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RETHINKING THE "WAR ON TERROR"
NEW APPROACHES TO CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT IN THE POST-9/11 WORLD

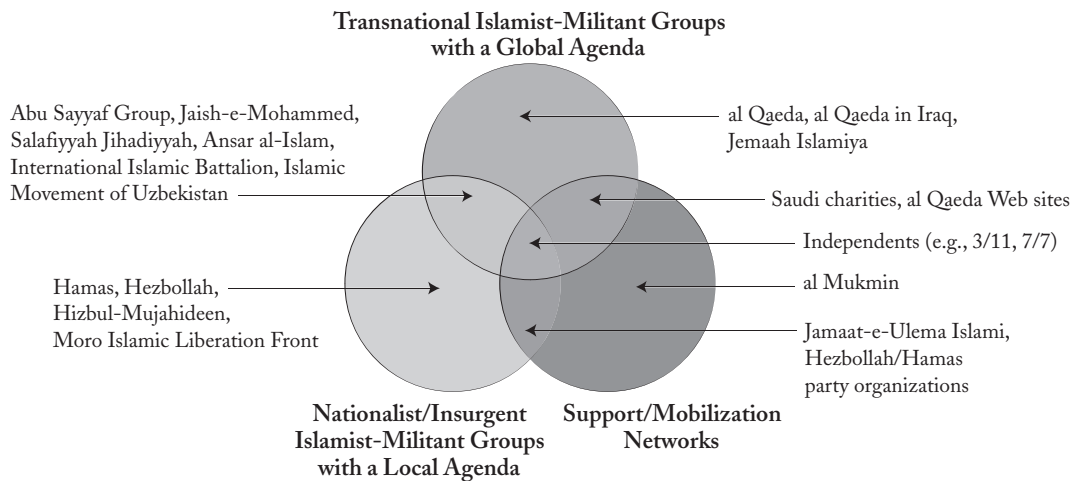*Paul B. Stares and Mona Yacoubian*

THE NEW STRATEGIC CHALLENGE FACing the United States in the wake of 9/11 is often compared with the great "generational" struggles of the twentieth century against fascism and communism. While the contest likely will be as prolonged and require a comparable mobilization of national and international resources if the United States is to prevail, the comparison should not be pushed too far. The struggle we now find ourselves in is like neither World War II nor the Cold War, with their clearly defined combatants, "front lines," and rules of engagement. The perpetrators of the September 11 attacks represent a transnational, highly dynamic, increasingly decentralized, religiously inspired movement propelled for the most part by a diverse collection of nonstate actors. They operate in some instances openly but more often clandestinely, using unorthodox tactics and weapons. The challenge posed by what we define as "Islamist militancy" is fundamentally different, therefore, from traditional "state-centric" threats to international peace and security.

As such, Islamist militancy has more in common with other so-called new security challenges that transcend national borders and are driven by nonstate actors and processes. This does not mean that the traditional toolbox of national security responses is now irrelevant or renders obsolete the standard menu of conflict prevention and management techniques—on the contrary. But these techniques must be adapted and complemented with new approaches that acknowledge unconventional attributes of these new security challenges. In the case of Islamist militancy, the nature of the evolving challenge is still poorly understood. Thus, before describing an alternative, and what we believe to be a more effective strategy for responding to Islamist militancy than the approach currently favored in the "global war on terror," this chapter will first lay out a different way of thinking about the new strategic challenge confronting the United States.

THE NEW STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

Despite a plethora of studies and policy prescriptions since the September 11 attacks, we are still trying to grasp the nature of the new strategic challenge we face and how best to

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Figure 1. Islamist Militancy, c. 2006

Transnational Islamist-Militant Groups
with a Global Agenda

Abu Sayyaf Group, Jaish-e-Mohammed,
Salafiyyah Jihadiyyah, Ansar al-Islam,
International Islamic Battalion, Islamic
Movement of Uzbekistan

al Qaeda, al Qaeda in Iraq,
Jemaah Islamiya

Saudi charities, al Qaeda Web sites

Independents (e.g., 3/11, 7/7)

Hamas, Hezbollah,
Hizbul-Mujahideen,
Moro Islamic Liberation Front

al Mukmin

Jamaat-e-Ulema Islami,
Hezbollah/Hamas
party organizations

Nationalist/Insurgent
Islamist-Militant Groups
with a Local Agenda

Support/Mobilization
Networks

counter it. There is no better indication of this than the complete lack of consensus or common lexicon about what to call the threat. Is it "global terrorism," "Islamic terrorism," "al Qaeda and its affiliates," "Sunni jihadists," "Islamist radicals," or "terrorist extremism"? This is not just a semantics issue; words and names have vital operational import. Without clarity on who, precisely, is our adversary, we are unlikely to ever develop a clear and comprehensive understanding of its objectives, strategy, and operational character. And without such a common understanding, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of an effective and sustainable response. Yet it is our assessment that there is neither a broadly accepted understanding of the challenge we face nor a comprehensive long-term strategy to counter it.

Our preference is to classify this broader challenge as "Islamist militancy." Like the 9/11 Commission, we feel it important to use the modifier "Islamist"—a politico-religious movement within the Muslim world—rather than "Islamic"—the culture and religion of Islam.[1] Unlike the 9/11 Commission, however, we prefer the simpler, less loaded term "militancy"

to "terrorism." Using the term "militants" to refer to those who either employ or espouse violent means in pursuit of political ends not only avoids the notoriously slippery definitional problems associated with terrorism but also serves to underscore that the challenge is both multidimensional and broad based, involving more actors than just those who actually carry out terrorist attacks.[2] Indeed, Islamist militancy has three main constituent groups whose memberships are constantly evolving and overlap in significant ways.

There are, first, the transnational jihadist groups that have a global agenda (principally al Qaeda and its affiliates); second, the nationalist insurgent groups that have essentially a local agenda (e.g., Hamas, Hezbollah, and some of the Kashmiri groups); and, third, the miscellaneous organizations and networks that directly and indirectly support these militant groups. Distinctions among these groups are difficult to discern. Indeed, more and more new organizations and groups are emerging that share common traits with overlapping agendas. Figure 1 provides a general snapshot of the principal actors in 2006. The diagram is not

meant to be exhaustive and is merely illustrative of the phenomenon and its key constituent elements.

Islamist militancy does not represent a conventional national security threat—that much is clear and generally understood. Neither does it represent a conventional terrorist threat, which typically has a distinctive—often singular—identity with reasonably clear political goals, organizational structure, and area of operations. Conventional counterterrorist responses, with their emphasis on apprehending an organization's leaders and rolling up networks or cells of activists and supporters through improved intelligence gathering and sharing, are usually effective therefore. Although such methods remain just as necessary to any campaign against Islamist militancy, it is also becoming clear that they will not be sufficient. The growing trend, exhibited in attacks such as those in Madrid (March 2004), London (July 2005), and elsewhere, toward the emergence of localized, self-organizing militant groups acting largely independently of higher operational direction underscores the limits of conventional counterterrorism responses.

Not surprisingly, an increasing number of experts now advocate drawing on the strategies and tactics of unconventional, or "irregular," warfare to meet the challenge.[3] The threat is portrayed as a global insurgency that requires a commensurate global counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign. There is some logic to this as elements of the challenge reflect characteristics of a classic insurgency. Certainly, al Qaeda's stated goals of expelling "Jews and crusaders" from the Muslim world and cleansing it of apostate regimes—all with the objective of reestablishing a purified caliphate—can be viewed as an insurgency of sorts. The recognition that success ultimately hinges on winning "hearts and minds" in the Muslim world is also a critically important attribute of a counterinsurgency response.

Yet just as classic counterterrorism measures have their limits, so a strictly counter-insurgency approach has its shortcomings and even liabilities. Describing the phenomenon as a global insurgency dangerously exaggerates the threat by assuming a degree of organization and unity among its various actors that currently does not exist. The COIN approach also risks conflating many kinds of Islamist struggles and perversely even serving to legitimize them. Unless suitably adapted, the standard COIN framework with its simplistic distinctions between "enemies," "friends," and "uncommitted" could make matters worse, especially if military or "kinetic" responses come to dominate.

With these concerns in mind, we propose an alternative strategy to countering Islamist militancy that views the challenge as one would a global public health threat or epidemic. The conceptual leap required by this approach is not as far as it first appears. Social scientists increasingly have looked to epidemiology to understand a variety of social contagions, and here Islamist militancy is no different. Specifically, our approach draws on the scientific principles and practices of epidemiology as well as the insights from a growing body of research on "social contagion phenomena" such as fashions, fads, rumors, civil violence, and revolutionary ideas.[4] Moreover, many commentators and even U.S. officials have employed disease metaphors to describe the challenge of Islamist militancy.[5] Thus references to terrorism being a "virus" or to al Qaeda "mutating" or "metastasizing" are common. Similarly, the image of madrassas and mosques being "incubators" of a "virulent ideology" is frequently invoked. Such metaphors have a visceral appeal in that they help to convey a dangerous and, moreover, darkly insidious threat. For some, the disease metaphor also sets—implicitly, at least—a more realistic goal for what can be practically achieved to eliminate this scourge. Just as very few diseases have been completely eradicated, so the likelihood that terrorism or political violence will be rendered extinct is remote. The best that

can be hoped for is for it to become a manage-
able, low-probability, albeit sometimes deadly,
nuisance much like many other social ills.

Beyond its metaphorical appeal there are
more practical attractions to an epidemiological/
public health approach. Three stand out:

◆ First, epidemiologists observe rigorous stan-
dards of inquiry and analysis to understand
the derivation, dynamics, and propagation
of a specific disease. In particular, they seek
clarity on the origins and geographical and
social contours of an outbreak: where the
disease is concentrated, how it is transmit-
ted, who is most at risk or "susceptible" to
infection, and why some portions of society
may be less susceptible or, for all intents
and purposes, immune. Applying the same
methodological approach to mapping and
understanding Islamist militancy can yield
immediately useful guidance on where and
how to counter it.

◆ Second, epidemiologists recognize that dis-
eases neither arise nor spread in a vacuum.
They emerge and evolve as a result of a
complex dynamic interactive process be-
tween people, pathogens, and the environ-
ment in which they live. Indeed, the epi-
demiologic concept of "cause" is rarely if
ever singular or linear but is more akin to a
"web" of direct and indirect factors that
play a lesser or greater role in differing cir-
cumstances. To make sense of this com-
plexity, epidemiologists typically employ a
standard analytical device that "deconstructs"
the key constituent elements of a disease.
This model helps not only to understand
the phenomenon in its entirety but also to
anticipate how it might evolve in the fu-
ture. As will be discussed, the same systemic
conception of disease can be adapted to un-
derstand the constituent elements of Is-
lamist militancy and their evolution.

◆ Third, just as epidemiologists view disease
as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, so
public health officials have come to recog-

Figure 2. The Epidemic Model
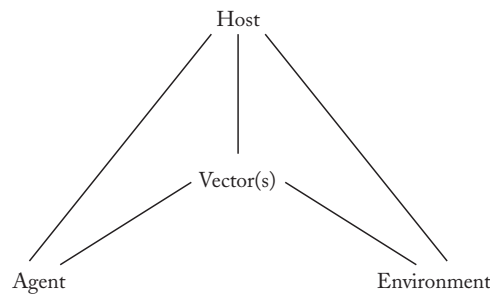
nize that success in controlling and rolling
back an epidemic typically results from a
carefully orchestrated, systematic, priori-
tized, multipronged effort to address each
of its constituent elements. At the same time,
however, it is also recognized that signifi-
cant progress or major advances can some-
times be precipitated by relatively minor
interventions—or "tipping points."[6] Again,
there are lessons and insights to be learned
here for orchestrating a global counter-
terrorism campaign.

Before turning to what such a campaign to
defeat Islamist militancy might look like were
it to follow a public health or counterepidemic
approach, it is necessary to understand how epi-
demiologists typically try to understand dis-
ease and how this can help us understand the
challenge we face.

THE EPIDEMIC MODEL

As indicated, epidemiologists employ a stan-
dard approach, or model, to study epidemics
that deconstructs an outbreak into four key
components, recognizing that in reality they
are all dynamically interconnected, as shown
in figure 2.[7]

In simple terms, the agent refers to the
pathogen (e.g., a virus or bacterium) that causes
disease. The host is the person infected by the
disease (the "infective"), while the environment

Figure 3. The Epidemic Model Applied to Islamist Militancy
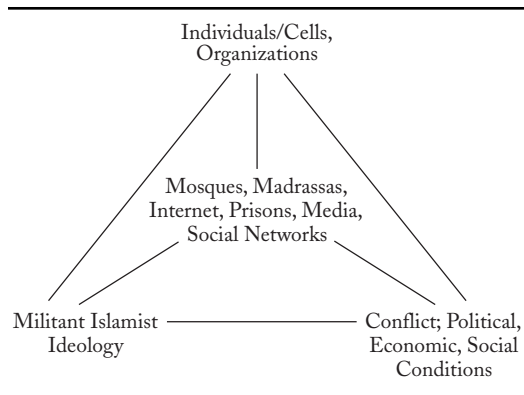
refers to a variety of external factors that affect both agent and host. At the center of the triad are the vectors, the key pathways, or conduits, that help propagate the disease.

Islamist militancy is clearly not a disease in a comparably clinical fashion. Whereas those who fall victim to disease are typically passive and unwitting receptors of the pathogen, Islamist militants to a lesser or greater extent willingly decide to play an active role of some kind. Yet their actions are clearly driven by a core set of ideas and beliefs—an ideology—that has an "infectious" appeal. In this and other respects Islamist militancy can be seen as having epidemic-like qualities. It, too, therefore, can be deconstructed using the classic epidemic model, as shown in figure 3.

Thus, so applied, the agent is Islamist militant ideology. Specifically, two primary "strains" can be identified: (1) a transnational Salafist/jihadist ideology as espoused by al Qaeda[8] and (2) a nationalist/insurgent Islamist militant ideology as espoused by groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and some of the militant Kashmiri groups. Each of these ideological strains is characterized by a specific set of underlying assumptions, motivations, and goals.

The host is the group or person "infected" by the agent. More specifically, the host refers to a group or individual who becomes to a lesser or greater extent an adherent of militant Islamist ideology. As defined, Islamist militants are those who employ or espouse the use of violence in pursuit of political goals.

The environment refers to key factors specific to the Muslim world that promote exposure to Islamist militancy—conflict, political repression, economic stagnation, and social alienation being the leading influences. Vectors in this case refer to a variety of known conduits that are used to propagate the ideology and associated action agendas, such as mosques, prisons, madrassas, the Internet, satellite television, and diasporic networks.

It is important to understand that the epidemic model of Islamist militancy acknowledges that the vast majority of Muslims find the core elements of Islamist militant ideology to be both aberrant and abhorrent. In this respect they are effectively "immunized" to its appeal. However, some unknown, yet critical, proportion of the population is clearly "susceptible" to becoming not only an adherent of the ideology but actively motivated by it.

Several policy-relevant benefits accrue from conceiving of Islamist militancy in this fashion. First, it captures the key elements of the challenge in a *systemic* manner rather than in the disaggregated, unconnected way that so often bedevils analysis and understanding. Second, it is a *dynamic* model that acknowledges that the phenomenon is not static but constantly evolving with the emergence of new strains, new hosts, new vectors, and changing environmental conditions. Third, it provides insights into how Islamist militancy may evolve in the future.

However, unlike with an outbreak of disease, in which those infected typically (though not always) are motivated to report their condition to seek treatment, the size and spread of Islamist militancy are clearly more difficult to assess. A combination of indicators (e.g., the number of attacks conducted or thwarted and militants killed or incarcerated, the influence of jihadist Web sites, the dissemination

Figure 4. Growth of the "Epidemic"
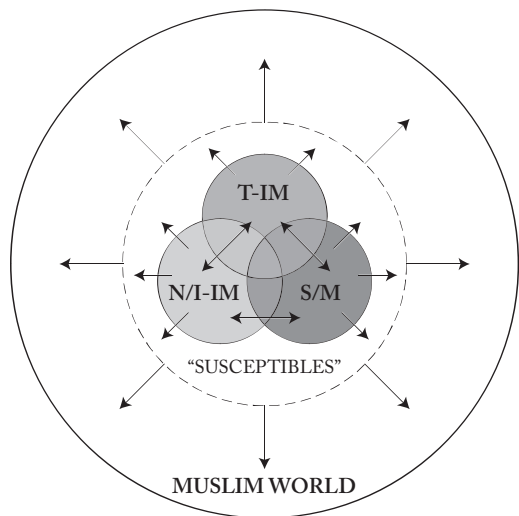
Key
T-IM = transnational Islamist militants
N/I-IM = nationalist/insurgent Islamist militants
S/M = support/mobilization networks

of training materials, etc.) suggests that the phenomenon is expanding as well as mutating in the ways indicated earlier. Surveys within the Muslim world of people's attitudes toward the United States and the West more generally would also suggest that the pool of "susceptibles"—those at risk for becoming Islamist militants—is large and expanding in certain countries. Figure 4 depicts the overall growth of Islamist militancy.

THE COUNTEREPIDEMIC APPROACH

Faced with the outbreak of an infectious disease, public health officials typically employ a three-pronged strategy to counter the threat.

First, *contain* the most threatening outbreaks to prevent them from gaining enough mass and momentum to overwhelm public health responders and threaten public order. Standard measures include quarantining specific areas to contain the movement of infectious

individuals, eliminating or decontaminating identifiable vectors of transmission, and, if an antidote exists, treating and rehabilitating individuals who have succumbed to the disease. Containing and contracting the number of infectives can effectively eradicate the pathogen, though such a success is rare, as indicated earlier.

Second, *protect* those who are most vulnerable or susceptible to the disease (the high-risk groups) as well as those who are most critical to a functioning society (high-value groups). The most effective countermeasure is selective or targeted immunization programs. Interestingly, not everyone needs to be inoculated to achieve what is known as "herd immunity"— essentially, the level at which the probability of an infected person being in contact with a nonimmunized person is very low, if not zero. If an effective vaccine is not available, other protective strategies are employed, including encouraging "safe practices" through public education to reduce the probability of exposure and the rate of new infection.

Third, *remedy* the environmental conditions that fostered the emergence of the disease in specific areas and its subsequent spread. Many types of interventions are conceivable, from the local to the global, depending on the nature of the threat.

Adapting the same basic strategic imperatives of a counterepidemic campaign to the threat posed by Islamist militancy would immediately translate into the following operational priorities:

♦ Containing and contracting the activities of the most "virulent" Islamist militant organizations—the transnational jihadist groups with global reach and apocalyptic agendas—as well as those who could gain a meaningful operational presence in areas of significant strategic interest. These areas would include most notably Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, the Caucasus, and the Muslim diaspora communities of Western Europe, as well as

areas in the vicinity of key global financial/economic infrastructure assets.

- Protecting the high-risk/high-value communities of the Muslim world. According to open-source—unclassified—accounts, a disproportionate number of the officers and foot soldiers in the transnational jihadist cause come from a few countries—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Yemen, Pakistan—and from the European diaspora communities. The high-value communities consist of the educational, religious, political, and security sectors of countries where Islamist militant organizations could make the greatest inroads and the growing number of transnational cultural, business, and media networks that affect the lives of many millions of Muslims throughout the larger *Ummah* (Islamic community).
- Remedying the key environmental factors that foster Islamist militancy. The most important would appear to be the ongoing conflicts or insurgencies involving Muslims and non-Muslims that help validate the central jihadist argument that Islam is under attack and that also serve as recruiting magnets and training grounds—notably, Iraq, Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Chechnya, and several smaller conflicts in Central and Southeast Asia. Social alienation within the European diaspora communities and public corruption, political repression, and economic stagnation in key areas of the Muslim world are widely viewed as additional factors.

These strategic imperatives can be further translated into specific containment, protective, and remedial programs or initiatives that, again, draw on the principles and practices of a counterepidemic campaign.

Containment Measures

In addition to limiting the operational reach and capabilities of the most threatening Islamist militant organizations by using standard counterterrorism measures and discrete special intelligence/military operations, containment initiatives would extend to placing greater emphasis on disrupting and restricting the untrammeled use of key vectors—the Internet, satellite TV, prisons, schools, mosques, and so on—by Islamist militant organizations. Some vectors can be physically shut down, others "decontaminated" of unwanted infectious agents.[9] Containment measures appear to be a largely haphazard, after-the-fact effort at the present, rather than a systematically planned, internationally executed campaign.

Because of the practical limits to such efforts in an open society, greater attention should also be given to nurturing and propagating what can be termed an "ideological antidote" to the key tenets of Islamist militant ideology. This can involve a broad-gauged campaign to denounce and delegitimize jihadist propaganda and practices such as beheadings and the killing of innocent civilians, including fellow Muslims, as well as more discrete efforts aimed toward a specific group or community. The former includes mobilizing moderate religious figures to issue fatwas condemning the ideology and tactics used as a perversion of Islam and encouraging key opinion makers, cultural leaders, and mass media figures to do the same.[10] Such efforts have been made, but apparently not in an extensive or concerted way.[11] More targeted activities include exploiting the ideological contradictions or schisms within the transnational jihadist movement to foment internal dissension and possible defection. There are reports, for example, of successful counterideological efforts in Yemen that in turn yielded operational success in rolling up a local al Qaeda network.[12]

Although many Islamist militants are beyond such intellectual suasion—essentially the health care equivalent of treatment and rehabilitation—this may not be the case with some groups and organizations. Local national-insurgent movements, in particular, may be susceptible to a "rehabilitative" process in much

the way that other terrorist organizations have abandoned armed struggle. The evolving role of groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, for example, suggests the possibility of their integration into their respective political systems. The provision of amnesties to insurgents willing to lay down arms, as in Afghanistan, constitutes another element of rehabilitation. And in Iraq, reports suggest a growing rift between the nationalist Iraqi elements of the insurgency and foreign jihadists, in part as a result of the latter's indiscriminate targeting of civilians.[13]

Protective Measures

Whereas the containment measures are directed primarily at those already infected, protective measures are aimed at those who are most at risk and those who play important societal functions. It is conceivable that with better understanding of why certain groups and individuals become first sympathetic to, then supportive of, and, finally, actively engaged in Islamist militant causes, targeted programs to effectively immunize at-risk groups could be designed. There are many cases where key populations have been targeted in ways designed to turn off their receptiveness to specific ideas, messages, and unhealthy or antisocial practices, including by appealing to people's common sense, their personal safety, their peer group standing, religious edicts, and societal norms, among other approaches. In some cases the tactics used are not unlike real vaccination programs that work on the principle of exposing uninfected populations to a weakened or attenuated version of the virus so that the body learns to identify and reject the real thing. Political campaigns, for example, often expose key undecided voters to the arguments of opposing candidates, in some cases to ridicule the candidates, but more often to "arm" the voters with convincing reasons to be skeptical when they hear the same arguments from those candidates.[14]

Similar public programs aimed at undermining the appeal of militant Islamist ideol-

ogy could be designed and implemented in many different arenas, from schools to mosques to mass media outlets. Unless they are undertaken in the Muslim communities of Western Europe, however, these are clearly not initiatives that the United States (and the West more generally) should lead or be openly associated with. Western states can, however, prod allies and partners in the Muslim world and provide discreet assistance.
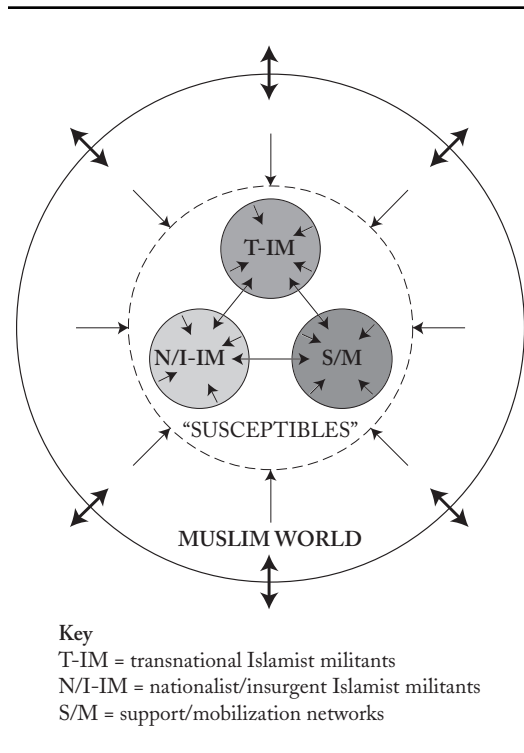
Such "ideological immunization" efforts aimed at high-risk communities should not just provide a negative image of militant Islamism, however. Ideally, they should also offer a positive and compelling alternative vision for the future. Indeed, efforts to undermine militant Islamism and provide a positive counterideology can be mutually reinforcing. Again, the same arenas and conduits—schools, mosques, mass media outlets—have a critical role to play, and thus efforts designed to mobilize and strengthen moderate voices in these sectors should be an indispensable component of the overall effort.[15]

Remedial Measures

Many of the previous initiatives will be harder to accomplish or will likely fail if parallel efforts are not also taken to remedy some of the key environmental conditions that promote Islamist militancy in the Muslim world. For reasons discussed earlier, an intensified effort should be made to resolve or at least tamp down the violent conflicts that have a particularly strong resonance within the Muslim world. Indeed, successful conflict management and prevention strategies will play a key role in impeding the spread of Islamist militancy. Besides reducing the direct role of the presence of violent conflict in jihadist recruitment and training, conflict resolution efforts will help invalidate jihadist propaganda and buttress moderate support.

The implementation of political reforms focused on good governance, particularly greater transparency, accountability, and the

Figure 5. Countering the "Epidemic"

Key
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N/I-IM = nationalist/insurgent Islamist militants
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rule of law, will also play a key role in neutralizing Islamist militant ideology that calls for the overthrow of corrupt regimes. Likewise, greater civil liberties, including broader freedoms of assembly and expression as well as the freedom to form political parties and other associations, will help to level the political playing field and allow "healthy" outlets for dissent. Particular emphasis should be placed on institution building so as to prevent democratic gains from being undermined by autocratic regimes or exploited by nondemocratic opposition forces. Facilitating the political participation of peaceful, moderate Islamists can also help to develop an effective counterweight to Islamist militants and their violent tactics.

The implementation of economic reforms designed to spur growth and bolster job creation will likewise help to ease popular disaffection, particularly among the region's disproportion-

ately young population. In addition, economic reforms that create an environment that is more appealing to foreign investors will help the Muslim world to integrate more effectively into the broader global economic system and help bridge the gap in relative performance between the Muslim world, particularly the Arab world, and the global economy.

◆ ◆ ◆

The combined effect of these containment, protective, and remedial measures will be to reverse over time the negative trends discussed earlier. As figure 5 depicts, the effect will be to divide, isolate, and weaken the Islamist militant organizations and marginalize their operational impact. The pool of susceptibles will also shrink in relation to the rest of the Muslim world, which through the various remedial efforts will become a more "healthy" and integrated part of the larger, globalizing world.

As with a global health campaign, success in countering the challenge of Islamist militancy will depend on a sustained commitment over many years, if not decades, by a broad coalition of like-minded states acting in partnership with a multitude of nongovernmental actors. Simply stated, there is no single or easy cure.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The counterepidemic approach to meeting the challenge of Islamist militancy follows in fundamental respects the basic tenets of effective conflict prevention and management. These tenets can be summarized as follows using common admonitions from the world of public health care:

◆ *Prevention is better than cure.* Reducing the momentum of a conflict, especially after passions have become inflamed and blood spilt, is clearly more difficult than taking early preventive measures to forestall violence;

positions harden, options narrow, and the costs rise. Early warning and early response can therefore make all the difference.

◆ *Diagnose before treating.* Knowing thy ailment is just as important as knowing thy enemy. While it doesn't guarantee success, understanding clearly the source(s) and dynamics of a conflict before taking action obviously improves the chances of applying the right tools in the right place with the right outcomes.

◆ *Do no harm.* The Hippocratic Oath is no less relevant to conflict management. As countless examples attest, poorly timed or calibrated interventions can make a problem worse, not better. Knowing what to do and when to do it in conflict management is as much an art as a science, but again, experience provides a rich set of guidelines, particularly when it comes to balancing incentives and disincentives, force with diplomacy, and so on.

◆ *Address the source, not the symptoms.* Resolving the root cause of a conflict typically raises the bar in terms of what is required to secure peace, but as many long-festering disputes attest, the "Band-Aid" approach to conflict management at best delays and in many instances complicates the task of finding a sustainable solution.

◆ *Palliate what you cannot cure.* Sometimes, however, a solution is beyond practical reach. Just as some diseases are—for the time being, at least—incurable, so some conflicts become, for all intents and purposes, intractable. Under such circumstances the best that can be achieved is to limit the consequences and not make a bad situation worse.

As indicated at the outset, however, the task of conflict prevention and management must adapt to the emerging realities of the twenty-first century. As a consequence of the forces of globalization, the world has clearly become a smaller, more interconnected place. Threats to international peace and stability that may have previously been considered distant and inconsequential can now resonate more widely, more quickly, and with greater impact. For similar reasons, nonstate actors can now wield unprecedented power for good and bad while also having much greater latitude to operate across borders—again with positive and negative consequences, as al Qaeda and numerous warlords around the world have demonstrated.

At the same time, states seeking to prevent and manage conflict, whether it be within their borders or in areas both adjacent and far away from them, find themselves in a changed operating environment. Besides the interdependencies of a globalizing world, emerging legal rules and norms affect their freedom much more than was ever previously the case. Their actions, furthermore, are subject to greater scrutiny and accountability by virtue of not only the constant 24/7 gaze of the global media but also an expanding network of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.

As a consequence of these new realities, states can rarely, if ever, address threats to peace and stability as singular actors. The task is likely to be too big to solve alone, while important advantages—not least in terms of generating international legitimacy—can be derived from acting collectively. This imperative to cooperate may seem too high a price to pay to those concerned about national sovereignty, but such concerns are arguably becoming redundant in an increasingly interdependent world if they haven't already become so. Indeed, giving up some de jure sovereignty may be the only way for states to regain some de facto sovereignty, especially when it comes to nonstate-based threats such as transnational terrorism.

The growing imperative to cooperate internationally is matched by the comparable need for states to partner with nongovernmental actors and civil society in general. The benefits are mutual. States need the cooperation of NGOs to manage those who would exploit

the business and commerce sectors, among others, for nefarious ends. NGOs likewise need the support of governments to operate effectively and relatively freely. Again, such partnerships can confer legitimacy on both sides.

Finally, states must adapt their internal political and bureaucratic structures and processes to these new imperatives. What were largely vestiges of the Cold War and earlier eras have to be reformed or replaced with new mechanisms for governmental decision making, coordination, and implementation. Without such changes, effective conflict prevention and management will only become more difficult to achieve.

NOTES

An earlier version of this chapter was presented to the Aspen Strategy Group Workshop "Mapping the Jihadist Threat: The War on Terror since 9/11," Aspen, Colorado, August 5–10, 2005. It also draws on a larger body of USIP-sponsored research reported in "Rethinking the War on Terror: A Counter-Epidemic Strategy," *Peace Watch* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, April-May 2006), http://www.usip.org/peacewatch/2006/april_may/war_on_terror.html.

1. See National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 362n3.

2. We recognize, therefore, that there are also peaceful Islamist organizations, including legal Islamist political parties such as the Party for Justice and Development in Morocco and charitable organizations such as the Red Crescent.

3. See, for example, David J. Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," in *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no. 4 (August 2005): 597–617; and Bruce Hoffman, testimony to the House Armed Services Committee: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, 109th Cong., 2nd sess., February 16, 2006.

4. See, for example, Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Differ-*

ence (Boston: First Back Bay, 2002); Joshua M. Epstein, "Modeling Civil Violence: An Agent-Based Computational Approach," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,* vol. 99, suppl. 3 (May 14, 2003): 7243–7250; Luis M. A. Bettancourt, Ariel Cintron-Arias, David I. Kaiser, and Carlos Castillo-Chavez, "The Power of a Good Idea: Quantitative Modeling of the Spread of Ideas from Epidemiological Models," Santa Fe Institute Working Paper (Santa Fe, N.M.: Santa Fe Institute, February 6, 2005).

5. For example, Richard N. Haass, former director of policy planning, U.S. State Department, went further in drawing the analogy in a major speech: "The challenge of terrorism is . . . akin to fighting a virus in that we can accomplish a great deal but not eradicate the problem. We can take steps to prevent it, protect ourselves from it, and when an attack occurs, quarantine it, minimize the damage it inflicts, and attack it with all our power." Richard N. Haass, speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, October 15, 2001. Likewise, France's top counterterrorism official, Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière, has often compared the terrorist threat posed by groups such as al Qaeda to a mutating virus. See, for example, "Frontline: Al Qaeda's New Front," October 12, 2004, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/bruguiere.html.

6. Numerous examples of "tipping points" exist in nearly every realm of life, from fashion to politics. The reversal of New York City's burgeoning crime wave in the 1980s stands as a classic example of identifying and successfully exploiting a tipping point. In that case, the New York police embarked on a strategy of cracking down on relatively minor "quality-of-life" crimes. They went after panhandlers on the street and subway fare-beaters, as well as employing a concerted effort to clean the graffiti from subway cars and ensure that they stay clean. These relatively minor measures constituted a key tipping point that apparently contributed to a significant downturn in serious crime.

7. Two key references were consulted for this section: B. Burt Gerstman, *Epidemiology Kept Simple: An Introduction to Traditional and Modern Epidemiology* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley Liss, 2003); and Leon Gordis, *Epidemiology,* 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Elsevier Saunders, 2004).

8. The modern Salafi movement traces its roots to the nineteenth-century Egyptian religious figure

Muhammad Abduh and his disciple Rashid Rida, who denounced the innovations and schisms (notably the Sunni-Shiite divide) within the Muslim community as perversions of Islam. Salafists demand a return to the pure form of Islam as practiced by the prophet Muhammad and his immediate successors. Over the past two centuries, the Salafi movement has evolved, split, and adapted to differing circumstances throughout the Muslim world. Salafists do not necessarily call for the use of violence; some focus almost exclusively on social behavior, calling for an ultraconservative moral code to direct dress and other social practices. However, a violent/extremist branch of the movement combines the missionary zeal associated with the call to purge Islam of its impure elements with the violent anti-Western extremism incubated among jihadists in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s. Sources on the Salafist/jihadist ideology include Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 4 (December 2001): 18–38; Christopher M. Blanchard, *Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology,* CRS Report for Congress (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 4, 2005); Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama Bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2002); and Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

9. For example, in February 2005, London's Finsbury Park mosque, once a bastion of radicalism, was reclaimed. A new board of directors ousted the mosque's radical cleric, Abu Hamza al-Masri, and literally changed the locks. See Lizette Alvarez, "Britain's Mainstream Muslims Find Voice," *New York Times,* March 6, 2005. Similarly, measures must be taken within prison systems to curtail and ultimately cease recruitment. See Ian Cuthbertson, "Prisons and the Education of Terrorists," *World Policy Journal* 21, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 20, for specific recommendations.

10. Alvarez, "Britain's Mainstream Muslims Find Voice." Mainstream Muslims in Britain have also taken steps to isolate Islamist militants and strengthen ties between moderates and the British establishment.

11. See David E. Kaplan, "Hearts, Minds, and Dollars," *U.S. News and World Report,* April 25, 2005.

12. See James Brandon, "Koranic Duel Eases Terror," *Christian Science Monitor,* February 4, 2005.

13. Sabrina Tavernise, "Marines See Signs Iraq Rebels Are Battling Foreign Fighters," *New York Times,* June 21, 2005.

14. See Matt Bai, "The Framing Wars," *New York Times Magazine,* July 12, 2005. See also Bettancourt et al., "The Power of a Good Idea," 10.

15. In Jordan, for example, a broad curriculum review is taking place that emphasizes more moderate and progressive interpretations of Islam. See Hassan M. Fattah, "Jordan Is Preparing to Tone Down the Islamic Bombast in Textbooks," *New York Times,* June 12, 2005. A number of European governments are also exploring options for having greater influence over the training of imams who preach in European mosques. See Elaine Sciolino, "Europe Struggling to Train New Breed of Muslim Clerics," *New York Times,* October 18, 2004.