THE
LAND
WARFARE
PAPERS

No. 58 SEPTEMBER 2006

Defining Asymmetric Warfare

David L. Buffaloe

A National Security Affairs Paper
Published on Occasion by

THE INSTITUTE OF
LAND WARFARE

ASSOCIATION OF THE
UNITED STATES ARMY
Arlington, Virginia

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David L. Buffaloe

The Institute of Land Warfare
ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

AN AUSA INSTITUTE OF LAND WARFARE PAPER

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LAND WARFARE PAPER NO. 58, SEPTEMBER 2006

Defining Asymmetric Warfare

by David L. Buffaloe

David Buffaloe, an Infantry major in the U.S. Army, recently completed his Master of Policy Management degree at Georgetown University as part of the Army's Office of the Secretary of Defense Internship Program and now serves as the Congressional Liaison for the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization. He enlisted in the National Guard as a field artillery forward observer in 1988 and in the Regular Army in 1990 during the Operation Desert Shield force buildup. After Operation Desert Storm, he won a competitive Army nomination to attend the U.S. Military Academy, where he graduated in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nuclear Engineering Management. His first assignment was as a mechanized infantry lieutenant with the 1st Infantry Division in Germany, where he participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As a junior captain, he served as an instructor in the Mountain Phase of the U.S. Army Ranger School. He deployed to Afghanistan in December 2002 as the battalion plans officer and assistant operations officer for the 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division. He took command of Bravo Company, 3-504PIR, and Firebase Shkin in the Bermel Province in May 2003 after his predecessor was badly wounded in a firefight with al Qaeda forces. He commanded the task force at Firebase Shkin through five separate small-arms enemy engagements with al Qaeda and hostile Taliban forces and was one of the first conventional infantry officers to conduct counterinsurgency missions formerly reserved for special operations forces. He later commanded B/3-504 in Balad, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom-Phase II and served as the brigade plans officer prior to the 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division's second deployment to Afghanistan. In addition to his studies at Georgetown, then-Captain Buffaloe served as a part-time Military Fellow for the U.S. Senate Committee for Veterans Affairs. He is currently pursuing both his PhD in Public Policy from George Mason University and his Post-Graduate Intelligence Program Certificate at the Joint Military Intelligence College operated by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

This paper represents the opinions of the author and should not be taken to represent the views of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, the United States government, the Institute of Land Warfare, or the Association of the United States Army or its members.

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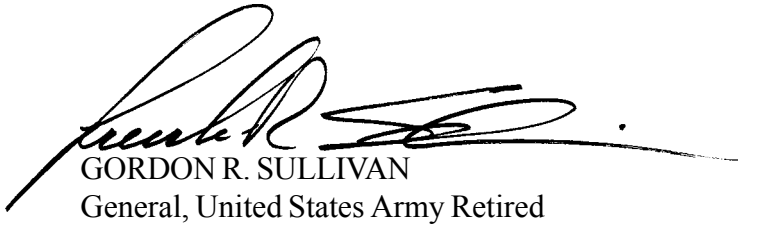
Foreword

Warfare today has taken on a new form and grown to new levels. The type of warfare is not new, and few of the tactics are new. What is new is that this type of war has recently reached a global level—and the United States and its allies have found themselves ill prepared. Many strategists and theorists have attempted to grasp the concept of the war we are facing today, yet none have adequately given it definition and understanding.

This paper surveys some of the history and literature of asymmetric warfare, citing and critiquing some of the best attempts to define the term. The author then adds his own discussion of the term, its concepts and its implications, and proposes his own definition in an attempt to resurrect the term before it becomes completely obsolete.

America's sole-superpower status forces us to continually engage in asymmetric warfare since no force can win a traditional war against us. Even traditional wars today—such as the first phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom—and in the future will have many asymmetric elements and implications, especially after the traditional war has been won.



GORDON R. SULLIVAN
General, United States Army Retired
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September 2006

Defining Asymmetric Warfare

Introduction

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States homeland[1] captured the attention of the world and ushered in a new phase of warfare. Not that terrorism was new—it has been around since the dawn of time—but just as World War I and World War II elevated warfare itself to a worldwide level, 9/11 brought a global dimension to terrorism. The difference today is that the enemy takes on many faces and methods: terrorism, insurgency, war of information and ideas, war of disruptive threats, attacks using bioweapons through the mail or cyber-attacks on the Internet, war waged by non-state actors against the sole remaining superpower. The face and method not used by the current enemy is what is known as "traditional warfare"—warfare conducted by the legitimate military forces of nation-states, wherein the objective is either terrain- or enemy-focused. The 9/11 attacks did not signify an end to traditional warfare. On the contrary, in 2003 the United States fought a traditional war against the forces of Iraq's Ba'ath Party government and won a regime change. But if warfare as the United States and its allies understand it is limited to military conflicts between nation-states, then what do we call the bloodshed and conflict we have seen and are currently experiencing throughout the world?

In the second half of the 20th century, the two great powers of the world waged what is known as the Cold War. Few strategists or theorists understood the concept or paradigm of a Cold War back in the 1940s. Yet the United States, its government, its bureaucracy and its military evolved to fight the Cold War. Nuclear technologies grew; Russia experts became prevalent in U.S. universities; students of Soviet strategy examined communist theory to better understand the enemy; clandestine intelligence organizations as well as high-tech intelligence platforms came into existence and became focused on the enemy of the United States.

Now that the Soviet Union is dissolved, now that the United States is the only superpower in the world, now that an enemy of the United States has launched an attack on the American homeland, this nation must once again evolve to face a new enemy. So what type of war is this? The President addressed this topic very eloquently to a West Point graduating class:

> This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origin—war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins, war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. . . . It preys on economic unrest and ethnic conflicts. It requires in those situations where we must counter it, and these are the kinds of challenges that will be before us in the next decade if freedom is to be saved, a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.[2]

The statement seems to have hit the mark, but the speaker was President John F. Kennedy and he was addressing the West Point Class of 1962. The Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Armed Forces and the head of the U.S. bureaucracy called for evolution—forty years ago—to confront the type of war the United States is fighting today, yet most U.S. bureaucracies (including the Department of Defense) are still ill-equipped to face today's opponent in the early part of the 21st century.

Many have tried to describe this new type of warfare, and many catchphrases and buzzwords have come and gone: low-intensity conflict, military operations other than war, asymmetric warfare, fourth-generation warfare, irregular warfare. To understand this type of warfare, one must first define "warfare" in general. Merriam-Webster defines warfare as military operations between enemies, an activity undertaken by a political unit (as a nation) to weaken or destroy another (e.g., economic warfare) or a struggle between competing enemies.[3] Traditional warfare has taken the form of violent military action among nation-states. By its very nature, warfare is a struggle at the strategic level. Battles are fought at the tactical level and campaigns at the operational level, but warfare is waged at the strategic level. The great Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz understood that warfare is an extension of "politics[4] through other means."[5]

"Asymmetric warfare" is a term that waxed in the realm of U.S. government documents and academic writing in the late 1990s but waned in the year 2003, and it is now almost shunned. During its heyday, to scholars and government officials it meant everything from the 9/11 terrorist strikes to roadside bombs to supercomputer viruses to nuclear proliferation. Arguably, it meant so many different things that it became a useless, ambiguous term.

Understanding the concept of asymmetric warfare has always been challenging. During the Cold War, the two world superpowers participated in various arms races—each side always in fear of a gap in their capabilities when compared to the other. Peace was secured through mutually assured destruction (MAD). This bipolar order of the world's military forces relied mainly on concepts of symmetry. Even if a perfect symmetry of forces could not be achieved, a balancing of qualitative advantage of the West versus quantitative numbers of forces in the East led to an arguable symmetry.[6] Also during this time, much trust was placed in documents such as the Geneva Conventions[7]—whereby the great powers agreed to certain rules of war and thus dictated the management of violence. Building on the grand-scale conventional war fought during World War II, great-power warfare as understood during this time was a detailed, measured, ordered event, getting messy only on the periphery in places such as Afghanistan for the Soviets and Vietnam for the Americans.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks, of course, changed many concepts. Taking place roughly a decade after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar order, 9/11 showed the West that their new enemy plays by no rules, respects no national boundaries and, although he wields little or no advanced technology or firepower, can wreak

more destruction upon American lives on U.S. soil in an hour than occurred in the nearly half-century of the Cold War. The attacks also demonstrated that a military could no longer guarantee its ability to serve as a buffer between the enemy and its own government or people. This shock to the Western psyche spurred much of the discussion that was already transpiring on the concept of asymmetric warfare—changing perceptions of strategy, tactics, security and threat forever.

However, the concept of asymmetric warfare has been around for centuries. Following the teachings of Sun Tzu, all warfare is asymmetric because one exploits an enemy's strengths while attacking his weaknesses. The Greeks used the Phalanx to defeat a mounted enemy. Hannibal used a feint in the middle of his forces with a double-envelopment to achieve victory over the Romans. Every time a new tactic or invention changed the fortunes and power of one army or empire over another, an imbalance or asymmetry occurred—the weighting to one side created the conditions for victory.

Given the strict definition of symmetry, if any war were perfectly symmetrically weighted, then stalemate would be the norm and victory would be based solely upon luck. This truism, coupled with the ambiguous nature of the term "asymmetric warfare" as it was debated after the end of the Cold War, is the primary reason for the term's waning and its current taboo status. However, while all warfare is asymmetric, not every battle in history lends itself to today's concept—ambiguous though it may be—of asymmetric warfare.

When the term "asymmetric warfare" *was* used, it seemed to mean everything from catastrophic terrorist attacks to insurgents' roadside bombs, to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to advanced computer viruses. Understandably, when a term means so many different things to so many people, it easily loses its usefulness. Many scholars have attempted to define the term and its meaning. The U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute commissioned a three-year-long effort to grapple with the term and its implications. Yet, due to a lack of concrete understanding, the term became meaningless.

Asymmetry in Government Documents

The first official mention of the concept of asymmetry to appear in official U.S. government documents occurred in 1995 in Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the United States of America*. However, according to Dr. Stephen Metz and Dr. Douglas Johnson,

> The concept . . . was used in a very simplistic and limited sense. The doctrine defined asymmetric engagements as those between dissimilar forces, specifically air versus land, air versus sea, and so forth. This very narrow concept of asymmetry had limited utility.[8]

It focused the concept of asymmetric engagements so narrowly that it continued to limit them to military-on-military fighting.

From this initial document, the term made its way into the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which elaborated on the concept of asymmetry and used the realist doctrine of international relations[9] to anticipate unconventional attacks by potential enemies:

> U.S. dominance in the conventional military arena may encourage adversaries to use . . . asymmetric means to attack our forces and interests overseas and Americans at home.[10]

This statement illustrated that, given the unipolar nature of the world, a "rational" enemy of the United States would be expected to find new and unique ways to strike.

After these initial official mentions of asymmetric warfare, the military began more in earnest to attempt to understand this seemingly new concept in military affairs. The most important single study—*The Joint Strategic Review: Asymmetric Approaches to Warfare*, undertaken in 1999—provided both a conceptual framework of asymmetric threats and a number of recommendations.[11] It also was the first official attempt to define asymmetry as it applied to the military:

> Asymmetric approaches are attempts to circumvent or undermine U.S. strengths while exploiting U.S. weaknesses using methods that differ significantly from the United States' expected method of operations.[12]

The authors of *The Joint Strategic Review,* recognizing that they had a limited grasp of the concept, ended with a number of recommendations for follow-on study; most—if not all—of them were largely ignored.[13]

The follow-on document was *Joint Vision 2020*. Published in 2000, it labeled such asymmetric approaches as long-range ballistic missiles "perhaps the most serious danger the United States faces in the immediate future."[14] Yet critics note that this document fell short in its follow-through recommendations on how to handle this serious new threat.[15]

Asymmetric warfare is still discussed within some official Department of Defense (DoD) documents, but it currently takes primacy amongst DoD personnel working on Defense Transformation:

> We are operating in a less predictable threat environment than we faced before 1990, with many more axes of approach to defend against, both at home and abroad. Regional powers are developing capabilities to threaten stability in areas critical to U.S. interests. Both state and non-state adversaries are attempting to compensate for U.S. military superiority by developing asymmetric capabilities. And the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) capabilities raises the specter of such weapons falling into terrorists' hands. Non-state actors using the international sea lanes and airways of global commerce have also greatly diminished the protection that the U.S. was afforded by geographical distance in the past.[16]

This document also quotes the emphasis placed on asymmetric concepts by former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard B. Myers:

> We are fighting a war unlike any we have fought before—it demands new ways of thinking about military force, new processes to improve strategic agility, and new technologies to take the fight to the enemy.[17]

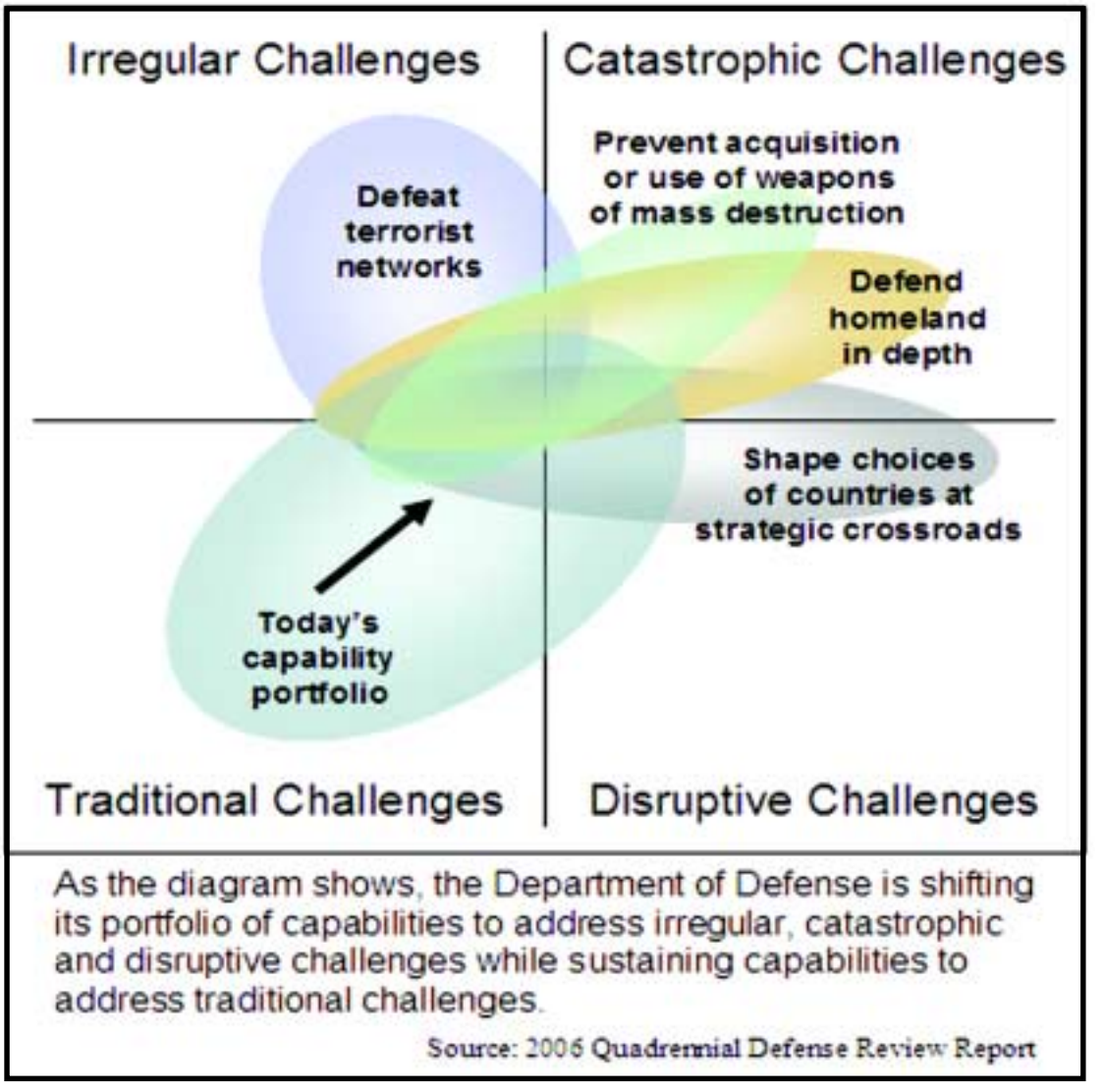
The most recent official document espousing asymmetric concepts is the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, published on 6 February. The term "asymmetric" appears 14 times in the 2006 QDR. It addresses asymmetric operations, asymmetric threats, asymmetric challenges, asymmetric military capabilities, asymmetric tactics, asymmetric approaches and, in one instance, actually uses the term "asymmetric warfare," albeit parenthetically: "*Irregular (Asymmetric) Warfare."*[18]

The 2006 QDR demonstrates that the strategic thinkers within the Pentagon grasp the fact that the current war illustrates how the nature of warfare itself has changed:

> This war requires the U.S. military to adopt unconventional and indirect approaches. Currently, Iraq and Afghanistan are crucial battlegrounds, but the struggle extends far beyond their borders. With its allies and partners, the United States must be prepared to wage this war in many locations simultaneously and for some years to come. As the Department of Defense works to defeat these enemies, it must also remain vigilant in an era of surprise and uncertainty and prepare to prevent, deter or defeat a wider range of asymmetric threats. . . .
>
> This QDR sought to provide a broader range of military options for the President and new capabilities needed by Combatant Commanders to confront asymmetric threats. The principles of transparency, constructive competition to encourage innovation, agility and adaptability, collaboration and partnership should guide the formulation of new strategic processes and organizational structures.[19]

The QDR shows a graphic illustration (shown on the following page) that demonstrates the various asymmetric challenges faced by the United States in today's unipolar environment, along with the transformation in force planning and force allocation necessary to address those asymmetric threats. Note that Traditional Challenges (i.e., non-asymmetric) make up only one quarter of the challenges, yet make up the vast majority of today's capability portfolio (prior to transformation).

The other, asymmetric challenges—Irregular Challenges, Catastrophic Challenges and Disruptive Challenges—make up the other three quartiles and represent the future prescription for capabilities DoD wishes to possess. This diagram seems to underscore the changing nature of warfare[20] in the current asymmetric environment, and it echoes DoD's commitment to transforming to address this threat.



As the diagram shows, the Department of Defense is shifting its portfolio of capabilities to address irregular, catastrophic and disruptive challenges while sustaining capabilities to address traditional challenges.

Source: 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report

Although the concept of asymmetry is prevalent in Defense Transformation and the current QDR, the term "asymmetric warfare" and its relevant concepts are largely or completely absent from the following documents:

- *National Security Strategy*, 2002[21]
- *National Security Strategy*, 2006[22]
- *National Defense Strategy*, 2005[23]
- *National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 2006[24]
- *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, 2005[25]

This absence illustrates why it is crucial to provide a workable definition for asymmetric warfare—because this is the level at which an understanding of asymmetric warfare is most needed.

Asymmetry in History

The concept of asymmetric warfare has existed since the dawn of time. One need not go into every example of a war fought with a new tactic, new weapon or new organizational style, or where one side used terrain or some other tangible substance to its advantage. As we examine the *concept* of asymmetry in warfare, however, a few key authors and situations stand out.

The first is Sun Tzu, the sage of warfare theory. In his monumental work *The Art of War*, written more than 1,500 years ago, he states:

> All warfare is based on deception. When confronted with an enemy one should offer the enemy a bait to lure him; feign disorder and strike him. When he concentrates, prepare against him; where he is strong, avoid him.[26]

This quote illustrates that a good strategist or tactician should always look for asymmetry and exploit it. However, it applies to all warfare, including traditional and conventional warfare, so it does very little for the argument that asymmetric warfare is somehow different.

Sun Tzu's concept of the asymmetric nature of all warfare was echoed in the mid-20th century by B. H. Liddell Hart, a staunch advocate of the "indirect approach." He taught, "The wisest strategy avoids the enemy's strength and probes for weakness."[27]

After the Napoleonic Wars, the German strategist Carl von Clausewitz grasped the fact that warfare must not be simply intertwined with politics; rather, it must be subservient to politics and waged only to achieve political goals:

> We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means. War in general, and the commander in any specific instance, is entitled to require that the trend and designs of policy shall not be inconsistent with these means. That, of course is no small demand, but however much it will affect political aims in a given case, it will never do more than modify them. The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.[28]

Like those of Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart, Clausewitz's principles apply equally to conventional/traditional/symmetric warfare. But this understanding that warfare is an extension of politics rather than a raw matching up of firepower is key to understanding the nature of asymmetric warfare.

In the late 19th century another German, Otto Von Bismarck, gave the first hint that nontraditional asymmetric concepts can help to balance conventional military weaknesses:

"We live in a wondrous time in which the strong is weak because of his moral scruples and the weak grows strong because of his audacity."[29] This statement illustrates a cultural asymmetry, bringing a whole new concept to asymmetry in warfare. In it, Bismarck illustrates that one can balance against a stronger military force if one is willing to forgo the boundary of moral and cultural acceptability.

T. E. Lawrence, popularly known as "Lawrence of Arabia," was one of the first military thinkers to understand and write about the concept of unconventional/asymmetric warfare. In *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, he points out that a strict military advantage might not be the surest route to victory:

> Do not try to do too much with your own hands. . . . Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not win it for them.[30]

Lawrence shows that when fighting in an asymmetric environment, long-term objectives come into play; intangible progress is achieved by the manner in which the war is fought. This intangible progress outweighs the traditional military progress of the campaign. He teaches:

> Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is. It may take them longer and it may not be as good as you think, but if it is theirs, it will be better.[31]

A monumental work on the concept of asymmetric warfare was published in 1964 by a French officer with experience in revolutionary warfare in places such as Algeria and Greece. David Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, written prior to the United States' main involvement in Vietnam, reads like a field manual for counterinsurgency in places like today's Iraq.[32] He recognized that the insurgent and the counterinsurgent, although fighting the same war in time and space, are fighting very different wars in terms of tactics, objectives and ideals. One of Galula's key observations addresses the asymmetry between the insurgent and the counterinsurgent:

> There is an asymmetry between the opposite camps of a revolutionary war. This phenomenon results from the very nature of the war, from the disproportion of strength between the opponents at the outset, and from the difference in essence between their assets and their liabilities. . . .
>
> The insurgent has a formidable asset—the ideological power of a cause on which to base his action. The counterinsurgent has a heavy liability—he is responsible for maintaining order throughout the country. The insurgent's strategy will naturally aim at converting his intangible assets into concrete ones, the counterinsurgent's strategy at preventing his intangible liability from dissipating his concrete assets. . . .The peculiarities that mark the revolutionary war as so different from the conventional one derive from this initial asymmetry.[33]

Although Galula's book focuses on revolutionary war and counterinsurgency, most of its teachings apply to the current concept of asymmetric warfare.

Finally, in 1999 two colonels—Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, from the People's Republic of China—wrote and published a book entitled *Unrestricted Warfare*.[34] This work, aside from causing mass panic in the U.S. defense and intelligence community, brought many previously unconsidered concepts into the realm of warfare and altered thinking to perceive every act of national power as an act of war. It also suggested other catastrophic and disruptive threats as the only means to wage war against a country that is vastly superior in traditional and conventional military might:

> While we are seeing a relative reduction in military violence, at the same time we definitely are seeing an increase in political, economic, and technological violence. However, regardless of the form the violence takes, war is war, and a change in the external appearance does not keep any war from abiding by the principles of war.[35]

This manuscript, published prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, lent more to U.S. understanding of asymmetric warfare than any study published by a Western author. The concepts of *Unrestricted Warfare* have contributed to some excellent work and study by Bruce Berkowitz in *The New Face of War*[36] and Martin Van Creveld in *The Transformation of War*.[37]

Asymmetric Warfare in Scholarly Writing

After the Chinese publication of *Unrestricted Warfare*, in the year 2000 and for the next three years, the U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) commissioned a study to examine the concept of asymmetry:

> Following the May 2000 Army-Marine Warfighter Talks, the Army resolved to develop an Army-Marine Corps view of a strategy for combating asymmetric threats. The U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, in turn, set about defining asymmetry within the context of military doctrine, assessing the implications of asymmetric military capabilities, and suggesting strategic concepts for countering asymmetric threats.[38]

SSI director Dr. Douglas Lovelace best described the Army's intellectual emphasis on asymmetry in the introductions to many of the SSI products:

> Since the mid-1990s, the concept of strategic asymmetry has been receiving more serious attention from the U.S. Department of Defense. The September 11, 2001, attack on America, in which fully-loaded airplanes used as a form of stealth bomb with aerial fuel explosives hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, marked the beginning of an actual asymmetric war. Its initial dimensions shocked and engaged the Nation.[39]

Some of the focus of the SSI studies built on the notion of the Realist Doctrine of International Relations—that a "rational" enemy of the United States would seek means to strike at America whereby they could avoid the tremendous U.S. military advantage. This notion was espoused by Dr. Max Manwaring in *Internal Wars* in September 2001:

> Ironically, strategies being developed to protect or further the interests of a number of new players on the international scene are inspired by the dual idea of evading and frustrating superior conventional military force within the global chaos. The better a power such as the United States becomes at the operational level of conventional war, the more a potential opponent turns to asymmetric solutions.[40]

In SSI's *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, Metz and Johnson took the most thorough and comprehensive look at the concept of asymmetric warfare. They critiqued the most recent and accepted definition: that given in the *Joint Strategic Review* of 1999. Metz and Johnson's critiques as well as their own definition are further discussed in the next section, "Past Attempts to Define Asymmetric Warfare."

Melissa Applegate, a former military intelligence officer and current Senior Warnings Analyst for the National Intelligence Council (NIC), offered a keen understanding of asymmetric warfare as well as a strong critique of U.S. military leaders' tendency to pay asymmetric warfare superficial homage but fail to follow through with substantial policy. She highlights the primacy of asymmetric threat in her introduction to *Preparing for Asymmetry*—published, ironically, ten days prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks:

> Asymmetric approaches can no longer be considered secondary or peripheral to conventional threats; U.S. forces must master the asymmetric domain with the same intellectual energy devoted to conventional warfare—because asymmetry is not just a threat.[41]

In an interview, Applegate stated that although the United States "pays her to be paranoid" as an analyst for the NIC, she agrees with DoD that

> . . . there is a much lower expectation of traditional threats out there and/or political scenarios that lend themselves to resolution by conventional warfare. At the same time, I believe that the conflicts the U.S. is likely to find itself in will all, undoubtedly, have asymmetric characteristics as much because of who we are and what we do as who our enemies are and what they do.[42]

In February 2002, Robert Steele, a retired Marine Corps infantry and intelligence officer, published a work that called for policy action in the face of the evolving asymmetric war:

> Both the Cold War threat paradigm and the Cold War intelligence paradigm are dead. A new integrative paradigm for achieving asymmetric advantage in the face of nontraditional threats is needed in the face of both nontraditional threats and nontraditional sources and methods. This can be done by devising and exploiting new intelligence sources and methods.[43]

Although his work focused primarily on the U.S. intelligence apparatus, Steele's call for a policy shift in the face of the asymmetric threat is applicable to many other departments and agencies, not the least of them DoD itself.

In the summer of 2003, however, a military icon weighed in on the debate of whether or not asymmetric warfare was a great revolution in military affairs. Retired General Montgomery Meigs[44] offered the U.S. Army War College a completely different viewpoint on asymmetric warfare. He took a historical survey and contended that al Qaeda was applying similar tactics that had been used for centuries whenever a militarily weak force struggled against a strong force.

> Asymmetry means the absence of a common basis of comparison in respect to a quality, or in operational terms, a capability. . . .
>
> Actually, al Qaeda's overall strategy is not new. In the 11th and 12th centuries the Assassins, a militarily weak fundamentalist and extremist sect, used pinpoint killing to bring more powerful ruling groups to heel. Indoctrinating their young followers into an extreme and enthusiastic cult of Shiite Islam, they sent individuals and small teams out to infiltrate the inner circles of targeted leaders. . . . Today, only the mechanism of attack has changed.[45]

The final "nail in the coffin" of asymmetric warfare as a revolutionary term in military strategy came from one of the last publications of the SSI undertaking. In *Rethinking Asymmetric Threats*, Dr. Stephen Blank made the final compelling critique that the term had become too many things to too many different people and that its amorphous nature detracted from its utility.

> For the last several years, the U.S. strategic community has used the terms "asymmetric" and "asymmetry" to characterize everything from the threats we face to the wars we fight. In doing so, we have twisted these concepts beyond utility, particularly as they relate to the threats we face. As one writer cited here observed, we have reached the point where the German offensives of 1918 are considered asymmetric attacks. Clearly this use of the term asymmetric or of the concept of asymmetry does not help us assess correctly the threats we face. Indeed, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has voiced his discomfort with the term asymmetry, indicating his unease with its use.[46]

Blank's statements echoed the feeling of most of the strategic and academic community that the term "asymmetric warfare," having never received an adequate, useful definition, had dwindled into uselessness. The term *du jour* in its heyday, it now existed only within parts of the military establishment, where buzz words, once established, tend to linger on. The terms "low-intensity conflict" (LIC) and "military operations other than war" (MOOTW) are also now seldom used, yet there still exists an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict who oversees special

operations policy, as well as a Master of Defense Analysis degree program at the Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey, California, with a focus on special operations and low-intensity conflict. Like LIC, the term "asymmetric warfare" still has its legacy, in a new Army Special Mission Unit called the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), which activated on 8 March 2006. As described by Lieutenant General James J. Lovelace and Brigadier General Joseph L. Votel,

> The AWG will become a lead organization in providing the conventional force with global perspective and expertise in full spectrum training, planning and execution of countermeasures to asymmetric warfare.[47]

Ironically, the AWG, although an awesome step forward in retooling the U.S. Army to fight asymmetric warfare, focuses on specific enemy tactics and maintains its focus on the tactical rather than the strategic level.

Past Attempts to Define Asymmetric Warfare

The first official U.S. attempt to define any notion of asymmetry appeared in the 1999 *Joint Strategic Review*, which defined "asymmetric approaches":

> Asymmetric approaches are attempts to circumvent or undermine U.S. strengths while exploiting U.S. weaknesses using methods that differ significantly from the United States' expected method of operations. [Asymmetric approaches] generally seek a major psychological impact, such as shock or confusion that affects an opponent's initiative, freedom of action, or will. Asymmetric methods require an appreciation of an opponent's vulnerabilities. Asymmetric approaches often employ innovative, nontraditional tactics, weapons, or technologies, and can be applied at all levels of warfare—strategic, operational, and tactical—and across the spectrum of military operations.[48]

Metz and Johnson critiqued the *Joint Strategic Review* definition as follows:

> This definition expanded official thinking but has two shortcomings: it remains specific to the current strategic environment and American security situation; and it deals primarily with what might be called "negative" asymmetry—what an opponent might do to the United States—rather than giving equal weight to how the U.S. military might use asymmetry against its opponents.[49]

Their critique is valid on its second point—that when considering asymmetric warfare, equal weight should be given to the offensive asymmetric capabilities of the stronger power. However, their first point—that asymmetry as defined by *Joint Strategic Review* 1999 lacks a universal application because the definition focused on the United States—is too harsh in its criticism. Asymmetric warfare, like an insurgency on a grand strategic level, is a conflict that is waged very differently by the strong and the weak sides. It is not illogical for a U.S. government document to be U.S.-focused in defining aspects of warfare. It is

also adequate to substitute "the asymmetrically stronger opponent" for "the U.S." to achieve universal applicability—due to the unipolar nature of today's world, the United States will likely continue to hold the position of the "asymmetrically stronger opponent."

Although Metz and Johnson offered somewhat sound critiques of others' definitions of asymmetric warfare, their own definition was somewhat ambiguous:

> In the realm of military affairs and national security, asymmetry is acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize one's own advantages, exploit an opponent's weaknesses, attain the initiative, or gain greater freedom of action. It can be political-strategic, military-strategic, operational, or a combination of these. It can entail different methods, technologies, values, organizations, time perspectives, or some combination of these. It can be short-term or long-term. It can be deliberate or by default. It can be discrete or pursued in conjunction with symmetric approaches. It can have both psychological and physical dimensions.[50]

This definition of asymmetry, harking back to Sun Tzu's "acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize your advantage" with its many "can-be's," "can-have's" and "can-entail's," further complicated the concept. They then went on to identify more can-be's: positive or negative, short or long term, deliberate or by default, low risk or high risk, discrete or integrated, material or psychological. It was further complicated by its identification of levels of asymmetry and at least six different forms of asymmetry.[51] It is no wonder that, with this definition, most strategists were willing to let go of the term, assuming that it can be everything or nothing.

Colonel Robert Shaw, the first commanding officer of the U.S. Army's new Asymmetric Warfare Group, defines asymmetric warfare as such:

> Warfare in which the two or more belligerents are mismatched in their military capabilities or accustomed methods of engagement such that the militarily disadvantaged power must press its special advantages or . . . its enemy's particular weaknesses if they are to prevail.[52]

Shaw points out that the same definition could apply to any country, not just the United States. His definition applies the basic concept of Sun Tzu to the truism of the mismatch of forces in an asymmetric conflict. However, it does not address asymmetries beyond the mismatch of forces, such as the cultural asymmetry or the asymmetry of cost that exists on the strategic level.

Thoughts and Discussion on Asymmetry

The asymmetric nature of all warfare. The first and greatest critique of the concept of asymmetry in warfare is the one posed by Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart: Is not all warfare asymmetric? If all warfare is based on deception, if one looks for the indirect approach, does one not always strive for asymmetry even in conventional warfare? The answer to

this simple question is yes, but the actual concept of asymmetric warfare brings much more to the understanding of the current conflict.

Asymmetry of cost. One aspect of the current asymmetric war is the asymmetry of cost. Galula noted in 1964 the asymmetry of cost between an insurgent and a counterinsurgent. An insurgent blows up a bridge—a counterinsurgent now must guard all bridges. An insurgent throws a grenade into a theater—a counterinsurgent must take very expensive steps to ensure that the population feels safe.[53] This concept is drastically illustrated today in the tremendous cost to the United States to secure its airways after the relatively inexpensive (for the attackers) 9/11 attacks.

Asymmetry of cost is further illustrated in the cost of waging warfare in general with a non-state terrorist organization. When a nation-state wages war against a peer nation, each member of the conflict has similar risks at stake: population, land and interests to defend. When a non-state actor like a terrorist organization wages war against a nation-state, the non-state actor has no population or land at risk and therefore bears a lower cost in waging warfare.

Cultural asymmetry. Failure to understand an enemy's culture—assuming that the enemy thinks as you do and shares your values—will lend to a failure to achieve victory because you are unable to identify his "center of gravity." General Anthony Zinni, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired) identified the center of gravity of America's current enemy as "angry young Muslim men."[54] Cultural asymmetry impacts the way the West communicates—or fails to communicate—with this center of gravity.

Asymmetry and idiosyncrasy. In his *Parameters* article, Meigs recommended agreeing upon a definition, but he also recommended that strategists not overlook the idiosyncrasies of the enemy's methods:

> Idiosyncrasy has a different connotation—possessing a peculiar or eccentric pattern. In a military sense, idiosyncrasy connotes an unorthodox approach or means of applying a capability, one that does not follow the rules and is peculiar in a sinister sense. . . .
>
> In this new strategic environment we [should] agree on a set of definitions that will provide our tools for analysis. In preempting the terrorist are we really dealing with asymmetry, or is something else at work? Thinking of the threat as only asymmetric misses the mark, especially if we have the concept wrong. The combination of asymmetry and the terrorists' ability continually to devise idiosyncratic approaches presents our real challenge. Assessing the distinction and interrelationship between these two factors provides us with the initial understanding required to address the operational challenges.[55]

Ambiguous definitions. Major General John R. Landry, U.S. Army (Retired) has served as the National Intelligence Officer for Military Issues for most of the post-Cold War era,

having been appointed to the National Intelligence Council in 1993. He is not a fan of the term "asymmetric warfare," but he has stated that he is willing to be convinced.[56] Part of his reservation about the term is that its lack of proper definition has resulted in considerable clouding of crucial intellectual judgment: "Terminology is important. Are we fighting terrorism or are we truly fighting a global-transnational insurgency?" He posits that terminology is important because one fights an insurgency very differently than one fights terrorists.[57]

Multidimensional warfare. Shaw cited the multidimensional nature of asymmetric warfare:

> Whereas traditional warfare is linear in nature, Asymmetric Warfare is multi-dimensional and amorphous. One category blends into the other. One action affects the other. The "threat grid" depicted in the [2006] QDR is somewhat inaccurate because the lines between the various threats: catastrophic, disruptive, irregular, and traditional, are not solid boundaries, but rather blurred guidelines [whereby] one category bleeds over and overlaps the other.[58]

Dr. David Kilcullen, a retired Australian lieutenant colonel with experience in East Timor who is currently serving as the State Department's Senior Strategist for the Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism and is also one of the authors of the 2006 QDR, elaborated on this multidimensional aspect of warfare:

> Multidimensional warfare lends itself to asymmetry. For example, in Iraq today, there are four dimensions operating at once: 1) first and foremost, a devastated country badly in need of rebuilding, 2) counterinsurgency, 3) counterterrorism and 4) sectarian and communal conflict. The difficulty is that if you address one of the four, you lose ground on the other three. For instance, you cannot rebuild the nation because of all of the violence. So do you end the violence first? Well, no, because if you do not reconstruct the country then you add to the insurgency. If you give power to the Shia, then you feed the Sunni violence, etc.[59]

Kilcullen identified the following four aspects of asymmetry but did not limit the dimensions to these alone: asymmetry of technology, asymmetry of method, asymmetry of interests and asymmetry of culture and values. Asymmetry of technology is the most obvious due to the United States' vast advantage. Asymmetry of method was illustrated in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, when al Qaeda proved its ruthlessness and resolve. The U.S. experience in Vietnam illustrated an asymmetry of interests, since the U.S. goals and the goals of the Viet Cong were very much at odds.[60]

Irregular warfare. Even as the term "asymmetric warfare" approaches scholarly taboo, "irregular warfare" seems to be coming more into vogue—and, like asymmetric warfare, irregular warfare has not been strictly defined. One concise definition—"not regular warfare"[61] —was provided by Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl, U.S. Army (Ph.D., author and Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense). However, once again, this ambiguity demands some attention. Given the QDR force-planning grid, "irregular

challenges" are addressed by military forces attuned to "defeat terrorist networks." This diagram fails to identify the difference between terrorism and insurgency and fails to recognize the force planning necessary to defeat each. As Landry pointed out, each must be addressed by vastly different tactics.

It is accurate to place both terrorism and insurgency in the same category on the QDR force-planning grid; calling the broader category "irregular warfare" is also not a problem. But strategists, tacticians and force-planners should recognize the great difference between terrorism and insurgency. Whereas a terrorist can act alone and without support, an insurgent needs the support of the population to succeed. One can destroy a true terrorist by killing him, without fear of alienating the populace at large. As long as an insurgent has a cause that can be spread through the population, killing insurgents through harsh methods or dramatic fire superiority can have the effect of persuading more insurgents to their cause. When planning U.S. strategy, one must ask: Are the al Qaeda truly terrorists, or has their idea spread and solidified to the point that if every member of al Qaeda were removed, another organization would simply step into its place? When U.S. strategists can grasp this nuance between insurgents and terrorists, they can plan a strategy focused first on distancing the enemy from the people and destroying their idea in the minds of the population; then the United States will have a much easier fight—with the full support of the world's population, and without allowing any insurgency to grow.

The common thread. Is there a common thread among all of the various threats that asymmetry seems to represent: insurgency, cyber-terrorism, bioterrorism, improvised explosive devices, 9/11, WMD proliferation? Yes, the thread is that it is the ideas of *Unrestricted Warfare* applied to the ideas of *On War*. Each act is simply "politics through other means" by a declared enemy of the United States or the West, through other than traditional means.

Asymmetric vs. traditional warfare. If there is a commonality among the various aspects of asymmetric warfare, then what distinguishes it from any other type of warfare? The answer can be found in Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare*. The United States and the West would fight an asymmetric war on the global level, much as a counterinsurgent would fight an insurgency within national borders—distancing the population from the enemy, attacking the enemy's *idea* (his primary asset) and without being too heavy-handed in either actions or retribution, always striving to reinforce the local governments and militaries.

Population-centric warfare. Kilcullen also identified traditional warfare as either terrain-centric (as in World War II, and also in the Falklands or in Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm) or enemy-centric (as in Phase 1 of Operation Iraqi Freedom—OIF-1—wherein the primary goal was to seek out the Republican Guard and the Ba'ath Party wherever they might be).[62] Asymmetric warfare is population-centric; the population is the ultimate key to victory for both sides of the conflict.[63]

Unrelated aspects? The final question prior to presenting the definition is: How can one bring so many different and seemingly unrelated aspects of conflict together under a single umbrella term? The answer is found in the antithesis of asymmetric warfare: Traditional warfare deals with many seemingly unrelated events. On the face of it, infantry jungle warfare, tank battles in the desert, naval warfare on the high seas, supersonic air-to-air dogfights and intercontinental ballistic missile exchanges have little in common with one another, but they are all representative of traditional great-power warfare. Similarly, all of the various aspects of asymmetric warfare intertwine to help clarify the type of war the United States is currently fighting.

Recommended Definition of Asymmetric Warfare

In consideration of the above analysis, I propose the following definition of "asymmetric warfare":

> ***Asymmetric warfare is population-centric nontraditional warfare*** *waged between a militarily superior power and one or more inferior powers which encompasses all the following aspects: evaluating and defeating asymmetric threat, conducting asymmetric operations, understanding cultural asymmetry and evaluating asymmetric cost.*

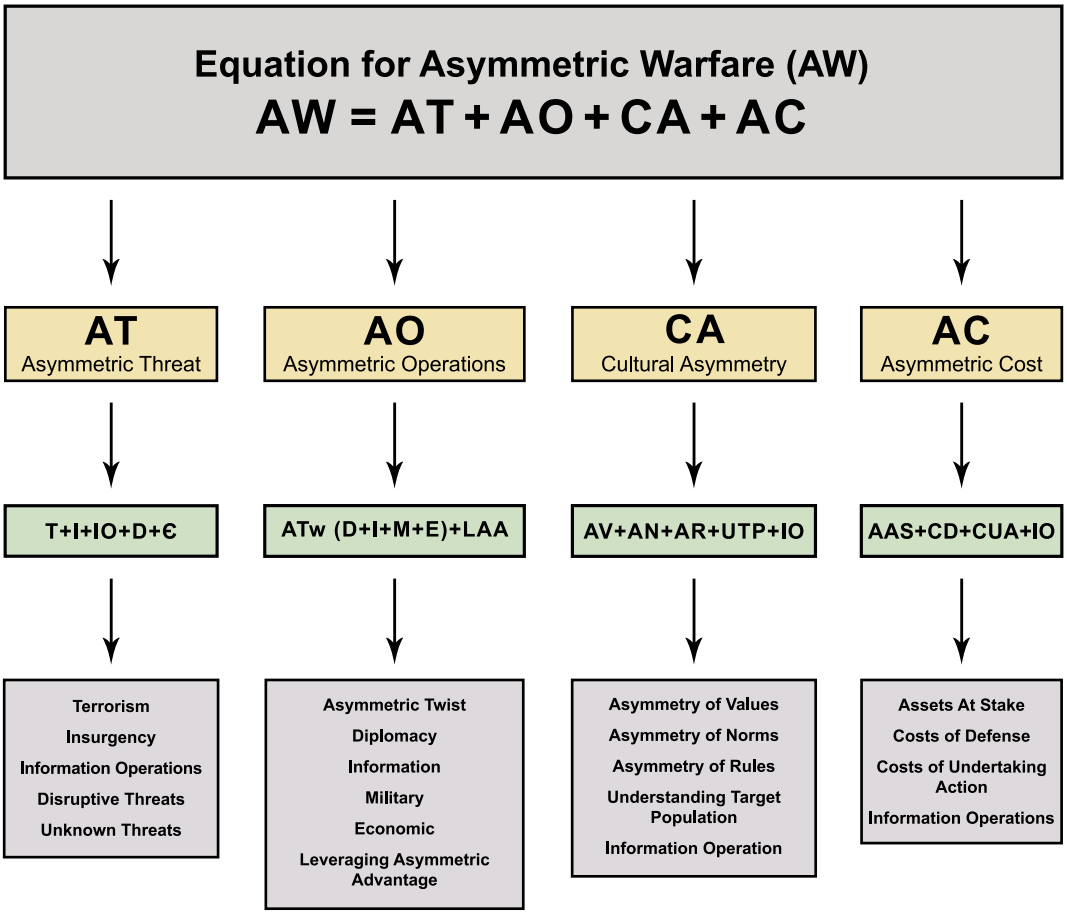
This definition encompasses every aspect of asymmetry that is important to today's strategist. It provides equal weight to enemy actions (asymmetric threat) and allied actions (asymmetric operations). These, along with cultural asymmetry and asymmetric cost, encompass all of the most import aspects of asymmetry that must be applied to today's grand strategy. This definition is universally applicable to all of nontraditional warfare and specifically to the war the United States is currently fighting. (A graphic representation of that concept appears on the following page.)

When planning grand strategy or conducting force planning, these are the aspects of asymmetric warfare one must consider. These are the aspects that separate it from traditional warfare. Traditional warfare is either enemy-centric or terrain-centric warfare consisting of traditional threat and traditional operations, wherein each side bears similar costs.

Volumes can be and have been written about each component and subcomponent of asymmetric warfare. However, volumes have also been written about tank battles and submarine warfare, yet a grand strategist need not be an expert on each of their nuances.

To fully understand the definition above requires discussion the four primary elements of asymmetric warfare described therein.

Asymmetric Threat. The components comprising asymmetric threat are: terrorism, insurgency, information operations, disruptive threats and unknown threats. Note that each of these components of asymmetric threat can easily fit into the threat categories outlined in the 2006 QDR.



Terrorism. Terrorism includes all of the known forms of terrorism that exist today: suicide terrorism, catastrophic attacks such as the strikes on 9/11, political assassination, biological strikes like anthrax mailings, and many others.

Terrorism is meant to produce a horrific effect. In the Information Age, terrorism is much more effective because a terrorist's message is disseminated and its impact is felt instantly and worldwide. Threat and message mean more to a terrorist than the action itself; success is measured by the disruptive and psychological effect of an action, not by the body count. Terrorist networks can operate with a very decentralized command structure. Terrorists do attempt to achieve political goals, as per Clausewitz' definition of warfare in general; however, the support of a population is not essential to a terrorist.

Insurgency. At its root, an insurgency is a revolutionary war. Asymmetries abound in an insurgency. The key is that, unlike a terrorist, an insurgent is completely reliant upon the population, and the population is the objective for both the insurgent and the counterinsurgent.

Kilcullen mentioned that one key difference between the insurgency taking place in Iraq and past examples of insurgency is that the Iraqi insurgency is decentralized. In Vietnam, for instance, all of the direction of the insurgency came from Ho Chi Minh. In Iraq, however, there are at least 17 insurgent organizations and four terrorist organizations that the United States is aware of, many of them at odds with one another as well as with the counterinsurgent forces.[64] Also, Landry pointed out that many of al Qaeda's actions and strategies more closely resemble those of a global transnational insurgent than of a terrorist. Much more like a revolutionary than a terrorist, Osama bin Laden conducts his actions to attempt to gain the support of a populace.[65]

Information operations. Galula stated in *Counterinsurgency Warfare* that information operations (IO) are key. An insurgent's greatest asset is an idea; he wants to spread this idea and convert it into more tangible assets like soldiers and support. Similarly, in today's asymmetric war, the United States is fighting a war of ideas wherein the Muslim population is the objective. In this war, information operations are key. In the Information Age, a terrorist network or a weak insurgent need not have extensive funding to have his message heard; bin Laden can easily issue a *fatwa* by having one operative publish it on the Internet.

The enemy wages information warfare by issuing propaganda, creating lies and developing conspiracies. The enemy, like the insurgents described by Galula, can bank currency on mere promises, rather than upon action.[66] They can also seek always to drive a wedge between the target population and the West. This was clearly exemplified by the violence that followed the publication of the Danish cartoon depicting the Prophet Mohammed.

Disruptive threat. "Promoting disorder is a legitimate objective for the [asymmetric enemy]."[67] Between terrorism and disruptive threats lies much overlap. When conducting a disruptive strike, an asymmetric enemy need not even commit an action; the mere threat of action is enough to disrupt the American way of life. This holds true in the United States, but even more so in parts of the world where suicide bombing is part of daily life. The impact of a disruptive strike is measured in psychological rather than physical effect. Disruptive threats weigh greatly in asymmetric cost, as will be discussed later.

A grand strategist combating disruptive threats must consider that until the average American truly understands the nature of asymmetric warfare, great measures—at a great cost—must be taken to make people *feel* safe. A strong case in point is the 9/11 terrorist strikes: Billions of dollars were lost in impeded air travel shortly after 9/11, and billions more have been spent to ensure that "9/11 could not happen again." However, 9/11 could not possibly have happened again—not even again on 9/11. The first strikes were possible only because the terrorists broke their own paradigm. Until 9/11, every passenger, airline employee and federal agent could be reasonably assured that when a terrorist hijacked an airplane, he would force it to land in some neutral or friendly location, and then use the hostages to barter for his demands; if the hostages remained calm and did not resist, they

would likely emerge alive. But the moment that paradigm was broken—when passengers learned their hijacked airplane was to be used as a "stealth bomb"—the terrorist's plot was foiled. This happened on United Airlines Flight 93, when the passengers forced a crash in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, to prevent the terrorists' reaching their true target. There has not been another hijacked airplane since, not because of the extensive safety measures put in place at a tremendous cost and a huge inconvenience, but because the terrorists would be foolish to attempt such a thing again. Now that the paradigm is broken, the drill of "stay calm and don't try to be a hero" would not work on any passenger. But that knowledge is not enough to make an airline traveler feel safe. For now, the U.S. government must continue spending millions of dollars per day to ensure that "9/11 couldn't happen again" rather than spending this money and intellectual energy to find and fix the *next* U.S. weakness.[68]

Enemy vs. tools. In the equation of asymmetric threat, there is the vast and ambiguous unknown term denoted by the symbol "∈." An asymmetric enemy could use virtually any means to achieve his goal. However, it is important to clearly delineate the difference between a true asymmetric enemy and that enemy's tools.

Many people view crime, organized crime, hate crime, disease, drug trade, protests, natural disaster, peaceful civil disobedience or human trafficking as potential asymmetric threats. These in and of themselves are not the enemy because they fail to meet the Clausewitzian principle of politics through other means. Rather, they are events that are profit-motivated, directed toward minorities rather than toward the government, part of nature or part of the political life of a free democracy.

However, each of these could be used by an asymmetric enemy to achieve his goals. In this case it becomes a tool and does fall under the realm of asymmetric threat. Criminal elements can supply and assist enemies, protestors can further an enemy's cause, natural disasters can provide a disruption that an enemy can capitalize upon; however, none of these is motivated by the ideology of the enemy. A criminal seeks profit and avoids arrest; his ideology is moot. Criminals can be bribed to work against the enemy, or intimidated into submission if their price is too high.

Each enemy tool must be addressed by a strategist, as long as that tool is not targeted as the actual enemy. Targeting these forces as an *enemy* instead of as a *tool* can cause the population—the true objective—to become more sympathetic to the enemy's ideology.

Asymmetric operations. Asymmetric operations in this formulation are those operations that are planned and conducted by the stronger side of an asymmetric war. They can be thought of as offensive operations. They consist primarily of putting an asymmetric twist on the traditional spheres of national power, limited for the purposes of this paper to diplomacy, information, military and economic (DIME). In addition to placing an asymmetric twist on DIME, one also must look to leverage asymmetric advantage wherever possible.

Asymmetric diplomacy. As Galula pointed out that politics has primacy in an insurgency[69] —and Clausewitz pointed out that all wartime objectives are political[70] — diplomacy has primacy in asymmetric war. This is sometimes easy to forget since most asymmetric enemies are non-state actors. However, if counterinsurgency principles are applied to asymmetric warfare on the global-transnational scale, the population is still the objective. The State Department's mission is diplomacy; thus far they have focused only on nation-states and international organizations. They should be organized and equipped to engage a target population through diplomatic efforts either directly or by working through the legitimate governments of the nation states.

Asymmetric information operations. There are four very important concepts about information warfare that anyone conducting an asymmetric war must understand. The first concept is that information warfare in the Information Age is not waged just by very specialized military units on the ground. Psychological operations (PSYOP) products are targeted communications aimed at a specific group or demographic and delivered on a schedule as part of a larger plan. In contrast, information operations are conducted every time an official of the United States (or the West), whether elected, appointed or uniformed, makes any public statement; regardless of the intended target, the message is immediately disseminated worldwide. The second concept is that actions, or lack thereof, speak much louder than words. As Galula stated:

> With no positive policy but with good propaganda, the [asymmetric enemy] may still win. . . . [We] can seldom cover bad or nonexistent policy with propaganda.[71]

The third concept is that the IO message comes across much more convincingly when it is delivered by a local leader rather than by a Western spokesman. Whenever possible, the United States should engage friendly sheikhs, imams, elders and elected officials to disseminate IO themes. The last great concept to take away is that, unlike traditional warfare wherein any action by the friendly side is seen as progress, an "action" by the U.S. side in an information war can just as easily impede progress or take giant leaps backward if the consequences are not thoroughly and carefully considered.

The lead agency in information warfare should be the State Department. However, coordination must occur at all levels, and good policy—supported by organization, knowledge and leadership—is the most important aspect in winning.[72]

Asymmetric military operations. Asymmetric military operations mainly comprise direct action (antiterrorism), unconventional warfare (counterinsurgency), psychological operations, civil-military operations, foreign internal defense and special reconnaissance. Ironically, until recently U.S. Army Special Operations Command trained for and specialized in each of these types of operations—leaving the rest of the Army to focus on traditional missions. Today, however, given the nature of the asymmetric war the United States is fighting, the rest of the military is quickly learning to perform of these operations.

Counterinsurgency has come to the forefront of military thinking due to the situation in Iraq today. Galula's book *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, now back in print, has become required reading at the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and elsewhere throughout the military. The U.S. military is making huge strides in the realm of counterinsurgency; however, the State Department—among other federal departments—is only just beginning to realize its own vastly important role in winning a counterinsurgent war. Once again, as Clausewitz stated, warfare is simply politics through other means. All other means should be explored.

Asymmetric economic operations. The most visual asymmetric economic operation is development and reconstruction. Foreign aid, trade policy and foreign direct investment (FDI) also play vital roles in waging asymmetric economic operations. In a war where the population is the objective, that target population must be able to see and understand the tangible benefit for supporting the side with the asymmetric advantage and to see and understand a material disadvantage for supporting the asymmetric enemy. "Stick-and-carrot" techniques are important, as is coordination at all levels. All aspects of economic operations must be coordinated and nested with the diplomatic, information operations and military campaigns. Note that military personnel are not the experts when it comes to foreign aid, trade policy, FDI or development and reconstruction.

Leveraging asymmetric advantage. Finally, the side of an asymmetric war that wields the asymmetric advantage must understand how to leverage that advantage against the enemy. Asymmetric advantage comes primarily in the following forms: technology, intelligence, communications, conventional military forces and economic resources. Although much of asymmetry highlights the advantages possessed by the weaker side, the United States must recognize and appreciate its own vast advantages and use them against the enemy.

Cultural asymmetry. Cultural asymmetry is one of the hardest concepts to grasp, but it is one of the most crucial in an asymmetric war. Since asymmetric warfare is population-centric, understanding the population—the center of gravity, as identified by Zinni—cultural asymmetry feeds into all other operations. Understanding of cultural asymmetry also helps identify and prepare for asymmetric threats because analysts should have a better understanding of the enemy's capabilities and motives.

Cultural asymmetry is not new to American forces. During the development and reconstruction phase following World War II, when the allies were rebuilding Japan, General Douglas MacArthur exhibited a keen grasp of cultural asymmetry when he allowed Japan to keep its emperor rather than punishing him as a war criminal, even though the concept of an emperor ran counter to American values. Broken down into component parts, cultural asymmetry consists of: asymmetry of values, asymmetry of rules, asymmetry of norms, understanding the target population and conducting culturally attuned information operations.

Asymmetry of values. Bismarck's statement that the "the strong is weak because of his moral scruples and the weak grows strong because of his audacity" referred to cultural asymmetry of values, norms and rules. The West believes that it values life too greatly to employ suicide as a politicalor military tactic. Suicide terrorists see themselves as sacrificing their lives to achieve legitimate military goals—and, in the context of the terrorist suicides of Islamic extremists, to reap commensurate rewards in heaven. This is foreign to the Western mindset; without condoning such actions, we must look through our cultural barriers to try to understand why someone would commit such an act.

Understanding values is crucial in a population-centric asymmetric war. Simply put, the enemy's greatest asset is an idea—currently that the "imperialistic Western infidels" are trying to corrupt their values, lives and holy land.[73] The West values freedom. However, "freedom" can easily be translated in a non-Western culture to "lawlessness" and "anarchy"—neither of which is valued in any culture.

Asymmetry of norms. The West has gone to great lengths to legitimize acts of warfare by identifying combatants and noncombatants. However, if a non-Western culture vilifies an entire group of people for committing economic and political as well as military atrocities, then they can view the people working in the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 as *combatants*, whereas the West justifiably identifies them as innocent noncombatants. Once again, the West need not accept the enemy's norms; strategists must simply attempt to understand them so strategy can be focused accordingly.

Also, in the Muslim culture loyalty is placed above honesty when weighing one's honor. Many U.S. Soldiers and commanders complain when a member of the local population lies to protect the insurgents/terrorists/cache, etc. Although Soldiers take this as a strong affront, and their norms cause them to feel that this man has no honor or integrity, they must understand that if someone appealed to his loyalty—whether to culture, religion, nationality or tribe—whether or not he likes that person or supports his cause, the man is honor-bound to *lie* for that person. The man's honor is defined more greatly by his loyalty than by his honesty.[74]

Asymmetry of rules. Asymmetric enemies are bound by neither the laws of land warfare nor the Geneva Conventions. They routinely direct violent action against civilians. They use tactics of terror and horrific images. Many terrorists and insurgents are also willing to sacrifice their own lives for their cause in a suicide strike. All of these must be weighed when planning to fight an asymmetric enemy. No atrocity is beyond this enemy's capability.

Understanding target population. When waging a population-centric war, strategists must identify the values and norms of the target population. These may be very different from those of the enemy and, if so, must be exploited. If the target population's values and norms are very different from those of the West, then every effort must be made to understand this and to be aware. Soldiers on the front lines have done an amazing job of respecting the Muslim culture by their treatment of women, by their listening to and working

with sheikhs and village elders; this now must occur at every level. When U.S. values of "freedom of the press" conflict with the target population's notion of a "travesty against God," strategists need to be aware and deal with it at a national, diplomatic level; otherwise the enemy will exploit this clash of cultures. Also, when the United States shows the world that it trusts its European allies but not its Middle Eastern allies to operate U.S. ports, the enemy can exploit this with the target population.

Information operations. Cultural asymmetry is crucial in waging information warfare. As previously stated, information warfare is waged whenever any Western spokesperson makes a public statement and any time the West acts or fails to act in a given situation. Often, Western leaders make statements for their own benefit and without consideration of their impact on this war's target population. Statements such as "I would rather fight them over there than over here" tell an Iraqi who is deciding whether to support the insurgents that the goal of the United States is to make Iraq (his home) an unending battleground. Courses on communicating with the Muslim world can and should be taught to any Western spokesperson.

Asymmetric cost. Galula quite eloquently explains that there is a tremendous cost to asymmetry in counterinsurgency warfare; this is true in all types of asymmetric warfare:

> Disorder . . . is cheap to create and very costly to prevent. . . . Because [we)]cannot escape the responsibility of maintaining order, the ratio of expenses between [us] and the [asymmetric enemy] are high. . . . Because of the disparity in cost and effort, the [asymmetric enemy] can thus accept a protracted war; [we] should not. . . . The [asymmetric enemy] is fluid because he has neither responsibility nor concrete assets; [we are] rigid because [we have] both.[75]

Asymmetric cost encompasses assets at stake, cost of asymmetric defense, cost of undertaking action, and the asymmetric costs and nature of information operations.

Assets at stake. As stated previously, a nation state that goes to war places many assets at risk: population, land and interests. A non-state actor's or an insurgent's only asset is his idea; he has no land or population. He may have interests, and he probably has a target population. The goal of the players on both sides of an asymmetric war, as in a counterinsurgency, is to win over the population to support their side—only then can the enemy grow weak. If an asymmetric enemy has interests, then these interests should be targeted as well. When fighting other than a nation-state, however, one must recognize the assets at stake for each side of the asymmetric war.

Cost of defense. As Galula noted, "Disorder . . . is cheap to create and very costly to prevent."[76] It is cheap for an insurgent to bomb a bridge, but expensive for a counter-insurgent to guard all of the bridges. We have seen that it is cheap for al Qaeda to hijack airplanes but expensive for the United States to maintain air security. It is cheap to mail anthrax but expensive to screen the mail.

Cost of undertaking action. Also, as Galula states, to be effective, a counterinsurgent's forces must be ten or twenty times the size of the insurgent's. This lends itself to the asymmetric cost of the defense. An insurgent can afford to wait, and he chooses where to strike. The drawn-out nature of a counterinsurgency makes it extremely costly. However, as stated under Information Operations, failure to act in a given situation loses more of the population to the insurgency.

This same principle can be true on the strategic level. Demonstrating to the world that the United States and its allies are willing to help in the aftermath of a natural disaster such as the December 2004 tsunami that struck Indonesia or the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan gained tremendous ground in this asymmetric war.

Information operations. Information operations holds a position under "Asymmetric Cost" due to the costs associated with conducting information operations in an asymmetric war. The enemy can base his entire IO campaign on rumor, propaganda and conspiracy theories. The West can base theirs only on concrete actions—and they are judged very harshly when they fail to act. It is hard for someone to grasp the concept that the United States can place a man on the moon but cannot turn on a village's electricity. Due to this asymmetry of cost in the realm of information operations, the West might lose ground every day without ever being aware, simply because the enemy's propaganda mechanism leads the populace to believe, for example, that Allah is punishing them with a lack of rain for their cooperation with the infidels.

Importance of information. Information operations is actually a subset of each of the four main components of asymmetric warfare rather than a separate component because it permeates throughout every action within asymmetric warfare. It cannot be conducted in isolation or delegated to one specialized section. The information warfare strategy must be coordinated at the grand strategy level, and then it must be further coordinated at all levels. Again, IO is not just PSYOP products or command messages. Every statement by a Western spokesperson—whether a member of the government or not—and every action, failure to act or overreaction (e.g., reacting too harshly to an insurgent attack, thereby causing collateral damage) on the part of the United States constitutes information operations and carries with it the potential to increase the enemy's numbers rather than attritting them. Political, Clauswitzian ends are the key.

Note once again that each description of a subset of asymmetric warfare barely scratches the surface of understanding the subject. The point, however, is that a grand strategist must take each of the subsets into account to fully appreciate all aspects of the war the United States is currently fighting—and of any foreseeable future war, for that matter.

Concrete definitions. Asymmetric warfare is the type of war the United States and its allies will face in the foreseeable future. When planning grand strategy and force levels one must weigh the threats and then balance forces, develop policy and conduct actions

against those threats. If the asymmetric threat outweighs the traditional threat, U.S. forces, strategy, policy, actions and even thought must be balanced accordingly. If force planners, strategists, soldiers, academics, bureaucrats, legislators, executives and citizens have a better understanding of the type of warfare in which the United States is engaged, their actions will be better integrated.

Until recently, only elements of the CIA, elements of the FBI and elements of DoD dealt with asymmetric warfare—albeit calling it by other terms. For example, DoD has one assistant secretary out of ten and one unified commander out of ten who deals with asymmetric warfare. Yet it is the nation's primary threat and focus of operations.

The 2006 QDR's force-planning diagram addresses the concept of the threat facing the United States. The Army is well on its way toward transformation. The QDR calls for an increase in Special Forces, psychological operations and civil affairs and for a focus on irregular warfare. However, much of the U.S. defense budget is still focused on winning a conventional military war. Projects such as the F/A-22 fighter program and the Navy's littoral combat ships and attack submarines are still fully funded—citing the need for preparation against a traditional threat such as China. If the greatest threat to the United States comes from lacking supremacy on the high seas or in the sky, these investments make sense. If, however, the primary threat lies elsewhere, making U.S. military forces better at that at which they already excel is a squandered investment. Besides, as Kilcullen stated: "If you think the Chinese pose a real traditional threat—well—they were the ones who wrote the book on unrestricted warfare, weren't they?"[77] Threats to the United States, even from a large conventional force, will be greatest in the asymmetric realm.

Also, where the 2006 QDR lacks understanding of the overall concept of asymmetric warfare is in its statement of DoD's new priorities: defeating terrorist networks; defending the homeland in depth; and shaping the choices of countries at strategic crossroads. This means dissuading China, Russia and India from becoming potential enemies and preventing hostile states and non-state actors from acquiring or using weapons of mass destruction.[78] Sadly missing from these priorities was nation-building, counterinsurgency and winning the hearts and minds of the Muslim world so the West can end this war, or at least shift the focus to simply rooting out terrorists, because al Qaeda will no longer have popular support and will stop behaving like global-transnational insurgents.

But overall, the QDR does demonstrate that DoD has a decent understanding of the type of war the United States is fighting. What is needed most is an understanding by all of the other departments and agencies of the federal, state and local governments as well as an understanding by all of the Western nations, by U.S. allies in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, and by all members of the United Nations that they have a tremendous role to play in winning this asymmetric war—and they all have much to lose by accepting defeat. Most federal agencies have taken only small steps to recognize their role in asymmetric warfare and to reorganize to best fulfill that role. Current action at the

local or international level is trivial; most agencies are waiting for the U.S. military to "win" in the traditional/symmetric sense. This will not happen through military action alone. Relying on the military and the intelligence apparatus will not defeat an asymmetric threat.

Policy Recommendations

Earlier I proposed the following definition of asymmetric warfare:

> ***Asymmetric warfare is population-centric nontraditional warfare*** *waged between a militarily superior power and one or more inferior powers which encompasses all the following aspects: evaluating and defeating asymmetric threat, conducting asymmetric operations, understanding cultural asymmetry and evaluating asymmetric cost.*

It is important to consider what the definition means in practice.

U.S. policymakers need to accept a comprehensive definition of asymmetric warfare and use it to transform U.S. grand strategy; the concept of asymmetry must be addressed in all national strategy documents. They should then evaluate both traditional threats and asymmetric threats and allocate resources accordingly. The United States should restructure its current bureaucracy to wage asymmetric warfare. The 2006 QDR shows an understanding of some of the concepts of asymmetric warfare and demonstrates that these concepts are being applied to transformation in the Army and Marine Corps. Transformation, restructuring and mission focus must be applied to all areas of the government, not just elements of DoD.

First and foremost, the mind-set of Phase 4 operations—that once the fighting is over, the United States begins to rebuild a nation—must change. Concepts that strictly designate a combat zone or a front line must evolve. Asymmetric warfare is amorphous—people at work in downtown New York found themselves in a combat zone on 9/11. Traditional concepts of what constitutes a battlefield and who can and cannot go to war have impeded much progress on the battlefield over the last five years.

Next, every federal department must become deployable. Currently, the military is organized into strategic, operational and tactical elements; most other federal departments are not organized into tactical elements that can deploy. However, the military is ill-equipped to shoulder the full responsibility for building a country, creating stability and winning over a population. Military commanders know little about establishing commerce, monetary policy, agricultural assistance, sewage, electricity, an education system, local governments, police forces, judicial systems, banks, etc. If the Departments of Education, Agriculture, Justice, Commerce, Treasury, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Energy, Labor and Interior looked within their personnel, they might find highly skilled and very motivated people who would be willing to risk their lives to serve their country in a war effort. Their skills can win the support of a population much better than those of an infantryman or tanker.

The study by the Center for Strategic and International Affairs (CSIS) entitled *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*[79] prescribes an excellent policy recommendation for interagency coordination and effort. The measures taken by the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Stability and Reconstruction are an excellent first step in this direction.[80] Next, the State Department needs to greatly expand its mandate, its scope of operations and its modus operandi. It must be equipped to take the primary role in directing and coordinating this war, to engage a population either through a foreign government or directly. And it must lead, direct and evaluate all aspects of the information operations campaign. Other U.S. government departments must be involved as well.

Finally, the United States needs a national acceptance and understanding that it is engaged in an asymmetric war. The nation must mobilize its industry and population. Federal government departments are only the beginning of the human resources and expertise needed to win over a target population. Local experts on such services as law enforcement, sewage, education and electricity—just to name a few—are also crucial. During World War II, this nation's industry rallied behind the war effort. In a war of ideas where information operations are so important, why are the brightest minds in the United States focused on convincing more young Americans to prefer one soft drink over another, or convincing more voters in the Midwest to vote for one party over the other? How many Wharton marketing MBAs or Harvard political analysts are trying to show the young Muslim population of the world that U.S. interests do not conflict with their religious beliefs? That the United States is a secular society that makes no religious judgment? That working with the United States is greatly within their material interests? That the United States simply wishes to rebuild their country into greatness rather to than exploit it—looking at Germany and Japan as examples? And finally, that the enemy seeks only to build his own power at the cost of young Muslim lives and suffering? The brightest minds of the enemy are convincing them of the opposite.

These are only the beginnings of the policy changes that are needed. A very large-scale analysis must be commissioned to study all aspects of the new face of war and how to fight it. Many attempts have been made in the right direction, not the least of which was the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, the National Intelligence Director and the National Counter-Terrorism Center in an attempt to give many of the federal departments and agencies a unified focus towards the war effort—at least in defense of the homeland. However, just as a counterinsurgent is most at risk if he or she stays within the compound rather than engaging the population, the United States must have an expeditionary government that understands the enemy, understands the center of gravity—the Muslim population—and is organized and equipped to engage them.

In a recent address to the Council on Foreign Relations, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley stated:

> [T]he new international environment also brought new security challenges. Instead of great power conflict, the United States found itself confronted by a more diffuse array of threats. The attacks on the Homeland on September 11, 2001, provided a stark demonstration of the most serious dangers we and our friends and allies face. A terrorist enemy showed it could attack America and kill thousands of our citizens. This same terrorist enemy operated out of a national safe haven—Afghanistan—where it sought to develop weapons of mass destruction and inculcated in its recruits a murderous ideology.
>
> Since that tragic day, the United States and its allies have waged war against al Qaeda, its associates and supporters, and the deadly scourge of terror and intimidation more broadly. An international coalition has taken the fight to the enemy, targeting its leadership, denying it safe havens, and disrupting what it needs to support its operations.[81]

Here Hadley demonstrates that he understands the nation is facing an asymmetric threat, yet he fails to grasp the overall concept of asymmetric warfare. The war he sees is enemy-centric (taking "the fight to the enemy, targeting its leadership") and terrain-centric: ("denying it safe havens"). He fails to mention any strategy for winning the respect and cooperation of the Muslim community that is the enemy's center of gravity and political objective. He does not mention any asymmetric objective—only traditional military objectives. He mentions the "most serious dangers that we and our friends and allies face," but the average Iraqi citizen is in much greater danger than the average Western citizen—and they are the target population.

In the future, the United States could conceivably fight another traditional war—either enemy- or terrain-focused, facing an organized military representing the legitimate authority of a nation-state. However, even traditional warfare will have asymmetric implications. OIF-1 was a traditional, enemy-centric war fought against the organized army of a hostile nation-state. However, OIF-1 led directly into an asymmetric conflict of epic proportions. It is a valid assumption that any future conflict with Iran, North Korea or China not only would be fought by both conventional and asymmetric means by the enemy but could also have tremendous asymmetric consequences after the conventional victory.

The West is currently at a turning point. The United States could turn this war into a victory, or it could dissolve into defeat—simply because the nation fails to recognize the war it is fighting. Asymmetric warfare is waged differently by each side, and the victor is not preordained. It can be won, but not by blindly charging into the fray, chasing terrorists without concern for the effect on the population—because population is the true objective for each side. The first step in winning a war is knowing what type of war one is fighting. By understanding asymmetric warfare and its policy implications, the United States will be able to effectively coordinate its actions to achieve victory.

Endnotes

[1] Hereafter referred to as "9/11."

[2] President John F. Kennedy, Remarks to the Graduating Class of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., June 6, 1962.

[3] Merriam-Webster Online, http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/warfare.

[4] Or *policy*. The German word translates to either English word, although the two English words have very different meanings. See John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002) pp. 16–25, for an interesting discussion on Clausewitz vs. Jomini; and Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz and His Works* (written for the U.S. Army War College in 1996 and somewhat modified in May 1998, early 2000 and early 2002), available online at http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/CWZSUMM/CWORKHOL.htm#Politik, for an interesting discussion on the difference between "politics" and "policy" as it applies to Clausewitz.

[5] Carl von Clausewitz, eds./trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, *On War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), book 1, chapter 1, section 25.

[6] Dr. Stephen Metz and Dr. Douglas Johnson II, in *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy: Definition, Background, and Strategic Concepts* (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, January 2001) argue that this type of qualitative force capability vs. quantitative force capacity equated to a type of "asymmetric warfare" that was fought by the two poles during the Cold War.

[7] Available online at http://www.genevaconventions.org/.

[8] Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 2.

[9] The realist doctrine is based on the concept that states behave as rational actors who strive for relative gain and understand self-preservation. It was first noted in the Melian Debate in Thucydides' Peloponnesian War, and has been argued as the dominant international relations theory by scholars E. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz, among many others.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[13] Interview with Melissa Applegate, 18 April 2006.

[14] Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 4.

[15] Applegate interview, 18 April 2006.

[16] Director, Office of Force Transformation, *Elements of Defense Transformation* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, October 2004), p. 4. Available online at www.oft.osd.mil.

[17] General Richard B. Myers, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 4 February 2004, quoted in *Elements of Defense Transformation*, p. 4.

[18] Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 6 February 2006), hereafter referred to as "*QDR 2006*."

[19] *QDR 2006*, p. 1.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[21] Available online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html.

[22] Available online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/.

[23] Available online at http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/dod/nds-usa_mar2005.htm.

[24] Available online at http://www.defenselink.mil/pdf/NMS-CWMD2006.pdf.

[25] Available online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_national_strategy_20051130.pdf.

[26] Sun Tzu, trans. Samuel B. Griffith, *The Art of War (*London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 66–67.

[27] B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd Revised Edition (New York: Signet, 1974).

[28] Clausewitz, *On War*, book 1, chapter 1, section 25.

[29] Quoted in Melissa Applegate, *Preparing for Asymmetry: As Seen Through the Lens of Joint Vision 2020* (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, September 2001).

[30] T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (Hertfordshire, England: Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 1935 and 1997).

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing, 1964).

[33] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, pp. 5–7.

[34] Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, February 1999). Translated by Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS).

[35] Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare,* pp. 1–9.

[36] Bruce Berkowitz, *The New Face of War: How War Will be Fought in the 21st Century* (New York: The Free Press, 2003).

[37] Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).

[38] Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, p. iii.

[39] Robert D. Steele, *The New Craft of Intelligence: Achieving Asymmetric Advantage in the Face of Nontraditional Threats* (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army Security Studies, February 2002), p. iii.

[40] Dr. Max G. Manwaring, *Internal Wars: Rethinking Problem and Response* (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, September 2001).

[41] Applegate, *Preparing for Asymmetry*, p. 2.

[42] Applegate interview, 18 April 2006.

[43] Robert D. Steele, *The New Craft of Intelligence,* p. v.

[44] At that time General Meigs, who holds a PhD in History, had recently served as the commander of U.S. Army Europe, had served two tours in Bosnia (one as the 1st Infantry Division commander and the other as the senior military commander of the Stabilization Force) and was serving as a full professor at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

[45] General Montgomery Meigs, USA Ret., PhD, "Unorthodox Thoughts about Asymmetric Warfare," *Parameters*, Summer 2003, pp. 4–5.

[46] Dr. Stephen J. Blank, *Rethinking Asymmetric Threats* (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army Security Studies Institute, September 2003), p. v.

[47] LTG James J. Lovelace and BG Joseph L. Votel, "The Asymmetric Warfare Group: Closing the Capability Gap," *ARMY*, March 2005, p. 32.

[48] *Joint Strategic Review, 1999* (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, 1999), p. 2.

[49] Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 3.

[50] *Ibid.*, pp. 5–8.

[51] *Ibid.*, pp. 8–12.

[52] Interview with Colonel Robert Shaw, USA, 7 April 2006.

[53] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare.*

[54] General Anthony Zinni, USMC Ret., in a speech delivered at Georgetown University, 23 September 2005.

[55] Meigs, "Unorthodox Thoughts about Asymmetric Warfare," p. 4.

[56] Interview with Major General John Landry, USA Ret., 20 April 2006.

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] Shaw interview, 7 April 2006.

[59] Interview with Dr. David Kilcullen, 3 March 2006.

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] Interview with Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl, USA, 7 March 2006.

[62] Kilcullen interview, 3 March 2006.

[63] Actually, Dr. Kilcullen believes that asymmetric warfare is more than population-centric—it is environment-centric. The extrapolation that it is population-centric is my own.

[64] Kilcullen interview, 3 March 2006.

[65] Landry interview, 20 April 2006.

[66] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[68] Or better yet, to identify the enemy's strategy, since he learned how strong the American will can be when average American citizens are attacked on their own homeland. Is it possible that the terrorists, in this war of ideas and population, would not want to urge the American people on to pursuing the military goals in the Middle East?

[69] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.

[70] Clausewitz, *On War*.

[71] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.

[72] For an interesting study of the primacy and evolution of Information Warfare, see Berkowitz, *The New Face of War.*

[73] Among other ideas—this is the drastically simplified version.

[74] This assessment is based on the author's own experience in Afghanistan and Iraq.

[75] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare,* pp. 11–12, substituting "asymmetric enemy" for "insurgent' and "we" for "counterinsurgent."

[76] Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare,* pp. 11–12.

[77] Kilcullen interview.

[78] *QDR 2006.*

[79] Christine E. Wormuth, principal author, Michèle A. Flournoy, Patrick T. Henry and Clark A. Murdock, co-authors, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era,* Phases I (1 March 2004) and II (28 July 2005) (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies), available online at http://www.csis.org/index.php?option=com_csis_pubs&task=list&type=1.

[80] See Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Stability and Reconstruction (S/CRS) website at http://www.state.gov/s/crs/.

[81] Stephen Hadley, National Security Advisor, in address to the Council on Foreign Relations, 18 October 2005, available online at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/10/20051018-6.html.