest exponents, who, like weathervanes in a storm, like to self-importantly spin and rattle largely in a world of their own imagination. Root causes of terrorism are often ignored in the 'wars' against its manifestations. Parochial interests define the frontlines of offensives against terror. The difference between ally and enemy is judged by the degree of subservience to a *soi-disant* coalition against terror.

This essay will look at the phenomenon of 'new terrorism'. It will argue that while new terrorism is somewhat of a departure from traditional acts and methods of terrorism, not all terrorist activity in the 21st century falls into the paradigm of new terrorism. The essay will briefly explore possible democratic responses to terrorism in general, after examining two key facets of new terrorism – the threat and possible use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) and Information Warfare.

What is terrorism?

Fighting terrorism is like being a goalkeeper. You can make a hundred brilliant saves but the only shot that people remember is the one that gets past you.
Paul Wilkinson

In its broadest sense terrorism can be thought of as the use or threatened use of force against civilians designed to bring about political or social change. Moreover, while we think of terrorism as being both a political and irrational act (especially suicide terrorism), terrorism can also be thought of as a rational act conducted specifically because of the impact it will have - fear, confusion, submission, anxiety etc.

Today, terrorism must be viewed within the context of the modern nation-state. Indeed, it was the rise of a bureaucratic state, which could not be destroyed by the death of one leader that forced terrorists to widen their scope of targets in order to create a public atmosphere of anxiety and undermine confidence in government. This reality is at the heart of the ever more violent terrorism of the last 100 years.

The overwhelming salience of a coherent definition of terrorism must also address the wider socio-economic issues that give rise to terrorism. All we have to do is look at both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide or the Sinhala-Tamil imbroglio in Sri Lanka to understand that violence, including terrorism by the state, rarely stops further violence as long as underlying societal grievances are not addressed.

Furthermore, definitions of terrorism must tread warily between restricting the freedoms of the individual with legal provisions required to guard against the contingencies and imperatives confronting the state and the primary necessity to protect democratic processes without excessive intrusion in to the private domain of the individuals. Maintaining the democratic process, which is the ultimate guarantor of individual liberties and human rights, must be uppermost in any definition of terrorism.

A single definition of terrorism then, cannot account for all possible uses of the term. Bruce Hoffman in *Inside Terrorism* (1998) adds that by distinguishing terrorists from other types of criminals and terrorism from other forms of crime, we come to appreciate that terrorism is:

1. ineluctably political in aims and motives;
2. violent -or, equally important, threatens violence;
3. designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim of target;
4. conducted by an organization with an identifiable chain of command or conspiratorial cell structure (whose members wear no uniform or identifying insignia);
5. perpetrated by a sub -national group or non-state entity.

In view of the large spectrum of terrorists, terrorist organisations, and the motivations that underpin their chosen course of action, this study submits it is dangerous to look at terrorism in reductionist perspectives which attempt to characterise the entire phenomenon of terrorism on the basis of trends against American interests and targets, and the manufacture, acquisition or possible use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).

This study also recognises the role of state terror as an important and oftentimes, pervasive historical antecedent and contributory cause of sub-state terrorism. Contrary to the submission of Alexander Downer, the foreign minister of Australia, who would have us believe that terrorism has no root causes[1], actions of monolithic states, unresponsive to the basic human needs of its constituent peoples, and shackled under a majoritarian democracy and ethnically polarised public services and systems of governance, often contribute to and amplify grievances against the state, which if unaddressed have a high probability of erupting into violent sub-state activism and terrorism.

For the purposes of this article, the definition of terrorism is also consonant with that drawn up by Chalk (1999) – "[terrorism is] the systematic use of illegitimate violence that is employed by sub-state actors as a means of achieving specific political objectives, these goals differing according to the group concerned. It is an inherently psychological tactic that seeks to spread fear-inducing effects in a target group wider than the immediate audience through the actual or feared use of indiscriminate violence against non-combatant victims and property".

A 'new terrorism'?

"What about the United States government? How do they justify their acts of bombings, of killing innocent people, directly or indirectly, openly or secretly? They're killing people everywhere in the world: before, today, and tomorrow. How do you define that?"
Mahmud Abouhalima, alleged mastermind behind 1995 World Trade Centre attack in the US.[2]

The evolving dynamic of terrorism in the 21st century will necessarily reflect continuity and change in the tactics of terror. New motivation, new actors, new rationalities are inextricably entwined with those of the previous century. Kuhn's theory of paradigmatic change does not allow us the luxury of believing that the so called new terrorism emerged out of ether, and bears no resemblance, or linkage, with the *raison d'etre* of terrorism that preceded it.

According to the former US Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 were not two more examples of old-fashioned terrorism. "What is new," she declared, "is the emergence of terrorist coalitions that do not answer fully to any government, that operate across national borders and have access to advanced technology." The bomb victims, she claimed, were caught up "in a new kind of confrontation that looms as a

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[1] Speech to the National Press Club, 13 April 2004, Canberra, http://www.foreignminister.gov.au
[2] Quoted in Juergensmeyer, M. 'Understanding the new terrorism', Current History, vol. 99, no. 636, pg. 159.

new century is about to begin . . . a clash between civilization itself and anarchy -- between the rule of law and no rules at all."[3] Albright's sentiments were consonant with those of her President – Bill Clinton, in an address to the UN shortly after the 1998 bombings said "has a new face in the 1990s. The new technologies of terror and their increasing availability, along with the increasing mobility of terrorists, raise chilling prospects of vulnerability to chemical, biological and other kinds of attacks, bringing each of us into the category of possible victim".[4]

But what defines this new terrorism?

Juergensmeyer[5] calls new terrorism the "anti-order of the new world order of the 21st century", stating that "[new terrorism] appears pointless since it does not lead directly to any strategic goal, and it seems exotic since it is frequently couched in the visionary rhetoric of religion."

New terrorism can be broadly defined by three main characteristics:

1. Ethno-nationalist and separatist based
2. Inspired by the rise of extremist fundamentalist religious factionalism
3. Emergence and prevalence of 'Ad hoc' terrorism

The contours of the world order after the Cold War, it is argued by Chalk (1999) and Laquer (1996), gave rise to sub-state secessionist movements and separatist struggles that had either been subsumed or repressed in Cold War proxy wars, or were the lingering result of (or mixed together with) anti-colonial struggles and policies of 'divide and rule'.

The rise of militant Islamic fundamentalism, Chalk (1999) notes, is primary the result of three factors – sponsorship by States such as Iran and Sudan, the legacy of the Afghan War and the fall out from the Palestinian – Israeli peace process. But religious fundamentalism isn't limited to an Islamicist flavour – Chalk (1999) and Laquer (1996) note that Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist extremism also constitute a serious threat in South Asia.

As Bruce Hoffman notes in Lesser (1999: pgs 15 – 17), "the overall increase during the past 15 years of terrorism motivated by a religious imperative encapsulates the confluence of new adversaries, motivations, and tactics affecting terrorist patterns today. While the connection between religion and terrorism is not new, in recent decades this variant has largely been overshadowed by ethnic- and nationalist-separatist or ideologically motivated terrorism".

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[3] Gideon, Rose, *It Could Happen Here: Facing the New Terrorism, Foreign Affairs,* March/April 1999, http://www.foreignaffairs.org/19990301fareviewessay1030/gideon-rose/it-could-happen-here-facing-the-new-terrorism.html?mode=print
[4] White House, 'Remarks by the President to the Opening Session of the 53rd UN General Assembly,' 21 September 1998, available online at http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/news/1998/09/980921-wh1.htm
[5] Ibid, pg. 158.
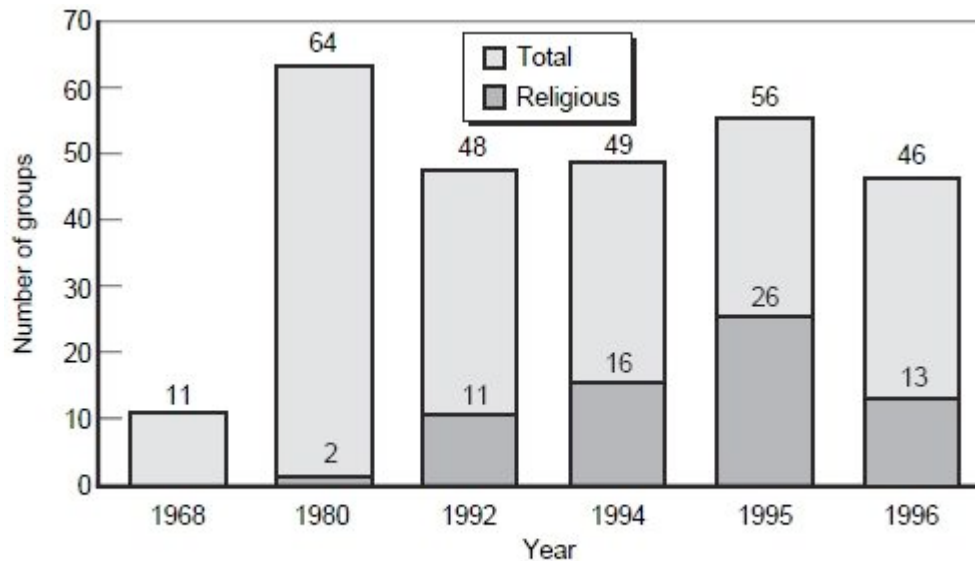
SOURCE: The RAND-St. Andrews Chronology of International Terrorism

Mark Juergensmeyer (2000) calls the last decade of the 20th Century the decade of the new terrorism. In what he calls 'performance violence', evoking images of theatre, Juergensmeyer characterises the dramatic symbolism of new terrorism in its use of indiscriminate violence intended to affect not only direct victims, but also anyone who experiences it through the media. New Terrorism, it is argued, is more amorphous in nature when compared to the terrorism of earlier years. Chalk terms this 'ad hoc' terrorism – with a trend towards indiscriminate killing as opposed to attacking specific targets (like carefully selected assassinations of officials on the other side). New terrorists may have a global presence, but are amorphous in nature – with no discernable hierarchies, who collaborate using new communications technologies (or at the other end of the spectrum, homing pigeons) – they leave no clearly identifiable patterns, no footprints and are very hard to track down, making it extremely difficult for governments and law enforcement authorities to build accurate pictures of their scope of operations, membership and funding. Both Chalk (1999) and Laquer (1996) broadly concur that New Terrorism also offers its practitioners many 'advantages'. By not recognizing innocents, terrorists have an infinite number of targets – ranging from military to civilian. This range of choices gives terrorists a high probability of success with minimum risk. If the attack goes wrong or fails to produce the intended results, the terrorists can deny responsibility. If it goes according to plan, New Terrorism can either claim responsibility, or let states wallow in a quagmire of uncertainty, fear and anxiety.

New Terrorism, however, is not an uncontested term. As Paul Wilkinson (2000) notes, while recent acts of terrorism may be dissimilar to tactics used by terrorists in the past, New Terrorism doesn't capture the traditional and conservative methods used by terrorist organisations like the Maoists in Nepal and the LTTE in Sri Lanka. This sits in opposition to Hoffman (1996:216) who states that 'the terrorist perpetrator of today is more likely to be an

'amateur', probably belonging to what are only transient, or at least loosely structured, organisations'. As such, not all contemporary terrorists groups are engaged in 'new terrorism'.

And yet, there are some key differences in the new terrorism when writ against the more traditional terrorism:

1. Amorphous structure of organisation
   As opposed to the rigid, hierarchical, pyramidal structures of terrorist organisations like the LTTE, IRA, ETA etc, entities like Al-Qaeda are far more amorphous, indistinct and geographically spread. As a result, State level responses to the terrorist threats and actions of these organisations are extremely difficult. Their organic and fluid nature are hard, if not impossible, to pin down. The lack of structure gives a great degree of autonomy to its constituent units, who may be only held together by a very loose notion of solidarity towards an avowed cause. Comprising of hard core (full time) terrorists and networks of sympathisers, fund raisers, sympathetic lawyers and part time supporters, these organisations link their activities via a broad spectrum of methods, ranging from word of mouth, to letters and the use of the internet, making their activities very difficult to monitor.

   As Hoffman notes[6], "the absence of any existing, publicly identified central command authority is significant in that it may remove previous inhibitions on the terrorists' desire to inflict widespread, indiscriminate casualties. In some instances, individual networks may therefore have greater freedom and independence in tactical decisions than traditional terrorist cells of the past given the absence of some central command structure or actual functioning headquarters. Accordingly, this particular trend in terrorism may represent a very different and potentially far more lethal one than that posed by more familiar, traditional, terrorist adversaries."

2. Us against the West
   The froth of religious fervour and fanaticism seem to dominate our perception of new terrorism, in contrast to the secessionist or abstract (though not inexplicable) political demands of the old terrorism. While IRA, ETA and the LTTE, for example, may use terror in support of 'emancipatory struggles for their homeland' or contiguous tracts of land, the geo-political terrain of the new terrorist is broader. Revenge and retaliation against the West, damning edicts against its decadence, moral corruption and the perceived repression of peoples between the Hindu kush and the Arabian Sea (the term is from Richard Reeves in *Passage to Peshawar*) seem to fuel and inspire the fanatical determination of the new terrorists to launch indiscriminate attacks against civilian populations – attacks, which increasingly go unclaimed.

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[6] [6] Hoffman, B 2001, 'Change and continuity in terrorism', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no. 24, pg 418

3. Religion

    As alluded to above, the religious tinge to new terrorism is particularly deadly. The Manichean world views that inform the actions and shape the motivations of certain new terrorist groups use religion as a legitimising force for wanton violence. The radically different value systems, realities, mechanisms of legitimisation and justification etc all make religious terrorism a very difficult beast to quell.

And yet, is New Terrorism really new? Wilkinson (2000) notes that "A close examination of trends in terrorism world-wide does not lead one to conclude that we now confront an entirely new phenomenon of 'post-modem' terrorism in place of the 'old' terrorist regimes and movements of the 1970s and 80s." Groups like ETA, the insurgent groups in India, the Maoists in Nepal, and the LTTE in Sri Lanka for instance, still account for the vast majority of terrorist acts in South Asia, and a significant percentage of such attacks internationally. And yet, none of these groups can be classified as new terrorists.

Furthermore, the 'conservatism' of terrorists – in their choice of symbolic targets and traditional tactics and weaponry used to attack them – hasn't radically changed in the early years of the 21st Century. We have not yet seen, though one cannot rule it out completely, a new terrorism adept at manipulating WMDs or cyber-warfare. We have not yet seen a recurrence of the use of Sarin gas on the lines of Tokyo subway attack in 1995. While the events of 11th September 2001 unequivocally demonstrated the ability of new terrorism to appropriate non-traditional weaponry, one can argue that the symbolic destruction of the targets was as important as the mass casualties. This conservatism also extends to the selection of targets and *modus operandi* of many other contemporary sub-national terrorist groups – the attacks on the World Trade Centre apart, many terrorist attacks continue to employ time tested methods of terrorism – invoking more fear than carnage, creating more psychological duress and anxiety than physical and material damage, creating a fear psychosis with the threat of attacks rather than actual mass scale destruction.

As such, the age of 'new terrorism' is inextricably entwined with the continuation and evolution of 'old terrorism' – it is the two, juxtaposed, that will pose the greatest threat in the 21st Century.

Quoting Martha Crenshaw, Merari (1993) observes that "an initial problem in assessing the results of terrorism is that it is never the unique causal factor leading to identifiable outcomes. The intermingling of social and political effects with other events and trends makes terrorism difficult to isolate." This of course is coupled with processes of globalisation. Globalised transnational forces, coupled with sub-state secessionist tendencies, have significantly challenged or even undermined the sovereignty of the nation state – what Mary Kaldor calls 'the trans-nationalisation of violence' has obvious relevance to the study of global terrorist movements.

The increasingly lethality of new terrorism is a direct result of the evolution of terrorism. An almost Darwinian principle of evolution applies here – as Hoffman points out (quoted in Lessser 1999: 25) "every new terrorist generation learns from its predecessors – becoming smarter, tougher and more difficult to capture or eliminate".

As Hoffman goes on to point out, the implication of this trend is for terrorist groups, and new terrorist groups in particular, to exponentially increase their use of violence – becoming less a means to an end but an end in itself. The difference here is that while the former, violence as a means to an end, needs to be justified to one's support base or constituency, violence as an end in itself needs only to be justified to the members of the group or faction, and not to a broader group. It may also be the case that coupled with the increasing tendency to not take credit for terrorist attacks, new terrorism gives primacy to factional and individual violence that isn't even necessarily accountable to the higher ranks of its own organisation. The reality may be that when, in response to a specific terrorist attack, the Press Communiqués of well known terrorist organisations deny all responsibility, it may well be the truth, since they may not be privy to planned activities that take place in their name in the far flung hinterlands of their influence and power base by factions or loose strung groups of individuals that are influenced by their ideology.

The increasing lack of any hierarchy coupled with their fanaticism makes new terrorists more like to consider the use of WMDs – an aspect that will be explored in the next section.

WMD's: Cause for alarm?

"… by succumbing to terrorist threats and braggadocio and failing to distinguish their inflated rhetoric from genuine intentions, much less actual capabilities, there is a risk of making hard policy choices and budgetary allocations based mostly on misperception and misunderstanding rather than on hard analysis built on empirical evidence."
Bruce Hoffman[7]

The association between Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) and new terrorism constitutes a very real threat for many researchers. Although Wilkinson (2000) disagrees about the chances of terrorists using tools of 'super-violence' – easy access through porous borders in South Asia to nuclear technology from the former Soviet Union is flagged as a key area of concern by both Chalk (1999) and Laquer (1996). While the authors agree that terrorists will primarily continue to use conventional weapons, the danger as Chalk (1999: 164) succinctly states is that even a single instance of the use of WMD will "usher in a new age of violence where any semblance of restraint, limitation, and indeed, humanity, both by aggressors and victims, would be lost." Wilkinson (2000:9) disagrees with the dire predictions on the possible use of WMDs by terrorists takes a more balanced approach, stating that "…it is equally important to ensure that [planning for the possible use of WMDs by terrorists] is not at the expense of resources and expertise to

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[7] Hoffman, B 2001, 'Change and continuity in terrorism', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no. 24, pg 420

deal with other existing and high probability threats from terrorist using 'conventional' weapons".

Hoffman (2001: pg. 417) states that "future terrorist use of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons may be far less certain than is now commonly assumed and therefore current efforts to address this threat may prove as ineffective as they are misplaced".

That said, a single act of WMD based 'super-terrorism' will be enough to change the course of history, whether it be aimed at a symbolic target or directly aimed at mass casualties. Given the amorphous nature of new terrorists, government and state crackdowns on their organisations may have less of an impact as with their older more rigid and hierarchical counterparts, further taking away inhibitions that one can argue prevented the old terrorism from dabbling fully in WMDs.

But as the next section explores, WMDs are not the only tools that new terrorism has in its arsenal.

Information Warfare: The threat of the internet

New Information Communications Technologies (ICTs) provide assistance to the terrorists as well as opportunities for attacks, as industrialized societies place greater reliance on information infrastructures. However, terrorists will likely avoid dismantling the internet because they need the technology for their own communication and propaganda activities and may be more interested in "systemic disruption" rather than the total destruction of information networks.

While the consequences of a major disruption of American or global information infrastructures could be catastrophic financially or socially, terrorists have not shown the inclination or capability to undertake massive strikes in this area.

Yet.

There have been limited attacks along these lines, but the major use of information technology has been as an aid for terrorists rather than as a target of their activity. The reported use of the internet and e-mail by al Qaeda to coordinate the strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11th September 2001 provides a dramatic example of this sort of coordination. As Paul Pillar (2003) notes, "Information technology's biggest impact on terrorists has involved the everyday tasks of organizing and communicating, rather than their methods of attack".

Laquer (1996) in particular concurs with Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1996) in flagging the increasing threat to the information architectures on technologically advanced societies by new terrorism. As Laquer (1996) states "If the new terrorism directs its energies toward information warfare,

its destructive power will be exponentially greater than any it wielded I the past – greater even than it would be with biological and chemical weapons." Even if we don't fully accept this line of reasoning, it is indeed the case the new terrorism is interested in the internet and the World Wide Web not merely as a 'weapon' in itself, but as a useful tool to communicate and coordinate conventional acts of terrorism on a global scale, and as a potential resource for the design of terrorist acts. As the Report of the 9/11 Commission points out (2004: 157), some of the hijackers used the Internet to get background information on US Flight Schools and keep in touch with each other.

While Laquer is right to point out the dangers of info-war (or Netwar), it is more likely that the likes of *Al Qaeda* will not want to destroy the very channels of communications they use to plan attacks on physical infrastructure.

Paradise regained? Towards effectively combating new terrorism

"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it"
Martin Luther King

The ramifying evil of terrorism, according to Michael Walzer[8], is not just the killing of innocent people but also the intrusion of fear into everyday life, the violation of private purposes, the insecurity of public spaces and the endless coerciveness of precaution. He also argues against a fundamental principle of terrorism – that it is the last resort of an underprivileged and discriminated peoples to over-turn and change dominant political structures. Walzer says that it is not easy to reach the last resort. Politics, he states, is the art of repetition, and terrorists often conveniently forget that it sometimes takes much more than one attempt to democratically change the prevailing structures of governance.

There is a passage in James Blinn's Gulf War novel *The Ardvaark Goes to War*. In it the hero is asked what makes him feel anxious. His answer offers a very insightful commentary on the risk communities we now inhabit:

> *What am I afraid of? I'm afraid of everything. You think war scares me? Is that what you think? Well, it does, it scares the shit out of me. And so does that airplane. That airplane scares me. And so does nuclear winter and fallout from Chernobyl mutating Finnish reindeer. And toxic fibers in my uniform. And legionnaires' Disease, that scares me. And killer Bees. And drive-by shootings. And poisoned Tylenol. And crude nuclear devices. And strip mining and the vanishing rain forests and AIDS…and Japanese investors and rising interest rates and falling interest rates and people with accents and Third World population growth…I'm afraid of my ignorance. I'm afraid of*

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[8] [8] Michael Walzer, '*Excusing Terror*', *The American Prospect*, Vol. 12 No. 18, 2001.

things I can't see, things I don't even have words for…But the main thing that frightens me is fear.

The fundamental challenge is to reconcile the necessity of combating terrorism with the constitutional, legal, and ethical demands of a democratic state.

As we champion the discourse of human rights around the globe, we must face up to the difficulty of reconciling it with our ongoing 'war on terrorism'. If human rights belong to all peoples equally, then how can terrorists be excluded? The danger is that, by insisting on their rights, we risk increasing their ability to take those same rights from others, most notably the basic right to life. Such dilemmas lie at the heart of a democracy's struggle with terrorism. They need to be urgently tackled, however, if terrorism is indeed, in the words of Madeleine Albright, "the war of the future." Like inter-state war before it (manifest most blatantly in the form of two World Wars), perhaps we need to formulate a set of rules by which to fight this new war.

The difficulty is, of course, that whereas previously such rules could be mutually agreed upon and practiced by the warring parties (like the Hague and Geneva conventions), in the case of terrorism it is mostly a one-sided affair. While democratic states place limitations upon their ability to wage war against terrorists, the terrorists themselves abide by no such restraints.

Does this mean we have to fight terrorists with little regard for moral scruples? This is certainly the sombre judgment of Martin van Creveld, an Israeli expert on warfare, who claims that "when you fight terrorism, you become a terrorist."[9]

This, however, is a simplistic notion of combating terrorism, and its genesis.

Paul Wilkinson (in Sondhi, M.L. 2000) speaking on counter-terrorism strategies for democracies, comes up with a number of possible ways in which new terrorism in particular, and terrorism in general, can be addressed. From terrorists themselves giving up arms to educative solutions, where State and non-governmental apparatus plays a catalytic role in creating dialogues within and between communities to address social inequalities, Wilkinson draws a fine picture of the complexities involves in combating terrorism, which run counter to the one-dimensional solutions that Crevald seems to suggest. Wilkinson suggests a smorgasbord of ways in which terrorism can be combated – from 'repentant legislation' (he uses the example of the 'Supergrass' system in Northern Ireland) to re-education and rehabilitation, his argument culminates in a call to address the root causes of terrorism:

> *"Social scientific research suggests that perceived deprivation of civil and political rights, such as downgrading the status of a language, is far more of a danger to stability than purely material deprivation... democratic authorities need to defeat the*

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[9] *The New Terrorism*, Economist, August 15, 1998, p. 19.

terrorist leadership at the political level by showing that the government is capable of responding imaginatively to the legitimate demands and aspirations of the very social groups the terrorist seek to mobilise."

That said, new terrorism rarely affords those who wish to address and transform it the luxury of time. While new terrorism imitates its previous avatars, the heady pace at which new terrorism is evolving and creating new ways of threatening the rubric of democratic society and the lace of peaceful co-existence within and between peoples, makes addressing it extremely difficult.

Final thoughts

The practice of terrorism has undergone dramatic changes in recent years. The categorical fanaticism that is apparent in many terrorist organizations today, across a spectrum of belief systems, is a major part of this change. In the past, terrorists were more likely to be dominated by pragmatic considerations of political and social change, public opinion, and other such factors. Today, a phenomenon that was a rarity in the past - terrorists bent on death and destruction for its own sake, or terrorism as an act of 'performance' - is more commonplace than ever.

Organizationally, terrorists are using amorphous, non-hierarchical structures and other fluid systems of organisation that have emerged in recent years. The potential availability of nuclear, chemical, and biological WMD technology provides the prospect that these trends could result in unprecedented human disasters.

However, as Wilkinson (2000) notes, state terrorism "is often an antecedent and… a contributory cause of sub-state terrorism". It would be far more useful to argue that the future will see an unhealthy confluence of old terrorism and new terrorism, which will make its addresal an incredibly complex exercise for democratic states.

Nevertheless, terrorism has indeed quantitatively and qualitatively changed from previous years. Whether it is Gurr and Coleman's "third wave of vulnerability" or Rapoport's "fourth wave of terrorism", the so called new terrorism is a significant departure from the phenomenon even as recently as during the Cold War.

That said, the author submits that research on new terrorism needs to be placed in a more comprehensive rubric of research and thought.

There *are* root causes of terrorism. Addresal at the level of these root causes, in the long term (coupled with other more immediate measures to thwart their actions), will be the only way in which to address the core and oftentimes intractable issues that are part of new terrorism.

Terrorism primarily serves to erase the line between prudence and panic in its aftermath. A democratic response to terrorism must accept this challenge and craft responses to terrorist activities, both proactively and reactively, that are cost effective, measured, sober and practical.

But above all, responses which are just and sustainable.

Caught between the Scylla of terrorism and the Charybdis of effectively addressing it, democratic states in the 21st have a solemn duty to not only address the symptoms of new terrorism, but address its root causes as well – guided by the recognition that human life, above all else, is sacred, and that to fight fire with fire is to lessen our own ability to argue against the sheer wastefulness of terrorism – old or new, state or non-state.

❧ ENDS ❧

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