

The Asymmetry of the GWoT – Is It Really New to Us?

Description

Over on one of my favorite blog hangouts, [Right Thinking Girl](#), there was a [post rhetorically questioning the response to a nuke going off in the US](#) as part of the WoT. Nothing is rhetorical on RTG, and some threads rage for days. If you're in the mood for a good debate, head over to see what's cooking there.

I pondered the point for a moment and then posted my first response. a few of the regulars chimed in on the "gimme some of that old Hiroshima GLOW" side of the argument. I don't think a nuke at the shrine would do the right thing. Anyhow, this became the first stage of putting words to something I have been pondering for a few years.

"We are in a world of unknowns. The seemingly tired phrase from Vietnam about "no front lines" was a simplistic analogy back then, but, as recently London has been a victim of it's own "upstanding citizens," we are in uncharted waters. This war, while "insurgencies" may have existed before, they didn't have the access to thermo-nuclear devices from the now defunct Soviet Bloc, which even in their "low yield" capacity can do damage for centuries, let alone anthrax and other "bugs and gas" type stuff, which is nasty, but containable in time and space much easier (from a clinical view, from the victims view, it's horrific).

When the Evil Empire was a fixed set of geographic points, this enemy, fighting a battle over the territory of the mind (you must accept their ideology), is unlike any war that has been.

Nuking Mecca sure sounds like an immediate gratification, but FTM29 may have a more practical solution...

Bottom line: I think we are, as a human race, so uncompletely prepared for this type of conflict, even our great thinkers, such as [Eliot Cohen](#) (who was the Dean at War College when I attended) is at a loss for how to proceed. Not only is he a brilliant thinker, he has just seen his son, an Army Captain, ship out for the Middle East. He is invested in this war at many levels. [Here are his most recent thoughts](#) on the entire matter. Profound to the core of his thoughts and worth your time.

I'm stumped, but then I'm not even a chem light of intensity compared to the smarts of Professor Cohen. This war is being waged and fought in many dimensions of the human experience, and I fear we have not entered all the battlefields. "Winning the hearts and minds" is another Vietnam concept that needs a lot more investigation, but I believe we must go there. I just got my copy of ["Our Own Worst Enemy"](#) by William Lederer yesterday

(\$0.99 plus shipping!) I'm thinking there's some bits of wisdom in there I need to re-read. H&Ms is not a lame effort, it's a viable strategy, which the Marines began looking into in the Central American campaigns at the opening of the 1900s. They wrote the Small Wars Manual, which discusses how to interact with the local populace in order to show them you're there to help. On the other hand, we were kinda in Central America for the big fruit guys....("

I managed to get away from my desk to do some work, and while I did, it came to me that we have "been here" before, and, in fact, are there now. I returned to RTG's comment section and then posted this:

"After thinking about this a little more, we are seeing this same model right now: The War on Drugs.

Different "weapons" are being delivered, it used to be a organized crime controlled environment (which had some definable boundaries of the organizations). Then the "cartels" arose, which would be going from the bi-polar power model, to the multi-polar model of powerful entities. So far, so good...manageable in it's understood environment.

Next came every Tom, Dick, and Harry, who saw there was big profits to be made hopped in as sort of "independent contractors" in a free form economic model. As a result, the defined "enemy" became one on every street corner. They are the jihadi equivalents. Amsterdam may be a comparison for the middle eastern cities that harbor terrorists, and allow them to freely exercise their thoughts in the open.

We have been trying to successfully take this on using the military, law enforcement, border control entities and also public health organizations. So far, we have made headway, but it is an ongoing battle, with no end in sight...

I'm gonna have to think on this some more....just as with the terrorists, it went from country based armies, to just anyone who wants to get in on the act, sanctioned or not, by the control "agency" at the top of the chain of command...and our own citizens wage the war...also with ACLU on their side...mmmmm..interesting cross connect....Not only that, but Europe is a fertile environment for the drug trade as well...another connection.

As far back as 1982, my military assignments had me directly interacting with the drug war. I often thought over all those years how the drug trade seemed to have been a illegal business for much of modern history, but there were the entities such as the Mafia, that did "manage" the trade. I'll admit, I haven't taken any dedicated time to study the history of this topic, and my knowledge is essentially exclusively derived from situations where the drug trade interjected itself into the world of military history. I'm striking out here in my limited commentary.

Anyhow, "competition" arose and other big players entered the market. After a while, then many "little people," as we are inclined to do after an unagreed to apprenticeship, leave the "company" employ, now empowered with sufficient knowledge to start up our own business in the trade. I firmly believe the big guys in the "management" shop lost control It has become a free-for-all market, so, much as like th GWoT, there sure isn't a central building where the head cheese sits. Which government does Osama

work for?

I believe our actions that show people that democracy, or at least that modeled into a look alike to our system, and that the Middle East, and other parts of the globe, will come along, merely because we have something special, that they want, also.

In the same vein, then I added this:

“A study of the manner in which Bismark unified Germany has some good lessons on how to make your enemy your friend. He did it from the position of strength. He was known to let von Moltke “show his stuff,” but only until the point had been made clear. A particular campaign into Denmark is a good case in point and I don’t have access to “On War” right this moment to dig up the one I’m thinking of.

To use a large warhead, or, like if you shoot “one” you’re really sending 10 (it’s a missile design thing) is pretty much an overkill.

While there are not moderate Muslims, there are many, as with Christians and Jewish people who claim the religion, but don’t spend much time really getting to know the faith. I attribute the lack of “moderate Muslim” response due to those who don’t really practice it except for show, then live a pretty regular life otherwise. To nuke a city (and one of our nukes is good enough to do that), would truly risk putting much of the world against us.

Unlike the surrender of the Japanese, where their culture held the Emperor as a god, and therefore to get him to come around was to get the Japanese to stop their aggression, the jihadis are still many splinter group with only the hate of all of the modern world connecting them. No central figure to pressure...”

It’s a thorny issue. I think I have found a proper corollary to the war without borders in the form of the GWOt, without excess hyperbole. Maybe we can look at the two wars in order to help fight each of them to a successful conclusion.

As the ending note, I’ve always been a cynic when it comes to believing that Congress would ever let the law enforcement and military get serious about winning the war on drugs, for most of them are lawyers, and I know a great deal of defense money is being made for their professional peers, so we’ll just be allowed to play at ending it, but never turned loose to get ‘er done.

And, there you have it. One man’s views. Maybe I’m off the mark, but maybe not.

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