

# The Global War On Terror: The Most Extensive and Successful Coalition Ever?

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## Abstract:

This essay covers three key aspects of pre-9/11 politics in America and discusses the battle of ideas between western culture and global terrorism. It also explores America's efforts leading the Global War On Terror (GWOT) coalition in Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, it uses several statistical measures to gauge the success of the GWOT. While the US and coalition forces have diminished the capabilities of terrorists, the means to reduce the appeal of Al-Qaeda's ideology and recruitment have been overlooked. This essay proposes the need to understand the root causes of terrorism and develop a sound strategy to undermine terrorist willpower in order to achieve success in the GWOT.

*Keywords: Global War On Terror; Al-Qaeda; Iraq; Afghanistan*

## INTRODUCTION

*"War ... is not merely a question of emergency, but rather of knowledge and encompassing strategy"*

*– Sun Tzu, Art of War*

Although the United States (US) Coalition in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) may be extensive, the results are limited. Since 9/11, the struggle against Al-Qaeda has resulted in "a battle of ideas" between western and jihadist value systems. With insurgency and terrorism on the rise, both Iraq and Afghanistan are far from becoming liberal democracies. Furthermore, the already weakened Coalition has begun to fracture, with muddled chains of command and restrictive rules of engagement.

This essay has three parts. First, it will cover three key aspects of pre-9/11 American politics before discussing the battle of ideas between western culture and global terrorism. Second, it will explore America's efforts leading the GWOT Coalition in Afghanistan and Iraq. Third, it will measure the success of the Coalition forces in the GWOT by examining terrorist casualty figures,<sup>1</sup> the insurgency in Iraq, Coalition control of territory, the limits of the Coalition, the number and frequency of terrorist attacks, and the spread

of liberal democracy. It will argue that the Coalition forces need to fight a long war as the appeal for Al-Qaeda's ideology increases.

## AMERICAN POLITICS BEFORE 9/11

It is important to understand three key elements of American politics prior to 9/11. First, the US role as the world's sole superpower lends the notion of "assertive realism" to perceptions of America security. Second, there has been a rise in the influence of a strong neo-conservative or ultra-nationalist "New American Century," with America providing global leadership for shaping the world into a liberal market. Third, neo-conservatives believed that the 1991 Gulf War was "unfinished business" and therefore that there was a need to remove Saddam Hussein's regime.<sup>2</sup> At the end of the Cold War, the US military had geared itself towards global power projection in the face of an uncertain threat. Then came 9/11.

## BATTLE OF IDEAS

Against the backdrop of 9/11 and previous trends in American politics, the National Security Strategy revealed that "the US is fighting a war against terrorism of global reach. The enemy is not a single political regime, person, religion or ideology. The enemy is terrorism—premeditated, politically motivated

violence perpetrated against the innocent.”<sup>3</sup> The GWOT has changed the nature of modern warfare and is different from “Clausewitzian war” such as World War I.<sup>4</sup> Global terrorism is a battle of ideas and some analysts have argued that it is the result of resistance against western culture and democratic values.<sup>5</sup>

## EXTENT OF AMERICAN-LED COALITION

Leading a Coalition sanctioned by the United Nations, America launched an invasion of Afghanistan barely three weeks after 9/11. The Coalition aimed to remove the Taliban regime, destroy Al-Qaeda bases and terrorist training facilities, and capture or kill Osama bin Laden. The invasion, known as Operation Enduring Freedom, saw the participation of 23 countries, led by the US.<sup>6</sup> Some historians have suggested that the launch of the war in Afghanistan marks the start of the GWOT.

Kreps argued that the US conducted the Afghanistan war unilaterally in combat operations and multilaterally in peacekeeping operations.<sup>7</sup> This argument supports his logic of “consequences” as specified according to (1) time horizon, and (2) operational payoff.<sup>8</sup> In the former, President Bush acknowledged that diplomacy or multilateral bargaining is time-intensive, which would in turn undermine America’s short-term security challenges.<sup>9</sup> In the latter, the US expected a resource-intensive Phase IV operation, which would increase America’s operational constraints and thus favoured a multilateral effort.

Rogers believed that the State of the Union address on 29 January 2002 by President Bush was “the high point of the war on terror,” where President Bush extended the GWOT to a global campaign and singled out Iran, North Korea and Iraq as the “axis of evil” due to their sponsorship of terrorism and intentions to develop weapons of mass destruction.<sup>10</sup> Other analysts saw the GWOT as a means for America to increase its influence across Europe and Central Asia.<sup>11</sup>

In mid-July 2003, only ten nations had deployed to Iraq.<sup>12</sup> There was a lack of international support for the invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 as compared to the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The US rationale for invading Iraq was weak and eventually proved to be groundless.<sup>13</sup> The Islamic countries and the NATO alliances (including France and Germany) strongly opposed the invasion. Hence, the US failed to obtain a UN Security Council resolution to justify their invasion.

Due to the war’s unpopularity, there was limited participation by the Coalition forces in active combat roles (with the exception of the British). Even media reports from US-friendly Arab states opposed American foreign policies, especially on the sensitive Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other critics suspected that the ulterior motive of the Americans was to gain access to Iraq’s oil resources.<sup>14</sup>

On 1 May 2003, President Bush declared that “major combat operations in Iraq have ended.”<sup>15</sup> By August 2003, the US forged new bilateral ties with other nations, resulting in an addition of twenty-six countries to the Coalition forces in the GWOT.<sup>16</sup>

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## SUCCESS IN THE GWOT?

The US-led Coalition adopted a conventional military strategy against the terrorist and insurgent threat. This strategy was inherently limited as the opposition’s will and morale were reinforced rather than undermined by superior Coalition firepower.<sup>17</sup> Although the initial military campaign in Iraq was a stunning display of American-led military capability, they failed to anticipate a fierce insurgent resistance bolstered by embittered locals.<sup>18</sup>

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*US Soldiers and French Commandos Conduct a Joint Reconnaissance Patrol*

Success in the GWOT needs to be viewed through both military and political lenses.<sup>19</sup> Hence, I will examine its success in the following areas: (1) terrorist casualty figures, (2) level of insurgency in Iraq, (3) Coalition control of territory, (4) limitations of the Coalition, (5) the number and frequency of terrorist attacks, and (6) success in spreading liberal democracy to Afghanistan and Iraq.

## CASUALTY FIGURES

The Bush administration claimed that the high casualties of the Al-Qaeda leaders and associates were strong indicators that the GWOT was progressing well. However, O'Hanlon and Adriana warn that such data is inaccurate and does not represent the actual progress in the broader political struggle.<sup>20</sup> Arguably, the Vietnam War has shown that high casualty figures are not necessarily an accurate measure of progress in an ideological struggle.

Relying solely on casualty figures to measure progress also does not take into account key factors such as morale, recruitment and financing of terrorists.<sup>21</sup> Angstorn argued that problems with the casualty figures include positive identification of the bodies, manipulation of the data for political and morale purposes, and problems differentiating between terrorist leaders and mere foot soldiers.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the Coalition's failure to capture or kill key Al-Qaeda figures for many years can be considered a victory for the terrorists.

## INSURGENCY IN IRAQ

The insurgency in Iraq shows no signs of collapsing.<sup>23</sup> Although there were reports of more than 50,000 insurgents being killed or detained, insurgent recruitment and multiple-fatality bombings have shown a positive upward correlation.<sup>24</sup> US intelligence was weak and there were insufficient American, Coalition and government troops in Iraq to stamp out the insurgency.<sup>25</sup>

Early April 2004 marked a strategic disaster for the Coalition mission in Iraq. Coalition forces and Iraq civilians suffered huge casualties in the assault on Fallujah and Sadr City.<sup>26</sup> Many foreign paramilitaries supporting the Al-Qaeda movement targeted the US and its Coalition partners. Iraq was seen as a valuable combat training area for generating new jihadists experienced in urban guerrilla warfare.<sup>27</sup>

## CONTROL OF TERRITORY

The invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan and the removal of the Al-Qaeda,<sup>28</sup> the Taliban and Saddam has not diminished the threat of terrorism. The Bush administration made control of territory a measure of their success.<sup>29</sup> However, the problem with this criterion is that the relinquishing of territory by insurgents does not mean the end of violence and the achievement of political aims. Whenever the Taliban or Al-Qaeda fighters faced an overwhelming number of US or Coalition forces, they chose not to fight but instead withdraw to sanctuaries among the local communities or across the border into Pakistan.<sup>30</sup>

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Al-Qaeda was forced to transform into an ideology to influence local and regional terrorists by the power of its reputation. They have been very successful in this transformation. In the case of Iraq, the Coalition's occupation and control of territories simply bred more terrorists and insurgents than ever before. There was fighting in almost every province and the Al-Jazeera media coverage of the Fallujah offensive led to a rise in support for bin Laden and Al-Qaeda.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, the Al-Qaeda associates in other countries continued to be active, and attacks in Tunisia, Kenya, Pakistan and Indonesia were planned and carried out independently.<sup>32</sup> Thus, controlling territories in Afghanistan and Iraq was ineffectual in the GWOT.

## LIMITS OF THE COALITION

The Coalition was portrayed by the media and the international community as a display of international cooperation in the GWOT. In reality, however, the Coalition was fraught with complexity and a lack of commitment.<sup>33</sup> Most nations joined the Coalition because of the economic incentives offered by the US Government.

The Coalition forces adopted restrictive rules of engagement, resulting in weak military offensive capabilities in Southern Iraq. Hence, the Muqtala al-Sadr's supporters successfully seized control of four provincial capitals in Southern Iraq.<sup>34</sup> History has also demonstrated that politicians frequently do not make the best decisions from a military standpoint.<sup>35</sup> In a Coalition force, politicians make decisions to pursue their individual interests rather than the interest of the "Coalition" or international community. Consequently, in Iraq, almost all nations had caveats which ranged from support agreements, geographical restrictions, rules of engagement, tactical requirements and chain of command.

The difficulties of Coalition command at war were also evident in Kosovo and Iraq—muddled chains of command were a constant. The 1999 Kosovo operations revealed that, in reality, most of the nations in the Coalition had to clear orders with their national political and military chains of command.<sup>36</sup> In the political realm, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo faced political, security and economic issues identical to the challenges faced by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq during the GWOT.<sup>37</sup> This included a lack of resources, national and international guidance in post-war operations.



Anti-War Demonstration in London, 20 March 2005

## NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

A decline in the number and frequency of terrorist activity may not reflect success in the GWOT. The Bush administration used the frequency of terrorist attacks to measure the success in the GWOT by claiming that at least ten serious Al-Qaeda terrorist plots had been disrupted since 9/11. Angstorm argued that this notion depends on a “counter factual” logic.<sup>38</sup> This is similar to the traditional problem with deterrence: the mere fact that there are no new terrorist attacks does not necessarily indicate that Al-Qaeda is inactive. In reality, the various Coalition actions led to an increase in terrorist activities in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>39</sup> In December 2009, there was a string of terrorist attacks by the Taliban in secure Kabul districts targeting foreign embassies, aid groups and government officials.<sup>40</sup>

The Al-Qaeda movement was more active after 9/11 and coordinated attacks continued to be carried out at a high level.<sup>41</sup> This did not include loosely coordinated attacks or attacks by jihadists in Iraq and Afghanistan. If those were included, the increase in terrorist acts by the Al-Qaeda movement in the mid-2000s is “six-fold compared with the start of the decade.”<sup>42</sup> These widespread attacks highlighted the closely networked, yet dispersed nature of the Al-Qaeda movement and its supporters.

## SPREAD OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

The spread of liberal democracy is unlikely to contribute to any success in the GWOT. The Bush administration believed that regime change in so-called “rogue states” and spreading democracy in the Middle East will undermine the support and expansion of terrorist cells. On the contrary, Angstorm argued that the inherent openness of democratic societies makes terrorist activities easier to carry out.<sup>43</sup>

The reverse domino theory proposed that democratisation in Afghanistan and Iraq would lead to a wave of democratisation in Central Asia and

the Middle East.<sup>44</sup> On the contrary, newly democratic states that were previously autocracies tend to be more violent and undermine the notion that the spread of democracy leads to a more stable world order.<sup>45</sup>

Washington “lost the plot” in the Iraq war as the initial efforts were focused on the immediate military campaign and there was a lack of post-conflict planning.<sup>46</sup> The idea that a US-led Coalition could occupy and reform an Arabic nation was “a gross misreading of regional politics, culture and religion.”<sup>47</sup> History has shown that post-conflict operations are often overlooked by the Coalition. This is evident in Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia and Panama where wars won through tactical victory can turn out to be strategic failures.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, the prospects of an Iraqi government exercising true liberal democracy seem bleak. The

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Iraqi government is weak and made up of former exiles. In the face of complex violence and attempts to safeguard the government’s interests, there are little incentives to cooperate within the government in nation building.<sup>49</sup> Many analysts in the Middle East were also suspicious of the huge investments pumped into the US Embassy in Baghdad and

the five-year terms imposed by the CPA on the key Iraqi government appointments. The high insurgency rate also meant that the Iraqi government depended largely on US military power for survival.<sup>50</sup>

## TOWARDS THE LONG GWOT

As the GWOT continues, there is a tendency to refer to it as “The Long War Against Islamofascism,”<sup>51</sup> the greatest threat to western civilisation. Other critics see the war as counterproductive to western security interests and with the potential to destabilise global security.<sup>52</sup> Coalition forces will need to prepare for a long war against terrorism. However, the Coalition is weakening, with the US, Britain and a few other nations making limited commitments towards the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Cross highlighted that the battle of ideas against an “invisible enemy” must be fought using diplomacy, foreign and economic policies, and the weapons of the information age.<sup>53</sup> The Coalition cannot be entirely successful in eliminating terrorism but can undermine terrorism as a force in international affairs through a long campaign in the battle of ideas.

## CONCLUSION

Success in the GWOT has been limited. The US and Coalition forces have degraded terrorist capabilities, disrupted some of its plans and operations, and wiped out some of the key members in the leadership. But the need to reduce the appeal of Al-Qaeda’s ideology and limit terrorist recruitment were grossly overlooked.<sup>54</sup> As Sun Tzu pointed out aptly in the *Art of War*, we need to understand the root causes of terrorism and develop a sound strategy to undermine the willpower of terrorists. Only then will we achieve success in the GWOT. 🌐

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“Terror that Mocks the Imagination.” *Straits Times*, 30 December 2009, A17.

## ENDNOTES

1. However, success is more than just numbers, which will be examined in this paper.
2. Paul Rogers, *Why We’re Losing the War on Terror* (Polity Press, 2008), 65-66.
3. *National Security Strategy of the US* (Washington, DC: White House, 2002).
4. Clausewitz wrote based on his experiences with Napoleon. World War I involved large scale attrition warfare between Germany and France. See Major General Timothy Cross, “Can We Win the War on Terror?” *The British Army Review*, no. 14, Autumn (2006): 24.
5. As the “enemy” lives amongst the people and needs to be separated from them, the GWOT aims to prevent terrorists (including suicide bombers) from achieving their objectives. The GWOT does not have a clear victory against any tangible entity like an institution or government body. In other words, the GWOT seems to be a fight against shadows. The GWOT has expanded from conventional visible battle to covert operations and from military actions to sanctions. See Cross, “Can We Win the War on Terror?,” 25.

6. Ricardo S. Sanchez and Donald T. Philips, *Wiser in Battle – A Soldier’s Story* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 143.
7. Sarah Kreps, “When Does the Mission Determine the Coalition? The Logic of Multilateral Intervention and the Case of Afghanistan.” *Security Studies* 17, no. 3 (July-September 2008): 537.
8. Kreps suggested that “consequences” are specified according to time horizon. Time horizon creates tradeoffs between the long-term benefits of multilateralism and short-term benefits of unilateralism. The nature of intervention will affect the operational payoffs of multilateralism. See Kreps, “When Does the Mission Determine the Coalition?,” 531-567.
9. The incentives of unilateralism allow America to move faster, without the need to rally for UN support. Furthermore, campaign planning will be easier without the Coalition’s restrictive rules of engagement and national caveats. See Kreps, “When Does the Mission Determine the Coalition?,” 533.
10. Rogers, *Why We’re Losing the War on Terror*, 80.
11. *Ibid.*, 84.
12. In addition to US, Great Britain, Australia, Poland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Denmark and South Korea.
13. Saddam Hussein would provide weapons of mass destruction to terrorists.
14. Bruce R. Pirnie and Edward O’Connell. *Counterinsurgency in Iraq (2003 – 2006)* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 63-64.
15. Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle – A Soldier’s Story*, 174.
16. The Pentagon directed CENTCOM to accelerate the flow of the Coalition forces into Iraq. These countries include Tonga, Croatia, Nepal, Bosnia, Uzbekistan, the Netherlands, Spain, Hungary, Ukraine, Slovakia, Macedonia, Thailand, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, New Zealand, the Philippines, Fiji, Portugal, Norway, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Japan and Singapore. See Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle*, 244.
17. The success of the GWOT is not measured by the side that possesses the most sophisticated or high technological weapons and systems. See Cross, “Can We Win the War on Terror?,” 25. The Coalition nations are unlikely to impose their way of life or value systems by bombing the terrorist into submission.
18. Brian Michael Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy Strengthening Ourselves* (Santa Monica, CA, 2006), 38.
19. Thus far, the Coalition achieved little success because the GWOT in Afghanistan and Iraq was largely driven by American foreign policy whose main objective was to retain political power back in the US. For example, in mid-April 2004, the Bush administration ordered a cease-fire in Fallujah and halted the planned capture of Muqtada al-Sadr in Najaf. The Bush administration knew that the risk was high—they would have no time to recover before the November presidential elections if there were any serious mishaps in Fallujah or Najaf and in the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people. See Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle – A Soldier’s Story*, 371; and Jan Angstrom, “Victory in the War on Terrorism,” *Understanding Victory and Defeat in Contemporary War*, eds. Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 94.
20. O’ Hanlon, Micheal and Adriana Lins de Albuquerque, “Scoring the Iraq Aftermath” *National Interest*, Winter (2004): 31-35.
21. Similarly in Jakarta, despite the deaths of several top fugitives, terrorist cells across Indonesia are actively recruiting members and planning attacks. See “Noordin Dead, but Indonesia Terror Cells Still Active,” *Straits Times*, 23 December 2009, A10.
22. Angstrom, “Victory in the War on Terrorism,” 101.
23. Iraq’s resistance comprises a number of independent groups united in their goal to drive the Americans out of Iraq. There are some links to Saddam Hussein loyalists, purged Baathist Party members, Sunnis and Jihadist.
24. Rogers, *Why We’re Losing the War on Terror*, 96.
25. Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation*.
26. Freeman, *Freedom or Security*, 74.
27. Rogers, *Why We’re Losing the War on Terror*, 96.
28. The Al-Qaeda movement aims to (1) evict crusader forces (US military presence in Middle East), (2) terminate the House of Saud (as a US ally), (3) replace pro-western regimes, (4) support Palestine and separatist movements, and more importantly, (5) re-establish some form of Islamist Caliphate. See *Ibid.*, 126-127.
29. The US-led Coalition successfully invaded Afghanistan and Iraq to fight terrorists abroad and the Bush administration repeatedly made connections to the states that allegedly sponsored terrorism. See Angstrom, “Victory in the War on Terrorism,” 102.
30. Rogers, *Why We’re Losing the War on Terror*, 78.

31. In the Fallujah offensive, the US government apparently did not seek consensus from the political leadership of the Coalition nations to attack Fallujah. This caused great discontent among the political leaders of the Coalition. Due to the large number of civilian casualties and the political instability of the Sunni council in Iraq, the Coalition nations were exerting tremendous pressure on US to stop the fighting. See Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle*, 353. Some Arab analysts point to the assault on Fallujah as "Arab's 9/11." The city was a centre for insurgent actions and thus presented huge problems for the US and the Coalition forces. The Fallujah assault had little impact on the insurgency. Moreover, the Middle East media coverage portrayed a violent and determined occupying power that was bent on wrecking a city to pursue its own objectives. Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 110.
32. Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 129.
33. Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle – A Soldier's Story*, 245.
34. *Ibid.*, 336.
35. During the battle of the Bulge in World War II, General Dwight Eisenhower (Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe) had to contend with British PM Winston Churchill, US President Franklin Roosevelt, the Russian leadership and the rifts between the British and American generals on the ground in Belgium. See *Ibid.*, 136.
36. Sanchez expressed that he had to "consider nation interests, internal national politics, cultural sensitivities and international political implication when developing a plan of action." See *Ibid.*, 117 and 136.
37. The Coalition Provision Authority was assigned to administer post-war Iraq, with the military in support. However, the command and control channel between the CPA and military was poorly defined. See *Ibid.*, 179.
38. Angstrom, "Victory in the War on Terrorism," 104.
39. The closing of Muqtada al-Sadr's newspaper *Hawza*, seizing Mustafa al-Yaqoubi, recovering ground occupied by Shiites and the offensive into Fallujah. This included blowing up oil terminals, cutting off line of communications, bombing of government buildings and targeting key Baghdad infrastructure locations. The insurgents had turned to kidnapping foreign diplomats and holding them for ransom or executing them. Among the victims were Italians and Koreans. See Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle*, 354 and 370.
40. "Suicide Attack at 'Secure' Kabul District," *Straits Times*, 16 December 2009, A13.
41. The attacks were primarily against western or pro-western targets. See Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 129-131. In 2003, there were bomb attacks in Casablanca, Riyadh, Jakarta and Istanbul. In 2004, there were more attacks in Madrid, Tashkent (capital of Uzbekistan), Jakarta and Sinai (Israel). In 2005, multiple bombings were reported in London, Bali, Karachi. In 2006, Dahab (Egypt), Karachi, Damascus, Abqaiq oil plant (Saudi Arabia) were bombed. In 2007, there were bombings in Algeria.
42. Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 131.
43. These activities include reconnaissance, intelligence collection, planning and targeting. See Angstrom, "Victory in the War on Terrorism," 106.
44. *Ibid.*
45. This is evident in the December 8, 2009 coordinated suicide attacks that killed 127 people in Baghdad and undermined the new Iraqi government's claims of improved security ahead of the March 2010 election. See "US on Track to Leave Iraq," *Straits Times*, 10 December 2009, A28.
46. Stabilisation and post-conflict peace building leads to a liberal and democratic Afghanistan. Yet this was not the priority for the Bush administration. See Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 80. The Pentagon's key focus was to destroy the Taliban and Al-Qaeda leadership and extend the war to Iraq.
47. Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 92.
48. Sanchez and Philips, *Wiser in Battle*, 114.
49. Rogers, *Why We're Losing the War on Terror*, 113.
50. *Ibid.*, 98-99.
51. Rogers argued that the events of September 11 were caused by Al-Qaeda, Hizbullah, Hamas, the insurgents in Iraq, the Taliban in Afghanistan and other radicals in Pakistan, all subsumed into a single entity. See *Ibid.*, 119.52. David Boey, "Singapore on Hit List: Not Unexpected, Say Terror Experts," *Straits Times*, 16 March 2007.
52. *Ibid.*, 119.
53. Cross, "Can We Win the War on Terror?," 26.
54. Following the failed 2009 Christmas Day attack on a US-bound passenger plane, the head of US national intelligence warned that "future terrorist attacks will be harder to foil" as Al-Qaeda and its affiliate organisations (including suicide terrorists) deepen their knowledge on US defences and design ways to



get past them. See "Future Plots Harder to Foil," *Straits Times*, 1 January 2010, [http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/World/Sotry/STIStory\\_472545.html](http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/World/Sotry/STIStory_472545.html). There is an emerging pattern of terrorists using new and imaginative ways to set off charges to destroy a plane in mid-flight ("Terror that mocks the imagination." 2009). The Al-Qaeda's latest statement "called on Muslims to declare an all-out war against the Crusaders in the Island of Mohammed (the Arabian Peninsula)." The young Nigerian bomber's privileged background also reinforced analyses that radical causes attract not only the marginalised or oppressed as "there will be more just like the young Nigerian who will strike soon." See "Plane Plot: We did it, says Al-Qaeda Wing," *Straits Times*, December 30, 2009, A1.



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