

(Re)Defining the Long War: Toward a New Vocabulary of International Terrorism

Aaron Hess

Z. S. Justus

April 25, 2007

Report #0703

Consortium for Strategic Communication

Arizona State University

With Contributions From:

Kris Acheson

Steve Corman



The CSC is a strategic initiative of the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University. It promotes advanced research, teaching, and public discussions of the role of communication in combating terrorism, promoting national security, and improving public diplomacy. For additional information or to become involved in one of our working groups, visit our website: <http://www.comops.org>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the fight against terrorism continues, language plays a pivotal role. In current policies, the language of war continues to dominate. Based on an analysis of President Bush's September 11th anniversary campaign speeches, we propose that war metaphors and language, such as victory, enemies, and allies, occlude the reality of counterterrorism efforts. It is difficult to pinpoint victory in this conflict, a requisite of the vocabulary of war familiar to lay audiences.

We call for a new language to illustrate the nature of our present conflict, a new vocabulary of international crime as an effective replacement for discussions of counterterrorism. There are four benefits of this new language. First, domestic audiences are accustomed to the persistence of crime; it is a manageable social ill. Second, the labeling of terrorist organizations as "criminal" decreases the perceived legitimacy of their acts by potential recruits. Third, international crime is a global problem, not a war perpetrated by the United States. Global problems require global solutions, and such a language will help garner support from the global community. Finally, crime language separates the religious connotation associated with labels of terrorism or "jihadism." This allows moderate Muslims to reframe their faith away from extremist and violent acts.

To illustrate the new language, we have modified one of President Bush's speeches to remove uses of war language and replace it with a new language of international crime. The speech reads just as "tough" on terrorism while avoiding the disadvantages of war framing. Future domestic and international persuasive efforts to win support should take into account this new language of international crime.

BACKGROUND

The level of popular domestic support for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) is in decline. According to a recent poll by Rasmussen less than half of the American population believes we are winning the Global War on Terrorism.¹ While there are a number of possible explanations for flagging support of the GWOT, it is worth examining the relationship between the perception of victory and support. In the current language of the GWOT, Americans hear of a war being waged upon an enemy. However, communicating progress of such a war is difficult due to the non-traditional nature of the GWOT. Simply, the rhetorical framework of the GWOT does not fit the reality of the conflict.

The Global War on Terrorism is different than any war that has ever been fought. We are constantly reminded of this fact from a number of different sources. The 2006 National Security Strategy noted, “Our strategy also recognizes that the War on Terror is a different kind of war.”² The Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence more specifically commented that “To win the war on terrorism, the United States and our allies will have to not just kill and capture key terrorist operatives.”³ The 2002 National Security Strategy as well as President Bush and members of his cabinet all agree that this is a war unlike any war we have ever fought.

We agree that the war on terrorism is different—so different in fact that it is not a “war” at all. This conflict features non-state actors who use methods that violate international standards of war. They have no standing army and it is unlikely that the conflict will end in a peace accord. Additionally, in recent months, criticism of the phrase “war on terror” has grown. The British government has elected to not use the word in future operations⁴ and has criticized the United States’ preference for a war vocabulary.⁵

European leaders believe that the language of war inflates those who are in fact terrible criminals

Mary Robinson
-American Bar
Association

Several commentators have openly criticized the language choices made by the Bush Administration in describing the GWOT. Senator Russ Feingold questions the accuracy and strategic value of the term “Islamic fascist,” a rhetorical effort to recall World War II enemies. “Call them whatever you want - monsters, butchers - but the use of the term 'Islamic fascist' puts the name of Islam . . . in an exceptionally negative light.”⁶ Mary Robinson of the American Bar Association recognizes the international nature of the debate.

European leaders believe that the language of war inflates those who are in fact terrible criminals, through committing acts of terrorism that deliberately kill civilians, and that the context of being “at war” makes it more acceptable to erode standards of civil liberties and human rights.⁷

Without the proper vocabulary, it is impossible to accurately describe the conflict. We believe that communication scholarship can add a level of depth and sophistication to these arguments to fully explain the problems of the current vocabulary of war. In the following section we will explain the importance of the label “war” within the Global War on Terror by reviewing communication scholarship concerning the rhetoric of war. We also evaluate how the vocabulary used to describe armed conflict has developed and been used in the last sixty years and its shortcomings in describing the current conflict.

THE RECENT HISTORY OF NAMING WAR

As the world emerged from the horror of World War II and entered the nuclear age, one thing did not change—the language of war. In point of fact, the language of war has changed very little for several hundred years. We can easily use *victory* to describe military engagements as diverse as the English defeat of the Spanish armada and allied victory at Iwo Jima. Similarly concepts such as *war*, *defeat*, *offensive*, *attack*, and *surrender* have changed very little over time. Even as war turned metaphorical during the cold war the vocabulary stayed the same. Medhurst’s observation helps to explain this stasis. He noted that the “Cold War, like its ‘hot’ counterpart, is a contest.” This striking similarity is more than a casual observation. Even though the Cold War was fought with “markets, spheres of influence, and military alliances, as well as such intangibles as public opinion, attitudes, images, expectations, and beliefs”⁸ instead of guns and rockets, the language used to describe the contest remained the same.

American presidents regularly invoke the vocabulary of war to communicate important messages to their constituents.

American presidents regularly invoke the vocabulary of war to communicate important messages to their constituents. Robert Ivie undertook an analysis of 150 years of war rhetoric in American presidencies, that “these several war messages establish a pattern” leading to a recognizable linguistic framework “through which American Presidents assess international relations.” Ivie continues, arguing that the rigid vocabulary of war has held steadfast, “despite major variations in the nature of the enemy, the intensity of the threat, the personality of the presidents, (and) the general historical milieu.” Following this vocabulary “produces (a) set of ideal purposes and agencies that, presumably, should be adhered to by all men in all places.”⁹ The language of war is relatively stable; it communicates a set of conditions, including moral justifications, conditions for victory, and the nature of the enemy. By using scholarship about the historical vocabulary of war, our analysis tracks President Bush’s adoption of the war framework to communicate the GWOT, despite the overwhelming dissimilarity between the current struggle and traditional concepts of war.

ANALYSIS

In an effort to understand how the language of war pervades rhetoric about the GWOT we have undertaken an extensive analysis of a series of five speeches that President Bush gave between August 31, 2006 and September 29, 2006.¹⁰ These speeches were part of a series intended to build support for the war on terror around the five year anniversary of 9/11. These speeches represent the administration's best efforts to reframe the war in a more positive light despite recent setbacks. A number of commentators have characterized these speeches as "blunt," indicating that not only are these speeches a best effort, they also leave very little to the imagination.¹¹ We analyzed the speeches by parsing words and phrases that describe the enemies, allies, and outcomes/events in the GWOT. Table 1 shows the short words and phrases extracted from the speeches about the war. It is organized by the following narrative elements: people, actions, means, purpose, and environment.

Our analysis reveals that the speeches rely on very traditional language and description in their characterizations of the GWOT. Obviously, the term "war" is the central element in the acronym GWOT. But the presence of other language also points toward a very traditional conceptualization of the current fight against terrorism. In the narrative contained within the speeches: "allies" form a "coalition" that use a "clear plan" to stay on the "offensive" in order to "defend civilization" and "win the war" all aimed at the end goal of "complete victory" within a "global campaign." This narrative is juxtaposed with that of the terrorists, which characterizes them as "enemies" and their "terrorist allies" who utilize "propaganda," "strategy," and pursue "weapons of mass destruction" as part of a larger effort to "defeat" our troops through "multiple attacks" with the final goal of creating a "violent political utopia" and "forcing America to retreat."

The above language cannot be described as inaccurate. Many parts of the descriptions ring true and seem to follow what we and other Americans see in the news and believe is happening. However, war language is a choice from among other possibilities, one that has rhetorical consequences that can diminish long-term chances of success, and the war framing has fundamental problems.

For example, using traditional language to describe the war on terrorism leads people to believe that this war is similar to other wars. This leads the public to expect victory, something that can be "complete" and result in the placement of an American flag on a hill. Indeed, Bush frequently references other victories in American history, including World War II. While previous conflicts have had "V-days" that symbolized the

finality of a conflict, the GWOT may never have a day where conflict fully subsides. Even when the coalition performs a successful operation, because of the reliance on traditional war language, the president is unable to communicate the magnitude of the success accurately to the American public, yet such progress reports are expected under a traditional war framing.

Table 1. Existing Characterizations of the Global War on Terrorism

	US	THEM
Action	Defending civilization, Killed hundreds of Taliban fighters, Fight the enemy, Foolish to negotiate, Memorial(ize), (We will not) Retreat, Not give the enemy victory, Winning this war, Stay on the offense, Taking the battle (to them), Given their lives, On the offense	Attacked, Murdered, Massed fighters, Fight our forces, Massacre, Defeat and disgrace, Defeat, Localized strike, Multiple attacks
Goals	Victory, Liberated, Bring you to justice, Triumph, Complete victory, Win, Eliminate extremism, Defeat al Qaeda, Completing the mission, Win this war on terror, Emerge victorious, Liberty triumph, Win the ideological struggle, Prevail	Violent political utopia, A totalitarian nightmare, Radical Islamic empire, Radical dictators, No compromise or dialogue, Forcing America to retreat, Regime of tyranny, Open field, To control governments, Terrorist states, Armed with nuclear weapons, Create numerous, Decentralized operating bases, Totalitarian empire
People	Friends and allies, Strong ally, Coalition, Forces of freedom, Allies, Allies in the war on terror, Nation at war	Enemies, Tyrants, Radical, Dictators, Enemy we face, Mind of our enemies, Terrorist allies, Enemies, Enemies of liberty
Means	Long war, Clear plan, Fierce fighting, Arsenal, Offensive, Military might	Resources, Nuclear, Weapons, Propaganda, Strategy, Strategy to defeat us
Environment	Global network, Empire, Conflict, War, Struggle, Across two oceans, Military conflict, Central front, Third World War, Greatest battle, Pivotal moment, Despotism, Battlefield, Wars of the 20 th century, Path to victory, War of destiny, Central battlefield, Global campaign, Campaign against terror	

While previous conflicts have had “V-days” that symbolized the finality of a conflict, the GWOT may never have a day where conflict fully subsides.

A striking example of this problem is found in the recent death of a terrorist leader. The death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was a major success for the coalition in Iraq. However, the display of his corpse paved his path to martyrdom among sympathizers and met a lukewarm reception in the United States.¹² Commanders knew that his death was important, but because the reality of this conflict is different, the event could not be accurately translated into the language of traditional warfare. The death of Zarqawi was not “complete victory,” but it was important. Yet, it was impossible to convey its significance within the traditional framework.

The inability to communicate victory using the traditional language of war is directly related to flagging support for the war on terrorism. As

the aforementioned scholars argue, perceptions of victory are closely tied with support. In short, the inadequacy of traditional war framing is, at least partially, to blame for a lack of domestic enthusiasm regarding the GWOT. The solution to this problem is more complicated than renaming the GWOT as the “global struggle against extremism”—we need a new, more accurate vocabulary for the entire conflict. It must communicate the conflict accurately, contain an appropriate tone, and frame the conflict in terms compatible with its likely path of development. In crafting the vocabulary we must be aware that while the problem we have identified is domestic, everyone will have access to the words we choose. While it is impossible to craft the perfect message/vocabulary for every audience,¹³ we believe that we can make substantial improvements on the current language choices we have made.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

We propose that the United States Federal Government should adopt a new vocabulary in reference to what is now called the Global War on Terrorism. In discussing the debate over the language of war, Walid Phares¹⁴ calls for a clear alternative to present language, an alternative that presents the conflict as both ideological and global. We answer that call by providing a framework that confers international legitimacy to counterterrorism efforts as well as belittling the motivations for violent acts by groups such as al-Qaeda.

Phares warns that to re-label the war would embolden terrorist groups by not recognizing that they are “one ideology, a focused identity, [with] a global strategy,” but we do not agree that *any* re-labeling would have this effect. On the contrary re-labeling it as a different kind of threat—as an organized criminal enterprise rather than a military struggle—can help resist terrorists’ religious legitimization efforts,¹⁵ better mobilize domestic Muslim support, and could revitalize non-Muslim domestic attitudes at a time when support for the war frame is waning. The focus on criminal activity is a natural one given the strong connection between criminal activity and terrorism.¹⁶ Focusing on terrorism as a violation of international law accomplishes several purposes.

1. Framing terrorism as a violation of international law makes it possible to communicate success.

Americans understand that crime cannot be eliminated, but that it can be contained. This means that when the coalition undertakes a successful operation it will be judged as to whether or not it decreased criminal activity, not whether or not it was a “total victory.” Having attainable goals means that Americans are more likely to sustain support for the effort.

2. Framing terrorism as a violation of international law increases awareness of the problem as a global one.

This language reframes the discussion of terrorism against the backdrop of international standards. Hence, when the United States takes action against terrorism, we take action on behalf of the laws of the international community. This framing increases the opportunities for cooperation with other international actors who seek a more just world based on rule-of-law.

3. Framing terrorism as a violation of international law means that terrorists are reduced to the level of criminals.

Positioning the conflict as a “war” confers a certain amount of legitimacy on terrorists, as a force defending a large collective interest. Reducing terrorists to criminals who seek money and power detracts from the allure of terrorism to possible recruits.

4. Framing terrorism as a violation of international law removes any connection of the language to religion.

Referring to terrorists as criminals rather than “jihadis” completely separates them from Muslim faith. Distancing the conflicts from religion means that we are more likely to win moderate Muslim cooperation because we will implicitly acknowledge the disconnection between terrorist activity and Islam. Conversely the current policy runs the constant risk of conflating “terrorist” with “Muslim.” We cannot sustain this policy if we expect to win friends within the Muslim community.

The new language of terrorism will require development, refinement, and contributions from a variety of sources. However, within the same framework we utilized in the analysis of presidential speeches, we have devised the basis for a vocabulary of terrorism that distinguishes the current situation from traditional warfare (Table 2). From our newly established vocabulary, we have rewritten one of Bush’s speeches from his campaign during the anniversary of 9/11 (see appendices A and B). In our modification, we have left much of the President’s words intact, but have changed the instances where the traditional war frame appears. We are confident that readers who give this a fair reading will find that the language equally as tough, determined, and unfavorable to the terrorists.

Table 2. New Characterizations of the Terrorism

	US	THEM
Action	Policing, Building alliances, Increasing communications, Increasing independence	Steal, Lie, Cheat, Murder, Assassinate, Violate, Launder, Manipulate, Propagandize, Disrupt, Breach, Infringe, Transgress, Abuse Assault
Goals	Decreased levels of activity, Removing key players, Maintaining order, Increasing cooperation, Law enforcement	Acquire power and money, Disrupt order, Break law, Bend international will, Control international actors
People	International peacekeepers	Enemies of international law, Criminals, Outlaws, Fugitives, Bandits, Assassins, Murders, Thieves, Thugs
Means	Freezing assets, Breaking up rackets/networks, Isolating activity, Containment, Imprisonment	Underground networks, Human rights abuses, Violence, Threats, Intimidation, Bombing, Recruiting
Environment		International order, Back Alleys, Dark Corners (Internet)

CONCLUSION

With increasing doubts toward the Bush administration’s policies in the War on Terror, new frameworks and vocabularies are necessary to revitalize public support. The War on Terror provides a new type of battle on an ambiguous front where victory will not be realized through peace treaties and flags atop hills. We have offered a new vocabulary, that of international crime, to reframe the War on Terror. This strategic new vocabulary paints terrorism as a persistent international problem and undermines the religious justification commonly asserted by Al Qaeda and other extremists. Removing the religious connotation of the War on Terror will help mobilize moderate Muslims in support of efforts that reduce international crime. Finally, reframing the War on Terror as an international crime problem allows international bodies to enforce existing law systems which already govern criminal acts.

APPENDIX A: BUSH SPEECH MODIFIED WITH NEW VOCABULARY IN BOLD

President's Address to the Nation, September 11, 2006

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening. Five years ago, this date -- September the 11th -- was seared into America's memory. Nineteen men attacked us with a barbarity unequaled in our history. They murdered people of all colors, creeds, and nationalities -- and **violated international law and order**. Since that day, America **and members of the international community have enforced international norms and laws, policed these underground criminal networks, and hunted down the murderous outlaws**. Today, we are safer, but we are not yet safe. On this solemn night, I've asked for some of your time to discuss the nature of the threat still before us, what we are doing to protect our nation, and the building of a more hopeful Middle East that holds the key to peace for America and the world.

On 9/11, our nation saw the face of evil. Yet on that awful day, we also witnessed something distinctly American: ordinary citizens rising to the occasion, and responding with extraordinary acts of courage. We saw courage in office workers who were trapped on the high floors of burning skyscrapers -- and called home so that their last words to their families would be of comfort and love. We saw courage in passengers aboard Flight 93, who recited the 23rd Psalm -- and then charged the cockpit. And we saw courage in the Pentagon staff who made it out of the flames and smoke -- and ran back in to answer cries for help. On this day, we remember the innocent who lost their lives -- and we pay tribute to those who gave their lives so that others might live.

For many of our citizens, the wounds of that morning are still fresh. I've met firefighters and police officers who choke up at the memory of fallen comrades. I've stood with families gathered on a grassy field in Pennsylvania, who take bittersweet pride in loved ones who refused to be victims. I've sat beside young mothers with children who are now five years old -- and still long for the daddies who will never cradle them in their arms. Out of this suffering, we resolve to honor every man and woman lost. And we seek their lasting memorial in a safer and more hopeful world.

Since the horror of 9/11, we've learned a great deal about **these criminals**. We have learned that they are evil and kill without mercy -- but not without purpose. We have learned that they form a global **criminal network driven by a violent self-interest that disregards international order**, rejects tolerance, and despises all dissent. And we have learned that their goal is to **disrupt international norms to the point** where women are prisoners in their homes, men are beaten for missing prayer meetings, and terrorists have a safe haven to plan and launch **criminal** attacks on America and other civilized nations. **The hunt for these criminals has changed the international landscape and the world is united against these murderous thugs**.

Our nation is being tested in a way that we have not been since the start of the Cold War. We saw what a handful of our enemies can do with box-cutters and plane tickets. We hear their threats to launch even more terrible attacks on our people. And we know that if they were able to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction, they would use them against us. We face an enemy determined to bring death and suffering into our homes. America did not ask for this **violence**, and every American wishes it were over. So do I. But the **hunt** is not over -- and it will not be over until we **capture every fugitive**. If we do not **contain** these enemies now, we will leave our children to face a Middle East overrun by terrorist states and radical dictators armed with nuclear weapons. We are in a **struggle** that will set the course for this new century -- and determine the destiny of millions across the world.

For America, 9/11 was more than a tragedy -- it changed the way we look at the world. On September the 11th, we resolved that we would go on the **hunt for** our enemies, and we would not distinguish between the terrorists and those who harbor or support them. So we helped drive the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. We put al Qaeda on the run, and killed or captured most of those who planned the 9/11 attacks, including the man believed to be the mastermind, Khalid Sheik Mohammed. He and

other suspected terrorists have been questioned by the Central Intelligence Agency, and they provided valuable information that has helped stop **criminal** attacks in America and across the world. Now these men have been transferred to Guantanamo Bay, so they can be held to account for their actions. Osama bin Laden and other **criminal agents** are still in hiding. Our message to them is clear: No matter how long it takes, America will find you, and we will bring you to justice.

On September the 11th, we learned that America must confront threats before they reach our shores, whether those threats come from terrorist networks. I'm often asked why we're in Iraq when Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The answer is that the regime of Saddam Hussein was a clear threat. My administration, the Congress, and the United Nations saw the threat -- and after 9/11, Saddam's regime posed a risk that the world could not afford to take. The world is safer because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. And now the challenge is to help the Iraqi people build a democracy that fulfills the dreams of the nearly 12 million Iraqis who came out to vote in free elections last December.

Al Qaeda and other **criminal** extremists from across the world have come to Iraq to stop the rise of a free society in the heart of the Middle East. They have joined the remnants of Saddam's regime and other armed groups to foment sectarian violence and drive us out. Our enemies in Iraq are tough and they are committed -- but so are Iraqi and coalition forces. We're adapting to stay ahead of the enemy, and we are carrying out a clear plan to ensure that a democratic Iraq succeeds.

We're training Iraqi troops so they can defend their nation. We're helping Iraq's unity government grow in strength and serve its people. We will not leave until this work is done. Whatever mistakes have been made in Iraq, the worst mistake would be to think that if we pulled out, the terrorists would leave us alone. They will not leave us alone. They will follow us. The safety of America depends on the outcome of the battle in the streets of Baghdad. Osama bin Laden calls this fight "the Third World War" -- and he says that victory for the terrorists in Iraq will mean America's "defeat and disgrace forever." If we yield Iraq to men like bin Laden, our enemies will be emboldened; they will gain a new safe haven; they will use Iraq's resources to fuel their extremist movement. We will not allow this to happen. America will stay in the fight. Iraq will be a free nation, and **an international actor in terrorist crime reduction.**

We can be confident that our coalition will succeed because the Iraqi people have been steadfast in the face of unspeakable violence. And we can be confident in victory because of the skill and resolve of America's Armed Forces. Every one of our troops is a volunteer, and since the attacks of September the 11th, more than 1.6 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our nation's uniform. In Iraq **and** Afghanistan, the men and women of our military are making great sacrifices to keep us safe. Some have suffered terrible injuries -- and nearly 3,000 have given their lives. America cherishes their memory. We pray for their families. And we will never back down from the work they have begun.

We also honor those who toil day and night to keep our homeland safe, and we are giving them the tools they need to protect our people. We've created the Department of Homeland Security. We have torn down the wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence from sharing information. We've tightened security at our airports and seaports and borders, and we've created new programs to monitor enemy bank records and phone calls. Thanks to the hard work of our law enforcement and intelligence professionals, we have broken up terrorist cells in our midst and saved American lives. Five years after 9/11, our enemies have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil, but they've not been idle. Al Qaeda and those inspired by its **criminal** ideology have carried out terrorist attacks in more than two dozen nations. And just last month, they were foiled in a plot to blow up passenger planes headed for the United States. They remain determined to attack America and kill our citizens -- and we are determined to stop them. We'll continue to give the men and women who protect us every resource and legal authority they need to do their jobs.

In the first days after the 9/11 attacks I promised to use every element of national power to fight the terrorists, wherever we find them. One of the **most effective tools** in our **possession** is the power of freedom. The terrorists fear freedom as much as they do our firepower. They are thrown into panic at the sight of an old man pulling the election lever, girls enrolling in schools, or families worshipping God in their own traditions. They know that given a choice, people will choose freedom over their extremist ideology. So their answer is to deny people this choice by raging against the forces of freedom and moderation. We are fighting to maintain the way of life enjoyed by free nations. And we're fighting for the possibility that good and decent people across the Middle East can raise up societies based on freedom and tolerance and personal dignity.

We are now in the early hours of this struggle between **order and disorder**. Amid the violence, some question whether the people of the Middle East want their freedom, and whether the forces of moderation can prevail. For 60 years, these doubts guided our policies in the Middle East. And then, on a bright September morning, it became clear that the calm we saw in the Middle East was only a mirage. Years of pursuing stability to promote peace had left us with neither. So we changed our policies, and committed America's influence in the world to advancing freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism.

With our help, the people of the Middle East are now stepping forward to claim their freedom. From Kabul to Baghdad to Beirut, there are brave men and women risking their lives each day for the same freedoms that we enjoy. And they have one question for us: Do we have the confidence to do in the Middle East what our fathers and grandfathers accomplished in Europe and Asia? By standing with democratic leaders and reformers, by giving voice to the hopes of decent men and women, we're offering a path away from radicalism. And we are enlisting the most powerful force for peace and moderation in the Middle East: the desire of millions to be free.

At the start of this young century, America looks to the day when the people of the Middle East leave the desert of despotism for the fertile gardens of liberty, and resume their rightful place in a world of peace and prosperity. We look to the day when the nations of that region recognize their greatest resource is not the oil in the ground, but the talent and creativity of their people. We look to the day when moms and dads throughout the Middle East see a future of hope and opportunity for their children. And when that good day comes, the clouds of **violence** will part, the appeal of radicalism will decline, and we will leave our children with a better and safer world.

On this solemn anniversary, we rededicate ourselves to this cause. Our nation has endured trials, and we face a difficult road ahead. **Containing terrorism** will require the determined efforts of a unified **international community**, and we must put aside our differences and work together. We will **break up criminal networks and bring our enemies to justice**. We will protect our people. And we will lead the 21st century into a shining age of human liberty.

Earlier this year, I traveled to the United States Military Academy. I was there to deliver the commencement address to the first class to arrive at West Point after the **crimes** of September the 11th. That day I met a proud mom named RoseEllen Dowdell. She was there to watch her son, Patrick, accept his commission in the finest Army the world has ever known. A few weeks earlier, RoseEllen had watched her other son, James, graduate from the Fire Academy in New York City. On both these days, her thoughts turned to someone who was not there to share the moment: her husband, Kevin Dowdell. Kevin was one of the 343 firefighters who rushed to the burning towers of the World Trade Center on September the 11th -- and never came home. His sons lost their father that day, but not the passion for service he instilled in them. Here is what RoseEllen says about her boys: "As a mother, I cross my fingers and pray all the time for their safety -- but as worried as I am, I'm also proud, and I know their dad would be, too."

Our nation is blessed to have young Americans like these -- and we will need them. Dangerous enemies have declared their intention to destroy our way of life. They're not the first to try, and their fate will be the same as those who tried before. Nine-Eleven

showed us why. The **crimes** were meant to bring us to our knees, and they did, but not in the way the terrorists intended. Americans united in prayer, came to the aid of neighbors in need, and resolved that our enemies would not have the last word. The spirit of our people is the source of America's strength. And we go forward with trust in that spirit, confidence in our purpose, and faith in a loving God who made us to be free. Thank you, and may God bless you.

APPENDIX B: ORIGINAL BUSH SPEECH WITH WAR FRAMING

President's Address to the Nation, September 11, 2006

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening. Five years ago, this date -- September the 11th -- was seared into America's memory. Nineteen men attacked us with a barbarity unequalled in our history. They murdered people of all colors, creeds, and nationalities -- and made war upon the entire free world. Since that day, America and her allies have taken the offensive in a war unlike any we have fought before. Today, we are safer, but we are not yet safe. On this solemn night, I've asked for some of your time to discuss the nature of the threat still before us, what we are doing to protect our nation, and the building of a more hopeful Middle East that holds the key to peace for America and the world. On 9/11, our nation saw the face of evil. Yet on that awful day, we also witnessed something distinctly American: ordinary citizens rising to the occasion, and responding with extraordinary acts of courage. We saw courage in office workers who were trapped on the high floors of burning skyscrapers -- and called home so that their last words to their families would be of comfort and love. We saw courage in passengers aboard Flight 93, who recited the 23rd Psalm -- and then charged the cockpit. And we saw courage in the Pentagon staff who made it out of the flames and smoke -- and ran back in to answer cries for help. On this day, we remember the innocent who lost their lives -- and we pay tribute to those who gave their lives so that others might live.

For many of our citizens, the wounds of that morning are still fresh. I've met firefighters and police officers who choke up at the memory of fallen comrades. I've stood with families gathered on a grassy field in Pennsylvania, who take bittersweet pride in loved ones who refused to be victims -- and gave America our first victory in the war on terror. I've sat beside young mothers with children who are now five years old -- and still long for the daddies who will never cradle them in their arms. Out of this suffering, we resolve to honor every man and woman lost. And we seek their lasting memorial in a safer and more hopeful world.

Since the horror of 9/11, we've learned a great deal about the enemy. We have learned that they are evil and kill without mercy -- but not without purpose. We have learned that they form a global network of extremists who are driven by a perverted vision of Islam -- a totalitarian ideology that hates freedom, rejects tolerance, and despises all dissent. And we have learned that their goal is to build a radical Islamic empire where women are prisoners in their homes, men are beaten for missing prayer meetings, and terrorists have a safe haven to plan and launch attacks on America and other civilized nations. The war against this enemy is more than a military conflict. It is the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century, and the calling of our generation.

Our nation is being tested in a way that we have not been since the start of the Cold War. We saw what a handful of our enemies can do with box-cutters and plane tickets. We hear their threats to launch even more terrible attacks on our people. And we know that if they were able to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction, they would use them against us. We face an enemy determined to bring death and suffering into our homes. America did not ask for this war, and every American wishes it were over. So do I. But the war is not over -- and it will not be over until either we or the extremists emerge victorious. If we do not defeat these enemies now, we will leave our children to face a Middle East overrun by terrorist states and radical dictators armed with

nuclear weapons. We are in a war that will set the course for this new century -- and determine the destiny of millions across the world.

For America, 9/11 was more than a tragedy -- it changed the way we look at the world. On September the 11th, we resolved that we would go on the offense against our enemies, and we would not distinguish between the terrorists and those who harbor or support them. So we helped drive the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. We put al Qaeda on the run, and killed or captured most of those who planned the 9/11 attacks, including the man believed to be the mastermind, Khalid Sheik Mohammed. He and other suspected terrorists have been questioned by the Central Intelligence Agency, and they provided valuable information that has helped stop attacks in America and across the world. Now these men have been transferred to Guantanamo Bay, so they can be held to account for their actions. Osama bin Laden and other terrorists are still in hiding. Our message to them is clear: No matter how long it takes, America will find you, and we will bring you to justice.

On September the 11th, we learned that America must confront threats before they reach our shores, whether those threats come from terrorist networks or terrorist states. I'm often asked why we're in Iraq when Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The answer is that the regime of Saddam Hussein was a clear threat. My administration, the Congress, and the United Nations saw the threat -- and after 9/11, Saddam's regime posed a risk that the world could not afford to take. The world is safer because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. And now the challenge is to help the Iraqi people build a democracy that fulfills the dreams of the nearly 12 million Iraqis who came out to vote in free elections last December.

Al Qaeda and other extremists from across the world have come to Iraq to stop the rise of a free society in the heart of the Middle East. They have joined the remnants of Saddam's regime and other armed groups to foment sectarian violence and drive us out. Our enemies in Iraq are tough and they are committed -- but so are Iraqi and coalition forces. We're adapting to stay ahead of the enemy, and we are carrying out a clear plan to ensure that a democratic Iraq succeeds.

We're training Iraqi troops so they can defend their nation. We're helping Iraq's unity government grow in strength and serve its people. We will not leave until this work is done. Whatever mistakes have been made in Iraq, the worst mistake would be to think that if we pulled out, the terrorists would leave us alone. They will not leave us alone. They will follow us. The safety of America depends on the outcome of the battle in the streets of Baghdad. Osama bin Laden calls this fight "the Third World War" -- and he says that victory for the terrorists in Iraq will mean America's "defeat and disgrace forever." If we yield Iraq to men like bin Laden, our enemies will be emboldened; they will gain a new safe haven; they will use Iraq's resources to fuel their extremist movement. We will not allow this to happen. America will stay in the fight. Iraq will be a free nation, and a strong ally in the war on terror.

We can be confident that our coalition will succeed because the Iraqi people have been steadfast in the face of unspeakable violence. And we can be confident in victory because of the skill and resolve of America's Armed Forces. Every one of our troops is a volunteer, and since the attacks of September the 11th, more than 1.6 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our nation's uniform. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts in the war on terror, the men and women of our military are making great sacrifices to keep us safe. Some have suffered terrible injuries -- and nearly 3,000 have given their lives. America cherishes their memory. We pray for their families. And we will never back down from the work they have begun.

We also honor those who toil day and night to keep our homeland safe, and we are giving them the tools they need to protect our people. We've created the Department of Homeland Security. We have torn down the wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence from sharing information. We've tightened security at our airports and seaports and borders, and we've created new programs to monitor enemy bank records

and phone calls. Thanks to the hard work of our law enforcement and intelligence professionals, we have broken up terrorist cells in our midst and saved American lives. Five years after 9/11, our enemies have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil, but they've not been idle. Al Qaeda and those inspired by its hateful ideology have carried out terrorist attacks in more than two dozen nations. And just last month, they were foiled in a plot to blow up passenger planes headed for the United States. They remain determined to attack America and kill our citizens -- and we are determined to stop them. We'll continue to give the men and women who protect us every resource and legal authority they need to do their jobs.

In the first days after the 9/11 attacks I promised to use every element of national power to fight the terrorists, wherever we find them. One of the strongest weapons in our arsenal is the power of freedom. The terrorists fear freedom as much as they do our firepower. They are thrown into panic at the sight of an old man pulling the election lever, girls enrolling in schools, or families worshiping God in their own traditions. They know that given a choice, people will choose freedom over their extremist ideology. So their answer is to deny people this choice by raging against the forces of freedom and moderation. This struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization. We are fighting to maintain the way of life enjoyed by free nations. And we're fighting for the possibility that good and decent people across the Middle East can raise up societies based on freedom and tolerance and personal dignity.

We are now in the early hours of this struggle between tyranny and freedom. Amid the violence, some question whether the people of the Middle East want their freedom, and whether the forces of moderation can prevail. For 60 years, these doubts guided our policies in the Middle East. And then, on a bright September morning, it became clear that the calm we saw in the Middle East was only a mirage. Years of pursuing stability to promote peace had left us with neither. So we changed our policies, and committed America's influence in the world to advancing freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism.

With our help, the people of the Middle East are now stepping forward to claim their freedom. From Kabul to Baghdad to Beirut, there are brave men and women risking their lives each day for the same freedoms that we enjoy. And they have one question for us: Do we have the confidence to do in the Middle East what our fathers and grandfathers accomplished in Europe and Asia? By standing with democratic leaders and reformers, by giving voice to the hopes of decent men and women, we're offering a path away from radicalism. And we are enlisting the most powerful force for peace and moderation in the Middle East: the desire of millions to be free.

Across the broader Middle East, the extremists are fighting to prevent such a future. Yet America has confronted evil before, and we have defeated it -- sometimes at the cost of thousands of good men in a single battle. When Franklin Roosevelt vowed to defeat two enemies across two oceans, he could not have foreseen D-Day and Iwo Jima -- but he would not have been surprised at the outcome. When Harry Truman promised American support for free peoples resisting Soviet aggression, he could not have foreseen the rise of the Berlin Wall -- but he would not have been surprised to see it brought down. Throughout our history, America has seen liberty challenged, and every time, we have seen liberty triumph with sacrifice and determination.

At the start of this young century, America looks to the day when the people of the Middle East leave the desert of despotism for the fertile gardens of liberty, and resume their rightful place in a world of peace and prosperity. We look to the day when the nations of that region recognize their greatest resource is not the oil in the ground, but the talent and creativity of their people. We look to the day when moms and dads throughout the Middle East see a future of hope and opportunity for their children. And when that good day comes, the clouds of war will part, the appeal of radicalism will decline, and we will leave our children with a better and safer world.

On this solemn anniversary, we rededicate ourselves to this cause. Our nation has endured trials, and we face a difficult road ahead. Winning this war will require the determined efforts of a unified country, and we must put aside our differences and work together to meet the test that history has given us. We will defeat our enemies. We will protect our people. And we will lead the 21st century into a shining age of human liberty.

Earlier this year, I traveled to the United States Military Academy. I was there to deliver the commencement address to the first class to arrive at West Point after the attacks of September the 11th. That day I met a proud mom named RoseEllen Dowdell. She was there to watch her son, Patrick, accept his commission in the finest Army the world has ever known. A few weeks earlier, RoseEllen had watched her other son, James, graduate from the Fire Academy in New York City. On both these days, her thoughts turned to someone who was not there to share the moment: her husband, Kevin Dowdell. Kevin was one of the 343 firefighters who rushed to the burning towers of the World Trade Center on September the 11th -- and never came home. His sons lost their father that day, but not the passion for service he instilled in them. Here is what RoseEllen says about her boys: "As a mother, I cross my fingers and pray all the time for their safety -- but as worried as I am, I'm also proud, and I know their dad would be, too."

Our nation is blessed to have young Americans like these -- and we will need them. Dangerous enemies have declared their intention to destroy our way of life. They're not the first to try, and their fate will be the same as those who tried before. Nine-Eleven showed us why. The attacks were meant to bring us to our knees, and they did, but not in the way the terrorists intended. Americans united in prayer, came to the aid of neighbors in need, and resolved that our enemies would not have the last word. The spirit of our people is the source of America's strength. And we go forward with trust in that spirit, confidence in our purpose, and faith in a loving God who made us to be free. Thank you, and may God bless you.

REFERENCES

- ¹ [War on terror update: An upswing in confidence](#). (2006, October 28). Rasmussen.
- ² [National Security Strategy of the United States of America](#). (2002, Sept). *The White House*, p. 1
- ³ [Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence](#). (2006, Sept 20) Al-Qaeda: The many faces of an Islamist extremist threat, p. 6.
- ⁴ Reynolds, P. (2007, April 17). [Declining use of 'war on terror.'](#) *BBC News*.
- ⁵ Perlez, J. (2007, April 17). [Briton criticizes U.S.'s use of 'War on Terror.'](#) *New York Times*.
- ⁶ Gilbert, C. (2006, September 12). Sept. 11: Five years later Feingold decries creation of term 'Islamic fascism'. *Milwaukee journal sentinel*, p. 10.
- ⁷ Robinson, M. (2006, Winter) [Law, language, and principle in the "war on terror"](#). *Human rights magazine*.
- ⁸ Medhurst, M. J. (1990). Rhetoric and cold war: A strategic approach. In Medhurst, M. J., Ivie, R. L., Wander, P., and Scott, R. L. (Eds.) *Cold war rhetoric: Strategy, metaphor, and ideology*. New York: Greenwood Press, p. 19.
- ⁹ Ivie, R. L. (1974). Presidential motives for war. *Quarterly journal of speech*, 60, p. 344.
- ¹⁰ Bush, G. W. (2006, Aug 31). [President Bush addresses American Legion National Convention](#). *The White House*; Bush, G. W. (2006, Sept 5). [President discusses Global War on Terror](#). *The White House*; Bush, G. W. (2006, Sept 7). [President Bush discusses progress in the Global War on Terror](#). *The White House*; Bush, G. W. (2006, Sept 11). [President's address to the nation](#). *The White House*. Bush, G. W. (2006, Sept 29). [President Bush discusses Global War on Terror](#). *The White House*.
- ¹¹ Baker, P. & VandeHei, J. (2006, August 31). Bush team casts foes as defeatist; Blunt rhetoric signals a new thrust. *Washington Post*. Retrieved November 2, 2006 from lexis-nexis.com.
- ¹² Justus, Z. S. & Hess, A. (2006). [One message for many audiences: Framing the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi](#). Report #0605, Consortium for Strategic Communication.
- ¹³ See Justus and Hess, previously cited.
- ¹⁴ Phares, W. (2007, April). [British Minister fails the War of Ideas](#). *Counterterrorism Blog*.
- ¹⁵ See Corman, S.R. and Schiffelbein, J.S. (2006). [Communication and media strategy in the jihadi war of ideas](#). Report #0601, Consortium for Strategic Communication, Arizona State University.
- ¹⁶ Gartenstein-Ross, D. & Dabruzzo, K. (2007). [The convergence of crime and terror: Law enforcement opportunities and perils](#). *The Center for Policing Terrorism*.