EDITED BY **DIANA AYTON-SHENKER**

FOREWORD BY ANDREW ZOLLI

A NEW GLOBAL AGENDA

PRIORITIES, PRACTICES, AND PATHWAYS

OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

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THE NEW SCHOOL

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CHAPTER 20

The Geopolitical Convolutions of Fighting the Global War on Terrorism

Hall Gardner

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the George W. Bush administration was able to mobilize the support of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, NATO, the European Union (EU), and much of the world, for the global war on terrorism (GWOT). At that time, GWOT was largely perceived as a war against the "anti-state terrorist" organization al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and against those states that appeared to provide protection or support for al-Qaeda, primarily the Taliban leadership of Afghanistan. Yet, as time progressed, GWOT has morphed into a truly global war against a number of different "anti-state terrorist" groups as well as so-called rogue states that support different forms of "terrorist" actions. President Donald Trump has now hoped to forge a US-led coalition of sixty-eight countries against al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS). Yet without a truly engaged international diplomatic peace offensive, there will be no end in sight to the ongoing GWOT, despite the apparent defeat of IS in Iraq and Syria.

The September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon killed as many as three thousand people of differing social, economic, and religious backgrounds and may have cost at least $1–2 trillion in damages (including estimated stock losses), of which roughly $40 billion was actually insured and lost by insurance companies.[1] Nevertheless, the GWOT has been disproportionate and not entirely, nor exclusively aimed at al-Qaeda and those individuals actually responsible for committing the September 11, 2001, atrocity. Both the human and political-economic costs of the US retaliation far exceed the actual damage caused by those attacks.

Since 2001, approximately 370,000 people have been killed by violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. At least 200,000 civilians have died in this fighting. Moreover, at least 10.1 million Afghans, Pakistanis, and Iraqis have been surviving as war refugees in other countries, or been forcibly displaced from their homes. The United States alone has spent or committed $4.8 trillion dollars on the wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. These current wars have

been paid for almost entirely by borrowing. Depending on the costs of the ongoing wars against the IS, future interest payments could total over $7.9 trillion by 2053.[2] And it is only in early 2017 that the US Congress began to consider revoking the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force after sixteen years.[3]

These costs are, to a large extent, due to the new form of post–Cold War "short war illusion," and in part due to the geopolitical complications of fighting wars against both states that support "terrorist" movements (i.e., Afghanistan under the Taliban, Iraq under Saddam Hussein, and Syria under al-Assad) and anti-state "terrorist" movements (such as al-Qaeda and its affiliates, the IS, and the Taliban). The situation has been made even more complex in that Washington, while fighting states that support terrorism in American eyes, has aligned itself with states that have been accused of supporting differing terrorist movements, such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Qatar, and Turkey, and which do not necessarily support the same groups that Washington supports. For example, Washington has backed differing partisan groups, such as the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), which represents the armed wing of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), but which both Syria and NATO ally Turkey consider to be a "terrorist" organization.

In terms of the "short war illusion," the actual military interventions in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, and elsewhere, such as Libya in 2011, have generally been short. There has been a minimum of American (and European) deaths in accord with the "zero death syndrome," at least in the initial offensives of these conflicts. But in the aftermath, "peacekeeping," "peacemaking," and "nation building" have proven to be very long, costly (both in terms of resources and in terms of personnel, with considerable numbers of US soldiers severely wounded[4]), and not very coordinated or effective. For example, US efforts at rebuilding Afghanistan (and engaging in "peacemaking") have cost more in comparative terms than the US Marshall Plan did in rebuilding Europe after World War II. The United States and other international donors have continued to fund more than 60 percent of the Afghan national budget, as well as numerous reconstruction programs and projects that currently operate off budget. It consequently appears that the Afghan government is not self-sustainable just at a time when the United States and NATO have considered pulling out most of their forces.[5] This does not even take into account the potential costs of rebuilding Iraq and Syria, among other countries.

These considerations raise questions as to whether or not the GWOT, with its focus on both states that support terrorism and anti-state terrorist groups, has generally caused more harm than good. US-led military interventions were not initially wars of existential necessity or wars of strategic imperative from the standpoint of American national interests—but purely discretionary and noncompulsory conflicts.[6] Arguably, the Bush administration's efforts to counter the perceived loss of US hegemony over the Arab/Islamic world by means of massive military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq (in effect falling into the trap set by Osama bin Laden) has actually worked to accelerate the

loss of American authority and legitimacy, and possibly helped fuel the spread of differing terrorist movements. Moreover, the ongoing state and anti-state resistance to GWOT—has continued to draw the United States deeper into the quicksand of wider wars.[7]

The question remains as to whether President Trump's approach to GWOT—including his efforts to forge a US-led coalition of sixty-eight countries against the IS[8]—may trigger the spread of militant Islamist movements even further throughout the wider Middle East, Europe, and into other regions as well. The issue is further complicated by the fact that different states, including US allies, appear to be backing different partisan or "terrorist" organizations, whether by funding through government or private sources or through Islamist charities. Trump's apparent tilt in support of Saudi interests since his May 2017 trip to Saudi Arabia risks exacerbating the ongoing proxy war in which both Saudi Arabia and Iran back rival Sunni and Shi'ite "terrorist" organizations or authoritarian state leaderships throughout the "wider Middle East." This ongoing Sunni–Shi'a rivalry is further embroiled by conflict among Sunni states and different anti-state "terrorist" factions. The Trump administration's tilt toward Saudi Arabia, coupled with a number of US attacks on Russian-backed Syrian or Iranian forces—including the Tomahawk cruise missile strikes on a Syrian airbase in response to reports of a Syrian chemical attack on its own population—now risks the possibilities of major power war.[9]

To address these questions and consider strategies to reduce or put an end to acts of terrorism, this chapter explores multiple dimensions of terrorism, analyzes the US-led GWOT, examines potential ramifications of the Trump administration, and finally concludes with the geopolitical complications and implications of GWOT in Syria as an emerging threat to global security, while pointing to the need for engaged international diplomacy to bring GWOT to an end.

The Question of State-Supported versus Anti-State Terrorism

In order to move beyond stereotyped, one-dimensional conceptions, it is important to develop a clearer understanding of the multiple dimensions of "terrorism"—as it takes both state-supported and anti-state forms. To try to provide a simple definition (there are more than one hundred definitions), "terrorism" can be defined as a sociopsychological concept that describes any act that intends to bring fear into the mind of others. Any person threatening significant harm to another person for any reason can be considered as engaging in an act of "terror." Yet, when one is speaking of an act of "terrorism," then this generally implies a socially or politically organized act of violence against others, or even an act of an individual (or "lone wolf") that is staged against a sector of society or members of a government. Social and political acts of "terrorism" take essentially two conflicting, yet often interacting and intercommunicative, forms: state-sponsored and anti-state terrorism.[10]

State-Sponsored Terrorism

The first form of terrorism—which is actually more prevalent—is "state-supported" or "state-sponsored" terrorism, in which the state leadership, regardless of its political orientation (whether democratic, socialist, communist, fascist, theocratic, monarchist, authoritarian, etc.), threatens some form of violence against a rival state's political leadership, its military, and/or its population in an effort to provoke fear and terror. The threat and use of force is part of the panoply of tools that states can use against each other in order for one state leadership to attempt to press the rival state (and its population) to behave in the manner demanded. The greater the threat to use force, and the greater the force is actually used, the greater the sociopsychological impact of the use of terror on the general population and state elites—particularly if the attacks hit members of the civil society and are not merely aimed at a state's official military or police forces, which are generally the target of terrorist groups with more traditional or realistic goals.

State leadership can also threaten its own citizens if it is judged to be in the so-called national interests of the leadership—however those interests are determined. Even democratic states—although to a lesser extent than authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, which are not constrained by rules of law—can "terrorize" their own citizens or those of other countries who are believed to be subverting the established order. In democratic societies, acts of state-supported "terrorism" (including acts of torture or the euphemistic "enhanced interrogation techniques") against presumed "terrorists" or other designated individuals can be rationalized and legally justified under official declarations of a national "state of emergency."[11] These actions are often carried out covertly, by intelligence agencies that may or may not be under the full control of the legislative, judicial, or executive branches. The CIA's drone operations in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya, for example, may not be under full US governmental control and possess questionably legal validation.

Whether a state is democratic or not, fears of anti-state terrorism can undermine legal safeguards against the abuse of state power. This can result in infringements of civil rights and counteractions ranging from invasion of privacy to curfews, state repression, torture, internment camps, extrajudicial execution, democide, and even genocide. The response of states to both nonviolent and violent actions may result in acts justified as "counterterrorism" or "terrorizing the terrorists"—in the effort to obtain and sustain both allegiance and obedience, and to repress dissent and opposition. This can result in state counteractions that are disproportionate to the crimes committed, because the anti-state terrorists are seen as directly challenging the legitimacy of leaders to rule. To underscore the point, even though traffic accidents generally cause more deaths per year in most countries than do acts of anti-state terrorism, leaders do not necessarily react to even major traffic accidents—unless these daily travesties are somehow seen as challenging their political legitimacy.

Anti-State Terrorism

The second and opposing form of terrorism is "anti-state terrorism." Anti-state terrorism seeks to challenge the hegemony of the state often in response to acts of state-supported terrorism—although it is generally debated as to which side committed the first and most severe acts of violence against the other. The basic motivation for an anti-state and/or anti-society attack is often based on differing ideological rationale, which may or may not be logically consistent or based on verifiable facts.

There are several types of anti-state "terrorist" movements with differing goals and objectives. First, there are anti-state secessionist movements that seek to achieve political independence from governments generally described as oppressive so as to gain social, political, economic, and cultural control over those territories once separated. These movements often claim to represent a specific ethnic identity, regional group, or other groups with common beliefs and ideologies. Second, there are political succession movements which seek to change governments by force through revolution or some form of *coup d'etat*, but which generally hope to control the same boundaries of the former state. Third, there are transnational pan-movements which seek to link differing leaderships across state boundaries.

In the case of al-Qaeda and the IS, transnational propaganda seeks to reach and recruit populations spanning the breadth of the Sunni Islamic world before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. These groups critique, often in apocalyptic terms, what they see as the general oppression of Sunni Muslims caused by the territorial division of the Ottoman Empire at the hands of the rival European powers, Russia, and China—due to the latter's control over Muslim Uighurs in the energy- and mineral-rich Xinjiang province (former eastern Turkestan). As takfiri jihadists, with Wahhabist-Salafist ideological roots, al-Qaeda and the IS not only oppose Zionism and Shi'a Iran, but they also likewise seek to overthrow the Arab Gulf monarchies, whose leaderships are perceived to be corrupt and only superficially Islamic. More specifically, in the case of the IS, the goal has been to forge a unity of Sunni Muslims in both Iraq and Syria—to the exclusion of other ethnic and religious communities. This goal may soon begin to morph as IS members join Islamist struggles in other countries. Already, in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, the IS has attempted to link its version of Wahhabist-Salafist ideology with a Deobandi version of Islamic theosophy, but has thus far been opposed by the Taliban.[12] It is not always clear who is actually in charge of anti-state terrorist or partisan groups. Some anti-state groups may represent indigenous partisans who oppose a specific state or states for somewhat similar reasons and who hope to obtain support from other partisans either inside or outside that particular state and society. The dilemma is that such groups can eventually become supported or financed by states that possess sympathy with their cause or that believe they can manipulate that cause to their advantage—usually with covert aid and assistance. Anti-state groups that cannot find domestic sources of funding, or that cannot engage in self-sustaining black and/or gray market activities (such as drug

trafficking), may accordingly fall under the sway of wealthier states or organizations. In such a way, one cannot be certain if anti-state groups necessarily possess their own self-realized goals and agenda as they claim. It is possible that these groups may be operating as surrogates in the interests of another state or organization. The latter states or organizations may want to support acts of "terrorism" through surrogates precisely because they do not want to exhibit their influence and activities openly.

Comparative Analysis of Terrorism Forms

There is a key difference between state-supported and anti-state terrorism. States are generally seen as possessing *legitimate* means to threaten compliance to the government as perceived by both the domestic society and international governments—assuming that the state is recognized by those governments. State-supported "terrorism" generally possesses the social, political, and international legitimacy that the state can then abuse if it decides to engage in violence—even state leaderships can step beyond the boundaries of domestic and/or international laws governing human rights and the laws of war.

Unlike states, anti-state movements possess no real legitimacy to use violence—and must build their legitimacy over time. That legitimacy is often—and ironically—achieved by the use of violence, so that leaders described as "terrorists" can become "freedom fighters," and even win the Nobel Peace prize, such as Menachem Begin, Yasser Arafat, and Nelson Mandela. But there is no way to know whether anti-state "terrorist" or partisan groups will rule fairly and justly—once, and if, they obtain power. Both Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe, for example, were considered "terrorists" at early stages of their career, prior to seizing power. Yet Mandela voluntarily stepped down from the presidency of South Africa, while Mugabe has tightened his dictatorship in Zimbabwe.[13]

Both state-supported and anti-state "terrorism" possess a whole range of possible threat options and tools that are intended to induce fear or terror in others and achieve domestic and/or international ends, depending upon their capabilities, intentions, and will to power. Both state-supported and anti-state "terrorism" are in a dialectical battle to claim legitimacy for their various causes, and often by using violence to achieve those causes and in accusing their rivals of acts of "terrorism."

In contrast to already established states, including countries with highly repressive governments, anti-state movements generally possess little legitimacy unless they have built up a substantial popular following. They rely primarily on "moral" claims against state injustice and corruption, which they denounce and critique by means of counter-ideology. For example, anti-state movements can propagandize about high levels of unemployment and underemployment in an effort to attract followers. These groups can blame state leadership for corruption and police repression or for mismanagement of the economy and for the "terror"—often attributed to globalization—that can result from the loss of one's livelihood.

At the same time, however, once anti-state groups go underground, they often oppose even legitimate state reforms in the fear that such reforms will eventually gain popular support and thereby strengthen the power and authority of those state authorities whom they oppose. Such groups then demand "revolution" on their terms, and do not advocate mere reforms of the leadership in power.

Hard-line opposition to government policies does not, however, mean that it is absolutely impossible to make some form of political trade-offs with such terrorist groups depending on the situation. Differing political accords can be reached with some groups, such as Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), among others. These organizations had been denounced as anti-state "terrorist" groups in the past, but were eventually willing to accept power-sharing accords.[14] Even Hizb'allah, denounced by the United States as a terrorist organization, has engaged in political compromises and power sharing in the Lebanese cabinet and parliament. The political problem is that once an organization is labeled a "terrorist" organization, this makes it extremely difficult to engage in diplomacy with such organization as both government officials and private individuals (including nongovernmental organizations) may be banned from making any form of contact. Often, negotiations need to take place through third parties, which recognize both sides to a dispute.

Anti-state terrorism usually adopts a critical ideology in an effort to undermine the legitimacy of the states and societies that the group is struggling against—often in the proclaimed hope that the sociopolitical movement can achieve a new form of governance. Effective marketing of an anti-state group's counter-ideology is crucial. Acts of terror become a trademark for some anti-state organizations for media and promotional purposes. Some acts of terror and suicide missions are staged to show the world that the group is still alive and that the cause is not lost. Contrary to realism and rational actor models, suicide for a cause greater than oneself is seen as a means to attract new followers. Moreover, the asymmetrical nature of new forms of "hybrid warfare" (involving cyber sabotage, use of drones, suicide bombings, passenger planes, or vans, among other techniques to kill and provoke terror) can provide some tactical advantages to lesser anti-state actors—including "lone wolves"—relative to states, which generally possess superior force capabilities.[15]

Anti-state groups accordingly need a powerful system of beliefs and interpretation of social, political, and religious "reality" to attract followers and to critique and undermine state legitimacy. Concurrently, such groups need to build up their own legitimacy over time against the beliefs, ideology, and religion of their "oppressors," "enemies," or "infidels." The more the state represses, it is hoped, the greater the social resistance will grow. The IS, for example, possesses strong propaganda capabilities given its use of social media, a radio station, magazines, videos, photos, and propaganda distribution in many languages.[16] Attacks against cultural and religious symbols (such as the IS's demolition

of two mausoleums in Palmyra, the Taliban's destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan, and Ansar Dine's destruction of nine mausoleums and the door of the Sidi Yahia mosque in Timbuktu) are not only crucial for destroying the "oppressor's" identity, but also in helping to build a counter-ideology.

The US-Led GWOT

To understand how the US-led GWOT impacts the future of global security, this section reviews how the crisis came about. Just after the al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the two major symbols of American financial and military power, respectively, the Bush administration declared a "global war on terrorism" (GWOT) on "every terrorist group of global reach." This declaration then led to major US-led military interventions into both Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003—even though those countries, particularly Iraq, were only tangentially related to the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States.

The direct military intervention phase of the Bush administration's GWOT in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, OEF) was initiated on October 7, 2001, under a general UN mandate—which the Bush administration largely used as a blank check for a more extensive war against both "rogue states" that support "terrorist" organizations and anti-state "terrorist" organizations. The peacekeeping, peacemaking, and "nation-building" phase of that war began in December 2001 after the International Conference on Afghanistan held in Bonn, Germany, which had established a provisional government under the leadership of Hamid Karzai, which was protected by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, but which largely excluded the majority Pashtun tribal population, even if the latter did not all back the Taliban.

OEF was officially ended by the Obama administration on December 31, 2014, but this operation has been succeeded by Operation Freedom's Sentinel. In the meantime, GWOT has spread to the largely uncontrolled tribal Pashtun regions of northern Pakistan, which have thus far served as a safety zone for anti-NATO Afghan militias. Osama bin Laden was able to escape to Pakistan after the battle of Tora Bora in December 2001—in part because the Pentagon relied on Afghan militias and did not deploy sufficient US forces, and in part because the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence purportedly wanted to keep bin Laden alive in order to provide support for differing Islamist factions in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and elsewhere, after the September 11, 2001, attacks. Even after bin Laden's assassination in Pakistani territory by US Navy SEALs under President Obama's command in 2011, Islamabad, as a major non-NATO ally, continued to support a number of Islamist groups in Afghanistan and in India-controlled Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan—in a hope to gain what it has called "strategic depth" versus India.

In addition to the Afghanistan/Pakistan dimension of OEF, other regional dimensions of OEF included the battle against differing Islamist movements in the Philippines, around the Horn of Africa, in the Trans-Sahara, and in the Caribbean and Central America. The OEF forces also possessed basing rights until 2014 in Manas, Kyrgyzstan, which helped to supply US and NATO forces

in Afghanistan. (The US military presence in Kyrgyzstan was protested by both Russia and China.) The OEF force was concurrently involved in fighting Islamist groups in the Georgian Pankisi Gorge valley near the Chechen border. Both Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin had intervened against Islamist secessionist movements in the first (December 1994 to August 1996) and second (August 1999 to April 2009) Chechen wars—in which the Chechen groups involved were seen by Moscow as backed at least in part by Saudi Arabia. (Pankisi Gorge has a Chechen/Ingush Muslim population of roughly ten thousand.) Here, for example, Northern Caucasian suicide bombers, often called "Black Widows" because they may have lost close relatives in the brutal Russian-Chechen wars since 1994, or in more recent clashes with Russian-backed forces, have engaged in a number of "terrorist" attacks throughout Russia.[17]

In 2003, GWOT entered into yet another phase with the US-led military intervention against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein, this time without a UN Security Council mandate. Operation Iraqi Freedom largely diverted resources, manpower, and intelligence away from the initial focus on al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and ineffective "nation building" in Afghanistan. As was the case in Afghanistan, the actual military intervention phase of that war was brief (from March 20 to May 1, 2003), but the peacekeeping and peacemaking phase still has not come to a full end despite President Obama's promises to pull US forces out in 2014.

The US-led military intervention was not only intended to eliminate weapons of mass "terror" (which were not found) and Saddam Hussein's leadership, but was at least initially intended to bring peace, if not "democracy," to the entire region. In order to help justify the United Kingdom's participation in the Iraqi war effort, UK prime minister Tony Blair in particular argued that the US-led intervention in Iraq would be followed by international efforts to achieve peace between Israel and the Palestinians—efforts led by the Quartet Group of the UN, the EU, the United States, and Russia. Those efforts largely fizzled out by 2015, when Blair stepped down as Middle East peace envoy. But similar peace talks need to be revived in a new format and under new leadership—just as protest has begun to erupt over new Israeli security measures at the al-Aqsa Mosque in July 2017. As to be argued, more extensive international diplomatic efforts will be needed if a modicum of peace can be established throughout the wider Middle East.

Following the forced regime change and total collapse of the Iraqi state in 2003, largely due to the Bush administration decision to eliminate the Ba'ath Socialist Party altogether (which had controlled the entire government, military, and educational system), the country became a highly unstable and conflictual "democratic federation" of essentially Shi'ite, Kurd, and Sunni regions. In effect, the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 eventually served the interests of al-Qaeda, IS, and Iran—particularly given Iranian infiltration of the collapsed Iraqi state in an effort to support the Iraqi Shi'a population after that war and to gain an ally.[18] Burgeoning Iranian influence inside oil-rich Iraq has consequently helped to generate a regional proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran—given Saudi fears that Iran and Iraq together could eventually dominate oil export markets.

The ongoing conflict between Sunnis (which fell from being the ruling elite under Saddam Hussein to become a minority population in relatively poorer

regions of Iraq) and the Shi'a majority led to the eventual rise of the IS. This took place after Abu Musab al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden and formed al-Qaeda in Iraq in 2004 to fight against the predominantly Shi'a Iraqi federal government. By 2006, al-Qaeda in Iraq created an umbrella organization, Islamic State in Iraq (ISI); the latter was countered by the US troop surge and by the Sahwa (Awakening) councils, which had been created by Sunni Arab tribesmen with US assistance to fight al-Qaeda affiliates.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who had created Jamaat Jaysh Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamaah, the Army of the Sunni People Group, then became leader of ISI in 2010 and began rebuilding ISI's capabilities to fight the Iraqi government. By 2013, al-Baghdadi joined the ongoing post–Arab Spring rebellion against President Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Al-Baghdadi then helped set up the al-Nusra Front before merging his forces in Iraq and Syria in the creation of "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL). The leaders of al-Nusra and al-Qaeda were opposed to this decision, and separated from ISIL. At the end of December 2013, ISIL shifted its focus back to the Iraqi struggle and took control of Fallujah.

By June 2014, ISIL was able to overrun Mosul; it then advanced south toward Baghdad. ISIL declared the creation of a caliphate and changed its name to "Islamic State" (IS). Although Allied forces have attempted to combat IS in Mosul, Iraq and Raqqa, Syria from 2016 to June 2017 with heavy civilian casualties, IS members have nevertheless been able to create a network of affiliates in Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, Jordan, Indonesia, Lebanon, Palestine, the Philippines, and Libya.[19] Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and possibly Thailand, are also on the IS hit list. By 2016, Moscow began to warn that the Pankisi Gorge region has been attracting IS militants, just as the region once attracted al-Qaeda.[20]

IS has also been gaining entry into Afghanistan, and it took Tora Bora away from the Taliban after the US military bombed the former position of IS with the largest nonnuclear bomb in the US arsenal, the MOAB, as a means to "terrorize the terrorists."[21] After al-Qaeda sought to support the Islamist struggle against India in Kashmir, thus aligning with Pakistan, it has been reported that IS has begun to enter the Kashmir region as well. This dispute needs UN and Contact Group diplomatic attention before it once again heats up into violent conflict.[22]

The Trump Administration

Unlike his predecessor, President Obama, who tried to remove "terror" and "Islam" from the focus of GWOT and implement instead the "Struggle against Violent Extremism (SAVE)," President Donald Trump has gone in the opposite direction. Trump's anti-Islamic propaganda and rhetoric go far beyond any previous US administration. In his February 2017 address to Congress, Trump vowed to "eradicate 'radical Islamic terrorism' from the face of the Earth." Trump thus became the first American president to use the term "radical Islamic terrorism."[23] Neither the administration of George W. Bush nor Barack Obama had officially referred to "Islamic terrorism" because it conflates Islam as a religion with "terrorist" organizations that seek to manipulate Islamic beliefs for their own political purposes.[24]

Moreover, Trump's own anti-terrorist propaganda has appeared to provide ideological cover to the Sunni Wahhabist claims of Saudi Arabia against Iranian-backed Shi'a claims—even if Saudi Arabia and Iran have both been accused of supporting acts of "terrorism" over the years, and even if Saudi Arabia possesses major political disputes with other Sunni states, such as Turkey and Qatar. On the one hand, during his presidential election campaign in 2016, Donald Trump himself accused Saudi Arabia of secretly supporting the al-Qaeda September 11, 2001, attacks; other American political leaders have accused Riyadh of having prior knowledge of the attacks.[25] Saudi Arabia has likewise been accused of being a major financier of both the Afghan government and the Taliban through private and government channels.[26] For its part, Iran has also been accused of complicity with the September 11 attacks by granting al-Qaeda members responsible for the attacks passage through Iranian territory[27]—in accord with the dictum "the enemy of my enemy can become one's friend (at least on occasion)." On the other hand, by June 2017, President Trump appeared to be giving full support to the Saudi Arabia against Iran.[28]

Obama's approach had sought to counterbalance Saudi and Iranian interests, in the hope of achieving an eventual Saudi-Iranian *rapprochement*. By contrast, the Trump administration has strongly denounced Obama's efforts to forge a *rapprochement* with Iran. This was after the Obama administration, in working with the UN Security Council, plus Germany and the EU, had signed the Iranian nuclear framework accord (or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) in 2015. Washington then opened up the possibility of trade accords with Iran for the sale of Boeing commercial aircraft, for example, in rivalry with Europe's Airbus.[29] While Obama had initiated a major $110 billion arms sale to Saudi Arabia that Trump himself has appropriated (but in which not all contracts have been signed),[30] it was nonetheless the Obama administration's intent to prevent a regional arms race of nuclear "terror." Nevertheless, it appears highly unlikely that Trump will tear up the nuclear deal with Iran despite his accusation that it represents the "worst deal ever."[31]

In addition to engaging both overtly and covertly in conflicts in Afghanistan/northern Pakistan, Somalia, the Philippines, the Trans-Sahara, Libya, Iraq, and Syria, the United States since Obama has also provided arms for Saudi Arabia's battle against Iranian-backed Houthis—ostensibly in order to prevent Iran from obtaining a foothold in the Red Sea, while concurrently fighting al-Qaeda affiliates and IS in Yemen.[32] GWOT has consequently spread over an even wider area from Libya to Syria to Yemen as well as to sub-Saharan Africa—largely in the aftermath of the so-called 2011 Arab Spring movements.

Geopolitical Complications and Implications of GWOT in Syria

While the initial focus of GWOT was on al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, its scope has expanded dramatically. Although President Trump has reluctantly started to build up forces in Afghanistan (justified in part for the United States to obtain Afghanistan's mineral wealth), GWOT's major focus

now appears to be shifting toward the complex struggles taking place in Syria and Iraq. In September 2015, Moscow intervened in the Syrian conflict in order to quell the civil war that had largely been initiated during the Arab Spring in 2011. Contrary to US and European strategy, Moscow has generally opposed all groups that are unwilling to work with the essentially Iranian-backed Alawite regime of Bashar al-Assad. For their part, the United States and Europeans have focused on destroying the IS. The differing groups that oppose al-Assad are essentially Sunni Muslim, Christians, Yazidis, or secular Kurds. Sunni groups have been seen by the al-Assad regime as backed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar, while the United States and France, among other countries, have generally claimed to be backing the Kurds or so-called moderate Islamist forces—even if these latter groups must sometimes align with the battle-hardened al-Nusra Front (an affiliate of al-Qaeda). In late January 2017, the al-Nusra Front merged with four other groups to become Tahrir al-Sham.

The conflict between the Syrian al-Assad regime, seen as a state supporter of terrorism, and anti-state "terrorist" factions epitomizes the convoluted geopolitical struggle between state and anti-state forces. While President Obama had opted not to strike Syria after the al-Assad regime was accused of using Sarin poison gas in 2013 (without absolute proof) against its own people, the Trump administration ordered a strike of fifty-nine cruise missiles against a Syrian airbase after the regime was once again accused (again without absolute proof) of using poison gas in April 2017.[33] While Trump's cruise missile attack may have been intended to send a signal for Syria not to use chemical weaponry, this has evidently not prevented the Syrian regime from refraining from the use of conventional bombs, cluster bombs, phosphorus weapons, or "barrel bombs" (which can contain toxic materials and chlorine gas)—which evidently also kill innocent populations. Nor does it stop the extreme torture of the Syrian regime's opponents.

The US Tomahawk attack represented a new phase in GWOT—in that the Pentagon was not attacking an anti-state "terrorist" movement but the interests of a "rogue" state, which is nonetheless backed by both Russia and Iran. Then, in June 2017, Moscow put Washington on warning after a US F/A-18 Super Hornet shot down a Syrian SU-22 which had been dropping bombs near pro-US Syrian Democratic Forces. Washington has dubbed the latter group as "moderate," but this group is nevertheless seen by the al-Assad regime as a "terrorist" organization that has been seeking to undermine Assad's rule. Washington, along with Israel, may have also struck Iranian-backed militias, including the Lebanese group Hizb'allah, which has also moved into the oil-rich region where the United States shot down the Syrian jet.[34]

Further geopolitical convolutions in GWOT involving state-supported and anti-state "terrorism" are shown in Turkey–US relations with respect to the Kurds. US support for secular Kurdish factions in Syria to fight against IS angers Turkey, which sees Kurdish groups as anti-state "terrorist" factions. Ankara believes that Kurdish political parties and militias in Syria, such as the PYD, are linked to the radical Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey. These

Kurdish groups have been seen by Turkey as demanding independence and not "autonomy" as they claim.[35] Ironically, it is the Kurdistan Regional Government leadership which previously opposed independence, but which has begun to demand independence against the interests of the Turkish PKK and against the advice of the US government.[36] This would open a new can of worms if the Iraqi Kurds begin to fight the Iraqi government.

Other geopolitical complications arise from the dispute between Saudi Arabia and Qatar (both are Wahhabist states) over the latter's support for the Muslim Brotherhood and its efforts to forge a more balanced approach toward Iranian interests in the region. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, and Bahrain have all accused Qatar of supporting al-Qaeda affiliates, among other terrorist groups; they have also demanded that Doha close down its TV station Al Jazeera.[37] Concurrently, Hamas was enraged when Saudi Arabia demanded that Qatar put an end to its support for the Muslim Brotherhood and for Hamas as well. For its part, Turkey, which is aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, has strongly backed Qatar, stating that the latter does not support "terrorist" movements.[38] In essence, Saudi Arabia opposes Qatar's close ties to Iran (due to their shared gas field), while the UAE and Egypt have strongly opposed Qatar's support for the Muslim Brotherhood, ironically, as the UAE has close trade ties with Iran. Saudi Arabia's thirteen demands placed on Qatar in June 2017 to stop backing "terrorism"—with Turkey backing up Qatar to deter the tacit threat of Saudi invasion—nevertheless appear eerily reminiscent of Austro-Hungarian demands on Serbia not to support terrorist groups such as the Black Hand, which had assassinated the Archduke Ferdinand.[39]

Qatar claims that it does not back "terrorism." Doha argues that its real "crime" is to demand that all Arab countries permit greater freedom of debate through its TV station Al Jazeera—which has been seen as a major ideological force behind the Arab Spring protests—in that Al Jazeera journalists have been regarded as supporting both Islamist and democratic movements against authoritarian regimes and against US and European interests. A further irony is that Qatar hosts the Al Udeid Air Base from which the United States has operated many of its "counterterrorist" military operations in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

The problem of who is supporting whom is further complicated by the fact that the IS, to some extent, may have been initially enabled by Washington itself. Former US director of defense intelligence Michael Flynn asserted that the creation of a "Salafist principality" (which could include IS or other groups) in eastern Syria was a "willful act" by Washington. IS was then purportedly supported by the United States; Europeans; Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Arab Gulf states; and Turkey—in order to combat Syrian leader al-Assad.[40] In any case, whether or not the United States and Sunni Gulf states were directly or indirectly involved in the founding of the IS, the genie is out of the bottle and the states that may have initially been involved in the creation of IS have all accused each other of continuing to support IS—or else not doing enough to cut off its finances or destroy it. In any case, the Trump administration has

reportedly ended funding for a number of anti-Assad groups secretly supported by the CIA. This should somewhat strengthen the position of Syria, Russia, and Iran in the struggle for control over Syria and could possibly open the door to a confederal solution between the Assad government and those few partisan groups willing to work with the Assad regime. But this assumes that the United States, Europeans, and Saudi Arabia can eventually reach a common accord with Russia and Iran.

One way or another, the complex conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia impacts all the above actors. On the one hand, Iran sees itself engaged in a war of counter-encirclement against pan-Sunni movements that could destabilize the northern Caucasus, Central Asia, Iraq, and other areas in the wider Middle East. Tehran also opposes the essentially American-backed regimes of Saudi Arabia, plus the other Arab Gulf states—in addition to clashing with Israel, which has threatened to preempt Iran's proclaimed "peaceful" nuclear energy program if Iran does attempt to develop nuclear weapons. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia fears Iranian efforts to augment its political-economic influence in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen, and along the Red Sea, plus closer economic and energy ties to Qatar.

Increasingly backed by the Trump administration, Riyadh has supported differing Sunni rebel groups which have been struggling against the al-Assad regime, while also fighting a disastrous and expensive war (at $7 billion a month) against the Houthis in Yemen—who are seen as Iranian proxies. The United States has been assisting Saudi Arabia in the war with military supports and arms sales, but has been focusing primarily its air strikes on al-Qaeda affiliates and IS in Yemen. Ironically, Saudi Arabia's efforts to blockade Qatar as an indirect means to contain Iran may actually strengthen Iranian influence by bringing Iran and Turkey, plus Russia, closer together.[41]

Given these kind of complex, convoluted, and often contradictory approaches of major and regional powers toward differing partisan or "terrorist" movements—in which so-called anti-state terrorist organizations appear to be increasingly backed by states—the Trump administration will find it very difficult, if not next to impossible, to establish an effective sixty-eight-member coalition of military forces, involving the United States, NATO, the Europeans, Turkey, the Kurds, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Arab Gulf states, in the struggle against the IS. And if the latter does spread into new regions, it will prove very difficult to smother.

A separate, but related, issue is that President Trump's intent to slash the State Department budget by as much as 28 percent could undercut the long-term prospects for peace—as it would mean less resources for postconflict peacekeeping, for diplomatic solutions, and for social and political development in many of the areas where they are most needed. The defeat of IS alone will not put an end to the ongoing conflict between state-supported and anti-state "terrorist" or partisan factions. And despite the general failure of nation building in Afghanistan, different forms of international assistance, coupled with UN-mandated peacekeeping to provide stability, will be needed to help foster the development of the populations living in Afghanistan, northern Pakistan, Iraq,

and Syria, among others that have been ravaged by GWOT—if a general peace can eventually be implemented.

GWOT will not come to an end unless the Trump administration—or its successor—eventually finds a way to reach a *rapprochement* between Israel, Iran, Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia by way of settling the horrific conflict in Syria. Washington—in working in multilateral Contact Groups with Russia and other major and regional powers—also needs to engage in sincere diplomatic efforts to reconcile Israel and the Palestinians in a variant of the "two-state" solution. It will also prove necessary to reconcile Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and the Kurds, as well as India and Pakistan over Afghanistan and Kashmir—among many other disputes impacting the "wider Middle East." This means reaching power-sharing accords, high degrees of autonomy in certain regions, coupled with arrangements involving confederal governance—if partitions are to be avoided.

Despite the accusations against Qatar for its support for "terrorism"—of which many states are guilty, including the United States—one of Doha's strengths has been its diplomatic and financial role in engaging in *conflict mediation* in Lebanon, in Yemen, and throughout the region, including the 2011 Darfur Peace Agreement, with efforts also undertaken in Palestine (given Qatar's ties with both Israel and Hamas) and in the border conflict between Djibouti and Eritrea. Qatar is one of the few Sunni Arab countries that can negotiate with Iran. Doha has also sought to achieve positive ties with Israel—despite their disputes over the role of Hamas.

Doha had permitted the Afghan Taliban to open a political office in Qatar in 2013, which was abruptly closed, but has nevertheless helped to sponsor a number of international peace conferences, such as the Track II Doha Dialogue on "Peace and Security in Afghanistan" organized by the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs in 2016.[42] This conference took place when the official Quadrilateral Coordination Group on Afghan Peace and Reconciliation was at a standstill due to lack of Taliban participation. In April 2017, Moscow likewise organized a conference with Taliban participation, but in which the United States refused to participate. One option being considered is that of regional power-sharing arrangements between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

The point is that many of Qatar's efforts in *conflict mediation*—even if not all were successful—need to be supported by the United States, Russia, and the UN Security Council, through initiatives such as the Quartet Group of the UN, the EU, the United States, and Russia, among other possible Contact Groups involving regional powers. By drawing Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, as well as Israel, among other states, into wider international discussions, there will be a better chance to achieve *conflict resolution* throughout the "wider Middle East," as these states—and many (but not all) of the "terrorist" factions that they overtly or covertly support—will be pressed to make concessions and compromises. Without geopolitical settlements over the aforementioned regions, there is a real possibility that the GWOT will soon transmogrify into the next Major Power War.[43]

Notes

1. "How much did the September 11 terrorist attack cost America?" http://www.iags.org/costof911.html. The attackers themselves probably spent around $500,000 in the effort to organize the attacks from Afghanistan, Hamburg, Germany, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and from US territory as well.

2. http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/economic.

3. http://thehill.com/policy/defense/340330-possible-war-authorization-repeal-reflects-growing-shift-in-gop.

4. http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human/military/wounded.

5. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) (July 30, 2014). https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2014-07-30qr.pdf.

6. Chester Crocker, "The Place of Grand Strategy, Statecraft and Power in Conflict Management," in *Leasing Dogs of War*, Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall, eds. (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace Press, 2007).

7. It was the Carter administration which had initially encouraged the rise of Islamist movements in the effort to make it more likely that Moscow would intervene militarily in Afghanistan in December 1979. See Hall Gardner, *American Global Strategy and the "War on Terrorism"* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2007).

8. http://www.newsweek.com/us-allies-middle-east-nations-isis-trump-fight-571876.

9. See Hall Gardner, *World War Trump: The Risks of America's New Nationalism* (Prometheus Books: 2018, forthcoming).

10. See my concept of "four forms of terrorism," Gardner, *American Global Strategy*.

11. "The Committee finds, based on a review of CIA interrogation records, that the use of the CIA's enhanced interrogation techniques was not an effective means of obtaining accurate information or gaining detainee cooperation. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (Declassification Revisions December 3, 2014). http://gia.guim.co.uk/2014/12/torture-report-doc/torture_report.pdf.

12. Deobandi is a movement within Sunni (primarily Hanafi) Islam that is centered in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh but generally opposes the Wahhabist-Salafist theosophy of both al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. http://thediplomat.com/2015/02/islamic-state-goes-official-in-south-asia/.

13. Leon Hartwell, "The Democrat and the Dictator: Comparing Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe," *Southern African Peace and Security Studies* 4, no. 1(2015): 19–40 http://www.saccps.org/pdf/4-1/4-1_Hartwell_2.pdf.

14. See discussion in Gardner, *American Global Strategy*.

15. Hall Gardner, "Hybrid Warfare: Iranian and Russian Versions of 'Little Green Men' and Contemporary Conflict" (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2015). http://www.ndc.nato.int/news/news.php?icode=885.

16. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/07/isis-media-machine-propaganda-war.

17. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/8279043/Moscow-airport-attack-timeline-of-attacks-in-Russia.html.

18. Hall Gardner, "Hybrid Warfare", 2015. http://www.ndc.nato.int/news/news.php?icode=885.

19. Rod Nordland and Fahim Abed, "ISIS Takes Tora Bora, Once bin Laden's Afghan Fortress," *New York Times* (June 14, 2017). See also http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2014/11/isis-now-has-military-allies-in-11-countries.html.

20. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36035312; https://www.rt.com/news/330234-georgia-pankisi-isis-lavrov/.

21. http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-islamic-state-idUSKCN0P91EN20150629.

22. http://thediplomat.com/2016/04/why-violence-in-kashmir-is-getting-worse/.

23. http://nypost.com/2017/02/25/mcmaster-reportedly-splits-with-trump-on-radical-islamic-terror/. Trump overruled his newly appointed national security advisor, Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster, who had argued that these groups are really "un-Islamic" even if they claim to represent Islamist beliefs.

24. Former CIA agent Robert Baer put the issue this way: "I think it's a mistake in US foreign policy, first of all, to paint Islam as an enemy, because you get dragged into a cultural war which

we can't win." The goal was "to isolate the people who really do sponsor mass murder or kidnappings or individual murders of people . . . Those are isolated individuals which don't have anything to do with Islam in general. Same way in Hezbollah. It's a small group of people kidnapping, murdering. But Hezbollah itself is not a terrorist organization." Robert Baer, *Frontline* interview with Neil Docherty, "Terror and Iran" (March 22, 2002). http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/interviews/baer.html.

25 https://theintercept.com/2017/05/18/donald-trump-said-saudi-arabia-was-behind-911-now-hes-going-there-on-his-first-foreign-trip/. A lawsuit claims that the September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda hijackers received assistance and financial support from individuals connected to the Saudi Arabian government, implicating intelligence officers, embassy staff, and members of the country's royal family. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/saudi-arabia-911-victims-lawsuit-prior-knowledge-world-trade-center-terror-attack-twin-towers-a7644016.html.

26 https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/world/asia/saudi-arabia-afghanistan.html?_r=0.

27 In *Havlish et al. v. bin Laden et al.*, Judge Daniels held that the Islamic Republic of Iran, its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei, former Iranian president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and Iran's agencies and instrumentalities, including, among others, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS), and Iran's terrorist proxy Hezbollah, all materially aided and supported al-Qaeda before and after 9/11. http://www.iran911case.com/. Former CIA agent Robert Baer reported that Iran may have discussed a strategic partnership with al-Qaeda in July 1996, but what happened after is not certain. Interview: Robert Baer, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/interviews/baer.html.

28 http://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/21/politics/trump-saudi-speech-transcript/index.html. Trump's speech on Saudi Arabia: "From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds, arms, and trains terrorists, militias, and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region. For decades, Iran has fuelled the fires of sectarian conflict and terror. It is a government that speaks openly of mass murder, vowing the destruction of Israel, death to America, and ruin for many leaders and nations in this room. Among Iran's most tragic and destabilizing interventions have been in Syria. Bolstered by Iran, Assad has committed unspeakable crimes, and the United States has taken firm action in response to the use of banned chemical weapons by the Assad Regime—launching 59 tomahawk missiles at the Syrian air base from where that murderous attack originated."

29 https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-04/boeing-reaches-3-billion-deal-to-sell-jets-to-iranian-airline.

30 http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/saudi-arabia-sign-arms-deals-worth-110bn-170520141943494.html. By contrast, the United States also sold Qatar $12 billion worth of arms. https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-qatar-move-toward-arms-deal-estimated-at-12-billion-1497484240.

31 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39950827.

32 http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-yemen-us-arms-2017-story.html.

33 Daniel Lazare, "Luring Trump into Mideast Wars," *Consortium News* (April 8, 2017). https://consortiumnews.com/2017/04/08/luring-trump-into-mideast-wars/; Seymour Hersh argues that "poison gas" was caused by secondary explosions and not by the chemical weaponry; see "Trump's Red Line," De Welt, https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article165905578/Trump-s-Red-Line.html; https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/04/trumps-attack-on-syria-has-already-been-forgotten/524454/. Other analysts argue "Assad's forces' military activities along critical choke points, such as Khan Shaykun, indicate that recent CW use was not an exception. Furthermore, given the complexities of the battlefield in Idlib, coupled with this province's military importance regarding Hama, a key hub linking the capital to Aleppo in the north and the Mediterranean gateway to the west, the regime probably saw many practical benefits in CW use." https://www.frstrategie.org/publications/recherches-documents/web/documents/2017/201703.pdf.

34 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/18/world/middleeast/iran-syria-missile-launch-islamic-state.html.

35 For an outline of Kurdish parties in the region: http://www.rubincenter.org/2013/08/the-main-kurdish-political-parties-in-iran-iraq-syria-and-turkey-a-research-guide/.

36   http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-kurds-idUSKCN0VB2EY;   https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2017/06/22/pkk-leader-slams-krgs-referendum-says-kurds-dont-need-a-state. Masoud Barzani, the president of the Kurdish Regional Government, has threatened to hold a referendum in September 2017 to break away from Iraq—a position which is actually opposed by the Turkish PKK and its imprisoned founder Abdullah Öcalan, who has argued that "it is possible to build confederate structures across all parts of Kurdistan without the need to question the existing borders." This approach represents a compromise between demands for total independence and those for total assimilation. See my argument in *American Global Strategy and the "War on Terrorism"* and my interviews in Iraqi Kurdish: Hall Gardner, *Digital Gulan* (December 2007); Hall Gardner, interview with Ferhad Mohammed, "Questions on the Philosophy of Revolution," *Digital Gulan* (September 2011): "I do not believe in the formula that an independent nation-state and national identity automatically means Liberty . . . The problem then is how to establish democratic forms of governance within the same ethnic community or identity group while also engaging in power sharing arrangements with other minority groups and with neighboring countries. Rather than seeking national independence, a loose confederation of autonomous regions can be the goal" (from my original text).

37   https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/6/9/qatar-blasts-baseless-saudi-allies-terrorism-list.

38   https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/6/10/turkeys-president-erdogan-backs-qatar-in-gulf-terrorism-row?utm_campaign=magnet&utm_source=article_page&utm_medium=recommended_articles;https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/News/2017/6/10/Qatar-says-al-Jazeera-foreign-policy-are-sovereign-non-negotiable-matters.

39   https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/25/erdogan-rejects-saudi-demand-to-pull-turkish-troops-out-of-qatar. For a comparison of causes of World War I with today, see Hall Gardner, *The Failure to Prevent World War I: The Unexpected Armageddon* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2015); Hall Gardner, *Crimea, Global Rivalry and the Vengeance of History* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2017).

40   https://levantreport.com/tag/judicial-watch-dia-foia-release/.

41   http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/06/saudi-qatar-blockade-iran-turkey-convergence-crisis.html.

42   http://www.cittadellascienza.it/centrostudi/2016/01/meeting-on-peace-and-security-in-afghanistan/.

43   See Gardner, *World War Trump*.