The Asymetry of the GWoT â€“ Is It Really New to Us?

Description

Over on one of my favorite blog hangouts, Right Thinking Girl, there was a post rhetorically questioning the response to a nuke going off in the US as part of the WoT. Nothing is rhetorical on RTG, and some threads rage for days. If youâ€™re in the mood for a good debate, head over to see whatâ€™s cooking there.

I pondered the point for a moment and then posted my first response. a few of the regulars chimed in on the â€œgimme
some of that old Hiroshima GLOWâ€• side of the argument. I donâ€™t think a nuke at the shrine would do the right thing. Anyhow, this became the first stage of putting words to something I have been pondering for a few years.

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> â€œWe are in a world of unknowns. The seemingly tired phrase from Vietnam about â€œno front linesâ€• was a
> simplistic anaology back then, but, as recently London has been a victim of itâ€™s own â€œupstanding citizens,â€• we are
> in uncharted waters. This war, while â€œinsurgenciesâ€• may have existed before, they didnâ€™t have the access to
> thermo-nuclear devices from the now defunct Soviet Bloc, which even in their â€œlow yieldâ€• capacity can do damage for centuries, let alone anthrax and other â€œbugs and gasâ€• type stuff, which is nasty, but containable in time and space much easier (from a clinical view, from the victims view, itâ€™s horrific).
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> When the Evil Empire was a fixed set of geographic points, this enemy, fighting a battle over the territory of the mind (you must accept their ideology), is unlike any war that has been.
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> Nuking Mecca sure sounds like an immediate gratification, but FTM29 may have a more practical solutionâ€¦
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> Bottom line: I think we are, as a human race, so uncompletely prepeared for this type of conflict, even our great thinkers, such as Eliot Cohen (who was the Dean at War College when I attended) is at a loss for how to proceed. Not only is he a brilliant thinker, he has just seen his son, an Army Captain, ship out for the Middle East. He is invested in this war at many levels. Here are his most recent thoughts on the entire matter. Profound to the core of his thoughts and worth your time.
>
> Iâ€™m stumped, but then Iâ€™m not even a chem light of intensity compared to the smarts of Professor Cohen. This war is being waged and fought in many dimensions of the human experience, and I fear we have not entered all the battlefields. â€œWinning the hearts and mindsâ€• is another Vietnam concept that needs a lot more investigation, but I believe we must go there. I just got my copy of â€œOur Own Worst Enemyâ€• by William Lederer

> yesterday ($0.99 plus shipping!) Iâ€™m thinking thereâ€™s some bits of wisdom in there I need to re-read. H&Ms is not a lame effort, itâ€™s a viable strategy, which the Marines began looking into in the Central American campaigns at the opening of the 1900s. They wrote the Small Wars Manual, which discusses how to interact with the local populace in order to show them youâ€™re there to
> help. On the other hand, we were kinda in Central America for the big fruit guysâ€¦.:(â€•

I managed to get away from my desk to do some work, and while I did, it came to me that we have â€œbeen hereâ€• before, and, in fact, are there now. I returned to RTGâ€™s comment section and then posted this:

> â€œAfter thinking about this a little more, we are seeing this same model right now: The War on Drugs.
>
> Different â€œweaponsâ€• are being delivered, it used to be a organized crime controlled environment (which had some definable boundaries of the organizations). Then the â€œcartelsâ€• arose, which would be going from the bi-polar power model, to the multi-polar model of powerful entities. So far, so goodâ€¦manageable in itâ€™s understood environment.
>
> Next came every Tom, Dick, and Harry, who saw there was big profits to be made hopped in as sort of â€œindependent contractorsâ€• in a free form economic model. As a result, the defined â€œenemyâ€• became one on every street corner. They are the jihadi equivalents. Amsterdam may be a comparison for the middle eastern cities that harbor terrorists, and allow them to freely exercise their thoughts in the open.
>
> We have been trying to successfully take this on using the military, law enforcement, border control entities and also public health organizations. So far, we have made headway, but it is an ongoing battle, with no end in sightâ€¦
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> Iâ€™m gonna have to think on this some moreâ€¦just as with the terrorists, it went from country based armies, to just anyone who wants to get in on the act, sanctioned or not, by the control â€œagencyâ€• at the top of the chain of commandâ€¦and our own citizens wage the warâ€¦also with ACLU on their sideâ€¦mmmmm..interesting cross connectâ€¦.Not only that, but Europe is a fertile environment for the drug trade as wellâ€¦another connection.

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As far back as 1982, my military assignments had me directly interacting with the drug war. I often thought over all those years how the drug trade seemed to have been a illegal business for much of modern history, but there were the entities such as the Mafia, that did â€œmanageâ€• the trade. Iâ€™ll admit, I havenâ€™t taken any dedicated time to study the history of this topic, and my knowledge is essentially exclusively derived from situations where the drug trade interjected itself into the world of military history. Iâ€™m striking out here in my limited commentary.

Anyhow, â€œcompetitionâ€• arose and other big players entered the market. After a while, then many â€œlittle people,â€• as we are inclined to do after an unagreed to apprenticeship, leave the â€œcompanyâ€• employ, now empowered with sufficient knowledge to start up our own business in the trade. I firmly believe the big guys in the â€œmanagementâ€• shop lost control It has become a free-

for-all market, so, much as like th GWoT, there sure isnâ€™t a central building where the head cheese sits. Which government does Osama work for?

I believe our actions that show people that democracy, or at least that modeled into a look alike to our system, and that the Middle East, and other parts of the globe, will come along, merely because we have something special, that they want, also.

In the same vein, then I added this:

> â€œA study of the manner in which Bismark unified Germany has some good lessons on how to make your enemy your friend. He did it from the position of strength. He was known to let von Moltke â€œshow his stuff,â€• but only until the point had been made clear. A particular campaign into Denmark is a good case in point and I donâ€™t have access to â€œOn Warâ€• right this moment to dig up the one Iâ€™m thinking of.
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> To use a large warhead, or, like if you shoot â€œoneâ€• youâ€™re really sending 10 (itâ€™s a missile design thing) is pretty much an overkill.
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> While there are not moderate Muslims, there are many, as with Christians and Jewish people who claim the religion, but donâ€™t spend much time really getting to know the faith. I attribute the lack of â€œmoderate Muslimâ€• response due to those who donâ€™t really practice it except for show, then life a pretty regular life otherwise. To nuke a city (and one of our nukes is good enough to do that), would truly risk putting much of the world against us.
>
> Unlike the surrender of the Japanese, where their culture held the Emperor as a god, and therefore to get him to come around was to get the Japanese to stop their aggression, the jihadis are still many splinter group with only the hate of all of the modern world connecting them. No central figure to pressureâ€¦â€•

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Itâ€™s a thorny issue. I think I have found a proper corollary to the war without borders in the form of the GWoT, without excess hyperbole. Maybe we can look at the two wars in order to help fight each of them to a successful conclusion.

As the ending note, Iâ€™ve always bben a cynic when it comes to believing that Congress would ever let the law enforcement and military get serious about winning the war on drugs, for most of them are lawyers, and I know a great deal of defense money is being made for their professional peers, so weâ€™ll just be allowed to play at ending it, but never turned loose to get â€˜er done.

And, there you have it. One manâ€™s views. Maybe Iâ€™m off the mark, but maybe not.

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1. Geo-Political
2. History
3. Military
4. Political

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