Dying to Understand Terrorism and the Islamic State
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Defining Terrorism and Objectives

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon by any means and has been employed in modern

times beginning with the anarchists and liberals during the 1840s in Europe. However, terrorism

in middle decades of the 20th century evolved to include the use of hijacking airliners. Around

the 1980s, a different method of terrorism began to come to the forefront: suicide bombings and

attacks. The first widely successful suicide attack is the Lebanon bombings which killed 282

American Marines; and began a wide precedent or shift towards the use of suicide terrorism to

achieve an organization's stated objective(s). Since the most successful terrorist attack,

September 11th, 2001 World Trade Center, there has been an uptick in the terrorist attacks.

However, the magnitude of the attacks are often not as spectacular as the Lebanon or World

Trade Center, and rather are smaller on scale but still help a terrorist organization advance its

objectives. What exactly are a terrorist organization's objectives? Are the political, national, or

religious? What has driven the use of terrorist attacks and what exactly is behind the increase in

the number of attacks? Two schools of thought exist in helping, first by defining modern day

terrorism and secondly identifying the when, where, why, what, who, and how the terrorists

determine their objective(s).

The first school of thought originates with Robert A. Pape's *Dying to Win: The Strategic*

Logic of Suicide Terrorism. Pape has sifted through the data and compiled a data base of terrorist

bombings and attacks spanning 1980-2003, and categorized 315 attacks. The database excludes

"attacks authorized by a national government," (Pape). The objective of Pape's collection of the 315 attacks is so he can focus examination on terrorists' deeper motivations, principles, and their goals in carrying out their attacks and bombings. Immediately works to dispel a common portrayal of terrorists within the media, who suggest there is an underlying connection between terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism or any other religion found in the world. Pape back's up the fact with the information that the Tamil Tiger from Sri Lanka, who have a Marxist-Leninist political ideology, have Hindu upbringings, and are opposed to religion, but committed 76 of the 315 attacks in Pape's database.

Though divine direction may not drive terrorism, religion is used as a broad tool by a terrorist organization to attract recruits and help the organization achieve its objective. If a terrorist attack is not because religion, then what drives them? There are three principal patterns laid out which state that a clear majority of terrorist attacks are part of an organized effort or campaign carried out by the terrorist organization. The notion of a terrorist attack being part of an organized campaign runs counter to the portrayal in the media of said attack being an isolated or singular random occurrence, and Pape classifies 301 attacks as part of a campaign or political objective.

The second principal is not a closely guarded secret, but democratic governments are more vulnerable to terrorist attacks than more autocratic governments. The third principal Pape lays out goes in hand with the second and that is the attacks are a way to coerce a democratically elected government to bowing to the terrorist organization's wishes. Of the 301 attacks classified as a military campaign or political objective, Pape states that within the past twenty years, all the terrorist campaigns have been aimed at coercing a democratically elected government into withdrawing troops from what the terrorist organization perceives to be their homeland or area of

operation. In defining these campaigns against democratically elected governments, Pape uses "American and French forces in Lebanon; Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; the status of the Tamil regions of Sri Lanka; the status of the Kurdish region of Turkey; the Russian occupation of Chechnya; the Indian occupation of Kashmir; the Indian control of Punjab; and the presence of American forces in Iraq and in the Arabian Peninsula," (Pape).

Terrorist attacks being waged as a campaign rocks the minds of the average American citizen; however, the argument Pape is taking up with *Dying to Win* begins to make sense when the results are shown. An example is the 1980 Lebanon bombing carried out by Hezbollah, whose political objective is the withdrawal of the military forces of America and France, two democratically elected countries. Hezbollah considered the area of Lebanon being occupied by American and French soldiers as part of their national homeland, and thus to achieve their objectives decide to wage a military-like campaign of suicide attack(s) to achieve their objective. The attack succeeds and kills 282 American Marines; which prompts the withdrawal of American forces. Though the attack may seem like a singular or random event, in fact the effort was a concentrated campaign which achieved the campaign's intended objective.

The withdrawal of the American forces achieved the campaign waged by Hezbollah which helps Pape reasoning which goes back to the targets being democratic governments. A democratic government is viewed as soft in the context that its public has "a low thresholds of cost tolerance and high ability to affect state policy," (Pape). The structure of a democratic government also lends itself to vulnerability of terrorist attacks, because people are allowed greater rights and freedom to travel across the state than an autocratic controlled nation. An authoritarian government may be a more difficult environment in which to organize and carry out a terrorist attack. When the said attack is carried out, there is a retaliatory period, and how a

democratic-led nation compared to an authoritarian government responds are different. A democracy will more likely have a more restrained approach and not target civilian populations in order to strike back at the terrorists; where as an authoritarian government may have no qualms about employing such actions.

The response employed by democratic regimes has been targeted at launching a few cruise missiles or air strikes at alleged terrorist training sites and camps, and can include sending ground troops into the land the terrorist organization operates from. The response then actually serves as a double-edged sword because one of the core tenets for the terrorist organization is the removal of foreign troops who occupy land the terrorists maintain is their national homeland. Pape clarifies the definition of a foreign occupation as one where the occupying "power has the ability to control the local government independent of the wishes of the local community," (Pape). In addition, members of the local community would have an understanding that once said occupying power withdraws; the political structure of the community would change. With the definition set, the early stages of the American invasion of Iraq would fall under the classification as an occupation.

Occupation of a perceived national homeland draws or motivates recruitment against the occupying power, which then allows the terrorist organization to wage a campaign of suicide attacks to try and achieve their political objectives. Pape further organizes his database into thirteen campaigns carried out during 1980-2003, and the results are divided into different categories. Seven of the campaigns either achieved full objectives, as with the withdrawal of American forces from Lebanon, or partial victories where the targeted government gave concessions to the terrorist organization. However, six of these campaigns failed to achieve their objectives and change the way a democratic nation acted towards the organization. With an

incredibly small sample size, there is difficulty in accepting Pape's argument that a terrorist organization's campaign is often successful in making democratic nations concede to either full or partial demands.

The assertion of campaigns of terror being on the uptick is made by Pape, but how much credibility should be given, especially regarding an issue with the sample size of 315 attacks, and the fact that terrorism itself since 2003 evolved into a different organization with more effective tools of communication, recruitment, and waging its campaigns. The problem of the small sample size is compounded by the fact, as Moghadam points out in his critical review of Pape's *Dying to Win* is that "Pape does not abide by the most common and most widely accepted definition of suicide terrorism," (Moghadam, 710). Pape lists attacks against uniformed personnel, either in the military or the police as acts of suicide terrorism, when the common definition would label these acts as part of an insurgency or guerilla warfare.

Like an insurgency, Pape's argument begins to fall apart once it encounters resistance, as the next point of attack goes against the notion that religion has little correlation with terrorism. Pape claims that a secular organization, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) are the leading terrorist organization; however, the numbers of their attacks, 75, is inflated because "half were conducted against military targets," (Moghadam, 710). When the numbers are adjusted for attacks truly against non-combatant targets, or the civilians; who have "low thresholds of cost tolerance and high ability to affect state policy," (Pape), the leading terrorist organization then is Hamas, a mostly religious organization. It is unclear why the distortion of the numbers is included and is certainly more confounded when Pape himself mentioned policy. Attacking a military target only affects a small number of the population, whereas attacking a civilian target

would have a greater effect not only in short term but also long-term policy making of the democratic nation.

The confusion of what constituents a terrorist attack does not end with who is targeted, but rather extends to what itself constituents as an attack. The consensus of what constitutes a terrorist attack is if one person attacks an area, it is then classified as a singular attack. For instance, the attacks against the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania should be counted as two separate attacks; however, Pape counts them as a singular attack. A better way to describe multiple attacks occurring on the same day would be to classify them as an incident. Hence, while September 11th is a singular coordinated incident by Al Qaeda, it is four separate attacks; which Pape only counts as one attack. Because a religious based terrorist organization tends to favor using multiple attacks to inflict the most harm physically and to the alter psyche of the public to affect the policy objective the organization wants. Counting the September 11th, 2001 incident as a singular attack skews the numbers. That is not to say that secular terrorist organizations, like the LTTE do not use multiple attack incidents, but it is a word of caution when digesting the information provided by Pape.

The numbers continue to add up against Pape and next up to bat is the idea that terrorists wage campaigns against democratic governments because the method works. Recalling, Pape states there were 13 campaigns, 7 with success and 7 without. However, the number of campaigns is closer to 18, with 13 of them being completed and 5 ongoing. The ongoing campaigns which Pape omits from his study have had a duration that is "on average, three times longer than that of completed campaigns," (Moghadam, 713). With the inclusion of the ongoing campaigns, which have not achieved full or partial success from the targeted democratic states, the idea that terrorism works to achieve an organization's objective is in serious doubt.

What Pape fails to fully address on the successful terrorist campaigns is that there may have been outside pressure from other governments which would play against the government the terrorists were targeting. One of the successful campaigns Pape references is the release of Hamas's spiritual leader by Israel in 1997; which he credits with the suicide campaign. There are two possible contributors which lead to the spiritual leader's release. First, a diplomatic blow suffered by Prime Minister Netanyahu in the wake of a failed Mossad assassination attempt of Hamas's exiled leader, where the agents were apprehended by Jordanian officials. Secondly, the United States and other Western nations have routinely applied diplomatic pressure on Israel with withdraw from occupied territories, and Israel, though on its own time table, ends up relenting to the pressure applied by its fellow democratic states and primary benefactor.

With a failure of campaigns addressed, there is one last critical issue to address with Pape's theory regarding terrorism and that is the occupation of a perceived national homeland. While Pape's assertion of foreign occupation may be justified in Israeli-Lebanon-Palestine, areas like Sri Lanka and Chechnya are a lot more muddled and harder to justify the latter cases as a foreign occupation. The main problem with occupation is that Pape correlates the rise in suicide terrorism with the occupation of land the terrorists perceive as their own. Under Pape's theory, terrorist attacks would most likely be occurring against the occupiers; however, this would most likely be against uniformed personnel and thus would not be classified as a suicide attack. A campaign waged against an occupying power then would need to be conducted against homeland of the offending power. However, recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussel, and at the time of Pape's book like "Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan," (Moghadam, 719) that suffered attacks but had no clear occupation or direct role in

an occupation. The argument of occupation suffers credibility when Pape suggests merely having an American military presence in the country can be classified as an occupation.

The issue of occupation leads to an interesting dilemma which Pope failed to explore, but in his defense the widespread use and access to the Internet hadn't yet fully developed. The rise of the Internet has exposed another crack in Pape's idea that religion does not matter. Cyberspace allows new connections to be made and can enhance established face-to-face connections. An additional problem is the World Wide Web allows information to be shared easier and those of a like-minded view an easier means to communicating with other like-minded individuals. This closed knit group then is not exposed to new or opposing views and helps spread what Moghadam says is "theological justification…to join the jihad and act in the defense of Islam," (Moghadam, 723).

With theological justification in hand, these participants of likeminded views now move to a more extreme part of the spectrum and the path to terrorism, flying in the face of Pape's idea that religion is not the primary reason terrorism is committed. No religion shares the sole blame on terrorism, nor is terrorism unique to only followers of one faith. Bruce Hoffman, author of *Understanding Terrorism*, dedicates an entire chapter of the book about religious terrorism. A small highlight of the attacks read as:

- March 1995 sarin nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway system by an apocalyptic Japanese religious cult
- April 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of a federal office building
- November 1995 Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a Jewish religious extremist

- June 1996 truck bombing of a USAF barracks in Saudi Arabia by religious militants opposed to al-Saud regime, (Hoffman, 86-87).

Within the religion a few of the world's major religions are represented and religion provides a unique contribution to the act of terrorism as violence is seen as a "sacramental act or divine duty," (Hoffman, 87) which should be executed based of a theological justification or imperative. There is a key distinction in the kind of terrorist, there is a secular terrorist and a religious terrorist, the difference is that the later will discriminately kill to further their political objectives, whereas the former finds the method incompatible with their values. A second key difference is where as a secular terrorist views themselves as trying to fix a flaw within the system, the religious terrorist seeks to radically alter the system to fit their values.

The religious terrorist's choice of weapon employed to radically alter the system is suicide terrorism, which has what Pape and Hoffman agree has a "strategic logic" (Hoffman, 132). The logic stems from a suicide attack tends to be less expensive in the overall costs and logistical hurdles, and the suicide attacker gives the weapon flexibility to choose the moment of maximum impact. On the media front, the news of a terrorist attack by suicide bombing strikes at the heart of citizen and spreads fear and paralysis or change in routine in modern day life. The point of the attack is intimidation which "the terrorists seek to manipulate and exploit to their advantage," (Hoffman 132). The attacks while causing short term changes in behavior often have a more far reaching effect both in the physical and psychological worlds.

After the Twin Towers

After the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks which rocked the United States, the immediate behavior was one of paranoia as the vast majority of citizens within the nation had no

idea what happened. Everyday events were postponed, airline travel temporarily suspended, and the conscious of citizens wondered what would happen next. The longer-term effects began to manifest later, as temporary security checks became permanent and the United States found itself engaged in conflict in Afghanistan. Within two years, Iraq had been invaded and dangerous situation developed, terrorism and instability became a more common occurrence and has continued after the American withdrawal at the end of 2011. The next fifteen minutes of fame focuses on the latest terrorist organization, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS. Regarding the many iterations of names, ISIS and/or the Islamic State will be the identifier used throughout this paper. The primary objective is to see how ISIS fits into Pape's theories regarding terrorist organizations. The later part of the paper will deal with if ISIS is a terrorist, organization, a political state, or a hodgepodge of both. Lastly, there will be an examination on the course of actions on how to deal with ISIS in the present and in the future.

Harking back to Pape's first assessment that there is little connection between religion and terrorism; a swift look from January 2014 to April 2016 and one would assume this notion is false. Most of the terrorist attacks that would most likely come to mind during this timeframe are:

- January 7th-9th, 2015 a series of attacks in Paris, France, mostly notable for the assault at Charlie Hebdo.
- October 23rd, 2014 when four NYPD officers were attacked by Zaim Farouq Abdul-Malik
- May 3rd, 2015 when two gunmen attacked a "Draw Muhammad" exhibit in Garland, Texas.

- July 16th 2016 when Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez attacked two military installations in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

- December 2nd, 2015 the San Bernardino attack.

Except the first attack, all four of the attacks occurred on American soil; though that is not the reason these attacks were selected out of the hundreds of attacks which occurring during the arbitrary timeframe selected. The selection may seem counter-productive; however they were chosen to reinforce Pape's argument that there is little relation between religion and terrorism. The ordinary viewer of cable news channels in America would be most familiar with these five incidents, because it is a marketing strategy conducted by the owners of the channels. There is an idea of a good versus evil, with America representing the good side versus the bad guys, in this case the ones who carry out terrorism. Why non-Islamic terrorist attacks are rarely mentioned in the American media is another matter worthy of its own research.

While religion may not have much of a correlation to terrorist attacks, religion is still a driving tool to increase recruitment into a terrorist organization, and ISIS serves are a prime example of religious fundamentalism driving recruitment. A large draw for the Islamic State is the draw towards the End Times prophecy, where "the Mahdi (the Guided One) will appear before the Day of Judgment, (Stern, 219). When the Madhi appears, they will appear with an army waving black flags and conquer the world before the final battle between good and evil. The best way to describe the Madhi is thinking of "Jesus and George Washington rolled into one," (McCants). The idea of apocalyptic groups is not a new phenomenon; however, ISIS employs the tactic to a whole new tier of success. A terrorist organization tends to be concerned with its public image, for example Al-Qaeda's long-term goal is to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim population and strongly discourages attacking other Muslims. Meanwhile, ISIS

resolutely believes its fighters are engaged in "a cosmic war between good and evil, in which ordinary moral rules do not apply," (Stern, 223) and has committed numerous atrocities against Muslims of all sects.

The crimes against fellow Muslims is justified by blanket approvals known as *takfir,* when designates a person to be an unbeliever and open to the bloody interpretation of war and religion employed by ISIS. The savagery against apostates is not a new tactic, but rather has been around before the declaration of a Caliph. Spanning back to the recent past, there were acts of *tafkir* in American detention facilities where detainees killed detainees, remove eyes and employ other violent acts; which appeal to foreign fighters who make up a large number of ISIS's recruits.

However, the Islamic State is not built up solely of foreign recruits driven by religious overtures. ISIS and its prior iteration, al-Qaeda in Iraq have a long history of being built up through personal connections made in the detention facilities, former Ba'athists, and others drawn to the cause. After the death of Zarqawi in 2006, al-Qaeda in Iraq ran into a recruiting dilemma primarily because the organizations heavy-handed approach and "bullying had eroded its base of support among Iraq's Sunnis," (McCants). By 2010, for all intents and purposes, the heydays of the Islamic State looked to be over as the organization teetered under ineffectiveness.

Terrorist organizations are like the mythical phoenix, which arise anew from their ashes and are extremely difficult to land a mortal blow. The Islamic State emerged from its deathbed with new vigor because of the dominance of the internet, and a relatively new tool: social media. Traditional discussion forums used to be a hotbed of "friendly activity for the Islamic State," (McCants, 727); however once western intelligence agencies caught on and were able to penetrate these discussions boards or outright shut them down through internet service providers,

terrorist organizations, most notably ISIS, suffered a stringing defeat in recruitment. Unlike al-Qaeda, a slow adopter of social media, ISIS flourished with the advent Twitter which allowed its message to be displayed in a new medium and with a company that until recently, held libertarian views of censoring content.

It is difficult to properly assess what drives a person to join ISIS, whether it be religion, outreach by social media contacts, a sense of disillusionment of their life at home, or because the idea sounds fun, as a British recruit told a broadcaster. In a few interviews which have been given to journalists by Islamic State recruits, they feel they have become a part of a global cause which is both "Arab and non-Arab…[with people] from the [Arabian] Peninsula, the Islamic Maghreb," (Worrick, 290) Egypt, and Iraq. The only clear thing which appears is while recruits have poured in to join the Islamic State, Pape's idea that religion is not the primary contributor, but a means to an end, stands.

Next up on the feed is Pape's principle which strongly suggests democratic governments are exponentially more vulnerable to terrorist attacks than autocratic governments. In addition, these attacks serve as a way to coerce a democratic electorate to make the elected government cave to a terrorist organization's wishes. To best achieve their results then, terrorist organizations begin a campaign to coerce the targeted government to reverse course. Pape argues this is an effective method and has caused either partial or total victory, and because of its high success rate the terrorist organizations continue to carry out campaigns of terror. There is little doubt that the Islamic State is waging a campaign of untold terror and brutality, but exactly how do the cards stack up with Pape's theory is another question.

Democratic governments tend to grant their people greater rights and the people enjoy freedom to travel and communicate freely. Because of an open society then, it is within the best

interest of the terrorist organization to attack democratic governments. Al-Qaeda Central is a prime example of the concept in play as they prefer to fight the far enemy, the Western democratic governments. To put it simply, the Islamic State does not care about necessities and does not care if a government is democratic or autocratic, an attack is an attack which furthers its objective one way or another. The list of the Islamic States enemies includes both democratic and more autocratic governments. While the fight against ISIS and its affiliate organizations has expanded outside of Syria and Iraq, the notable non-democratic countries participating in the fight are Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

A few of the deadliest terrorist attacks since al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Islamic State came into being has been the Middle Eastern countries of Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. Iraq and Syria are more outliers in attacks as there are several groups there which could be classified more as an insurgency than a terrorist organization. Jordan stands in a precarious situation, it is bordered by both Iraq and Syria and keeps an ever-watchful eye on its borders. In 2012, the GID "pieced together the outlines of a plan to launch near-simultaneous attacks on multiple civilian and government targets in the capital, from the U.S. Embassy to an upscale shopping mall in the center of town," (Warrick, 270). Under Pape's theory, the difficulty of pulling of a terrorist attack in an autocratic government should be near impossible and Jordan has suffered few terrorist attacks, the most notable occurring in Amman in 2005.

What Pape does not account for then is the methods which are employed by the state in order to uncover a terrorist attack. An example scenario is: the "teams watched for weeks as the infiltration teams set up safe houses and began stockpiling supplies for what appeared to be an ambitious plan to strike targets all across," (Warrick, 270) the city and moved in right before the plot came to fruition. While the description takes place within Jordan, the tactic employed under

the retinue of autocratic governments, but rather is a commonsense method used by law enforcement agencies throughout the world. Pape's theory may hold sway when accounting for the pre-September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks; however, with legislation like the Patriot Act and similar laws and executive orders, the landscape of conducting a terrorist attack in the Western world has become more difficult.

Theories and Realities and the Islamic State

In addition to the numerous attempts and few successes employed against countries in the Middle East, a few terrorist attacks have been carried out against democratic governments. Earlier, I mentioned five terrorist attacks which occurred in the United States and France as an example of media attention. These attacks also discounter Pape's notion that a democratic government is subject to coercion by a terrorist organization. Before San Bernardino, an attack inspired by foreign terrorist groups, "a majority of Americans (53%) say the U.S. should send ground troops to Iraq or Syria to fight ISIS," (Agiesta). The number represents a clear difference from the first attack, in 2014, in which the percentage of Americans supporting a ground war stood at 38. While Americans may be fearful of a terrorist attack, they are simply not writing Congress or their electorates to cede to the demands of the Islamic State. That is not to say the how to handle ISIS will play a meaningful role in the upcoming Presidential Election.

There has only been one country which has withdrawn from the ongoing strikes against the Islamic State, and even suggesting a withdrawal requires a stretching of the words definition. Canada has seen two attacks inspired by terrorists, both of which killed one member of the Canadian Forces before the assailants were gunned down. A year later, the Canadian people elected a new prime minster, the liberal Justin Trudeau, who made a campaign promise to stop the airstrikes against the Islamic State. Pape may chalk this up as the Canadian people making a

change and conceding to the terrorist's demands; however, as Moghadam has pointed out, other factors may contribute to why a democratic government seemingly appears to change tactics and concede.

Canada certainly did employ a change in tactics with confronting the Islamic State, and the change has been coordinated with allies in the on-going operations. On February 22nd, 2016, the Canadian air force's six fighter jets dedicated to the ongoing aerial campaign against ISIS ceased but it's commitment to fighting the group did not terminate. Under Pape's theory, the withdrawal may ring as a success as the government felt the pressure from the attacks and changed course. However, polling conducted about a month before the end of Canada's bombing campaign ceased suggests otherwise. Fifteen hundred Canadians were asked what Canada's contribution to the fight against the Islamic State should be and "27 per cent...[said] they were on the same page as Trudeau in wanting to stop Canada's bombing mission and focus only on training local troops in Iraq and Syria," (CBC News). In addition, only 11 percent of the wanted a complete halt of the country's involvement in the campaign against ISIS. In fact, the majority of Canadians, 37 percent, actually want to maintain current level military and training, with 26 percent calling for increased levels.

Pape's suggestion that a democracy will bend to the will of a terrorist organization's campaign appears to be a bust instead. Pape's theory is not without its merit, and the data may suggest at the time, a government was willing to concede or change policy. However, there is without a doubt that September 11th, 2001 changed the game and people are reluctant to fall back into complacency against the threat of terrorism. There may be the thought that the fight against terrorism and the threat it poses is a never ending one and by conceding to an organization's demands actually only further emboldens its actions against the democratic state. The last

problem may be that the terrorist organization's demands and wants are wholly unrealistic and the democratic government will not cave towards desires of fanatics.

What helps drive a terrorist organization's campaign against democratic states is, according to Pape, occupation of a perceived national homeland. For a terrorist organization like Hezbollah or Hamas it is easy to understand what their perceived national homelands are, respectively being Lebanon and Palestine. The difficulty lies in determining what matches the definition for the Islamic State. With ISIS knack for tying in apocalyptic imagery, perhaps it is best to start with an area called "Khorasan, a region that includes part of Iran, Central Asia, and Afghanistan," (Stern, 220). The importance of the region stems from the prophecy which the Mahdi will descend from with an army and begin the last days. If Khorasan then is the perceived national homeland, since it is where the Guided One is to hail from, the Islamic State should be operating within the region. The United Nations has accounted that ISIS has created a large affiliate network; with a few groups claiming allegiance to al-Baghdadi and his organization. The groups operating within Khorasan are Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Leaders of the Mujahid in Khorasan, al-Tawheed Brigade in Khorasan, and Heroes of Islam Brigade in Khorasan.

Though there are groups operating within the area, there is little known information on the exact size of these affiliates, their capabilities, and what level of threat they pose. A media search of the affiliated groups does not return many results on if these groups have planned or carried out attacks in the region. It is possible because of the more autocratic type of governments and cultures in Iran, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan, these groups may be unable to advance to an operational stage and carry out attacks. Because of the tight security apparatus these countries and Jordan, it is possible to rule out them and Khorasan as perceived national homelands for the Islamic State.

A more logical choice of defining a homeland for the Islamic State would be the origins of the leadership. The leadership of ISIS's predecessor, al-Qaeda in Iraq was primarily made up of foreign leadership, most notably Zarqawi hailing from a different tribe in Jordan. The Islamic State's leadership is mostly made up of individuals with Iraqi origins, along with its leader al-Baghdadi. Tribal heritage plays a complicated role in the relations of the Middle East. When Zarqawi headed al-Qaeda in Iraq, he sided with the Sunni tribes of Anbar Province but because the foreign fighters within Zarqawi's organization failed to understand the customs and nuances of the tribesmen, they ended up losing the trust and their stronghold. However, when Zarqawi's organization reemerged into Anbar, "their leadership [had become] …Iraqi, and their program changed completely," (Warrick, 299). The differences lie with the fact that unlike Zarqawi, Baghdadi is a member of the right Sunni tribe and understands the complicated relationship tribal heritage.

The problem of being from the right tribe is, the tribe's control and influence only spreads to a certain degree before there is competition with a different tribe, so to speak. This stems from the Islamic States insistence on strict interpretations of Sharia law. The majority of tribes within the Middle East practice a form of Sunni Islam, and those in Iraq and not fond of the strict interpretations of Sharia law, but rather welcome the Islamic State to help combat what they describe as the tyrannical central government in Baghdad; which is predominantly controlled by the Shiite. As soon as ISIS found itself welcomed back into Anbar Province, at the behest of the tribes, they began settling scores with members of the tribe who had been part of "the Anbar Awakening movement that cooperated with U.S. troops in driving Zarqawi's followers out of the province," (Warrick, 300), and imposing Sharia law.

Baghdadi and the Islamic State's treatment of local tribes is not a local issue and has spread to numerous affiliates who claim allegiance to the Caliph. An issue which divides the affiliated organizations is smoking; which while considered a taboo for religious individuals, the practice is not banned throughout the Middle East. An affiliate in Somalia bans the practice of smoking and reinforces the punishment with a fine and jail time for offenders. Meanwhile, in other localities, lighting up and taking a puff is not banned. However, within the perceived national homeland of the Islamic State, repeat offenders of the practice may have their fingers severed, and if the risks of smoking don't already cause it, they may be executed. The issue of smoking is just one of many which may offend the local populace who have become accustomed to certain luxuries. It is difficult to say you have a national homeland if you do not enjoy the support of the local populace.

There may be then thirty-five different perceived national homelands, one for ISIS, and one for each of the thirty-four affiliated organizations which claim allegiance to it. Propaganda from the Islamic State treats the affiliated organizations differently and simply suggests that they are provinces of the Caliph established by Baghdadi. Additionally, prophecy which is effectively wielded by ISIS believes it is required to conquer "every country… [and have their black] blessed flag…expand until it covers all eastern and western extents of the Earth, filling the world with the truth and justice of Islam and putting an end to the falsehood and tyranny," (McCants, Location 2440). Essentially, there is no singular area which the Islamic State and its affiliates haven't tried to draw recruits from. It is probably best and scariest to sum up Pape's idea of perceived national homeland for the Islamic state as the whole planet.

Perceived national homeland or not, the fact on the ground there is a considerable amount of territory in Syria and northern Iraq that is under control of the black flag. Here the

examination sways from theoretical to more concrete evidence and an examination of whether

the Islamic State is either a terrorist organization, a state, or a hodgepodge mixture of both. One

of the key responsibilities of a state is to take care of the soldiers under its employment. A

benefit which also heralds the imminent end times is that of slavery. In further twisted fashion,

ISIS performs economic, having to worry "about the price of deflation [of slaves], the State

issued a decree in October 2014 fixing the prices," (McCants, Location 1966). Certainly, in

regard to raising money ISIS begins to fit the definition of a state, where it receives revenue from

oil, and in regions controlled by the group it levies a tax on "the salaries of Iraqi government

employees," (Keatinge). In addition, Baghdadi's organization has monthly stipends which go to

those injured, and families of those killed in coalition airstrikes. The barbarity continues with

internal documents showing fighters receive $50 dollars a month, and "an additional $50 for

each wife, $35 for each child, $50 for each sex slave, $35 for each child of a sex slave, $50 for

each dependent parent, and $35 each for other dependents," (Browne).

Before imposing harsh interpretations of Sharia law on newly conquered towns, the

Islamic State tends to fix up roads and clean up the town. This strategy allows them to gain favor

with the local residents and allow ISIS to become the only game in town and kick out rebel

groups who are opposed the reign of President Assad in Syria. Only then as its power is

consolidated does ISIS impose "harsh restrictions on women," (McCants, Location 1543), forbid

smoking and imposing curfews and resort to brutal methods of keeping the locals in line.

The harsh methods of keeping locals in line may eventually have to be rolled out to the

fighters and soldiers of the Islamic State, who according to Keatinge have been had their pay cut

by up to fifty percent. The bureaucratic apparatus has called on the state's fighters to watch their

electrical use and cease using official vehicles for personal reasons. What reasons the fighters are

using official vehicles for may be obscured, but there is a possibility they may be using them to obtain doctor's notes "in order to avoid frontline duty," (Hongo). While ISIS fits the definition of a terrorist organization, with actions which are meant to bring around the submission of local residents, there is clearly a stately apparatus from which it operates. It is best to imagine the Islamic State as Venn diagram, one circle represents a terrorist organization and the other a state; and in the middle falls ISIS, a foot planted firmly in both sides.

Labeling Baghdadi's organization as a both state and terrorist organization may offend a few and their criticisms may lie from classifying it as the former is offering it some validity. Regardless of the classification, how to deal with the organization does not change, there are still underlying issues which need to be addressed. What is the best course of action needed in order to bring about the end of the Islamic State? Recall, when Prime Minister Trudeau announced Canada would be withdrawing from the military mission, citizens were in favor of stronger actions being taken to fight ISIS. A vast majority of Americans, 68%, agree with their northern neighbors and "say America's military response to the terrorist group thus far has not been aggressive enough," (Agiesta). Former Republican presidential candidates and current presumptive nominee have argued for a tougher stance to defeat ISIS, and in more cases than not, it calls for sending ground troops into Syria and Iraq.

When talking of ground troops, it is best to clarify what Americans are in favor of: sending uniformed military personnel into the fight against ISIS. No definitive number on the number of troops needed to pacify the region has been thrown around, but at the height of the surge there were 160,000 US military personnel in Iraq. While proponents for ground troops will argue the surge helped tame Iraq, American forces were merely a temporary band aid to deeper divisions within the region. Anbar Province, once a hot bed for al-Qaeda in Iraq became tamer

not only because of US troops, but because the tribes had gone through a falling out with Zarqawi and his organization and were willing to work with the American forces.

A theoretical expedition of American ground forces to Syria and Iraq plays into the propaganda of the Islamic State which predicts a final battle where the crusaders – the West or Rome – would be defeated at Dabiq, "a small town in Syria, near the border of Turkey," (Stern, 119). The apocalyptic overtures help play into the recruitment of foreign fighters for the Islamic State and helps their propagandist further play up an us versus them mentality. Besides providing ammunition for ISIS recruitment efforts, the expedition of American ground forces face a monumental task in dealing with the deep divide between Shiite and Sunni Muslims. American forces would once more be caught amid a sectarian war, and when bodies begin hitting the floor, there will be cries for withdrawal.

To succeed at the mission, troop deployments to the region would have to continue for a foreseeable. There is no definitive timeframe to the length of deployment, as there are only two instances where an occupation successfully fostered deep change into political structures; Germany and Japan. The transition of those two countries into stable democratic states found itself hastened by an outside threat, the Soviet Union. Rebuilding both Iraq and Syria into stable democratic states, capable of defending themselves against threats is a tall challenge; one which American ground forces could do if given a clear and concise mission of nation-building and a long-term commitment. It is unlikely though, once the American electorate understands the troop and time commitment, would the support such a task.

A task equally daunting but likely more palpable in the long term is the solution Canada committed itself to when withdrawing from airstrike missions. Over the next three years, Canada's "contribution will total more than $1.6 billion," (Mas) with over half of the pledged

money going towards funding of humanitarian assistance. In addition, $270 million is going to be spent on helping countries like Jordan and Lebanon in building infrastructure in order to support the large number of refugees which have fled worn-torn Syria. There is not a complete withdrawal of the military presence, as money will still be spent for Canadian air and support personnel in assisting coalition partners in airstrikes against the Islamic State. Lastly, the new pledge will see additional money spent on the training of local forces; a vetting process may be an arduous task, but obtaining localized support in the region is a critical step. Having a well-trained and disciplined local force, able to put aside sectarian differences, is paramount as it will allow Western governments from having to commit to long term deployments to pacify the area.

More countries need to adopt an approach similar to Canada; however there will still be a need to militarily combat the Islamic State. The ongoing airstrikes have been successful in helping diminish ISIS' finances by primarily targeting oil revenue; which has a cascading effect on the morale and capability of Baghdadi's Caliph in order to wage war and conduct bureaucratic affairs. Inserting tens of thousands of soldiers hasten the downfall of the Islamic State; however as mentioned beforehand, there is considerable risks which make this scenario improbable. Rather, the United States has already been carrying out a strategy perfected in the deserted of Iraq by former General Stanley McChrystal.

As commander of special forces during the height of Zarqawi and al-Qaeda in Iraq, the former general adopted a strategy which ""operate[ed] at a rate that would exhaust our enemy but that we could maintain," (Warrick, 191) and included sixteen-hour work days. Included in the demanding days often started in the night, when Zarqawi's men would operate under the cover of darkness. Through countless night time raids, information slow came together and a more complete picture of how al-Qaeda in Iraq functioned on all levels, from low, middle, and

leadership tiers. With information obtained by these raids and surveillance by drones, raids were conducted mere minutes after convoys or tips regarding locations of terrorists were received. Eventually, the biggest prize, Zarqawi came in 2006, and al-Qaeda in Iraq began to collapse and eventually re-emerged years later as the Islamic State.

President Obama has been rightfully hesitant on committing conventional ground forces to Syria and Iraq, and has preferred to resort to airstrikes, drones, and special forces. The current method developed by McChrystal has made significant gains against the Islamic State. The defeat may not come for some time. ISIS has proven themselves committed to more than just terror, but its harsh behavior still coerces people to accept their rule. It has proven itself to be one of the most internet savvy, well financed, well equipped, and fastest expanding terrorist organizations in history. Baghdadi's organization has seen better days and will most likely, under continued pressure, face a downward spiral towards its second defeat.

When a terrorist organization is destroyed or reduced to insignificant numbers, there is always the next group which will have to be dealt with. Every terrorist organization is different, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria is just a diamond in the ruff. The solution to the problems of terrorism is not understood with a soundbite or catchy slogan. Rather, it is paramount to learn how religion may help drive recruitment but at the same time is not the sole factor in attracting fighters. Secondly, it is best to know why terror organizations tend to target democratic states. It is important to know the terrorists tend to target the far enemy, as once we withdraw our support from autocratic leaders in the terrorist organization's perceived national homeland, it is easier to topple the near enemy. Pape's theories may not be the conclusive go to answer in how to understand and defeat every terrorist organization, but they provide a comprehensive handbook in getting the ballgame started.

A New Type of Terrorism

Months have passed and the Islamic State while still around, has been facing a downward spiral. It has been pushed back in Syria and Iraq and has lost vast swaths of territory, has continued facing desertions from fighters, a loss of oil which depletes its ability to finance operations. The dog days of summer has been full of promises on how to accelerate the downfall of the Islamic State and other Islamist terrorist attacks, yet President Obama's coalition still remains the best option on the table. An enemy who is physically cornered or believes themselves to be tends to lash out in violent and often unpredictable ways. The days of coordinated attacks against democratic targets will be few and far. In the wake of its failings, the Islamic State and its persuasive and hard to root ideology will lean back onto its followers to carry out lone-wolf attacks. Below is a list of attacks against Western Europe and in North America:

- May 10, melee attack in Munich, Germany, killing 1 and injuring 3.
- June 12th, the shooting at Orlando's Pulse Nightclub killing 49 and injuring 53.
- June 13th, melee attack and hostage taking in Magnanville, France.
- *June 15th, melee attack in Brussels, Belgium, 0 killed.*
- *July 7th, the shooting of Dallas police officers, killing 5.*
- July 14th, 85 killed in Nice, France during Bastille Day celebrations.
- *July 17th, the shooting of Baton Rouge police officers, killing 3.*
- July 18th, melee attack in Wurzburg, Germany, 5 injured.
- July 24th, suicide bombing in Ansbach, Germany. 15 injured.

- July 26th, melee attack and hostage taking in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, France, 1 dead.

Three of the attacks, June 15th in Brussels, July 7th, in Dallas, and July 17th in Baton Rouge have been italicized because these attacks stand out. Of the ten listed attacks, the only attacks which are not directly related to Islamist terrorism of extremism are in Dallas and Baton Rouge. The attack in Brussels was carried out by two individuals who still classify as lone wolf assailants attack. Part of what makes a lone wolf attack different than a coordinated one is training, financing of the operation, and command structure to carry out said attack. The lone wolf most likely has not received any formal training; exception being the Dallas shooter, who received training from the United States Army. The lone wolf attack is more of an allusion, as the most are active participants in an online community "where they share their plans and are encouraged by," (Sageman, 122) other members to fulfill their frustrations.

The Islamic State has been a master in using the Internet and social media in order to expand its cyber borders far beyond its ever-shrinking physical borders; which allows it to claim or inspire a lot of attacks committed by lone wolf individuals. This presents a problem to the media who rails to the masses that these individuals have been trained by or inspired by Islamist or extreme propaganda. Omar Mir Seddique Mateen, who carried out the Pulse Nightclub attack, called into 911 and when asked for his name stated: ""My name is I pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State," (Zambelich). Mateen continued to identify himself as a soldier of Islam and that he would detonate explosives which included a car bomb and suicide vest like seen in France. According to club goers, Mateen "had threatened to put bomb vests on four people within 15 minutes," (Zambelich). Reports conclude Mateen had also gone online to check about the shooting and witnesses describe him as swaying and pacing, almost nervously.

Mateen's attack is a prime example of an uncoordinated, unorganized lone wolf attack and while a stark example of the danger from lone wolf attacks, the inflicted damage could have been a lot worse if carried out by a person with training. The shooting of Dallas Police Officers carried out by Micah Xavier Johnson during a Black Lives Matter protest is a recent example of a person who carried out an attack as multiple witnesses described as precise and coordinated. Johnson, a deployed veteran who had served in Afghanistan and been discharged from the Army a year earlier. Though discharged from service, Johnson kept a "a personal journal of combat tactics," (Kennedy) and when police searched his residence found an assorted array of ammunition, rifles, body armor and bomb making materials. When police had cornered Johnson, they used a robot attached with an explosive to end the threat.

Mateen and Johnson offer two insights into the deadliness of an attack; yet what has not been mentioned is their path which leads lone wolves to carry out their respective attacks. Both individuals have been described by several accounts from witnesses, neighbors, and family members as people who kept to themselves, were quiet, introverted individuals, who had become disillusioned with their position in life. Johnson had been critical of "police shootings of black Americans…and criticize[d] the Black Lives Matter movement," (Domonoske) and during with negotiations with police had "wanted to kill white people, especially white officers," (Kennedy). Pinpointing when Johnson subscribed to the unorthodox, radical view of killing police officers is uncertain. A possible sign of radicalization shows itself three weeks prior when Johnson had wanted to provide security for an anti-Trump rally organized by Reverend Peter Johnson and had been denied because Johnson wanted to bring his gun. Police believe given Johnson's armament and journal on combat tactics, he had been planning to carry out an attack. However, if he had

concocted an attack on a grander scale is uncertain because the spat of police shootings and local protest may have served as a target of opportunity before said attack could have been finalized.

Mateen's background increases the difficulty in assessing when he became radicalized and decided to carry out an attack. Mateen had been investigated twice by the FBI, where in May 2013 he "claimed to have ties to both al-Qaida and Hezbollah," (Zambelich). Following an inquiry which lasted ten months, the investigation was dropped as no collaborating information had been found. Mere months later, in July 2014, another investigation into Mateen opened up after a suicide bombing carried out by Moner Mohammad Abu-Salha in Syira; however, the second investigation, ended with no new substantial information. A speculative course of action here stems from regulars from the Pulse nightclub, who claim to Mateen "frequented the nightclub as a patron," (Zambelich) and according to at least two men, had been active on gay dating apps. Though the FBI denies Mateen had communication through gay dating apps, it is a plausible Mateen waged a battle about his sexuality and tenants of his religious faith. There is no clear evidence when Mateen become radicalized, but there appears to be a trigger event for the attack. Mateen's father stated his son became furious over watching two men kissing.

The most disturbing case of apparent radicalization involves a law enforcement officer in Washington D.C. Since 2003, Nicholas Young has been a member of the Metro Transit Police and in early August of 20016, was arrested and charged with for supporting a terrorist group and is the "first time a U.S. law enforcement officer has been accused of trying to aid a terrorist group," (Weiner). During July 2016, Young had "sent 22 gift card codes worth a total of $245…to someone he thought was active with the Islamic State," (Barrett). The case against Young begins back almost six years prior, when he had a public conversation with the FBI about his friend Zachary Chesser, who "pleaded guilty to attempting to provide material support to

terrorists," (Barrett). During January 2011 to February 2012, Young kept in touch with an undercover FBI agent and also reportedly met with Amine El Khalifif, who eventually pleaded guilty to planning an attack against the U.S. Capitol building. While under surveillance, Young, travelled to Libya and upon his return boasted about working with a rebel group. In addition, he had made veiled threats against agents and threatened to "kidnap and torture an agent…and leave the head of anyone betrayed him in a cinder block at the bottom of Virginia's Lake Braddock," (Weiner). Throughout its monitoring, the FBI never took the threats made by Young seriously, and never considered the D.C. Metro at risk.

Mateen, Johnson, and Young each represent a lone wolf individual with no clear signs of when their radicalization began. After their attacks or arrest, neighbors, friends, etc. have described the individuals as loners, and they felt something was off or not right about the person. What kind of methods could be employed by law enforcement and intelligence agencies? The Republican nominee for President has proposed a ban all immigration from terrorist hotspots. If the proposed tactics were in place, the attack on the Pulse Night Club still would have occurred and Nicholas Young would still have attempted to aid the Islamic State. Mateen and Nicholas Young were US born citizens, and decades prior, Mateen's parents immigrated to the United States from Afghanistan. Sometime during his life, Nicholas Young converted to Islam.

Another flaw in the proposed immigration ban is what the definition of a terrorist hotspot is. Within a given month there are numerous terrorist attacks carried out. Pape has helped dispel the notion of a solid connection exists between religion and terrorism. All walks of life, poor, middle-class, or rich and whether they believe in God or not, are capable of committing terrorist attacks. If a ban of immigrants is carried out based on a particular religion, it will fly in the face

of the US Constitution. If the ban passed Constitutional muster, it would give the terrorists a rallying cry, a us vs them mentality and potentially help spur recruitment.

A third solution could be to spend more resources into investigating people with suspected terrorist links. A lone wolf individual is, by nature, an individual who does not rely on a group in order to carry out an attack. A general rule of thumb is, the more people that are involved, a higher chance of detection exists. There is no guarantee the investigations into people would pan out any information or differences the ones done for Mateen and Young. Both individuals have been investigated prior to their attack or arrest, and there had been no significant evidence to support the conclusion they were linked to terrorism.

Away from impossible to implement immigration bans, the same presidential nominee has promised if elected, there will be no nation building carried out the United States and that the Islamic State will be crushed. A terrorist organization can be defeated militarily, and the Islamic State is well on the way to being beaten. However, after the defeat of the enemy, the nation needs to be rebuilt. Everyday lives need to be built; people need a place to live and work. Streets and highways need to be repaired and constructed. Access to goods needs to be restored. The population of the affected region needs to be taught on how to handle security. Critically important is schools and access to education for all needs to become a uniform standard to help defeat the corrosive ideology. The age-old adage says children are the future, and if only seek to militarily defeat the enemy of the time, and then only one side of the coin is being solved. Without solving both sides of the coin, the military defeat and nation building the affected area, the next terrorist organization will rise from the ashes of the Islamic State.

The "Defeat" of the Islamic State

When I first started researching about the Islamic State in the last quarter of 2015, it appeared to me to be an issue which would dominate regional politics in the Middle East for a few years. However, recently the Islamic State has lost considerable ground with the fall of Mosul, Iraq and Raqqa, Syria, the self-proclaimed capital of the Islamic Caliphate. The rise and downfall of the Islamic State occurred beginning in 2003 with the Bush Administration's decision to invade Iraq then to disband the Iraqi Army and not have a concrete plan to restore vital services to the Iraqi people. The Obama Administration, though initially slow to react to the spread of ISIS, should be given credit for the caliphate's downfall. His administration has been responsible for coordinating a region wide campaign against ISIS and though then candidate and eventual President Trump promised to unleash the military and have a better plan to defeat ISIS, no policy changed.

As Trump has proudly proclaimed in the past to have freed the military from its political shackles and give more leeway to military commanders, he has not focused on a concrete strategy required to defeat the Islamic State. Though they have been vanquished from Iraq by Iranian backed militias and the Iraqi Army supported by the United States, Russia and Syria led by Al-Assad, the next front against the Islamic State has shifted to a familiar battlefield: Afghanistan. The United States has been involved in Afghanistan since October 2001 or seventeen years when October 2018 comes around. Former President Obama had envisioned having close to zero troops left in the country by the end of his time as chief executive. However; Trump has doubled down and decided to unleash the troops but at what cost?

How long does the current commander-in-chief and future commanders-in-chief envision the United States commitment to Afghanistan lasting? The public has grown war weary and the definition of what winning looks like is muddled and undefined outside of grandiosely vague

statements that we will win. If we are capable of winning, the core problem to extremism exists the nations of Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan has been devastated by war. Hundreds of thousands have died in these horrible conflicts. Millions of people have fled from their homeland and may never return. These war-torn countries need to be rebuilt; otherwise one of the key foundations for terrorism remains.

A secondary contributing factor is a continued occupation of homelands, which Trump's policy continues for an unannounced duration. The war against the Taliban, the Islamic State or any other extremist organization which resorts to terroristic campaigns cannot be defeated unless the local population's homes, cities and country is rebuilt. Canada has taken the right steps by instead of focusing on dropping bombs but training its forces to train local police and military and rebuilding infrastructure. Playing whack-a-mole and militarily destroying a terrorist organization's ability to pose a threat, is not a strategy which will ever fully defeat extremist views. Instead by employing a full strategy which includes military might and civilian development, there is significant chance of curbing the rise in extremism and terroristic campaigns and attacks.

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