



CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

## **How Terrorism Ends: Implications for U.S. Homeland Security**

Audrey Kurth Cronin

All terrorist campaigns end, and the most effective way for homeland security to drive toward that end is to integrate defensive measures within an overall strategy of responding to terrorist threats both at home and abroad. Separating the internal and external elements of counterterrorism is a recipe for disaster, equivalent to separating the offensive and defensive elements of any other type of strategy. Because of the importance of perception in fighting terrorism, the actions and behaviours of domestic authorities feed into the effectiveness of efforts beyond the shores of the United States, and vice versa. There is a perfectly merged dynamic between the two. Protecting the most vulnerable assets in the homeland is, of course, essential. But it is crucial to avoid treating the threat as if it were an opaque monolith, thereby heightening public fear and increasing its ability to threaten. Attempting to protect all United States territory from terrorist attacks by using expensive technological fixes that are disconnected from dispassionate analysis of the specific purposes, goals, and evolution of threats will lead American efforts into a counterproductive spiral that exacerbates the problem, wastes resources, costs lives, and ultimately increases overall vulnerability at home. In short, history demonstrates that searching for perfect safety perversely enlarges the range of effective strategies available to terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, increasing their ability to threaten and decreasing the likelihood that they will rapidly meet their demise.

Terrorist violence seeks to challenge the state on two levels: with its citizenry, by questioning the state's ability to protect them from harm; and internationally, by undermining traditional notions of power and national sovereignty. These two dimensions cannot be separated. Chinese holistic medicine, rather than Western medicine focused on treating a specific symptom, is an apt analogy for how homeland security must be part of an integrated and layered strategy. Random, politically-motivated attacks against noncombatants undermine the state's credibility at home. Attacks abroad project an image of impotence and diminish state power, or so many leaders believe; and their perceptions facilitate the strategic impact of the incidents themselves. Both are challenges to a state's legitimacy. Regardless of the strength of the state, terrorism may be perceived as a threat to its power and the national interest. Before 9/11, for example, it is no accident that the United States retaliated militarily only in the wake of attacks on targets that were directly connected to the state itself,

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

including U.S. servicemen, a former U.S. president, and two U.S. embassies.<sup>1</sup> Terrorism is symbolic violence, and that symbolism is not lost on presidents and prime ministers.

Democratic governments want above all to protect their own citizens at home and abroad, a perfectly natural impulse. But terrorism is a tactic that bears within it the seeds of its own demise. The history of how terrorist groups end clearly demonstrates that adopting a phlegmatic approach to the threat and understanding the myriad strategies that terrorists may use have been most successful in turning a group's actions against them. It is extraordinarily difficult to maintain and perpetuate a terrorist campaign. Governments can put in place conditions that enable terrorist groups to help defeat themselves, thereby best protecting their populations in both the short and the longer term. Pursuing aggressive counterterrorist campaigns, instituting wise homeland security, and exploiting mistakes made by terrorists themselves is a winning triumvirate that can merge together to drive toward a group's end.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Strategies of Terrorism**

Terrorism has been used for many reasons, but the instinctive assumption of many governments is that groups are attempting compellence—which is the use of threats to manipulate or influence another actor to stop doing an unwanted behaviour or to start doing something a group wants it to do.<sup>3</sup> For example, compellence may try to force states to withdraw from foreign commitments through a strategy of punishment and attrition, to make the commitments so painful that the government will abandon them. Sometimes this approach has been thought successful, as in the U.S. and French withdrawals from Lebanon in 1983, the U.S. withdrawal from Somalia in 1993, the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000.<sup>4</sup> Others see terrorism in Iraq as a foreign-inspired plan to bleed America out of Mesopotamia. Many also argue that terrorism succeeded in the 2004 bombings in Madrid, leading to a change of government in Spain and the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. While that is an oversimplification of what actually happened in each case, terrorism is meant to oversimplify complex situations: the interpretation is persuasive to many audiences, not least those in the West, and that is a major reason why it is put forth on the Internet and over the airwaves. Compellence tries to change a state's policy. Given their twentieth century experience with air power, Western policy-makers and strategic thinkers find the logic

---

<sup>1</sup> Military retaliation was used after the 1986 Libyan bombing of a West German discotheque, the 1993 Iraqi attempt to assassinate former president George Herbert Walker Bush, and the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. For more on this see Michele L. Malvesti, "Explaining the United States' Decision to Strike Back at Terrorists," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Summer 2001), pp. 85-106.

<sup>2</sup> For information on al-Qaida specifically, see Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How al-Qaida Ends*, "International Security", Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 7-48.

<sup>3</sup> The strategic concept of "coercion" is the use of force or threatened use of force, but it can be mixed with diplomacy to provide positive inducements, too. Compellence is a subset of coercion and better describes what state leaders usually think terrorist groups are trying to do.

<sup>4</sup> But states are just as likely to respond by redoubling their efforts, as the Russians in Chechnya and the Indians in Kashmir.

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

comfortably familiar. As a result, they tend to focus exclusively on compellence but are blind to the other typical strategies of terrorism, and their practical implications.

Provocation, polarization, and mobilization are strategies of leverage that have been used repeatedly and for which terrorism is uniquely well-suited.<sup>5</sup> The first, provocation, tries to force a state to do something—not a specific policy but a vigorous action of some kind that undercuts its legitimacy. It was firmly established as a purpose for terrorism during the nineteenth century and was at the heart of the strategy of the Russian group Narodnaya Volya, for example. Narodnaya Volya’s goal was to attack representatives of the tsarist regime so as to provoke a brutal state response and inspire a peasant uprising. Other cases of provocation include the ETA’s early strategy in Spain, the Sandinista National Liberation Front’s strategy in Nicaragua, and the FLN’s strategy in Algeria.<sup>6</sup>

Provocation is a difficult strategy to apply effectively: terrorist groups may cause a state to behave in utterly unintended ways. A government may be vulnerable to being manipulated or provoked into unwise or emotion-driven action in the wake of a terrorist attack. This is arguably what happened with the outbreak of the First World War. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 was in itself a relatively unimportant act. The tactic had been endemic in the West for decades, including the assassinations of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, the French president Sadi Carnot in 1894, the Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas Del Castillo in 1897, Italian King Humbert in 1900, and U.S. President William McKinley, Jr., in 1901, among many others. But because of conditions in place at the time, not least Austro-Hungarian paranoia about Serbian nationalism, the act had huge implications. Gavril Princip, the consumptive 19-year-old who pulled the trigger, never meant to set off a global conflagration and was reportedly bewildered by what followed.<sup>7</sup> Terrorism on its own is relatively unimportant; but when it provokes a state it can indirectly kill millions. In this case, terrorism “ended” by setting off a cascade of state actions that resulted in a long and bloody war.

The second strategy, polarization, tries to divide and delegitimize a government, directing itself at the effects of terrorist attacks on the domestic politics of a state. It often drives regimes sharply to the right, ultimately forcing populations to choose between the terrorist cause and brutal state repression. The goal is to pry divided populations further apart, fragmenting societies to the extent that it is impossible to maintain a stable, moderate middle within a functioning state. This is a particularly attractive strategy against democracies, and it appeared regularly during the twentieth

---

<sup>5</sup> This discussion draws in part on the excellent overview of terrorism’s strategies provided by Martha Crenshaw in “Terrorism and Global Security,” Chapter 5 of *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007), especially pages 73-74.

<sup>6</sup> One of the best known twentieth century theorists of provoking the state to repression is Carlos Marighela, whose *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) is well known, particularly among Latin American revolutionaries.

<sup>7</sup> On Princip’s naiveté, see Adam Roberts, “The ‘War on Terror’ in Historical Perspective,” *Survival*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Summer 2005), p. 107.

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

century. Like the strategy of provocation it often results in unintended consequences. Examples of groups that deliberately acted to polarize societies included the LTTE in Sri Lanka and the PIRA in Northern Ireland. Terrorist activities in Germany, Austria & Hungary after the First World War were likewise meant to polarize and played a role in the coming of the Second World War.

A polarization strategy was used by the Tupamaros in Uruguay, for example. In the early 1960s, Uruguay had a robust party system, an educated, urban population, and an established democratic tradition. If democracy were an antidote to terrorism, Uruguay should have been immune. The Tupamaros were a small ultra-leftist urban guerrilla movement that adopted a strategy of targeting symbols of the “imperialist regime,” including businesses, airports, and diplomatic facilities.<sup>8</sup> Gradually they increased the audacity of their attacks on members of the establishment, leading to a sense of paranoia in the business community and the landed elite.<sup>9</sup> This drove politics to the right. Even as it temporarily suspended all constitutional rights, the government tried to enforce the rule of law and entrusted defeating the movement to the police. The police were unable to restore calm and eventually, in 1971, the government called upon the army.<sup>10</sup> By the end of 1972, the army had crushed the group. Even though terrorist attacks had ended and there was no serious threat from the Tupamaros, the Uruguayan army then carried out a coup, dissolving Parliament and ruling the country for the next twelve years. In their short pre-eminence, the Tupamaros had executed one hostage and assassinated eight counterinsurgency personnel in a widespread campaign of kidnappings, robberies, and terrorist attacks. The right-wing authoritarian military regime that came to power from 1973-1985 killed thousands.<sup>11</sup> A polarization strategy drove the government to destroy itself.

The last strategy, mobilization, is meant to recruit and rally the masses to the cause. Terrorist attacks may be intended to inspire current and potential supporters of a group, again using the reaction of the state as a means, not an end. This what the campaign of bombings and assassinations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century did for the anarchist movement, and the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre did for Palestinian nationalism. When terrorist attacks are used to mobilize, they are not necessarily directed toward changing the behaviour of a state at all; they aim instead to invigorate and energize those who would support a group or its cause and to raise its profile internationally,

---

<sup>8</sup> Originally part of the Uruguayan National Liberation Movement, the group named itself Tupamaros in honour of Jose Condorcanqui, who lead a failed revolt against Spanish rule in 1780 and was executed in 1782. The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement in Peru and the Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement in Venezuela also hark back to Condorcanqui. See MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base group profile for Tupamaros, available through <http://www.tkb.org>. Background on Uruguay’s political development is drawn from Jeffrey Cason, “Electoral Reform and Stability in Uruguay,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 2000), pp. 86-87.

<sup>9</sup> Fernando Lopez-Alves, “Political Crises, Strategic Choices and Terrorism: The Rise and Fall of the Uruguayan Tupamaros,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (April 1989), p. 225.

<sup>10</sup> Ironically, the Tupamaros greeted this development with pleasure, seeing military activity as evidence of the collapse of corrupt institutions and proof of their effectiveness in provoking a response. The Tupamaros switched from urban terrorism to a rural-based guerrilla strategy; this probably facilitated the military victory, as the military were trained to engage in counter-insurgency and the Tupamaros did not have extensive rural support.

<sup>11</sup> Fernando Lopez-Alves, p. 225. Another source for casualty figures is the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, <http://www.tkb.org>.

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

drawing resources, sympathizers, and allies. This strategy is uniquely well-suited for the twenty-first century's globalized international community, which allows movements to mobilize on a scale and at a speed never before witnessed in history; and it also gets to the heart of why so many see the struggle with religiously inspired militancy led by al-Qaida as a multi-generational 'long war'. In a global environment of democratized communications, an increase in public access, a sharp reduction in cost, a growth in frequency of messages, and an exploitation of images, groups like al-Qaida are able to use what I have elsewhere called "cyber-mobilization" to leverage the effects of terrorist attacks in a way that is unprecedented in history.<sup>12</sup> If a group is truly successful in mobilizing large numbers, this strategy can prolong the fight and enable the threat to transition to other forms, including insurgency and conventional war.

These four strategies—compellence, provocation, polarization and mobilization—are not mutually exclusive, and we have already mentioned a fifth: to erode a state's fundamental legitimacy at home and abroad. A group may use a combination of several, even all of these strategies; but what a government does in response to terrorist attacks is at the core of their efficacy. Reactions by a state in the narrow framework of one may be counterproductive with respect to the others. Terrorism is the weak strategy of the weak that draws its strength from the actions of the state. There are far more examples historically of strategies of leverage used by terrorist groups than any other type. Al-Qaeda is clearly engaging in all of them, employing whichever one best exploits the actions of the United States and its allies.

### **Democracies and Strategies of Leverage**

Modern states are not naturally designed to handle the logic of terrorism, and this includes democracies. Counterterrorism strategies that are designed to prevent a state from being compelled by a group founder if the goal is to provoke a state, polarize a population, or mobilize a constituency. And terrorist organizations may shift their approach to adjust to the demands of a fluid situation. Just as there is no evidence that terrorism is less likely to occur in democratic states (indeed, the data point the other way), there is likewise no evidence that democratic states are particularly adept at handling these multi-faceted strategies, especially in the short term. Autocratic regimes, because of their rigidity, lack of concern for human rights, and questionable legitimacy, tend to crush their challengers. Their mistakes and follies are well-known. But the pressures on democratic states to respond to major attacks with repressive measures at home and overwhelming force abroad are arguably just as strong—for different reasons.

Striking back with force immediately following a terrorist attacks is reflexive, and it occurs for a plethora of reasons. First, overt military retaliation is a kind of strategic catharsis. Sending air strikes or military invasions seems fitting. It is extraordinarily difficult for any state not to answer the use of force with force, and terrorist attacks by

---

<sup>12</sup> For much more on this, see Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Cyber-mobilization: The New *Levée en Masse*," *Parameters*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Summer 2006), pp. 77-87.

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

definition have a political motivation that challenges the current order.<sup>13</sup> Second, military retaliation responds to domestic pressure, the need to “do something.” In the aftermath of terrorist incidents, there is virtually always a wave of public opinion supporting military retaliation.<sup>14</sup> Elites respond to that pressure. Using military force sustains national morale and national prestige, all the more so in retaliation to terrorism, a brazen and defiant act. There is much focus on the natural brakes on democratic war-making, but these are accelerators in counterterrorism. Third, obliterating the perpetrators can be seen as carrying out appropriate “justice,” especially when attacks originate from outside a state’s territory (as is increasingly likely to be the case). With no reliable international enforcement of laws or norms, states must use their own military power to punish those who harm their citizens, and to deter others from doing the same.

The same kind of logic about the use of force drives democratic states to react vigorously and sometimes unsystematically at home. Pundits who argue that controversial measures put in place at home in the United States are unusual—the alert system, the tightening access to visas, the restrictions on civil liberties, and so forth—are either being hypocritical or absent-minded—or both. Europeans invented modern terrorism and then used it extensively. European leaders who have now happily passed beyond their period of anxiety during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries—when terrorist attacks by anarchists, social revolutionaries, fascists, leftists, and nationalist/separatists threatened the stability of regimes, the continent, and arguably the rest of the world—can hardly claim to be ignorant of their power and effectiveness in challenging the state. New regimes in other regions have likewise tended to use overwhelming force in answering terrorist attacks, perhaps because the challenge is keenly threatening in the early phases of a regime—and also because more restrained, phlegmatic counterterrorism policies grow from experience, even trial-and-error. Notable examples of brutal crackdowns include post-colonial governments in Algeria, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Egypt, and India.

Democracies are not particularly wise in countering terrorists. In the immediate aftermath of attacks, some democratic states have had more in common with authoritarian states than with mature democracies. But democracies have a built-in mechanism that drives them to modulate their responses over the long-term: the

---

<sup>13</sup> This is one reason why such attacks typically occur in the immediate aftermath of attacks, “while the situation is hot,” in former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft’s words. See Malvesti, p. 95.

<sup>14</sup> One US poll found 71% in favour of military retaliation days after September 11. See “Poll: Shock Gives Way to Anger”, *CBS News*, September 13, 2001, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2001/09/13/archive/main311139.shtml>. On September 17, Gallup Poll quoted a figure closer to 90%. See “Support for military action against terrorist attackers,” *CNN.com/Community* September 17, 2001, <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/COMMUNITY/09/17/newport/index.html>. A similar media poll in the UK weeks later found 70% supported military retaliation. See “The Observer Poll Results,” *The Observer*, October 7, 2001, <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/conservatives2001/story/0,,564832,00.html>. The figures in France and Italy were 68% and 88% respectively. See “EU leaders to hold emergency summit on security”, *Daily Telegraph*, September 18 2001, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2001/09/18/wdip18.xml> (all websites viewed on March 22 2007).

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

legitimacy and capacity to survive long enough to learn from trial-and-error. And that is one of their crucial advantages in dealing with strategies of leverage.

### **Homeland Security and al-Qaida's End?**

Democratic states tend to make decisions that directly or indirectly reflect their constituencies. When the people are afraid, a kind of generalized anxiety can propel policy, and terrorism is specifically designed to heighten fear in a targeted population.<sup>15</sup> This is one reason why homeland security must hit the right balance between increasing practical defenses and inadvertently hyping the threat. There are three ways that efforts at home can help to drive toward al-Qaida's end.

The first is to educate the public about terrorism and the extent to which it is and is not a threat. Modern communications give instant voice to ordinary citizens; in a period of perceived crisis, these citizens become the first line of defense against an ensuing panic or over-reaction. Of course, al-Qaida is dangerous and may carry out another attack on U.S. territory in the near future. There are new aspects to this movement, including its fluid organization, its means of sustenance, its methods of recruiting and its means of communication. (I have written more about each of these in greater depth elsewhere.)<sup>16</sup> But al-Qaida is not utterly unprecedented, and it shares certain characteristics with predecessors. The world has dealt with similar open-ended movements in the past, and we can draw upon that prior experience, sifting out what is relevant from what is irrelevant.<sup>17</sup>

Many aspects of American culture naturally drive toward increased anxiety, from its risk-averse nature, to its litigiousness, to its impatient problem-solving mentality, to its ahistorical perspective. Even U.S. consumerism promotes an anxious perception of threat, as the tremendous amount of money to be made in developing defenses shores up the incentives to heighten paranoia. But allowing a population to become overly concerned about terrorism increases the symbolic power that a terrorist group has and thus becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The most foolish counter to a strategy designed to mobilize supporters and frighten opponents is to lionize the al-Qaida movement at home. Al-Qaida has ample vulnerabilities, and one way to target these is to stop perpetuating an exaggerated, monolithic image of what is actually a fractious, often ill-coordinated entity rife with internal contradictions. Thus, in this campaign, broad-based education about terrorism is a strategic asset that will strengthen the national security of the United States.

A population that understands more about the history of terrorism will also know that the success rate for terrorist groups is dismal. An understanding of terrorist motives and strategy is especially vital for local and state first responders, who are often working the seams between public opinion and a federal response to an attack.

---

<sup>15</sup> Fear is the desired reaction on the part of the targeted population, but inspiration is the reaction intended from potential constituents.

<sup>16</sup> See Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends."

<sup>17</sup> One example is the late nineteenth century anarchist movement. For more examples, see *How Terrorism Ends* (forthcoming).

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

Terrorists can do tremendous harm but very rarely do they achieve their strategic ends. Terrorism is an illegitimate strategy that is designed to grab attention and catalyze action by others (especially states); but it cannot build anything, only undercut, murder and destroy. In the long run, the only way that terrorism succeeds is if a movement becomes strong enough to transition to a more effective form of violence, or if a population becomes so cowed by fear that they or their government acts foolishly and astrategically to perpetuate its ends.

Second, and related, the U.S. must put in place a much more effective counter-mobilization strategy, especially over the Internet but also in other media. Al-Qaeda and its associates have made serious mistakes of timing, targeting and technique; yet the West has done very little to capitalize on them. In particular, the United States tends to act as if al-Qaeda is essentially a static enemy that will react to its actions, but then fails to react effectively and strategically to the movement's missteps. The Bali attacks, the May 2003 attacks in Saudi Arabia, the Madrid attacks, the London attacks of July 7, 2005—all of these incidents were immediately and in a deliberate way trumpeted by al-Qaeda associates. Where was the coordinated counterterrorist multimedia response? The West is completely outflanked on the airwaves, and its countermeasures are virtually nonexistent on the Internet. Violence brings a kind of morbid fascination that can easily be tipped to repulsion if the stories of the innocents killed are better known at home and abroad, and the power of human decency is allowed more air time.

Third, homeland security can help policy-makers to resist the tendency to overreact to terrorist attacks. Terrorism has been effective only in situations where the target government has been unable or unwilling to put in place measures to desensitize themselves and their domestic population to the inflammatory potential of terrorism. These may range from confidence-building measures to a sophisticated understanding of the threat on the part of policy-makers themselves. In other words, the U.S. must make itself less vulnerable to being manipulated or provoked into unwise or emotion-driven action in the wake of the inevitable future terrorist attack, particularly in a context where its population is frightened and desperately needs calm, knowledgeable and dispassionate leadership.

## **Conclusion**

Unfortunately, the United States public must learn to live with terrorism. Efforts to eradicate it completely from our lives will only lead to an exacerbation of the threat. While individual campaigns always end, the phenomenon itself goes on. But that does not mean the American people must perpetually tolerate the al-Qaida movement. They will expect the U.S. government to do everything within reason to help thwart terrorism before its strikes and to manage its consequences in the event of an attack. At the same time, they will also especially want to know that the U.S. government has a holistic strategy for ultimately defeating a terrorist movement or network. The best way to end the threat of al-Qaida is to remove the power of this group to excite the imaginations and fears of the American public, as we put in place policies that will

**This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.**

**DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S).** Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)

both reduce their ability to leverage our actions and exploit their ample mistakes to our advantage.

This WORKING PAPER is part of the 2006-CTR-PACER project on the *Five Dimensions of Homeland Security*.

DO NOT CITE WITHOUT EXPRESS AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND THE AUTHOR(S). Contact: [transatlantic@jhu.edu](mailto:transatlantic@jhu.edu)