Georgetown Security Studies Review

GEORGETOWN SECURITY STUDIES REVIEW

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Letter from the Editor

This September, we are excited to present the *Georgetown Security Studies Review Volume 7, Issue 2*.

As usual, our call for papers drew some exceptional pieces of scholarship on a range of contemporary security issues. With articles on terrorism, domestic extremism, and Turkish foreign policy in Syria, this issue will be of particular value to those interested in extremism and Middle Eastern security issues. This is especially true given the thorough and penetrating book review of Harlan Ullman's *Anatomy Of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts* included in this issue. I am extremely grateful for the authors who submitted such erudite articles as well as for our dedicated editorial board who sacrificed many hours of their time to proof and refine the pieces that comprise this issue. Dr. Keir Lieber and Annie Kraft also deserve a special mention for their steady leadership and support in growing GSSR and ensuring that everything runs as smoothly as it can. Putting this journal together is a monumental effort, and it truly would not be possible without the dedication and conscientious work of our entire team.

Going into the fall, the GSSR will experience several significant changes. Perhaps most excitingly, our website has received a much-needed makeover. It is now much more intuitive to navigate and also fully ADA-compliant. Jordan Money labored throughout the summer to implement these improvements, and the entire editorial board is incredibly grateful for her excellent work. Another major change is the loss of Editor-in-Chief Rebekah Kennel, who graduated this past spring. She provided exceptional leadership throughout her time in charge and significantly expanded the size and scope of GSSR. Rebekah was also an excellent mentor for many on the editorial board, and I am grateful for her support and guidance as I assume the mantel of EIC. Everyone at GSSR wishes her the very best as she embarks on her post-Georgetown career.

Finally, I would be remiss not to note the excellent work of Integrated Books International, which produced this handsome volume.

I hope the ideas within the Review allow you as a scholar or practitioner to better make sense of the very real challenges of the day.

Warm regards,

Samuel M. Seitz
Editor-in-Chief, August 2019
Georgetown, Washington D.C.

Understanding Turkey's National Security Priorities in Syria

Patrick Hoover

Since the eruption of the Syrian uprising in March 2011, Turkey has pursued a "realpolitik" approach toward the conflict designed to both limit the spillover effects of violence and secure its national integrity. Turkey's strategic objectives in Syria are first and foremost to (1) degrade Kurdish militancy, (2) reduce the costs of refugee displacement within its own borders, and (3) shape "post–war" developments in line with its own economic interests. Central to these objectives is the stabilization and reconstruction of a contiguous zone of influence in northern Syria that stretches from the western bank of the Euphrates river to Idlib province that borders Turkey's Hatay province along the eastern Mediterranean coast. Turkey also coordinates closely with the Russian and Iranian governments to pursue this objective as well as bolster its oil and gas–strapped economy. While these objectives run in parallel with American interests in Syria— namely, the destruction of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and aversion to further large-scale violence—they are fundamentally misaligned with the US mission of supporting and protecting the Kurdish-led People's Protection Units (YPG). US policymakers needs to revise their current approach to Turkey by working toward a safe zone in Kurdish-held northern Syria jointly managed with Ankara, encouraging a broader Turkish–Kurdish rapprochement, supporting efforts to identify a workable political solution to the Syrian conflict, and de–incentivizing Turkish economic cooperation with Russia and Iran.

Turkey's strategy in Syria prioritizes defending itself against the threat of Kurdish militancy, minimizing the costs of Syrian refugees within its borders, and shaping Syria's "postwar" developments to align with its economic interests. Combatting the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), its Syrian affiliate the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and the PYD's armed wing, the People's Protection Units (YPG), in the Turkish-Syrian border region has compelled Ankara to carve out a contiguous zone of control in northwestern Syria, forego regional rivalries to cooperate with the Syrian and Russian governments, and leverage its influence over Iraqi Kurdistan to stir intra-Kurdish strife. The high costs of refugees has driven the need to develop local governance and security institutions in Syrian communities within Turkey's contiguous zone of control and implement various legal measures to "push" and "pull" Syrian refugees back to their country. Ankara has sought to gain a stake in Syria's economic future by enhancing cooperation with two of the Syrian government's major allies, Russia and Iran.

Turkish stabilization efforts parallel US goals in maintaining security across northern Syria and preventing the reemergence of violent extremist organizations like ISIS.[1] Turkey's domestic stability is also important to US force posture in the Levant given the fact it hosts significant US assets, including tactical nuclear weapons, at Incirlik Air Base.[2] However, the US-Turkish relationship is currently strained by American support for the Kurds in Syria, growing Russo-Turkish political and economic ties, and Ankara's tactical cooperation with Iran. As such, the U.S. should adopt a more transactional approach to its relationship with Turkey based on the recognition of mutual security interests: preventing the reemergence of ISIS, stabilizing Syria by jointly-supervising a safe zone in Kurdish-held northern Syria that would allow non-PYD political parties to participate in local elections, working with Turkey to secure a political

settlement with the Bashar al-Assad government that guarantees the protection of the safe zone, and enhancing the US-Turkish economic relationship to wean Ankara off Moscow and Tehran.

A Brief History of Turkish Involvement in Syria

Turkey's decision to intervene in Syria to protect its national security is not unprecedented. In an effort to convince Turkey to declare war against Nazi Germany, the French—who had ruled Syria as a mandate—allowed Turkey to take over the Sanjak of Alexandretta, a small portion of coastal land south of Turkey and west of Aleppo province in 1939.[3] Though the Syrian government recognized the annexation in 2004, Hatay Province remains a point of historical tension between Damascus and Ankara and served as a base and launching pad for Turkish-backed rebel forces against the YPG during Operation Olive Branch in early 2018.[4] Syrian-Turkish relations remained sour through the 1970s and 1980s over Ankara's participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Damascus's partnership with the Soviet Union.

Tensions hit a high point in the 1990s when Turkey threatened military intervention against Syria due to the latter's sheltering and protection of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in Damascus.[5] Following a tense stand-off, Bashar al-Assad's father, President Hafez al-Assad, expelled Ocalan in October 1998 and signed the Adana agreement to cease all harboring of PKK militants.[6] Since then, relations improved when then-Prime Minister Erdogan signed free trade agreements with Syria in 2007 and conducted joint military exercises in 2009.[7] With the eruption of the Syrian conflict in 2011, Turkey and Syria found themselves on opposing sides of the conflict. Erdogan began backing various rebel outfits, including the Free Syrian Army (FSA), alongside the U.S. and Gulf states, and called for al-Assad's removal.[8] However, as the PYD and YPG captured and consolidated territory against ISIS across northern Syria with US support through 2015 and 2016, Ankara reduced its pursuit of al-Assad's removal and prioritized working with Russia and Iran to resolve the crisis and prevent further Kurdish expansion.

Defending National Security Against Kurdish Militancy

Turkey utilizes three instruments to counter further PYD growth and encroachment west of the Euphrates River: armed intervention, international agreements, and support to Syrian political parties opposed to the PYD. Ankara views the PKK as an existential threat due to its fear of Kurdish autonomy: PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan calls for confederalist governance for all Kurds within and beyond Turkish borders. Were this to occur, it would result in the loss of significant territory in southeastern Turkey and the emergence of a potentially hostile neighbor on Turkey's border. Following the collapse of the 2013-2015 Turkish-PKK peace process, the PKK launched the Peoples' United Revolutionary Movement with the aim of violently overthrowing the Turkish government.[9] The PYD, founded in 2003 by Kurdish separatists in Syria, is part of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), an umbrella organization committed to implementing Öcalan's democratic confederalism. The PYD created an interim constitution outlining several administrative cantons—known as the Autonomous Administration (AA)—in January 2014 and formally incorporated Arab-majority al-Raqqa and Deir al-Zour Provinces into the AA in September 2018.[10] This model not only derives from Öcalan's vision of a pan-Kurdistan confederation based local and regional municipal assemblies but also reportedly runs on administrative and technical expertise from PKK cadres.[11] Turkish PKK members have also travelled to Syria to serve directly in YPG ranks.[12] Allowing the AA to consolidate and legitimize its political

vision in northern Syria would, in Ankara's view, provide the PKK with a base of support and lend further credence to its fears of violent secession.

Conducting Armed Intervention in Syria

The Turkish Land Forces (TLF) have engaged in two major operations to stamp out PYD presence west of the Euphrates River. Operation Euphrates Shield, launched in August 2016, resulted in the capture of the northern Aleppo province from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and, more importantly, prevented the PYD from linking territory between Afrin and Manbij.[13] The TLF and its Syrian proxies crossed from Turkey into Jarabulus, a border town north of Manbij, and proceeded to capture major towns further west and the main road linking Manbij with al-Bab, effectively cutting off the SDF's advance further west of the Euphrates River.[14] Allowing the Kurdish zone of control to enlarge would have given the PYD a fully-contiguous area across northern Syria. Though Manbij still remains within the PYD's orbit, Turkey brought the rest of the western Euphrates region under its control by conducting Operation Olive Branch in January 2018. The TLF and its proxies crossed into Afrin from Turkey's southern Hatay and Kilis provinces, traversed multiple avenues of approach through northern Afrin's hilly terrain, and captured Afrin in March 2018.[15] A notable advantage for the Turks during Operation Olive Branch that was absent during Operation Euphrates Shield was air power: the Russian government provided Turkey with access to Syrian airspace, which resulted in the deaths of over 1,000 YPG fighters (a third of its overall Afrin fighting force) via air strikes.[16] Since the capture of Afrin, a YPG/PYD insurgency has emerged against the Turkish-backed governing forces. To combat the ongoing insurgency, Turkey has conducted widespread detentions of Kurdish civilians, forcibly displacing and preventing the return of Kurdish internally displaced persons (IDP) and changing public street names from Kurdish into Turkish and Arabic.[17]

Balancing against the PYD with Regional Powerbrokers

Turkey negotiated diplomatic arrangements with Russia and the U.S. to limit the PYD's presence west of the Euphrates. Turkey's decision to launch operations Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch required Russian consent. First, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan met with Russian President Vladimir Putin several times and praised Moscow: "Afrin will be dealt with. We discussed this with our Russian friends, we are in agreement."[18] Russian military police personnel vacated their positions in Afrin, giving the TLF a clear greenlight to attack Afrin. Second, Turkey and Russia also agreed on September 17, 2018, in Sochi to establish a demilitarized zone in Idlib province and prevent a Syrian government offensive into the last remaining rebel stronghold. While Turkey primarily sought to prevent the subsequent IDP influx across its borders, it also feared that the Syrian government would enlist the participation of the PYD in the offensive.[19] Third, Turkey agreed with the U.S. in June to implement the "Manbij Roadmap," an arrangement that authorizes Turkish and American troops to conduct joint patrols along Manbij's outskirts and facilitate the withdrawal of Kurdish YPG—not Arab—elements from the town.[20] Though Turkish officials have denied reports that the YPG have completely exited Manbij, the process is ongoing and has effectively prevented broader Turkish-Kurdish conflict west of the Euphrates River.[21]

Backing PYD Rivals

Turkey attempts to undermine PYD dominance by funding and providing public platforms for rival Kurdish political parties in Syria and Iraq. The PYD's most significant rival, the Kurdish National Council (KNC), was founded in 2011 as a coalition of nearly a dozen parties under the auspices of Kurdistan Regional

Government (KRG) President Massoud Barzani.[22] The KNC refuses to participate in the PYD's AA administration and has organized several demonstrations in northern Syria against the organization's arrest of KNC officials and assaults on KNC-affiliated facilities, many of which are highlighted by Turkish media outlets.[23] KNC president Ibrahim Birro, who was arrested by the PYD in August 2016 but later released, told the pro-Ankara Daily Sabah that the PYD uses the international anti-ISIS campaign as a pretext to monopolize political power in northern Syria and commit a host of human rights violations.[24] In an interview with the pro-Ankara Daily Sabah newspaper in February 2019, KNC official Abdul Hakim Bashar declared that the PYD posed the next-biggest threat after ISIS and requested help from the U.S. to start supporting their own forces in lieu of the PYD.[25]

The KNC is also a member of the Syrian National Coalition (SNC), a Syrian opposition organization based in and backed by Turkey that fundamentally opposes the PYD's AA political framework.[26] The largest KNC party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Syria, is the sister organization of Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party in Iraq (KDP-I), the latter of which played an active role in forming and training the KNC's paramilitary wing, the Syrian Rojava Peshmerga (SRP).[27] The PYD has repeatedly blocked Barzani's calls for the SRP to deploy to Syria, likely out of fear that it would lose its political and military monopoly in northern Syria.[28] Such tensions along the Syrian-Iraqi border have occasionally spilled over into violence, most notably in March 2017 when the SRP engaged in armed clashes with the pro-PKK, Yazidi-majority Sinjar Resistance Units (SPU) in the Sinjar region of western Iraq.[29] The KDP-I not only opposes the PKK but also oversees the export of oil supplies from northern Iraq into Turkey and has occasionally closed the Semalka border crossing with northern Syria—a move that the PYD claims is a Turkish attempt to strangle the northern Syrian economy and undermine the AA.[30] KDP officials have attributed the border closures to the PYD's prosecution of KNC officials and monopolization of politics in Kurdish-held Syria.[31]

However, Turkey appears to be cultivating another Kurdish proxy in Syria—the Independent Kurdish Coalition of Syria (IKC-S).[32] In February 2019, the coalition announced its formation in the Turkish city of Mersin and adorned its meeting hall with Turkish flags.[33] The organization's president, Abdulaziz Temo, called the PKK and YPG "terrorists and enemies of the Kurdish people" and admitted to having "friendly ties with Turkey."[34] This move by Ankara is likely an attempt to reduce its dependence on the KNC, which has previously refused to fully integrate into the Turkish-backed military opposition and condemned Turkey's Operation Olive Branch.[35]

Turkey also seeks to undermine the PYD's ties to potential Arab partner groups by backing an organization called the Higher Council for Tribes and Clans (HCTC), which consists of over a hundred Sunni Arab Syrian tribesmen.[36] The HCTC is based in Turkey and recently opened an office in Gazientep yet has held consultative meetings with Turkish and pro-Turkish Syrian officials in northern Syria.[37] Following its founding meeting in Istanbul in December 2017, which 90 tribes and 362 tribal representatives attended, the organization released a statement in support of a potential Turkish operation against the PYD and the Syrian revolution's core principles of toppling the al-Assad regime.[38] The participants also emphasized their rejection of "all forms of terrorism, [including] the criminal PKK."[39] Building organizations like the HCTC signals a deliberate Turkish attempt to gain influence among Syria's eastern tribal communities and diminish a small, yet critical, base of support for the YPG. Given the lack of significant Kurdish communities in Deir al-Zour province, co-opting

local tribes is a cornerstone of the YPG's strategy in eastern Syria.[40] This is because integrating local Arabs into local governing structures and its ethnically-mixed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) dispels notions that the YPG is a PKK extension and helps create legitimacy among a largely-Arab population inherently suspicious of Kurds.[41]

Decreasing the Costs of Refugees

The second Turkish strategic objective in Syria is to reduce the costs of Syrian displacement across its borders. The Daily Sabah reports that Turkey has spent over $30 billion on services for the estimated 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey.[42] These numbers are increasing by around 1,000 refugees per day.[43] More than 95% of refugees live in urban centers, such as the 560,000 in Istanbul.[44] And most refugees often resort to low-paying manual labor employment, creating higher-wage formal jobs for Turkish workers.[45] Despite this, nearly a third of refugee children remain out of school and an estimated 1.5 million work informally.[46] The Turkish government has issued only 20,000 work permits, creating an immense informal sector that undermines the weakening Turkish economy and encourages criminal activities.[47]

Syrian refugees also pose a risk to Turkey's intercommunal stability and Erdoğan's hold on power. The sentiment that Syrians receive preferential access to public services and out-compete Turks for low-wage jobs has generated animosity toward Syrians. The percentage of Turks who expressed discontent with Syrian refugees increased to 61% in 2018 from 54.5% in 2017 according to Istanbul's Kadir Has University.[48] Incidents of intercommunal violence increased threefold in late 2017 when at last 35 people died, including 24 Syrians.[49] These anti-refugee grievances emerged as a point of contention during the June 2018 general election, where the Republican People's Party (CHP) that campaigned on criticizing Erdoğan's pro-refugee policies

won 24% of parliamentary seats—a 12% jump from before.[50] Though Erdoğan's AKP retained a parliamentary majority, Erdoğan later stated that "we want our refugee brothers and sisters to return to their country," proposing that they relocate to northern Syria.[51] The AKP's alliance with the far-right conservative Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) will likely seek to generate greater anti-refugee sentiments to mobilize supporters.[52]

Developing Local Syrian Governance

Turkey seeks to stabilize northern Syria as a destination for refugee return by building the governance and service-providing capacity of local Syrian administrators; continuing Turkish train, advise, and assist (TAA) missions with the SNA; and maintaining non-permanent refugee policies in Turkey. Following the conclusion of Operation Euphrates Shield, Turkey began supporting Syrian Local Councils (LC) by rebuilding roads, improving water and electricity services, paying salaries to teachers, rehabilitating schools, financing hospitals, and overseeing judicial institutions. In February 2018, members of the Gaziantep governor's office and the Local Council in the city of al-Bab laid a cornerstone to initiate the construction of an industrial zone.[53] The 138-acre planned zone will include a water network, sewage treatment unit, traffic police, hotels, gas stations, a power state, and a road network linking al-Bab with the Syrian-Turkish border.[54] In September, the governor of Kilis also attended a ceremony inaugurating the Palace of Justice in al-Rai, the city's first judiciary since 2011. Turkey funded the construction of the court, adjacent prison, and technical training of judges.[55] In June 2018, Turkey's Harran University announced that it would open a facility in al-Bab to provide courses in Turkish, Arabic, and English—following a previous statement that it would provide exams for Syrians in Jarabulus to enter Turkish universities.[56] Overall, these efforts have led to the return of nearly 140,000 refugees

to the area since March 2017. Turkey aims to replicate the northern Aleppo model in Afrin. Yasin Aktay, a senior advisor to Erdoğan, stated that Turkey will rebuild Afrin to stimulate the flow of as many as 500,000 Syrians.[57]

Centralizing Security Institutions

Another key element of Turkey's push to bolster the capacity and legitimacy of the LCs is the provision of security through Turkish TAA missions. The TLF captured northern Aleppo and Afrin with the assistance of an assortment of Syrian rebel groups, many of whom hold disparate ideological and political inclinations. In March 2017, Turkey sought to stem rebel infighting by amalgamating the factions under one command-and-control structure, the Syrian National Army (SNA). The SNA, a reportedly 22,000-strong force, has received training and equipment from Turkey.[58] On a local level, Turkey has also led the creation of a federal police force known as the General National Security Directorate (GNDS). Ankara provides salaries and five weeks of training in Turkey.[59] During an inauguration ceremony in Jarabulus, GNDS officers were wearing Turkish police uniforms decorated with the word "polis," the Turkish word for "police," and chanting "Yahya Erdoğan" or "Long Live Erdoğan."[60] The GNDS operates under LC authority, yet often coordinate closely with TLF and Turkish intelligence officials stationed across northern Aleppo.

Encouraging Refugees to Return

Ankara uses restrictive legal measures on the ability of Syrian refugees to obtain Turkish citizenship and thus permanently settle in Turkey as its third tool to encourage their return to Syria. While Ankara has policies in place to meet refugees' basic needs, lagging efforts to integrate them into the Turkish population indicate that Turkey still aims to return them home. Under the Turkish Nationality Law in May 2009, the Turkish government can grant citizenship to refugees who have proven they lived in the country for five years.[61] However, in September 2018, Ankara amended additional requirements for citizenship to include proof of legal domicile status as well as minimum real estate purchases and bank deposits.[62] However, a bulk of the 3.5 million Syrians in Turkey do not have legal status, which Ankara requires them to obtain within the first ten days of entry into Turkey, nor sufficient capital to own property and make significant bank deposits. As such, only 55,583 Syrians have officially gained Turkish citizenship since 2011.[63]

Promoting Turkish Economic Interests

Turkey's third strategic objective in Syria is the promotion of Turkish economic interests and expanded investment opportunities. Prior to the Syrian conflict, Turkey had healthy commercial relations with Syria, particularly after a free trade agreement came into effect in 2007.[64] Following lulls in Turkish exports to Syria throughout 2012 and 2013, the Turkish-Syrian economic relationship bounced back to prewar levels; in 2018, Turkey exported 1.345 billion USD to Syria and imported 69 million USD from Syria—indicating little change in the past year.[65] Turkey recognizes the importance of cultivating goodwill with both Moscow and Tehran in order to rebuild these economic ties.

Despite favorable trade figures, Turkish exports primarily arrive in areas outside of Syrian government control, such as the Turkish-held northern Aleppo province and Idlib province.[66] Gaining access to Damascus and Aleppo City, the country's prewar industrial hub, would expand investment opportunities and, in the long-run, tap into a broader nationwide market for Turkish investment companies to help offset Turkey's current account and currency crisis. The Turkish lira has lost 76% of its value against the US dollar since January 2018, pushing inflation to a decade-high 18%.[67] In October 2018, former senior Turkish diplomat Aydin Selcen

stated that "Turkey is facing a stagflation situation. The opening of Syria just next door to Ghaziantep, Hatay, and Kilis as a new market is important for Turkey."[68] In January 2019, the unemployment rate hit 14.7%–the highest in the country in a decade–and Moody's reported that the entire economy will contract by 2% by the end of the year.[69]

Cooperating with Russia and Iran as Key Intermediaries with Damascus

Turkey's ability to invest in Syria is hampered by the lack of diplomatic relations, which were severed with Damascus in 2011. As such, the primary mechanism for Turkey to expand commerce is to invest in Syria's "postwar" reconstruction via the cultivation of relationships with Russia and Iran. Syria's reconstruction functions as a prominent topic of discussion between Turkish and Russian officials, recently manifesting in the Sochi Agreement in September 2018. Under the agreement, Ankara and Moscow agreed to implement a demilitarized zone around the periphery of Idlib province, which Erdoğan insisted include the reopening of the international M4 and M5 highways under Turkish auspices.[70] This indicates that Ankara seeks to expand its export of food products and reconstruction materials toward Damascus. In exchange, Turkey participates in the Russian-led Astana peace process, which serves as an alternative to the United Nations (UN) Geneva accords and cements Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's staying-power.[71] The TLF and SNA, despite their claims to support the ousting of al-Assad, have not engaged in a major conflict with Syrian government or Iranian forces in a likely effort to protect Turkish-Russian cooperation. Part of this behavior stems from the fact that Turkey depends on nearly 3 million tons of crude oil from Iran, leading Ankara to criticize US sanctions on Tehran in July 2018. In August, Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami pledged to contribute to Syria's reconstruction—a signal to Ankara that it will need cordial relations with Tehran if it seeks a role in the "postwar" phase.[72]

Impact on US-Turkish Relations

Turkey's hostility toward the PYD and warming relations with Russia and Iran have made the Ankara-Washington relationship increasingly tenuous and fractious. Though Turkey became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1951 to serve as a bulwark against the Soviet Union in the Middle East and Black Sea, its relations with the U.S. have steadily declined. The U.S. issued a stern warning to Turkey against invading Cyprus in 1963, condemned Ankara's invasion of the country in 1974, and protected the Kurds in northern Iraq–where Turkey had been battling the PKK for decades–in the 1990s.[73] Having said that, Turkey remained a willful supporter and participant in the NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), and it continues to receive US support for its bid to join the European Union (EU) and efforts to prevent the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Despite a mixed history of cooperation and mistrust, the Syrian crisis has produced a number of intractable issues. The US alliance with the YPG and its ethnically-mixed umbrella group, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), is the foremost glaring driver of frustration and mistrust in the US-Turkish relationship. Turkey views the YPG as synonymous with the PKK, the growth of which poses a serious risk to Turkish stability. Due to the US partnership with the SDF and PYD, Turkey has repeatedly threatened to cut off American access to the Incirlik airbase, which serves as a key American military hub in the region.[74] Though the risk of conflict between the U.S. and Turkey is low, the lack of a healthy diplomatic relationship exacerbated by anti-U.S. rhetoric throughout Turkish media has hindered the US ability to influence "postwar" developments and accomplish its stabilization mission in

Syria. For example, pro-Turkish government newspaper Yeni Safak claimed on January 31, 2018 that the U.S. was using radar data from NATO facilities in Turkey to help the YPG target Turkish warplanes.[75] Such rhetoric is unlikely to sever diplomatic relations, yet it underscores the deep level of resentment Turkish government officials and citizens harbor against US actions in Syria.

An "x-factor" in the US-Turkish-YPG square-off is the Trump administration's stated desire to withdraw some 2,000 American troops from Syria.[76] While President Donald Trump casts this goal as fulfilling a key electoral promise, it may be a key step in repairing US-Turkish relations and the NATO alliance more broadly.[77] However, the administration has walked back on this statement, citing the Turkey's failure to provide credible assurances for the YPG's security and promises to refrain from launching an all-out offensive against northern Syria.[78] The administration has also faced significant hurdles in the US Senate, which voted in February 2019 in favor of symbolic legislation acknowledging the potential for ISIS to re-emerge in the event of a withdrawal.[79] The only hope for a trilateral rapprochement between the U.S., Turkey, and the PYD is the Manbij Roadmap, a June 2018 arrangement whereby US and TLF troops began conducting joint patrols around Manbij outskirts to facilitate the formation of a local, non-YPG-affiliated administration to govern the town. Though the patrols continue unabated, little progress has been made on a local governance body that is free from YPG interference.

Growing Russian influence over Ankara constitutes a second aspect of the Syrian conflict affecting US-Turkish relations. Despite Turkey's downing of a Russian Sukhoi Su-24 jet fighter in late 2015, Moscow has cleverly identified and exploited various areas of mutual interest with Ankara to further sideline the U.S. and divide NATO. From Russia's approved sale of the S-400 surface-to-air defense system to the Gazprom-led Turkish Stream pipeline, all signs point to increasing Russian-Turkish cooperation. Trump officials have stated that the S-400 sale would bar Turkey from participating in the F-35 program and supply chain network as well as trigger economic sanctions established by the Magnitsky Act in 2012.[80] Doing so would damage future US-Turkish arms transfers arrangements, degrade NATO's capacity to deter Russian provocation in eastern Europe, and further weaken an already-fragile Turkish economy. In the event of a US withdrawal from Syria, the YPG will likely look to Russia and the Syrian government for protection against Turkey—potentially, putting Moscow and Ankara at a crossroads. Though this may restore U.S.-Turkish trust, a withdrawal may precipitate further violence and displacement throughout the region that VEOs, like ISIS, can exploit.

In addition to Turkey's burgeoning relationship with Russia, its tactical cooperation with Iran also undermines US interests. Not only is Tehran a key oil exporter for Turkey but it is also a critical party to the Astana and Sochi processes that have kept a lid on Idlib province and continue to lay the foundation for a "postwar" settlement. Prior to the US withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015, Turkey had imported 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Iranian crude oil.[81] Following Washington's issuance of sanctions waivers to Turkey and four other nations in November 2018, Ankara stated that it was permitted to import 60,000 bpd from Tehran.[82] However, following the US decision to end all sanctions waivers by May 2, 2019, the Turkish-Iranian bilateral trade will likely shrink in the coming months.

Iran also funds and supports dozens of proxies in neighboring Iraq, the stability of which allows Turkey to monitor PKK movement throughout Kurdish territories in the north and import energy products from northern Iraq.[83] Turkey and Iran have even gone so far as to conduct

joint raids against the PKK operating in the Turkish-Iranian-Iraqi tri-border area.[84] While Iran's influence in Iraq undermines the integrity of Baghdad's political and security institutions, it also prevents Turkey from fully supporting the aggressively anti-Iran policy pushed by the U.S. Similarly in Syria, Turkey's vested interests in maintaining a relationship with Tehran fundamentally contradict the US position of both advancing Bashar al-Assad's exit according to the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 and forcing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which the Trump administration designated as a terrorist organization earlier this month, out of Syria.

A national security threat, whether in the form of a renewed PKK insurgency or economic crisis, may destabilize and create opportunities for ISIS and the PKK to sow chaos both in Turkey and the region. Between 2015 and 2017, Turkey suffered from nearly a dozen terrorist attacks tied to the PKK and ISIS, including the bombing of the Ankara Central railway station and death of over 100 civilians in October 2015.[85] Though fatalities from terrorism have fallen since 2017 according to the Global Terrorism Index, the country continues to wage a low-level counter-insurgency campaign against PKK militants in the southeast.[86] ISIS and the PKK are designated as terrorist organizations by the U.S., which has provided valuable support to Turkey in its fight against both groups.

Policy Recommendations

Given the set of challenges to its relationship with Turkey in and out of Syria, the U.S. should consider revamping its approach to Ankara to focus more on mutual security and economic interests—such as fighting ISIS, stabilizing Syria, and identifying alternative sources for energy. Turkey is no longer the Cold War-era bulwark against Russia, nor is it a viable candidate for President Trump's "Middle East Strategic Alliance." Turkish interests in Syria and beyond, though somewhat

opposed to US foreign policy goals, are grounded in a genuine concern for Turkish national sovereignty, security, and prosperity. Recognizing this logic should be front and center as US policymakers deal with Ankara moving forward.

Preventing the re-emergence of ISIS is not mutually exclusive from placating Turkish concerns about the PYD in northern Syria. The U.S. should push for an agreement with Turkey to establish a safe zone, stretching from Manbij to the eastern Syrian-western Iraqi border, that would provide greater political space for non-PYD entities to participate in local governance in non-Kurdish majority areas and allow US and Turkish troops to jointly supervise the formation of independent administrations for urban centers. The U.S. would need to convince Ankara to walk back its demands for a safe zone extending up to 40 kilometers into Kurdish-held Syria—a condition that the PYD has defiantly rejected. To do so, the U.S. may consider offering an arrangement similar to the Manbij Roadmap, where Americans and Turks can conduct joint patrols around border cities like Tal Abyad and work closely with both Arab and Kurdish community leaders to formulate local governing bodies that draw members from both the AA and Turkish-backed local councils. Given the Kurds' deep mistrust of Turkish intentions, convincing the PYD to relinquish its hard-fought territorial gains will be difficult, but not impossible. The U.S. should not completely exclude the PYD from a safe zone but rather encourage it to compete freely and fairly alongside the KNC and other Turkish/opposition-backed parties for spots in AA institutions. In contrast to the Manbij Roadmap–whereby the U.S. and Turkey have sought to build the local government from the top-bottom–the safe zone should organize an electoral system that allows the local population to elect party members into positions from the bottom-up. Opening up the political space to many parties not only provides Turkey the opportunity to limit PYD influence in

a non-violent manner but also ensures the PYD is not completely excluded from areas it fought so hard to capture.

Simultaneously, the U.S. should explore all channels for peace talks between Turkey and the PKK. Earlier this month, Turkish authorities allowed Abdullah Ocalan to meet with his lawyers for the first time in eight years—a potential indication that Turkey is open to a broader arrangement with the guerilla movement and the YPG.[87] The U.S. should encourage a Turkish-PKK peace deal as much as possible, as this would temper Turkish-PYD hostilities and provide a credible security guarantee that the PYD desperately needs if it is to accept the aforementioned safe zone agreement. A Turkish-PKK rapprochement would allow local elections within the safe zone to transpire more smoothly.

However, President Trump's withdrawal declaration spurred the Syrian Democratic Council (SDC), the SDF's political wing and public face of the PYD, to initiate negotiations with the Syrian government in January 2019.[88] Several pro-PYD Arab tribal leaders, such as Shummar sheikh Hamidi Daham al-Jarba, have already traveled to Damascus to visit Syrian government officials, declaring that his tribe–the PYD's most loyal and significant non-Kurdish ally–never left the government's side.[89] Out of fear of an American withdrawal and Turkish invasion of northern Syria, the PYD will hedge its survival by drawing closer to the Syrian government. The U.S. must maintain its military footprint in Syria to prevent a larger Turkish-Kurdish conflict and the Syrian government and its ally Iran from gaining leverage over the PYD. American presence is also crucial to ensure the US-Turkish safe zone successfully facilitates a workable local political solution for both the Turks and Kurds.

After Turkish-Kurdish relations are normalized, the U.S. should participate in the Astana diplomatic talks. While doing so will legitimize Russia's leadership position, it will also provide Washington with greater leverage to shape "postwar" developments in the country. At Astana, the U.S. should both support Turkey's protection of Idlib province from Syrian-Russian assault and accelerate the process of forming a constitutional committee that will be tasked with drafting a new Syrian constitution. Despite previous failures to form a constitutional committee, the diplomatic leverage the U.S. will gain from normalizing Turkish-Kurdish ties and backing Turkey on the Idlib issue may create enough momentum to come to a final political settlement on Syria. US interests in a political settlement should not be centered on removing al-Assad from power–as stipulated by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254–but instead focus on removing Iran and its affiliated proxies from the country and providing limited autonomy to Turkish- and SDF-held territories. These goals not only reduce Iranian influence in Syria and Turkey but also open the floodgates for much-needed stabilization funding that will help Turkey repatriate refugees back into Syria.

Beyond Syria, the most pressing issue in the US-Turkish relationship is the Russian sale of S-400 missile system to Turkey. The U.S. should modify its strategy to limit the operationalization of the S-400 missile system by Turkey in a way that does not hurt NATO's security. It should not demand Ankara cancel the purchase and exclude it completely from the F-35 arrangement. For example, the U.S. could renew its offer of the MIM-104 Patriot systems and pressure Turkey to either keep the S-400 in storage or sell it to a trusted third-party. The S-400 purchase is significant, but it is not likely to constitute a 180-degree switch in Turkey's foreign policy orientation out of NATO and toward Moscow. US policymakers should approach the idea of sanctioning Turkey lightly with a careful evaluation of the repercussions on the Turkish economy, the state of US operations out of Incirlik, and its clout with the Turkish government over the handling of Syria. While this course

of action is intended to avoid any fundamental disruption in the NATO alliance, it runs the risk of signaling to Ankara that the U.S. will not lash out at its deepening cooperation with Russia.

To further wean Turkish dependence on Russia and Iran, the U.S. should encourage greater cooperation between Turkey and Baghdad. Turkish-KRG cooperation over energy and hydrocarbons irks Baghdad and undermines its sovereignty, so the U.S. must provide Turkey alternative sources of energy, including through trade agreements such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), which would offer Turkish exports greater access to US and European markets and open up Turkish markets for much-needed investment. Including Turkey into the T-TIP would not only deepen bilateral trade with the U.S. and EU but also ensure greater US leverage in the economic relationship.[90]

Conclusion

Turkish behavior in Syria primarily stems from domestic concerns over Ankara's national security and economy. While Ankara claims it is protecting the rebels from al-Assad, it ultimately seeks a foothold in the country to minimize the PKK threat to its own southern regions. However, the conflict has taken a massive toll on Turkey's economy and society—from millions of dollars in refugee assistance to two major armed interventions. A broader conflict with the Kurds in northern Syria heightens the risk of confrontation with the U.S. and may even invite spoilers–like the Syrian government and Iran–to become involved, triggering massive displacement into Turkey and opening up a vacuum for VEOs.

In short, Turkey is navigating a geopolitical minefield in Syria. How it chooses to address the PYD-PKK issue and its stabilization goals in northern Aleppo could adversely impact US interests. Ultimately, the U.S. and Turkey share genuine interests, like fighting ISIS and

preventing an escalation in regional violence. Resolving these two core issues is the first step toward a more holistic improvement in the relationship that results in less Russian leverage over Turkey and a stronger NATO bloc. Washington's ability to deliver on Ankara's issues will be a test of diplomatic and political will on both sides and undoubtedly impact the region for decades.

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Pursuit of an Ethnostate: Political Culture and Violence in the Pacific Northwest

Joseph Stabile

The Pacific Northwest has historically spawned some of the United States' most notorious white nationalist organizations, including Aryan Nations, The Order, and a potent chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. Despite this trend, there remains an absence of scholarly work related to the region's enduring relationship with white nationalist terrorism. This research applies a political culture analysis to the region, arguing that tradition and history in the Pacific Northwest have, over time, contributed to an environment that is conducive to violent movements for a white homeland. Beginning with the 19th-century settlement of the Pacific Northwest and continuing into the 2000s, this culture builds upon itself with each new iteration of white nationalist violence, growing as the perceived threat of white extinction intensifies. As scholars continue to examine the threat of white nationalism, this research provides a baseline for investigating the importance of the Pacific Northwest in the broader phenomenon of white power terrorism.

"Considerations of demographics, economics, and a history of commitment and martyrdom in the persons of Bob Matthews [sic], Sam and Vicky [sic] Weaver, and Richard Butler dictate that the territory for this sovereign Aryan Republic must lie in the Pacific Northwest."

—*The Northwest Front Handbook*, 2014[1]

Introduction

The American Pacific Northwest[2] is home to prominent metropolises such as Seattle and Portland that are often associated with social and political progressivism. In recent years, however, this region has received significant focus as white nationalist violence has risen in America in the years following Barack Obama's election and surged since 2017.[3] *Northwest Front*, an organization founded by now-deceased white nationalist leader Harold Covington, identifies an "independent and sovereign White nation in the Pacific Northwest [as] the only possibility for the survival of the White race on this continent."[4] In December 2018, a man named Dakota Reed was arrested in Monroe, Washington after threatening to carry out mass killings in the style of white power terrorist Dylann Roof. Prior to his arrest, Reed pledged allegiance to Northwest Front.[5] When apprehended by law enforcement authorities, he possessed a cache of weapons, ammunition, and white supremacist paraphernalia. The threat of white nationalist terrorism, however, extends far beyond a single group or individual. In the late 20th century, both *Aryan Nations* and the terrorist group that it spawned, *The Order*, based their operations in the region. The now-infamous standoff known as Ruby Ridge that pitted federal agents against a family with ties to white nationalism, took place in Northern Idaho. Earlier in the 1900s, amidst the rise of the Second Ku Klux Klan, the organization "gained a particularly formidable power" in Oregon, on par with or even exceeding that of any southern state.[6] With the highest per capita membership of any state, the Oregon Klan wielded serious electoral influence in the state's political institutions.[7]

Should these occurrences, therefore, be understood as unrelated episodes,

or rather interconnected waves of white nationalism? In the case of the Pacific Northwest, the region's political culture helps to answer this question. History, religious tradition, and constructed identities over the course of generations in the Pacific Northwest have created an environment in which violent white nationalism continuously emerges. In this context, *white nationalism* refers to a "form of white supremacy that emphasizes defining a country or region by white racial identity and which seeks to promote the interests of whites exclusively, typically at the expense of people of other backgrounds."[8] In addition to the belief that the white race is naturally superior to members of other races, this definition of white nationalism emphasizes the importance of a white-dominated polity.

The objective of a white ethnostate in the Pacific Northwest figures centrally in the region's history of racist violence and terrorism. The Pacific Northwest is not alone in this sense; the resurgence of white nationalist terrorism is not isolated to one region of the United States. Areas such as Charlottesville, Virginia have also faced attacks that cannot be separated from the city's deeply entrenched history of violent racism.[9] However, the dearth of scholarship related to the interconnected history of racism and violence in the Pacific Northwest prevents scholars from better understanding the current threat of white nationalist terrorism as it related to this region. The existence of this culture does not implicate every inhabitant of the region as an adherent to the radical views of the aforementioned extremist groups. Rather, the distinct political culture has contributed to an atmosphere in which violent white nationalists can carry on the tradition of organizing in an area considered by some to be a beacon of tolerance.

Literature Review

From a broad scholarly standpoint, the American Pacific Northwest is a thoroughly studied region. Using a socio-political perspective, Ellis and Thompson examined Pacific Northwestern culture and its impact on environmentalism.[10] Taking a more expansive approach, Schwantes has written the comprehensive history of the region.[11] Though scholars have studied the relationship between culture, politics, and history in the Pacific Northwest, none have comprehensively investigated how this intersection can help explain the persistent presence of organized–and often violent–white nationalism. In *A Hundred Little Hitlers*, Langer examines the growth of the skinhead and neo-Nazi movements in the wake of the murder of an Ethiopian man named Mulugeta Seraw.[12] This text, however, focuses specifically on Portland in the latter half of the 20th century. Though anecdotally reported in the media, scholars have not analyzed the historical evolution of white supremacy in the Pacific Northwest as it relates to the pursuit of a white homeland.

This scarcity in literature with regards to political culture, violent white nationalism, and the Pacific Northwest appears even more pronounced when considering how the subject has been studied in other regions of the United States. Unsurprisingly, given the entire subfield of Southern Studies, the literature related to violence, race, and the political culture of the American South is significant. With regards to political culture and history, Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen analyze the lasting influence of slavery on modern American society.[13] Further, in two separate studies Richard Nisbett and Hayes and Lee have identified a subculture of violence and honor among white males in the South.[14] This imbalance comports with the reality that racially-motivated terrorism (often in the form of lynchings) in the United States has historically occurred most frequently in the South.[15] Despite this historical concentration, it is nonetheless important to investigate the roots of the ongoing threat of white nationalist violence in the Pacific Northwest.

Given the scarcity of scholarship in this area, M.J. Fox's framework for

political culture analysis proves instructive. Employing Fox's definition of political culture, "those individual and collective orientations which establish patterns of action and attitude and impact on the political over time,"[16] this analysis seeks to develop a more comprehensive explanation of why violent white nationalist movements have played a pivotal role in the history of the Pacific Northwest.

Methodology

This analysis considers history, demography, geography, and the studies of religion and terrorism as well as primary sources such as statements from relevant actors and organizations in order to clearly demonstrate the evolving traditions with respect to white nationalism in the region. Much of the evidence is qualitative, though it incorporates statistics related to immigration and the Pacific Northwest's population where appropriate.

The Settlement

One can trace the roots of movements in the Pacific Northwest for a racially pure ethnostate to the early 19th century. In this period of European-American expansion, influential figures characterized the Pacific Northwest as distinct from the rest of the continental United States. Thomas Jefferson planted the seed of this vision in 1813, when he declared an early settlement at the mouth of the Columbia River to be "the germ of a great, free and independent empire."[17] Later, Jefferson seriously weighed the possibility of establishing a Pacific Republic, wholly separate from the United States.[18] James Monroe shared a similar vision of Pacific Northwestern independence.[19] The distinct geography of the region provides insight as to why these Founders pondered the possibility of an independent Pacific Republic. The region is bounded by the Klamath Mountains to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Great Basin Desert and the Rocky Mountains to the east, and the Canadian border to the north. At the time of settlement,

the Columbia River, which flows through Washington and Oregon into the Pacific Ocean, played a crucial role in establishing trade, transportation, and communication networks across the Pacific Northwest.[20] These geographic features helped to create a cohesive regional identity.[21]

Decades after Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase, European-American pioneers divinely justified their westward expansion to the Oregon territories with the concept of Manifest Destiny. According to this logic, their deity chose the Pacific Northwest as a region for Christian American settlement. In 1845, Manifest Destiny was described as such:

> "[America's] legal title to Oregon, so far as law exists for such rights, is perfect. There is no doubt of this . . . The God of nature and of nations has marked it for us; with His blessing we will firmly maintain the incontestable rights He has given, and fearlessly perform the high duties He has imposed."[22]

From the outset of US westward expansion, white settlers drew the perceived right to this region along racial lines. Because God chose this land, the settlers believed that Americans of European descent possessed the exclusive claim to the Pacific Northwest.[23] This Christian notion of a white homeland provided a justification for initial settlement and later yielded a foundation for violent white nationalists to build new, extreme visions of Christianity to bolster their movements.

Along with this early Christian influence and a relative degree of geographic isolation from surrounding regions, the political beginnings of the Pacific Northwest also share a rejection of unity with the rest of America, building the foundation for institutionalized white supremacy. By the mid-19th century, the region's settlers had established a legislative body, and an amendment to one of its foundational laws criminalized African-American residency in the newly established region. Though

sparingly enforced, this legislation "reflected the dominant settler view that the presence of African-Americans jeopardized social and economic stability."[24]

As the Oregon Territory—which covered modern-day Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, as well as some parts of Wyoming and Montana—continued to be develop politically, a group of eight men known as The Salem Clique came to dominate the area's politics and society.[25] The Clique was not an ideologically monolithic group, and its members held a variety of views related to Oregon's place in the Union and the future of the abolition movement. However, some members of the Clique certainly believed that the Pacific Northwest should assert itself as an independent, white-dominated state. Around the time of Southern secession, a portion of The Clique advocated for the creation of a Pacific Republic. These proponents envisioned that the independent state would align with the Confederacy and favor the reinstatement of slavery.[26] One may reasonably point out that the viewpoints of this elite cadre of men should not necessarily be taken as the attitude of the population writ large. Yet, in an 1857 referendum, 89% of voters elected to ban African-Americans from inhabiting the recently formed state of Oregon.[27] Following the overtly segregationist referendum, the newly established Oregon state legislature successfully moved to rescind the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868 (the state did not officially re-ratify the amendment until 1973).[28] Prior to the initial ratification in 1866, many white Oregonians voiced their vehement opposition to granting African-Americans citizenship and equal protection rights, so much so that the *Oregon Statesman* published an editorial warning of the possibility of a "war of the races" if the Fourteenth Amendment was passed into law.[29] White nationalist sentiment in 19th-century Oregon extended from the elite founding class to the population writ large, establishing the foundational fear of minority enfranchisement that drove the aspiration for an ethnostate in the Pacific Northwest.

Exclusion and Prejudice in Postbellum Pacific Northwest

The discriminatory policies and attitudes that saturated the founding of the Pacific Northwest carried forward into the late 19th and early 20th centuries, heavily influencing the post-Civil War politics and society in the region. Oregonian reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation laid the groundwork for the next generation of ethno-nationalist policy and sentiment. For example, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation spurred anti-government movements in the Pacific Northwest.[30] These mobilizations, however, merely set the stage for the policies and violence that occurred in the next 150 years.

Following the conclusion of the Civil War, nativist immigration policies existed broadly on a national level. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, for example, prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers in the entire the United States. Given the geographic position of the Pacific Northwest, however, immigration became an especially contentious issue. At points of entry such as Washington State's Puget Sound, local immigration officials enforced general immigration laws by determining which prospective immigrants belonged to a prohibited class.[31] In light of the relative ambiguity of general immigration laws and widespread hostility towards Japanese immigrants, the Pacific Northwest's immigration system "functioned to pursue the racist goal of excluding the Japanese without interrupting the flow of white immigration."[32] Essentially, local officials exerted initiative provided by national legislation to pursue segregationist immigration policies, maintaining the notion of a white-dominated, white-populated Pacific Northwest.

Immigration to Seattle exploded in decades after the Civil War and its population grew by a factor of more than 700 between 1860 and 1910.[33] However,

despite being a geographically favorable point of entry for Chinese and Japanese immigrants crossing the Pacific, restrictive immigration policy successfully kept Asian-American immigration at very low levels. By 1910, the Asian-American population in Washington still constituted less than 2.5% of the state population.[34] In addition to restricting Asian-American immigrants from entering the Pacific Northwest, state legislation further repressed those Asian-Americans who successfully arrived in the United States. In 1921, Washington's state legislature passed the Anti-Alien Land Law in an ultimately successful effort to drive down non-white immigrant land ownership.[35] Laws such as these deliberately targeted the Japanese-American immigrant population. The President of the Washington State Senate advocated for the law by claiming that "the overwhelming sentiment of the people of this State regards [the] increasing number of Japanese and their hold on our soil as a grave national menace."[36] These nativist policies were driven by a fear of the prospect of diminished white political power in the Pacific Northwest. Immigration legislation in the decades following the Civil War sought to maintain the status quo of white political hegemony by preventing Asian-Americans from accumulating capital, wealth, and power.

White Nationalism and the Second Klan

The institutionalization of exclusion in the political sphere in the Pacific Northwest notably coincided with the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, blurring the lines between violent actors and mainstream social and political entities. In fact, the rhetoric of the Klan in the region follows a logical trajectory from the policies of segregation in mid to late 19th century Pacific Northwest. At a 1922 Klan recruitment event, a former pastor named Reuben Sawyer outlined the KKK's nativist worldview, railing against Japanese immigration, which he claimed was contributing to a "rising flood of color" in the world.[37]

In response to the perceived threat of immigrants, African-Americans, and Catholics, the Klan infiltrated local political institutions in order to enforce their vision of a white Anglo-Saxon Pacific Northwest. In Portland, the Klan took over the city police department, establishing a so-called Black Patrol that perpetrated violence against African-American Portlanders without consequence.[38] Just as fear of replacement and the deterioration of white Anglo-Saxon power motivated anti-Black and anti-immigrant rhetoric, anti-Catholic sentiment also took on an existential form. In Oregon especially, the KKK argued that Catholic schools were a tool of the pope to take over America.[39] This conspiracy helped contribute to the idea that Catholics, as well as immigrants and African-Americans, were working towards the extinction of the white Anglo-Saxon race. In 1922, the Klan successfully initiated a campaign to outlaw Catholic schools in Oregon, winning via popular referendum in 1922.[40] Though the ban was deemed unconstitutional by a federal court relatively quickly, this case demonstrates the degree to which the Klan could influence statewide politics (and also the degree to which popular political will did indeed align with that of the Klan). Despite KKK propaganda, this campaign clearly did not function merely as an effort to promote the virtues of public education. Klansmen in Eugene, for example, worked to purge Catholic teachers from public schools, underscoring the clear intent of the Klan's policies.[41] Furthermore, the message delivered by the Klan during these campaigns revealed an important component of the group's vision, and that of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest more broadly: while Catholic immigrants from Italy or Ireland could reach white status through reform, African-Americans and Asian-Americans were viewed as irredeemably inferior.[42] By infiltrating Pacific Northwest politics and violently policing minority communities, the Klan of the 1920's sought to further establish white dominance while also restricting

the possibility of minority empowerment in the future. In the context of increasing immigration, white nationalists organized through the Klan in order to influence local governance, violently repress minorities, and reinforce their vision for a white ethnostate.

Aryan Nations and The Order

Five decades after the collapse of the Second Klan–brought on by internal scandal and discord in the late 1920s–the white nationalist roots of the Pacific Northwest resurfaced once again. Though this ideology did not disappear during the intermediary period, 1978 marks a critically important inflection point in the history of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest. That year, Richard Girnt Butler, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ, Christian, added a political wing to his church known as *Aryan Nations*.[43] Butler's decision to establish AN coincided with a wider call by white supremacists to migrate to the Pacific Northwest in order to establish a white homeland.[44] AN's ideology contained parallels to the long tradition of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest. Butler sought to unite his church, formed in the radical of the Christian Identity movement, with other like-minded white separatists to establish a home in the Pacific Northwest. Starting in northern Idaho with plans to gradually expand, Butler developed an agenda known as the "10 percent solution" in which one-tenth of America's states would be Aryan-controlled.[45] The group believed that "a racial nation has a right and is under obligation to preserve itself and its members."[46] In this sense, the rhetoric and ideology of AN harkens back to the segregationist attitudes and policies of the region's recent history.

Like its white nationalist predecessors in the Pacific Northwest, *Aryan Nations* members cultivated a warped brand of Christianity to justify their pursuit of a white ethnostate. *Aryan Nations'* embrace of Christian Identity, an ideology marked by its belief in the two-seedline doctrine, reflects the organization's perception of itself as a population chosen by God. The two-seed theory deemed Western and Northern Europeans (who came to be called Aryans by Christian Identity extremists) to be the favored descendants of Adam and viewed European Jews as the descendants of Satan.[47] This religious ideology shaped Richard Butler's vision for the group. According to his manifesto, *The Aryan Warrior*, Butler sought the foundation of an ethnostate in the Pacific Northwest because he viewed "Aryan Race as a divinely ordained, sovereign, independent people."[48] According to a mission statement from an *Aryan Nations* brochure, the group primarily focused on "the preservation of [the white] race individually and collectively as a people as demanded and directed by God."[49] This language, though perhaps stated in more unadulterated terms, clearly reflects the themes established centuries earlier by the Pacific Northwest's first settlers who espoused the notion of Manifest Destiny. *Aryan Nations* used this belief in a divinely ordained white homeland to justify its use of violence. Beyond its obviously bellicose title, *The Aryan Warrior* places the militant protection of the Aryan race at the forefront of its operations. Butler declared, there is "nothing else in the whole of the Aryan State which is so rich in tradition as the army [of *Aryan Nations*]."[50] By espousing an interpretation of Christianity in which whites are entitled to a homeland by God, *Aryan Nations* followed the established pattern of white nationalist ideology in the Pacific Northwest. However, amidst a changing landscape of political power in a post-Civil Rights Era United States, the group's approach differed from that of its predecessors.

Aryan Nations presented a more dire worldview than that of the Klan or The Clique. Butler's addresses often enforced the concept of a millenarian war for the preservation of the white race in reaction to the perception of creeping multiculturalism and white genocide.[51] The group drew

on the same themes as its white nationalist predecessors in the Pacific Northwest, especially with regards to nativist rhetoric, but did so with far greater urgency. The only solution to this threat, according to *Aryan Nations*, was the establishment of a racially-pure National Socialist state.[52] Growing in the decades following the passage of major federal civil rights legislation, *Aryan Nations* leaders capitalized on the mounting concerns of minority enfranchisement by successfully translating the generations-old nativism and ethnocentrism into rhetoric that met the perception of an increasingly urgent threat.

In 1983, America's broader white power movement adopted a revolutionary worldview,[53] carrying profound implications for violent white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest. Whereas previous violence largely fell into the category of vigilantism, the movement's declaration of war on the United States during the 1983 Aryan World Congress fundamentally transformed the threat, now manifesting in explicit calls for the establishment of a white homeland through a revolutionary race war.[54] The history of racial violence and terrorism in the Pacific Northwest is as old as the 19th-century settlement of the region—to include significant organized violence against indigenous populations[55]—and continued through the rise of the Klan and the formation of AN. However, *The Order* notably escalated this tradition through its revolutionary approach to white nationalist violence. Splintering from AN in the autumn of 1983, Bob Mathews aimed to assemble a cadre of warriors in Washington state who were prepared to intensify AN's practices to the next level of extremism.[56] Mathews had moved to the Pacific Northwest after facing tax fraud charges in his native Arizona, and his residency in the isolated Metaline, Washington crucially influenced his path to white nationalism.[57] The racist dystopian novel *The Turner Diaries* also shaped Mathews revolutionary worldview (along

with that of many of America's most notorious white supremacists). Mathews loosely based the group's operations on the model established in *The Turner Diaries* and possessed dozens of copies in order to distribute them to prospective members as the organization's 'Bible.'[58]

Following with *The Turner Diaries* themes, members of *The Order* perceived a pronounced threat of white extinction, and the group's actions starkly exhibited this ideology. *The Order's* founding members swore an oath of loyalty over the six-week old infant of a new recruit, signifying their concern for the future of the white race.[59] Furthermore, it was David Lane, a member of *The Order*, who first penned the now-infamous 14 Words recited by white nationalists in the Pacific Northwest and across the world.[60] Writing, "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children,"[61] Lane succinctly described the same racist sentiment that ushered in Oregon's recission of the 14th Amendment and Washington's Anti-Alien Land Laws. Richard Scutari, another member of *The Order*, further underscored the importance of members' perception of an existential threat to fuel the group's violent white nationalism. In a publication called *Focus Fourteen* (a reference to Lane's 14 Words), Scutari wrote:

> *The survival of our Race is on the line. If it takes the imprisonment of one-third of our men and the death of another third in order to win this war, then that is a cheap price to pay . . . it will be worth it to future generations of White children. That is what this struggle is supposed to be all about.*[62]

Just as *The Order* intensified the rhetoric and symbolism related to the future of the white race, so did they escalate white nationalist terrorism and violence in the Pacific Northwest. The group's criminal activities included multimillion dollar armed bank heists, the assemblage of weapons

caches in three Pacific Northwest states, and the execution of Jewish radio host Alan Berg, who frequently spoke out against anti-Semitism.[63] Just over a year after establishing *The Order*, Mathews died in a fire that started during an armed standoff with law enforcement officials. Surrounded by FBI agents on a remote island in Washington, Mathews clung to his vision for a white ethnostate. He died demanding land for an Aryan homeland before a flare set ammunition stockpiles ablaze.[64]

The rather rapid collapse of *The Order* did not eliminate the threat of white nationalism in the region. *Aryan Nations* still sought to complete the unfulfilled vision of the region's white settlers who came more than 100 years before them: the establishment of an independent white ethnostate. *Aryan Nations* continued to hold its World Congresses following the dissolution of *The Order*.[65] Here, *Aryan Nations* laid out their aim to establish a "territorial sanctuary" and to create "a provisional government" for the "[re]establishment of a White Sovereign State in America."[66] In choosing to declare a 'reestablishment,' *Aryan Nations* deliberately recalls the history of white supremacy and white separatism in the Pacific Northwest.

Aryan Nations floundered partly as a consequence of failing leadership on the part of Richard Butler,[67] but still the group's ideology did not fade from existence in the Pacific Northwest. Even in the face of intense government counterterrorism efforts and incompetent leadership, this political culture endured, in part due to the lasting legacy of martyrs such as Bob Mathews. Quickly after his death, white nationalists began to sanctify Matthews as an ideal Aryan warrior. The hagiography took the form of speeches and punk rock songs in the emerging skinhead music scene.[68] This symbolism helped to entrench the political culture of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest and carry the call for the violent pursuit of a white ethnostate into the 1990's and 2000's.

Ruby Ridge

Just as the perceived martyrdom of Bob Mathews contributed to the mythos of the white nationalist political culture in the Pacific Northwest, the incident at Ruby Ridge elevated Randy Weaver and his family to a nearly divine symbol of white resistance to the federal government. After failing to appear in court for a weapons-related charge, federal agents surrounded the Weaver's remote residence in Northern Idaho. The situation quickly spiralled out of control, as Randy Weaver refused to surrender. The dispute led to an armed standoff between the Weavers, their family friend Kevin Harris, and a team of FBI agents and US Marshals. At the end of the eleven-day standoff, Randy's wife and son, Vicki and Samuel Weaver, along with one federal agent, were killed. In the eyes of Pacific Northwest white nationalists, by killing a woman and teenager on that Idaho mountain top in August 1992, the federal government violated the Jeffersonian vision for a "free and independent empire" in the Pacific Northwest. The foundational role that Ruby Ridge played in the growth of the militia movement in the United States should not be understated and has rightly received scholarly attention,[69] but it is also worth investigating how the martyrdom of Vicki and Samuel Weaver fits into the broader political culture of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest.

Lane Crothers, a scholar of right wing movements in America, argues that the novel *Late Great Planet Earth*—an eschatological text that pits immigrants and Jews, among others, against Christian literalists—played the single most influential role in shaping Randy and Vicki's political ideology.[70] Resonating strongly with the Weavers, the message of this text also fits well into the perception of white replacement and extinction in that came to form a political culture in the Pacific Northwest. As the Weavers settled in northern Idaho, relocating first from Iowa and then Montana, they began to immerse themselves

in this political culture far more seriously. By attending Butler's *Aryan Nations* World Congress beginning in the mid 1980s, Randy Weaver grew to feel legitimized in his racist views, further developing the notion that whites are entitled to their own ethnostate.[71]

The deaths of Vicki and Samuel Weaver bore so much importance because of the generations-long buildup of existential white fear that led up to Ruby Ridge and grew even more intense in the late 20th century. The killing of the mother and child of a family with ties to the Pacific Northwest's white nationalist movement further activated the rhetorical and ideological narrative that the federal government is determined to eliminate the white race. As demonstrated by *The Order's* symbolic oath, the white child carried significant symbolic weight in this movement. The constructed meaning behind the white woman, too, figured centrally in the history of white supremacy and further exacerbated anger among white nationalists.[72] The coinciding killing of both Vicki and Samuel, therefore, provided symbolic justification for the fears that white nationalists had been espousing for generations. The salience of the white nationalists' narrative, deeply rooted in the history of the region, increased substantially with the Ruby Ridge confrontation and added fuel to the threat of white nationalist terrorism that is once again experiencing a renaissance in the Pacific Northwest.

Conclusion

The enduring impact of a political culture of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest continues to influence violent actors in the region today. Beginning in the 19th century and growing more entrenched with each iteration of violent extremism since, the current movement draws on this political culture as it carries out violence in the name of the preservation of the white race. According to investigative reporting, the militant neo-Nazi organization *Atomwaffen Division* has organized

one of their largest chapters in Washington. In the remote town of Concrete, cell members have conducted training camps for the purpose of weapons training and the creation of propaganda that calls for an apocalyptic race war.[73] Moreover, modern white nationalists explicitly recognize this political culture and exploit it as a means of recruitment. The official handbook of The Northwest Front specifically cites regional history, demographics, and the martyrdom of Bob Mathews and the Weavers to rationalize the formation of an Aryan Republic in the Pacific Northwest.[74] Likewise, chat logs from the digital communication platform Discord reveal that the Pacific Northwest's history of white nationalist violence continues to ideologically influence today's extremists in the Pacific Northwest. Members of the Pacific Northwest neo-Nazi group *Cascadian Coffee Company* frequently invoke the example of Bob Mathews and David Lane, recommending their writing to other extremists and echoing their calls to violence.[75] The current movement cannot be separated from its predecessors. Notable periods of Pacific Northwestern history, from the resurgence of the Klan to the formation of *Aryan Nations*, share a mutual connection to the historical attitudes that have come to define the region's relationship with violence and the pursuit of a white homeland. Far from isolated incidences, the events reflect and reinforce a political culture that profoundly influences modern extremist groups in the Pacific Northwest.

The scope of this analysis does not permit a definitive recounting of each tradition and policy that has cultivated an atmosphere conducive to the formation violent white nationalist organizations. However, this analysis fills a much-needed gap in the American literature on domestic extremism by connecting the most important iterations of organized white nationalism with a coherent and enduring political culture. Zooming out to broadly assess the history and legacy of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest helps to understand

the present nature of this threat. Successive manifestations of discrimination and terrorism demonstrate the important connection between generations of white nationalism in the Pacific Northwest. The region's deeply ingrained political culture laid the groundwork for the shift to revolutionary violence in pursuit of a white homeland. Without these preexisting traditions, there would be no basis for Butler's 10 percent solution or the so-called Northwest Imperative. Given the entrenched political culture of white nationalist violence in the Pacific Northwest, scholars should not expect the threat to subside soon. Amidst rising right-wing extremism across the United States, the Pacific Northwest demands further attention.

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Endnotes

1.   *The Northwest Front Handbook* (Seattle: Northwest Publishing Agency, LLC, 2014), 1.1.
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Learn to Live With It: The Necessary, But Insufficient, State Counterterrorism Approach

Kelly Moss

This paper considers the importance of a state "learning to live with" terrorism as part of its counterterrorism response. Its argument is two-fold. First, while learning to live with terrorism is a necessary part of effective counterterrorism, it is insufficient by itself for a successful state response. This insufficiency is the result of internal (i.e., human nature) and external (i.e., the nature of the attack, state location, public opinion and political optics, funding, etc.) barriers. Second, for the most effective response to terrorism, states must mitigate these barriers while internalizing the inevitability of terrorism. To critically assess the argument, this paper employed two case studies of state responses to terrorism: The US War on Terror (2001) and the San Bernardino Attack (2015). The US War on Terror demonstrates the necessity of learning to live with terrorism and the consequences that result from not internalizing this rationale. The San Bernardino Attack also demonstrates this necessity while highlighting mitigative actions that states can take to counter the rationale's insufficiency. The paper concludes by assessing whether the U.S. has learned to live with terrorism. Under President Donald Trump, there has been a reversal into the War on Terror mindset, which will severely limit US counterterrorism efforts. However, this reversal can itself be reversed. Overall, the paper asserts that while terrorism can never be eradicated, learning to live with terrorism is the first step towards more effective counterterrorism.

"It is impossible to prevent all terrorist attacks . . . Thus, we need to admit that even the most effective state counter-terrorism will have serious limits to what it can achieve, and that even those terrorist groups whose campaigns will eventually end may take many years before they reach that point."[1]

As the logic above suggests, learning to live with terrorism is the most important component for effective state counterterrorism (CT).[2] However, while it is necessary, it is insufficient by itself, due to unavoidable barriers (internal and external) that impact state responses. To respond effectively, states need to internalize this rationale while mitigating the repercussions from these barriers (e.g., focusing on resilience and the short- and long-term consequences of CT actions and minimizing emotionally-driven responses). This paper critically analyzes this necessity, but it also examines the limits of learning to live with terrorism through two case studies of state responses to terrorism: The US War on Terror (2001) and the San Bernardino Attack (2015). It begins with a methodology and case justification, then moves to a critical analysis of necessity and insufficiency, and concludes with implications for state CT.

Methodology

Terrorism and state CT are defined by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as:[3]

> Terrorism: The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence, instilling fear and terror, against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, or to gain control over a population, to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives.

> Counterterrorism: Reducing the vulnerability of forces, individuals and property against terrorist threats and/or acts, to respond to terrorist acts.

Reductions in vulnerability are difficult to quantify, but for the purpose of this paper are actions that do not serve as catalysts for terrorism. Measuring the efficacy of CT measures has remained a long-standing challenge for academics and practitioners alike. These range from difficulties in the obtention of empirical data, a lack of reliable information, the interconnectivity of CT measures (e.g., legal, political, financial),[4] the challenge of measuring non-events (i.e., foiled attacks and individual decisions to not partake in an attack),[5] and the highly contextual nature of CT. Bearing in mind these difficulties, this paper defines effective/productive CT as actions that reduce terrorism violence in the long-term, such as intelligence sharing, acknowledging the root causes of terrorist violence, and developing a whole-of-government approach that aims for resilience, not prevention. Ineffective/counterproductive CT are actions that increase terrorism in the long-term, including politicization, over-militarization, solely short-term focused actions, and violations of civil liberties and democratic norms.

Learning to live with terrorism is defined as the recognition that terrorism is not a new phenomenon but rather an inevitable part of life that is undefeatable, as it is a tactic.[6] This is not an inherently pessimistic view; instead, it acknowledges the realities of terrorism in an effort to better contain and respond to it.[7] While this paper focuses on the state, learning to live with terrorism challenges the status quo for other actors as well (e.g., the media and the public). It demands a shift in how the media covers terrorism, from that of an existential threat to a rare one, as well as public conceptions of terrorism and the utility/limitations of CT.

The United States is a major actor in combatting terrorism globally and has taken a myriad of CT approaches, particularly in the past two decades. For this reason, two US case studies where chosen. These case studies represent the two major political parties in the U.S. through the presidency, different types of terrorist attacks, and fundamentally different CT responses by the state. The first case study is President George W. Bush's War on Terror, launched in the aftermath of 9/11. This case study is unique because it fundamentally changed the global approach to terrorism and security. It demonstrates the necessity of learning to live with terrorism and the failure that results from not internalizing this rationale. The second case study is President Barack Obama's response to the San Bernardino Attack. This case study is unique because it re-invigorated the debate about the threat terrorism poses, particularly because the shooters were a US citizen and a permanent resident. It demonstrates the necessity, but also insufficiency, of learning to live with terrorism. This insufficiency was mitigated through primarily productive state responses, including a transition to a resilience-oriented mindset and the acknowledgement of potential root causes of terrorism.

This author would be remiss to not address the difference in scale, in both the attack and public perceptions, between the two case studies employed. While learning to live with terrorism does not render the scale of an attack irrelevant, it does render it less important. This is because the principles associated with this mindset (e.g., avoiding over-militarization and the violation of civil liberties) are constants, regardless of the scale of an attack. In other words, learning to live with terrorism acts as a constraint on states, influencing what CT actions they choose to pursue first, for how long, and in what capacity. And while the scale of certain attacks may demand stronger responses in the short-term, learning to live with terrorism forces states to consider both the short- and long-term consequences of these actions.

Necessity

This section speaks to the necessity of learning to live with terrorism and its relationship with CT. It argues that learning to live with terrorism is necessary for effective state responses to terrorism because it fundamentally changes the way that states perceive and respond to terrorism. Perception-wise, states that normalize the threat of terrorism should act differently than states that do not. This is because learning to live with terrorism is foundational, facilitating a perspective shift, situating the response within a broader context, and imbuing rationality into terrorism. Response-wise, learning to live with terrorism is both prescriptive and restrictive in terms of actions, simultaneously encouraging and discouraging certain actions. These byproducts of learning to live with terrorism—a new psychological foundation and perspective shift, a renewed focus on the contextual nature of attacks and the rationality within them, and the discouraging/encouraging of counterproductive/productive responses—are expanded upon below.

Provides a new psychological foundation

Learning to live with terrorism acts as a psychological framework that underpins state decision making towards CT. Frames are "conceptual structures or sets of beliefs that organize political thought, policies, and discourse."[8] They are powerful and are comprised of beliefs and values that inform attitudes and influence behavior.[9] In other words, the way we think, talk, and portray terrorism affects how we respond to it.[10] Thus, the first way towards effective state CT is to change the way the state thinks about terrorism.

Signals a perspective shift

Learning to live with terrorism shifts terrorism from an existential threat to a manageable one.[11] This renders terrorism less effective by undermining the very goals it aims to achieve by quelling fear and shock and not overreacting. With this rationale, attacks inevitably elicit fear in the short-term, but do not make the population or state more fearful in the long-term. This is because the occurrence of attacks is more normalized,[12] depriving terrorist groups of the ability to instill mass fear in the population and provoke the state.[13] By not overreacting, it is easier for states to paint themselves as legitimate and terrorists as illegitimate,[14] while depriving terrorist groups' recruitment and propaganda mechanisms.

Considers the broader context

Learning to live with terrorism allows states to recognize that their reputation does not correlate with the scale of their response. In other words, full-scale responses do not equate to effectiveness, and states will not feel as compelled to "prove" themselves to terrorists, domestic audiences, or the international community through these types of responses. While state responses will be judged, their reputations are not solely predicated on a full-scale CT response. This allows for more proportional, decisive, and targeted CT.

Imbues rationality

Learning to live with terrorism imbues rationality into terrorist motivations by dispelling two widely held notions: 1) terrorists are inherently irrational and 2) countries are targeted for who they are and the values they hold. Viewing terrorism as a malicious act with (typically) rational underpinnings allows states to focus more on its root causes, which may serve to diminish the appeal of terror. This rationale also discourages a perpetual victim mentality in the country that is attacked. Instead of solely attributing terrorist motivations to external factors outside of the attacked

country's control, it acknowledges actions taken by the state.[15] This recognition that state actions, particularly in the realm of foreign policy, may be motivating factors allows for a more self-aware and critical state. Thus, instead of attributing terrorism solely to a country's identity or values, the state will be less inclined to view the attack as an existential threat to its existence, fostering patriotic, not nationalistic, responses. However, this is not to say that states cannot ever be targeted for specific actions or values; it is the actions, influenced by values, which can create grievances that serve as radicalizing factors for terrorism. This action-based argument can be seen in grievances arising out of US foreign policy, including its relationship with Israel, the invasion of Iraq, and the 2011 NATO Libya intervention.

Discourages counterproductive responses

Politicization. Politicization occurs when an individual causes "an event or activity to become political in character."[16] It is utilized for personal benefit, usually political, because it mobilizes support and consolidates power.[17] Politicization can take many forms, including the marginalization of certain groups, inflammatory rhetoric, and institutional degradation. Marginalization typically involves the scapegoating of groups with a defining characteristic (e.g., religion, sex, race, or ethnicity). With terrorism, it allows the state to deflect blame and prescribe it to these groups instead of acknowledging its own shortcomings. Inflammatory rhetoric is politically charged words or phrases used to create certain cognitive associations in public discourse and can lead to a mischaracterization of a terrorism threat.[18] Finally, politicization can take the form of undermining the credibility of state institutions.[19]

Politicization is dangerous and counterproductive to CT because it tends to give rise to polarization, which can lead to extremism.[20] This is particularly detrimental in the case of identity marginalization, where there is a defined outgroup. Feeling ostracized, individuals may be more attracted to terrorist recruitment and radicalization.[21] This tactic may also spiral and incite too much fear in the public, leading it to demand a heavy-handed response to terrorism. This could start a conflict within countries over necessary courses of action or blame placement, making it an inadvertent win for terrorists.[22] Learning to live with terrorism discourages this behavior by giving states a contrary point of view; while politicization may be effective short-term, the long-term negatives outweigh any perceived individual net-gains.

Short-term focus. Treating terrorism as a problem that needs immediate rectification results in poor CT responses, such as deviating from international norms (e.g., human rights), abusive and corrupt state behavior, and the exacerbation of the drivers of conflict (e.g., poor governance, inequality, marginalization, etc.). With the mindset that terrorism is an inevitable part of life, short-term solutions become less appealing as CT measures. Instead, long-term solutions are prioritized that deal with peace, human rights, and development.[23] And if emergency responses must be carried out, they will be restricted to the short-term.

Violating civil liberties and democratic norms. Violating civil liberties and democratic norms can take many forms, including indefinite detention, torture, and abusing or undermining the rule of law. According to Richard English, this can serve as a radicalizer for terrorism and diminish state legitimacy, potentially leading

to the loss of the state's monopoly of force.[24] This hypocrisy "plays into the hands of terrorists"[25] and undermines the values that the state is supposed to be predicated on. By learning to live with terrorism, states will not feel as compelled to react in imprudent ways, making them less likely to restrict civil liberties and violate legal frameworks.

Over-militarization. Richard English defines over-militarization as the "large scale [use of] military force."[26] The militarization of CT has become all too common and is fundamentally at odds with the rationale of learning to live with terrorism. It does so by creating winners and losers in CT by assuming that victory is possible. Since it is not, this is a self-defeating mindset.

Paul Wilkinson identifies other negatives to over militarizing CT, including the erosion of the democratic rule of law and human rights,[27] the potential for it to act as a radicalizer, civilian casualties, negative perceptions of the state as an occupying force, and difficulty withdrawing from military conflicts.[28] Malley and Finer corroborate this in "The Long Shadow of 9/11," arguing that an over militarized approach to CT:

> Aggravates the very conditions on which terrorist recruitment thrives. The destruction of entire cities and the unintentional killing of civilians, in addition to being tragic, serve as powerful propaganda tools for jihadists. Such incidents feed resentment, grievances, and anti-Americanism. Not everyone who is resentful, grieving, or anti-American will turn to violence. The vast majority will not. But invariably, some will.[29]

Learning to live with terrorism changes the utility of military force in CT. Short-term, the situation may demand it; however, long-term, it loses its viability because the state knows that terrorism cannot be defeated. Since CT is not a war, the military becomes limited in what it can effectively accomplish.

Encourages productive responses

Whole-of-government approach. This involves "public services agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. Approaches can be formal or informal."[30] Since terrorism is multifaceted and affects virtually every government institution, the response to terrorism should do the same. This would enhance coordination and cooperation, leading to a more robust and holistic national response, and allow states to better prepare for attacks through high-level exercises.[31] With more resources and diverse perspectives on CT, the state can craft a more effective response.

Resiliency, not prevention. Prevention involves "stopping something from happening or stopping someone from doing something."[32] Yet, as this paper has argued, terrorism cannot be prevented. Learning to live with terrorism encourages states to fundamentally shift how they approach CT by moving from prevention to mitigation and resiliency. Mitigation is the "act of reducing how harmful, unpleasant, or bad something is"[33] and necessitates resiliency. In the U.S., the Department of Homeland Security defines resiliency as "The ability to withstand and recover rapidly from deliberate attacks, accidents, and national disasters, as well as unconventional stresses, shocks and threats to the economy and democratic system."[34] A major benefit of a resilience-based approached to CT, as Jon Coaffee notes, is that it is "proactive

and reactive"[35] and integrates the disaster cycle of "response, recovery, mitigation, and preparedness."[36] As such, terrorists may find certain states unappealing, since the disruption they seek to cause would be minimal.

Intelligence sharing. Intelligence sharing involves sharing collected intelligence from different collection sources, running joint operations, and exchanging analyses.[37] Intelligence is critical to CT because states need to identify who the adversary is, what their capabilities are, and where they are located.[38] By using local human and signal intelligence, states can create effective strategies that thwart current terrorists and discourage future ones.[39]

Domestic and international intelligence sharing is particularly important because it disrupts financing, ends terrorist safe havens, allows for the arrest/killing of members, discourages waste and duplication of information, and mitigates the transnational nature of terrorism.[40] Learning to live with terrorism underscores the necessity for states to approach the persistent problem of terrorism with allies. Intelligence sharing is a key mechanism to doing so, while serving state interests.

Acknowledging root causes. The root causes of terrorism are typically tied to grievances towards external (e.g., foreign policy) and/or internal factors (e.g., kleptocracy and ethnic conflict). These root causes, which can include "poverty, demographic factors, social inequality and exclusion, [and] dispossession,"[41] are forms of human insecurity, which "provides the enabling conditions for terrorism to flourish."[42] With the more mitigation-oriented mindset that learning to live with terrorism brings, states will focus more on these root causes, diminishing the need for some individuals to turn to terror in the first place.

This can come in the form of "development aid, support for local democracy processes, human rights, the promotion and protection of minority rights, and the amelioration of the negative effects of globalization."[43] Addressing the underlying causes of terrorism will always be more beneficial than simply addressing its byproducts.

Insufficiency

Even if states learn to live with terrorism, it does not guarantee that they will respond effectively. This section explores this insufficiency and identifies certain barriers that hinder individuals' abilities to make informed, rational decisions regarding CT. These barriers are human nature, the nature of the terrorist attack, state location, public opinion and political optics, and funding. To mitigate these barriers, states need to have processes in place that "automate" effective state CT responses and leaders must respond carefully, weighing the efficacy of each response to the best of their abilities. The difficulty of this mitigation, as well as how these barriers make learning to live with terrorism insufficient for effective state CT, are analyzed below.

Human nature

Humans are emotional beings, so regardless of whether we comprehend, recognize, or internalize that we are supposed to act a certain way, we may be unable to do so. Instead, our emotions, such as rage or fear, may cause us to act in irrational ways. As Jennifer Lerner et al. assert:

> "Emotions are, for better or for worse, the dominant driver of most meaningful decisions in life . . . Integral emotions can be remarkably influential even in the presence of cognitive information that would suggest alternative courses of action."[44]

George Loewenstein notes that these emotions can "cause people to

behave contrary to their own long-term self-interest, often with full awareness that they are doing so."[45]

Fear is one of these emotions and elicits certain "emotional and cognitive reactions."[46] When fear is present, individuals tend to have "unusually strong reactions to low-probability catastrophes" and "adopt behaviors that appear irrational."[47] Nationalistic behaviors are one such by-product[48] and entail an uncompromising allegiance to one's country in the form of national identity and the belief that one's nation is supreme.[49] Nationalism is harmful, George Orwell argues in "Notes on Nationalism," and "unites people against people,"[50] while encouraging reactions focused on power demonstrations. On the contrary, patriotism is beneficial, and is "affection for one's country and willingness to defend it,"[51] resulting in actions focused on defense.[52]

Since terrorism aims to instill fear, and typically evokes a disproportionate amount of it right after an attack, the state may be physically limited in its capacity to rationally respond to terrorism. In these scenarios, nationalism is more likely to take root, as states navigate through stress, uncertainty, and fear. Thus, awareness may not be powerful enough to counteract the emotions produced by terrorist attacks.

Nature of the attack

The scale and/or nature of an attack may demand a certain state response in the short-term that would typically be discouraged. For example, if an attack occurred that was similar in scale to 9/11 in the United States, then a strong response would be warranted (e.g., activation of the National Guard or military involvement). However, if the state had learned to live with terrorism, it would closely control and regulate its

military response to prevent anything akin to the War on Terror.

State location

State location and proximity to the perpetrators of an attack matter. As Nicky Jonkhout notes, "the closer in proximity the terrorist attack is, the greater the probability that an individual will develop PTSD."[53] Broadened to a state-level analysis, if the group that orchestrated an attack is in a neighboring state, then the affected state may have a heightened level of concern, due to the fear of a secondary attack. This concern and fear may provoke an overreaction by the state, straying from the learning to live with terrorism mindset.

Public opinion and political optics

The state is put in a difficult position if its allies and citizens are calling for CT responses that the state knows would be more harmful than beneficial. This situation is further muddied if the most beneficial state response is politically untenable for those in power. This calls into question leader accountability to the public and their political party.

In this scenario, Mueller and Stewart believe that officials are charged with public safety and have a responsibility to spend money in the most efficient way possible, regardless of whether it "assuages the public"[54] or is politically tenable. Instead, state responses "should be based on a realistic understanding of the fact," rather than "factual mistakes."[55] However, in the event of a terrorist attack, this becomes difficult to put into practice and may lead to poor responses by the state.

Funding

Funding may also limit the number of viable CT options that are available to the state. This could be

physical, in the sense that the money is allocated elsewhere, or political, if there is disagreement over the proper CT response. Nevertheless, states cannot do anything without funding, which is why it can be a critical impediment to effective CT responses.

Case Study 1: The War on Terror

The US War on Terror was a CT disaster due to a failure to learn to live with terrorism, supplemented by mostly counterproductive responses by the Bush administration post-9/11. Of these counterproductive responses, the War on Terror is a prime example of state overreaction to terrorism. However, with emotions running high post-9/11, it is plausible to assume that US judgment may have initially been clouded. Yet this does not excuse the poor decisions made almost two years after 9/11 occurred, including the invasion of Iraq. While the role of faulty intelligence in this decision is debatable,[56] the invasion solidified the military as the most important component in the War on Terror.[57] This led to an overmilitarized US CT response that resulted in long-term occupations in the Middle East, which were neither proportionate nor decisive. Instead, President Bush's decision to take the country "on an offensive path, seeking to destroy and defeat terrorist groups overseas . . . [so as to] not have to face them in the United States"[58] created more problems than it solved[59] by contributing to the de-stabilization of the Middle East[60] and inadvertently providing terrorist organizations with sustained propaganda and recruitment mechanisms.[61]

Another counterproductive response by the Bush administration was its authorization of the detention and torture of suspected terrorists in secret prisons post-9/11.[62] While President Bush's knowledge of the situation remains disputed, it is a fact that the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, authorized the use of 10 harsh interrogation techniques, including cramped confinement, insects, wall standing, and waterboarding.[63] Regardless of whether President Bush knew of these tactics, it is likely that they served as a rallying cry for extremists around the world.[64] Thus, the means employed by the Bush administration were counterproductive, making the U.S. look like a hypocrite on the world stage, inadvertently diminishing its national security.

While the War on Terror had considerably more counterproductive CT responses, there were several productive responses by President Bush, such as his attempt to counter Islamophobia. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Bush made sure not to politicize the tragedy and marginalize the Islamic community. In his famous "Islam is Peace" speech, Bush stated:

> These acts of violence against innocents violate the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith. And it's important for my fellow Americans to understand that . . . The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don't represent peace. They represent evil and war.[65]

However, even within this speech, we see terrorism being framed as a war, underpinning poor decisions taken by the Bush administration (e.g., the violation of civil rights and state overreaction).

Once the War on Terror began, President Bush could do little to stop it. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2001, the U.S. has committed nearly $5.9 trillion to the War on Terror.[66] Direct war costs total $2 billion,[67] and 2018 projections by the Pentagon estimate $80 billion in OCO spending through FY2023.[68] By painting terrorism as an existential threat to the very existence of the United States and the values that it is predicated on, public perspectives, as well as the country's budgetary expenditures, towards terrorism were fundamentally shifted. This has resulted in the financial prioritization of militarized CT responses, at the expense of more effective, long-term CT responses. Furthermore, by promising

something it could never achieve, the global eradication of terrorism,[69] and citing the US's identity, instead of a mix of actions and identity, as the primary reason for 9/11, the opportunity for a decisive, proportionate response was removed and the strategy was destined for failure. Thus, even when the Bush administration had a productive CT response, it proved futile since the basic tenet for a good CT response, learning to live with terrorism, was absent.[70] The reverberations of this decision are palpable to this day and show the lasting impact that CT decisions can have on states.

Case Study 2: San Bernardino Attack

The 2015 San Bernardino Attack is an example of the necessity, but insufficiency, of learning to live with terrorism. However, President Barack Obama and his administration were largely able to overcome this insufficiency through good CT responses, both pre- and post-attack. This was not without a struggle, as many of the barriers identified in the "Insufficiency" section were present.

During his 2008 campaign, President Obama ran on the promise to reorient the War on Terror, end its byproducts (specifically, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan),[71] and veer away from the Bush administration's "overreliance on force."[72] After taking office in 2009, Obama fundamentally shifted the US Government's approach to CT. First, the focus was switched from prevention to resilience.[73] The importance of resiliency was addressed in Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8), *National Preparedness*. Released on March 30, 2011, PPD-8 called for a resilience-oriented US Government characterized by an "integrated, all-of Nation, capabilities based approach to preparedness" for threats including terrorism, pandemics, cyberattacks, and other natural disasters.[74] In 2013, Obama fundamentally restructured the US Government's approach to resiliency through Presidential Policy Directive 21 (PPD-21), *Critical Infrastructure*

Security and Resilience. In PPD-21, 16 critical infrastructure sectors[75] were created—that is, "Assets, systems and networks, whether physical or virtual, [which] are considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health safety, or any combination thereof."[76] These structural changes signified a push by the Obama administration to fundamentally reframe the narrative around security and terrorism. Terrorism is a long-term, inevitable threat and resilience is an effective long-term state response to counter it. The benefit of this approach is that it ended up better automating the US government's response to terrorism by putting in place concrete plans of action in the case of an attack, thus mitigating some of the emotions and clouded judgment that inhibit effective state responses following terrorist attacks.

The second productive shift by the Obama administration pre-San Bernardino was re-branding the War on Terror as Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in 2014.[77] CVE embodied a fundamental shift on terrorism in the U.S., most notably its emphasis on grievances as a root cause and recruiting tool for terrorists.[78] These grievances warrant economic (e.g., development and poverty reduction) and political solutions (e.g., adherence to the rule of law, human rights, civil liberties, as well as anti-corruption mechanisms).

Effective state responses continued post-San Bernardino. First, President Obama put the threat of terrorism in perspective to the public by immediately stating that "ISIL will not pose an existential threat to us."[79] Ironically, Obama's approval ratings fell to their lowest in a year,[80] showcasing the barrier of public opinion to changing the narrative on terrorism. However, President Obama appeared un-phased, continuing to de-politicize the shooting and taking care not to marginalize the Muslim community. In a White House address, Obama stated

that the shooters embraced "a perverted interpretation of Islam,"[81] showcasing his sustained aversion to the phrase "Radical Islamic Terror."[82] President Obama had frequently stated that this phrase creates an association between a specific religion and terrorism, granting religious legitimacy to terrorist groups that carry out attacks in the name of religion.[83] Refusing to use this term was wise and "kept the enemy narrow and the 'outgroup' small."[84] The final response worth noting was President Obama's push to close the No-Fly List loophole, which permitted people on the U.S.'s "No Fly List" to still purchase guns, including assault weapons.[85] This ended up failing due to insurmountable political barriers in the US Congress, but it was another demonstration of President Obama's push for a more mitigation-oriented CT approach.

Nevertheless, it is inaccurate to paint President Obama's response as fully effective. At times, the president reverted to rhetoric similar to that of the War on Terror. For example, Obama stated that "we will destroy ISIS,"[86] which directly contradicts the rationale behind learning to live with terrorism by perpetuating the belief that terrorism itself is defeatable. Whether this was done for political reasons, so as not to seem "soft" on terrorism, or a simple misstep, it demonstrated the lasting militarized CT atmosphere in the U.S.

Another problematic response by President Obama was his call on Muslim communities and religious leaders to:

"Unequivocally reject the hateful ideology that groups like ISIL and Al-Qaeda promote; to speak out against not just acts of violence, but also those interpretations of Islam that are incompatible with the values of religious tolerance, mutual respect, and human dignity."[87]

This statement is bigger than just San Bernardino and speaks to the broader asymmetrical treatment and expectations of Muslims after terrorist incidents. Putting the responsibility on Muslims to reject terrorism carries with it the notion that "Muslims as a whole are presumed guilty"[88] and that "to be exonerated in the court of public opinion, they must take to the streets, the airwaves, or social media and assure [the public that] they reject terrorism."[89] This is not to suggest that condemnation of attacks should stop, but, as Todd Green argues, "it's time to stop singling out Muslims."[90] Green is alluding to the fact that despite white extremism comprising one third of all terrorist attacks in the United States from 2011 to 2017,[91] the presumption of guilt and expectation of apology from the attacker's broader community is absent in the aftermath of these attacks. Thus, although President Obama took meaningful steps to de-politicize the San Bernardino attack and counter Islamophobia, this statement inadvertently perpetuated the marginalization of Muslims. Condemnation does not fall on the shoulders of the Muslim community, but on everyone, regardless of perpetrator and purpose.

Overall, by learning to live with terrorism, President Obama tried to fundamentally shift the U.S.'s approach to terrorism. By emphasizing resiliency and restructuring the War on Terror, Obama was able to craft a more effective CT approach, as demonstrated in the aftermath of the San Bernardino Attack.

Conclusion

Learning to live with terrorism is the most important aspect of any state's response to terrorism. However, while necessary, this approach is insufficient in-and-of itself. To address this insufficiency, other effective state responses must accompany this rationale, as was demonstrated thorough the San Bernardino Attack, and entirely missing in the US War on Terror. However, these case studies took place over four years ago, begging the question: Has the United States learned to live with terrorism?

In the U.S., the battle has been won, but the war has been lost on CT.[92] Under the Donald Trump administration, there has been a reversal towards the War on Terror mindset,[93] which has been exacerbated by politicized and inflammatory rhetoric that scapegoats an entire population.[94] This has harmed US interests abroad and created internal divisions,[95] as well as strained relations with allies. However, this reversal can itself be reversed. President Trump can still make meaningful strides towards an effective counterterrorism response; learning to live with terrorism can and should be that first step.

If the United States learned to live with terrorism, it would see a productive, fundamental shift in the way that it responds to terrorism. While the positive effects would not be instantaneous, the process can and should start now. And while it will be unnerving for the United States to go down this path, it should not be discouraged or deterred from adopting this mindset out of uncertainty or fear. Learning to live with terrorism, like any radical perspective-shift that the United States has undertaken, will not be easy. This does not mean that it should not be pursued. Imperfect situations necessitate imperfect solutions and terrorism and counterterrorism are no different. By learning to live with terrorism, the U.S. has an opportunity to fundamentally alter its approach to counterterrorism, without sacrificing effectiveness or the safety of its citizens. Thus, while terrorism can never be eradicated, learning to live with the terrorism would still allow the United States to (figuratively) fight it like hell.

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"I'm As Mad as Hell and I'm Not Gonna Take This Anymore:" *Evaluating the Threat Posed by White Supremacist Extremism in the United States*

Bryant King

Over the last decade, white supremacist extremism (WSE), as measured by the proportion of extremist-related violent crime perpetrated by white supremacists and the number of operational white supremacist groups, has grown increasingly prevalent in the United States. This paper develops a framework for analyzing and forecasting surges in WSE, drawing from a comparative analysis of three previous such surges in US history, to determine whether the current threat posed by WSE is likely to persist. The presence of growing political polarization, poor economic conditions, and an increasing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square suggest that the threat posed by WSE in the United States will persist, if not intensify, in the coming years. Inadequate intervention from the federal government in response to this threat, combined with growing fear and resentment among segments of the population about the direction and changing identity of the United States, has the potential to exacerbate this threat by operationalizing a series of sociological phenomena, including aggrieved entitlement, that prove conducive to white supremacist recruitment and radicalization. To effectively counter the threat posed by WSE, the federal government must employ a robust policy response in conjunction with advocacy organizations and other non-state actors. A failure to do so would represent a serious long-term threat to US national security and societal cohesion.

Introduction

On the morning of October 27, 2018, a lone gunman entered Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue with an assault weapon and carried out an hour-long attack that left 11 congregants dead and injured six other individuals, including four police officers. The perpetrator, a middle-aged white male, had an extensive online presence that demonstrated his deeply-rooted sympathy for white supremacist and white nationalist beliefs, with a particular focus on anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Prior to carrying out his attack, the perpetrator posted a message on Gab, a social media platform popular among white nationalists and the alt-right, that condemned the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, one of the nation's leading voluntary refugee resettlement agencies, for "bringing invaders in (the United States) that kill our people."[1] The Pittsburgh mass shooting represented "the deadliest attack on Jews" in US history and the deadliest attack carried out in over 30 years.[2] However, while the Pittsburgh mass shooting was unprecedented in its scale, it is emblematic of the growth of white supremacist extremism (WSE) in the United States over the last decade.

Given the growing prevalence of WSE in the United States, this paper examines whether this phenomenon is likely to persist in the coming years, perhaps representing a fourth historical "surge" of WSE in the United States. Historical analysis suggests that the threat posed by WSE will persist, if not intensify, in the coming years, due to the presence of four factors in the United States today: (1) growing political polarization; (2) poor economic conditions; (3) inadequate intervention from the federal government in response to the threat posed by WSE; and (4) an increasing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square. These factors can operationalize various sociological

phenomena, including several theories under the social movement theory umbrella and a concept known as "aggrieved entitlement," that prove conducive to facilitating white supremacist recruitment and radicalization and, consequently, surges in WSE. Accordingly, the federal government needs to employ a robust policy response to effectively counter this threat to US national security in the coming years.

This article opens with a brief historical and statistical overview of the current growth of WSE in the United States, which began around the time of the election of President Obama. It then provides a framework for explaining and forecasting surges of WSE in the United States, comprising four factors that have the potential to facilitate such surges, as well as a series of sociological phenomena operationalized by these factors that prove conducive to the recruitment and radicalization of white supremacists. The following section conducts a comparative analysis, examining whether and how these factors manifested during the three previous surges of WSE in US history, with the goal of substantiating the above-noted framework. The paper then synthesizes these sections into an argument for why WSE appears likely to persist, if not become more prevalent, in the United States in the coming years, while analyzing white supremacist ideology in the context of a series of ongoing demographic and public polling trends that are (re)shaping the identity of the United States in the 21st century. It concludes by offering a brief series of policy recommendations for the federal government to more effectively combat the threat posed by WSE in the coming years.

The Growing Threat of White Supremacist Extremism (2008–Present)

Between 2008 and 2017, right-wing extremists perpetrated 71 percent of all "domestic extremist-related killings in the United States."[3] Three years into President Obama's first term in office, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that "the number of domestic hate groups in the United States had reached more than 1,000 for the first time," with the number of white nationalist groups hitting an all-time peak of 146 and growing approximately 32 percent between 2008 and 2011.[4] Though the number of active white nationalist groups in the United States declined between 2011 and 2015, this number has increased annually since 2015. In addition to rising membership, right-wing extremists have also claimed a larger share of "extremist-related murders in the United States" in the last few years, with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reporting that right-wing extremists accounted for 59 percent of all such murders in 2017, as compared to 20 percent in 2016. The ADL forecasts that "it is quite likely that the future will see yet more violent acts stemming from the ranks of the alt right and the alt lite as more of their adherents move their activities (from virtual spaces) into the real world."[5]

In 2017, the most recent year for which data are available, the FBI reports that hate crime incidents increased approximately 17 percent from the year prior, with "racial/ethnicity/ancestry" bias motivating approximately 60 percent of those incidents reported.[6] This increase marks "the first consecutive three-year annual increase and the largest single-year increase since 2001," with African Americans and Jews representing the most heavily targeted racial and religious groups respectively.[7] A 2018 study from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism reports that hate crime rates in "America's ten largest cities" have risen over the past four years, including a 12.5 percent increase between 2017 and 2018 alone, "representing the highest total in over a decade." The same study identifies African Americans, Jews, and the LGBTQ community as the groups most targeted in hate crimes incidents, while the cities surveyed in the study saw "an unprecedented precipitous election month spike" in reported hate crime incidents in the lead up to the 2016 presidential election.[8]

These trends demonstrate the growing prevalence of WSE in the United States over the last decade, with an observable spike in such extremism since the beginning of the 2016 presidential campaign. The connection between WSE and US national security is clear. The perpetration and threatened use of violence against minority populations represents an obvious challenge to societal cohesion and long-held national values like multiculturalism, while seriously undermining the rule of law. Depending on the response of relevant actors like the federal government and local law enforcement agencies to this threat, WSE can also serve to undermine trust in key institutions among broad swaths of the population. This is not to mention the detrimental impact that WSE has on areas as varied as socioeconomic well-being and the ability of US diplomats to credibly and effectively carry out a values-based foreign policy in all corners of the world. Accordingly, these trends suggest that WSE represents an increasing threat to US national security that demands a robust response from the federal government.

The following section lays out a framework for analyzing and forecasting surges of WSE, comprising four factors that are theorized as having the capacity to facilitate said surges, along with a series of sociological phenomena operationalized by these factors that prove conducive to the recruitment and radicalization of white supremacists.

Factors Facilitating Surges in White Supremacist Extremism

Political Polarization and Poor Economic Conditions

In 2009, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released a controversial report arguing that growing political polarization and poor economic conditions could potentially contribute to a resurgence in rightwing extremism in the United States.[9] While the report offered compelling historical analysis and

assessments about the potential impact that factors like the ongoing economic recession, the election of the nation's first African American president, and issues like illegal immigration could have on rightwing radicalization and recruitment, it was met with strong criticism on two fronts that led to its swift withdraw. The first source of criticism stemmed from GOP opposition to the use of the term "rightwing extremism," while the second originated from opposition to the report's identification of military veterans as potentially being vulnerable to recruitment into extremist groups.[10] Despite these controversies, this report makes strong arguments about the role that political polarization and poor economic conditions can play in facilitating the rise of WSE in the United States. This is particularly relevant as divisive topics like racial justice, gun control, illegal immigration and economic inequality continue to dominate the contemporary US political dialogue.

Deepening polarization transforms politics into a zero-sum game. This phenomenon forces both major political parties to embrace increasingly divergent views on policy issues that are important within white supremacist circles, while gradually pushing moderate policy approaches out of the national discourse. An example of this polarization, which naturally breeds increasingly extreme rhetoric, can be seen in today's debate over immigration at the southern border, which pits calls for the construction of a border wall and the demonization of migrants against demands for the abolition of law enforcement agencies. This type of political rhetoric, particularly when it focuses on issues involving race or immigration, can easily play into conspiracy theories prevalent among white supremacists, while bolstering the potential for radicalization of vulnerable individuals and the recruitment efforts of WSE groups, including over the internet.[11] Poor economic conditions, while potentially operationalizing the relative deprivation component of social movement

theory (see below), can similarly bolster the recruitment efforts of WSE groups, particularly when said conditions are attributed to an "other" group (e.g., migrants) and the federal government is perceived as failing to address its root causes (e.g., illegal immigration and border security).[12]

Inadequate Intervention by the Federal Government

Over the last century and a half, the federal government has inconsistently intervened to address the threat posed by WSE. At certain points, the federal government has adopted an aggressive approach toward effectively combatting WSE, exemplified by the FBI's successful efforts to disrupt the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the Deep South during the Civil Rights Movement. At other points, however, the federal government has largely abdicated its responsibility to address this threat, as it did in the Deep South in the late 1870s, and as it is arguably doing today by limiting grant funding to countering violent extremism (CVE) and counter-recruitment initiatives that work within vulnerable communities.[13] And at still other times, the federal government has accommodated the political and social goals of white supremacists, including through the passage of the racially-biased Immigration Act of 1924, as detailed below.[14] While such accommodation might be presumed to dilute the motivating forces underlying the perpetration of WSE, it actually serves to embolden white supremacists and push their ideology closer to the mainstream, proving seriously detrimental to the nation's social cohesion in the long-term. Despite its inconsistent record on intervention, the federal government represents the only actor in the United States with the resources and coordination capacity to effectively combat the threat posed by WSE. The above-noted DHS report rightly suggests that such intervention need not focus solely on law enforcement efforts, but could also include initiatives to address economic inequality, as well as public education campaigns to dispel falsehoods and conspiracy theories propagated by white supremacist groups.

Permissiveness for White Supremacist Rhetoric in the Public Square

A growing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square is not conducive to combatting potential surges in WSE. The normalization of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square, whether through political campaigns, the mainstreaming of groups like the KKK, the exploitation of emerging technologies (e.g., social media), or other means, can help spread white supremacist ideology to previously unreached audiences and bolster its appeal among individuals "who are already predisposed to racism."[15] While the First Amendment limits the extent to which the government can prohibit white supremacist rhetoric that does not incite violence, it is easy to see the implied connection between the spread of such rhetoric and an increased potential for the recruitment and radicalization of vulnerable individuals. As a result, it is important for non-state actors, including advocacy groups and the media, to engage in campaigns to counter white supremacist rhetoric and dispel associated conspiracy theories when such rhetoric threatens to enter or ingrain itself more deeply within the public square.

Sociological Phenomena: Social Movement Theory and Aggrieved Entitlement

The sociological umbrella term of social movement theory offers a number of compelling explanations, including relative deprivation theory and various forms of new social movement theory, for surges in WSE. Proponents of relative deprivation theory argue that "some social movements are born when certain people or certain groups of people in a society feel that they are deprived of a specific good, service or resource," thereby putting them "in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis some other group in that society." In contrast to this materialistic and economic-centric

approach, new social movement theories suggest that "motivators of collective action are rooted in politics, ideology and gender," while incorporating other identifies of collective identity like ethnicity and sexuality.[16] In the context of white supremacism, perceived gains, whether economic, legal or other, by groups that represent primary antagonists in white supremacist ideology (e.g., African Americans, Jews, and the LGBTQ community) could bolster the potential for recruitment and radicalization among whites who feel that such gains put them at a relative disadvantage and/or threaten their sense of collective identity. When such gains are perceived as being untenable (i.e., they represent an existential threat to a way of life or cultural identity) and relevant actors (i.e., the federal government) are perceived as being either unwilling or unable to address grievance claims, violence can be seen as a viable strategy to either maintain or return to a previous status quo. The operationalization of these theories, which have clear connections to topics like demography and inequality, can serve to breed resentment among impacted individuals against the federal government, which is the primary actor responsible for dealing with issues connected to these subject areas. This resentment can serve to increase the appeal of violence outside of the state apparatus among radicalized groups and individuals, substantiating the argument put forth by DHS that political polarization and poor economic conditions represent factors that can facilitate surges in WSE.

Under the umbrella of social movement theory, political process theory and resource mobilization theory also offer compelling explanations for the sociological causes of surges in WSE.[17] The former "treats social movements as a type of political movement in that the origins of a social movement are traced to the availability of political opportunities" while the latter "invokes the importance of the availability of suitable resources in the birth of a social movement."[18] In the context of white supremacism, political process theory suggests that a federal government that fails to adequately intervene to confront the threat posed by WSE or to discourage the normalization of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square provides the necessary political space for a surge in WSE. Resource mobilization theory suggests that the exploitation of new technologies (e.g., social media) that can facilitate the recruitment efforts of white supremacist groups and the radicalization of vulnerable individuals and that are generally difficult to regulate could also contribute to a surge in WSE. These two theories bolster the argument that inadequate intervention by the federal government and a growing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square can facilitate surges in WSE.

All the theories under the social movement theory umbrella interact with a sociological concept developed by Dr. Michael Kimmel known as "aggrieved entitlement." Kimmel's work, including *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era*, examines white men in the United States who perceive themselves as victims of poor economic conditions, changing social norms, and an increasingly diverse and egalitarian political culture. These men find themselves feeling emasculated, humiliated, and incapable of adapting to a country that they increasingly struggle to recognize.[19] These sentiments can synthesize into a response, referred to as aggrieved entitlement, that leaves white men more vulnerable to radicalization and the perpetration of violence, as perceived injustices continue to mount.[20] This sociological concept helps to explain what those belonging to the white supremacist movement mean when they issue calls to "take back our country" while also offering an unsettling interpretation of more ambiguous political declarations to make the country "great again."[21] The perceived erosion of "hegemonic masculinity" that

fuels the sense of aggrieved entitlement prevalent in the United States today, as it has in previous eras, proves conducive to the perpetration of many types of violence (e.g., domestic violence), while drawing in one form or another on all of the factors identified as having the potential to facilitate surges in WSE.[22]

This section has laid out a multi-tiered framework for explaining and forecasting surges in WSE in the United States. First, it provides the causal logic underlying four factors that have the potential to facilitate surges in WSE: growing political polarization, poor economic conditions, inadequate intervention from the federal government in response to the threat posed by WSE, and an increasing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square. It then describes a series of sociological phenomena, including four theories that fall under the social movement theory umbrella and Kimmel's concept of aggrieved entitlement, that these factors can operationalize and that prove conducive to the recruitment and radicalization of white supremacists. The following section conducts an analysis of whether and how the above-noted factors manifested during three previous periods in US history characterized by surges in WSE: Reconstruction, the 1920s and the Civil Rights Movement. In so doing, it seeks to substantiate this paper's framework for explaining surges in WSE so that this framework can later be applied to forecast whether the current threat posed by WSE will persist in the coming years.

Analyzing Previous Surges of White Supremacist Extremism

This section examines whether this paper's framework for explaining surges in WSE can be applied to three periods in US history characterized by this phenomenon: Reconstruction, the 1920s, and the Civil Rights Movement. If successful, this framework can be employed to analyze and forecast whether the growing prevalence of

WSE in the United States is likely to persist in the coming years.

Reconstruction

The Civil War left the United States deeply divided along political and racial lines, with the Reconstruction Act of 1867 effectively leading to the occupation of the South by federal troops for the next decade. The establishment of the Freedmen's Bureau and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 represented early federal initiatives to enforce the 13th Amendment and to counter the post-war backlash emanating from the former Confederate States, manifested by the passage of "black codes" by state legislatures and the KKK's emergence. The Reconstruction Act and the Enforcement Acts of 1870 and 1871 represented additional efforts from the federal government to uphold the Reconstruction Amendments (i.e., the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments) and to combat the growing threat posed by the KKK.

In addition to driving significant political backlash from the former Confederate States, the federal government's efforts to enforce Reconstruction Era policies in the South during the late 1860s and early 1870s provoked a violent backlash that represents the first surge in WSE in US history.[23] This phenomenon coincided with an economic depression that wreaked havoc on the South, which had yet to recover from the economic devastation brought about by the Civil War. The Compromise of 1877, through which Southern Democrats acknowledged the victory of Rutherford B. Hayes in the presidential election of 1876 in exchange for Hayes' commitment to withdraw remaining federal troops from the former Confederate States, marked the unofficial end of the federal government's intervention in the post-bellum South. While federal intervention played a critical role in driving the dissolution of the KKK by the 1870s, the Compromise of 1877 effectively ceded control of the South to the Democratic

Party, ensuring that racist policies and white supremacist rhetoric would remain omnipresent in the public square for the next century.[24]

This first surge in WSE occurred during a period characterized by intensifying political polarization and poor economic conditions, particularly in the Deep South, where the fledgling KKK found its primary base of support. This period also witnessed the mainstreaming of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square, including among politicians from the Democratic Party, which would dominate Southern politics through the mid-20th century. The federal government initially intervened heavily to combat the threat posed by WSE during this era, including through a decade-long military occupation and the Enforcement Acts of 1870 and 1871, which contributed to the KKK's dissolution.[25] However, the Compromise of 1877 effectively negated the need for an extensive KKK apparatus, demonstrating the federal government's mixed record with regard to intervention during this period.

1920s

The KKK achieved its highest level of influence in US history in the 1920s, when it transformed into a fraternal organization with several million members whose reach extended far beyond its traditional base of support in the Deep South. The surge in WSE that took place during this period represented both a means to enforce Jim Crow in the South, reaffirming the KKK's traditional opposition to racial equality, as well as a reaction to the changing social fabric of the United States brought about by immigration, as Catholics and Jews from Central and Eastern Europe arrived in significant numbers.[26] This second surge occurred during a period characterized by significant political polarization, as manifested by Prohibition, the rise of anarchism, and the KKK's growth in urban areas with significant immigrant populations. Growing economic inequality, exemplified by the excesses of the Roaring Twenties that eventually gave way to the Great Depression, also characterized this period.

Relevant federal intervention during this period largely served to accommodate the political and social goals of white supremacists. Specifically, the Immigration Act of 1924 established a quota system that placed heavy restrictions on the number of immigrants entering the United States from regions other than Western and Northern Europe. The KKK declined over the course of the 1930s as a result of internal power struggles, negative media coverage, the work of non-state actors like the NAACP, as well as the accommodating policies of the federal government.[27] However, white supremacist rhetoric continued to hold a prominent place in the public square during this period, as evidenced by the invectives hurled in the lead up to the presidential election of 1928 against Al Smith, the first Catholic presidential nominee from a major political party. Whereas Smith faced significant opposition, individuals with ties (both current and past) to the KKK successfully ran for federal office during this period, including Senator and future Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black.

This second surge in WSE took place during a period characterized by growing political polarization, born from concerns about issues like immigration, as well as growing economic inequality. This period also saw the continued normalization of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square, with the KKK reaching the height of its national influence and successfully running candidates for political office. Intervention from the federal government, much like that seen toward the end of Reconstruction, served to accommodate the political and social goals of white supremacists, with non-state actors like the media and advocacy groups taking on a more significant role in combatting the threat posed by WSE. A factor distinguishing this surge from those seen during Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement was a greater emphasis on religion, largely

as a result of the large flows of Catholic and Jewish immigrants entering the United States from Central and Eastern Europe during this period.[28]

Civil Rights Movement

Scholars attribute the surge in WSE that took place during the Civil Rights Movement, best manifested in the rebirth of the KKK, primarily as a reaction to the passage of two landmark pieces of legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. These laws banned discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, and abolished the Immigration Act of 1924's quota system that heavily favored Western and Northern Europeans, respectively. Largely seen as a reaction to the federal government's efforts to abolish Jim Crow and reshape an immigration system that comported with white nationalist ideology, this surge in WSE represents the first, and to date only, case where the federal government, primarily through Hoover's FBI, adequately intervened throughout the entire operative period to effectively combat the threat posed by WSE.

Like the previous two cases, this surge took place in a period characterized by growing political polarization, evidenced by GOP infighting that led to Barry Goldwater's nomination for president in 1964, the first successful use of the GOP's electoral "Southern Strategy" by Goldwater, and the riots that plagued the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. President Kennedy's New Frontier and President Johnson's Great Society initiatives sought to address the growing economic inequality that characterized the era while Senator Robert F. Kennedy's much publicized tours of Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta in the late 1960s exposed the scourge of poverty in the United States. Segregationist Governor George Wallace's 1968 presidential campaign, which was one of the most successful third-party campaigns in US history and the last

to win a state (five in total), represents but one example of the pervasiveness and popular support for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square during this period, particularly in the Deep South.

The surge in WSE that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement coincided with both growing political polarization and economic inequality as well as the growing pervasiveness of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square. Much like during Reconstruction, action from the federal government (i.e., legislation) during this period served to drive this surge in WSE, though later intervention, primarily through the "FBI's covert action program called COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE," contributed to the KKK's decline.[29] Following this project's framework, the presence of these factors presumably operationalized the social movement theories described above while exacerbating the sense of aggrieved entitlement felt among some white males, particularly in the Deep South, during this period.

Growing political polarization, poor economic conditions, and a permissive climate for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square all characterized the three periods in US history during which surges in WSE have occurred. Though various types of early federal intervention arguably played a role in spurring these surges in two of the three cases explored above, intervention during the latter half of Reconstruction and over the course of the Civil Rights Movement served to effectively address the threat posed by WSE, demonstrating the federal government's capacity to effectively address this phenomenon when it chooses to do so. This historical analysis appears to substantiate this piece's framework for explaining and forecasting surges in WSE, suggesting that it can be applied to determine whether the growing prevalence of WSE in the United States today is likely to persist in the coming years. While there is no way to disaggregate the individual impact that each factor has in facilitating surges in WSE,

it is clear that the federal government and other relevant stakeholders should be wary of the potential for surges in WSE when these factors are concurrently present. The following section examines whether these factors are in fact present in the United States today in order to forecast whether the recent growth of WSE is likely to persist in the coming years.

Forecasting The Future of White Supremacist Extremism

WSE, as measured by the proportion of extremist-related violent crime perpetrated by white supremacists and the number of operational white supremacist groups, has grown increasingly prevalent in the United States over the last decade, with an observable uptick in this phenomenon since the period leading up to the 2016 presidential election. Employing this piece's framework for analyzing and forecasting surges in WSE, this section explores whether the factors present during previous surges in WSE in the United States are operational today, in order to inform a more accurate estimate of whether the current increased prevalence of WSE is likely to persist in the coming years.

Political Polarization and Poor Economic Conditions

The DHS report on the threat posed by rightwing extremism assessed "that a number of economic and political factors are driving a resurgence in rightwing extremist recruitment and radicalization activity" along with a "more pronounced threat from lone wolves and small terrorist cells than in the past."[30] While the US economy has rebounded as a whole since the Great Recession, economic inequality has only deepened over the last decade, while job displacement driven by factors like automation and offshoring has had a particularly negative impact on predominantly white regions of the country (i.e., the Rust Belt) that have traditionally been dependent on manufacturing jobs. Additionally, the sensitive political issues

identified by the DHS as having the potential to bolster rightwing radicalization and recruitment, including illegal immigration, deteriorating race relations, and ongoing debates about gun control, represent increasingly divisive issues in American political life today.[31] The ousting of a significant number of moderate GOP congressmembers in the 2018 midterm elections, along with the growing prominence of self-proclaimed Democratic Socialists within the Democratic Party, suggests that political polarization will only intensify in the coming years.

Inadequate Intervention by the Federal Government

The Obama administration faced criticism for adopting a markedly slow approach toward addressing the threat posed by WSE. This approach was possibly the result of the controversy generated by the 2009 DHS report, as well as the emergence of higher profile extremist threats abroad (e.g., ISIS).[32] Two examples of the slow-moving nature of the administration's approach include Attorney General Eric Holder's decision to wait until 2014 to announce the reconvening of the Department of Justice's Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee, which had been on a 13-year hiatus, as well as the administration's delay in establishing the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Grant Program, which addresses the threat posed by various forms of domestic extremism, until 2016.[33] The Trump administration has indicated that it does not intend to continue supporting the CVE Grant Program after its funding runs out in July 2019 and recently dissolved the branch of the DHS' Office of Intelligence and Analysis that "focused on the threat from homegrown violent extremists and domestic terrorists."[34] President Trump's continued equivocation regarding the violence perpetrated by white supremacists at the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville in August 2017 only serves to embolden white supremacists and encourage the perpetration of WSE. Recognizing

that the Trump administration has not taken any substantive steps to bolster the federal government's capacity to prevent and respond to WSE since it came to power, these policy decisions collectively suggest that we are again living during a period in which the federal government is abdicating its responsibility to address the threat posed by WSE.[35]

Permissiveness for White Supremacist Rhetoric in the Public Square

Since President Obama's election in 2008, white supremacist rhetoric has grown increasingly visible in the public square, facilitated by the white supremacist movement's aptitude for exploiting social media. The 2009 DHS report states that "rightwing extremists have capitalized on related racial and political prejudices in expanded propaganda campaigns, thereby reaching out to a wider audience of potential sympathizers." Since then-candidate Trump launched his presidential campaign, the rising profile of media outlets like Breitbart News and figures like Stephen Bannon has coincided with increasing public displays by white supremacist groups, "signaling a new willingness by racist groups to put themselves front and center on the American public stage."[36] The ADL highlights one example of this phenomenon in a recent report that observes that "white supremacists have been actively targeting US college campuses since January 2016," including for recruitment efforts, with the number of such incidents (e.g., "the distribution of racist, anti-Semitic and Islamophobic fliers, stickers, banners and posters") rising by 77 percent in the last year alone.[37] White supremacist groups have become increasingly savvy at exploiting social media over the past decade, with machine-learning analysis of alt-right social media activity suggesting that "the entire white nationalist community is embracing an increasingly extreme ideology" in the aftermath of the 2016 US presidential election, and "the rate of radicalization is increasing exponentially."[38]

Projections and Trends

Given that political polarization shows no signs of abating for the foreseeable future, economic inequality is deepening and forces like social media continue to facilitate the spread of white supremacist rhetoric in the public square, this paper's framework suggest that the growing prevalence of WSE in the United States is likely to persist, if not intensify, in the coming years.[39] A large-scale tragedy that raises public consciousness about the threat posed by WSE has the potential to trigger a robust response from the federal government, as was seen in the aftermath of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. Absent such an event, it appears unlikely that the current administration will take any substantive steps toward addressing the growing threat posed by WSE. The federal government's continued abdication of leadership on this issue will only serve to increase the likelihood that the growing prevalence of WSE will persist. To reduce this likelihood, state and local governments, advocacy groups, religious organizations, media outlets and other non-state actors will have to take on a more substantive role in addressing the threat posed by WSE than is currently the case.[40]

In addition to the presence in the United States of all of the factors included within this project's framework for explaining and forecasting surges in WSE, demographic trends and public opinion polling suggest that some sectors of the US population could be predisposed to the operationalization of some of the sociological phenomena detailed above. Census projections suggest that the United States will become a majority-minority country within the next half century, with whites becoming a minority of the population under 18 as soon as 2020.[41] After having represented approximately 80 percent of the US population in 1976, today "only 43 percent of Americans identify as white and Christian," while the white evangelical Protestant, mainline Protestant and Catholic populations have witnessed precipitous

declines over the past decade.[42] In polling taken in the lead up to the 2016 presidential election, approximately 70 percent of likely voters supporting President Trump said that "American society and way of life has changed for the worse since the 1950s." A majority (56 percent) of all white Americans, approximately two-thirds of white working-class Americans (65 percent) and almost three quarters of white evangelical Protestants (74 percent) shared this view. Opinions on this question diverged sharply along racial, class-based and religious lines.[43]

Several important conclusions can be drawn from these demographic and public polling trends: (1) the United States will be a majority-minority country in the near future; (2) white Christians will never again represent a majority of the US population; (3) a significant proportion of the white population of the United States believes that the last seventy years, which saw significant moves toward political equality and economic opportunity for a wide variety of minority populations, has adversely changed "American society and way of life;" and (4) among some sectors of the white population, there appears to be fear and resentment of America's increasingly multiracial and multicultural future.[44] This trend, made more explicit by increasing diversity in US colleges and universities, businesses, and at the highest levels of government, represents the manifestation of the worst fears of white supremacists, whose ideology of victimhood is rooted in the belief that whites face increasing societal discrimination. As this perceived discrimination increases, white supremacist extremists are more likely to reach the conclusion that "extreme measures" are necessary to make up for ground lost to groups like African Americans and Jews.[45] Consequently, it is safe to assume that without a robust response from the federal government, recruitment rates of individuals who have fears and/or resentments about the future of the United States and radicalization rates of individuals who already adhere to white supremacist ideology will increase in response to this perceived existential threat to an increasingly less visible "American way of life."[46]

Policy Recommendations

Given the socioeconomic and political climate in the United States today, it is imperative that the federal government engage in a robust policy response to stem the threat posed by WSE. To directly address this issue, the current administration should first take several steps to reverse some of its decisions related to combatting domestic extremism. One such step should involve restoring previous levels of support for the CVE Grant Program, which provided significant funding to groups like Life After Hate that operate at the community level and engage in critical work to "help people leave neo-Nazi and other white supremacy groups."[47] The administration should also restore the now-defunct DHS "Terror Intelligence Unit," which conducted critical work involving "sharing information with state and local law enforcement to help them protect their communities from these (homegrown violent extremist and domestic terrorist) threats."[48] Another possible step is the creation of a domestic terrorism statute, which does not currently exist and could potentially serve to better deter the perpetration of acts of WSE in the future.[49] On a broader level, efforts to address the factors that this framework suggests facilitate surges in WSE would also prove useful to combatting this threat over the long-term, whether that be through initiatives that address unemployment among vulnerable youth populations, efforts to cooperate with major tech companies to reduce the presence of white supremacist propaganda on social media forums, and even conscious decisions by politicians to temper their rhetoric on divisive political issues like illegal immigration.

Conclusion

The threat posed by WSE in the United States appears likely to persist, if

not intensify, in the coming years for several reasons. First, per this project's framework for analyzing and forecasting surges in WSE, four factors that characterized the periods during which three previous surges in WSE occurred in the United States are again present today: (1) growing political polarization; (2) poor economic conditions; (3) inadequate intervention from the federal government in response to the threat posed by WSE; and (4) an increasing permissiveness for white supremacist rhetoric in the public square. Second, the presence of these factors, combined with growing fear and resentment about the future of the country among some segments of the white population of the United States, has the potential to operationalize and exacerbate various sociological phenomena, including aggrieved entitlement, that prove conducive to facilitating white supremacist recruitment and radicalization. Third, inevitable demographic trends in the United States represent an inherent and existential threat to white supremacist ideology.

The federal government is the only actor in the United States with the resources and coordination capacity to effectively combat the threat posed by WSE, and it has successfully done so in the past. The threat of WSE has persisted in the United States over the last century and a half, at certain times manifesting itself very publicly, and at other times dwelling in the shadows. As WSE again rears its ugly head in the United States, the federal government, in cooperation with the private sector, advocacy groups and other non-state actors, must employ a robust policy response to effectively counter this threat. Failing to do so would represent a serious challenge to US national security and societal cohesion in the long-term.

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Promised The Moon (And Fell Short)

A review of Harlan Ullman's *Anatomy Of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts* (Annapolis, Maryland: The Naval Institute Press, 2017)

Martin Skold

This article provides a review of Harlan Ullman's recent work, Anatomy Of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts. *Although Ullman's points about the sources of US ineffectiveness are well taken, more can ultimately be said. The more basic sources of US failure in the Global War on Terrorism are unrealistic and mutually incompatible policy goals that cannot be fixed by US governmental reform but require fundamental changes in discourse and expectations.*

Whether because the American world order is in crisis, or simply because enough time has passed, the last decade has seen a long list of works attempting to account for the errors and shortcomings of American foreign policy. Harlan Ullman's 2017 book, *Anatomy Of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts*, is a useful contribution to the genre. Its critique of American policy failure is insightful, and its recommendations are sound. What should be noted, however, is that all its recommendations are futile if they fail to address a foreign policy that pursues contradictory objectives and sometimes simply asks the impossible. This article focuses primarily on an analysis of the Iraq War, and its surrounding offshoots and policy dilemmas, as an example of the limitations of process-driven analysis of the type Ullman provides when ultimate goals and policy coherence are not addressed. What applies to Iraq can easily apply to the other post-2001 wars that Ullman discusses and, indeed, directly impacts analysis of them.

Ullman, a defense consultant and former naval officer who has held numerous key positions in the US Department of Defense, is well-suited to the position of strategic critic, and he punctuates his argument with amusing anecdotes about his life in the military and policy world that make the book an enjoyable read. His thesis is that a direct line runs from the traumatic experience of Vietnam (where he served) through America's various foreign military adventures in the post-Cold War world, and ultimately to America's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq which, however contentious, have fallen short of expectations. Ullman identifies several longstanding problems that have contributed to these failures, including a defense policy process that produces a "hollow" military underequipped for the missions to which it is committed and overextended globally, a lack of regional and strategic knowledge that translates to an inability to accomplish goals in areas of operation outside the West, and a failure by high officials to consider the totality of circumstances in strategic thinking that results in poor decision-making.[1] It is difficult to disagree with this assessment, and Ullman produces an eloquent, often amusing, and inevitably vexing argument.

However, the central question merits further analysis at a point where critics, including Ullman, tend to break off: the definition of victory itself, which this article contends is actually where the problem begins.

Ullman senses some of this when he notes that a major problem with American strategy in such circumstances is an inability to consider the situation from

all angles and with an eye toward all outcomes, as well as when he notes (unobjectionably) that the U.S. needs to develop the technocratic expertise necessary to evaluate unfamiliar situations in foreign conflicts.[2] But the unfortunate truth is that strategy and "winning" (the attainment of strategic goals) are only meaningful concepts if one explains what winning would entail. The problem with American failure in Middle Eastern wars is that it not only fails to align means with ends, but also does not even comprehend the incompatibility (in real terms) of many of the ends sought. Every work that looks for the answer to the question of American military failure in its military strategy and not in its policy is therefore missing a large part of the problem.

Ullman's ultimate focus is the disappointing outcome in the U.S.' wars in the greater Middle East since 2001, to which much of his narrative leads. On this point it is crucial to step outside the question of means and instead examine ends. Iraq, the costliest of the U.S.' post-9/11 wars and one to which Ullman devotes significant space, can serve as an example for this analysis. Briefly, critiques such as Ullman's assume that the problem lies in the way wars such as Iraq have been conducted—typically drawing a line, as Ullman does, from past American failures in places such as Vietnam to current American failures in Iraq—rather than what was sought and whether the means used could ever achieve it.[3] On this point, therefore, before one can even address the bureaucratic problems Ullman identifies, it is necessary to ask whether Iraq was "winnable" at all given the victory conditions assigned to it. Inasmuch as the related problems with Syria and the rise of ISIS, which Ullman also discusses, have their origin in the disappointing outcome in Iraq, this analysis can address policy toward those conflicts as well.[4]

Where Iraq was concerned, the US invasion was sold to the public in part over fear of a state-sponsored 9/11-style attack using weapons of mass destruction

(WMD). Primarily, however, it grew out of existing US commitments and entanglements. The U.S. had a longstanding dispute with Iraq over its refusal to submit to sufficient inspections to satisfy the U.S. and others that it was not developing nuclear weapons or retaining raw nuclear material stockpiles, and the war was the means to resolve it. The sanctions regime the U.S. had imposed to punish Iraq for this refusal was breaking down—unsurprisingly, nominal US partner states were far more willing than the U.S. to make money by allowing their citizens to do business with Iraq.[5] Consequently, the US invasion was not primarily about terrorism but about enforcing a drastic counterproliferation policy. While most Iraq War proponents stopped short of calling for an immediate invasion of Iran, calls for Iranian regime change or some other program designed to neutralize Iran frequently emanated from the neoconservatism that backed the Iraq War and were driven by a similar set of fears regarding Iran's nuclear ambitions and capabilities.[6]

This conception of American interest—avoiding nuclear proliferation by Middle Eastern "rogue states" at all cost—failed to consider the overall situation. In obsessing over proliferation by "rogue states," it overlooked the possibility of a regional nuclear arms race—in particular, the possibility that Saudi Arabia and Turkey, both of which had avenues by which to obtain the necessary materials, might go nuclear for reasons of their own.[7] This was in part because the latter were construed (perhaps questionably, given all that followed) as US allies. But in any case, the focus was on eliminating hostile Middle Eastern states–in particular, Iraq—that threatened to acquire arsenals whose existence the U.S. could not tolerate. This policy also served the interests of Israel, the U.S.' closest regional partner, which benefited from the elimination of major state adversaries seeking nuclear arsenals.

Regardless, though, this focus on counterproliferation and the elimination

of hostile potential proliferators ran directly counter to the mission of suppressing the global Salafist jihadist movement (the Sunni Islamic fundamentalist movement to which Osama Bin Laden, Al Qaeda, and ISIS belong or belonged). Smashing Iraq meant creating a giant security black hole in the "Sunni Triangle" into which Al Qaeda would plunge and from which ISIS would eventually emerge. If the U.S. had gone forward with smashing Iran as well as Iraq, it might have had still less to fear regarding a regional nuclear build-up, but it would have also destroyed the power that had the least to lose and the most to gain from fighting Sunni fundamentalist militants. And it likely would have done so at the behest of Saudi Arabia, which aggressively proselytizes militant Salafism and uses conflicts such as Iraq as a safety valve for its own extremists, effectively ensuring a war of indefinite duration.[8] In short, counterproliferation and support for Israel (which now openly works with Saudi Arabia against Iran) won out over the more immediate imperative of suppressing Sunni extremism.

The problem was not, therefore, even the practical one of restoring order in a hostile environment after deposing an enemy dictator. It was that the U.S. wanted its counterproliferation cake and wanted to eat it in counterterrorism form. To this must also be added a belief—sincerely held among at least some Iraq War proponents—that the Middle East could be democratized within a short time and that this would somehow defuse support for, at once, Iran, Salafism, anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism, and so on.[9] Among the latter advocates, few, if any, seem to have contemplated the prospect that democracy might give voice to those on the opposite side of any of the questions just named.

Therefore, the U.S. was trying to suppress pro-Iranian Iraqis who were fighting Salafists, pro-Salafi Iraqis who were fighting Iran-backed groups, multiple regional constituencies opposed to a united democratic Iraq, Saddam regime dead-enders, and on, and on, while supporting a largely imagined community of pro-American, Israel-tolerant, anti-Iranian, anti-Salafist democrats whose existence in any quantity could not be documented. One does not need to look deep into the US national security bureaucracy and policy process, as Ullman does, to see the problem. The problem was that the U.S. was both supporting a phantom and making an enemy of all. Its policy demanded mutually incompatible outcomes given the constraints of the political factions that were involved. The U.S. did not "win" in Iraq because winning involved outcomes that could not occur together occurring together. Whatever it achieved, it was thus doomed to disappointment. This overshadows any question of counterinsurgency doctrine implemented or neglected, or even any realistic resource shortfall. It was a problem of ends, not tactics or strategy.

Everything that followed from Iraq—including war in neighboring Syria, the rise of ISIS and its metastasis across the Islamic world, and US indecision over Iran's nuclear program, all of which Ullman discusses—can be seen as an outgrowth of this fundamental lack of policy compatibility.[10] As noted, the U.S. could not suppress ISIS and contain Iran simultaneously, and this had follow-on repercussions for America's wars in the Middle East and its broader regional policy.

Space precludes a similar analysis of Afghanistan, which Ullman peripherally addresses, but a similar objection could apply.[11] Suffice it to say that in Afghanistan—a bigger country than Iraq geographically and demographically, with less literacy, lower income, worse infrastructure, a long list of entrenched cultural customs abhorrent to Westerners, and much more forbidding terrain—the U.S. sought, using less money and fewer troops, to create a democracy through which a long list of woes exacerbated by decades of conflict could be ameliorated all at the same time, even as the U.S. was working, at many points, with the very warlords-turned-politicians who

had perpetrated all of the crimes it sought to eradicate. The problem was not that the U.S. was not clever, agile, attuned to local customs, or properly organized bureaucratically, nor that it was somehow outfought or outwitted. It was that the U.S. had set a list of goals that were practically impossible to accomplish with the time and resources allotted, and in many cases were mutually incompatible.[12]

Ullman argues at the end that US Middle East policy is only part of a larger whole and that competition with Russia and China creates competing demands on scarce resources as well.[13] But here, again, the issue with regard to US policy is not merely "how?" but "what?" The U.S. will have to pick and choose which outcomes it wishes to pursue, since it cannot have everything and certainly cannot focus on everything.

Ullman ends his book with a call for "sound strategic thinking" that "understand[s] . . . the fundamental forces that are in play," which he crystallizes into three major factors: the tendency of US adversaries to employ asymmetrical warfare as a counter to American power, the relative cost-effectiveness of this form of warfare, and the "strategic linkages" between conflicts that policy must address.[14] These last, however, must include the inherent incompatibility of our unlimited and often utopian objectives that cannot be achieved at once or even at all, and pull American resources in opposite directions. Ullman offers a list of reforms for the executive branch to improve decision-making and policy coordination that are both urgent and far from objectionable.[15] But the very first thing the U.S. must do is determine what it wants to prioritize to avoid the trap of pursuing multiple long-shot objectives at once all over. That is partly a question for Congress but principally one for the voters. One fears that, at least in the current environment, little consensus will emerge.

A common critique of American incompetence or naiveté abroad (depending on how it is spun) is that the nation that went to the moon could not solve the problems of far-flung broken societies. But it might be more accurate to mix the metaphor. In the greater Middle East, the U.S. has shot the moon and fallen short. It has done so because it has wanted the moon—and promised the moon to everyone who could hear.[16]

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Endnotes

1. Harlan K. Ullman, *Anatomy of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts* (Annapolis, Maryland: The Naval Institute Press, 2017), *passim*, but particularly pp. vi-viii, 1–3, 24–32, 86–9, 227–41.

2. E.g. Ullman, 2017, p. 30.

3. Ullman is admittedly discussing all of the wars the U.S. has been engaged in since Vietnam, but he is primarily concerned with the major ones that the U.S. has waged since 2001, of which Iraq has been the costliest and the focus of U.S. efforts. See Ullman, 2017, pp. 24 and 30, where he draws a direct line from Vietnam to specifically Iraq and Afghanistan. The discussion of the War on Terrorism writ large occupies essentially a quarter of Ullman's work (pp. 145–198) and is the point to which his previous discussion of U.S. national security policy dysfunction leads. It is this author's contention that the problem of "winning" is not due to the failure of the national security bureaucracy or decision-making process, as Ullman contends, but to a concept of "winning" divorced from political reality and frequently from other victory conditions themselves. Iraq is, for space reasons, used as an example for this analysis, but what applies to the analysis of Iraq could apply—as the subsequent discussion of Afghanistan also indicates—to the other U.S. wars as well.

4. C.f. Ullman, 2017, pp. 169–70, 177–9, 183–7, 198–200 for his discussion of the relationship of Iraq to the wars in the surrounding states. It is contended here that the problem with Iraq *and* follow-on conflicts for the U.S. was simply that its goals regarding Iraq and the surrounding region were incompatible, and no amount of reform would solve this.

5. The best-reasoned case from the pro-war side as it pertained to the arms control regime then in place was probably articulated by Kenneth Pollack, "Next Stop Baghdad," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2002, available online from https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iraq/2002–03–01/next-stop-baghdad (accessed 3 December 2018).

6. The subject is contentious, but regardless of one's ultimate analysis, it is fair to say that many, if not most, neoconservatives viewed Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as of a piece where advocacy of U.S. preventive wars was concerned. The famous "Axis of Evil" section in President George W. Bush's 2002 State Of The Union speech elided them ("Text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address," *The Washington Post*, 29 January 2002, available online from https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/sou012902.htm?noredirect=on [accessed 16 May 2019]), and neoconservative commentary frequently put them together. For a commentary and a sampling of neoconservative arguments, see Conor Friedersdorf, "The Real Radicals Of The Iraq War: Its Proponents," *TheAtlantic.com*, 6 March 2013, available online from https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/03/the-real-radicals-of-the-iraq-war-its-proponents/273751/ (accessed 16 May 2019).

7. Whether the issue was avoiding a general regional nuclearization or merely keeping weapons out of the hands of states hostile to the U.S. was a major question at the time, with the Bush Administration solidly of the latter view, as was chronicled by Jessica Tuchman Mathews, "Reinvigorate Nuclear Nonproliferation," *The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 10 September 2007, available online from https://carnegieendowment.org/2007/09/10/reinvigorate-nuclear-nonproliferation-pub-19565 (accessed 3 December 2018). Originally published in *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, Issue 6 (Fall 2007). Available online from https://web.archive.org/web/20140209152345/http://www.democracyjournal.org/6/6556.php (Accessed 3 December 2018). The former view was articulated in a Carnegie report partially authored by Mathews—c.f. George Perkovich, Jessica T. Mathews, Joseph Cirincione, Rose Gottemoeller, and Jon B. Wolfsthal, *Universal Compliance: A Strategy for Nuclear Security*, *The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2007. But if the question was the nuclear capability of all, and not just some, states in the region, then this would have encompassed U.S. allies—who might not act as expected—as well as enemies.

  On this, the Saudi potential for a nuclear arsenal is extensively documented and occasionally alluded to by Saudi officials who want to get the U.S.' attention. C.f. Aryn Baker, "Saudi Arabia Considers Nuclear Weapons After Iran's Geneva Deal," *Time.com*, 26 November 2013, available online from http://world.time.com/2013/11/26/

saudi-arabia-considers-nuclear-weapons-after-irans-geneva-deal/ (Accessed 3 December 2018). Turkey's potential for nuclearization has been discussed in the open media as of late—c.f. Wayne McLean, "Commentary: Watchful Turkey may go nuclear soon," *Channel NewsAsia* (International Edition), 26 July 2018, available online from https://www.channelnewsasia.com/ news/commentary/turkey-recep-erdogan-may-go-nuclear-10537998 (accessed 3 December 2018). It is analyzed in a Carnegie Endowment report from 2012—Sinan Ülgen, "Turkey and the Bomb," The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: *The Carnegie Papers*, February 2012. Available online from https://carnegieendowment.org/files/turkey_bomb.pdf (accessed 3 December 2018).

8.   A large portion of the munitions supplied to the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces that suppressed ISIS were of Iranian origin. C.f., e.g., Hamza Hendawi and Qassim Abdul-Zahra, "Iran eclipses U.S. as Iraq's ally in fight against militants." *MilitaryTimes.com*, 12 January 2015, available online from https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2015/01/12/iran-eclipses-u-s-as-iraq-s-ally-in-fight-against-militants/ (accessed 3 December 2018). Saudi Arabia's proselytization of Salafism is well known, but has been documented, e.g., by the *Washington Post* foreign affairs analyst Josh Rogin—Josh Rogin, "America's Allies Are Funding ISIS," *The Daily Beast*, 14 June 2014, available online from https://www.thedailybeast.com/ americas-allies-are-funding-isis (accessed 3 December 2018).

The increasingly overt nature of the Israeli-Saudi relationship was recently discussed by the BBC—Jonathan Marcus, "Israel and Saudi Arabia: The relationship emerging into the open," *BBC.com*, 3 April 2018, available online from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43632905 (accessed 3 December 2018).

9.   A critique of neoconservative democracy promotion, as it related to prominent neoconservatives' arguments concerning Middle Eastern democracy and the famous Democratic Peace Thesis, was provided in 2007 by Piki Ish-Shalom in ""The Civilization of Clashes": Misapplying the Democratic Peace in the Middle East" (*Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 122, No. 4 [Winter, 2007/2008], pp. 533–554), and can serve as a representative review of neoconservative arguments on this subject. The project crystallized as the famous "Freedom Agenda" articulated in President George W. Bush's 2004 State Of The Union Address (c.f. "Text of President Bush's 2004 State of the Union Address," *The Washington Post*, 20 January 2004, available online from https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/transcripts/bushtext_012004.html [accessed 16 May 2019]). Suffice it to say that, whatever was intended, the subsequent 2011 Arab Spring led to nominally pro-democratic uprisings in multiple Middle Eastern states, few of which led to democracy and two of which—Libya and Syria—led instead to internal conflict.

10.   For Ullman's commentary, see Ullman, 2017, pp. 176–9, 183–7.

11.   Ullman, 2017, pp. 153–5, 179–83.

12.   For the under-resourcing of Afghanistan, see, among countless examples, David Rohde and David E. Sanger, "How A Good War Went Bad," *The New York Times*, 12 August 2007, available online from https://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/12/world/asia/12afghan.html (accessed 16 May 2019). For U.S. cooperation with thuggish local warlords, see for example Kelley Vlahos, "America's Warlords in Afghanistan, *TheAmericanConservative.com*, 20 March 2015, available online from https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/americas-warlords-in-afghanistan/ (accessed 16 May 2019). Space precludes an exhaustive list of instances in which the U.S. demanded more of Afghanistan than it could provide or undermined its own policy there. To pick a prominent one almost at random, the U.S. drug eradication effort ran against its effort to win Afghan hearts and minds given the lucrative nature and essential irreplaceability of the Afghan opium crop. (For a discussion of belated U.S. efforts from 2009 onward to begin changing this policy, see Azmat Khan, "Why Eradication Won't Solve Afghanistan's Poppy Problem," *PBS.org*, 3 January 2012, available online from https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/why-eradication-wont-solve-afghanistans-poppy-problem/ [accessed 16 May 2019]. For a counterargument in favor of continuing this failed policy that never quite ended, that invokes long-past Taliban successes in opium eradication—and that discounts the latter's draconian tactics, entrenchment, and cultural rapport—see John P. Walters and David W. Murray, "Kill All The Poppies," *ForeignPolicy.com*, 22 November 2017, available online

from https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/22/kill-all-the-poppies-afghanistan-heroin-taliban/ [accessed 16 May 2019].) One might note that the U.S. has experience both with stockpiling medical supplies and paying farmers not to grow crops, and could have applied that experience in Afghanistan in lieu of alienating large sections of the population.

13. Ullman, 2017, pp. 236–7.
14. Ullman, 2017, pp. 230–1.
15. Ullman, 2017, pp. 233–8.