

How to Fight the War of Ideas Against Radical Islamism
Testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
John Lenczowski
Founder and President, The Institute of World Politics
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Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Minority Member, and Members of the Committee. I am grateful and honored to have the opportunity to share with you my recommendations on how we in the United States can optimally protect ourselves and the world against radical Jihadism. My testimony consists of two parts. The first and major part addresses the question of how to defeat the principal dimensions of the Jihadist threat – particularly the method by which the Jihadist movement generates new recruits to its cause. The second addresses how our government should be organized and tasked with performing this critical function.

Jihadism is Principally an Ideological Problem

The United States has spent trillions of dollars fighting radical Islamist terrorism. We have done so by treating Jihadist aggression as principally a military and intelligence problem. Yet, it is a civilizational problem. We have been fighting two wars to destroy terrorism-supporting regimes, seeking out terrorists, and killing them. This is like trying to eradicate mosquitoes in your back yard by inviting all your friends over for a garden party, arming them each with shotguns, and shooting mosquitoes all afternoon. You will get a few of the mosquitoes. The problem is that there is a puddle in the back yard and something is going on there: it is the spawning of new mosquitoes – and we are doing very little about it. This is not principally a military problem, but a political, propaganda, ideological, cultural, and religious doctrine challenge. It is also a totalitarian effort to establish a temporal state (the Caliphate) by mobilizing the activists via an extremist interpretation of the Islamic religion. To solve this problem necessitates fighting a war of ideas. The problem is that we have virtually no ideological warriors in this war.

There is, to be sure, a military element to ideological war. So long as the Islamic State was able to conquer and control new territory, it, like the Soviet Union, could claim that these victories proved that its ideology and its vision of the future are correct because they were visibly sanctified by Allah. And so long as the Islamic State was expanding, it enjoyed a high rate of recruitment of new Jihadists. Even without the expansion and military success, the Islamist terrorists can canonically invoke Allah, explaining away their failures as “the time of trial,” thus continuing to draw on divine sanction of their aggression to attract followers. But ultimately, the lure of the Jihadist ideological vision was what constituted the essence of the appeal for new recruits.

The War of Ideas in the Cold War

Fighting any war requires an understanding of what victory looks like. In the Cold War, victory meant ending the causes of U.S.-Soviet tensions. Some people thought that this required

reducing or eliminating arms. The problem was that arms were not the cause of tensions: they were a symptom of those tensions. We could never have real détente – a relaxation of tensions – without a relaxation of concerns, the political concerns that were the real source of tensions.

In the case of the USSR, our concern was with Soviet expansionism and aggression in its many forms, including military intervention, occupation, and proxy war, and the many forms of conquest without war, including subversion, cultural warfare, propaganda, active measures (such as disinformation, forgeries, and covert political influence operations), psychological operations, economic warfare, strategic deception, espionage, and other forms of covert action.

The deeper concern was with the nature of the Soviet communist system – its “genetic code.” This consisted of:

- its systematic denial of basic human rights;
- its totalitarian control of all communications, education, publishing, news media, film, and entertainment;
- its internal security system, including the Gulag Archipelago and the pervasive system of secret police informants (in East Germany, where we have been able to ascertain with accuracy the extent of this system, a full 25 percent of the population were compelled into becoming informants, most against their will);
- the consequent process of “atomization” of society, where each individual is separated from others and left alone to fend for himself against the all-powerful state: a phenomenon made possible by the pervasive atmosphere of mistrust engendered by the system of informants;
- its system of forced conformity, which was enforced by its ideological methods of thought and speech control (“political correctness”), including the “daily force-feeding of a steady diet of lies” (which Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn called the single most oppressive feature of life under communism) – a regimen which compelled people to violate their consciences in order to demonstrate subjugation and loyalty to the regime;
- its crushing economic privations, stemming from the destruction of private property, which forced people into the underground economy, thus leaving them vulnerable to being accused of economic crimes and blackmailed into becoming accessories of the internal security system;
- its mass murder of 30 million to 60 million of its own citizens, including the forced starvation of millions of Ukrainians (the *Holodomor*); and
- its genocide of many small national groups within its empire.

To eliminate the political concerns that underlay Cold War tension, it was therefore essential to change the nature of the Soviet system, to change its genetic code. The heart of that genetic code was the ideology, which produced the enforced conformity, the totalitarian atomization of society, and the expansionistic foreign policy that was necessary to prove the validity of the Marxist-Leninist ideology and therefore the ideologically-based “legitimacy” of the regime.

To do this, the United States conducted a political-ideological war, episodically, sometimes effectively and sometimes barely, for four decades. This consisted of several elements:

- A war of information – the use of truth as our most powerful weapon – to counter the propaganda and disinformation that sustained the communist system from within and which it used as a key element of its subversive foreign policy.
- A systematic effort to delegitimize the Marxist-Leninist ideology and the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and its satellites. This strategy exploited one of the principal vulnerabilities of Communist Party rule: its rule without the consent of the governed, its consequent lack of legitimacy, and its consequent fear of its own people.
- An effort to anathematize the inhuman nature of communist rule.
- An effort to isolate the Soviet empire in the world community, including efforts to create divisions within its own empire.
- An effort to offer the peoples within the Soviet empire a positive alternative: freedom, democracy, justice, and hope for a better life.
- An effort to support forces of resistance against communist expansionism, including anti-communist movements in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Mozambique, Angola, and elsewhere (the success to such movements would demonstrate that resistance against communism is not futile and that the victory of communism is not inevitable).
- An effort to support resistance forces within the Soviet empire, including dissidents, human rights organizations, religious movements, the Solidarity Movement in Poland, and national independence movements in many union republics within the USSR. These efforts involved Presidential rhetoric, Congressional resolutions, covert political and communications assistance, and perhaps most importantly, international broadcasting by the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty. All this activity connected America and the West with people behind the Iron Curtain who yearned for freedom, for the protection of their human rights, including individual liberty and property rights, and for some semblance of justice, which they described as their desire to lead a “normal life.”

Altogether, these efforts used the tools not of traditional, government-to-government diplomacy, but rather public diplomacy, political warfare, and ideological warfare.

All of these efforts were complemented by various material pressures on the Soviet empire which pushed it toward bankruptcy and caused a crisis in its military economy. These included: our military buildup, our technological security measures, our depriving the Kremlin of hard currency (mostly by a successful effort to lower global energy prices), and other measures. It should be noted, however, that none of these measures were sufficient to explain how millions of

people would take to the streets in Moscow, Vilnius, Tashkent, and other cities demanding radical political change.¹

What, then, constituted victory in the Cold War? The obvious answer was the breakup of the Warsaw Pact, the destruction of the Berlin Wall, and the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the entire Soviet system. A part of this collapse, however, involved the defection of one of the most prominent Soviet Party leaders: Boris Yeltsin, who made a complete moral-ideological break with the Party. Another indicator was the declaration by chief Party ideologist, Alexander Yakovlev, that the Marxist-Leninist ideology and the system it produced were “evil.”

The Nature of the Jihadist Threat

The Jihad which concerns us here is not that which concerns fighting against one’s own temptations to do wrong. It is the “Jihad of the Sword” that has been adopted by those varieties of radical Islamism that stress warfare against unbelievers, even when those infidels are not at war them.

Today the most prevalent and virulent form of radical Islamism is the combination of reactionary Wahhabist Islam from the Arabian peninsula and the modernist-totalitarian Islam of the Muslim Brotherhood as developed by Said al-Qutb. It is this combination that emerged as the regnant ideology of Al Qaeda. While al-Qutb says that it is the duty of Muslims to cleanse the world of ignorance about Allah, he then describes Islam not as a religion, but as a revolutionary party. He borrows from Marxist-Leninist ideology and its prescriptions for the use of power to advance communism. It is for this reason that it is fair to say that this ideology is a new totalitarian movement.

A corollary to this new Islamist ideology, developed by Abdullah Azzam, the founder of Al Qaeda’s predecessor organization, the MAK, posits that every Muslim has the duty to conduct Jihad and needs no permission to do so. This is, in fact, mandated by the Koran. He who cannot (for reasons of health, age, or other) participate in the Jihad is obligated to assist the Jihadist materially, spiritually, and in any which way leading to the victory of Islam over the infidel.

Because there is no Muslim pope or magisterium as there is in the Catholic faith, the interpretation of doctrine is up for grabs, and even the most radical of Islamists can claim authenticity based on Koranic teachings.

There are two major elements of the radical Jihadist threat. Both are the results of Islamist supremacism in the political realm: the secular political passion to establish a worldwide caliphate by incremental means. The first consists of what has become known as “re-settlement Jihad” – the process of immigration to the lands of the *Dar al-Harb*: the “house of war” – in other words, the non-Islamic world (in contrast to the *Dar al-Islam* – i.e., the “house of Islam”). Once Muslim immigrants arrive in these lands, ordinary Muslims have the obligation under the

¹ For an authoritative review of the U.S. strategy as described by the Presidential advisors who were among its authors, see: Douglas Streusand, Norman Bailey, Francis Marlo, and Paul Gelpi (eds.) *The Grand Strategy that Won the Cold War*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016).

doctrine of *hegira* to conduct missionary activity and seek the transformation of their place of immigration to the *Dar al-Islam* – a process that historically has taken hundreds of years in various places around the globe. Meanwhile, the aim of the radical Jihadists is to expedite the process of Islamization by setting up separatist enclaves and conducting what the Muslim Brotherhood calls “civilizational Jihad.” This process begins by demanding accommodation to Islamic practices, establishing a parallel track within “infidel” societies for Sharia law, and then, through greater birth rates than those of the native population, establishing irreversible and, ultimately, preponderant political influence.

It should be recognized that this process is well advanced in Europe, where, in just one example in the United Kingdom, Sharia law has established a solid foothold within British society. In France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, and other western and northern European countries, many Muslim enclaves have become “no-go zones” where the native police cannot venture without unusual danger, where Sharia law is practiced within the community, where culture is permeated by Muslim cultural mores, including sexual practices, and where Jihadist ideology finds the opportunity to propagate.²

² The problem concerning no-go-zones is how such zones are defined. As former Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew McCarthy explains: “It is therefore easy for Islamists and their apologists to knock down their strawman depiction of what a no-go zone is when they leave it at that: a place where non-Muslims are “not allowed.” That is not what no-go zones are—neither as they exist in fact nor as they are contemplated by Sharia....no sensible person is saying that state authorities are prohibited from entering no-go zones as a matter of law. The point is that they are severely discouraged from entering as a matter of fact—and the degree of discouragement varies directly with the density of the Muslim population and its radical component. Ditto for non-Muslim lay people: It is not that they are not permitted to enter these enclaves; it is that they avoid entering because doing so is dangerous if they are flaunting Western modes of dress and conduct.” Andrew McCarthy, “What Bobby Jindal Gets About Islam – and Most People Still Don’t,” *National Review*, January 24, 2015, <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/397110/what-bobby-jindal-gets-about-islam-and-most-people-still-dont-andrew-c-mccarthy>. For numerous examples of such zones and the variations among them, see: David Rieff, “Battle Over the Banlieues,” *New York Times Magazine*, April 14, 2007; Jonathan Tobin, “‘No-Go Zones’ Are Not a Conservative Meme,” *Commentary*, January 23, 2015; Andrew McCarthy, “France’s No-Go Zones: Assimilation-Resistant Muslims Are the Real Refugee Problem,” <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/427302/frances-fifth-column-muslims-resist-assimilation>; Soeren Kern, “European ‘No-Go’ Zones: Fact or Fiction? Part I: France,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/5128/france-no-go-zones>; Idem., “European ‘No-Go’ Zones: Fact or Fiction? Part 2: Britain,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/5177/no-go-zones-britain>; Idem., “Police Warn of No-Go Zones in Germany,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/6264/no-go-zones-germany>; Idem., “Inside Germany’s No-Go Zones: Part I - North Rhine-Westphalia,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/9279/germany-no-go-zones-nrw>; Fjordman, “Europe: Combating Fake News,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/10037/no-go-zones-europe>; Yves Mamou, “France: No-Go Zones Now in Heart of Big Cities,” <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/10404/france-no-go-zones>; Leslie Shaw, “No-Go Zones for Women,” May 22, 2017, <https://clarionproject.org/paris-neighborhood-no-go-zone-women/>. The French government published a list of 750 so-called *Zones Urbaines Sensibles* (or No-Go Zones) in December 1996 where non-Muslims (including law enforcement) are unwelcome and sharia law holds sway: <http://sig.ville.gouv.fr/Atlas/ZUS/>. Just this month, 20,000 French women signed a petition protesting the effects of no-go zones in Paris: Rory Mulholland, “Paris boosts police in female ‘no-go zone’, as French feminist decries ‘unquestionable’ regression in status of women,” <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/03/paris-boosts-police-female-no-go-zone-french-feminist-decries/>

In the United States, the Islamist effort to establish Sharia law has already made major advances. To date, over 140 legal decisions in American courts have been influenced by Sharia law. In just one of these, a judge in New Jersey acquitted a man for serially raping his wife on grounds that he is a Muslim and therefore subject to Sharia law and not American law.³

Other noteworthy accommodations to civilizational Jihad include conformity within our financial system to the rules of Sharia finance, adaptation of our rules of taxation to include Islamic foundations (*waqf*) as religious tax deductible charities despite their involvement in Jihad, and the tacit acceptance of sexual molestation of minors by Muslim men.

The second major threat, of course, is terrorism. Radical Jihadist ideology is the key to the success of terrorism. It involves the enlistment of new recruits through promises of heavenly rewards for martyrdom and secular political power and privilege. It supplies meaning to lives that have not yet found meaning. It offers redemption of all sins and involvement in a glorious victorious cause. Fighting in the Jihad, including martyrdom, is the only canonically guaranteed way to Paradise.

The success of the ideology depends on the generation of hatred against the infidel by juxtaposing him with the perfect Islamic deity, Allah. And central to this project is the Islamists' moral attack against the United States and West. It is partly an attack against the injustice of Western colonialism (principally Zionism and American support for it), and the Western, principally American, presence and hegemony in the Middle East. But more importantly, the attack is against the moral degradation of the West, and its rejection of Islam. Islamists see the conflict as being between belief and unbelief. They see the West as godless, materialistic, and sexually libertine – a culture with no soul.

In fact, with increasing frequency the radical Islamists refer to the West not as “Christendom” but as *Dar al-Jahiliyyah* (The Land of Paganism/Ignorance of Allah). The difference is crucial. Pagans are given a choice: death or conversion to Islam. Christians (along with Jews) are regarded as “The People of the Book.” If they submit, their lives will be spared for a price. They will have to pay *jizya* (poll-tax) – in addition to all other taxes. They will have to surrender their arms and never bear them. They will have to recognize Islam and Muslims as superiors. In other words, they will be reduced to semi-slavery as the *dhimmi*; they will be subject to exploitation and humiliation. But they will remain alive as long as they please their Muslim masters.

Before subjugation of the infidel, the two elements of the Jihadist threat involve differing levels of intensity. The terrorist threat is what commands public attention. But the incremental

³ *Shariah Law and American State Courts: An Assessment of State Appellate Court Cases*, (Washington, DC: Center for Security Policy, 2011), <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/228663-sharia-law-and-american-state-courts.html>; *Shariah in American Courts: The Expanding Incursion of Islamic Law in the U.S. Legal System*, (Washington, DC: Center for Security Policy Press, 2014). For an overview of the larger threat of Sharia, see: LTG William G. Boykin, LTG Harry Edward Soyster, Christine Brim, Amb. Henry Cooper, Stephen C. Coughlin, Michael Del Rosso, Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., John Guandolo, Brian Kennedy, Clare M. Lopez, Adm. James A. Lyons, Andrew C. McCarthy, Patrick Poole, Joseph E. Schmitz, Tom Trento, J. Michael Waller, Diana West, R. James Woolsey, and David Yerushalmi, *Shariah: the Threat to America*, (Washington, DC: Center for Security Policy, 2010).

establishment of separatist enclaves with parallel legal systems and alien social norms constitutes what may be the greater of the two threats. For the latter involves the use of democratic freedoms, rights, and laws to effect the steady, incremental erosion of the system of human rights that characterizes Western democratic society, and the creation of separatist enclaves that provide the “sea” in which terrorists can swim. Migrants thus demand the rights denied to the non-Muslim in their original places of domicile to achieve domination over the Western host nations. That domination means bringing about the superiority that Muslim migrants used to enjoy at home over the *dhimmi* (the inferior non-Muslims).

So, the question we must address is: do we want our country to be governed by our Constitutional system of the consent of the governed, the rule of law, enumerated powers, inalienable individual rights (including the rights of women), the separation of powers, checks and balances, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, and other elements of our Bill of Rights – all based on respect for the dignity of the individual human person no matter what his or her background or condition?

Or do we wish to have a parallel society within our country run on the basis of a system that canonically denies the rights of women, prescribes the stoning of adulterers and extreme punishment of homosexuals, permits marriage with adolescent girls, allows the unilateral, capricious declaration of divorce solely by a husband, denies women the right to see their children if taken from them by their separated or divorced husbands, prescribes wife beating, denies free speech through the imposition of “blasphemy laws,” and other features of Sharia law?

Defeating Radical Jihadism

The Prerequisite of Strategy: the Establishment of a Political Goal

The Cold War lesson in ideological warfare must inform our war against radical Islamist Jihad. As in the formation of any strategy, the first question that must be asked is: what constitutes victory? What is the political result that we would like to achieve?

In full recognition of the limits of what may be possible, there is a hierarchy of desirable outcomes, from the perfect (and probably utopian) to the more achievable.

The perfect outcome would be the equivalent of the Yakovlev admission – by the way, an admission that nobody in the West thought would have been possible. That equivalent would be for one or more of the leaders or ideologists of radical Jihadism to say that, upon reflection, their interpretation of the Koran, including their version of Jihad, is wrong, misguided, and evil. As impossible and unrealistic as this seems, one form such an admission could take would be to acknowledge that a person who kills innocent people will go not to heaven but to hell, and that doing so is not Allah’s will. What makes this impossible as a practical matter is that Sharia justifies all manner of killing in the process of Jihad until the non-believers submit. The radical Jihadis must nevertheless concede that killers of innocents are not honoring essential passages of the Koran. They could also admit the manifold failures, injustices, hypocrisies, crimes, privations, and human rights violations of societies run by radical Islamism.

Another desirable outcome would be for unrepentant Jihadist leaders to be so widely discredited that they become isolated and no longer capable of mobilizing the recruits who serve as their terrorist cannon fodder. Insofar as such leaders are heads of nations, such as the Supreme Leader in Iran, the desired outcome would be for the society to reject such leadership and replace it with a more humane, honest, and just leadership that has the capacity, for example, to respect religious minorities.

Another outcome concerns those young people who have been attracted to Jihadism as part of their increased devotion to Islam. Here, it would be desirable for them to reject the temptation to treat their Islam as principally a secular ideology and not as a religion.

Then, there are less perfect outcomes that nonetheless represent positive steps toward the optimal goals. One of these is the disuniting of Jihadist groups. In addition to creating internal divisions, this can mean splitting Jihadist front groups, allied organizations, and even cooperative regimes from the metropolitan centers of Jihad, whether they be the Islamic State, Al Qaeda, or Jihadist Shia Iran.

Other partial goals include de-funding the progenitors of Jihadist ideology, preventing them from enjoying political support and safe haven, and banning those of their websites that advocate the violation of our fundamental laws and Constitutional rights, thus rendering them significantly less able to spread their propaganda.

Another is the creation of a consensus among nations that respect human rights as to the sources of the Jihadist threat, what fuels it, and how to minimize that threat within our own societies.

The accumulation of various types of political, ideological, doctrinal, and military defeats, and for established regimes, the breakdown of totalitarian Islamist structures of internal security, can also force Jihadist leaders to face the possibility that their entire program, their secular political goals, and their ruthless methods, may not comport with Allah's will. This was what they were forced to consider after the Ottoman caliphate's defeat in the battle of Vienna by the Polish cavalry on the symbolically important dates in 1683: September 11, when the battle was joined, and then September 12, when the Grand Porte's armies were routed.

The Strategy to Achieve Victory

The War of Information The principal weapon that the free world enjoys in this war of ideas is the truth. The truth must first be used to hold accountable and discredit the progenitors of Jihadism and their supportive regimes. It must expose the crimes of Jihadism, the hypocrisies and corruption of its advocates and supporters, and the consequences of Jihadist rule. It should also focus on the defeats of Jihadist forces to demonstrate that their victories are not inevitable.

Promulgation of the truth requires a robust information campaign using every medium possible in every major language of both Muslim countries and nations where Muslim communities have established themselves. It must involve official government media, covertly

supported media, non-governmental organizations, and assistance to indigenous individuals and organizations within Muslim nations and communities. A thorough information campaign would de-legitimize radical Islamist regimes in both Islamic and non-Islamic terms by exposing their many characteristics, including:

- corrupt, dishonest, hypocritical leaders whose goal has been political power and/or personal wealth and not holiness;
- the illegitimacy of radical Islamist leaders, from Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Iran to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State;
- arbitrary and capricious “justice” often administered with cruelty;
- the many features of totalitarianism, including systematic violations of human rights, enforced conformity, thought and speech control, mistrust, atomization, violence, fear, and lack of respect for the dignity of the human person – the creation of Allah;
- slavery (including sex slavery) which was the economic mainstay of the Muslim world until Western colonialism eradicated it;
- active collaboration with criminal activity, including narcotics, kidnapping, human trafficking, and smuggling;
- economic privation, aggravated by lack of freedom to innovate, a culture of fatalism, and intellectual stasis;
- gradually turning non-Muslim majorities into minorities by extermination, conversion, persecution, traumatization, and humiliation through Jihad and subsequent Islamic domination in a parasitical Caliphate (where the subservient condition of the non-Moslem is called “dhimmitude”); and
- overall civilizational decline.

Truth telling also requires the end of self-censorship by the leaders of Western countries and politically moderate Muslim nations as well.

Finally, telling the truth requires the end of false portrayals of radical Islamism by Western leaders, who are motivated partly out of ignorance of the nature of radical Islamism and partly out of a misguided desire to cultivate good “community relations” with those who they think are politically moderate, but in fact are not. One need only recall the case of Abdurahman Alamoudi, founder of the American Muslim Council with the help of the Muslim Brotherhood, who was received by Presidents Clinton and Bush as part of their outreach to the Muslim community, yet who ultimately revealed himself to be a felon now serving a long prison sentence for terrorism conspiracy.

One of the greatest fears of the radical Islamists is of their enemies’ use of the truth. They understand the power of words, pictures, film, and the mass media. That is why they censor free speech in the areas they control, ban satellite television, punish criticism, and establish the *sine qua non* of totalitarian rule: an ideological “Party line” that serves as the vehicle of thought control, speech control, and standard of enforced conformity – the prerequisites of behavior control. This suppression of truth extends to the academic realm as well, as it requires the suppression of reason and logic. Scholars are thus prohibited from seeking the truth, and using reason and logic as tools to find it.

The War of Ideas Articulation of the truth also applies to the ideological front. If the United States, the West, and politically moderate Muslim nations and communities are to free themselves of radical Jihadism, we must discredit the totalitarian ideology of radical Islamism and show the positive alternatives.

Fighting an ideological war presupposes that one has some knowledge of the ideas in question. This requires some working knowledge of several fields that are not part of any official U.S. government professional education programs but should be: Islamism, philosophy, and comparative religion and civilization. It also requires the collection of what one can call “cultural intelligence” which can inform us of the thinking of Islamist leaders, propagandists, and the people who live under their influence. This is a form of “audience research.” It is also a form of “opportunities intelligence” – i.e., information that enables us to identify opportunities that can be exploited by one or another instrument of statecraft, in this case, the tools of information and strategic influence. Finally, successful ideological warriors must know something about the history and methods of wars of ideas.

The first step in an ideological warfare strategy is to identify and discredit the toxic ideas and religious doctrines that result in terrorism and totalitarian Islamist regimes. One of these is the doctrine of paying attention only to the “Medina verses” of the Koran, that prescribe war against the infidel, and no consideration of the “Mecca verses” which command peaceful coexistence with the “people of the Book” – i.e., Christians and Jews – people who believe in God. The fact that these two sets of verses stand in opposition to one another introduces us to the relativism of Islam and the fact that, like the establishment of the Party line in Communist regimes, circumstances dictate which interpretation should hold sway among Muslim clergy and scholars at any given historical moment.

A corollary doctrine is that which says that a Muslim must use the sword against those who are at war with Islam. The question is: who is at war with Islam, and what constitutes war? The radical Jihadists argue that all sorts of people are at war with Islam, when in fact, the opposite is true. Exposing the falsehood by honestly recounting history is key to debunking the Jihadist argument.

Another example is the doctrine concerning the nature of Allah that has dominated Islamic thought for a thousand years. This is the doctrine that Allah is pure will, that he wills every second of every minute of every day and that everything that actually happens is Allah’s will. That means that the cholera epidemic in Pakistan is Allah’s will, as is the rape of the twelve-year-old girl. This deterministic idea lies at the root of so much of the fatalistic culture throughout the Islamic world.

Insofar as Muslims subscribe to, and live by, this doctrine, an ideological counter-argument can be made. If an Islamic State terrorist decides that he wants to attack a segment of what he considers to be a heretical Shia community with a terrorist bomb and succeeds at the project, killing scores of innocents, it must mean that Allah willed it. That means that the terrorist’s will equates with Allah’s will. And that means that the terrorist has decided that, at least in his own sphere, he is his own god. Could it be that in doing so he is being blasphemous?

A few years ago, in his famous speech at the University of Regensburg, Pope Benedict asked some pertinent questions (the gist and implications of which I present here): Is Allah reasonable? Can one divine Allah's rules of life through the application of right reason in the same way that it is possible to figure out the rules of the God of Christians and Jews without the benefit of divine revelation? Is there any logic to Allah at all? If he is "almighty," can he contradict himself or will himself to cease to exist? Is there any coherence to Allah's moral standards? Or is Allah capricious and arbitrary? Can Allah will good and evil at the same time? Can one justify violence – even against the innocent – on the basis of Allah's will? In other words, is there in Islam any concept approximating the Natural Moral Law – as C.S. Lewis described it, the Law of Decent Behavior, a law higher than man-made law, the law written on the human heart that either inheres in nature or comes from God?

There was indeed such a concept in Islam during its first three centuries. Islamic schools of thought, such as the Mutazilites, propounded ideas, such as the acceptance of reason and logic, that were related to this doctrine. However, as documented by Robert Reilly in *The Closing of the Muslim Mind*, that concept was defeated by a rival school of Islamic thought that posited the doctrine of Allah being "pure will."⁴ This remains the dominant doctrine in Sunni Islam today.

Those both in the West and in the movements for Islamic reform must raise this issue again and challenge the idea that Allah wills evil. Islam is said to be an Abrahamic religion. But insofar as it accepts the idea that Allah can will evil, it has nothing to do with the other two Abrahamic faiths. Those two, Judaism and Christianity, posit that God wills only good, that God has endowed man with free will and respects man's moral choices, such that He will permit evil to take place but never will it. In contrast, both Sunni and Shia Muslims see free will as blasphemous.

Then there is the question of whether Islam is more a secular totalitarian political movement than a religion. A major campaign in an ideological war must expose the fact that radical Jihadists are motivated more by passions for secular political power than they are by matters of the spirit. Indeed, a key element of their ideological recruitment campaigns is to recruit foot soldiers to their cause by giving them the excitement of participation in a glorious secular movement that enjoys some blessing from the Almighty, but simultaneously portraying it as a religious phenomenon.

This argument against the radical Jihadists is already being made by prominent Muslim leaders in, among other places, Indonesia. Indonesia has a few mass organizations of Muslims that have a long tradition of resisting Islamist radicalism. Today, these organizations, who of which have tens of millions of members, are working to prevent what they call the "Arabization" of Indonesian Islam. Specifically, this means resisting the Saudi export of Wahhabi Islamism to their archipelago. The leader of one of these organizations, the late Abdurrahman Wahid, who became President of Indonesia, published a book, *The Illusion of an Islamic State*, which has been a major salvo in the ideological war. In it Wahid argues that there is no such thing as a

⁴ Robert Reilly, *The Closing of the Muslim Mind: How Intellectual Suicide Created the Modern Islamist Crisis*, (Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute Books, 2011)

genuine secular Islamic regime. The true “Islamic state” is when an entire people have achieved holiness.⁵

A noteworthy fact about Indonesian Islam is that it retains many local, regional, and national characteristics: the land was never conquered by the Jihad but, instead, was converted through gradual missionary activity. So, these Indonesian Islamic organizations were in the forefront of national liberation struggle against colonialism and, later, against communism. By being both religious and nationalist, they are opposed by the radical Islamists who view nationalism as something forbidden. It follows that the promotion of nationalism is another ideological weapon against the radical Jihadists.

In addition to exposing, questioning, and debunking the Jihadist doctrines that legitimize evil, an ideological strategy must promote positive alternatives. It must show potential recruits that there is a better vision, a better way to find meaning and fulfillment in life. It must appeal to the better angels not only of potential recruits but those already recruited to the Jihadist cause.

There are several ways to do this. One is the appeal to conscience – to the little voice, the articulator of the Natural Law, which tells a person that he or she is doing the wrong thing. The Jihadists do much to suppress the voice of conscience. One of their techniques is to give mind-distorting drugs of different varieties to those who they send to commit suicide terrorist missions. This is why the etymology of “assassin” derives from “hashish.” There are other, more effective drugs that perform the same conscience numbing function.

The appeal to conscience has antecedents in the Cold War. Perhaps the most compelling articulation of this was made by Whitaker Chambers, a senior editor of *Time* magazine, who was a believing Communist and, proceeding from this idealism, a spy for the Soviet Union. In his magnificent memoir, *Witness*, Chambers describes how recognition of his own conscience caused him to convert from communism to the cause of freedom and ultimately to Christianity.⁶

Chambers argued that Marxism-Leninism follows an air-tight secular, materialist logic. He said that the essence of that ideology is a vision of life without God. Here, human reason is the creative intelligence of the world. If this is so, then it must follow that man has the capacity to improve and perfect a grievously flawed world, and even perfect human nature itself. And since it is man and not God who determines the moral standards of society, it must be moral to do what is necessary to bring about the perfect society. Since, as Marx observed, the oppressor class will not politely step out of the way, it must be removed by violent revolution. One cannot make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.

This argument was what Chambers called “the logic of the mind.” It was reasonable and logical, if one accepted the philosophical premises of materialism. But then Chambers began to feel the tug of another force. He described it by relating the story of an East-German Communist apparatchik, whose daughter explained what her father experienced: “one night he heard

⁵ Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid, *The Illusion of an Islamic State*, (Jakarta: Wahid Institute, LibForAll Foundation, and Maarif, 2011).

⁶ Whitaker Chambers, *Witness*, (Washington, DC: Regnery/Gateway Editions, 1980).

screams.” Chambers explains that these were the screams of the political prisoners being sent to the death camps of the Gulag Archipelago. They were the screams of the widows and orphans left behind. They were the screams of the prisoners being tortured in the dungeons of the Lubyanka. This, Chambers explained, was “the logic of the soul.” The East German was haunted. Even though he was a bureaucrat working in some government agency like the transportation ministry making the trains run on time, he was nevertheless an accessory to the apparatus of oppression. His trains included those sending those innocent wretches to their fate.

Chambers then explained that the Communist Party had acute antennae that could detect when apparatchiks such as that East German were haunted or when they were hearing the voice of conscience. The good Party member develops moral calluses and learns to suppress that little voice. The Party is smart enough to know that it cannot ask its new recruits to do monstrous tasks at the outset of their careers. It eases its cadres into full ruthlessness incrementally. When it does detect a member listening to his conscience, it knows that he is becoming morally sick. He is defecting in his heart. And spiritual defection is the ineluctable precursor to physical defection.

So, Chambers recognized that neither he nor his distant East German comrade could escape the haunting. And he could only conclude that this logic of the soul was more powerful than the logic of the mind. Here, he acknowledged the existence of a higher moral force than that exercised by human reason and its relativistic, contingent, and changing moral standards.

This same experience can be shared by Jihadists. But someone has to prick their consciences, awaken them from their suppressed state. Someone has to appeal to the Jihadists’ basic humanity.

Another front in an ideological strategy is to promote the dignity of the human person as the creation of God. It is as a result of this dignity that man possesses inalienable rights that come not from other men but, as our founders said, from a Creator.

The cause of human rights is one of the most powerful weapons in the ideological war. What is arguably the most effective campaign on this account has been conducted by a small private organization, Good of All, which is dedicated to promoting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an “idea virus” among “digital natives” – the younger generation who have grown up with computers, cell phones, and social media. The audience consists of both Muslims and also non-Muslims (some of whom may be also recruited to the Jihadist cause). The idea is to present an idealistic vision of how society should run that rejects violence and all the human rights violations that attend radical Islamist movements and regimes.

Educational programs and institutions are a powerful potential weapon in this war. Under the George W. Bush Administration, the Defense Department attempted to set up an Office of Strategic Influence, which, regrettably, collapsed under a dishonest political-bureaucratic attack. Among its plans was to set up and fund schools in Pakistan that would compete with the *madrassas* – the Islamist schools that principally taught Koranic memorization. Poor parents would send their children to these Saudi-funded indoctrination programs because they also supplied food, clothes, and shelter, which the parents could ill afford. The competitive

schools would give the students an all-round education that would include vocational training so that the graduates could earn a living and be less likely to become Jihadist recruits.

The ideological war can be fought with cultural means as well. In Indonesia, another private American group, LibForAll, has worked to promote a song written by the most prominent pop singer in the country. His song, which became the most popular song at the time, is called “Warriors of Love,” whose title is derived from the name of a local Al Qaeda affiliate, Warriors of Islam. The song rejects Jihadist violence and proclaims that genuine Islam is based on love.

Finally, the ideological war can be fought with public diplomacy, the most systematically neglected instrument of American power. One way this has been done has been through foreign assistance. One group that has excelled in this task has been the Asia America Initiative, which has established strong relationships of trust with Muslims living in poverty stricken islands of the southern Philippines. With the tiniest of budgets – and therefore no excessive quantities of money that can be diverted into corrupt officials’ pockets – this organization has demonstrated through its work in medical aid, education aid, and agricultural aid, that America is not an enemy of Islam. The islands in question have been prime Al Qaeda recruitment territory. Yet this small organization has parried the Jihadists’ advances.

Most Islamists, including those who do not necessarily agree with violence, harbor considerable illusions about American society. These are based on the caricature of America and the West that they see on the products of our popular culture, particularly our movies, television programs, and popular music. They focus on the gratuitous sex and violence. America consists of skyscrapers, car chases, rappers, high tech, and dishonest businessmen, all surrounded by pornography. What they never see is small town America, church-going America, volunteer charitable work, or the products of our high culture. Our vehicles of public diplomacy used to expose the world to these less sensational realities of America through visitors programs, exchanges, cultural diplomacy, distribution of literature, book fairs, film festivals, and international broadcasting. Today, however, our public diplomacy capabilities are a shadow of their former selves.

One important vehicle of public diplomacy is inter-religious dialogue. Exposing ordinary Muslims, including the non-radical clergy and scholars, to religious figures in America is a powerful instrument to counteract the lurid caricature of America that so many of them have been brought to believe. We have seen felicitous results of such interactions in the case of visits by our military chaplains to local imams in the recent theaters of war. These chaplains are virtually the only officials in the U.S. government who are authorized to talk about religion with anyone.

The fact that virtually no one else has such authority is the result of a thoroughly bogus legal opinion, remarkably prevalent within the government, that any discussion of religion or religious motivations for Jihadist activity, including terrorism, is somehow a violation of the Constitution’s First Amendment. This misguided opinion has no legal basis and fails to take into account the ample historical precedent of U.S. governmental involvement in religion as an intrinsic part of our traditional and public diplomacy. For example, our international broadcasters, the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty all broadcast actual

religious services to people of different faiths living behind the Iron Curtain. Our government also worked closely with the Vatican to assist the cause of religious liberty within the Soviet empire.

Organizing Our Government to Counter Radical Jihad

The U.S. government is intellectually, culturally, and organizationally unprepared to combat both elements of the radical Jihadist threat and fight a true war of ideas. There is no agency of the government charged with ideological warfare. There is no agency that hires warriors of ideas. There is no agency that trains its personnel to conduct such a war.

The U.S. Information Agency was one agency in the government that had capabilities to conduct ideological war. It was the principal agency in the government charged with having relations with people and not just governments and cultivating a culture of excellence in this field. However, it was eliminated in 1999, and only a fraction of its former capabilities was transferred to the Department of State which devotes only scanty strategic attention to this entire art of statecraft.

What must be done is to create a new U.S. Public Diplomacy Agency (USPDA) that will become a new bureaucratic empire within the State Department. The new agency would incorporate:

- all the former functions of the USIA;
- the various other public diplomacy functions at State, such as human rights, democracy, and international labor policy, women's issues, etc.;
- the many functions of the U.S. Agency for International Development;
- broadcasting in radio (on all wave-lengths), television, and internet/social media by the Voice of America;
- policy and budgetary oversight of the activities of the National Endowment for Democracy and its subsidiary organizations; and
- possibly even the Peace Corps. (There are sound arguments that the Peace Corps should remain independent. But so long as it is, it will remain an orphan child of the foreign policy community, perennially under-funded and lacking national strategic attention.)

The Director of USPDA should be a Deputy Secretary of State and a statutory observer in the National Security Council at the same rank as the Director of National Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Finally, in order that a culture of public diplomacy and strategic influence develop at State, fifty percent of all ambassadorships and Deputy Assistant Secretaryships going to career

Foreign Service Officers should be given to personnel who spend the larger part of their careers at USPDA.

Within the new agency should reside a couple of relevant offices. These should include:

- An office to counter Jihadist propaganda. It took the State Department over a decade to establish such a function within its walls: originally the Center for Strategic Counter-terrorism Communications, now the Global Engagement Center. This was a long overdue, but excellent development that needs much greater resources, both human and financial, as well as specialized training and targeted hiring of personnel who are optimally intellectually equipped to fight a war of information and ideas.
- An office specializing in semantics as a key component of information and counter-propaganda.
- An office with a robust capability to do foreign audience and opinion research.
- A Bureau of Education, Culture, and Ideas, within which should reside an office of religious and ideological affairs charged with strategic policy making and implementation in ideological warfare.
- An office that would provide counterintelligence protection of U.S. public diplomacy programs against penetrations by foreign agents of influence.

The Central Intelligence Agency must embark on a major revival of its covert political influence capabilities. There are limits as to how much U.S. government representatives can say to Islamic audiences concerning issues of radical Jihad. Many of the messages on this score must come from politically moderate Muslims who do not seek radical Jihadist domination and are capable of arguing against the killing of innocents. Such voices must be supported quietly and covertly. They must be given funding, media assistance, and possibly even physical protection.

During the Cold War, the CIA operated broadcasting stations, published and distributed newsletters, books, and other literature, subsidized journals of opinion, and established front organizations. It funneled funds to supportive foreign organizations. It distributed communications equipment to resistance cells within totalitarian regimes. It needs to do all these activities and more – and do so secretly to maximize their effectiveness.

The Defense Department has capabilities to conduct many related activities. Its Military Information Support Operations have considerable cultural knowledge and cross-cultural communication capabilities. They are under-funded and under-emphasized in overall defense strategy. Similarly, the Special Operations Command can fulfill a variety of relevant functions in areas where it has its personnel.

The FBI and local law enforcement agencies have a key role in fighting this war as well. They need significantly improved capabilities to distinguish between ordinary Muslims and

radical Jihadists when it comes to their efforts at domestic intelligence and community outreach. This requires better education in history, religion, and ideology.

Finally, the Department of Homeland Security, in collaboration with the State Department, must have similarly improved analytical capabilities to determine whom to admit to the United States. A simple but essential solution, even in the absence of such capabilities, is to include a key question on every application for a visa to enter the country. Like the questions asking the applicant whether he or she has ever been a member or supporter of the Nazi or Communist parties, each applicant should be asked if he or she supports the establishment of Sharia law in the United States. If the person answers in the affirmative, he or she should be disqualified from entry: Sharia law necessarily means the overthrow of the Constitution of the United States. If the person answers in the negative, but later proves to be a Sharia advocate, such a person, having lied on the application, should be deported.

All these institutional solutions, however, most of which I cover in greater detail in my book *Full Spectrum Diplomacy and Grand Strategy*, require strong leadership from the White House and funding that meets the national strategic need.⁷ Public diplomacy, strategic influence, and ideological warfare are dramatically less expensive than fighting kinetic wars. It is about time that the United States equips itself intellectually, institutionally, culturally, and financially to conduct methods of non-violent conflict before resorting to killing people to defend our vital interests.

⁷ John Lenczowski, *Full Spectrum Diplomacy and Grand Strategy: Reforming the Structure and Culture of U.S. Foreign Policy*, (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2011).