2008

Inconsistency in the American Media

Gabriella Gonda
Lynn University

Follow this and additional works at: http://spiral.lynn.edu/etds

Part of the Journalism Studies Commons, and the Mass Communication Commons

Recommended Citation
http://spiral.lynn.edu/etds/17

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at SPIRAL. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Theses, Dissertations and Projects by an authorized administrator of SPIRAL. For more information, please contact ladarola@lynn.edu.
INCONSISTENCY IN THE AMERICAN MEDIA

GABRIELLA GONDA

A CREATIVE PROJECT

Submitted to the faculty of the College of International Communication
Department of Lynn University in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of M.S. in Mass Communication

2008
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1 Local News</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 Advertising</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Justification</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Lesson Plan</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.1 References</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1 Educational Podcast Voiceover</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.2 Lesson plan handouts</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.3 Lesson plan articles</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The September 11 terrorist attacks were unquestionably one of the most mediated events in history. The terrorists targeted the heart of a major western city that is a global economic, cultural and media centre. Images of devastation, disbelief and suffering were displayed on TV screens and in newspapers for a very long time.

Prior to 9/11, the American news media spent limited time covering foreign events. During the time between July 12, 2005 and July 22, 2005, I followed four major news show coverage: the NBC Nightly News, BBC America, Newshour and Fox News at 7. The newscasts were chosen for specific reasons. Newshour is considered a liberal newscast, and has a completely unique format. NBC Nightly News is a network broadcast. Fox News is considered conservative newscast. BBC America has the international perspective. Having the advantage of being Hungarian, I decided to research for more international stories in Hungarian newspapers. My research was successful, coming across three major news stories that were not mentioned at all in any of the four newscasts I focused on.

The first day I took a close look at was July 12, 2005. On this date the Hungarian newspaper Népszabadság reported that Ruandian rebels burned down a village and killed 39 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The attackers forced the villagers into their houses, locked the doors and then burned them down. The victims were mostly women and children, because most men managed to escape. On this date, the four selected newscasts spent most of their time covering the London Terror attacks. They also spent time bringing us the latest updates on Iraq and the story on the space shuttle. However,
this sad story out of Ruanda, easily classified as a major international event, was not mentioned on any of the four stations.

The next controversial day was July 20, 2005. The same Hungarian newspaper (Nepszabadsag) reported a shocking story from the Indian side of Kashmir, where a suicide bomber drove his car full of explosives into a military truck right next to a local school. Twenty-one people were killed in this attack. Since 1989 more than 66,000 people died in this conflict for the claim of Kashmir between India and Pakistan. Sadly, this tragedy was not important enough for the creators of the selected newscasts, because there were no reports of this happening at all. The lead story for the day was the Supreme Court nominations, and beside the London terror attacks, no other international stories were covered that day.

The third article came from the Hungarian newspaper called Népszava. In May 2005, American President George W. Bush visited the country Georgia. On May 10, 2005 he gave a speech to over 100,000 people. During that speech, a grenade was thrown toward the President. Thankfully, the grenade missed the President and did not harm anyone. On July 22nd, the Georgian police officials arrested the suspect and charged him with attempted murder. Interestingly, the story was very much American related, but still eluded the American news casts. Instead, the leading account was still the London terror attacks and the nomination for the Supreme Court.
PURPOSE

For my creative project, I produced an educational podcast and created a lesson plan on the *Inconsistency in the American Media*. I recorded four news shows for a ten day period: the NBC Nightly News, PBS’s Newshour, BBC America and FOX News at 7. I recorded the shows in order to demonstrate how important world events were not mentioned in the selected newscasts. Also, I took a close look at the inconsistencies in the media in regards to the amount of international news covered before and after the September 11th terrorist attacks. I examined several studies and content analyses done showing the lack of public and media interest for international news. For example, Pew’s Biennial Media Consumption study looked at the public interest about international affairs before and after September 11. The study concluded that the public interest for international news was much lower before the attacks, and drastically jumped up after. An independent media group called Media Mouse conducted a study on the amount of international media coverage in local television, and found that after 9/11, the number of international stories covered on local television significantly increased.

After researching the topic, I created a lesson plan for high school social studies students in order to educate about this important issue. I included information on Afghanistan, Al Qaeda and their relationships with the United States. To make the learning easier and more enjoyable, and to accommodate all learning styles, I included several hands on projects along with the lectures.

The purpose of the project was to raise awareness and to educate high school students about the lack of international news covered in different newscasts. With the help
of the educational podcast and the lesson plan, students will have a chance to learn about the many different issues that cause the media to be inconsistent when it comes to international news coverage.

THEORY

In America, the news media often act as the chief source of political information for the mass public. The theory that allows us to better understand the role of the American media is called the agenda-setting theory. According to this theory, the media has the power to present images to the public. Agenda-setting is the creation of public awareness and concern of significant matters by the news media. There are two basic assumptions that trigger most research on agenda-setting: (1) the press and the media shape and filter reality, not necessarily reflect it; (2) the media’s focus on a few selected issues and topics leads the public to identify those matters as more important than others. One of the most critical features in the theory of an agenda-setting role of mass communication is the time frame for its occurrence. In addition, different media have different agenda-setting potential. (“Agenda Setting,” n.d., para. 2)

Bernard Cohen once stated, “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (“Agenda Setting,” n.d., para 3). According to the agenda-setting theory, the media considered to be the main method of communicating public desires to political elites and governmental actors (“Agenda Setting,” n.d., para. 2). Darrell West (2001) describes the “media establishment” as a “major power broker” which applies “unprecedented power over the dissemination of news” (p.3.).
Blumler and Katz's uses and gratification theory states, "media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use" (Blumler, 1974, para. 1). The theorists say that a media user seeks out a media source that best fulfills the needs of the user. Uses and gratifications suppose that the user has alternate choices to suit their need. Even though individuals have the power to choose what to watch and what to listen to, advertisers still have a large influence over what is shown on television or written in other media sources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to a 2007 news article on the annual report by Andrew Tyndall, written by Jim Lobe, "the foreign news bureaus of the three networks, ABC, CBS, and NBC, had their lightest year in 2007 since 2001, suggesting that the era of expanded international coverage that followed the Sep. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon is now over. Aside from Iraq-related stories, which together claimed about 13 percent of the total coverage of the three network evening news programmes, only two other foreign-based stories -- the recent political turmoil in Pakistan, and Iran's nuclear programme and alleged activities in Iraq -- made it onto the list of top 20 stories last year covered by the networks, while Latin America, East Asia, Africa, and even Europe were absent" (Lobe, 2007, para. 2). Tyndall's report also states that the total terrorism-related coverage fell sharply in 2007 compared to the previous year -- from 1,191 minutes to 476 minutes. Beside the coverage of Iraq, Pakistan and Iran; the most covered international stories were
Afghanistan and the campaign against al Qaeda (83 minutes each), the toxic toy imports from China (79 minutes), the terrorist plots in Britain (72 minutes) and the news about the British royal family (64 minutes) (Lobe, 2007, para. 19).

Pew's Biennial Media Consumption study between 2000 and 2002 measured the public's news interest about international events and national security. Five years prior to the September 11 attacks, the average news story that involved events from overseas and international affairs were only followed by 19% of Americans. The number increased to 34% the year after the attacks, and reached 38% during the beginning of the military actions in Iraq. Most of the attention focused on the news in Iraq and matters related to terrorism. The war in Afghanistan was also followed by 41% of Americans during the year following the attacks. (Feinstein, 2004, p.6)

Prior to the September 11 assault on American soil, according to the same survey, the public interest for international news was minimal.

"The Center's news interest database shows that the public's appetite for overseas news that is not related to terrorism or Iraq remains somewhat limited, however. For example, in both 1994 and again a decade later, violence and civil unrest in Haiti drew little public attention (14% in 1994, 15% in 2004). Only after U.S. forces were sent to Haiti late in 1994 did a sizable proportion (31%) turn their attention to the situation. The same pattern is evident regarding news about ethnic violence in Africa. In 1994, only 12% followed news about ethnic violence in Rwanda very closely. This is virtually identical to public attention to news from Sudan in July of this year (14% following very closely). Taking the average from all types of
overseas news stories that are not linked to Iraq or terrorism together over
the past two years reveals that roughly a quarter of Americans follow such
news very closely. This is up only slightly from the overall foreign news
average of 19% prior to the 9/11 attacks” (Feinstein, 2004, p.11.).

Clearly, since the tragic events in 2001, the media coverage along with the public interest
has changed. The American people are now more aware of the terrorist threats that the
country is facing, therefore they are more concerned about international news events.
However, the American public is still not overly interested in foreign happenings if they
are not terrorist related.

For decades, media scholars tried to identify the key variables that outline the
international news selection process. The most important question they asked was what
makes an international event newsworthy? According to Golan’s Inter-Media Agenda
Setting and Global News Coverage article, “research findings point to several key
determinants of international news coverage including deviance, relevance, cultural
affinity and location in the hierarchy of nations” (Golan, 2006, p.323). Because of time
limitations, television news’ gatekeepers have to select some nations as more newsworthy
than others. The study in the article suggests that inter-media agenda setting have
significant influence on the international news selection process (Golan, 2006, p.323). As
pointed out by Chang (1998) in Golan’s article, American reporting of international news
often abandons coverage of nations around the world while it focuses on the few selected
nations that are considered newsworthy. Therefore, that lack of balance has been
examined by numerous studies. As quoted in Golan’s article, “Weaver et al. (1984)
conducted a 10-year analysis of television news coverage and found that network coverage
differed significantly across different geographic regions on the world. Larson's (1984) content analysis of television news coverage of international events between 1972 and 1981 revealed significant differences in the amount and scope of coverage that certain regions of the world receive. His study indicated that some nations were perceived as more newsworthy than other nations as the USSR, Israel, Britain and South Vietnam dominated international news coverage on US network television news while most nations around the world received limited to no coverage” (Golan, 2006, p.323.). Most recent studies show that the nature of international news coverage is changing. “Golan's (2003) content analysis of 1300 television newscasts (ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN) found that 20 nations accounted for more than 80 percent of the overall international news coverage. The analysis revealed that the majority of third world nations received limited or no coverage” (Golan, 2006, p.324.).

Golan’s method used in the study was content analysis for the purpose to examine the nature of international news coverage in print and television. Three major television networks, ABC, NBC and CBS programs were selected for the study. “A randomly constructed year between 1995 and 2000 served as the sample for the content analysis. These years were selected based on the fact that they preceded the September 11, 2001 tragedy that completely changed the focus and nature of international relations, politics and media coverage. Including the period that came after September 11 would not be representative of most years as they shifted coverage into the context of the American war on terror” (Golan, 2006, p.323.). The importance of the news stories were determined by the location of the story within the broadcast. Each story was coded according to its identity of the nation covered in the story. The result of the content analysis shows that the
network news paid attention to a relatively small number of nations. These findings are consistent with previous studies that found that network television news programs often focus their coverage on a few nations and consider some nations more newsworthy than others.

As part of the research from the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) on Global Perspectives in Local Television News Coverage, researchers discussed the factors affecting international news coverage in the U.S. media. According to scholarly research, a variety of aspects determine the flow of international news in the U.S. media. “Some of the most important are geographical proximity, economics, deviance from norms, presence of international news agencies, and U.S. involvement in the foreign events” (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 45.). The first factor is geographical prejudice. Some regions are covered more often than others because of its geographical distance. As mentioned in the study by Beaudoin and Thorson, the closer the event is to the United States, the more likely it will be covered in the news. In the research, Wu was referred to about his examination of 13 newspapers. He found that geographic closeness was a chief predictor of foreign news coverage. Wu also stated that more powerful countries are regularly covered in the American news media, opposed to the smaller, less important countries, that remain invisible (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 46.). International news coverage of different parts of the world received different amounts of air time on three network news programs and on CNN. “Nearly 20 countries received more than 80% of the international news coverage whereas the other parts of the world (170 countries) received limited or no coverage at all” (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 46.).
Secondly, economic factors are crucial in determining the amount of international news covered in the American media. Prior to World War II, the nation’s power depended largely on economic issues. Gross National Product was one of the main factors influencing international coverage, and trade relation was the primary predictor of news coverage (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 46).

The third factor of the amount of international news covered in the media is normative deviance and potential for social change. Scholars argued that the American media is crisis-oriented and “crisis and conflicts are closely related to norms and social changes” (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 47). The U.S. media points out how healthy U.S. society is by contrasting it with deviant events in foreign countries.

U.S. participation in other parts of the world is yet another important factor on determining what international news story is covered in the media. “News involving the United States was reported more often than news not involving the United States through the Associated Press” (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 47). U.S. interest is proven to have direct relationship between what story is newsworthy and what’s not. As mentioned in the study, a content analysis was conducted by McLean and Ikpah in 1984 on international news coverage on three major networks between 1983 and 1987. Their findings stated that the stories the networks believe newsworthy are closely connected to the interests of the American people. “The American press tries to create the image of strong America in the world news and to strengthen the idea that the United States is global leader to satiate their home audiences’ patriotic desires” (Baker et al., 2004, pg. 47).

An investigative report was done by the PEW Research Center called International News Coverage Fits Public’s Ameri-Centric Mood. The study tracked international news
coverage between March and June of 1995, following the New York Times, ABC News, CNN, C-SPAN, daily regular newspapers and local television coverage. They found that “…critics who believe the American media is highly selective about foreign topics, including the regions and countries that are covered, are mostly correct: One-third of all stories (and 44% of those on one television network) has a U.S. angle, emphasis of orientation; and 22% of all stories (36% of network stories) had U.S. datelines on their foreign stories. These stories were essentially about the United States in the world, rather than the about the world” (“International News,” n.d. p.6).

This study suggests that as long as there is an American connection to the specific event in the world, that story receives superior coverage compared to ones with no direct relationship to the United States.

According to an article called State of the American Newspaper; Goodbye, World from the American Journalism Review, this is not the first time that the lack of international news coverage arises as a pressing issue; the concern was raised back in 1998 as well. Peter Arnett, the author of the story looked for reasons for the indifference toward international news; Mr. Arnett came to the conclusion that the reason why American people are not informed about the happenings around the world is that the media stopped telling them to care. “International news coverage in most of America’s mainstream papers has almost reached the vanishing point. Today, a foreign story that doesn’t involve bombs, natural disasters or financial calamity has little chance of entering the American consciousness” (Arnett, 1998, para. 11).
Ten days after September 11, The Register-Guard released an article called "Commentary: American news coverage weak on world affairs." According to the author, Stephen Ponder, the media responded to the terrorist attacks with more international information than ever. Ponder also discussed the reason why the American public was so shocked when it was hit by international terrorism. According to Ponder, "the decade between the Gulf War and the terrorism of September 11, coverage of international news has been one of the news media's lowest priorities. The result is a lack of context that may have contributed to the shock felt by Americans when they abruptly found themselves on the front line of international terrorism" (Ponder, 2001, para. 2). His main question in the article wonders if the events of 9/11 will encourage Americans to look for the kind of international news that will help them understand the post-attack world.

Local News

The majority of Americans watch gathers limited amount of news from sources such as CNN, PBS's Newshour or FOX News, or even the nightly network news coverage. Therefore, they are relied on gathering information from Local TV news broadcasts. An independent media group, the Media Mouse conducted a study looking at international issues covered on three local Grand Rapids, MI television stations. Surely, coverage differs in some ways between issues, but several major trends are evident in all international coverage. These are:

- International coverage in the Local News is primarily violence or disaster based. According to a GRIID study in 1999 - 2000, almost nine out of ten
international news stories on the local news were about war, violence, or disaster.

- The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 and the subsequent U.S. military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq led to increased international coverage in local news broadcasts.

- In covering U.S. military actions abroad, the local TV news relied to a great extent on "official" government and military voices. Considerably less often did the local TV news air international voices or voices offering views different from the "official" position. Nor did the Local news regularly challenge or verify facts and information put out by "official" sources.

- In reporting on deaths due to violence, the local TV media were more likely to report on deaths due to the actions of official "enemies" while less likely to report on deaths due to the actions of the U.S. government or its allies.

- In covering the war in Iraq, the local media took a "pro-troop" stance. The majority of the Iraq stories that were produced by the local TV news stories themselves were focused on local soldiers and soldiers' families.

- Seldom was contextual information provided by local TV news broadcasts on international issues. GRIID noted that very rarely did the local TV news give any information that would help the news consumer more fully understand the wider context beyond just the immediate events reported ("War and," n.d. para. 4).

According to the study, before September 11, 2001 in a six months period of time, 611 international news stories were shown on local television. Between September 1, 1999 and
February 28, 2000 3.3 international stories were shown per day. After September 11, in a 75-day period, 272 stories were presented on Afghanistan alone. Between October 7, 2001 and December 21, 2001 more than three (3.6) Afghan stories were shown per day. Since America is at war, it is understandable that the war coverage is more significant now than before 9/11, however, international news coverage should be more considerable at all times ("War and," n.d. para. 5).

As part of the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) research on Global Perspectives in Local Television News Coverage, Esther Thorson and Kent S. Collins from the Missouri School of Journalism conducted a contextual research on the topic. According to their study, local television news plays an important role in how Americans cope with the post 9/11 world. "Americans get most of their news from television, and much of that is from local television news. Indeed, local television newscasts often show up in surveys as the most credible and trusted source of news for Americans" (Baker et al., 2004, p.39).

**Advertising**

Advertising is another major influence of news coverage in the media. "Inter-media agenda setting is expanded to include another key element of mass communication: advertising. Advertising agendas occasionally have been examined as an influence on the public agenda, an alternative test of the basic, agenda-setting hypothesis" (Roberts, 1994, p.249). In Robert’s study, content analysis was used to determine the issue agendas of newspaper coverage, television coverage, and political advertising by looking at the
direction of influence or inter-media union of issue agendas during the 1990 Texas gubernatorial campaign (Roberts, 1994, p.251).

According to Carl Jensen’s book called 20 Years of Censored News, “America’s mainstream mass media basically serve three segments of society today – the wealthy, politicians, and the sports-minded. The news media have done an exceptional job of providing full and, on the whole, reliable information to those who are involved in or follow the stock market and to those who are involved in or follow politics and to those who are involved in or follow sports” (Jensen, 1997, p. 12). He also states that advertising pressure can corrupt the free press. One form of censorship is called direct economic censorship that occurs when an advertiser excessively dictates to the mass media what the public shall or shall not see or hear (Jensen, 1997, p. 13).

Mass media are used not only to sell goods but also ideas: how we should behave, what rules are important, who we should respect and what we should value. In some countries, the government has a major influence and control over the media. “In addition, powerful corporations are becoming major influences on mainstream media. In some places major multinational corporations own media stations and outlets” (Shah, 2007, para. 2). The result of that is a “reduction in diversity and depth of content that the public can get, while increasing the political and economic power of corporations and advertisers” (Shah, 2007, para. 4). Therefore, advertisers apply direct or indirect pressure on the media companies in order to sell their products. Media companies are forced to obey advertisers in order to survive. For example, some military contractors are large corporations with a large amount of power and influence. The products they sell have an effect on many
people's lives. However, their major goal is to sell their product by promoting an environment where high spending on military is necessary.

JUSTIFICATION

Our world today is becoming more globalized than ever. Globalization is defined by Sheila Croucher as the “process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and functioning together. This process is a combination of economic, technological, sociocultural and political forces” (Croucher, 2004, p.10). That is why in today's society, it is crucial to have an acute awareness of the events around the world. As a direct result of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, those eventually lead to the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our everyday lives are affected by the happenings around the world, which is justification for my project to be created at this time. The morning of September 11, 2001 changed the way of life in the United States of America. After the attacks on the Twin Towers by the Taliban and Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda, it was no longer possible for the American people, government, and media to avoid the rest of the world. With the hunt for Osama bin Laden and other Taliban members, the United States and its allies went to war against Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, less than a month after the fatal attacks. On March 20, 2003 President Bush announced the start of the military campaign against Iraq as part of the fight against terrorism. At this point the country was involved in major military actions on two fronts. Research showed in the literature review, that the people of the United States showed great interest to these events. The nation was watching every minute on television, read about it
in the newspapers, and listened to it on the radio. However, the war has been going on for more than six years by now, and the interest of the media shifted away from the Middle East to the effects of the war on the home front. According to my literature review research, the coverage of international news on television began to decrease rapidly moving closer to the pre 9/11 levels. I feel that this is a crucial time for high school students to understand the reasons behind the decisions that are made by the politicians, since these decisions shape, alter, and directly affect the lives of everyone.

**TREATMENT**

My creative project is the combination of two products, an educational podcast and a lesson plan supporting the video. The podcast focuses on the content, the language and the amount of international coverage included on the PBS’s Newshour, NBC’s Nightly News, FOX News at 7, and BBC America. I recorded the newscasts each day for a 10 day period and compared the above mentioned elements. I also researched important international events that took place during the selected ten-day time period, and included reports on them. Three news articles from Hungarian newspapers were used to demonstrate how certain international events were not covered in the selected newscasts. The focus of my podcast was to raise awareness to students about the importance of taking interest and being aware of events that are occurring outside the United States.

The written part of my project is a lesson plan that introduces Afghanistan and its history, politics, geography and people to students, along with activities dealing with the United States and al Qaeda. I researched previously done content analyses to show the
inconsistencies in the American media. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within the research material. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about the message within the material that is being researched. Golan’s 2003 content analysis examined the nature of international news coverage in print and television. The findings showed the difference in the amount of international news covered prior and following the September 11 terrorist attacks.
Lesson Plan

Subject Area: Social Studies – International Relations

Grade Level: 11-12

Title: Inconsistency in the American Media – The events and the results of the September 11th Terrorist Attacks

Objectives - Students will:

1. Assess their prior knowledge about Afghanistan and the Taliban, establish goals for what they want to learn about the country, and evaluate the accuracy of prior knowledge based on new learning.

2. Understand the political objectives of al Qaeda and possible reasons for the September 11 terrorist attacks.

3. Use critical reading and/or viewing skills to accurately complete a study guide related to Afghanistan's people, places and politics.

4. Understand the influence of American foreign policy and culture on international relations.

5. Understand the role of ethnicity and religious beliefs in political conflicts.

6. Understand causes and consequences of economic imbalances around the world.

7. Write a letter to a student 50 years from now, describing the events of September 11, possible reasons behind the attacks, and what they hope the long-term response will be from Americans and U.S. and international leaders.
8. Participate in class discussion activities related to the people, places and politics of Afghanistan with particular attention to their interaction with the United States and current events.

9. Work in pairs or groups to complete a research project and presentation related to assigned topics/aspects of Afghan life and/or political issues.

10. Present their projects to classmates.

11. Complete a written response based on their class discussions and new knowledge about topics related to Afghanistan and al Qaeda.

12. Evaluate and judge the ethical issues concerning the role of advertising in contemporary society.

13. Identify misleading, erroneous messages presented in advertising and the media.

14. Learn about possible problems with advertising and a consumer-based culture.

Materials:

- Preview activity
- Video: “Inconsistency in the American Media”
- Video: The Flight That Fought Back
- Access to Internet and other primary source materials for project research
- Pen/Pencil/Paper

Procedures:

Part 1: Background Information on Afghanistan
1. Introduce Afghanistan to students by going over the Preview Activity Handout. Start lesson by asking students to complete column 1: What do I know about Afghanistan?

2. Make a short statement such as: “Although Afghanistan is located far from the United States, it is often mentioned in our daily newscasts. Because of this, it is important to learn as much as we can about the country, its people, and its politics. Political issues connect the United States and Afghanistan, and it is crucial to have the knowledge to be able link the what and the why together. With that said, complete column 2: What would I like to learn about Afghanistan? The goal is to make students see the importance of knowing about and understanding information linked to Afghanistan and other foreign countries.

3. Explain to students that later in the lesson, we will discuss their answers given in the Preview Activity to see if what they knew was correct and to see if they learned what they wanted to know by the end of the lesson.

4. Review the basic information of Afghanistan’s geography, people and its political issues. Instruct students to complete the Study Guide during the teacher presentation.

5. Take time to discuss the study guide answers and encourage students to add details to their answers as you discuss each item.

Part 2: Learning In-depth Information about Afghanistan

Now that students have basic knowledge about Afghanistan, explain to students that with this project, they will have a chance to learn more in depth information.
about the country and its people and politics. Place students into pairs or groups of three, depends on the class size, and assign them a topic from the list below.

**TOPIC LIST:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan's Geography: How Does the Lay of the Land Keep the Country Poor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Day in the Life: Describe a typical day for a person from one of Afghanistan's main ethnic groups. Choose from Uzbeks, Hazara, Aimaqs, Turkmen and Kirghiz, Pashtun, Tajik, Baluch and Nuristanis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Women in Afghanistan: look at what it is today and how it has changed over the past 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Government of Afghanistan: Its Structure and Important People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Economy of Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Drugs and Traffickers in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who am I? (research key figures such as Hamid Karzai, Mullah Mohammad Omar, Osama bin Laden and other political figures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The al Qaeda Connection: Terrorists in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Taliban: Its History, Rule and Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Select your own topic with teacher approval.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prososki, L. (n.d. para. 9)
Students can gather information from online sources. Hand out the Project Guidelines and go over it with the class. Provide at least one class period for the groups to research and prepare their project.

When all projects are completed, the groups present their work to the class. All students are to take notes on each presentation.

After all the presentations, students are instructed to look at their Preview Activity, and check to see if they were right in the information they wrote down under “What do I know about Afghanistan?” and if they were able to get the information they wrote under the “What do I want to learn about Afghanistan?” column.

Part 3: Afghanistan and the United States

1. It is extremely important to make students understand why it is important to learn about Afghanistan. To achieve that goal, facilitate a class discussion/debate using the following questions.

2. Discuss the relationship between the United States and Afghanistan. Talk about why our government is concerned with the government and politics of Afghanistan when it is located so far from the United States.

3. Discuss why keeping groups such as the Taliban out of power in countries like Afghanistan is important to the United States and other countries.

4. Why are groups such as al Qaeda able to operate in a country like Afghanistan?

5. Why are groups like al Qaeda a threat to the United States and to maintaining peace in the Middle East?
6. Explain why having an understanding of the lifestyle of the average Afghan is important for U.S. citizens.

7. Discuss reasons why the United States as well as many other countries and the United Nations are working so hard to provide assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

8. What do you think would happen if the United States and other world powers abandoned their work in Afghanistan and left it up to the country and its leaders to take care of themselves? What are the potential consequences of taking this type of action?

9. By studying Afghanistan, how have you gained a greater understanding of international relations and the role of the United States in assisting other countries and governments?

10. Do you believe that the United States should continue to keep a military presence in Afghanistan? Why?

Part 4: The U.S. and al Qaeda


2. After watching the videos, evaluate what the class knows about al Qaeda. Who are they? What do they believe in? Who is Osama bin Laden? Discuss with the class their pre 9/11 knowledge of both al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, and their opinion why this huge threat was not more publicized in the American media until after the
tragic events on 9/11. Be sure to make it clear that even though al Qaeda is an Islamic militant group, what they represent does not speak for all Muslims.

3. With the information gathered from the two videos, assign students an essay presentation on what they believe are some of the reasons behind the 9/11 attacks. Why would those Islamic militants want to harm innocent American citizens? Allow students class time to research for their essay, and encourage them to include their opinion in their work.

4. The next assignment will be reading articles on al Qaeda, Afghanistan, terrorism and 9/11 topics from the Council of Foreign Relations website. After divided into groups, students will read and summarize their assigned article for the class. Some articles are current, some are old. It is the group’s responsibility to relate the read piece to the current topic and make conclusions on what they’ve read.

List of Articles:

- Al Qaeda Crippled But Resilient
- Game Plan: How to Win a War Against Al Qaeda
- Afghanistan in Need
- Why They Hate Us. The nature of the enemy.
- Fighting Terrorism
5. It is important to teach students the importance of remembering. Talk about other major historical events such as Pearl Harbor, and compare their similarities and their differences. Allow students to write down their thought on this question, and have a class discussion on how they think September 11 will be remembered in 50 years from now.

6. After the discussion, as a homework assignment, have students write a letter to a teenager fifty years from now explaining their personal experience of 9/11. Students should also include our understanding as of today of the possible reasons for the attack and their hope of the long-term response from Americans and international leaders to these brutal terrorists.
Vocabulary and Definitions:

1. **Al Qaeda**: an Islamic terrorist organization started in 1988 by Osama bin Laden to resist Soviet forces in Afghanistan and which seeks to purge Muslim countries of Western influence and establish fundamentalist Islamic rule; also written Al-Qaeda, Al-Qaida, al-Qaeda, al-Qa’ida, al-Quaida, al-Qa’idah.

2. **Terrorism**: The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.
   
   **Terrorist**: One that engages in acts or an act of terrorism.

3. **Hijack**: To take control of a moving vehicle, such as an airplane, take the passengers hostage, and change the vehicle's destination.

4. **Osama bin Laden**: Saudi Arabian-born leader of al-Qaeda who established training camps in Sudan and later Afghanistan where Islamist militants were trained to carry out attacks to disrupt the economies and influence of Western nations.

5. **Council of Foreign Relations**: an independent, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other governments.

Evaluation

This rubric is designed to evaluate students’ knowledge and participation of the covered lesson and the assigned presentation and assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginning 1</th>
<th>Developing 2</th>
<th>Accomplished 3</th>
<th>Exemplary 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Lacked voice projection, many grammatical errors, no organization of information</td>
<td>Weak voice projection, contained grammatical errors, organization of information was unclear.</td>
<td>Satisfactory voice projection, few grammatical errors, and organization of information had a logical sequence.</td>
<td>Excellent voice projection, no grammatical errors, and organization of information had a logical sequence covering all the required information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Product</strong></td>
<td>Numerous grammatical and spelling errors, no organization of information.</td>
<td>Many to several grammatical and spelling errors, organization of information were unclear.</td>
<td>Several to few grammatical and spelling errors, and organization of information had a logical sequence.</td>
<td>Few to no mistakes in grammar and spelling, organization of information had a logical sequence covering all the required information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>Took no responsibility for content and no cooperation with others.</td>
<td>Took little responsibility for content and little cooperation with others.</td>
<td>Took satisfactory responsibility for content and worked cooperatively with others.</td>
<td>Took excellent responsibility for content and worked cooperatively with others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sunshine States Standards Covered:

The student understands the world in spatial terms. (SS.B.1.4)

The student:

1. uses a variety of maps, geographic technologies including geographic information systems (GIS) and satellite-produced imagery, and other advanced graphic representations to depict geographic problems.
2. understands the advantages and disadvantages of using maps from different sources and different points of view.
3. uses mental maps of physical and human features of the world to answer complex geographic questions.
4. understands how cultural and technological characteristics can link or divide regions.
5. understands how various factors affect people’s mental maps

Reading Comprehension Standard: The student uses a variety of strategies to comprehend grade level text.

The student will:

LA.1112.1.7.1 - use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, pre-reading strategies (e.g., previewing, discussing, generating questions), text features, and text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection;

LA.1112.1.7.2 - analyze the author’s purpose and/or perspective in a variety of text and understand how they affect meaning;
LA.1112.1.7.3 - determine the main idea or essential message in grade-level or higher texts through inferring, paraphrasing, summarizing, and identifying relevant details and facts;

LA.1112.1.7.4 - identify cause-and-effect relationships in text;

LA.1112.1.7.5 - analyze a variety of text structures (e.g., comparison/contrast, cause/effect, chronological order, argument/support, lists) and text features (main headings with subheadings) and explain their impact on meaning in text;

LA.1112.1.7.6 - analyze and evaluate similar themes or topics by different authors across a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections;

LA.1112.1.7.7 - compare and contrast elements in multiple texts.
CONCLUSION

The American media’s responsibility is to inform the American people of the events and happenings that will shape and affect their lives currently and in the future. The theories that help us better understand the roles of the American media are the agenda-setting theory and Blumler and Katz’s uses and gratification theory. The agenda-setting theory states that the media has the power to present images to the public. Agenda-setting is a creation of public awareness and concerns of significant matters by the news media. The uses and gratification theory states that the media users seek out media sources that best fulfill their needs. Uses and gratifications suppose that the user has alternate choices to suit their needs.

Research shows other factors that influences what international events are covered in the American media. Geographical proximity is a key aspect. Some regions are covered more often than others because of their geographical distance from the United States. The closest the event to the U.S., the more likely it will be covered in the news. Economic factors are also crucial in determining what story is newsworthy. Trade relations are primary predictors of news coverage. Normative deviance and potential for social change is yet another feature that determines the newsworthiness of a story. The American media is crisis-oriented, which is closely related to norms and social changes. Lastly, another important factor in determining what international story is covered in the media is the U.S. participation in other parts of the world. Research shows that U.S. interest has direct relationships between what story is newsworthy and what’s not.
The researched information provided significant information used in the lesson plan. With the help of the collected material, the students are offered more in depth information on the reasons behind the inconsistencies in the American media. The collected data will help demonstrate to students that although Afghanistan is located far from the United States, it is often mentioned in our daily newscasts. Because of this, it is important to learn as much as possible about the country, its people, and its politics. Political issues connect the United States and Afghanistan, and it is crucial to have the knowledge to be able link the what and the why together.
REFERENCES


http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/world/afghanistan_overview_10-06.html


Hi, my name is Gabriella Gonda, a graduate of the M.S. in Communication and Media program of Lynn University. Throughout the course of the program I researched international news coverage in the American media, and during the next few minutes, I will share my findings with you in this educational podcast.

In today's society, it is unavoidable to have a broad global view and it is important to be familiar with the events that are happening around the world. In this educational podcast, I will demonstrate how the September 11th terrorist attacks forced the citizens of the United States to start paying attention to the events that are happening around the world.

Prior to September 11th, 2001, most Americans had never heard of al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden. According to Stephen Ponders article called Commentary: American news coverage weak on world affairs, "the decade between the Gulf War and the terrorism of September 11, coverage of international news has been one of the news media's lowest priorities. The result is a lack of context that may have contributed to the shock felt by Americans when they abruptly found themselves on the front line of international terrorism" (Ponder, 2001). Peter Bergen, a terrorist expert conducted an interview with Osama Bin Laden at a remote location in Afghanistan in 1997 and it was seen by a modest number of viewers. However, journalist Peter Arnett came to the conclusion that the reason why American people are not informed about the happenings around the world is that the media stopped telling them to care, of course until it was too late. From September
11th on, for an extended period, it was all we saw, morning until evening, sun up to sun down. From this point forward, media coverage focused primarily on the war against terrorism, as long as it concerned the United States and its closest ally, Great Britain. From September 11th on, any other world events would take a back seat to anything terrorism.

Between July 12, 2005 and July 22, 2005, I followed 4 major news coverages; the NBC nightly news, BBC America, Newshour and Fox News at 7. My picks were chosen for specific reasons. Newshour is considered a liberal newscast, and has a completely unique format. NBC Nightly News is a network broadcast, Fox News is considered conservative, and BBC America has the international perspective.

On July 11, 2005, London was hit by a terrorist attack. Four bombs went off simultaneously, killing dozens of innocent people. Because of the significance of the event, the next day the London terror attack was the leading story on all covered newscasts. When terrorism strikes, locally or internationally, people become interested in the facts, and want to hear more and more about the certain issue. In this case, the G8 meeting was held at the day of the bombings. With those two incidents happening at the same time, this specific international news was covered thoroughly by all three newscasts.

Another story, which falls under international story, but is very closely related to the US, is the war in Iraq. The reason why it is an international story is because it takes place in the Middle East (more specifically, Iraq). American soldiers are over there fighting, but the decisions are made in the US. Without US involvement, the media coverage would be significantly less. However, since the beginning of the conflict, the news media have been covering the story very closely. During the two week time period, each newscast dedicated a large amount of its airtime to this issue.
Another international story covered during that time was the Middle East conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Israel is pulling out of the Gaza strip and other occupied territories. PBS’s Newshour and BBC America covered the story the most. With the unique format of the Newshour, they were able to spend, at times, ten minutes on the issue, and BBC America also spent a good portion of its show covering this important issue. NBC and Fox News spent very little time on this ongoing event.

However, during this time, I was researching other news sources for more international stories. Having the advantage of being Hungarian, I was using Hungarian newspapers as my sources. During my search I came across 3 major news stories that were not mentioned in any of the four newscasts I focused on.

The first day I am going to take a close look at is July 12, 2005. On this date the Hungarian newspaper Népszabadság reported that Ruandian rebels burned down a village and killed 39 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The attackers forced the villagers into their houses, locked the doors and then burned them down. The victims were mostly women and children, because most men managed to escape. On this date, the four selected newscasts spent most of their time covering the London Terror attacks. They also spent time bringing us the latest updates on Iraq and the story on the space shuttle. However, there was one major international happening that was not mentioned on either station. This sad story was nowhere to be finding here in the US.

The next controversial day was July 20, 2005. The same newspaper reported a sad story from the Indian side of Kashmir, where a suicide bomber drove his car that was full of explosives, into a military truck right next to a local school. 21 people died in this attack. Since 1989 more than 66,000 people died in this conflict for the claim of Kashmir
between India and Pakistan. Sadly, this tragedy was not important enough for the creators of the selected newscasts, because there was no coverage of this story. The lead story for the day was the Supreme Court nominations, and beside the London terror attacks, no other international stories were covered that day.

Third, but not least I came across this interesting news article reading Népszava, another Hungarian newspaper. In May 2005, American President George W. Bush visited the country Georgia. On May 10, 2005 he gave a speech to over 100,000 people. During that speech, a grenade was thrown toward the President. On July 22nd, the Georgian police officials arrested the suspect and charged him with attempted murder. Interestingly, the story was very much American related, but still, it was not at all covered in the US. Instead, the leading story was still the London terror attacks and the nomination for the Supreme Court.

Since September 11, 2001 the American media focused more and more on the whys. Author Stephen Ponder stated that the media responded to the terrorist attacks with more international information than ever. During the next few minutes I will give a brief description of the history of the terrorist groups responsible to the attacks and their relationship with the United States.

During the Soviet-Afghan war, the United States allied themselves with the Pakistani Intelligence Agency, the ISI, and provided logistics, intelligence, and funding to the rebel forces resisting communism. The United States was bound and determined to stop communism, like a cancer, spreading through the global bloodstream. The Pentagon, along with Pakistani intelligence, was also becoming cozy (all be it unintentional) with a loosely affiliated group of Afghan-Arabs (known as the mujahideen) led by a man named
Abdullah Azzam, who would start up an organization known as the “office of services.” The “office of services” would officially become al Qaeda in 1988, and the financier would be the son of a wealthy Saudi construction magnate, named Osama Bin Laden. Many Americans, who rely heavily on the news media, were unaware of the early history behind the United States and its eventual enemy, until of course, September the 11th, 2001.

In February of 1993, the enemy that the American people were rarely informed of would strike on their own soil, trying to bring down the World Trade Center. Fortunately, the plan, carried out by al Qaeda operative Ramsi Yousef was unsuccessful, except for the handful of people who suffered horrific deaths due to the explosion. For the next several years, al Qaeda was operating in several countries around the world including Sudan and Afghanistan. Although the American media didn’t report it, al Qaeda was operating as guests in primarily two countries, half way around the world. The Sudan, and its leader, Omar al-Bashir, greeted guest Bin-Laden at the Khartoum airport in the early 90’s, allowing him to live in luxury, operate businesses, employ hundreds of workers, and come and go as he pleased. In Afghanistan, terrorist training camps were open for business and supported in large part by a group of Pakistani students who would come to power in 1996 (the Taliban). While the American media, and U.S. government was relatively uninterested in reporting and investigating these suspicious activities, al Qaeda was busy striking U.S. targets around the world.

In 1995 and 1996, U.S. military installations were hit in Saudi Arabia. In 1998, American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were hit, almost simultaneously. In 2000, the USS Cole was hit off the coast of Yemen, killing 17 American sailors. Al Qaeda was paid
some attention and was cause for some concern, but until their attacks were witnessed on American soil, the news media’s focus would be on a variety of other issues.

September the 11th, 2001 occurred and the American media would be forever altered. Day after day, newscast after newscast, the electronic news media covered post 9-11 events like nothing we had ever seen. The horrors of al Qaeda struck a blow to the very heart of the largest American city, and finally, the nightly newscasts began to pay attention. Since that tragic day, the American news media has focused, to a large degree, on anything relating to that infamous day, and has neglected to cover many other events around the globe.

In March of 2004, after many warnings, a train bombing in Madrid, Spain occurred, killing close to 200 innocent people. The American news media paid some attention to the incident, especially since the culprits at the time seemed to fit the al Qaeda profile. Approximately one year later, in London, al Qaeda (or those connected to the same movement) struck again, terrorizing America’s closest ally in the war on terror.

Before and leading up to the attacks of September the 11th, the American news media seemed to be uninformed and inconsistent on the most important issues facing the United States and other countries around the globe. If it didn’t directly relate to the red, white, and blue, it was irrelevant. Who could have thought that 19 terrorists, training halfway around the world, at an al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan, could have terrorized America and changed media coverage. From that fatal day forward, the media has focused primarily on all things 9-11, and everything terrorism, as long as it pertains to the United States or Great Britain. The nightly world newscasts, have in large part abandoned events that are occurring in remote regions around the world, unless they are somehow attached to
terrorism. Once again, the only thing consistent about the American news media is that it is inevitably very inconsistent.
### KWL CHART – PREVIEW ASSIGNMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K – What I know about Afghanistan</th>
<th>W – What I want to know about Afghanistan</th>
<th>L – What I learned about Afghanistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson Plan Handouts
Group Project

Name: ____________________________  Date: ________________

Directions: Use your best ability to answer each question from the information gathered during lecture.

1. Describe the geographical characteristics of Afghanistan.

2. What is the relationship between Islam and the recent history and politics of Afghanistan?

3. How is life different in Afghanistan from life in the United States?
Group Members: 

Date: 

Topic: 

**Use the information you have learned from the lecture on Afghanistan. Make sure to follow the guidelines.**

1. With your group, create a project that you can present to your classmates. The purpose of this assignment is to teach your classmates about what you’ve learned on the selected topic.

2. The presentation has to be based on facts, by using online sources. Make sure to write down the information of the source you are using to avoid plagiarism.

3. With your group, choose a presentation format that you would like to use.
   - Write a short act on what you have learned and play a role of a person connected to your topic.
   - Pretend that you are an anchor, and create a newscast on your topic.
   - Role-play an Afghan citizen and share information about your life.
   - Use a panel discussion format to answer questions as an expert of your topic
   - Other: Choose your own project idea and get it approved by the teacher before starting work.

4. You will be provided with enough time in class to complete your project.

5. The presentation is a large part of the assignment, so be sure to practice your presentation. Each group member has to have an equal role in the presentation.

6. Be prepared to answer questions after your presentation.
# Al-Qaeda Crippled But Resilient

**Interviewee:** Henry A. Crumpton  
**Interviewer:** Robert McMahon, Deputy Editor

**August 21, 2006**

In the five years since September 11, 2001, the U.S. government has spent more than $400 billion on its global war on terrorism, concentrating on state sponsors of terror groups. Al-Qaeda, the group responsible for the 9/11 attacks, has receded somewhat from view but it remains the government's top terrorist concern, says the State Department's counterterrorism coordinator, Henry A. Crumpton.

Crumpton says al-Qaeda has been significantly degraded through U.S. and international efforts and its two leading figures are under "great stress." But it remains a resilient presence near the Afghan-Pakistani border region, Crumpton says, and has inspired an increasingly sophisticated group of affiliates who are still striving to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

## What is al-Qaeda today?

Al-Qaeda aspires to have the type of global network it did prior to 9/11. It works toward that end but because of our partnerships around the world, because of our collective operational success, al-Qaeda is crippled and is certainly not the organization it was. Al-Qaeda, however, has placed extra emphasis on inspiring other groups and trying to mobilize other groups and when and where possible, establishing links to these affiliated networks to have them help drive their

## Related Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winning the Right War</td>
<td>January 1, 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levi: On Nuclear Terrorism</td>
<td>December 5, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeland Security Technologies</td>
<td>November 19, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Costs of U.S. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and of Other Activities Related to the War on Terrorism, October 2007</td>
<td>October 24, 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**See Also**

United States, Terrorism

**ISN Security Watch**
You said in Senate testimony in June that the two top leaders—Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri—had become isolated in some ways. Is that the case? Does it matter for how the group functions?

They’re under great stress. We’re convinced of that and I think that’s captured in the letter that Zawahiri sent to [Abu Musab al-] Zarqawi in Iraq where he was complaining about the lack of funds and trying to reestablish some degree of control over the Zarqawi network inside Iraq. That’s the best public example I can refer to that underscores how constrained they are. Now they still have some communications links. They are able to release videos and audio, of course, and able sometimes, I think with great difficulty, to transmit some of their specific messages, operational messages, but yes they are under a great pressure and our mission of course, working with our partners in the region, is to keep that pressure on to further diminish those links.

The name has been brought up as an inspiration for the British airliner plot. Is there anything fresh on that front, in terms of affirming ties to al-Qaeda?

No, and as you can understand I’m not going to comment on an ongoing investigation given the sensitivity but the British working with us and others are working diligently and I think we’ll have a better view in the coming weeks of what kind of links to al-Qaeda there might be there.

Al-Qaeda or not, what does this plot at this point tell you about the capabilities of terrorists today?

It underscores one of the major trends that we outlined in the Country Reports on Terrorism for 2005, and that was the growing sophistication of the enemy. You look at their planning, you look at their technical sophistication. Unfortunately that’s going to be a trend that continues and will challenge us on several levels.

In this particular case, there are links to Pakistan that continue. Is the Bush Administration alarmed about this persistence in Pakistan of an element that is able to operate pretty effectively?

We’re working very closely with President Musharraf and his government to address these issues. As you know, Musharraf has been the target of two assassination attempts and I think that working together we can continue to make progress. And Pakistan, of course, has captured—with our assistance and others—has captured hundreds of al-Qaeda operatives over the years and provided a wealth of intelligence. Yet in that part of the world, especially along that border area, a resilient enemy resides and we have to keep working it.

Does it appear as if in the northwestern territories of Pakistan there has
been this transplanting of al-Qaeda/Taliban elements?

You see some operational activity, of course, along the border inside Afghanistan and inside Pakistan. The Pakistanis and the Afghans are working with us and I think that we'll have continued degrees of success in that area but it's a tough part of the world, and not just in physical, geographical terms but in terms of culture and heritage. There are some proud people in there and we have to not forget that and understand that terrain in terms of the social, political, and cultural aspects.

Where would you rank that part of the world on the scale of terrorist concerns?

Well, because you have elements of al-Qaeda leadership there, I think it's very important but you look at Iranian sponsorship of terrorism, whether you're talking about Hezbollah or some of the Shia militia groups in Iraq. That's a major source of concern and then bear in mind you've got areas of concern in Southeast Asia, in parts of the Philippines and you've got concern in Colombia with the FARC [the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia]. This is not only about the Middle East or Central Asia. Terrorism is a global problem with several different groups using terrorism as a tactic.

So are you not of a mind to rank the terror concerns at this point?

If you look at terrorist concerns, al-Qaeda is still at the top, obviously, because of their history, because of their intent, and because of the affiliated groups and the growing sophistication of al-Qaeda and these affiliated groups. You look at that and in combination with their intention to attack soft civilian targets around the world and not just American and Western but Muslim targets and others and that's clearly number one.

There have been some links drawn between al-Qaeda and Hezbollah through the years. What can you say about such links?

You see two terrorist groups with, in many ways, different political agendas, and there's of course the religious divide, Shia-Sunni, and that is evident in some of the violence we see in Iraq today, where al-Qaeda is targeting Shia groups. But also you see a difference in terms of some of the methodologies used. They both embrace terrorism as a tactic but some of their operations are characterized by different traits.

So perhaps the difference is so fundamental it's not an area where there's a great concern of collaboration?

No, we don't see the collaboration that I think you're inferring. In fact, there's a pretty large degree of differences I noted in terms of their agenda, in terms of their funding, in terms of how they operate. Now, they do view the United States and our allies as a common foe and you can't rule out the possibility of some collusion at some point but there's certainly no strategic alliance there that we see.

Does Hezbollah emerge from this conflict with Israel more dangerous, still dangerous, or degraded in some ways?

The United Nations now has a responsibility, with our support, not only to go into southern Lebanon, but to uphold the previous UN Security Council resolutions—1559 and others—to disarm Hezbollah. That's going to be the measure of success, ultimately.

Whereas 1559 resulted in the ouster of Syrian forces, it really made very few inroads on Hezbollah disarmament. Is there anything that leads you to believe this can be easier now?
I am hopeful. I think, with international focus and with international contribution, not only to disarm Hezbollah, but to help the Lebanese people, really first and foremost, to help them rebuild, and for the Lebanese government to be able to assert its true sovereignty throughout its borders, with the Lebanese Army supported by the United Nations force, that’s going to be the answer. But realistically, we have to look at Hezbollah and measure their intent. [Hezbollah leader Sheikh Hassan] Nasrallah said just yesterday [August 14] there will be no disarmament so this is not going to be easy. We understand that.

Another aspect of counterterrorism that’s getting some attention is dealing with the political skills of some of these groups, Hezbollah, for example. Can you refine a public diplomacy tool to counter this?

Certainly that’s going to be a part of it. The president and the secretary [of state] have underscored this, Ambassador Karen Hughes is working hard to approach that and it’s part of a larger question. It’s not just political actors using terrorism as a tactic. These actors are increasingly sophisticated in how they collect intelligence, in how they subvert societies and groups, in how they use denial and deception, and also in how they, in some cases, use open warfare in addition to terrorism. And, of course, their public information campaigns can be challenging for us and so you have to look at all of those things.

The other issue, when looking at Lebanon and Pakistan, is shoring up fragile societies. Do you get a sense there’s a consensus in terms of shoring up these places like Afghanistan where havens can grow?

If you look at military, law, and enforcement or other measures, that’s critical because it keeps the enemy from attacking us, from harming our citizens and our communities. It buys us space and time. But then the more enduring constructive aspect of counterterrorism and the broader agenda the president and the secretary have outlined, with international partners being a part, that’s the enduring answer and you can’t separate these different aspects.

So both within the U.S. policy community as well as international partners, you see that effort gaining some speed?

I think there’s a growing realization [of the need to rehabilitate fragile states]—if you look at some of the countries that have pledged money to help rebuild parts of southern Lebanon—and there’s a growing realization also in Afghanistan that this isn’t a military answer, you’re going to have to have long-term economic development and education and give people opportunities. You have to not only deny safe haven to terrorist forces. You have to replace it with trusted networks and all the things that make societies viable and allow their citizens to enrich their lives.

Are you concerned that there’s been some rollback in Afghanistan where that international process has been underway for five years?

Afghanistan, especially in the south and on the eastern border, is of concern. You see an increase in violence there and an increase in the poppy production which, of course, undermines society because it leads to corruption. That just underscores the point I’ve made that you’ve got to get in there. The international community has to get in there and move forward quickly and help with the development.

Do you have evidence that terror groups are still trying actively to acquire various forms of WMD?

Absolutely.
Any anecdotes that could shed some light on that?

All I could offer you are some historical public record references. One of the most chilling is the al-Qaeda operative who's currently in Malaysian detention—[Yazid] Sufaat. He was tasked to develop and deploy a biological weapon in Southeast Asia and obviously I can't talk about some of the ongoing intelligence operations and investigations but yes, multiple terrorist groups are searching for weapons of mass destruction.
Game Plan: How to Win a War Against Al Qaeda

Author: Kenneth M. Pollack, Director of Research, Saban Center for Middle East Policy

September 19, 2001
Asian Wall Street Journal

What exactly would it mean to wage a war on Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist network? Al Qaeda isn't a country with a defined geography, a uniformed military, or a physical political infrastructure. As a result, while many have called for war, few have been able to explain what such a war might look like. Indeed, one of today's great frustrations is coming to grips with this amorphous adversary.

If the U.S. concludes that bin Laden's Al Qaeda is responsible for last week's attacks, it would be difficult, but quite feasible, for the U.S. to wage a war against the network. The goal should be to destroy Al Qaeda as a functioning organization that is capable of attacking the U.S. or threatening U.S. interests. An important secondary goal will be to convince or compel other nations either to join in this task or to make it possible for the U.S. to do so itself. The U.S. strategy in such a war should consist of four broad efforts:

-- Define the sides. In nearly every war the U.S. has fought it has sought allies, and this effort has always served it well. This time should be no different. America should actively canvas its allies around the globe for those who are willing to take up arms with it in this effort. So far, the Bush administration appears to have this effort well in hand.

However, the U.S. also needs to call bin Laden's supporters on the carpet. It should make very clear that unless the Afghan government turns over bin Laden and every other member of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan within a reasonable
about right) Afghanistan will be considered at war with the U.S.

If the Taliban turns down the first such ultimatum, perhaps the most important step the U.S. could take would be to furnish large-scale arms, training and other support to the Northern Alliance, the Taliban's principal foe in Afghanistan. The Northern Alliance is the last force stopping the Taliban from taking complete control over Afghanistan, and with U.S. assistance it might be able to cause considerable pain to the Taliban.

Beyond this, the U.S. needs to make clear that those states that support or protect either Al Qaeda personnel or Afghanistan will also be considered to be at war with the U.S. Since the list of the Taliban's admirers is short, we are mainly talking about Pakistan, whose shaky military dictatorship has close ties to the Taliban, and where bin Laden enjoys popular support. Islamabad will be under strong pressure to do as little as possible, so the administration will have to hold Pakistan's feet to the fire with a meaningful combination of economic and political assistance, on the one hand, and on the other a list of dire credible consequences if it fails to cooperate.

-- Roll out an intelligence campaign. Critical it will be to wage a covert operations campaign against the Al Qaeda network itself, which consists of thousands of personnel and hundreds of global safe houses, weapons factories and other facilities. Nations either harboring elements of Al Qaeda or turning a blind eye toward Al Qaeda activities on their soil must arrest the organization's personnel, seize their facilities and confiscate their assets.

The U.S. should be prepared to impose sanctions on those countries that refuse to do so. Such sanctions must have real teeth, and might include denying national airlines the right to land in the U.S., seizing or freezing assets, and severing economic and diplomatic relations.

In addition, the U.S. should work to disrupt and deceive Al Qaeda's high technology and long-distance communications network. It should look to capture Al Qaeda operatives identified in foreign countries and bring them back to the U.S. to stand trial. Alternatively, the U.S. could kill them.

There is no U.S. law prohibiting assassination, only an executive order that could be reversed. Past history has given good reasons for the existence of this executive order and the U.S. should think long and hard about whether it is opening a Pandora's box. But it should also consider that effectively waging war against a shadowy organization like Al Qaeda might require new weapons.

-- Take direct military action. Direct military action may prove to be less central in waging such a campaign than determined diplomacy and far-reaching intelligence operations, but it should still play an important role. Assuming the Taliban chooses not to hand over bin Laden and his associates, the U.S. should conduct direct military operations against Afghanistan and Al Qaeda facilities there. An entire range of terrorist facilities, from training camps to weapons dumps, barracks to recruiting centers, should be targeted.

The U.S. forces should kill bin Laden's people. In the past, the U.S. has demonstrated an unwillingness to inflict casualties -- even military casualties. This time, its goal should be to maximize casualties; trained personnel are bin Laden's
crucial asset.

Although Afghanistan’s extreme backwardness will constrain targeting, there is still a range of relatively high-value assets that could be struck to coerce the Taliban to turn over bin Laden and his minions. They include the Taliban’s defense and intelligence ministries, remnants of the Taliban’s air force, key garrisons, weapons dumps, motor transport pools, communications nodes and other military bases.

Ideally, a combination of manned aircraft, cruise missiles and special-forces operations might be used in a sustained campaign to destroy the Al Qaeda infrastructure in Afghanistan, hunt down Al Qaeda personnel there, and destroy Taliban military capabilities. Direct support might be provided to the military operations of the Northern Alliance. However, it will be extremely difficult to mount airstrikes or special-forces operations in Afghanistan without the use of Pakistani airspace and bases -- another reason why Pakistan’s cooperation will be crucial.

-- Step up security at home. Al Qaeda has demonstrated an ability to target and kill Americans. More will have to be done, especially at home, to protect U.S. facilities and personnel. This will include putting sky marshals on planes and security officers on trains and other forms of mass transportation, increasing security at public venues, and intensifying inspections of ships wishing to dock in U.S. ports.

Fighting a war against Al Qaeda will not be easy. Bin Laden is a new kind of foe. The commitment of significant U.S. resources and political capital will be required. It will undoubtedly entail further loss of American lives. Fighting a war might mean making important sacrifices on other issues of importance to Americans: Will the Russians demand concessions on North Atlantic Treaty Organization enlargement or missile defense in return for taking an active role in the fight? What will be required to bring Pakistan on board?

The U.S. should be ready to confront these kinds of decisions. But if it committed and willing to make the sacrifice, the nebulous nature of its foe should not be an impediment to waging a successful war against Al Qaeda and its accomplices.

Mr. Pollack is the deputy director for national security studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. He was formerly a director for Near East and South Asian affairs at the U.S. National Security Council.
Often cited by U.S. officials as a post-9/11 success story, Afghanistan is now experiencing an alarming rise in insurgent attacks on government and international-led forces. Recent attacks have increasingly featured once-rare suicide bombings and other tactics more common in Iraq (BBC), a phenomenon explored in this CFR Background Q&A. As President Hamid Karzai tries to bring security and prosperity to his war-torn country, he and other leaders are pushing the Afghanistan Compact, a five-year plan for security, governance, and development, as a road map. But experts say there is little hope all its recommendations will be met. Afghanistan expert Barnett Rubin writes in a new CFR Special Report that sustained support from the United States and other international actors is crucial. Emphasizing security, the CFR report calls for U.S. pressure on Pakistan to clamp down on local Taliban leaders using Pakistan as a base to launch attacks on Afghanistan. The Center for Defense Information offers an update of the Afghan security situation. Karzai, who has been criticized for being too dependent on the Americans, is currently battling to get his cabinet approved by parliament (RFE/RL).

There are several roadblocks to security in Afghanistan. Security lapses, even at U.S. bases, are a cause for concern. The Los Angeles Times reports security is so lax that stolen disk drives with classified U.S. military information are for sale at a local market near Bagram air base (LAT). And the flourishing opium trade is particularly vexing. The latest UN report on opium trends in Afghanistan shows a steady rise in opium production since 1986—with the exception of 2001, the year the U.S.-led coalition overthrew the Taliban. The drug trade was worth more than $2.2 billion in 2004, or 60 percent of Afghanistan's legitimate GDP. Another UN report lists the roughly $500 million spent on alternative livelihood projects in the country, designed to try to lure farmers away from drug cultivation. Nearly 64 percent of the funding for this program comes from USAID. But despite these efforts, the BBC says Afghanistan is losing the war against drugs.

Reconstruction is another critical goal seen as getting short shrift. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) says the image of Afghanistan as a success relative to Iraq has led to comparative neglect for its many needs. An International Crisis Group report says one way of bolstering Afghan reconstruction is for the European Union to develop a more forceful presence in Afghanistan to...
reflect its financial contributions.

Religious intolerance in Afghanistan poses complications for Kabul in its relations with Western allies. While the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report 2005 found fewer instances of the abuse of religious freedom than in the past, the case of Abdul Rahman—the Afghan sentenced to death for converting to Christianity—shows the limits of religious freedom in practice (NYT).

Overall, experts say Afghanistan's progress continues in fits and starts. Some say it's important to acknowledge the progress that has been made. The September parliamentary elections were held peacefully. And Philip Gordon of the Brookings Institution writes in the International Herald Tribune that the international community should support the NATO mission in Afghanistan, calling it "a remarkable and so far mostly successful development."

Weigh in on this issue by emailing CFR.org.

Copyright 2008 by the Council on Foreign Relations. All Rights Reserved.
Why They Hate Us The nature of the enemy.

Author: Ray Takeyh, Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies

October 9, 2001

Ray Takeyh is research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and author of the upcoming Receding Shadow of the Prophet: Radical Islamic Movements on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century.

October 9, 2001 8:45 a.m.

Since the September 11th bombings, a persistent question that belabors Americans is why do they hate us so much? From the president to media outlets a chorus of voices has been at pains delineating between Osama bin Laden and Islam. The former is vengeful and pre-modern, the latter peaceful and tolerant. Such demarcations miss the point. Bin Laden and his cohort form a specific subculture of Islam that has been evolving in the murky terrain of Southwest Asia. This species of Islam views violence and terror as legitimate tools against the infidel West. As such, bin Laden is not an exceptional case but representative of a genre and a new radical religious movement.

While much of the international community’s terrorism concerns have focused on the Arab world, Southwest Asia has eclipsed the Middle East as the epicenter of terrorism. During the past two decades, a pernicious subculture of religious radicalism has been permeating Pakistan’s theological schools (madrassahs) that act as the country’s primary system of education. Such schools feature fiery clerics exhorting the virtues of martyrdom, encouraging the exegesis of theological texts pledging celestial rewards for suicide bombings, and promising ample financial support coming from Saudi millionaires. The messages of militant Islam and the lure of scholarships made such schools attractive to the region’s impoverished young seeking a sense of mission and a means of subsistence. Moreover, the student body was not limited to young Pakistanis but Afghans, Chechens, Chinese, Mongolians, and Central Asians. In turn, Pakistani-trained clerics and missionaries went forth into the former Soviet bloc and Eastern Europe to begin work among the Muslim populations. An international jihad movement was gestating beyond the glare of the international community that would soon be puzzled by the intensity and scope of the new claimants of radicalism.

Among the most illustrious graduates of these centers were the Taliban. Young men from the Afghan refugee camps schooled in Pakistan (the very term "Taliban" refers to their student origins) were infused with religious fervor and captivated by a leadership shrouded in mysticism who preached an ideal utopia that could be created in Afghanistan under the rule of righteousness. The disciplined cadres that were produced undertook a relentless and successful invasion of Afghanistan, ending up in control of some 90% of the country.
The victory of the Taliban in Afghanistan marked the first major triumph of this new form of "international jihad," combining the foot soldiers provided by displaced Afghan refugees, the combat and organizational experience of Middle Eastern Islamist fighters, logistical support from Pakistan's intelligence services, and funding from the wealthy members of the Gulf Arab princely class. Whatever their shortcomings, the Taliban and their Arab compatriots soon became the purveyors of a new model of revolutionary Islam whose ferocity would soon be eerily felt.

Into this inflamed arena stepped the Saudi-born master terrorist Osama bin Laden and his terror network, al Qaeda. In a sense, bin Laden was part of a larger movement of Islamic radicals defeated and expelled from the Middle East, seeking a new venue for demonstrating their distaste for the United States and the moderate Arab regimes. However, bin Laden's wealth and charisma gave the movement of refugee radicals shape and content. The nexus between al Qaeda and Taliban is easily decipherable, as the two share an ideology and a sense of commitment. The more murky set of connections is the one between bin Laden and Pakistan's intelligence operatives who appreciated his assistance to their cause in Kashmir while the retired generals made ample money selling arms to bin Laden. A diverse and complex network based on ideological amity, strategic convenience, and profit motive was born and became the backbone of the most destructive if ill-understood subcultures of hate.

As such, America’s enemies are not just the rulers of a strife-torn Afghanistan or a master terrorist, but a specific culture. In the coming weeks, the United States may militarily succeed in dislodging the Taliban from power and even assassinating bin Laden, but so long as the international jihad movement is alive, Americans are at risk. To combat this type of culturally based terrorism, the United States has to compel its allies, particularly, Pakistan, to close down the radical madrassahs and eliminate the financial network that sustains them. But the U.S. also has to move beyond dealing with generals and princes and compel the region's clergy that have long winked at their radical brethren who have used religion to legitimize suicide bombings and demonization of the West to move to the forefront of the antiterrorism struggle. Only the region's clergy can negate the theological arguments of the messengers of hate. If Islam is the sublime faith that Peter Jennings insists on, then this will be an easy task for the Muslim world’s clerics.
Transcript

Fighting Terrorism

Author: Douglas J. Feith

May 8, 2002
U.S. Department of Defense

Douglas J. Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Speech to the American Jewish Committee

Washington, D.C.

May 8, 2002

Fighting Terrorism

Good morning. Nice to be here. I have a number of friends in this American Jewish Committee audience.

I'd like to talk with you about the war on terrorism. I'd like to discuss the progress of the war and share some thoughts about its nature, our objectives and our strategy.

Our enemy in the war on terrorism is not a state or a group of states. Our enemy is not organized as a conventional military force. We cannot define victory as the conquering and subduing of a particular piece of territory or a people. We cannot expect that our own territory will be spared major damage so long as our armed forces remain undefeated. This is indeed a most unusual war, different from any that we fought in the past.

We're fighting not a nation but a terrorist network. One might even say a network of networks, an amorphous structure present in many countries, including those of our allies, and in the United States itself.

So it's a complicated struggle on multiple fronts. And we can't rely on conventional

Related Materials

Washington Times:
Inside Martyrdom
By Thomas Barnett
May 26, 2007

Prepared Testimony
before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
By Vah Re Nasr,
Adjunct Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies
Testimony
January 17, 2007

U.S. repeating Mideast mistakes?
By Steven A. Cook,
Douglas Dillon Fellow
Op-Ed
July 17, 2007

Islam, Terror and the Second Nuclear Age
By Noah Feldman,
Adjunct Senior Fellow
Article
October 29, 2006

Hamas: Isolate or Engage?
Online Debate
Updated: May 11, 2006

See Also

Israel, Palestinian Authority, Terrorism, U.S. Strategy and Politics, National Security and Defense

http://www.cfr.org/publication/4761/fighting_terrorism.html

2/24/2008
armed power to the extent we relied on such means in past wars. That's why administration officials so often stress that we must bring to bear the full range of instruments of US national power, including intelligence, financial, diplomatic and, not least, moral, as well as military tools.

Fundamental to our strategy is the recognition that we can't just defend ourselves at our own borders. We have no choice but to take the offensive.

Our country is too big, too vulnerable too full of tall building for us to do otherwise.

We're vulnerable because of the kind of country we are:

We're open to the world for commerce, travel and communications.

We welcome people from all over and let them live their lives as they wish, building their own institutions, practicing their own religion, living according to their own lights.

We respect people as individuals and afford them a large degree of privacy.

Accordingly, we have constraints against the surveillance of domestic groups.

That is the kind of country we are and that is the kind of country we want to be. If we're to preserve our freedom and our way of life, we must play offense, not defense against terrorism. We must destroy terrorism at its sources:

First of all, we have to deny terrorists a secure base of operations a safe haven where they can recruit and train more terrorists, plan operations, acquire equipment and supplies, where they can rest and regroup after terrorist attacks.

In some cases, this means the United States will cooperate with friendly governments, helping them make their authority effective over their entire territory. Examples are the Philippines, Yemen and Georgia.

In other cases, it means forcing regimes to stop supporting terrorists or providing safe haven to them.

We demanded that the Taliban stop supporting the al Qaida terrorist organization.

When they refused, we took decisive action to rid Afghanistan of the terrorists and those who supported them.

Our action in Afghanistan has already constructively perturbed the atmosphere of toleration of terrorism.

Many states that had been tolerant of terrorism, or not at all active in fighting it, have changed their policy.

In some cases, the change in behavior does not bespeak a change of heart. Some regimes may simply fear that they could become the next Taliban if they believe that, for now at least, it's prudent at least to appear to be cooperating in the war on terrorism.
But in other countries, such as Pakistan, the change has been dramatic and, we think, reflects a genuine desire to take a new and better path.

But, as I said, we're fighting a widespread network in countries where the governments oppose terrorism.

Pressing our offensive, therefore, now involves many actions that are less dramatic than the war in Afghanistan has been:

For example, law enforcement activities, the freezing of bank accounts, interception of the movement of terrorists from one country to another or the interception of shipments of weapons or money.

But we don't rule out additional military actions, directed against unrelenting state sponsors of terrorism.

As President Bush said in his State of the Union speech, we must pay particular attention to states that have supported terrorism and are developing weapons of mass destruction.

These states, the President said, could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.

So, as the President stated:

The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.

Ultimately, our goal is to change the international environment concerning terrorism.

We should confront an unpleasant fact: During the past three decades or so, there developed in the world an atmosphere of tolerance for terrorism.

Many excused it: in one famous phrase that often passed for sophisticated discourse: "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter"

Some countries supported it perhaps not openly, but often without even bothering to cover their tracks.

There were important failings in this regard all around the world, including in the United States.

In place of this atmosphere of tolerance, the United States aims now to establish an international norm of intolerance of terrorism.

In short, we want the international community to view terrorism as it now views piracy, slave-trading or genocide - activities that no-one who aspires to respectability can tolerate, let alone support.

This takes us into the realm of ideas.

It's important that we state our case clearly, even bluntly.

As President Bush has declared: "Terrorism is evil."

However much the language of morality elicits sniffs from some of our sophisticated critics abroad and at home, we don't flinch from using it. Moral clarity is a strategic asset.
It will take time to reverse the pernicious effects of the last several decades but we will be steadfast in making our case.

It bears noting that military victory while not exactly a logical argument does have its uses in the battle of ideas.

After all, in the 1930s, fascism, despite (perhaps because of) its inhumanity, had a strong intellectual following. It was in vogue and its influence spread throughout Europe years before Nazi military conquests began.

It wasn't defeated solely or even primarily by arguments, but by Allied tanks and bombers. Nothing fails like failure. Ideas associated with catastrophe for their adherents tend eventually, if not suddenly, to lose influence.

But there's a second aspect of the war of ideas that I want to address and I think it's more significant:

An important ideological source of global terrorism is an extremist interpretation of Islam that emphasizes intolerance and brutality in religious matters and hatred of the West in political matters.

This extremist school perverts the humane ideals of Islam.

But unfortunately, it has much resonance in the Islamic world.

There is a struggle going on within Islam. Non-Muslims are not parties as such in this struggle. But the whole civilized world has an interest in helping those in the Moslem world who reject extremism and espouse the more moderate, tolerant, peaceful kind of Islam.

The moderate kind of Islam flourishes in many Islamic countries.

Two especially significant examples are Turkey, which stands out as a predominantly Moslem country that has a democratic form of government and is a longstanding and valuable ally of the United States,

And Indonesia, the country whose Muslim majority is the largest in the world.

The Western world has a large stake in the prosperity and stability and overall success of such countries.

Unfortunately, extremist Islam has been making inroads around the world lately.

It has large financial resources, which its adherents use to finance, and hence control, Islamic institutions, especially schools, throughout the world.

To propagate hatred of the West and the notion of inevitable warfare between Islam and the West, and

To support terrorism that is, to legitimate violence against innocent people.

The Western world has an interest in helping the moderate voices of Islam to be heard, and to protect them against retaliation.

I would like to close with a few words concerning the campaign of suicide bombing which has been waged against Israel in recent weeks the most salient problem on the anti-terrorism agenda at present.

It's often argued that the phenomenon of suicide bombers -- terrorists who perform attacks that they know they cannot survive -- demonstrates that we aren't
dealing with people who calculate the benefits and costs of their actions.

In this vein, we frequently hear that suicide bombing is the product of the combination of poverty and hopelessness.

Westerners -- we whom Usama bin Laden has sneeringly referred to as "lovers of life" -- cannot easily understand how a young man (or woman) strpes on several pounds of high explosive and then blows himself up in a crowd of civilians. We assume that only a person ensnared by deep despair could do such a thing.

This diagnosis implies its own solution -- that the world should address what is called the "root causes of terrorism," the poverty and political hopelessness that many people imagine are the traits and motives of the suicide bombers.

This diagnosis, however, doesn't jibe with actual experience. And it misleads us about the wisest strategy.

When we look at the records of the suicide bombers, we see that many aren't drawn from the poor.

Mohammed Atta, for instance -- a key figure in executing the September 11 attack -- was a middle-class Egyptian whose parents were able to send him to study abroad. And his education meant that he could look forward to a relatively privileged life in Egypt -- hardly grounds for extreme despair.

Indeed, as we learn from a recent New York Times interview with Hamas leaders in Gaza, what characterizes the suicide bombers -- and especially the old men who send them off on their missions -- is rather hope than despair:

First of all, the bombers cherish a perverse form of religious hope. The promise of eternity in paradise is a tenet of many faiths, a noble incentive and consolation to millions of people. It's as cynical as it is sinister that leaders of al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas and other groups convince young people that eternity in paradise is available as a reward for the murder of innocents.

Second, there is the bomber's hope of earthly glory and reward -- praise as a hero from political leaders and honor for one's parents and a $25,000 check to the bomber's family from Saddam Hussein. President Bush has condemned [those governments, like Iraq, that reward parents for the sacrifice of their children ....

Those who encourage homicide bombing, as the President said, are guilty of soliciting murder of the worst kind.

Third, there is the homicide bomber's political hope. As that New York Times interview makes clear, Palestinian extremists think they have finally discovered a winning strategy.

The recent outpouring of open support in the Arab world for homicide bombers -- from Mrs. Arafat, from a senior Arab diplomat, from clerics associated with prestigious universities -- reflects excitement at the thought that bombings are producing success. It is the kind of triumphalism characteristic of a mentality that believes in "the worse the better."

This suggests a strategic course for us: attack the sources of these malignant hopes.

Regarding the religious hope: Many Islamic religious leaders seem uncomfortable with suicide bombing -- but many of them have been silenced or intimidated to voice support for the terrorists. As I have mentioned, the civilized world should
exert itself to support moderate clerics, defend them and provide them with platforms to protect their religion from extremists who want to distort and hijack it.

The civilized world should also deal with political leaders who heap honor (and money) on the suicide bombers and their families. President Bush, speaking of suicide bombers, said: "They are not martyrs. They are murderers." Other world leaders have the responsibility to reinforce this message.

Finally, as to the suicide bombers' political hopes, we must ensure that terrorism is not seen as a winning strategy. This is today's immediate challenge: For example, we have to make it understood that the Palestinian homicide bombers are harming, not helping, their political cause.

Arab-Israeli peace is a goal craved by all decent people. The Bush administration is engaged in the pursuit of this goal.

We recognize that peace can be achieved only when the conditions are right: and the most important condition is the state of peoples' minds. Thus, we must take seriously the incitement to hatred that creates the intellectual atmosphere in which terrorism can flourish. If we seek the "root cause" of terrorism, this is where we'll find it.

Peace diplomacy in the Middle East has been an intense activity for decades. It's now clear that we have not focused enough attention on the relationship between peace and education. We spend a great deal of attention on what diplomats say to each other. We need to pay closer attention to what teachers instill in their students. Therein lies the key to peace.

Changing the intellectual fashions in the world regarding terrorism -- and ultimately de-legitimating it altogether, without regard to the various causes espoused by the terrorists -- won't be easy. But its importance as a strategic requirement is right up there with the destruction and disruption of terrorist operational infrastructure.

The Bush administration appreciates the complexity of its tasks -- in the war on terrorism and in Middle East diplomacy. The President approaches these tasks with the steadiness and energy appropriate to the magnitude of the stakes.

We have our nation and its liberties to protect, our friends to assist, and our adversaries to deter and defeat. This is a rare period of flux in world affairs. We have opportunities to do good for ourselves and for others -- in the Middle East and other regions of the world -- by enhancing security, suppressing terrorism, eliminating weapons of mass destruction, promoting freedom and prosperity and opening paths to peace. The American people expect this administration to rise to the occasion. We shall do our best.

Thank you.