

THE UNITED STATES' OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR  
ON TERROR: A MILITARY REVOLUTION?

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

THE UNITED STATES' OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR: A MILITARY REVOLUTION? by Major David R. O'Leary, 142 pages.

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks against symbolic icons of the United States' economic and military power, then President George W. Bush launched a series of military, political and diplomatic efforts that became widely known as the Global War on Terror. Rebranded as the "Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror" by President Barack Obama in 2009, these efforts have had a profound impact both domestically and globally. The resultant political, economic and societal effects give rise to the possibility that these operations collectively constitute a Military Revolution. The absence of a universally-agreed upon definition for a Military Revolution provides an exciting opportunity to consider various authors' theories and provide a fresh look at this intriguing concept. Subsequent analysis seeks to compare the U.S. post-9/11 response to terrorism with historical examples and consider the evidence to determine how these events have affected the United States politically, economically and socially.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

There appear to be two distinct historical phenomena involved in radical innovation and change. The first can be called military revolutions. *These were by far the more important, for they fundamentally changed the nature of warfare in the West.* There appear to have been four (two occurring at the same time): creation of the modern, effective nation-state based on organized and disciplined military power in the 17th century; the French Revolution and the industrial revolution beginning at the same time during the period 1789-1815, and World War I, 1914-18. We might compare them to earthquakes. *They brought with them such systemic changes in the political, social, and cultural arenas as to be largely uncontrollable, unpredictable, and above all unforeseeable. . . .* Such ‘military revolutions’ recast the nature of society and the state as well as of military organizations.<sup>1</sup>

— Williamson Murray, quoted in *Strategy for Chaos: Revolutions in Military Affairs and the Evidence of History*

#### Problem Statement

On September 11, 2001, the world watched in horror as nineteen terrorists hijacked four fuel-laden commercial airliners and transformed them into human-guided missiles employed to attack well-known symbols of America’s military and economic power. These attacks destroyed the twin towers of New York City’s World Trade Center, significantly damaged the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and concluded when a fourth plane crashed into a rural Pennsylvania field. If not for the extraordinary bravery of US Airways Flight 93’s passengers, it is likely that the hijackers would have flown this fourth plane into one of America’s key political landmarks such as the Capitol Building

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<sup>1</sup>Colin Gray, *Strategy for Chaos: Revolutions in Military Affairs and the Evidence of History* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2002), 41.

or the White House. When the sun set that day, approximately 3,000 people had died as a direct result of these terror attacks.<sup>2</sup>

On the evening of the attacks, then U.S. President George W. Bush addressed the American People and promised to “(direct) the full resources for (American) intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice,” and stated that the United States “will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.”<sup>3</sup> With those words, the President foreshadowed the U.S. political, economic and military response to the deadliest terror attacks in the nation’s history. In the coming weeks, the country would first invade Afghanistan and overthrow the ruling Taliban regime accused of harboring suspected 9/11 mastermind and *al-Qaeda* chief, Osama bin Laden. Then in March 2003 President Bush ordered the invasion of Iraq, opening a second major front in what his administration termed the Global War on Terror, or GWOT. Although Saddam Hussein’s regime collapsed almost as quickly as the Taliban’s, neither war ended with the overthrow of these governments. In fact, United States and coalition forces remained in Iraq for more than eight years before withdrawing on December 31, 2011. As of April 2014, more than 30,000 American service people remain engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan. Despite many gains in both theaters, the current Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror, or OCO/GWOT (as President Barack Obama relabeled

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<sup>2</sup>Tom Lemley and Tom Templeton, “9/11 in Numbers,” *The Guardian*, August 17, 2002, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/aug/18/usa.terrorism> (accessed November 14, 2013).

<sup>3</sup>CNN, Text of Bush’s Address, September 11, 2001, <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/bush.speech.text/> (accessed November 14, 2013).

these operations in early 2009) is far from complete.<sup>4</sup> To clarify, this thesis will use Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) or Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (OCO/GWOT) interchangeably.

The moniker “Global War on Terror” originated during President Bush’s September 20, 2001 address to the nation. In that speech, the President declared that “Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there.”<sup>5</sup> Continuing, he provided the war’s intended end state, namely that “It (the war) will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.”<sup>6</sup> To accomplish this aim, the President provided a synopsis of how the United States would execute this new war by stating, “We will direct every resource at our command--every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war--to the destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network.”<sup>7</sup> In less than one hundred words, the President provided the operational design for how the U.S. would leverage all elements of national power (diplomacy, information, military and economics) to battle to the dangers of global terrorism.

The foreign military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan comprise the largest, but by no means the only, theaters of war in the U. S. fight against terrorism. Military

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<sup>4</sup>Scott Wilson and Al Kamen, “‘Global War on Terror’ is Given New Name,” *Washington Post*, March 25, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/24/AR2009032402818.html> (accessed April 2, 2014).

<sup>5</sup>Washington Post, Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation, September 20, 2001, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress\\_092001.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html) (accessed December 28, 2013).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

operations in the Philippines, Africa and elsewhere reflect the truly global nature of the threat and the United States' commitment to attacking terrorists and those that harbor them. Parallel domestic political and military efforts continue to support a third major operation in the War on Terror, Operation Noble Eagle (ONE). Generally speaking, "Operation Noble Eagle is the name given to military operations related to homeland security and support to federal, state, and local agencies in the wake of the September 11th attacks."<sup>8</sup> Although ONE rarely generates the amount of media coverage and debate as the more highly-visible Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), visitors to the former World Trade Center site in lower Manhattan would almost assuredly see uniformed soldiers in the vicinity. This presence, while only a small snapshot of a larger operation, represents one feature of Operation Noble Eagle.

As evidenced by the physical destruction in New York City and Washington, D.C. as well as the ongoing deployments of United States soldiers, marines, sailors and airmen around the world, the September 11, 2001 terror attacks have profoundly affected the United States of America and in fact the world, militarily, politically, economically and socially. The enduring consequences of these terrorist attacks, and the unprecedented U.S. commitment aimed to defeat terrorist organizations and their supporting governments, continues to shape U.S. foreign and domestic policies. Since these attacks, more than 2.5 million American men and women have deployed to support overseas

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<sup>8</sup>Lawrence Kapp, *Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom: Questions and Answers About U.S. Military Personnel, Compensation, and Force Structure* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, February 2005), <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL31334.pdf> (accessed February 9, 2014), 1.

military operations; more than 6,600 have died.<sup>9</sup> For mid-career military personnel whose service began in the early years of the twenty-first century, they have not known an Army without war. This conflict has defined their careers.

The profound commitment of national resources dedicated to protecting the security of U.S. interests at home and abroad is truly exceptional and incorporates more than military engagements. As a result, America's response to the September 11 terror attacks warrants consideration as a potential Military Revolution. This term, although frequently cited but lacking a universally-agreed upon definition, signifies an event or series of related events significant enough to fundamentally change the nature of society as a whole, and by extension the nature of warfare. This thesis aims to investigate this possibility and assess the degree to which available evidence supports or fails to support identifying the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror as a Military Revolution.

#### Primary Research Question

Did America's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 constitute a Military Revolution (MR)?

#### Secondary Research Questions

1. What is a Military Revolution?
2. What is a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA)?

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<sup>9</sup>Chris Adams, "Millions Went to War in Iraq, Afghanistan, Leaving Many with Lifelong Scars," McClatchy DC, March 14, 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/03/14/185880/millions-went-to-war-in-iraq-afghanistan.html> (accessed October 22, 2013).

3. How does a Military Revolution relate to a Revolution in Military Affairs?
4. What are the elements of a Military Revolution?
5. What military effects resulting from the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks support or discourage defining this response as a Military Revolution?
6. What political effects resulting from the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks support or discourage defining this response as a Military Revolution?
7. What economic effects resulting from the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks support or discourage defining this response as a Military Revolution?
8. What social effects resulting from the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks support or discourage defining this response as a Military Revolution?

#### Assumptions

The complex nature of the security challenges currently facing the United States both domestically and internationally requires the following assumptions to assist in researching and analyzing the primary and supporting questions:

1. The September 11, 2001 terror attacks were not the sole cause of all resulting military and political operations undertaken to defeat terrorism in the ensuing years, although they likely served as a catalyst for major anti-terrorism initiatives as a whole.

2. The GWOT will continue beyond the publication of this thesis; henceforth, the data presented and analyzed herein will not encompass the entire scope of the economic, political, social or military costs of ongoing involvement resulting from the September 11, 2001 attacks.
3. It is uncertain whether President Bush would have invaded Iraq if not for the terror attacks. As a result, this thesis assumes that the President likely found popular support and justification for the invasion of Iraq due in large part to the perceived threat of Saddam Hussein's government and the suspicion that he harbored weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or provided material support to terrorists.
4. As stated in assumption number two above, this author considers a limited and recent historical period. Accordingly, this thesis assumes that any conclusions presented based on the available evidence will necessarily require additional review post-publication. To that end, this investigation proposes that at best, the evidence provides *indicators* supporting or not supporting the classification of the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror as a Military Revolution.

### Scope

The OCO/GWOT and related operations are ongoing and global. At the time of this writing, the United States remains actively engaged in a war in Afghanistan and continue to conduct less robust combat operations elsewhere. Although not directly related to these operations, the United States narrowly avoided initiating military action against Syria for its suspected use of chemical weapons on August 21, 2013. To remain

manageable and accurate, this thesis limits its scope to those military events occurring between September 11, 2001 and May 1, 2014, with a primary focus on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Additionally, this thesis typically depicts the American experience following the terror attacks, but in order for the GWOT to qualify as a true Military Revolution, it must be documented that the effects of these attacks ignored borders and caused a global paradigm shift. Whenever useful to provide context or provide support for the attacks' universal consequences, examples will illustrate international responses to combating terrorism. Overwhelmingly, however, this work includes discussion on the United States and its response to the attacks.

### Limitations

From a research and preparation standpoint, few limitations affect the completion of this thesis. The sheer scale of these terrorist attacks at a relatively recent point in our history allowed millions of people to follow the events unfolding live on television, through internet updates and in all other available mediums. In that respect, abundant information exists in the open media to conduct this research and develop this thesis without utilizing classified documents. Although the specifics of many military and political decisions undoubtedly remain classified, these should not prevent the depth of analysis necessary to complete this work. The nature of a Military Revolution, in fact, necessarily stipulates that effects encompass all aspects of the state and are hence readily visible to the population as well as to the political and military leaders. In other words, a lack of access to classified documents will not limit data collection to the extent that

would make it difficult or impossible to determine whether or not the U.S. response to the attacks constitute a Military Revolution.

### Delimitations

As stated, this thesis considers the military, political, economic and social effects that directly or indirectly resulted from the U.S. response to the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. Given the ongoing nature of these operations, and the considerable controversy and media coverage they often generate, this document discusses only those events happening prior to May 1, 2014. It does not imply or assume that the attacks' influence—domestically or internationally—ceased after that date. Rather, limiting the study to those dates makes the research feasible.

Another delimitation applied to this research stems from the concept of a Military Revolution itself: this work will focus primarily on the military, political, economic and social domains. Other possible domains, such as the technological or doctrinal serve as secondary considerations but only insofar as they provide supporting or refuting context for the topic under discussion. As explained in the following chapters, many military theorists and historians define technological, doctrinal and resource developments as Revolutions in Military Affairs (RMA). While thoughts differ on whether RMAs precede Military Revolutions or vice versa, most authors typically credit the former with having a less profound impact on the world at large than do Military Revolutions. Since the distinction between the two enhances the understanding of this topic in general, this thesis will seek to highlight the differences and relatedness between them, but stops short of considering any possible RMAs associated with the United States' Global War on Terror.

### Significance of Study

Emphasizing the interrelatedness of politics, war, economics and society is not a new concept. Most students of military history are well aware of the oft-quoted Clausewitz dictum that “war is a mere continuation of policy by other means.”<sup>10</sup> While analyzing this nineteenth-century Prussian theorist’s work provides invaluable perspective for the modern military professional, it does fall outside the scope of this thesis. Where Clausewitz does assist the reader, however, is in drawing attention to an unavoidable reality of armed conflict: it rarely, if ever, occurs for its own sake.

Writing in 1957, sociologist Ernest Greenwood provided a list of five attributes that define a profession: systematic theory, authority, community sanction, ethical codes and culture.<sup>11</sup> Unquestionably, the U.S. military establishment possesses each of these attributes and virtually all commentators identify the United States military as a profession. As with other professions such as the practice of law, medicine or theology, one of the defining characteristics is the considerable amount of institutional knowledge specific to the profession. While the military certainly requires and utilizes very technical knowledge and expertise to operate various weapons, communications or transportation systems, the military also invests heavily in its human capital, often in the form of academic development. Perhaps in support of that academic investment this work finds its greatest value.

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<sup>10</sup>Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Anatol Rapaport (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1968), 119.

<sup>11</sup>Ernest Greenwood, “Attributes of a Profession,” *Social Work* 2, no. 3 (1957): 45, <http://sw.oxfordjournals.org/content/2/3/45.extract> (accessed November 16, 2013).

Military leaders and military officers in particular, play a vital role in shaping the world in which we live. From safeguarding the capacity to project force globally in support of national and international interests to advising key government officials, our military leaders must maintain intellectual dexterity as much as top physical condition, personal courage or strong ethics. In an increasingly complex world in which military operations support and affect all aspects of a nation's physical and economic security, the professional military leader must be cognizant of those effects. As such, the significance of not only how the War on Terror has changed our world, but also of how the interrelatedness of so many factors coalesce to define operational environments and their desired outcomes, makes a detailed study of the events that characterized our nation's involvement in some of its longest and most costly wars a matter of critical importance. The ability to see these events not only through a historical lens, but also through a contemporary one, will capacitate further study and facilitate attaining a deeper understanding of how to best solve the riddles of a complex, dangerous and ever-changing world.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Including a literature review serves to not only provide the reader with relevant background information regarding what other authors have contributed to the proposed topic, but it also engenders credibility for the author's thesis in that it demonstrates the breadth of research and consideration of multiple perspectives. The abundance of available writings, coupled with the extremely theoretical nature of a Military Revolution, magnifies the importance of a literature review for this work in particular. Essentially, this thesis will assess qualitatively the degree to which the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terror attacks constitutes a Military Revolution; few quantitative metrics exist to accomplish this task. At its core, this investigative undertaking desires to analyze the wealth of available information and offer a feasible, supportable and defensible analytical conclusion that originates directly from the evidence considered.

While the method used to develop the aforementioned presentation is the subject of the next chapter, a brief introduction will serve to orient the reader and assist in understanding its various components. Beginning with a discussion of the key terms Military Revolution and Revolution in Military Affairs, the thesis first seeks to provide an overview of background information on these topics in general. Once established, the focus will then shift to the key components presented in chapter 1, namely the interrelatedness of the military, political, economic and social domains.

## Military Revolution and Revolutions in Military Affairs

Interestingly, several of the U.S. Army's academic institutions, including the United States Military Academy at West Point and the United States Army Command and General Staff College, include the concepts of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs in their respective history curricula, although these are not doctrinal terms. In fact, several authors have provided differing views not only on how best to define these concepts, but differ widely on what historical events deserve classification as such. To that end, this literature review begins with a consideration of these authors' various view points and then seeks to discover similarities that help to provide a useful definition.

The absence of concrete definitions for Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs presents the first challenge to the researcher desiring to judge the OCO/GWOT's suitability as a possible MR; in fact, one simply cannot pursue this task without first establishing which definitions to apply to his or her subsequent analysis. For this reason, literature that explores these concepts must become the launch point for this project. Although historian Michael Roberts typically receives credit for introducing the idea of a Military Revolution in 1955, several historians and theorists have provided additional commentary and sought to further develop this idea.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the most well-known of these authors, and whose work most heavily influences the history curriculum at the United States Army Command and General Staff College, are Williamson Murray and MacGregor Knox. In their book The Dynamics of Military Revolution: 1300-2050,

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<sup>12</sup>MacGregor Knox and Williamson Murray, *The Dynamics of Military Revolution: 1300-2050* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1.

Murray and Knox compile a series of essays from various authors who discuss the concepts of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs. While these essays focus most heavily on the various technological and doctrinal developments that have changed the way the world fights wars, Murray and Knox propose that a Military Revolution's "defining feature is that it fundamentally changes the framework of war."<sup>13</sup> The two go on to describe five such revolutions in Western history: the creation of the nation-state, the French and Industrial Revolutions, World War One, and the advent of nuclear weapons.<sup>14</sup> Although most authors consider the technological development of weapons and related tactics Revolutions in Military Affairs, Knox and Murray propose that the introduction of nuclear weapons falls into a different category, not only for the weapons' unprecedented destructive potential, but also for their role in determining international policy and keeping the "Cold War *cold* in the decisive European and northeast Asian theaters."<sup>15</sup> In these authors' words, these five events "were earthquakes."<sup>16</sup>

Complementing the various vignettes organized by Knox and Murray, Elinor Sloan's *The Revolution in Military Affairs* provides an excellent summary of the foremost theories concerning this thesis' key terms and provides support for Knox's and Murray's view that Military Revolutions profoundly affect not only the nature of military conflict, but also of politics, economics and societies. In her historical analysis of Military

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<sup>13</sup>Knox and Murray, 6.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs, Sloan shares the following quote from futurist thinkers Alvin and Heidi Toffler: “A true revolution ‘change(s) the game itself, including its rules, equipment, the size and organization of the ‘teams,’ their training, doctrine, tactics, and just about everything else.’”<sup>17</sup> They follow up that “a true military revolution ‘changes the relationship of the game to society itself.’”<sup>18</sup> This statement is particularly interesting if applied to the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror. By providing a descriptive and useable framework, this characterization of a Military Revolution enables qualitative analysis of the United States’ kinetic and non-kinetic efforts on multiple fronts. Specifically, by considering the defense of the United States’ domestic and international interests as “the game,” one could begin to gauge the degree to which this response initiated resultant military, political, economic and social changes in the state at large. With this mental and theoretical paradigm, one might better analyze the extent to which the OCO/GWOT employed citizens and soldiers in a unified, but often distinct, effort to defeat the global threat of terrorism.

Not surprisingly, the alluring nature of a concept as profound and far-reaching as a Military Revolution solicits the creative attention of several brilliant minds. Once again, Sloan’s work provides depth to the researcher’s understanding of this somewhat nebulous term by presenting the conflicting opinions of still other theorists, which help highlight the range of interpretation (and applicability) that this concept fashions. While the forthcoming analysis explains these differences in greater detail, major variances include

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<sup>17</sup>Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 19.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

proposals that Revolutions in Military Affairs precede, and hence cause, the resultant Military Revolution as well as the opposite—that MRs give rise to RMAs. Despite the sequencing of the Military Revolution to the Revolution in Military Affairs, similar factors appear in several of these definitions—military, political, economic and social.

To help define the related concept of a Revolution in Military Affairs, Richard Hundley's *Past Revolutions, Future Transformations* seeks to explain the largely technical aspect of an RMA. Similar to other authors, Hundley suggests that while significant, the benefits offered to one side by an RMA remain largely military. The use of the railroad to ferry troops during the American Civil War, the appearance of machine guns and airplanes in the First World War or the use of precision-guided munitions in the First Gulf War are all possible examples of Revolutions in Military Affairs for their effects on the battlefield, yet they are not Military Revolutions. Hundley's work, written for key civilian and military defense officials provides an easy-to-follow development of the theory supporting Revolutions in Military Affairs and makes clear that while complex and far-reaching, they are overwhelmingly military in nature.

In spite of the aforementioned authors' very convincing arguments about the nature of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs, the lack of a universally agreed upon definition leaves the terms open to criticism and disassembly from equally talented skeptics. One such thinker, social scientist Colin Gray, respectfully disagrees with Williamson Murray's (he makes no mention of MacGregor Knox) examples of Military Revolutions in his book *Strategy for Chaos: Revolutions in Military Affairs and the Evidence of History*. Bluntly, he writes that "it is unfortunate that as an influential scholarly opinion-leader Murray should encourage the fallacious belief that

military revolutions ‘fundamentally changed the nature of warfare in the West.’”<sup>19</sup>  
Specifically, he argues that “it is implausible to claim that the French, Industrial or First World War military revolutions effected as fundamental a change as is alleged.”<sup>20</sup>  
Finally, while acknowledging the alluring nature of suggesting that Military Revolutions affect multiple areas including politics and society, he says the argument falls short in its phrasing and hence stands to cause as much confusion as it does benefit.

Fortunately, Gray’s criticism of Murray’s work does not render it unusable. Rather, it focuses on some potential shortcomings in the theory’s development and offers a unique opportunity for future scholars to perhaps better articulate their cases for possible Military Revolutions. With respect to this thesis, such skepticism can only benefit the author by requiring deeper and more precise analysis. As stated in the opening chapter, claiming that the ongoing Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror (or really any other event or series of events) constitutes a Military Revolution requires a qualitative vice quantitative approach. To that end, utilizing the right definitional construct to analyze the available evidence ultimately remains the greatest factor in providing a response to this thesis’ primary research question.

### Military Considerations

Arguably, the military invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan represent the most visible response to the terror attacks. While it remains uncertain whether or not President Bush would have ordered the invasion of Iraq had the attacks not occurred, this

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<sup>19</sup>Gray, 42.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

manuscript assumes that the events of September 11 created conditions that provided popular and political support necessary for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Much more certain is that the decision of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to provide refuge to Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda operatives directly led to Operation Enduring Freedom and major combat operations inside that country.

At the highest levels of government, combating terrorism remains a focal point of American military and political strategy. In the 2010 *National Security Strategy* of the United States, for instance, President Barack Obama reminds American military and political leaders, as well as the American public, that “For nearly a decade, our Nation has been at war with a far-reaching network of violence and hatred” and that “even as we end one war in Iraq, our military has been called upon to renew our focus on Afghanistan as part of a commitment to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa’ida [sic] and its affiliates.”<sup>21</sup> To further illustrate the point, the President calls “the attacks of September 11, 2001 . . . a transformative event for the United States . . . (that drew) a swift and forceful response from the United States and our allies and partners in Afghanistan . . . (requiring that) America’s forces, resources, and national security strategy focused on these conflicts.”<sup>22</sup> Notably, President Obama clarifies that “this is not a global war against a tactic—terrorism or a religion—Islam. We are at war with a specific network, al-

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<sup>21</sup>The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010), [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf) (accessed 16 November 16, 2013), i.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 8.

Qa'ida [sic], and its terrorist affiliates who support efforts to attack the United States, our allies, and partners.”<sup>23</sup>

Although the *National Security Strategy* is as much a political document as it is a military one, the Commander-in-Chief's commitment to defeating terrorism ultimately translates into “boots on the ground.” Citing text from the *National Security Strategy* helps to provide context for what the now-defunct Joint Forces Command referred to in 2010 as a “period of persistent conflict.”<sup>24</sup> Although seemingly benign in the larger context of the 2010 report, the implications of “persistent conflict” speak to the profundity of the terror attacks. One such author, Micah Zenko of the Center for Preventive Action even suggests that this type of warfare might exist during the administrations of all future presidents.<sup>25</sup> Specifically, Zenko makes a prediction about the possibility that perpetual warfare will factor into successive presidential administrations at least for the foreseeable future and perhaps beyond.

#### Historical Vignettes

Investigating whether or not the OCO/GWOT presents a strong candidate for inclusion on the list of Military Revolutions naturally leads one to consider how these operations differed from previous terrorism-related responses. In other words, one should

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>24</sup>United States Joint Force Command, *The JOE 2010: Joint Operating Environment* (Norfolk, VA: U.S. Joint Forces Command, 2010), 4, <http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/joe2010.pdf> (accessed November 16, 2013).

<sup>25</sup>Micah Zenko, “A Period of Persistent Conflict,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 6, 2012, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/11/06/a\\_period\\_of\\_persistent\\_conflict%20](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/11/06/a_period_of_persistent_conflict%20) (accesses November 16, 2013).

not consider the United States' post-9/11 responses in the proverbial "vacuum," but rather analyze the similarities and differences that might suggest revolutionary change. To achieve this, the thesis includes three historical vignettes that relate in some way to the 2001 attacks. The three examples provided are the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the Oklahoma City bombing and the bomb attacks against two U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998. Generally speaking, this analysis considers news articles related to the attacks as well as information posted on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) website. The information, while general, provides factual information on the attacks as well as some insight into the perceptions of that governmental agency (FBI) most heavily involved in leading the law enforcement efforts to locate, apprehend and bring to justice the perpetrators.

Raphael F. Perl's report - *Terrorism: U.S. Response to Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania: A New Policy Direction?* - provides an important exception to the generally media-intensive nature of literature included in this section. Writing for the Congressional Research Service, Mr. Perl's report explores the possibility that the United States government began to pursue a more militaristic approach to combating terrorism after the embassy bombings. This document provides the first indication of an *evolutionary* paradigm shift in the United States response to terrorism. It also seems to corroborate, or at least support, other literature that speaks to the unprecedented use of military force to combat terrorism that gained steam in the Bush Administration. Including this report, therefore, provides some evidence that while the OCO/GWOT might have greatly expanded the use of military force to respond to terrorism, the concept likely did not develop as a direct result of the September 11 attacks.

## Political Considerations

Perhaps the most important literature surrounding the political response to these attacks are the two Authorizations for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) providing the legal justification for the President to deploy military forces in support of antiterrorism operations. This thesis considers two such documents—the authorizations for military action against the terrorists and their sponsors directly responsible for 9/11 and also for action against Iraq. In the first AUMF, signed in 2001 shortly after the attacks, the United States Congress authorizes the President to use military force against individuals and organizations who either planned or executed the attacks, or states that provided support or refuge to these terrorists. The second authorizes the President to use force to protect the United States and its interests against Iraqi threats and also to enforce various United Nations resolutions that the world accused the country of violating.

These documents further shed light on a very significant evolution in the U.S. approach to its anti-terrorism campaign. For the first time in history, the AUMF following the September 11 attacks allows the President to pursue a military-focused, vice law enforcement-focused, strategy to seek redress for the terrorist attacks. In the ensuing discussion, this distinction will reappear in the analysis of how these attacks elicited a very different response than similar (although admittedly less spectacular) incidents did previously.

An interesting parallel development occurring alongside the Executive Branch's expanded ability to deploy the armed forces is the rapid expansion of the size and reach of the United States government. The *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107-296) established the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and provided the cabinet-

level position of Secretary of Homeland Security. This department, which eventually assumed responsibility for the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA), the United States Coast Guard and various other agencies, seeks to protect the American homeland against various threats, including terrorism. This law marked a significant expansion of government and solidified the United States' long-term commitment to combat terroristic threats. Various supporting literature including reports prepared for congress, newspaper articles and the department's official website provide contextual background information and priorities of the organization and its subordinate agencies, such as the TSA.

Not surprisingly, along with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and Transportation Security Agency in 2002 and 2001, respectively, the *Washington Post* led a two-year investigation that determined "at least 263 organizations have been created or reorganized as a response to 9/11."<sup>26</sup> The report, although focused primarily on the United States' burgeoning intelligence infrastructure, succeeds in illustrating the incredible expansion of governmental efforts to combat international terrorism.

While the creation of so many federal agencies reflects an expanded role of government, so too does the passage of key laws and policies. Perhaps the law most commonly associated with a post-9/11 response is the *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001*, also known as the *USA Patriot Act*, or simply the *Patriot Act*. The U.S. Justice Department touts the law as vital "in preventing another catastrophic attack on the

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<sup>26</sup>William M. Arkin and Dana Priest, "A Hidden World, Growing Beyond Control," *Washington Post*, July 19, 2010, <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/top-secret-america/articles/a-hidden-world-growing-beyond-control/print/> (accessed November 16, 2013).

American homeland since September 11, 2001.”<sup>27</sup> In other circles, the *Patriot Act* receives considerable criticism for its collection methods and how those methods might infringe upon individual rights in its narrow focus to defeat terrorism. While somewhat outside the scope of how September 11 affected America’s political landscape, the law’s potential impact to the nation’s social aspect receives some consideration in the forthcoming sections.

### Economic Considerations

As the United States winds down the war in Afghanistan, public debate continues about the benefits of maintaining a residual force of American military personnel to provide training and support for indigenous forces as well as to conduct limited strikes against key terror targets. Increasingly, the discussion focuses on economic considerations as much as they do political and military ones. For those supporting a continued footprint, withdrawing U.S. and coalition (NATO) forces from the South Asian country places in jeopardy hard-won gains as well as promised economic and reconstruction aid. For those opposed, the incredible amount of money spent (not to mention lives lost) has failed to produce the desired results; how much benefit can a significantly limited presence provide? While the answers to this critical but difficult question fall outside the scope of this literature review, it does serve to propose the notion that economic factors—past, present and future—constitute a critical component in any analysis of the OCO/GWOT as a potential Military Revolution.

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<sup>27</sup>United States Department of Justice, “The USA Patriot Act: Preserving Life and Liberty,” <http://www.justice.gov/archive/ll/highlights.htm> (accessed November 16, 2013).

## Declaration of Economic War on the United States

As it turns out, the United States and her allies hold no monopoly on assessing the financial impact of the U.S.-led War on Terror. Speaking in 2004, Osama bin Laden claimed that (Al-Qaeda is) “continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy.”<sup>28</sup> In that speech, Bin Laden cites the collapse of the Soviet Union that followed their ill-fated foray into Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989. Perhaps recognizing that his organization could not defeat the United States militarily, he instead taunts the United States’ political and military leaders that he will defeat them economically by goading them into perpetual and unwinnable warfare. Although little evidence exists to support a claim that bin Laden succeeded in masterminding the unraveling of the U.S. and global economy in the years following the attacks, his claims do warrant consideration given the ensuing economic challenges occurring in the middle part of the decade.

## General Economic Maladies Affecting the United States

Irrespective of the War on Terror’s hefty price tag, establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between a dollar amount and revolutionary economic change remains a difficult feat. In spite of this realization, this thesis studies the United States’ struggling economy and investigates how the antiterrorism efforts might have contributed to this state. To achieve this, the thesis considered literature concerning the most visible consequences of the stagnant financial situation, including the recession, the Sequester

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<sup>28</sup>Al Jazeera, Transcript of Usama bin Laden speech, November 1, 2004, <http://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2004/11/200849163336457223.html> (accessed August 25, 2013).

and the eventual lowering of the U.S. sovereign credit rating. Taken holistically, this investigation seeks to determine how the War on Terror might have had the unintended effect of undermining the national security by leaving the country less financially able to provide for continued defense, both domestically and internationally. While not necessarily revolutionary in and of itself, the possibility that a preoccupation with defeating terrorism could lead to nontraditional economic practices to the point of significantly harming the world's largest economy does seem to support the idea of changing the nature of how the U.S. funds wars and the financial risk it accepts to achieve those ends.

#### The American Recession of 2007-2009

Literature covering the global recession in the latter part of the century's first decade typically avoid associating this downturn with the Global War on Terror. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, for instance, cites traditional causes for the recession including unemployment, the loss of actual employment opportunity (job loss), layoffs and the impact of layoffs and job losses on various industries. Almost universally, economists also cite the "housing bubble" as a leading cause of the recession. Specifically, the rapid increase in the price of U.S. houses, combined with financing practices that allowed individuals to borrow beyond their means, created conditions for catastrophic economic losses for all involved. To provide relevant background information on this critical point, the thesis considered remarks made in a 2010 speech by former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke who spoke on the relationship between monetary policy and the aforementioned bubble. Additional articles, including one by political science professors Jacob Hacker (Yale University) and Paul Pierson (University

of California, Berkley) provide commentary on the Bush Administration's tax cuts and the concept of "supply side economics," commonly (but not necessarily correctly) equated with lowering taxes to stimulate the economy. The intricate nature of macroeconomics, fiscal policies and the unpredictable nature of our world warrant inclusion of various sources to help describe this very complex and dynamic historical period. For the purpose of this thesis, it also helps avoid unfairly (and incorrectly) accrediting the OCO/GWOT as the sole perpetrator of the recent economic hardships.

The proximity in time between bin Laden's comments and the onset of significant financial challenges validates exploring a link between the two. What it does not achieve, however, is providing a "road map" that establishes how the War on Terror created a global financial catastrophe in its bid to eradicate the terrorist threat. Rather, considering the War on Terror against the backdrop of other economic practices, policies and realities helps to suggest that perhaps rather than *cause* the economic recession, the wars exacerbated problems caused by the other, unrelated events and in essence made a bad problem worse.

### The Sequester

A consequence of the growing deficit in general, and a potential indirect result of the GWOT is the Sequester, a political austerity measure passed in response to poor economic growth and an associated inability to enact appropriate legislative spending bills. Little to no literature exists providing a direct cause-and-effect relationship between these automatic cuts and the ongoing War on Terror. Considering this occurrence as potentially related to this thesis however, assumes an indirect link between the exorbitant costs of the foreign wars, domestic anti-terrorism initiatives, foreign nation building and

the challenging reality of balancing these priorities with other domestic and international issues such as education, health care, domestic infrastructure and honoring previously-existing foreign commitments.

The White House's website cites a lack of political progress due to partisan divide between the two major political parties as a determining factor in requiring these arbitrary cuts. Based on the information presented on the site, one sees the (proposed) cause-and-effect relationship between political (in) activity and economic reality. Not only does this website provide the President's understanding of the Sequester's origin, but it also reaffirms the simple reality that one cannot often analyze a state's economic strength without also considering the related politics.

To introduce perspective to the concept of a Sequester, this thesis also considered the impact that these cuts could have on military readiness. Not surprisingly, key civilian and military leaders cautioned against these cuts and proposed that they would have a significant impact on the U.S. ability to respond to emerging threats, whether from terrorism or from a traditional "state" actor. The highly public nature of these debates assures an abundance of coverage in the open media and so newspaper articles provide the primary source of information concerning the Sequester.

#### The Cost of America's Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Most government websites and newspaper articles considering the Sequester or the Recession do not posit a direct link between the War on Terror and the economic malady currently facing the United States, but such commentary does exist. One of the leading voices on establishing this association is Professor Linda Bilmes, former Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In her words, the conflicts in

Iraq and Afghanistan are “the most expensive wars in U.S. history” and will ultimately cost trillions of dollars.<sup>29</sup> This thesis makes heavy use of Professor Bilmes’ claims given not only her impressive professional and expert credentials, but also because other commentary seems to support her analysis.

To evidence her claims, Professor Bilmes cites not only the amount spent thus far on the wars (about \$2 trillion, or 20 percent of the total national debt accrued between 2001 and 2012), but also the cost of political-economic agreements, health care for veterans and repairing the damaged American military, to name but a few looming financial obligations.<sup>30</sup> To be sure, Professor Bilmes does not seem to be an avid supporter of the wars; her assessment is that the legacy of these wars will be “no peace dividend, and . . . costs that persist for decades.”<sup>31</sup>

Presenting a divergent view from Bilmes, Lee Teslik of the Council of Foreign Relations highlights that when considered relative to previous wars, the percentage of U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) currently spent on defense pales in comparison to previous periods of conflict. The difference between these percentages during World War Two and today, for instance, exceeds 30 percent and provides a strong antidote to argue against arguments that the GWOT contributed to revolutionary economic change. So, although Professor Bilmes provides a lackluster assessment of the wars and their costs,

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<sup>29</sup>Doug Gavel, “Linda Bilmes on U.S. Engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan: ‘The most Expensive Wars in US history,’” Harvard Kennedy School, March 28, 2013, <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/news-events/news/articles/bilmes-iraq-afghan-war-cost-wp> (accessed September 2, 2013).

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

the debate does not rest with her and most likely, the final verdict on this issue remains in the future.

Finally, various congressional reports and articles from publications such as the *Financial Times* provide additional commentary on the economic costs of the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror and the implications of these costs. Some of the reports, such as those prepared by Amy Belasco for the Congressional Research Service provide a relative straightforward account of funds dedicated to the various operations and hence help establish a factual understanding of bottom line expenditures. Yet other authors, such as Merrill Goozner of the *Financial Times* seem to corroborate Bilmes' assessment that imprudent financial practices such as effectively paying for the wars on credit will have lasting consequences. The many perspectives presented by these authors help illustrate the complexity of the budgetary measures required to support and pay for the Global War on Terror. Importantly, they suggest that understanding the true economic impact of these operations transcends reporting the dollar amount spent and must also include consideration of future costs and how political decisions translate into economic realities. In a very true sense, one cannot realize a holistic economic assessment by focusing solely on economics.

#### Miscellaneous

In order to provide as thorough an investigation as possible with respect to the financial features of a possible Military Revolution, this thesis included a modicum of analysis on the lowering of the U.S. sovereign credit rating. In 2011, Standard and Poors

lowered the United States' rating from "AAA" to "AA+."<sup>32</sup> The reports fails to cite the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan as a source for this diminished rating and instead favors the political impasse in Washington over the debt ceiling and a lack of prudent fiscal restraint as indicative of a long term concern for confidence in the U.S. economy. While this document does not establish a direct link between the GWOT and the current economic struggles, it could provide indirect support for Bilmes' claim that spending in general has led to the overall challenge currently affecting the U.S. coffers. Further, when considering these wildly expensive wars alongside the Bush-era tax cuts, one sees a cascading effect of dwindling economic resources that collectively contribute to an ever-increasing deficit.

#### Social Considerations

The subjective nature of how the terror attacks and resulting response affected the civilian population (society) requires a higher level of qualitative self-reporting than quantitative data. Of course, various researchers aim to quantify the results of their surveys and polls, but given the intimate and personal nature of human emotions and researchers' limitations to fully experience these internal manifestations, much of the available literature remains decidedly subjective.

In an attempt to gauge potential social impacts caused by these events, therefore, the author considered various polls and studies conducted by *Gallup* as well as by various medical professionals. A poll conducted in the days after the terror attacks, for instance,

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<sup>32</sup>Standard and Poors, "United States of America Long-Term Rating Lowered To 'AA+' Due To Political Risks, Rising Debt Burden; Outlook Negative," August 5, 2011, <http://www.standardandpoors.com/ratings/articles/en/us/?assetID=1245316529563> (accessed September 2, 2013).

showed a dramatic increase in the U.S. public's awareness of the threat posed by international terrorism. Indeed, almost half of those adults surveyed considered terrorism among the most serious threats confronting the country, whereas less than 1 percent considered it a threat prior.<sup>33</sup> Other polls and surveys surrounding individuals' emotional and psychological health seem to corroborate these findings. Not surprisingly, a large majority of U.S. adults surveyed feared both future terrorist attacks and suffered Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of the horror displayed on 9/11. While these studies in and of themselves provide little evidence to confirm (or deny) a causal link between support for the War on Terror and an emerging societal "cry for vengeance," it does lend credibility to the notion that the attacks profoundly affected a significant portion of U.S. citizens not directly affected by the attacks (meaning no loss of loved ones or property).

Along with showcasing the negative effects experienced by individuals as a result of the attacks, literature also exists to suggest that many citizens translated their horror into resolve and rallied to the proverbial cause. One such Pentagon report conducted a decade after the attacks presented recruiters' reflections on enlistment in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. Citing increased numbers of young men and women willing to enlist the report suggests a resurgence of patriotism and sense of duty that affected many people following the attacks.

Relatedly, a separate 2010 Gallup Poll indicates a generally positive view of the military profession, proposing that the U.S. public trusts today's military officers second

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<sup>33</sup>Frank Newport, "Nine Years after 9/11, Fewer Than 1% See Terrorism as Top U.S. Problem," *Gallup*, September 10, 2010, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142961/nine-years-few-terrorism-top-problem.aspx> (accessed February 11, 2014).

only to nurses.<sup>34</sup> When considering the emergent fears of terrorism, psychological effects, high recruitment and generally positive views of the military together, one begins to see the development of a society more inclined to support an armed reaction to the 9/11 attacks, and by extension, proactive and passive support for resultant military, political and economic measures. This presents, of course, only one possibility.

The opposing possibility is that all of the previously stated literature and evidence doesn't support the GWOT as a Military Revolution, but rather an unfortunate example of American adventurism. Taking this dissenting view, Chris Davis describes in the *Small Wars Journal* the primary societal impact of the GWOT as a diversion of important resources from more critical areas such as infrastructure and education. In his article, Mr. Davis provides a contrary perspective to the generally "positive" societal impacts reported by the aforementioned authors.

Predictably, opponents of the OCO/GWOT take issue with not only the monetary costs of the operations, but also with the negative societal costs that result. Taken from their website, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), for instance, portrays the Patriot Act as an affront to the fundamental right to privacy expected for U.S. Citizens. The organization's generally disapproving view of the law cites Constitutional and procedural violations as a situation where the means do not justify the ends.

Supporting the assertion that the government has overstepped its limits concerning privacy, various news sources provided wide coverage of the documents

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<sup>34</sup>Jeffrey M. Jones, "Nurses Top Honesty and Ethics List for 11th Year: Lobbyists, Car Salespeople, Members of Congress Get the Lowest Ratings," *Gallup Economy*, December 3, 2010, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/145043/nurses-top-honesty-ethics-list-11-year.aspx> (accessed November 17, 2013).

illegally released by former security contractor Edward Snowden. Specifically cited in the various literatures is not only a report on the tens of thousands of documents Snowden released, but also allegations that the National Security Administration (NSA) indiscriminately collects and stores phone data. In broad terms, this literature presents a generally negative societal impact arising from the War on Terror that stands in stark contrast to the mostly positive impressions that the United States populace has of its military leaders. For the purposes of this thesis, the varied, and in fact contradictory, viewpoints on these critical issues facilitate an objective confirmation that in this largely subjective area of analysis, the evidence suggests a complex reality that reflects personal interests as much as organizational agendas.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The comparative importance of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs for politicians, military leaders, analysts and historians belies an interesting paradox concerning these topics: no universally-agreed upon definitions for either exist. Perhaps surprisingly, these terms are neither doctrinal nor unambiguous. For some theorists, Military Revolutions precede Revolutions in Military Affairs while others propose the opposite. A smaller group contends that very little correlation exists between the two and the concepts' harshest critics refuse to acknowledge their existence at all. For the individual seeking a definitive understanding of these terms, therefore, the results of that search might prove disappointing. For the researcher or scholar looking for an opportunity to consider the available literature and make his or her own determination about what, if anything, constitutes a Military Revolution or Revolution in Military Affairs, exciting opportunities quickly present themselves for deeper analysis and synthesis. This thesis aims to take advantage of these opportunities.

The absence of authoritative definitions requires one to first consider various authors' theories, discover common themes, and synthesize these ideas into a comprehensive definition that captures both the magnitude and the theoretical underpinnings of a Military Revolution and Revolution in Military Affairs. This work therefore begins with a thorough consideration of several authors' writings and seeks to identify commonalities and differences between the various perspectives of these base terms. Once complete, this analysis and corresponding definitions will facilitate discussion of the U.S.'s response to September 11, 2001 terror attacks as a possible

Military Revolution. Defining this term constitutes the first portion of this study and enables subsequent analysis of the GWOT as a MR.

Given the general trend of considering both MRs and RMAs together suggests that while defining a Military Revolution is a critical requirement of this study, it would be incomplete without a corresponding analysis and discussion of a Revolution in Military Affairs. The latter, while distinct from a Military Revolution, is nonetheless related and present in virtually all of the available literature. Once again, the basis for this analysis will be the consideration of the available literature. The purpose of analyzing and defining RMAs will be twofold: it will provide an additional tool to investigate the OCO/GWOT's potential labeling as a Military Revolution and it will also provide a more holistic discussion of this topic in general. Perhaps a third benefit, discussed briefly in the thesis' conclusion is that it provides a starting point for those seeking to conduct further research into any possible RMAs resulting from the War on Terror.

With the relevant definitions established, analysis can then focus on determining why the U.S. response to the September 11 terror attacks was or was not, in fact, a Military Revolution. Whereas virtually all available sources portray a Military Revolution as a significant factor in fundamentally changing warfare, it implies a broader set of influences. At this point, the author will utilize two methods to develop the thesis herein presented. The first is to determine what might distinguish the Global War on Terror from other responses to terrorist attacks. The idea that America's response to 9/11 was exceptional enough to warrant classification as a Military Revolution needs strong evidence to support such a claim. To provide this justification, the thesis will include basic information on several previous terrorist attacks that share some similarities with

those that occurred against New York and Washington and determine if the post-9/11 U.S. response signaled any fundamentally different actions. Specifically, this thesis will consider the first attack on New York's World Trade Center (same target), the Oklahoma City Bombing (indiscriminate targeting of an American building) and the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa (same perpetrators also operating out of Afghanistan). These short vignettes will seek to expose any evolutionary (or revolutionary) changes to how the United States responds to terrorist attacks against its interests at home and abroad. Through this approach, this juxtaposition will provide a basis for historical comparison that could assist qualitative assessment not only on the use of military force, but also on any related political, economic or social consequences of the determined course of action.

Considering that a Military Revolution denotes not only military changes, but also political, economic and social ones, and then requires discussion on how the GWOT affected or failed to affect each of these areas. Hence, the thesis will next seek to analyze the War on Terror in the context of each individual area of focus. To assist in this matter, the framework provided to students at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College will assist in organizing and guiding these considerations in a coherent and methodical way. At each point, relevant, open-source media and government documents will provide the material to substantiate or dispel the effect on each area as a result of the attacks.

Political considerations comprise the first area of analysis. Since the September 11 attacks, America has undergone profound political restructuring and refocusing, from the creation of an additional governmental cabinet department in the founding of the Department of Homeland Security, to the passage of various legislation, including the

far-reaching Patriot Act. Without question, this law has generated much domestic (and international) criticism, hence affecting how the U.S is perceived globally. In determining the relevance of the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror, this thesis will consider the attacks' influence on the creation of these political institutions and policies, among others.

Given the legal basis for most political actions, this segment will largely consider political speeches, commentary and public laws to indicate any substantive changes enacted by 9/11. Beginning with the words and actions of the United States President, this section will explore whether the evidence suggests a paradigm shift in how the United States views terrorism and what it now considers an appropriate response to these acts of violence. Considering that political decisions and laws almost always guide military and civilian actions, this section will contain significantly more factual (less speculative) information than the others. Laws authorizing the use of military force, for instance, clearly indicate a prescribed course of action, its rationale and its intended outcomes. Unlike a qualitative assessment of social factors, political responses typically present less ambiguity, at least in implementation if not in inspiration.

As with any major initiative intended to fundamentally alter an organization or a state, a discussion of funding and required resources nests closely with any major military or political action. Economically, the collapse of the World Trade Center's twin towers may present the most immediate costs of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. The destruction of these towers was, in fact, economically devastating. Computing the total cost is difficult; estimates for the immediate property and equipment loss, clean up and

insurance claims alone approach \$100 billion.<sup>35</sup> These costs do not factor in added security, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, or the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. To place the magnitude of these costs into context, that amount is virtually equal to the entire cost of the first Gulf War (adjusted for inflation to FY 2011).<sup>36</sup>

Economic considerations for the GWOT as a Military Revolution will not seek to imply that the wars' cost alone has devastated the U.S. economy, although much literature exists to at least include it as a major contributor to the recent recession and associated economic woes. Rather, analysis will initially focus on the costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other related costs (the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, the Transportation Administration, etc.) to illustrate the United States' degree of economic commitment to combating terrorism. Afterwards, discussion will address how economic policies also contributed to the concurrent financial struggles. Specifically, this work will acknowledge the reality that governmental revenue remains unfixed and so the Bush-era tax cuts in particular warrant mention for their potential effect on erasing pre-existing budget surpluses and contributing to the subsequent deficits. The theoretical concept of supply-side economics provides a possible explanation for some of the diminishing funds, but only for some. Most probably a combination of increased foreign and domestic wartime spending, incongruent economic

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<sup>35</sup>Lindsey Blakely, "Cost of 9/11 in Dollars," *CBS Money Watch*, September 8, 2011, [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505123\\_162-57292565/cost-of-911-in-dollars/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505123_162-57292565/cost-of-911-in-dollars/) (accessed October 25, 2013).

<sup>36</sup>Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf> (accessed October 25, 2013), 1.

policies and the reduction in tax revenue colluded to create the economic conditions that led to the global recession and its consequences.

Ultimately, any political or economic consequences of the War on Terror do not happen in isolation and the final area to receive consideration is that of the U.S. society, or its people. Socially, the United States' collective psyche responded to the terror attacks and while outside the scope of this author's expertise, shifting attitudes towards the attacks and public support for a strong response almost assuredly impacted the subsequent political decisions to leverage military strength against our enemies and their supporters. Indeed, not only did the American public suffer psychologically from these attacks, but many came to see the military as a noble profession committed to protecting them from subsequent acts of terrorism. In this sense, one might determine that these resulting attitudes might have contributed directly to providing a moral justification or at least tacit support for the waging of the GWOT.

A less positive social effect of the resulting anti-terrorism operations stems more from the government's choice of tactics during the war vice its reasoning for attacking terrorist cells and organizations. Domestic spying and the intelligence war to locate terrorists in our midst remain controversial and divisive. On the one hand, the government and its affiliates claim that these programs provide invaluable protection to American citizens with very little real impact on their privacies. Often referring to "metadata," vice content, the government claims that these practices show trends between potential terrorists and their communications. Of course those who oppose domestic spying see these collection efforts as government interference in citizens' lives and deem them unacceptable. Clearly, the terror attacks and the U.S. response have affected our

citizens' lives. Perhaps the question Americans need to answer is whether or not these government programs and possible loss of privacy is an acceptable price to pay for added physical security.

With research into the various categories listed above, this thesis will rely heavily on the literature review to deliver the evidence that will ultimately contribute to the proposal of a qualitative assessment on whether or not the United States' response to the September 11, 2001 terror attacks do, in fact, constitute a Military Revolution. When the evidence suggests that the attacks weren't a Military Revolution, this thesis will include those results as well. Throughout the investigation, the author considered various viewpoints, assessed their validity and reflected upon how they seem to answer the primary and supporting research questions. In the concluding chapter, this thesis will present both the supporting and the refuting evidence of why we should—or should not—consider labeling the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror a Military Revolution.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

The world changed when terrorists hijacked four U.S. airliners on September 11, 2001 and turned them into weapons of mass destruction. The incredible loss of life, scale of physical destruction and astronomical economic losses resulting from these attacks shocked the world and set in motion a series of events that would impact U.S. and global strategies for years to come. The magnitude of devastation eclipsed any previous terror attack against the United States and provided horrific testimony to the solemnity of the threat posed by international terrorists. Ironically, even the attacks' mastermind, Osama bin Laden, was surprised by the degree of devastation wrought against the World Trade Center towers.<sup>37</sup>

In the wake of these events, the United States acted diplomatically, politically and militarily to prevent further such assaults and to dismantle Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, responsible for the carnage in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. Eventually, the United States would launch the "Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror," initiating major military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and numerous smaller operations in Africa, the Philippines and elsewhere. Domestically, the U.S. government would significantly restructure itself to facilitate its counterterrorism operations and in spite of various criticisms, expand intelligence collection efforts such as wiretapping and the recording of telephone data. The economic

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<sup>37</sup>National Public Radio, Transcript of Bin Laden Videotape, trans. George Michael and Kassem Wahba, December 13, 2001, <http://www.npr.org/news/specials/response/investigation/011213.binladen.transcript.html> (accessed December 27, 2013).

and social costs of these reforms and efforts remain debatable, but solicit no dearth of dedicated commentary and research.

If there is any real-world application for the saying “business-as-usual,” the September 11 attacks redefined usual. From seemingly endless armed conflict to security checks at airports bordering on excessive, it would be quite difficult for a person living or visiting the United States in the first decade of the twenty-first century to not witness some legacy of the terror attacks. In many ways, these events have become a part of the national identity, a part of the culture that brought foreign words such as *al-Qaeda*, *jihad* and *Taliban* into our common vernacular and provided new meaning to words and terms such as 9-11 or Ground Zero. In a very real sense, the events of that Tuesday morning have permeated every element of the American experience: its military, politics, economy and society.

These many reactions, along with their far-reaching consequences, speak to the enormity of the events themselves. As then President George W. Bush stated in the weeks after the attacks, “Americans have known wars, but for the past 136 years they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war, but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks, but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.”<sup>38</sup> With these remarks, the President seemed to acknowledge the somber reality of a new threat posed by an old enemy. While the dangers posed by international and domestic terrorists predate the country’s founding,

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<sup>38</sup>Washington Post, September 20, 2001.

something fundamental changed on September 11, 2001 and compelled the United States to pursue a radically different course domestically and internationally.

Arguably, America's most visible response to these terror attacks were the military operations launched first against Afghanistan and then against Iraq. While the proximate justification for each war differed in the details, both reflect President Bush's belief that the "enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them."<sup>39</sup> In Afghanistan, the ruling Taliban's refusal to hand over Osama bin Laden precipitated the invasion of that country. In Iraq, suspicions that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and maintained possible links to terrorism paved that road to war. In each case, the prolonged American presence in both countries reflected the United States' determination to eradicate terrorists wherever they may hide. Interestingly, all U.S. military personnel deploying into Iraq and Afghanistan received the "Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal" for their service prior to the development of individual ribbons or service in each country. At least from the military perspective, each of these major operations fell under the guise of a global struggle against terrorism.

The highly visible and complex military response to the terror attacks provides the backdrop for the development of this thesis. For some authors and scholars, events of this magnitude might constitute a Military Revolution. The forthcoming section discusses this concept in greater detail and aims to refine the definition of a Military Revolution and provide a framework for subsequent analysis of the U.S. response to the terror attacks.

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

## Defining a Military Revolution

The concept of an event so profound as to change not only the nature of warfare, but also of the societies engaging in warfare is intriguing. Not surprisingly, various scholars commit their expertise towards defining the term, determining what events constitute Military Revolutions and provide commentary on how these revolutions spawn, or derive from, lesser revolutions known as Revolutions in Military Affairs. Several U.S. Army schools, including the United States Military Academy at West Point and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, incorporate the concepts of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs into their history courses. While the latter institution tends to present its material using the paradigm put forth by MacGregor Knox and Williamson Murray, these theorists hold no monopoly on how to define a Military Revolution. As such, in spite of the term's allure and appeal to students, analysts and military personnel, we lack a universally agreed upon definition.

Michael Roberts originated the idea of a Military Revolution in the 1950s when he proposed that Sweden's Gustavus Adolphus "had embarked on a military revolution that had swept away traditional approaches to military organizations and tactics throughout the West."<sup>40</sup> The ensuing analysis and discussion generated by this concept inspired a series of authors to provide their own designs of what constitutes a Military Revolution, or if such a thing exists at all. The nonexistence of consensus concerning a definition provides an exciting opportunity for researchers, historians and other interested parties who seek to analyze the evolution of warfare and assess its impact on the societies that wage it. Fortunately, the many authors who have contributed to this enticing concept

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<sup>40</sup>Knox and Murray, 2.

have contributed some very thought-provoking commentary from which one can glean some common characteristics of a Military Revolution.

In order to understand the significance and implications of a Military Revolution, one must also understand the closely-related concept of a Revolution in Military Affairs. While the subsequent section discusses RMAs in greater detail, one can generally consider Military Revolutions to be considerably more “all-encompassing” than the associated RMAs. Admittedly, this author agrees with the majority of scholars such as Murray, Knox, Rogers and the Tofflers who distinguish between the two. Hence, the first element in defining a Military Revolution is that A Military Revolution is an event that is so significant and so far-reaching that it encompasses more than military considerations. In fact, the true Military Revolution is often only incidentally military, or perhaps only a military application of a greater change. It differs from a Revolution in Military Affairs, which is decidedly military in nature.

This part of the definition is critical to understanding not only the significance, but also the complexity of a Military Revolution. As Sloan writes, “Technologies that underwrite a military revolution are often originally developed outside the military sector and then exploited for their military applications.”<sup>41</sup> In this sense, America’s military response in the Global War on Terror was just that—the military response—to a much larger series of actions taken to prevent and defeat terrorism. In spite of the highly visible nature of the ensuing military operations, the United States’ actions following the attacks were hardly limited to armed conflict. This realization contributes to a second key tenet of defining a Military Revolution: A true military revolution combines political,

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<sup>41</sup>Sloan, 25.

economic and societal changes that supplement, support or give cause to the military response.

In other words, the term “Military Revolution” is a bit of a misnomer. Although the implications of MRs display themselves most conspicuously in the execution of armed conflict, they rarely originate or exist with a military end state “in mind.” This concept becomes somewhat difficult to follow if one sees the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as America’s “response” to the terror attacks. Doing so would fail to acknowledge the political and social changes, or their economic consequences, that also occurred. To highlight this dichotomy, the long lines at today’s airports, domestic spying and the creation of “secret courts” to deal with suspected terrorists do not necessarily correlate to the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. Rather, each is a specific response with a specific intended outcome resulting from a common cause: the threat of international and domestic terrorism.

Moving forward, we can succinctly present the following definition for a Military Revolution: A Military Revolution is a significant event or development that combines far-reaching political, economic, social and military implications. The Military Revolution need not be military in nature, and in fact, may not be fully realized until applied to military operations potentially far removed from the revolution’s initial conception (or cause).

To this definition, one could add discussion of a Revolution in Military Affairs, but it is not necessary. Rather, the following section provides the same type of analysis and proposes a stand-alone definition for RMAs. Once complete, the correlation between the two should become more obvious and hence provide the reader with a more holistic

understanding of the MR-RMA relationship and a useful tool for analyzing the September 11 attacks and America's response.

### Defining a Revolution in Military Affairs

Unlike a Military Revolution, a Revolution in Military Affairs is much more inherently associated with the military realm, but once again is not constrained to that association. Perhaps due to its arguably easier applicability to military operations, the majority of literature focuses on RMAs, with only a cursory mention of the MRs. Furthermore, RMAs focus more heavily on technological developments and their associated applications. Once again, the available literature provides commonalities between the various theorists' conception of this term and from these ideas one can gain a more complete understanding of RMAs and their importance to the military professional.

The idea of a Revolution in Military Affairs originated in the 1970s with a Soviet staff officer's observation that a "military-technical revolution" was allowing the United States "to sharply increase (by at least an order of magnitude) the destructive potential of conventional weapons, bringing them closer, so to speak, to weapons of mass destruction in terms of effectiveness."<sup>42</sup> In this specific context, "Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, chief of the Soviet general staff from 1977 to 1984," referred to the Americans' recent development of "precision-guided munitions (PGM), cruise missiles, and stealth," to highlight the growing capability gap between the two forces.<sup>43</sup> Significant for the Soviets, Ogarkov and his staff realized that the development and employment of these weapons

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<sup>42</sup>Knox and Murray, 3.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

provided the U.S. with an advantage that not only undermined the Soviet military strategy of massive armor formations, but also presented them with a challenge that they did not expect to overcome.<sup>44</sup> For the Soviet Union, these technologies upset the perceived balance of power and offered the United States a clear advantage in Western Europe and elsewhere.

From the U.S. perspective, the advantages offered to friendly forces (with associated disadvantages posed to the adversary) reflected more than mere technological disparity and soon, the Pentagon coined the term Revolution in Military Affairs. Richard Hundley, writing for RAND defines an RMA as a “paradigm shift in the nature and conduct of military operations which either renders obsolete or irrelevant one or more core competencies of a dominant player, or creates one or more new competencies, in some new dimension of warfare, or both.”<sup>45</sup> Although vague, this definition supports the assertion that RMAs, unlike MRs, focus primarily on the military domain.

Once again, Elinor Sloan provides simple yet insightful commentary on the nature of RMAs by stating succinctly that “Definitions of a revolution in military affairs are wide and varied and perhaps as numerous as its analysts.”<sup>46</sup> Like the closely related Military Revolution, we lack a universal definition for Revolutions in Military Affairs. Generally speaking, however, many of the available definitions do remain largely true to the original Soviet concept that these revolutions center around, or at least rely heavily

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<sup>44</sup>Knox and Murray, 3.

<sup>45</sup>Richard O. Hundley, *Past Revolutions, Future Transformations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999), 9.

<sup>46</sup>Sloan, 1.

upon, technological innovations or developments. Perhaps more specifically, the advantage that it provides those who possess the technology is the true revolution.

However one elects to define an RMA (or if one opts to acknowledge its existence in the first place) its usefulness as a tool for analysis owes as much to the skill of the observer as to the individual who coins terms and neatly places various developments into one category or another. Most theorists supporting the existence of RMAs cite the use of the railroad during the American Civil War (1861-1865) as a Revolution in Military Affairs made possible by the larger and more influential, Military Revolution of the Industrial Revolution. In general, this proposition makes sense since “militarizing” the Industrial Revolution “made it possible to arm, clothe, feed, pay and move swiftly to battle the resulting masses.”<sup>47</sup> What often fails to gain wide acceptance as an RMA, however, is the introduction of Spencer repeating rifles, designed in the early 1860s and that the Union Army fielded to some of its cavalry outfits.<sup>48</sup> Using a tubular magazine that could hold between 6-13 rounds depending on the size of the magazine, the gun provided significantly more rapidly available firepower than did the rifled muskets and smoothbore weapons typically in use.<sup>49</sup> As Mark Grimsley points out, however, “such weapons (Spencer Repeaters and other repeating rifles) were revolutionary in their potential . . . But the Union army never distributed these weapons widely enough to

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<sup>47</sup>Knox and Murray, 6.

<sup>48</sup>Martin J. Dougherty, *Small Arms Visual Encyclopedia* (London: Amber Books, 2011), 66.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*

achieve an asymmetrical advantage.”<sup>50</sup> Once again, the link between technology and its ability to provide a significant advantage seems significant in defining an RMA.

In consideration of the available literature and historical underpinnings, one must clearly consider technology to be central to the idea of an RMA, but is it enough?

Another author contributing an essay to Knox and Murray’s book *The Dynamics of Military Revolution: 1300-2050* (2001) would take a dissenting view in answering this question. In fact, when writing about King Edward III’s string of impressive victories over numerically superior foes during the 1300s, Clifford Rogers states that “the stunning improvement in British military effectiveness from the 1330s to the 1350s was not technologically driven, though technological development was a significant contributing factor.”<sup>51</sup> Choosing to term Revolutions in Military Affairs as Military Revolutions, Rogers points out four components: technological change, systems development, operational innovation, and organizational adaptation.<sup>52</sup> Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, Rogers’ criteria looks quite similar to the U.S. military’s concept of “DOTMLPF,” or doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel and facilities. This American acronym, in contemporary usage, denotes the various considerations that must accompany significant military change such as fielding new equipment.

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<sup>50</sup>Knox and Murray, 76.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 18.

This discussion, while succinct, allows us to identify some key tenets of any definition suitable for a Revolution in Military Affairs. First, A Revolution in Military Affairs deals primarily, but not necessarily exclusively, with the military domain.

This acknowledgement is significant in helping to distinguish a Revolution in Military Affairs from a Military Revolution, in which military implications often result from, vice center around, the revolutionary event. Secondly, Although a Revolution in Military Affairs focuses primarily on technological innovation that provides a decided (asymmetric) advantage to one side over another, associated doctrinal, organizational, training and other considerations must necessarily accompany it.

In assessing the employment of new technology and gaining from it the decisive advantage over the enemy, one must understand not only how to employ the new technology, but also how to integrate it into existing doctrine or produce it with existing resources. Repeating rifles, for instance, although available in concept, are not decisive if not deployed in sufficient quantities to overwhelm the opponent. Often, available resources (including financial resources) determine the availability of new technology. In a proverbial sense, the availability and employment of a given technology differentiates between the *potential* and *kinetic* energy of the innovation's ability to introduce revolutionary change.

With this consideration in mind, a possible definition of a Revolution in Military Affairs may be presented as such: A Revolution in Military Affairs is a significant development often, but not exclusively, technological that provides a decided advantage to one side over another. Unlike a Military Revolution, a Revolution in Military Affairs deals primarily, but not necessarily exclusively, with the military domain. In order to

harness the potential advantages of a Revolution in Military affairs, it is equally important to provide for the associated doctrinal, organizational, training and other considerations required to employ the new technology, strategy or method of employment.

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College’s MR/RMA Framework

In each of the classrooms dedicated to the Command and General Staff Officers Course (CGSOC) at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) campus at Fort Benning, Georgia, one finds a poster providing a framework for considering Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs. These posters, used in conjunction with the basic history course (H100: Rise of the Western Way of War) provide students with a quick visual reference to assist in analyzing historical events as potential MRs/RMAs. This diagram is provided below as figure 1.

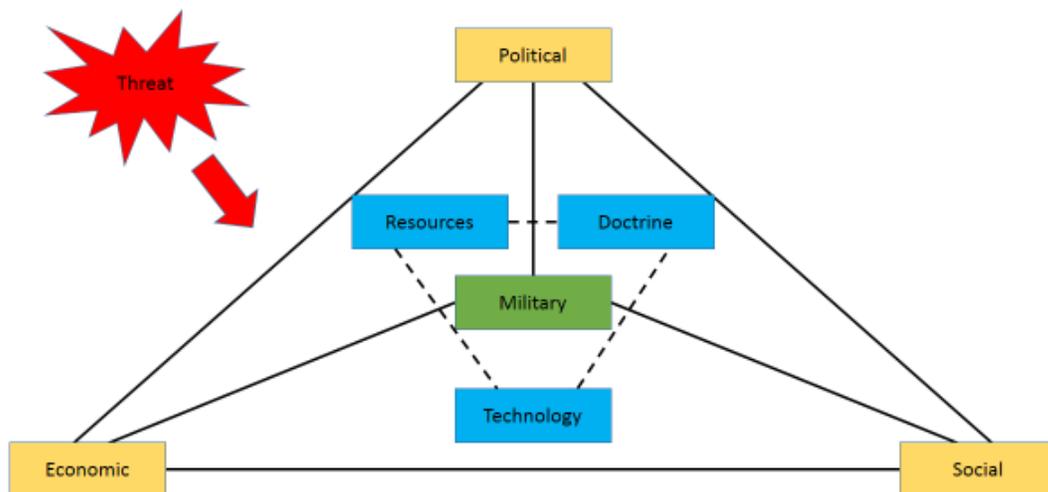


Figure 1. Military Revolutions And Revolutions In Military Affairs

Figure 1 graphically portrays the interrelatedness of MRs and RMAs, along with their associated components. Indicated in yellow and forming the corners of the triangle, are those elements affected by a Military Revolution. The blue squares indicate the various considerations of a Revolution in Military Affairs. Finally, the center box, changed to green by this author, denotes the military element. Understanding this chart allows one to see the relationships that exist between these elements and how one necessarily affects the other.

Beginning with the yellow boxes at the corners of the triangle, one sees the conceptually “larger” themes such as politics, economics and society. While not explicitly stated in classroom discussion, these boxes seem to depict the all-encompassing nature of the State. In other words, these components speak to the State at large—its government, its economy and its society (people). Considering this diagram from that perspective aligns nicely with the concept of a Military Revolution as affecting not only a military aspect of an event, but rather the very nature of the world in which we live.

Correspondingly, the blue boxes fall inside the triangle and hint at having little to no impact on fundamentally affecting the aforementioned “pillars” of the State. Unlike those elements comprising MRs, those depicting RMAs don’t create a new world, irrespective of the degree of change they bring to the battlefield. Furthermore, these elements support the idea that an RMA is not solely military in nature, but rather that it requires resultant change in several factors in order to be effective. Although limited, and not including the quantity of considerations as does the military acronym DOTMLPF, this diagram provides a useful tool through which to analyze potential RMAs and their relatedness to the “bigger” picture.

At the center of this triangle, the green box denotes the military domain. Originally presented by the CGSOC as a yellow box, associating the military realm exclusively with a Military Revolution could mislead some from seeing that in the context of military history or general military analysis, both RMAs and MRs directly affect the application of military force. In other words, the military box at the center of this diagram is as much affected by the components of the Military Revolution as it is by that of the Revolution in Military Affairs. Certainly viewing the military aspect as distinct from both MRs and RMAs makes this tool useful for a wider array of analysis.

The final element presented in this figure, and the one that provides the link between the chart and analysis of this thesis, is how an external threat—perceived or validated—places a type of “stressor” onto the system, forcing some sort of adaptation. In this work, terrorism in general represents the threat, and specifically, the September 11 terror attacks initiate the change into the system that gives rise to this discussion. By considering the interrelatedness of the various factors presented in the depiction above, one begins to see the potential for how such a threat can dictate comprehensive changes in order to overcome the challenge. Threats may also emerge from inside the State, but in this instance, the concept of an external threat fits nicely as a tool for analyzing the attacks on New York and Washington, and hence, will serve as the paradigm for analyzing their potential in initiating a Military Revolution.

### America’s Military Response to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks

#### Afghanistan

One day after the Empire of Japan’s December 7, 1941 sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States Congress declared war, beginning America’s direct

involvement in the Second World War. In that vicious attack against American military forces stationed on Oahu, the Japanese sank or damaged 21 ships, destroyed more than 300 aircraft, killed 2,403 people and wounded 1,178.<sup>53</sup> In spite of Japan's demonstrated aggression against various islands and possessions in the Pacific Rim in the months and years preceding this attack, the United States considered the attack a "surprise" and would go on to spend the majority of the next four years fighting the Japanese military throughout the Pacific. The U.S. declaration of war on the Japanese following the attacks was only the fifth time the country had done so, the other four being during the War of 1812 (1812-1815), the Mexican War (1846-1848), the Spanish-American War (1898) and World War One (1914-1918, American involvement between 1917-1918).<sup>54</sup>

To clarify, the United States Congress did not formally declare war in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, but it did act to authorize the use of military force. On September 18, 2001, the United States Senate passed Senate Joint Resolution 23, 98-0.<sup>55</sup> On the same day, the House of Representatives passed H.J. Res. 64 by a vote of 420-1.<sup>56</sup> With President Bush's signature on September 18, 2001, these pieces of legislature established the legal basis for America's war on terror, to wit:

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<sup>53</sup>U.S. Navy Museum, *Fact Sheet: Pearl Harbor*, <http://www.history.navy.mil/branches/teach/pearl/aftermath/facts.htm>. (accessed December 28, 2013).

<sup>54</sup>Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, January 2013), <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL31133.pdf> (accessed January 3, 2014), 1.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*

to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he (the President) determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons.<sup>57</sup>

As evidenced by the wording of the law presented above, the authorization for the use of force in the wake of the terror attacks provided the President with considerable leeway and discretion on how to leverage America's vast resources against the attacks' perpetrators and supporters. As legislative attorney Jennifer Elsea and foreign policy legislation analyst Matthew Weed comment in their research paper, "This authorization of military action against organizations and persons is unprecedented in American history, with the scope of its reach yet to be determined."<sup>58</sup> According to the authors, the "unprecedented" aspect of this resolution is that it allowed for the targeting of organizations (terrorist cells such as *al-Qaeda*) and persons (such as key terrorist leaders, including Osama bin Laden), along with national governments. The authors provide a critical insight into the President's (and perhaps the country's) mindset in the wake of these attacks.

According to a Gallup Poll taken between October 19-21, 2001, 80 percent of respondents supported a ground war in Afghanistan.<sup>59</sup> Of that population, fully 60 percent identified themselves as "willing supporters" or "hawks."<sup>60</sup> An additional 22

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>59</sup>David W. Moore, "Eight of Ten Americans Support Ground War in Afghanistan," *Gallup*, November 1, 2001, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/5029/eight-americans-support-ground-war-afghanistan.aspx> (accessed January 4, 2014).

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

percent referred to themselves as “reluctant warriors.”<sup>61</sup> Although the war in Afghanistan would become arguably the “most unpopular war in U.S. history” with only 17 percent of Americans supporting continued military action at the beginning of 2014, the war fever affecting the nation in the wake of the attacks seemed to provide the moral and popular support for the initiation of military operations.<sup>62</sup> Overwhelmingly, the United States population, like the President, sought a prodigious response in the aftermath of these terror attacks, and as such, America launched military action against Afghanistan on October 7, 2001.

### Iraq

While special operations forces and some conventional units pursued *al-Qaeda* and *Taliban* militants in Afghanistan, the Bush Administration quickly began preparing its appeal for military action against Iraq. The administration’s strongest case against the country was Iraq’s failure to comply with various United Nations Security Council resolutions designed to eliminate its production, storage and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In mid-September 2002, President Bush presented his position to the United Nations General Assembly, cited various Iraqi failures to fulfill its obligations under various U.N. Security Council resolutions and threatened American involvement to enforce these resolutions if Iraq did not comply and permit weapons inspections. With a

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>CNN Political Unit, “CNN Poll: Afghanistan War Arguably Most Unpopular in U.S. History,” December 30, 2013, <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2013/12/30/cnn-poll-afghanistan-war-most-unpopular-in-u-s-history/> (accessed January 4, 2013).

seemingly quick victory against terrorist and government forces in Afghanistan within reach, the Bush Administration began turning its attention towards Baghdad.

After some Congressional debate in late September and early October 2002, the House of Representatives passed H.J. Res 114, 296-133 on October 10.<sup>63</sup> The Senate passed the same resolution the next day with a 77-23 vote.<sup>64</sup> As a result, on October 16, 2002, “President Bush signed the Authorization for Use of Military Force against Iraq Resolution of 2002 into law.”<sup>65</sup> America had now established the legal groundwork for a dual-theater Global War on Terror.

The text of P.L. 107-243 does not cite terrorism as a motive for initiating military action against Iraq. Rather, the Congress authorized President Bush to launch military strikes against Iraq “as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to - (1) defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and (2) enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.”<sup>66</sup> In spite of the conspicuous absence of any reference to terrorism in the legislation authorizing military action, there is little doubt that the 2003 invasion was conceived by the Bush Administration as a major component of America’s expanding war on terror. Indeed, during a speech delivered to the National Endowment for Democracy in 2005, President Bush called Iraq the ““central front in our war on

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<sup>63</sup>Elsea and Weed.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

terror.”<sup>67</sup> This view of the Iraq war asserted by the Bush Administration as central to the larger war on terror remains consistent with comments made by then Vice President Dick Cheney some two years prior. Referring to the decision to invade Iraq, Cheney stated that “Some claim we should not have acted because the threat from [deposed Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein was not imminent. Terrorist enemies of our country hope to strike us with the most lethal weapons known to man, and it would be reckless in the extreme to rule out action and save our worries until the day they strike.”<sup>68</sup>

Administration officials provided many reasons justifying military action against Iraq: the threats posed by Saddam’s WMD programs, his sponsorship of terrorists and even the enigmatic “yellow cake” allegedly sought in order to pursue nuclear weapons. Evidence surrounding these various claims proved inconclusive at best and in most cases proved the allegations to be false. Interestingly, this made little matter in the Bush Administration’s decision to continue to expand military operations inside Iraq. Even as public support for the Iraq War steadily eroded from an initial high of over 80 percent of respondents in 2003 to just over 40 percent by 2013, the United States remained embroiled in Iraq for over eight years.<sup>69</sup> This willingness to remain so steadfastly committed to an increasingly unpopular war is not unprecedented in American history;

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<sup>67</sup>Donna Miles, “Bush Calls Iraq Central Front in Terror War, Vows Victory,” *American Forces Press Service*, October 6, 2005, <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=18145> (accessed January 4, 2014).

<sup>68</sup>CNN, “Powell: Iraq Action was ‘Fully Justified,’” October 11, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/10/10/cheney.terror/> (accessed January 4, 2014).

<sup>69</sup>Andrew Dugan, “On 10th Anniversary, 53% See U.S. War in Iraq as a Mistake,” *Gallup*, March 18, 2013, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/161399/10th-anniversary-iraq-war-mistake.aspx> (accessed January 4, 2014).

the large protests against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s reflected society's opposition to that conflict. Rather, the willingness to "stay the course" on what many characterize as a losing strategy hints at a galvanized resolve to attack terrorism at that time embedded in the U.S. psyche, as well as lingering suspicions among many that the Hussein regime maintained a sponsor of international terrorism.

### Shift in American Views of Terrorism in the Wake of 9/11 Attacks

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon and the September 11 attacks were not the first launched against U.S. targets. One needn't scour the annals for obscure mentions of hijackings, bombings and attacks against innocent civilians to uncover that dubious distinction. While providing a historic chronology of each and every terrorist attack to occur inside the United States or against its overseas interests since the country's founding would detract from the design of this work, a few historical examples may provide the reader a better understanding of the uniqueness in the United States' collective response to the 9/11 attacks. Chosen for their similarity to the 9/11 attacks' targets, intention or perpetrators, the following vignettes seek to provide a historical benchmark for further analysis.

#### World Trade Center, New York City, 1993

Although few, if any, Americans expected to see hijacked aircraft targeting some of the nation's most famous landmarks on September 11, New York City had experienced terrorism before. In fact, Islamic terrorists first targeted the World Trade Center in February 1993. Even though the first attack failed to achieve the terrorists'

desired degree of destruction, they did kill six innocent people and injured over 1,000.<sup>70</sup> Economically, insurance payments resulting from the attack exceeded \$500 million.<sup>71</sup>

According to the FBI's website, the investigation following the attacks ultimately involved some 700 agents from around the world and eventually led to the capture and arrest of six terrorists and the identification of a seventh who remains at large.<sup>72</sup>

Incredibly, the bureau's investigation led to more than the arrests of the aforementioned perpetrators: it provided a terrifying foreshadowing of the terrorists' plans to wreak havoc against American and international targets.

According to the same article on the FBI's website, the investigation revealed the terrorists' plans to attack various targets around New York including the Lincoln and Holland tunnels and the plaza outside the FBI's New York City office.<sup>73</sup> Shortly after discovering the plan for the coordinated attacks, the FBI arrested several terrorists, seizing their bomb-making materials and eventually helped convict several of these men for their terrorist activities. Incredibly, the terrorists did not limit their ambitions to simply attacking the United States, and as investigators continued to follow leads and map the terrorists' plots, the reality of a truly global threat nefariously emerged.

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<sup>70</sup>CNN Library, "1993 World Trade Center Bombing Fast Facts," November 5, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/05/us/1993-world-trade-center-bombing-fast-facts/> (accessed January 8, 2014).

<sup>71</sup>Reuters, "WTC Attack to Cost Insurers Billions," *Fox News*, September 11, 2001, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2001/09/11/wtc-attack-to-cost-insurers-billions/> (accessed January 8, 2014).

<sup>72</sup>Federal Bureau of Investigation, "First Strike: Global Terror in America," February 26, 2008, [http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2008/february/tradebom\\_022608](http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2008/february/tradebom_022608) (accessed January 8, 2014).

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*

In early 1995, Filipino authorities responded to an apartment fire in Manila and discovered evidence related to “Project Bojinka,” an apparent plot by Kuwaiti-born Pakistani citizen, and alleged mastermind of the 1993 WTC attack, Ramzi Yousef and others to destroy twelve commercial airliners over the Pacific. Fortunately, the evidence uncovered in that fire foiled the attack, but tragically not before a “test run” led to the death of a single individual on a Philippine Air Lines flight bound for Tokyo.<sup>74</sup> As a result of the investigations, prosecutors found Yousef, along with two co-conspirators, guilty on all counts and sentenced each to life in prison. Interestingly, the United States would later accuse Yousef’s uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, of masterminding the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. In other words, attacks against the World Trade Center, combined with the destruction of civilian commercial aircraft and attacks against famous landmarks, formed the nexus of the terrorists’ plot years before the towers crashed in lower Manhattan. In this respect, one can see the relatedness and perhaps even the evolution of the attacks over a period of time just under one decade.

#### Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing, Oklahoma City, 1995

When Timothy McVeigh bombed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on April 19, 1995 killing 168 people, many Americans assumed the bombing was the work of Islamic extremists. On their website, the FBI admits that “Coming on the heels of the World Trade Center bombing in New York two years earlier, the media and many Americans immediately assumed that the attack was

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<sup>74</sup>Brian Jenkins, “Plane Terror Suspects Convicted on All Counts,” *CNN*, September 5, 1996, <http://www.cnn.com/US/9609/05/terror.plot/> (accessed January 18, 2014).

the handiwork of Middle Eastern terrorists.”<sup>75</sup> In fact, the terrorist attack was not the work of Middle Eastern or any other foreign terrorist. Rather, Timothy McVeigh was a U.S. citizen and Army veteran of the First Gulf War, and the attack most likely reflected the perpetrator’s dissatisfaction with the government assault against the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, exactly two years prior, substantiating the danger posed by domestic right wing extremists. While McVeigh may not have fit the profile of the typical terrorist, the U.S. response did fit the pattern of America’s response to terrorism at that time.

According to the Bureau, “the investigation turned out to be one of the most exhaustive in FBI history.”<sup>76</sup> Shortly after the bombings, authorities apprehended Timothy McVeigh and his accomplice Terry Nichols. After returning a guilty verdict against McVeigh, the jury deliberated for two-and-a-half days before sentencing him to death (carried out in 2001).<sup>77</sup> Nichols, also found guilty, received a life sentence without the possibility of parole for conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction and involuntary manslaughter.<sup>78</sup> As described here, the investigation, pursuit, trial and ultimate sentencing of the men involved in these attacks follows a traditional law

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<sup>75</sup>Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Terror Hits Home,” <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/history/famous-cases/oklahoma-city-bombing> (accessed January 19, 2014).

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>CNN, “McVeigh Sentenced to Die for Oklahoma City Bombing,” June 13, 1997, <http://www.cnn.com/US/9706/13/mcveigh.sentencing/> (accessed January 19, 2014).

<sup>78</sup>Tom Kenworthy, “Nichols Gets Life Term for Oklahoma Bombing Role,” *Washington Post*, June 5, 1998, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/national/longterm/oklahoma/nichols.htm> (accessed January 19, 2014).

enforcement and Department of Justice paradigm. At the end of his life, McVeigh met the same fate as the notorious serial killer Ted Bundy.

#### U.S. Embassy Bombings, Tanzania and Kenya, 1998

Terrorists once again demonstrated their ability and willingness to conduct coordinated global attacks against U.S. targets or interests on August 7, 1998 when they detonated two massive bombs at United States embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya. In those attacks, 224 people lost their lives, including a dozen Americans.<sup>79</sup> Shortly after those bombings, then U.S. President Bill Clinton condemned the attacks and promises to “bring those responsible to justice ‘no matter what or how long it takes.’”<sup>80</sup> Former Secretary of State Madeline Albright echoed the President’s sentiments and vowed, “to ‘use all means at our disposal to track down and punish’ those responsible.”<sup>81</sup>

The U.S. responded swiftly to these attacks, launching missile strikes against bin Laden-affiliated terror camps in Afghanistan as well as a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan,

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<sup>79</sup>“Court Upholds 1998 Embassy Bombings Conviction of Ex-Guantánamo Inmate,” *The Guardian*, October 24, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/24/federal-court-embassy-bombings-conviction-guantanamo> (accessed January 19, 2014).

<sup>80</sup>James C. McKinley, Jr., “Two U.S. Embassies in East Africa Bombed,” *New York Times*, August 8, 1998, <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/world/africa/080898africa-bombing.html> (accessed January 19, 2014).

<sup>81</sup>Raphael F. Perl, *Terrorism: U.S. Response to Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania: A New Policy Direction?* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, September 1998), <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/crs19980901.pdf> (accessed January 19, 2014), 1.

the latter suspected of producing chemical weapons.<sup>82</sup> Although bin Laden and his associates escaped the missiles, international affairs specialist Raphael Perl's report for Congress cited these attacks as significant demonstrations of how the U.S. utilized military force to respond to terrorism. Insightfully, Perl states, "this is the first time the U.S. has given such primary and public prominence to the preemptive, not just retaliatory, nature and motive of a military strike against a terrorist organization or network."<sup>83</sup> Citing previous military strikes against both Libya and Iraq in the 1980s and early 1990s, respectively, Perl speaks to a potential shift in American views concerning terrorism from criminal acts to those requiring a military response.

Although no further escalation of military actions against Afghanistan followed the initial salvos of missiles launched against terrorist training camps, the concept of terrorism requiring more than a law enforcement response cannot go unnoticed. To further elaborate upon this evolutionary view, former Secretary of Defense William Cohen "characterized the (missile) response as 'the long term, fundamental way in which the United States intends to combat the forces of terror' and noted that 'we will not simply play passive defense.'"<sup>84</sup> Prophetically, Madeline Albright added that "We are involved in a long-term struggle. . . . This is unfortunately the war of the future."<sup>85</sup> Although the Clinton Administration's limited response to these bombings did not approach the magnitude of that launched after the September 11 attacks some three years

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<sup>82</sup>Perl, 1.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

later, it did foreshadow America's growing intolerance of international terrorism and its increased awareness of the complex and enduring nature of the existing and emerging threats.

### Analyzing the Global War on Terror as a Potential Military Revolution

The preceding historical vignettes clearly show that the United States had known terrorism prior to the events of September 11, 2001. It had also experienced foreign attacks on its soil, the most significant in 1941 when the Empire of Japan launched the surprise attack on U.S. military forces stationed in Hawaii. In comparison to these previous instances of aggression against U.S. foreign and domestic targets, then, how did the use of four hijacked airliners turned into manned projectiles elicit a response that fundamentally changed the nature of warfare? Perhaps of more immediate importance, did such a fundamental shift occur? Placing the U.S. response into a historical perspective, comparing and contrasting it with responses to previous attacks, and utilizing the definitions previously established assist in the analysis seeking to answer these fundamental questions.

Assuredly, the terror attacks on September 11 did not, in of themselves, constitute a Military Revolution or a Revolution in Military Affairs. While the use of commercial aircraft to execute terrorist attacks shocked the world and has no similar precedent, it did not indicate a radical evolution in the conduct of military (or terrorist) operations. In fact, terrorists had hijacked aircraft for decades and as seen over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, targeted them for destruction as well. Most likely, September 11 resulted as an evolutionary, or even a legacy, attack from the failed attempts in the 1990s to destroy the World Trade Center towers and simultaneously attack the commercial air industry.

Further, one's first instinct to identify the attacks as a potential Military Revolution almost always precedes deeper analysis of an MR's various elements (military, political, economic and social) and their interrelatedness. Even a cursory degree of analysis will likely lead one to conclude that the attacks themselves did not usher in fundamental changes in these areas, leaving only the U.S.-led response as a possible candidate for this labeling.

The most likely and logical Military Revolution perhaps related to the September 11 attacks, therefore, is what has become known as the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror. In the previous discussion concerning America's historic response to select terror attacks, one might argue those events affected primarily law enforcement, vice military, responses. The 9/11 response, however, included not only a law enforcement approach, but an overwhelmingly military one as well. In fact, comparing the pre-9/11 methods of combating terrorism with the post-9/11 methods suggests a radically different framework entirely. The recurring themes of attacking the World Trade Center towers, targeting civilian airliners, destroying buildings and utilizing Afghanistan as a base of operations are all common between one or more of the three vignettes and the primary attack currently under study. What then accounts for such a radically different reaction?

The Military Revolution emerging in the wake of the September 11 attacks reflects a degree of evolution first witnessed in the Clinton Administration's swift military response to the 1998 embassy bombings. In that instance, U.S. warships launched Tomahawk cruise missiles into Afghanistan, intent on destroying terrorist training camps. Similar attacks into Sudan aimed to destroy a suspected chemical

weapons manufacturing plant. In both instances, the operations aimed to disrupt Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, although they failed to achieve the intended results. Critical to this discussion is that no further missiles were launched after the initial volleys. In other words, the Administration limited the retaliatory actions in time and scope; they did not introduce additional application of military power to any appreciable levels.

The absence of highly visible military operations does not suggest that the Clinton Administration failed to act against al-Qaeda and bin Laden. In actuality, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other intelligence organizations did maintain a focus on bin Laden and his terrorist network, although with debatable success. According to a now unclassified report, "the DCI (Director of Central Intelligence) was actively and forcefully engaged in the counterterrorism efforts of the CIA. Beginning in 1999, he received regular updates, often daily, on efforts to track and disrupt UBL (Usama bin Laden) . . . In December 1998, the DCI signed a memorandum in which he declared: 'We are at war.'"<sup>86</sup> Unfortunately, the director's understanding of the ongoing threat posed by radical extremists failed to prevent the September 11 attacks. Accordingly, the report cited above clears CIA personnel of any criminal or ethical wrongdoing, but does cite procedural shortcomings in contributing to the failure to thwart these attacks.

While acknowledging that the evolutionary aspects presented above precipitated potentially revolutionary change, one should at the same time not fail to appreciate the distinct sets of circumstances that shaped America's relatively limited military response

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<sup>86</sup>CIA Office of Inspector General, "OIG Report on CIA Accountability with Respect to the 9/11 Attacks," June 2005, <http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/oig-911.pdf> (accessed April 27, 2014).

to the embassy bombings in particular. Various factors, including two distinct presidential administrations, the scope and visibility of damage, and the physical location of the targets all likely contributed to the respective presidents' determined responses. The link between the two events, aside from the obvious fact that both involved bin Laden's terrorist group operating out of Afghanistan, is the United States' awakening to the global terrorist threat and the realization that combating terrorism likely requires a strong military response along with the traditional law enforcement and diplomatic solutions. Therefore, between these two attacks, we see how evolutionary thinking concerning the use of military force originated several years prior to 9/11 and introduce the possibility that the evolutionary underpinnings of the OCO/GWOT deserve at least a modicum of credit for producing a full-blown revolution in September and October 2001, if such an event occurred.

To again quote Perl, "The proactive nature of the U.S. response, if official Administration statements are to be taken at face value, can readily be interpreted to signal a new direction in antiterrorism policy."<sup>87</sup> Written during Clinton's presidency, Perl's report provides insight into similar realizations during the subsequent administrations. In fact, Elsea and Wood, writing in 2013, reflect on the Bush Administration's Authorization for the Use of Military Force following the September 11 attacks and cite it as "unprecedented" by allowing "the President's authority as Commander-in-Chief to conduct antiterrorism operations anywhere in the world, including within the United States."<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup>Perl, 2.

<sup>88</sup>Elsea and Weed, 15.

Certainly, the President's words and deeds seemed congruent with the observations of the aforementioned authors. While addressing the nation on September 11, 2001, President Bush opened his remarks by stating "our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts."<sup>89</sup> He also referred to the attacks as "mass murder" and although he did state that "our military is powerful, and it's prepared" he added that "I've directed the full resources for our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice."<sup>90</sup> A final reference to a winning "the war against terrorism" provides insight into the President's evolving views of the attacks as both crime and war.<sup>91</sup> When addressing the United States Congress nine days later, however, he was less ambiguous about how he felt towards those responsible.

Bluntly, the President stated that "On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country."<sup>92</sup> He draws parallels between the terrorist networks and other tyrannical regimes stating, "they follow in the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism."<sup>93</sup> Answering his own rhetorical question of how to win the war on terror, the President continued with "We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the

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<sup>89</sup>CNN, September 11, 2001.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Washington Post, September 20, 2001.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network.”<sup>94</sup> In the same speech, the President spoke directly to the world’s nations: “Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.”<sup>95</sup> Unambiguously, the President had drawn a line in the sand and terrorism no longer belonged exclusively to the purview of the law enforcement community or resulted in limited and ineffective military strikes. The United States now considered terrorism as an act of war and would commit the entirety of its resources to wage that war.

Blurring or eradicating the distinction between crime and war with respect to terrorism did more than put hostile organizations and rogue governments at risk of U.S. military action: it made possible the lethal targeting (killing) of American citizens accused or suspected of engaging in these activities. According to a *New York Times* report from 2013, the United States used unmanned aerial drones to kill radical American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki and an associate (also a natural-born U.S. citizen) in Yemen on September 30, 2011.<sup>96</sup> According to the report, “For what was apparently the first time since the Civil War, the United States government had carried out the deliberate killing of an American citizen as a wartime enemy and without a trial.”<sup>97</sup> Al-Awlaki, a “rising star” in the al-Qaeda hierarchy, first gained recognition for his internet

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

<sup>96</sup>Mark Mazzetti, Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, “How a U.S. Citizen Came to Be in America’s Cross Hairs,” *New York Times*, March 9, 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/10/world/middleeast/anwar-al-awlaki-a-us-citizen-in-americas-cross-hairs.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/10/world/middleeast/anwar-al-awlaki-a-us-citizen-in-americas-cross-hairs.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0). (accessed April 3, 2014).

<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

rants and sermons of hatred. Investigated for years by various intelligence and law enforcement agencies, al-Awlaki apparently interacted with various terrorists including three of the September 11 hijackers and Fort Hood shooter Major Nidal Malik Hasan.<sup>98</sup> In a separate incident some weeks later, al-Awlaki's 16-year-old son was also killed by a U.S. drone strike, bringing to three the total of U.S. citizens killed in this fashion at that time.<sup>99</sup>

Given the inherent controversy of the U.S. government targeting and killing its citizens with little to no judicial review, a complicated legal debate seemed to justify the government's actions against al-Awlaki. In December 2010, Judge John Bates dismissed a lawsuit brought on by al-Awlaki's father intending to question the Constitutionality of having his son added to a CIA "kill list."<sup>100</sup> Additional commentary on this decision reflected the lack of consensus concerning the legality (or prudence) of placing U.S. citizens on this list, partly because those individuals included have no idea that they are on it and hence cannot challenge their inclusion prior to being killed by government operatives. Writing in support of the judge's decision, Assistant Professor in the Law Department at the United States Military Academy John Dehn states that "the Government asserts that any unconfirmed targeting of AQAP [Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula] is either within the scope of the post-September 11, 2001, Authorization for

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>Mazzetti, Savage, and Shane.

<sup>100</sup>John C. Dehn and Kevin Jon Heller, "Targeted Killing: The Case of Anwar al-Aulaqi," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, *PENNumbra* 159 (2010): 175, <http://www.pennlawreview.com/online/159-U-Pa-L-Rev-PENNumra-175.pdf> (accessed April 3, 2014).

the Use of Military Force (AUMF) or is supported by ‘other legal bases under U.S. and international law . . . including the inherent right to national self-defense.’”<sup>101</sup> While this legal opinion forms only one side of the issue (and the dissenting view does not necessarily refute the fact that the U.S. could have legally targeted al-Awlaki for killing), it does support the concept that the broadly-worded AUMF passed in the days succeeding the attacks allows the President considerable discretion in identifying individuals for military targeting, and also that such targeting has led to the death of U.S. citizens, along with untold numbers of foreign fighters.

Taken together, the Presidents’ words and subsequent actions provide critical support for the first key distinction of how the Global War on Terror might have ushered in revolutionary change:

The United States has committed to using all elements of national power— diplomatic, informational, military and economic— to target not only adversarial nations, but also individuals and organizations, implicated or suspected, of involving themselves in terrorist actions against the United States. The United States has also committed to using these resources against domestic, as well as international, terrorists.

In short, the United States has come to see terrorism as an act of war vice a solely criminal action and in so doing, has established as precedent the possibility of leveraging the complete resources of the United States towards defeating any existing or *perceived* threat.

The idea of the world’s premier democracy responding to terrorism as one would respond to an act of war profoundly changes the nature of warfare. In a similar manner to how the French Revolution “merged mass politics and warfare” in the late 18th and early

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<sup>101</sup>Dehn and Heller, 178.

19th centuries, or to how World War One "set the pattern for twentieth-century war," President Bush's response to the attacks equated defeating terrorism with safeguarding the very existence of the democratic way of life.<sup>102</sup> Interestingly, the wording of his speeches also provides insight into the paradigm shift that perhaps indicated the maturing of the previously discussed evolution into an actual revolution.

Treating terrorist attacks as an act of war connotes more than semantics; it effectively authorizes the country to mobilize all its resources and leverage them to target, kill or detain any individual or group involved with terrorism. Although legally and politically complex, authorizing the U.S. President and other national leaders to determine that the 9/11 terror attacks equaled war signaled a watershed event in the nature of U.S. military operations. Advocating that the very existence of freedom has come under attack by extremists helps explain the second element denoting the Global War on Terror as a Military Revolution: the concept of war in perpetuity.

Whereas words such as "Ground Zero" and "weapons of mass destruction" have entered the national (and perhaps international) lexicon due to their frequent use in the media, the term "era of persistent conflict" has enjoyed similar proliferation amongst the nation's military. Often cited in speeches by guest lecturers, the idea that future generations of military personnel will witness combat is neither unique nor radical. Rather, it remains a key motivator for challenging, realistic training and serves as a constant reminder that today's military must remain ready for the omnipresent inevitability of the "next fight." During his commencement address to West Point's graduating Class of 2013, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel offered to the class that

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<sup>102</sup>Knox and Murray, 6.

“The challenge you will face is how to build on the skills honed during the past decade of war while preparing for conflicts that are likely to take on a new and unfamiliar form.”<sup>103</sup> While the Secretary did not speak directly about the nature of enduring conflict, and in fact, he spoke about how “The Army you enter today is emerging—and in many ways recovering—from more than a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan,” he did seem to acknowledge the presence of an unknown, yet viable threat. The Secretary wisely reminded the graduating cadets that warfare does not cease when the wars end in Iraq and Afghanistan, but rather that they—the leaders of tomorrow’s army—must be ready to lead the army in a period of transformation “at a time when the world is undergoing historic transformation. A new world order is being constructed.”<sup>104</sup> In other words, the world remains volatile and unstable and the threats posed by state and non-state actors have not abated.

The Secretary’s subtle references to unforeseen threats and resultant necessity for trained and ready forces need not give rise to speculation about the possibility of future terror-related conflicts; other key political and military leaders describe the future in much less vague terms. Speaking less than two weeks prior to Secretary Hagel’s commencement remarks, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, Michael A. Sheehan stated that “the evolving war against Al Qaeda was likely to

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<sup>103</sup>Department of Defense, “United States Military Academy Commencement” (Delivered by Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, West Point, New York, May 25, 2013), <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1782> (accessed January 20, 2014).

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

continue ‘at least 10 to 20 years.’”<sup>105</sup> With the expected end of “combat operations” in Afghanistan set to occur at the end of 2014, United States officials seek Afghan President Hamid Karzai’s (or his successor’s) signature on the Bilateral Security Agreement, or BSA, that would allow American and coalition troops to remain in Afghanistan for training and counterterrorism purposes for many years after the completion of the official NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) mission. The BSA does not establish a definite number of troops to remain, but “The marine general currently leading the war, Joseph Dunford, is said to favor a residual force of between 10,000 and 13,000 troops, situated in nine bases around the country.”<sup>106</sup> Other sources propose a smaller force between 8,000 and 10,000 troops. While the ultimate number of troops remains unclear at this time, the possibility of a residual military force remaining in Afghanistan beyond 2014 seems not only possible, but a desired condition from the United States’ perspective.

Appearing to corroborate Sheehan’s statement, Micah Zenko, “Douglas Dillon fellow in the Center for Preventive Action (CPA) at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR),” offers a stark prediction that “it is unlikely that the United States will ever have a

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<sup>105</sup>Charles Savage, “Debating the Legal Basis for the War on Terror,” *New York Times*, May 16, 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/17/us/politics/pentagon-official-urges-congress-to-keep-statute-allowing-war-on-terror-intact.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/17/us/politics/pentagon-official-urges-congress-to-keep-statute-allowing-war-on-terror-intact.html?_r=0) (accessed January 3, 2014).

<sup>106</sup>Spencer Ackerman, “Pentagon Urges Afghanistan to Sign Agreement on US Military Presence,” *The Guardian*, December 30, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/30/pentagon-afghanistan-agreement-us-troops> (accessed January 20, 2014).

peacetime president again.”<sup>107</sup> While provocative in its pointedness, Mr. Dillon’s assertion that the United States will never again be a nation at peace due to a dangerous confluence of political and military factors also provides an interesting perspective on how deeply the four hijacked planes and resultant loss of life have affected the American consciousness. This assault on the collective conscious might also provide some explanation for America’s apparent willingness, and at times enthusiasm, to remain engaged in seemingly endless military struggles.

A commitment to a never-ending war on terror is not United States policy nor is it the likely intention of the current United States President, Barack Obama. In a recent speech delivered at the National Defense University at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., the President spoke at length about terrorism, the war in Afghanistan and the topics ranging from the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to current detainees. Additionally, he commented that “I look forward to engaging Congress and the American people in efforts to refine, and ultimately repeal, the AUMF’s (Authorization for Use of Military Force after 9/11) mandate. And I will not sign laws designed to expand this mandate further. Our systematic effort to dismantle terrorist organizations must continue. But this war, like all wars, must end. That’s what history advises. That’s what our democracy demands.”<sup>108</sup> In spite of the apparent contradiction between the President’s

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<sup>107</sup>Micah Zenko, “A Period of Persistent Conflict,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 6, 2012, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/11/06/a\\_period\\_of\\_persistent\\_conflict%20](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/11/06/a_period_of_persistent_conflict%20) (accesses November 16, 2013).

<sup>108</sup>Ezra Klein, “READ: President Obama’s Speech on the Future of the War on Terror,” *The Washington Post*, May 23, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/05/23/read-president-obamas-speech-on-the-future-of-the-war-on-terror/> (accessed January 20, 2014).

call to wind down the war in Afghanistan and other diplomatic efforts to obtain Afghan signatures on the BSA and hence extend our presence in Afghanistan for several years to come, the President is not insincere. Rather, this paradox reflects the complex nature of America's war on terror and once again reaffirms the concept that a Military Revolution need not confine itself to the direct application of military force.

Even if major military operations end in Afghanistan at the close of 2014, several thousand U.S. military personnel will likely remain to train Afghan soldiers and target terrorists. This involvement will cost the U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars, and tragically, will likely result in the loss of more American lives. Although this does not in and of itself signal a Military Revolution, and there is precedent with the United States maintaining a robust military presence in countries such as Germany, Japan and the Republic of Korea after combat operations conclude, each of the aforementioned nations have become stable democracies and world powers in their own right—industrially, economically, etc. While one cannot predict the future, it is unlikely that Afghanistan will ever attain the levels of industrial or economic status as the aforementioned states. Accordingly, any continuing military presence will undoubtedly focus disproportionate effort on combating terrorism and preparing the country's military and police forces to maintain internal order against various extremist forces

The second critical element of why America's Global War on Terror perhaps constitutes a Military Revolution, therefore, is that: America's "War" on terror will not end when American forces redeploy from Afghanistan and even if the military component plays a less significant role, other elements of national power, including

diplomacy, information and the economy, will continue to combat terrorism and influence domestic and international policy.

One considering the United States' war on terror needn't limit analysis to the combat operations occurring in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. In fact, doing so could serve to obfuscate the theory's central theme, namely that a Military Revolution considers effects on many elements of a state, including its government, economy and populace. In this case, postulating that the Military Revolution would conclude once coalition forces withdraw from Afghanistan belies the significance of this discussion.

As with all highly visible and controversial personalities or undertakings, the seeming support that the previous discussion provides to highlighting "game-changing" characteristics of the War on Terror exists alongside comparatively strong arguments that refute labeling the post-9/11 response as a Military Revolution. In fact, Edward Stettinius Professor of History at the University of Virginia Melvyn P. Leffler states in *Foreign Affairs*, "There was, and there remains, a natural tendency to say that the attacks changed everything. But a decade on, such conclusions seem unjustified. September 11 did alter the focus and foreign policy of the George W. Bush administration. But the administration's new approach, one that garnered so much praise and so much criticism, was less transformative than contemporaries thought."<sup>109</sup> While eloquently written and well-argued, one can summarize Leffler's argument by saying that the U.S. response to

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<sup>109</sup>Melvyn P. Leffler, "September 11 in Retrospect: George W. Bush's Grand Strategy, Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68201/melvyn-p-leffler/september-11-in-retrospect> (accessed March 5, 2014).

the attacks largely reflects standard policy and lacks the truly revolutionary aspect that this thesis investigates.

To provide a counterweight to the idea that preemptive war (or preventive military action) presents a novel development, Leffler provides historical examples in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, versus German U-boats prior to World War 2 and Kennedy's response to the Cuban Missile Crisis as evidence that using the military preemptively existed prior to the Bush Administration's use of the same decades later. While true, this argument fails to consider the truly profound aspect of Bush's "preventive" approach: these examples all consider nations or the armed forces of states. They do not, at least as presented here, reflect previous presidents' willingness to attack individuals or organizations. So, although this argument might apply to Bush's use of force versus Iraq, it falls short in providing a convincing historical precedent for the use of military force undertaken in the days after the attacks against terrorists and terrorist organizations generally.

Interestingly, Leffler also writes that "The administration announced that it was adopting a policy of anticipatory self-defense—essentially, preventive warfare. Bush declared that he would take action to preclude not only imminent threats but also gathering ones, and would act alone if necessary. This approach led eventually to war not only in Afghanistan but in Iraq as well."<sup>110</sup> Without falsely attributing meaning to the author's words, this recognition seems congruent with one potential revolutionary characteristic explored in this thesis, namely that the Congressional approval the President received to attack individuals, organizations and governments affiliated with

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<sup>110</sup>Leffler.

terrorism established a precedent for using the military element of national power to pursue criminals.

### Political Analysis

Since September 11th, our intelligence and law enforcement agencies have worked more closely than ever to track and disrupt the terrorists. The FBI is improving its ability to analyze intelligence, and transforming itself to meet new threats. And tonight, I am instructing the leaders of the FBI, Central Intelligence, Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense to develop a Terrorist Threat Integration Center, to merge and analyze all threat information in a single location. Our government must have the very best information possible, and we will use it to make sure the right people are in the right places to protect our citizens.<sup>111</sup>

America's strong military response to the September 11 terror attacks first needed equally powerful political and diplomatic efforts to provide the legal and moral justifications for the use of force. As discussed, the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force against those responsible for the attacks and their supporters established a new precedent in the President's ability to wage war against terrorist individuals and organizations. Whereas this political consideration received much attention in the previous discussion, the AUMF was not the only noteworthy illustration of how the GWOT ushered in sweeping political change.

President George W. Bush established the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) by executive order in October 2001. In that action, the President charged a simple mission for the office: "to develop and coordinate the implementation of a comprehensive

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<sup>111</sup>George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, January 28, 2003, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2003.html> (accessed January 29, 2014).

national strategy to secure the United States from terrorist threats or attacks.”<sup>112</sup> Along with the establishment of the OHS, the President also established the Homeland Security Council, comprised of the “President, the Vice President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, and such other officers of the executive branch as the President may from time to time designate.”<sup>113</sup> In a sense, the establishment of the OHS reflected the political reorganization and impetus perceived necessary to respond to an emerging terrorist threat against the United States.

The establishment of the OHS preceded the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security by approximately a year. On November 25, 2002, Public Law 107-296 established the Department with the mission to:

1. prevent terrorist attacks within the United States;
2. reduce the vulnerability of the United States to terrorism;
3. minimize the damage, and assist in the recovery, from terrorist attacks that do occur within the United States;
4. carry out all functions of entities transferred to the Department, including by acting as a focal point regarding natural and manmade crises and emergency planning;

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<sup>112</sup>George W. Bush, Executive Order Establishing the Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council, October 8, 2001, <http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/bills/bleohomeland.htm> (accessed February 1, 2014).

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

5. ensure that the functions of the agencies and subdivisions within the Department that are not related directly to securing the homeland are not diminished or neglected except by a specific explicit Act of Congress;
6. ensure that the overall economic security of the United States is not diminished by efforts, activities, and programs aimed at securing the homeland; and
7. monitor connections between illegal drug trafficking and terrorism, coordinate efforts to sever such connections, and otherwise contribute to efforts to interdict illegal drug trafficking.<sup>114</sup>

The establishment of the Office of Homeland Security, the Homeland Security Council and ultimately of the Department of Homeland Security is significant because it demonstrates a federal-level expansion of government with the intent of combating terrorism. More simply, the establishment of an additional cabinet-level position suggests a substantial response to the terrorist attacks; no governmental restructuring occurred following the previously mentioned attacks. In the abstract of their November 2001 report, Ivo Daadler, et al., of the Brookings Institute stated flatly that “President Bush’s June 6 proposal to create a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would constitute the largest reorganization of the federal government in fifty years.”<sup>115</sup> They continued that “The issue of homeland security is one of the most important challenges facing our nation, and the decisions we make today about the strategy and organization for

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<sup>114</sup>Public Law 107-296, *Homeland Security Act of 2002*, 107th Cong, November 25, 2002, [http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hr\\_5005\\_enr.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hr_5005_enr.pdf) (accessed February 1, 2014).

<sup>115</sup>Ivo H. Daadler et al., *Assessing the Department of Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, July 2002), <http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/homeland/assessdhs.pdf> (accessed February 1, 2014).

addressing these new threats will have profound consequences for our national security, our economy and our way of life.”<sup>116</sup> This report, prepared prior to the establishment of the DHS, reflected the popular belief that the terror attacks mandated a governmental (political) response. Indeed, approximately one year after the report’s publication, Public Law 107-296 formally established the government’s newest department.

Founded in 2002, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) “has a vital mission: to secure the nation from the many threats we face. This requires the dedication of more than 240,000 employees in jobs that range from aviation and border security to emergency response, from cybersecurity analyst to chemical facility inspector. Our duties are wide-ranging, but our goal is clear - keeping America safe.”<sup>117</sup> This mission statement, found on the Department’s website provides a glimpse into how DHS understands its role in protecting Americans—virtually in all areas ranging from our transportation systems, to the borders and key infrastructure. As the Brookings report’s authors stated, the threat posed by terrorists affected American’s way of life and to counter their efforts, the government needed to commit itself fully to protecting its citizens from these emerging dangers.

Arguably, the creation of the DHS reflects one of the United States’ most enduring political responses to the attacks. The significance of this department is that it acknowledges a persistent threat of terrorist attacks against the United States and its interests, both at home and abroad, and permanently commits the government’s resources

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<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Department of Homeland Security, “About DHS,” <http://www.dhs.gov/about-dhs> (accessed January 29, 2014).

to combat that threat. While further research could provide considerably more depth and detail on the eventual ramifications of this perpetual government focus on combating terrorism, that the severity of the 2001 attacks so profoundly refocused the government on future assaults speaks to the enormity of the perceived threat and the resultant need for a “whole-of-government” response to counter these dangers. Simply put, at the highest levels of the United States Government, key leaders—including the President—determined that the country needed to restructure its political infrastructure to execute its Global War on Terror.

While the creation of the DHS in 2002 signified an incredible evolution of the government’s organization, the country’s citizenry most likely interfaced with one of the Department’s subordinate agencies: the Transportation Safety Administration or TSA. Passed by the 107th Congress (the same that passed Public Law 107-296, establishing the Department of Homeland Security), the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of November 2001 established the TSA, originally subordinate to the United States Department of Transportation.<sup>118</sup> According to the Agency’s website, the Congress establishing the TSA required the completion of 30 mandates, which the Agency cites as the “the largest civilian undertaking in the history of the United States.”<sup>119</sup> The website continues to outline the Agency’s requirements of assuming control for the security at all the nation’s civilian airports, to include the screening for explosives and the hiring of

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<sup>118</sup>Transportation Security Administration, “9/11 and TSA,” last modified January 14, 2014, <http://www.tsa.gov/about-tsa/911-and-tsa> (accessed February 2, 2014).

<sup>119</sup>Ibid.

security personnel.<sup>120</sup> While the establishment of a responsible agency for airport security in the wake of the 9/11 attacks might seem logical, one may find it noteworthy that the Agency first fell subordinate to the Department of Transportation and later to the Department of Homeland Security, greatly enhancing the reach and authority of that newer organization. With the establishment of the TSA, the restructuring of government affected more than the creation of “behind-the-scenes” bureaucracy transparent to all but a select few in government; it brought the United States’ governmental fight against terror face to face with ordinary citizens.

The creation of the DHS and TSA embody some of the major political reorganizations intended to assist the United States in managing its war against terrorism. Most Americans, if not fully aware of the organizations’ legal origins at least know that the organizations exist and may have even experienced some of the resulting consequences at the nation’s airports or elsewhere. Less well known, but perhaps equally significant is the explosion of federal intelligence-related agencies and organizations. To address the issue, the *Washington Post* led a two-year investigation that determined “at least 263 organizations have been created or reorganized as a response to 9/11.”<sup>121</sup> The report, although focused primarily on the United States’ burgeoning intelligence activities, succeeds in illustrating the incredible expansion of governmental efforts to combat terrorism. If correct as reported, the far-reaching consequences of the attacks and

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<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

<sup>121</sup>William M. Arkin and Dana Priest, “A Hidden World, Growing Beyond Control,” *Washington Post*, July 19, 2010, <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/top-secret-america/articles/a-hidden-world-growing-beyond-control/print/> (accessed November 16, 2013).

America's response could very well be unprecedented. That the government changed so much to address the specific threat of terrorism (these reorganizations did not result from threats posed by rogue states such as Iran or North Korea, nor did they result from emerging powers such as China) lends credibility to the possibility that these actions, taken together, suggest a fundamental change in the "nature of the game" that occurred in the attacks' aftermath.

The creation of government organizations and assigning new anti-terrorism tasks to existing entities provide interesting commentary regarding the perceived need to provide a political solution to combating terrorism, but so too does the passage of key laws and policies. Perhaps the law most commonly associated with a post-9/11 response is the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001, also known as the USA Patriot Act, or simply the Patriot Act. The U.S. Justice Department touts the law as vital "in preventing another catastrophic attack on the American homeland since September 11, 2001."<sup>122</sup> Yet another key piece of legislation passed by the 107th United States Congress on October 26, 2001, Public Law 107-56 established the Act "To deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world, to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools, and for other purposes."<sup>123</sup> In a broad sense, the law provides for such enhanced terrorism-

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<sup>122</sup>United States Department of Justice, "The USA Patriot Act: Preserving Life and Liberty," <http://www.justice.gov/archive/ll/highlights.htm> (accessed November 16, 2013).

<sup>123</sup>Public Law 107-56, *Uniting and Strengthening America By Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA Patriot Act) Act of 2001*, 107th Cong, October 26, 2001, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ56/pdf/PLAW-107publ56.pdf> (accessed February 2, 2014).

combating techniques as increased surveillance, monitoring and defeating terrorist funding, border protection and information and intelligence sharing between governmental agencies. What the law seems to offer is an enhancement to the government's capacity to identify, detect and defeat terrorists and their organizations. By incorporating various agencies and many governmental resources, the signing of the Patriot Act into law shows yet another political response to combating terrorism.

Taken together, one might conclude that the United States significantly altered, or enhanced, its political posture in the wake of the September 11 attacks. These changes have in turn led to other significant consequences elsewhere. The cost of these new departments and agencies have influenced the U.S. budget and hence the economy, whereas the enhanced intelligence-gathering agencies and practices have often led to controversy among many members of the populace who perceive their activities to be an infringement upon their right to privacy. Ultimately, the interrelatedness of the political changes to the other elements of the state will provide the most holistic assessment about the degree that these changes ushered in revolutionary change. As a standalone consideration, however, the War on Terror prompted considerable political and governmental augmentations and modifications.

#### Economic Analysis

All that we have to do is to send two mujahidin to the furthest point east to raise a piece of cloth on which is written al-Qaida, in order to make the generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic, and political losses without their achieving for it anything of note other than some benefits for their private companies. This is in addition to our having experience in using guerrilla warfare and the war of attrition to fight tyrannical superpowers, as we, alongside the mujahidin, bled Russia for 10 years, until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat . . . So we are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy . . . al-Qaida spent \$500,000 on the [September 11, 2001

attacks], while America, in the incident and its aftermath, lost - according to the lowest estimate - more than \$500 billion. Meaning that every dollar of al-Qaida defeated a million dollars by the permission of Allah, besides the loss of a huge number of jobs. As for the size of the economic deficit, it has reached record astronomical numbers estimated to total more than a trillion dollars. And even more dangerous and bitter for America is that the mujahidin recently forced Bush to resort to emergency funds to continue the fight in Afghanistan and Iraq, which is evidence of the success of the bleed-until-bankruptcy plan - with Allah's permission.<sup>124</sup>

If war is a human endeavor, it is also certainly an economic one. Similar to the terror attacks themselves, no shortage of literature exists on the United States' struggling economy. In spite of some recent literature addressing the creation of jobs and some signs of economic recovery, most literature describes a generally negative economic situation for the United States and a sluggish recovery. Depending on the perspective taken, many authors often cite the inability of our political leaders to effectively curtail spending and implement prudent increases in taxation as a principal determining factor in our economic malaise. Still others pose that the War on Terror diverts fund from other critical obligations, including our infrastructure, public education system and healthcare. While not always expressly identified as a major source of current and projected spending obligations, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have had a tremendous impact on U.S. government spending. It is uncertain if we fully understand the ultimate cost of these wars. In almost all instances, these estimates are in the trillions of dollars and will take generations before the final cost becomes known.

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<sup>124</sup>Al Jazeera, Transcript of Usama bin Laden speech.

## Declaration of Economic War on the United States

Speaking in 2004, Osama bin Laden claimed that (Al-Qaeda is) “continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy.”<sup>125</sup> Bin Laden claimed that this type of economic warfare was instrumental in the *mujahidin* defeat of Soviet forces in the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-89). To support his claim, he spoke of the relative ease with which he compelled the United States (specifically the Bush Administration) to initiate military operations against Afghanistan. Bin Laden challenged the American people not to “squander (their) security, wealth and children for the sake of the ‘liar’ in the White House.”<sup>126</sup> Clearly, bin Laden believed that it was impossible for al Qaeda to win a military victory against the United States. However, he concluded that al Qaeda could win using other means. American military and political leaders defined success in Afghanistan and Iraq in military, political or diplomatic terms. Bin Laden knew that the United States could easily overcome any military resistance by al Qaeda and its allies. However, he determined, this success would come at such a high price that it would inflict an economic defeat of the United States that would permeate all facets of American public and private life.

Bin Laden is not an authoritative speaker on the relative strength of the United States and he is not an economist. Therefore, one should consider his comments in the light of the propaganda campaign that characterize most of his proclamations and video releases. Al-Qaeda is, after all, a manipulator of public opinion and relies heavily on popular support for the success of its operations. With this caveat in mind, one should not

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<sup>125</sup>Ibid.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

dismiss his claims as merely the boastful rants of a deranged terrorist, either. In fact, some three years after bin Laden delivered the speech above, the United States entered its worst economic recession since the Great Depression. While it's unlikely that bin Laden and his terrorist affiliates possessed the ability to realize their stated intentions of destroying the U.S. economy, one should not ignore the economic impacts of the War on Terror. In fact, bin Laden's purported plan to attack the United States' economy might have displayed an understanding of U.S. political and military culture more than economic insight. In other words, while bin Laden likely did not cause the economic recession, the terror attacks he orchestrated may very well have been a major contributing factor.

#### The Cost of America's Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Professor Linda Bilmes, former Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the United States Chamber of Commerce, calls the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan “the most expensive wars in U.S. history.”<sup>127</sup> According to Bilmes, the cost of the wars will “(total) somewhere between \$4 to \$6 trillion.”<sup>128</sup> Her projections present a much direr picture than that typically presented by military and political leaders who support the wars. In Bilmes' assessment, “One of the most significant challenges to future US national security policy will not originate from any external threat. Rather it is simply coping with the legacy of the conflicts we have already fought in Iraq and

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<sup>127</sup>Gavel.

<sup>128</sup>Linda Bilmes, “The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets,” Faculty Research Working Paper Series, March 2013, <https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=8956&type=WPN> (accessed September 1, 2013).

Afghanistan.”<sup>129</sup> In other words, Bilmes proposes that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars may have had the unintended consequence of undermining national security by undermining our *economic* security.

To support her claims, Professor Bilmes cites not only the amount spent thus far on the wars (about \$2 trillion, or 20 percent of the total national debt accrued between 2001 and 2012), but also the cost of political-economic agreements, health care for veterans and repairing the damaged American military, to name but a few looming financial obligations.<sup>130</sup> Based on her stark assessments and pointed comments, Professor Bilmes does not seem to be an avid supporter of the wars; her assessment is that the legacy of these wars will be “no peace dividend, and . . . costs that persist for decades.”<sup>131</sup>

Assessing the costs of the United States’ military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan is not always a straightforward endeavor. Whereas Professor Bilmes cites both current and projected future expenditures, other reporting venues, including reports provided for Congress, often treat the spending for the wars as incremental spending, or “costs that are in addition to regular military salaries, training and support activities, and weapons procurement, RDT&E [Research Development Test & Evaluation] or military construction as described above, as well as new war-related programs such as coalition support or the Commanders Emergency Response Program designed to meet specific war

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<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid.

needs.”<sup>132</sup> Determining the true cost of the wars, therefore, requires deeper analysis than simply studying the Department of Defense’s budget or comparing changes to the bottom line expenditures by year. In fact, although the DOD accounts for almost the entirety of this budget, it is not the sole recipient of the increased funding. Other governmental agencies, including the United States Department of State (DOS) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) received decidedly smaller amounts of money to support their operations. Importantly, however, is that irrespective of the specific percentages of funds dispersed to particular agencies, the United States Congress appropriated some \$1.283 trillion to fund the three key military operations between Fiscal Years 2001 and 2011, namely Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Noble Eagle.<sup>133</sup> The commonality between the three with respect to funding is that all required an incredible economic investment to provide support for the ongoing War on Terror.

As the United States increased its involvement in these wars, the amount of funds appropriated continually rose from approximately \$31 billion in fiscal years 2001 and 2002 (FY2001/2002) to a peak of approximately \$180 billion in FY2008.<sup>134</sup> These “neat” figures mask a complex and dynamic series of changes that affected both theaters of war in the years considered. Changing troop levels in both Iraq and Afghanistan, unforeseen expenditures and commitments to training, equipping and developing the Afghan and Iraqi police and military forces all affected the amount of money required to sustain the

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<sup>132</sup>Amy Belasco, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, March 2011), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf> (accessed February 9, 2011), 5.

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup>Belasco, 14.

operations.<sup>135</sup> The specifics of how the United States financially supported these operations is often as important as the quantity of money spent, and provides insight into an evolving strategy as concerns terrorism. Indeed, closer analysis of this spending would reveal increased funding for the local forces—a reflection of America’s long term commitment to combating terrorism using all instruments of national power, including its ability to provide financial support to host nation and international allies.

In spite of the evidence, not all commentators share Professor Bilmes’ stark assessment of the wars’ economic impacts and downplay the relative costs of these wars. Writing in 2008 for the Council of Foreign Relations, Lee Teslik provides his commentary on the wars’ potential effects—both positively and negatively. Importantly, Teslik highlights that when compared to spending during historic times of conflict, the current percentage of America’s gross domestic product (GDP) devoted to defense remains relatively low. As evidence of his claim, he juxtaposes today’s defense budget of approximately 6.2 percent of GDP to the 37.8 percent of GDP during World War Two.<sup>136</sup> These numbers suggest that America’s economic commitment to the Global War on Terror pales in comparison to that experienced during the Second World War, but they do not dismiss the importance of the economic impact of the GWOT.

While an assortment of brilliant financial analysts and professionals provide insightful and thought-provoking dialogue on the final cost of the U.S.’s War on Terror, the method of financing also deserves consideration. To quote Merrill Goozner of the

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<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

<sup>136</sup>Lee Hudson Teslik, *Iraq, Afghanistan and the U.S. Economy*, Council on Foreign Relations, March 11, 2008, <http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/iraq-afghanistan-us-economy/p15404> (accessed February 9, 2014).

*Financial Times*, “The final and more enduring cost of the War on Terror was the decision to put the entire enterprise on the national credit card.”<sup>137</sup> Citing tax cuts at a time of increased spending and dwindling economic resources might not make sense to the layman—or to the political rivals of our elected officials. Most analysts today project the final total for the War on Terror to reach into the trillions once one factors in lifelong medical and psychological care to veterans, international aid projects and other commitments. Of course, the interest payment on the loans used to finance these wars remains a key factor in the continual reassessment of these wars’ costs. Expectedly, Bilmes agrees with Goozner and adds that “the decision to finance the war operations entirely through borrowing has already added some \$2 trillion to the national debt, contributing about 20% of the total national debt added between 2001 and 2012.”<sup>138</sup>

Professor Bilmes includes commentary from former Goldman Sachs’ Vice Chairman Robert Hormats, who “has pointed out, it is unprecedented in US history that we pay for a war entirely from debt, and actually cut taxes repeatedly during wartime.”<sup>139</sup> She adds that this “war debt has been especially unhelpful” in that it provided little, if any, benefit to the nation.<sup>140</sup> If truly unprecedented, this method of funding would not directly suggest a revolutionary shift in the nation’s fiscal management, but could provide

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<sup>137</sup>Merrill Goozner, “9/11 and the War on Terror: A \$5 Trillion Choice,” *The Fiscal Times*, September 6, 2011, <http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Articles/2011/09/06/911-and-the-War-on-Terror-A-5-Trillion-Choice> (accessed February 9, 2014).

<sup>138</sup>Bilmes, 3.

<sup>139</sup>*Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*

support for broader effects related to the War on Terror including the spiraling debt and coinciding economic downturn.

The United States' economy needn't suffer a traumatic blow to provide support for a Military Revolution any more than bin Laden needs to mastermind the economic dissolution of the United States to inflict harm to the nation's purse. What these figures show, in any case is that the United States invested large quantities of money into the Global War on Terror in direct response to the September 11 attacks. Most probably, had terrorists not hijacked the four airliners on that morning and used them as weapons against civilian targets, the U.S. would likely not have invaded Afghanistan or Iraq, thereby saving potentially trillions of dollars. What is certain, and what is critical to studying the GWOT as a potential Military Revolution is that the United States' economy did noticeably respond to the task of defending itself against terrorist threats, both domestically and internationally.

#### Domestic Costs of the Global War on Terror

While not all operations qualify as part of Operation Noble Eagle, this operation generally consists of "operations related to homeland security and support to federal, state, and local agencies in the wake of the September 11th attacks."<sup>141</sup> In other words, while Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom refer to military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, respectively, Operation Noble Eagle denotes service and efforts on the home front. Usually, but not exclusively, this service supposed protection of critical infrastructure and transportation nodes such as bridges, airports and train terminals.

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<sup>141</sup>Kapp, 1.

A detailed consideration of the various costs associated with defending the homeland naturally includes the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, its subordinate organizations such as the TSA and countless additional efforts to augment various levels of law enforcement agencies. In the first years after the terror attacks, estimates suggest that spending on homeland security indeed increased from approximately “\$56.0 billion in 2001 to \$99.5 billion in 2005.”<sup>142</sup> This increase, while significant in the amount of dollars spent, represented a very modest increase in overall spending, or approximately 0.55 percent of GDP in 2001 to 0.80 percent of GDP by 2005.<sup>143</sup> Of this figure, approximately \$32.4 billion reflects increases in governmental spending, whereas the remaining \$9.4 billion reflects private sector spending to enhance security.<sup>144</sup> By FY 2014, the Department of Homeland Security’s budget alone was “\$60 billion in total budget authority.”<sup>145</sup>

The Department includes funding for its various subordinate agencies in the figures presented above. Consistent with its mission statement and general focus, these agencies include the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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<sup>142</sup>Bart Hobijn and Erick Sager, “What Has Homeland Security Cost? An Assessment: 2001-2005,” *Current Issues in Economics and Finance* 13, no. 2 (February 2007), [http://www.newyorkfed.org/research/current\\_issues/ci13-2.pdf](http://www.newyorkfed.org/research/current_issues/ci13-2.pdf) (accessed April 2, 2014), 2.

<sup>143</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup>Department of Homeland Security, *Budget-in-Brief: Fiscal Year 2014*, <http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/MGMT/FY%202014%20BIB%20-%20FINAL%20-508%20Formatted%20%284%29.pdf> (accessed April 2, 2014).

(ICE). The United States Coast Guard is also now subordinate to the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime. Although the Department's internal monitoring has identified various areas in which to save money, the budgetary authorizations have remained relatively constant for Fiscal Years 2012-2014.

The costs associated with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, along with the costs associated with defending the homeland suggest a strong financial investment in defending the United States against both domestic and international terrorism. Bin Laden's 2004 remark, while stimulating, most likely did not reflect the reality of the emergent financial crisis facing the United States, although the Global War on Terror almost certainly contributed to that downturn. Accordingly, even though the 9/11 attacks most likely did not cause the resultant recession and associated financial problems, they most likely contributed. To that end, a brief mention of these events seems appropriate.

#### The American Recession of 2007–2009

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) determined that the most recent U.S. recession lasted from December 2007 until June 2009.<sup>146</sup> The BLS report identifies the principal indicators of a recession. These include: unemployment, the loss of actual employment opportunity (job loss), layoffs and the impact of layoffs and job losses on various industries. While this particular report does not include the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on its list, the recognized start of the recession occurred almost exactly three years after bin Laden released the video announcing his “bleed-until-bankruptcy” policy.

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<sup>146</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *The Recession of 2007-2009*, February 2012, [http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2012/recession/pdf/recession\\_bls\\_spotlight.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2012/recession/pdf/recession_bls_spotlight.pdf) (accessed September 1, 2013).

Other sources and analysis make more emphatic links between the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the resulting economic downturn, to include the recession.

### The Sequester

On the White House's official website, the President and his staff present the Sequester as the result of Congressional unwillingness to compromise on finding a way to reduce the deficit. Specifically, the website quotes the president as saying, "The whole design of these arbitrary cuts was to make them so unattractive and unappealing that Democrats and Republicans would actually get together and find a good compromise of sensible cuts as well as closing tax loopholes and so forth. And so this was all designed to say we can't do these bad cuts; let's do something smarter. That was the whole point of this so-called sequestration."<sup>147</sup> Unfortunately, Congress did not reach a solution, and in March 2013, this caused the Sequester, as the "arbitrary cuts" came to be known, to come into effect.

The president intended the Sequester to compel congressional compromise on tough economic issues. When this strategy failed, senior defense and military leaders spoke out against it, arguing that the Sequester undermines American security and its ability to respond to emerging threats around the world. Speaking in July 2013, American Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel warned lawmakers that "If the cuts continue, the Department will have to make sharp cuts with far reaching consequences, including limiting combat power, reducing readiness and undermining the national security

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<sup>147</sup>Whitehouse, *What You Need to Know About the Sequester*, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/sequester> (accessed September 1, 2013).

interests of the United States.”<sup>148</sup> Senator James Inhofe, R-Okla., added that “sequestration is leading to the hollowing out of our military.”<sup>149</sup>

As with the recession, the above-cited articles and webpages stopped short of attributing America’s current economic crisis to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, although they conceded that the hefty price was a contributing factor. However, research suggests an analytical shift in recent months. At present in fact, most analysts and commentators, aside from those on government websites, do see a correlation between the wars and our current economic situation. While Professor Bilmes’ assessments often receive the most attention in this regard given her credentials, the relatively straightforward association between a surging deficit and immense war costs requires no advanced understanding of economics to see how one could potential lead to the other.

#### Miscellaneous

Another major impact of America’s political inability to resolve its debt crisis has been the decision by Standard and Poor’s to lower the U.S. sovereign credit rating from “AAA” to “AA+” in 2011.<sup>150</sup> In their 2011 report, the organization states, “Our lowering of the rating was prompted by our view of the rising public debt burden and our

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<sup>148</sup>Stephanie Haven, “Hagel: Fix Sequester or Military Will Have ‘Serious Damage,’” *CBS News*, July 10, 2013, [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250\\_162-57593175/hagel-fix-sequester-or-military-will-have-serious-damage/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57593175/hagel-fix-sequester-or-military-will-have-serious-damage/) (accessed September 2, 2013).

<sup>149</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup>Standard and Poors, “United States of America Long-Term Rating Lowered To 'AA+' Due To Political Risks, Rising Debt Burden; Outlook Negative,” August 5, 2011, <http://www.standardandpoors.com/ratings/articles/en/us/?assetID=1245316529563> (accessed September 2, 2013).

perception of greater policymaking uncertainty, consistent with our criteria.”<sup>151</sup> The literature once again fails to name the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as contributing factors to the lowering of our sovereign debt limit. However, if Professor Bilmes’ claims hold true, the general economic conditions created, at least in part, by the wars might have at least an *indirect* effect on our diminished credit rating.

#### Limitations to the United States’ Economic Response Following 9/11

Irrespective of what author, Congressional report or periodical provides analysis and commentary concerning the economic consequences of the United States’ post-9/11 operations, most acknowledge the high costs incurred in pursuit of those various aims. Teslik’s report on the incredibly disparate percentages of GDP dedicated to defense in World War Two versus today provide one data point to suggest a minimal economic “mobilization” to fight the OCO/GWOT. President Bush’s massive tax cuts provide another.

An important consideration for how U.S. economic policies provide or deny support for the War on Terror as a Military Revolution is the blatant lack of economic mobilization to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Simply put, the United States’ economic approach to the war provides an interesting (and often conflicting) case study for financing major military operations. On the one hand, most leading economists concede the wars’ exceptionally high cost and posit that these costs will affect U.S. fiscal policy for generations to come. On the other, the President not only failed to mobilize the economy for war by drastically enhancing the percentage of GDP dedicated to the

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<sup>151</sup>Ibid.

purpose of war-fighting, but actually implemented significant tax cuts during the same time period. For the layman, the equation of “money in versus money out” casts doubt upon the degree to which the post-September 11 response directed significant economic reorganization or change. At a minimum, it fails to provide evidence that from an economic perspective, the OCO/GWOT instituted the degree of radical change typically encountered during a true Military Revolution.

One cannot rightly credit the exorbitant costs of the War on Terror as the main source of the United States’ financial meltdown without also considering the effect that President Bush’s tax cuts had on the same. To again quote Leffler, he provides numerical support for how the administration’s economic policies contributed to the economic downturn: “It was eroded by the debts that accrued as a result of tax cuts and increased domestic expenditures. Defense spending climbed from \$304 billion in 2001 to \$616 billion in 2008, even as the U.S. budget went from a surplus of \$128 billion to a deficit of \$458 billion. Federal debt as a percentage of GDP rose from 32.5 percent in 2001 to 53.5 percent in 2009.” Writing in 2005, political scientists Jacob S. Hacker of Yale University and Paul Pierson from the University of California, Berkley, add that “initial estimates placed the ten-year cost (of the Bush tax cuts) as high as \$2.1 trillion—a figure that was soon to be cast in stark relief by the sharp reversal of federal finances from record surpluses to mounting deficits.”<sup>152</sup> Assuming the veracity of these figures, one might resolve to attribute poor fiscal planning, and not an unforeseen revolutionary event, as the leading cause of the United States’ economic woes. In that case, although the wars’ cost

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<sup>152</sup>Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, “Abandoning the Middle: The Bush Tax Cuts and the Limits of Democratic Control,” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, no. 1 (March 2005), <http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/hackerpierson.pdf> (access April 24, 2014).

contributed heavily to the associated downturn, poor financial strategy is, frankly, not revolutionary.

The practice described above is commonly referred to as “supply side economics.” In the simplest terms, supply side economics suggests that a combination of lowering marginal and capital tax, employing traditionally “conservative” regulatory policies (less government intervention in the free market, for instance) and monetary policies that refer to the “Federal Reserve’s ability to increase or decrease the quantity of dollars in circulation,” will provide economic benefits.<sup>153</sup> The theory assumes that the lower marginal and capital taxes will incentivize workers to work longer and encourage others to invest or save more money.<sup>154</sup> In another sense, the greater amount of money available to the populace will allow them to purchase the more readily available goods (this is a supply versus demand driven policy) and hence further stimulate the economy. Often associated with Ronald Reagan’s series of economic policies during the early 1980s, the term is also colloquially known as “Reaganomics.”<sup>155</sup>

Much literature exists to offer President Bush’s tax cuts as a leading contributor to the global economic slowdown, but these tax cuts are not alone; the oft-cited bursting of the “housing bubble” also received considerable attention as a major factor in the overall corrosion of the global economy. Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association in 2010, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben S. Bernanke

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<sup>153</sup>David Harper, “Understanding Supply-Side Economics,” *Investopedia*, November 4, 2013, <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/05/011805.asp> (accessed April 28, 2014).

<sup>154</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup>*Ibid.*

addressed the relationship between the mid-2000s recession and the housing bubble stating that “Some observers have assigned monetary policy a central role in the crisis. Specifically, they claim that excessively easy monetary policy by the Federal Reserve in the first half of the decade helped cause a bubble in house prices in the United States, a bubble whose inevitable collapse proved a major source of the financial and economic stresses of the past two years.”<sup>156</sup> In the course of his discussion, Bernanke seems to downplay the result that monetary policy had in causing the bubble and instead cites “alternative” mortgaging options as more likely to have contributed to the collapse of the housing market. Continuing his discussion, he states that “At some point, both lenders and borrowers became convinced that house prices would only go up. Borrowers chose, and were extended, mortgages that they could not be expected to service in the longer term. They were provided these loans on the expectation that accumulating home equity would soon allow refinancing into more sustainable mortgages. For a time, rising house prices became a self-fulfilling prophecy, but ultimately, further appreciation could not be sustained and house prices collapsed.” Irrespective of what led to the eventual housing market crash, whether “regulatory and supervisory policies” or monetary ones, the contribution to this discussion is that factors other than excessive spending due to the Global War on Terror contributed to the U.S. and global economic downturn in the middle years of the decade.

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<sup>156</sup>Ben S. Bernanke, “Monetary Policy and the Housing Bubble” (Speech, Atlanta, Georgia, January 3, 2010), <http://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/bernanke20100103a.htm?sourc> (accessed April 24, 2014).

## Social Analysis

The lesson of 9/11 is that America is truly exceptional. We withstood the worst attack of our history, intended by our enemies to destroy us. Instead, it drew us closer and made us more united. Our love for freedom and one another has given us a strength that surprised even ourselves. At the same time, it's a strength that must be guarded and nurtured. We must rediscover our unity. We must never forget what we witnessed on that day, both the incomprehensible face of pure evil and the depth of love and compassion. Today, 10 years later, the fight continues, and the memories remain etched into our national character.<sup>157</sup>

True Military Revolutions transcend military matters; they effect a state's political and economic systems as well as the military power they wield. Acknowledging this interconnectedness between so many elements of a nation's identity, it necessarily follows that the nation's citizens also experience revolutionary change as a result of any MR. The final major factor comprising our definition, and several definitions, of a Military Revolution is the societal. For those who experienced the brutality of the attacks on a beautiful September morning in 2001, it is hard to comprehend a world unchanged by those acts.

Society's response to the 9/11 attacks manifested itself in several ways. Perhaps the most immediate was the realization that terrorists possess both the desire and the ability to indiscriminately kill innocent men, women and children to advance their political or ideological agendas. A Gallup poll taken between September 7, 2001 and September 10, 2001, reported that less than 1 percent of the American population cited terrorism as their primary concern.<sup>158</sup> The following month, the number rose to 46

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<sup>157</sup>Rudy Giuliani, "Giuliani: 911 Was the 'Worst Day' and 'the Best Day,'" *USA Today*, September 7, 2011, <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2011-09-06/Giuliani-911-was-worst-day-and-the-best-day/50284308/1> (accessed January 29, 2014).

<sup>158</sup>Newport.

percent.<sup>159</sup> Given the brutality of the attacks, these numbers should not seem high—perhaps they may even appear a bit low. They are significant, however, in that they provide a look into the American psyche at a time when New York still smoldered and the world still sought answers. Perhaps more importantly, the prominent belief that terrorism posed the greatest threat facing the nation helped provide justification for the ensuing military and political responses that followed.

Tempering any conclusions drawn from these statistics with the inescapable reality that in and of themselves stats do not provide proof and may mislead if improperly interpreted, these studies and polls do provide indicators that less than a decade after the attacks, the number of the United States’ citizens considering terrorism a major threat to their security remains, although only 1 percent identify it as the most serious danger.<sup>160</sup> Along with many other domestic and international issues preoccupying the citizenry, including the economy, the number (or lack) of jobs and two long wars, the article also suggests that as late as 2010, 75 percent of Americans considered terrorism an “extremely or very important issue.”<sup>161</sup> Although impossible to ascertain the true motivation for the responses provided by those polled, these numbers seem to provide support for the idea that by 2010, terrorism and the threat of terrorism had become so ingrained into the American psyche that people viewed it as a permanent and perpetual problem, something that existed in spite of other, more pressing issues.

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<sup>159</sup>Ibid.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid.

These findings seem to align with results obtained during a psychological longitudinal study of a random sample of American adults between two and six months after the attacks. In that study, approximately 2/3 of adults surveyed (64 percent) reported that they feared future terror attacks at least occasionally.<sup>162</sup> Six months after the attacks, that number was just over 1/3 of those surveyed (37 percent).<sup>163</sup> An additional, unrelated survey suggested that as many as 20 percent of those people living south of Canal Street in Manhattan showed signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) between one and two months after the attacks.<sup>164</sup> As with the previously presented statistics, these numbers in and of themselves do not prove or disprove lasting effects of the attacks on society. What they do continue to provide, however, is increased research and data suggesting a major psychological strain placed on the American population. How this psychological trauma affected the population in the long term remains debatable. What it might offer, however, is a contextual backdrop for related views of the War on Terror and a collective willingness to support proposed military action against Afghanistan and Iraq.

Relatedly, one of the most promising effects that the September 11 terror attacks may have had on American society was the outpouring of patriotism among the nation's citizens. In the weeks and month following the attacks, a Pentagon report suggested "an

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<sup>162</sup>Roxane Cohen Silver et al., "Nationwide Longitudinal Study of Psychological Responses to September 11," *The Journal of the American Medical Association* 288, no. 10 (September 11, 2002), <http://mysite.du.edu/~dmcintos/PDF/Silver%20et%20al.%20Responses%20to%209-11,%20JAMA,%202002.pdf> (accessed February 11, 2014).

<sup>163</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup>Sandro Galea, "Psychological Sequelae of the September 11 Terror Attacks in New York City," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 346, no. 13 (March 28, 2002), <http://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMsa013404> (accessed February 11, 2014).

8-percent increase among young men likely to enlist immediately after 9/11.”<sup>165</sup> Along with these young men—and women’s—willingness to join the military, society as a whole continues to view the military as a noble profession and continues to provide an incredible amount of support for the soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who remain in military service. To place this exceptional level of public support for the military establishment in perspective, a 2010 Gallup Poll listed military officers as the second most respected group of professionals in the United States, with 73 percent of Americans polled reporting that they believe these officers have “high” or “very high” ethical standards.<sup>166</sup> Only nurses received higher ratings, with 81 percent of respondents claiming “high” or “very high” ethical standards for that population.<sup>167</sup> Even in instances where American support for the wars themselves has waned, it remains clear that American society maintains a strong support for its armed forces.

Public support for the U.S. military is of vital importance to sustaining troop morale and providing the political justification to continue military operations, but it doesn’t necessarily provide ample support for September 11 as a Military Revolution. To further this contrasting view, a recent article by former Army intelligence officer Chris Davis in the *Small Wars Journal* describes the primary societal impact of the GWOT as the amount of resources it takes away from some of society’s most pressing areas of concern, such as domestic infrastructure, education and the feasibility of providing

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<sup>165</sup>Lisa Daniel, “Recruiters Recall Patriotism of Post-9/11 America,” *American Forces Press Service*, September 8, 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=65272> (accessed November 17, 2013).

<sup>166</sup>Jones.

<sup>167</sup>*Ibid.*

affordable healthcare to the masses.<sup>168</sup> Although written largely as a very articulate opinion piece, this article does reintroduce a theme common throughout this thesis: there exists an inextricable link between the military, political, economic and societal facets of a state. The relative “good” or “bad” of how a Military Revolution affects these areas is largely irrelevant.

One aspect of the current conflict that seems to limit the societal case for the OCO/GWOT as a Military Revolution is that the United States maintained its all-volunteer force and never seriously considered reinstating conscription, also known as the draft. Ending the practice most recently in 1973, then President Richard Nixon established a panel to analyze how the nation could repeal the draft and move forward with an all-volunteer force.<sup>169</sup> Historically, the U.S. has relied on conscription to quickly generate manpower “in times of significant perceived threat.”<sup>170</sup> Specifically, the draft provided soldiers during the American Civil War (1861-1865), the World Wars and during the Cold War (1948-1973).<sup>171</sup>

Cumulatively, millions of men entered military service due to the draft. Although this led to considerable controversy for numerous reasons, including perceptions of

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<sup>168</sup>Chris Davis, “Empire at War: The Effects of the War on Terrorism on the American Middle Class,” *Small Wars Journal*, April 23, 2012, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/empire-at-war-the-effects-of-the-war-on-terrorism-on-the-american-middle-class> (accessed November 17, 2013).

<sup>169</sup>Walter Y. Oi, “The Virtue of an All-Volunteer Force,” CATO Institute, July 29, 2003, <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/virtue-allvolunteer-force> (accessed March 13, 2014).

<sup>170</sup>Ibid.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid.

inequality, especially during unpopular wars such as the one in Vietnam, the United States did not suspend the draft until very close to the end of the war in Southeast Asia. Since then, the country has relied on volunteers to fill its ranks. As a result, fewer Americans face the horrors of war, and of those that do, the vast majority are members of the United States Armed Forces or other governmental agencies. Of that number, all are volunteers.

The absence of a draft does not support a Military Revolution. In fact, it suggests a limited governmental mobilization for war with correspondingly limited effects on the society as a whole. Although key political and military leaders often reference the strain that repeated deployments place on today's military personnel and their family, this strain remains limited to a relatively small percentage of the U.S. population.

One member of congress, Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), did introduce legislation to reinstitute the draft, but ironically did so to discourage war. "If our great nation becomes involved in an all-out war, the sacrifice must be equally shared," Rangel said. "We must return to the tradition of the citizen soldier."<sup>172</sup> In more recent commentary regarding his stance on this issue, Rangel wrote that "currently the burden of defending our nation is carried by less than 1% of the population" and that "Since we replaced the compulsory military draft with an all-volunteer force in 1973, our nation has been making decisions about wars without worry over who fights them. I sincerely believe that reinstating the draft would compel the American public to have a stake in the wars we

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<sup>172</sup>Oi.

fight as a nation.”<sup>173</sup> While written as an opinion piece, the Congressman’s message resonates with fact: although the U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks permeated many elements of society, a decidedly small percentage executed the lion’s share of the military efforts. In this sense, the only actions needed to ensure that the government would not call upon a person to deploy overseas was to avoid military service. To date, the kinetic operations of the OCO/GWOT have had very little direct impact on the average U.S. citizen.

Whereas the absence of a draft leaves many U.S. citizens insulated from the horrors of the modern battlefield, GWOT efforts on the domestic front do seem to affect the citizenry more directly. In spite of the government’s insistence that the Patriot Act helps protect American Citizens, critics say the law is unclear about its methods and erodes individual liberties. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), for instance, take issue with what they term an “overly broad surveillance bill.”<sup>174</sup> Certain aspects of the bill, the organization points out, allow the United States to conduct surveillance of individuals with no known ties to terrorism, and that the authorization to do so comes from “secret courts.”<sup>175</sup> While clandestine intelligence-gathering isn’t unique, the ACLU argues that even Americans become targets for government monitoring without the “due process” usually required by law enforcement to employ wire taps and other such

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<sup>173</sup>Charles B. Rangel, “A More Equal Military? Bring Draft Back,” *CNN*, January 26, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/25/opinion/rangel-military-draft/> (accessed March 13, 2014).

<sup>174</sup>American Civil Liberties Union, “Reform the Patriot Act,” <https://www.aclu.org/reform-patriot-act> (accessed November 17, 2013).

<sup>175</sup>*Ibid.*

surveillance. In fact, the Patriot Act allows for National Security Letters (NSLs) that “permit(s) the government to obtain the communication, financial and credit records of anyone deemed relevant to a terrorism investigation even if that person is not suspected of unlawful behavior.”<sup>176</sup> While it remains uncertain whether these methods ultimately provide protection against terrorism, or whether the surveillance is only used in furtherance of deterring terrorism remains unclear. As far as the ACLU is concerned, however, it is a violation of Americans’ fundamental right to privacy.

Documents recently leaked by former security contractor Edward Snowden suggest that the scope of spying is sweeping. Addressing the press in October 2013, Army General Keith Alexander (and NSA head) revealed that “Snowden has shared somewhere between 50 [thousand] and 200,000 documents with reporters.”<sup>177</sup> In the name of defeating terrorism, these leaks revealed that not only does the National Security Administration (NSA) “collect records of every U.S. phone call,” but directs those collection efforts abroad, as well.<sup>178</sup> Importantly, the Foreign Intelligence Service Court determined that the collection of phone data without a warrant was legal, citing the 1979 *Smith v. Maryland* case that effectively established that the Constitution’s Fourth Amendment did not protect phone calls since the phone companies managed those

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<sup>176</sup>Ibid.

<sup>177</sup>Mark Hosenball, “NSA Chief Says Snowden Leaked Up To 200,000 Secret Documents,” *Reuters*, November 14, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/us-usa-security-nsa-idUSBRE9AD19B20131114> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>178</sup>Michael Kelley and Mike Nudelman, “The Snowden Saga: Here’s Everything We Need to Know About the Leak of the Century,” *Business Insider*, November 14, 2013, <http://www.businessinsider.com/everything-we-know-about-snowden-leaks-2013-11> (accessed November 17, 2013).

records and hence, the user effectively “agreed” to the sharing of that information and agreed to the loss of privacy.<sup>179</sup> While critics state that other (more recent) court cases should affect the legal opinion, the fact is that government collection of phone records remains legal at this time.

Unfortunately, heightened surveillance of U.S. citizens occurs not only at the federal level, but also inside of our communities. A recent article in the *New York Times* reported that the New York Police Department (NYPD), the nation’s largest, had recently deactivated the “Demographics Unit,” a reported “secretive program that dispatched plainclothes detectives into Muslim neighborhoods to eavesdrop on conversations and built detailed files on where people ate, prayed and shopped.”<sup>180</sup> Formed in 2003, the organization predictably created a firestorm within the Muslim community upon its discovery in 2011 and has given rise to two federal lawsuits and harsh criticism from organizations such as the ACLU.<sup>181</sup> Along with mapping the activities of ordinary citizens, police collected data on students and identified various mosques as “terrorism enterprises.”<sup>182</sup> All of this occurred, it appears, in spite of a failure to uncover a single lead relevant to a terrorism investigation.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>179</sup>Charlie Savage, “N.S.A. Plans to Collect Calls is Renewed by Court,” *The New York Times*, October 18 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/19/us/nsa-plan-to-log-calls-is-renewed-by-court.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/19/us/nsa-plan-to-log-calls-is-renewed-by-court.html?_r=0) (accessed November 17, 2013).

<sup>180</sup>Matt Apuzzo and Joseph Goldstein, “New York Drops Unit That Spied on Muslims,” *The New York Times*, April 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/16/nyregion/police-unit-that-spied-on-muslims-is-disbanded.html> (accessed April 28, 2014).

<sup>181</sup>Apuzzo and Goldstein.

<sup>182</sup>Ibid.

<sup>183</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most probably, America's response to the September 11, 2001 terror attacks constitutes a Military Revolution. For some, initial consideration of this topic might seem to suggest that the attacks themselves constitute a Military Revolution, but the evidence does not support this conclusion. While the attacks certainly revolutionized the world, they more importantly provided justification and acceptance for armed military conflict and ushered in an era of considerable political, economic and social change. For many who experienced that tragic day, it defined an era. In spite of this, the attacks themselves were not a Military Revolution.

The attacks that killed thousands in New York City, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania certainly made the world aware of how far terrorists would go to indiscriminately kill innocent people, but they had done this before. Investigations led by various government law enforcement and intelligence agencies, in fact, linked Osama bin Laden's *al-Qaeda* network and its affiliated terrorist organizations with previous attacks on United States and its interests, including the 1993 World Trade Center bombings and the African embassy bombings. Still, the image of planes crashing into buildings, and the President's prompt and unequivocal condemnation of the attacks left little doubt that the United States intended to provide a heavy response, including the use of military force. It is this response, and not the attacks themselves, that constitute a Military Revolution.

The legacy of these attacks continues to affect the entire world. Although the United States took the lead on combating terrorism, it is not alone in leveraging the state's resources against those who envision death and destruction as appropriate means

to affect political or societal change. From Syria to Somalia to Russia, terrorists continue to target the innocent and weak in their bid for power and the affected governments respond to these threats in several ways, including with the use of lethal force. Terrorism certainly did not begin with the 9/11 attacks on the United States and unfortunately, it will not end with them, either.

Williamson Murray wrote that true Military Revolutions “recast the nature of society and the state.”<sup>184</sup> The Global War on Terror certainly meets the requirements for this label. Not only did the Global War on Terror redefine the government’s point of view as concerns terrorism, but it effectively committed the United States to a state of perpetual conflict. At very few other points in history has the world’s greatest democracy committed this level of effort and national treasure to defend itself against a perceived threat. In those instances where societies have committed themselves to deposing a looming threat, those responses most likely had revolutionary attributes themselves.

Of course, the United States has known war before, even major wars. Several of these, including the world wars and the wars in Korea and Vietnam, resulted in more American lives lost than did the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Global War on Terror is not about body counts, however. Its status as a “game changer” does not arise from the number of people killed or even the number of laws passed or the amount of money spent. The GWOT became a Military Revolution when the country’s fundamental outlook concerning terrorism changed. When the terror attacks were no longer considered criminal acts, but rather acts of war, the nation experienced a Military Revolution. The concept of a war without end against an evolving and adaptable enemy further changed

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<sup>184</sup>Sloan, 22.

the paradigm of how the United States fights its wars and differed substantially from the goals of obtaining unconditional surrender from the Axis powers or the cessation of hostilities by a communist force. This war aimed to eradicate a belief system that may have perhaps spread, vice shrank, during the war's execution. Indeed, the concept of perpetual warfare is not only very real, but very probable.

The GWOT introduced very few new concepts yet it fundamentally altered our world. Terrorist attacks and military responses to those attacks occurred before terrorists flew planes into buildings. The commitment of national resources and political, economic and societal changes to reflect these emerging commitments occurred prior to 9/11. What the GWOT did was fundamentally change the nature of life in the world's most powerful country, and by extension, life on earth as we know it. Hardly a day goes by when people do not feel some legacy of these attacks and the world's answer to those attacks. In short, the true legacy of September 11 is as much something one feels as it is that he or she can describe. The Global War on Terror has rewritten the rules of how we live and combat terror. We will likely not be the same again.

In much the same way that nuclear weapons constituted a military revolution for keeping the Cold War Cold, the United States' response to the 9/11 attacks effectively assured that the GWOT would remain "hot," perhaps indefinitely. Small conflicts around the globe, from Africa to Asia to Europe and beyond will continue to trace their roots to the eradication of terrorism. Friendly and hostile governments around the world will continue to invoke the concept of terrorism as justification for their actions, irrespective of international opinion and if necessary, objections. Simply put, these attacks put into

motion a self-sustaining cycle of habitual conflict that shows no signs of abating and will likely continue to occupy political and military leaders for years, if not decades, to come.

Does the Established Definition Support 9/11  
as a Military Revolution?

At this point, reintroducing the previously established definition of a Military Revolution assists the author and reader in conducting final analysis into the United States' Global War on Terror as a Military Revolution. To refresh the latter: A Military Revolution is a significant event or development that combines far-reaching political, economic, social and military implications. The Military Revolution need not be military in nature, and in fact, may not be fully realized until applied to military operations potentially far removed from the revolution's initial conception (or cause).

The preceding chapter introduced two distinguishing characteristics that differentiate the GWOT from previous responses to terrorist attacks. First, the Authorization of Military Force signed in the days after the attacks allowed—for the first time—the application of military force against individuals and organizations vice nations and governments. This radical shift in the law's application facilitated the expansion of the war on terror by effectively presenting an infinite list of possible targets that the United States could engage using the elements of national power. With no government required to accept a negotiated settlement or an unconditional surrender, the AUMF established the foundation for the second defining characteristic of this war: the idea of a war without end.

The prospect of an endless war is as profound as it is terrifying; in this context it is also a bit misleading. As discussed, the kinetic “shooting” wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

have ended or will soon end. What remains, therefore, is a commitment to wage war through other means, including through the enactment of various legislation to facilitate the identification and defeat of terrorist elements, economic initiatives to freeze terrorists' assets or even a heightened information campaign that seeks to erode the support base of potential terrorist recruits while strengthening the functionality of foreign governments. In many respects, the "war" on terror depicts less a war in the traditional sense than it does a type of "resolve." In this sense, the U.S. resolve to actively attack terrorism around the world and to remain in a state of heightened vigilance is significant. It is also enduring—and revolutionary.

As concerns the first element of our definition, the AUMF permitting the targeting of individuals and organizations, as well as the prospect of a potentially endless war, most assuredly connotes far-reaching political, economic, social and military implications. Additionally, these measures, although possessing a strong military contingent, clearly transcend mere military considerations. The AUMF itself, for instance, is largely political and all anti-terrorism initiatives, from the deployment of armored brigades to Iraq to the hiring of additional screeners at our nation's airports accrues a cost and affects our society. In other words, the war on terror is more than a military operation and exists as much outside the military domain as inside it. In these ways, the definition seems to validate the GWOT as a military revolution.

Along with describing the broad effects denoting a Military Revolution, the idea that the event need not originate from a military event provides justification for why one might consider the creation of a nation-state and the Industrial Revolution Military Revolutions. These events, although ultimately having a profound impact on warfare,

were not military events in their inception. The War on Terror, by contrast, became a military operation very quickly after the attacks. Several factors might help explain this. First, the nature of the attacks themselves required a strong military response. Secondly, the President's speeches in the days and weeks after the attacks foreshadowed the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Central to this thesis, however, is the supporting political, economic and social effects not only resulting from the attacks and subsequent military operations, but also those that helped justify and propagate the wars. In other words, although the most visible response to these events was military, other efforts and initiatives occurred simultaneously.

Perhaps the strongest argument for the Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terror as a Military Revolution rests with the political aspect. As discussed at length above, the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, coexisting with a massive expansion and restructuring of the United States government seems to denote revolutionary change. Conversely, the economic and social domains provide less robust support. Undeniably, each of these areas did change, and in fact continue to change, as a result of the attacks and ensuing operations, but the failure to mobilize either the economy or the population seems to indicate that at least from the U.S perspective, these changes, while significant, fail to reflect an "earthquake."

### Relations to Previous Studies

As described in chapter 3, this thesis relies heavily on synthesizing qualitative information from various sources to support and promote its reasoning. In a sense, this work provides very little new information. Rather, it considers research previously undertaken by experts in various fields to determine similarities in their thinking and

incorporates a fresh point of view to gain additional insights and possibilities from these findings. Without question, this thesis simply would not exist if not for the incredible scholarship and research of much more qualified and experienced professionals in many fields. Whenever possible, this investigation aimed to help highlight connections between various sources; at no point did it suppose a superior degree of analysis or ability than did those authors whose writings proved invaluable.

The concepts of Military Revolutions and Revolutions in Military Affairs are as allusive as they are alluring. The apparent logic and conceptual simplicity of these theories belies the depth of analysis and investigation that several authors have devoted to this subject. In that regard, this thesis shares those struggles and confronts many of the same obstacles as earlier researchers in seeking to not only determine if an historic event meets the criteria to qualify as a Military Revolution, but also to appropriately define exactly what constitutes a Military Revolution. In no uncertain terms, the idea that a single event or a series of events could so profoundly reorient the very direction in which human society travels is an extraordinary concept. With respect to the United States' response to the 9/11 attacks, the extraordinary evil of that day most assuredly warranted equally extraordinary responses. At least in that regard, the assertion that any response to those attacks affects a paradigm shift deserves further contemplation and provides as promising a candidate as any for inclusion in that exclusive group of historic developments that so fundamentally redefined our collective identity with respect to warfare.

### Suggestions for Further Research

Whereas this thesis relies heavily on previous works already completed by an eclectic group of experts in various fields, so too does this thesis provide a potential resource for others who seek to build upon the ideas put forth in these pages. In any case, this work should not be considered the final word on whether or not America's response to the September 11 terror attacks constitutes a Military Revolution. Rather, it should provide a starting point for those more qualified to provide analysis in their respective fields. Unquestionably, the sheer amount of information available that relates to this topic necessitates involvement from multiple individuals if one seeks to attain a holistic understanding of this event and its consequences.

Perhaps most importantly, individuals in their various fields should not limit their analysis merely to those areas with which they are most familiar, but rather contribute it to a broader dialogue that focuses more on a type of "inter-disciplinary" relationship between one element or the other. The definition provided in this thesis, much like that graphically portrayed at the Command and General Staff College, suggests that Military Revolutions do not belong solely to the military realm. Contrarily, the definitions require that for an event to become a Military Revolution there needs to be broader applications. The previous discussion sought to provide rudimentary evidence that these applications exist in the post-9/11 world. Further research can strengthen these arguments and provide additional evidence to debate the validity of the underlying precepts.

Fortunately, the ongoing and global nature of America's War on Terror promises to provide ample material for continued study, at least for the foreseeable future. The abundance of information, combined with the relatively recent nature of the incidents

themselves, assures that additional research will likely provide new insights into the legacy of these events and contribute to the collective understanding of how they affected our world. With specific concern to America's response to the attacks as a Military Revolution, the passage of time will no doubt provide greater clarity and will undoubtedly become the true metric by which to determine the appropriateness of this significant classification.

The sheer scope of the September 11 attacks and resultant response transcends the purview of historians and military officers. Political analysts, economists, sociologists and the American public at large play a vital role in providing perspective to this 21<sup>st</sup> Century history. If these events truly constitute a Military Revolution, they require an interdisciplinary approach for any worthwhile analysis. This analysis provided general political, economic and social considerations, but other professionals possess the expertise to contribute significant insight to the discussion.

In that vein, future civilian and military leaders would do well to view the U.S. War on Terror in the context of the JIIM (Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational) paradigm. The United States does not fight the OCO/GWOT alone and it cannot win alone. Rather, a synergistic effort that incorporates the various elements of U.S. national power with the unique capabilities of our various allies and international partners provides the best chance for ultimate victory. At times, those relationships will present their own challenges as our most talented diplomats and thinkers negotiate complex and often conflicting cultural and political differences to combat the threat of terrorist organizations and those states that support them.

The U.S. partnership with Pakistan provides a strong example of the critical importance that maintaining key relationships in spite of potential differences have on mission success. In addition to sharing a porous border with Afghanistan, Pakistan provides vital access to the Indian Ocean and hence is indispensable to the logistical sustainment of coalition forces. Given the ethnic, religious and historical ties that no doubt exist between peoples in these nations' contentious border region, our political and military leaders must remain eternally cognizant of these connections and consider the impact that their actions (or at times inaction) might have on these groups. Incidents of cross-border fratricide, for instance, have the potential to let a tactical error become a strategic defeat. At the individual and collective level, understanding and seeking to improve our nation's capacity to operate effectively in the JIIM environment must remain a top priority. This author would recommend that future research considers the War on Terror from that perspective.

Specific recommendations for further research include deeper analysis into how the response to these attacks differed from previous terror attacks. Certainly military action as a result of an attack on American soil has precedent, and even military action against terrorists in Afghanistan occurred in the last years of the previous century. To truly understand what makes this event special, one needs to establish that a true revolution occurred. Additionally, one needs to consider the legacy of these events twenty, thirty and fifty years hence. Ultimately, a "longitudinal" approach to studying this topic will help to determine if the response was truly revolutionary, or just extraordinary, given extraordinary circumstances.

To appreciate the full impact of the American response to the terror attacks and to completely develop the theory of how the resultant actions and events constitute a Military Revolution, future researches should also consider concurrent (related) Revolutions in Military Affairs. Admittedly, this thesis devoted considerable effort to introducing a definition for an RMA, but provided very little discussion on any that occurred as a result of the Global War on Terror. The absence of this discussion, although by design, does leave much research to be completed. Accordingly, any future researcher should include a more robust discussion of any Revolutions in Military Affairs that occurred during, and especially as a result of, the GWOT.

Finally, this author acknowledges a significant limitation in this work's scope, namely that it fails to provide a robust explanation of how the United States' war on terror ushered in revolutionary change on a global level. Any criticism aimed at this author concerning this largely unaddressed area would no doubt reach a receptive ear. In short, the Global War on Terror, while U.S. inspired and led, was truly a global enterprise. In Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond, American soldiers did not fight alone. According to Stephen Carney from the United States Army's Center of Military History, approximately 60 nations provided support for Operation Iraqi Freedom.<sup>185</sup> 37 of these nations provided ground troops.<sup>186</sup> By the tenth year of war in Afghanistan, just under 50

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<sup>185</sup>Stephen A. Carney, *Allied Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 2011), [http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/059/59-3-1/CMH\\_59-3-1.pdf](http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/059/59-3-1/CMH_59-3-1.pdf) (accessed April 28, 2014), vii.

<sup>186</sup>*Ibid.*

nations maintained military personnel in that country.<sup>187</sup> Unequivocally, the Global War on Terror was global in more than name; it brought together a coalition of nations committed to showing solidarity and resolves to eradicate terrorist networks and deny them sanctuary in weak and unstable countries. For those individuals seeking to conduct additional research into this topic, this author would recommend elaborating upon these international efforts and highlight the contributions and antiterrorism initiatives of our global partners.

#### Author's Final Commentary

The final chapters on this topic remain unwritten. While this thesis aims to provide a broad synthesis of available literature and historic events to argue that we have witnessed a Military Revolution, this revolution continues. As this document goes to print, much of the world remains a volatile and dangerous place; terrorism continues to threaten the existence of struggling and weak governments and the security of people everywhere. How the world responds to these dangers depends in large part on how people view and understand the nature of the exigent threat. Do we view the September 11, 2001 terror attacks as a horrible but largely isolated event directed by a radical terrorist for his personal vendetta? Or do we rather view international terrorism as an emerging reality that truly pits good versus evil and freedom against tyranny? Unfortunately, the answers to these questions exist beyond the reach of a single individual and requires yet unknown resources to conquer. In the end, one must realize

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<sup>187</sup>Afghanistan International Security Assistance Force, "Troop Numbers and Contributions," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2014, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php> (accessed April 28, 2014).

that terrorism in one form or another has always existed and likely always will. For our purposes, as political, military and academic leaders, one question remains. In this thesis we sought to answer “what?” and “so what?” These questions considered the legacy of these terror attacks and whether or not the Global War on Terror ushered in a Military Revolution, along with all its implications. We are now left to answer the final, and perhaps most important question: now what? What do we do now with our understanding of these events, their consequences and the potential implications for our future? Perhaps the answer to this largely rhetorical question, yet one needing political, military, economic and social answers, lies most at the center of our quest for additional research.

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