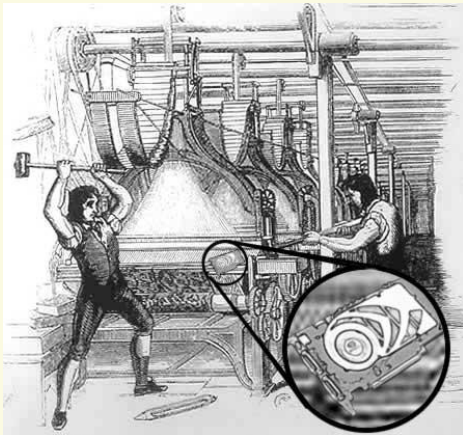


The Futures of Terrorism

How likely are the futures of terrorism to be more of the same – the “long war” against Islamist terror – or “something completely different”?



C. Dale Walton expects “a vast proliferation of terrorist groups with an enormous variety of ideologies and goals.” An acceleration of technology & social changes that generates “a violent ‘neo-Luddite’ response to genetic engineering, artificial computer intelligence, and other advances is **utterly predictable.**”

In absence of the rise of an “Islamist great power,” could Islamists realistically become an existential threat to the U.S. and the West?

Could globalism’s displacements, coupled with advanced technologies, motivate increasingly diverse nonstate terrorist-entrepreneurs?

Could the Great Powers (U.S., Japan, EU, Russia, China, India) ever agree on a common strategy to “strengthen disapproval ... and discourage support for” “violent nonstate groups who act against their peers”? What would it take – a nuclear terror strike?

Retrospective

Core themes examined during this course:

- ✓ Terrorism is violence against noncombatants for political purposes
- ✓ Terrorists are rational actors, embedded in nationalist / religious contexts
- ✓ They use network social structures to plan & strike more powerful targets
- ✓ Terror crests in historical waves; most recent: Transnational Islamist wave
- ✓ Military CT rarely succeeds; more often resolved politically or by burnout
- ✓ U.S. vs. Al-Qaida is multidimensional struggle & may be interminable
- ✓ Democratic societies confront trade-offs between security & civil liberty
- ✓ Cost of a failure to prevent nuclear terror strike would be enormous

How important are theoretical explanations of terrorism for devising effective CT strategy? Or are practical guides to actions more useful?

Does knowledge & understanding of how terrorist & CT organizations operate give you a better basis for choosing among policy options?

Are you better equipped to continue studying the issues on your own?