Alexander T. J. Lennon

Introduction: The Battle for Hearts and Minds

The image on the cover of this book was chosen intentionally. Most obviously, the Pentagon was the building in Washington, D.C., that was successfully attacked by the Al Qaeda terrorist network on September 11, 2001. But the authors in *The Battle for Hearts and Minds* look outside the Pentagon to debate the utility of nonmilitary responses to the threat from terrorist networks. Military operations—because they are tangible, increasingly short, and produce dramatic television images—generate tremendous attention and analysis.

Yet the tools being used and considered to undermine terrorist networks extend well beyond military operations. Some of those tools include improving intelligence collection and cooperation, law enforcement, and ways to undermine terrorist financing. There are still others, as the authors of the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy wrote:

> We will also wage a war of ideas to win the battle against international terrorism. This includes:
>
> - using the full influence of the United States, and working closely with allies and friends, to make clear that all acts of terrorism are illegitimate so that terrorism will be viewed in the same

Alexander T. J. Lennon is editor-in-chief of *The Washington Quarterly* and is pursuing his Ph.D. in policy studies, part-time, at the University of Maryland's School of Public Affairs.

light as slavery, piracy, or genocide: behavior that no respectable government can condone or support and all must oppose;

- supporting moderate and modern government, especially in the Muslim world, to ensure that the conditions and ideologies that promote terrorism do not find fertile ground in any nation;
- diminishing the underlying conditions that span terrorism by enlisting the international community to focus its efforts and resources on areas most at risk; and
- using effective public diplomacy to promote the free flow of information and ideas to kindle the hopes and aspirations of freedom of those in societies ruled by the sponsors of global terrorism.[1]

As a group, these tools are the "soft power" that Joseph Nye first defined in 1990.[2] Unlike hard power, which involves ordering or compelling others, soft power is the ability to co-opt or persuade other countries or actors to follow the original country or to want what it wants. In hard-power language, it may be analogous to preparing the diplomatic battlefield. As Nye wrote, "it is just as important to set the agenda and structure the situations in world politics as to get others to change."[3]

To set the stage of *The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Using Soft Power to Undermine Terrorist Networks*, four authors from around the world discuss the challenges and limits of hard power, or military force, to combat terrorism. In this extensive prologue, they do not argue that military operations are always useless or counterproductive against terrorist networks, but they do advise that they are not a panacea.

Rob de Wijk from the Netherlands argues that Western military forces—shaped by concepts such as collateral damage, proportionality, and coercive diplomacy—are particularly not well equipped for unconventional battles against terrorists. He analyzes the experiences in Afghanistan and elsewhere to conclude that these formative concepts provide little practical utility for the battles ahead. Paul Dibb from

Australia questions the sustainability of an international coalition when only the United States has suffered a severe attack. Beyond these challenges, Barry Desker and Kumar Ramakrishna from Singapore write that in Southeast Asia—which they argue is becoming the center of gravity of the global battle against terrorist networks after Afghanistan—political, economic, and ideological measures are necessary to defeat terrorism. Finally, Thérèse Delpech from France outlines the implications of terrorism for global order, including both the limited value of deterrence and defense as well as the strategic challenge of failed states.

State failure, along with the traditional notion of nation building, is the subject of part one of this book. Ray Takeyh and Nikolas Gvosdev discuss the utility that terrorist networks derive from the anarchy and lawlessness of failed states. Robert I. Rotberg then presents the conditions, based on his research, that have historically preceded state failure.

The prologue and these two preliminary chapters define the problems faced. What to do about terrorists, given the potential benefit they get from state failure and the limited ability of military power to address the threat, is the subject of the rest of the book. Of the four objectives cited from the national security strategy at the beginning of this introduction, the first can be called the international norm "to make clear that all acts of terrorism are illegitimate." The second, supporting moderate governments, can involve a vast array of tools such as foreign assistance or diplomatic support. In this book, authors first address the most extreme challenges to moderate governance presented by state failure and ways to address them.

In the concluding three chapters of part one, the authors review the historical success of different, but not necessarily exclusive, approaches to combating state failure. Karin von Hippel examines the lessons the United States learned from interventions for nation building in the 1990s. Colorado governor Bill Owens and his chief of staff, Troy A. Eid, then discuss how, through the State Partnership Program and similar efforts, strategic democracy building can be enhanced through bipartisan federal-state partnerships. To compliment those U.S. policy lessons,

Sierra Leone provides a case study of the transition from anarchy to tentative reconstruction, which Michael Chege dissects.

In part two, authors focus on one particular strategy in depth: post-conflict reconstruction. In the opening chapter, John J. Hamre and Gordon R. Sullivan distinguish it from nation building in three ways: post-conflict reconstruction uses local actors more; relies less on the military; and can be initiated before conflict has ceased entirely. The other four chapters in this section then delve in detail into the four pillars of post-conflict reconstruction. Security, Scott Feil contends, is the foundation on which progress rests, identifying areas for the United States to better develop, access, organize, and focus its efforts and international capabilities to meet security needs. Beyond security, justice and reconciliation represent a second pillar, which Michèle Flournoy and Michael Pan maintain helps post-conflict societies address past, and prevent future, lawlessness, corruption, and crime. Third, socio-economic well-being can be restored through strategies, outlined by Johanna Mendelson Forman, to promote economic hope and opportunity. Finally, Robert Orr develops measures to assist governance and participation activities, the fourth pillar of post-conflict reconstruction and the last chapter of part two.

Part three tackles a third measure outlined in the national security strategy: public diplomacy, which is described in the opening chapter by Ambassador Christopher Ross, the U.S. special coordinator for public diplomacy. Subsequent chapters by a policymaker, former NSC staffer Antony J. Blinken, and a media executive, Edward Kaufman, propose how to help bridge the perception gap between U.S. policies and the way they are understood overseas. Yet Lamis Andoni, a journalist with extensive experience in the Middle East, contends that simply changing U.S. messages will not address the resentment that, she argues, U.S. policies have caused in the Arab and Muslim world.

The other policy tool outlined in the national security strategy, and the final part of this book, addresses foreign assistance as a soft power tool to undermine terrorist networks. The extensive debate about whether poverty causes terrorism is not tackled thoroughly in this volume; that

subject has been covered elsewhere. The authors here debate the efficacy of the administration's new development assistance strategy and program, the Millennium Challenge Account, to improve foreign assistance. Regardless of how directly or indirectly poverty may contribute to terrorism, as President Bush himself announced when he unveiled the program, "we fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror."[4]

Beyond describing the program and how it improves U.S. foreign assistance, both Lael Brainard and Steve Radelet, former members of a Democratic and Republican administration, respectively, argue that additional decisions need to be made about both the program and a broader strategy for foreign assistance than the Millennium Challenge Account currently provides. Beyond development assistance, foreign assistance can help combat terrorism in other ways. Jennifer Windsor contends that assisting democratization abroad can also address the causes of frustration that arguably lead to terrorist and nihilist acts. Based on his decades of experience, the chairman of the House Foreign Operations Subcommittee, James Kolbe, draws broad foreign assistance lessons to help countries achieve broad-based economic growth and integrate them into the global economy, in this book's final chapter.

Together, the purpose of the authors in *The Battle for Hearts and Minds* is not to argue that military power has no role in combating terrorism; it clearly does. The goal of these chapters is to raise the profile of debates over other potential means to combat terrorism that do not generate stunning images or brief stories in the broadcast or print media. The purpose is to stimulate you, as a reader, to learn from the authors' insights, to challenge their thoughts, and to continue the debates yourselves (whether in a classroom, online, in the halls of power around the world, in the media itself, or elsewhere).

This book intends to stimulate you to ask critical questions, such as: In the long run, what contributions, if any, can soft power tools such as post-conflict reconstruction, public diplomacy, and foreign assistance make to dry up the recruiting grounds that failed states provide terrorist networks? Military power may win wars against terrorists, but how

important are soft power tools to win hearts and minds and, ultimately, to undermine those terrorist networks themselves and secure peace? The authors in the following pages provide some initial answers, but what we really want is to develop what you think....

Notes

1. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, September 2002), p. 6.
2. Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Soft Power," *Foreign Policy* 80 (F all 1990): 153-171.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
4. George W. Bush, remarks to the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, March 22, 2002.