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Letters may be edited before publication.

CORRECTION: Jeffrey Jones, in his article "Strategic Communication: A Mandate for the United States," *Joint Force Quarterly* 39, 3rd Quarter 2005, was misidentified as the Director for Strategic Communications and Information on the National Security Council when, in fact, he was Senior Director, Strategic Communication and Information.

From the Editor



Do suicide bombers look both ways before they cross the street? That sounds like the start of a bad joke. The answer is yes, but there is no punch line. Why they look is an essential element of security strategy.

Regardless of their motivations, suicide bombers intend to kill others through the vehicle of their own logically planned deaths. Terrorists train, create international funding schemes, and perform extensive tactical planning, including selecting targets that maximize casualties and wrapping bombs with nails to tear flesh. Their investment of time and effort is lost if a truck hits them before they make it to their intended destination, perhaps a bus stop or cafe.

Military strategists and security analysts since Sun Tzu have agreed that understanding the enemy is helpful to commanders. The real art lies in knowing what to do with the knowledge. This is the essence of effects-based operations: select targets that may be subject to influence and tailor methods to achieve effects that support the strategy. Readers will find this common intellectual thread among many articles in the past four issues of *Joint Force Quarterly*, and this issue in particular. There is a growing recognition beyond military circles of the necessity to understand the dissimilar *Weltanschauung*. In the War on Terror, security decisionmakers must consider the worldview that encourages terrorist and rogue leaders to believe they can succeed and how that view differs from that of peace-loving nations.

While considering a terrorist dodging traffic, analysts must keep in mind a moral imperative: one must not conflate atrocities such as those on September 11 or in Madrid, London, Bali, Israel, Afghanistan, and Iraq with "freedom-fighting." Indeed, in war, the target may define the act. Purposely murdering noncombatants, beheading kidnapped hostages, executing teachers, and driving car bombs into civilian queues contrast starkly with the internationally sanctioned approach of forcing the world's worst dictators to stand trial, unabused, for crimes affecting millions.

Security professionals and free thinkers also need to guard against the lazy rationalization that terrorism today is just 12th-century reality judged with 21st-century situational ethics. Recent terrorist attacks demonstrate how far the terrorists of today go beyond international norms, laws, and standards of contemporary conflict. Consider an Islamic leader's admonition when his children asked to kill a prisoner: "I do not want them to get used to shedding blood so young; at their age they do not know what it means to be a [Muslim] or an infidel, and they will grow accustomed to trifling with the lives of others." The speaker was a man born in Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, almost 900 years ago—Saladin. Today's terrorists are well outside even this 12th-century standard.

In response to the continuing challenges and opportunities provided by today's dynamic strategic environment, this issue of *JFQ* features General Peter Pace's first "Word from the Chairman," calling for renewed focus on the War on Terror; a new Forum topic, Homeland Defense and Security; an intriguing U.S. Special Operations Command special feature; and the premiere of a new senior leader interview series, In Their Own Words. Although this issue does not directly address the topic of jaywalking terrorists, the staff trusts that you will find the essays and articles thought-provoking and welcomes feedback from military and security professional readers alike.

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