INFLUENCING TERRORISTS' WMD ACQUISITION AND USE CALCULUS

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SECTION 3:  
U.S. RESPONSES TO NEXT GENERATION WMD AND WME TERRORISM

PART 2  
INFLUENCING TERRORISTS’ WMD ACQUISITION AND USE CALCULUS

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The lack of a strategy and supporting actions aimed at influencing terrorists’ calculations of whether or not to seek to acquire or then to escalate to the use of WMD, as already argued Section 3, Part 1, is a major gap in the overall set of U.S. counter-terrorist activities. Within the analytic community, moreover, there is an emerging conceptual consensus on how to address this gap. There also remains considerable skepticism about the ultimate effectiveness of any such efforts.

Against this backdrop, the following discussion first sets out a set of concepts that could guide a U.S. strategy of to influence the WMD acquisition or use calculus of many different terrorist groups and their component entities as well as outside aiders and abettors. The ultimate goal of that strategy is clear: to affect terrorists’ assessment of such things as whether WMD use would be smart (in terms of their own goals), feasible and an effective use of resources (in light of available alternatives), and/or justifiable and legitimate (in terms of their own ideology and vision). What to term this strategy, however, is more uncertain. As argued below, deterrence is too narrow a term. During the course of this study, the term of “influencing” was often used instead, including in a workshop held on this subject. However, influencing may well suggest to great an ability to impact terrorists’ thinking. For that reason, the discussion that follows uses the term influence.

Building on this initial discussion of key concepts, this part then applies that conceptual model to a series of cases, from the al-Qaeda core leadership to outsider aiders and abettors of a possible terrorist acquisition and use of WMD. In so doing, the analysis also provides an assessment of how the prospects for successful influencing efforts likely would vary across the most prominent different cases.

Up front, two prefatory points are in order. First, it bears emphasis that any such influencing strategy should be viewed as only one element of an overall U.S. and global

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1 The following discussion draws on the author’s ongoing work in this area, including an earlier monograph for the National Defense University. It also has benefited from interaction with Dr. Bradley Roberts of the Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, VA, who has been a key figure in these recent efforts to think through the issue of deterring WMD terrorism.
strategy to counter the threat of terrorist escalation to the use of WMD – but a potentially important and as yet undeveloped element. Second, as discussed more fully below, the following approach assumes that there will be an element of rational calculation, a weighing of costs and benefits in any decision by terrorist groups, their component entities, or their outside aiders and abettors to seek to acquire or eventually escalate to WMD violence. That element of rationality may be more or less, depending on the group and the individual. It also will be influenced by the particular lenses through which a group or its leaders view the world. Other factors also may play a role in any WMD decisions. Nonetheless, past terrorist behavior, including that of the most dangerous threat, al-Qaeda in all of its facets, warrants making this assumption that there often will be an element of rational calculation as the basis for exploring the elements of an influencing strategy.2

1. SOME ANALYTIC CONCEPTS

The conceptual model of how to seek to influence terrorists’ WMD acquisition and use calculus can be summarized by a series of propositions.3 These propositions are:

- Think in terms of actions aimed at influencing terrorists’ calculus concerning acquisition or use of WMD – rather than in terms of deterrence per se;
- Recognize that there are many different WMD-related choices and decisions made by terrorists as well as by outside aiders and abettors that any such strategy should seek to influence – not simply the final choice of whether or not to escalate to the use of chemical, biological, radiological, or a nuclear weapon;
- Disaggregate the “whom” that is to be influenced, in effect, recognizing that there are many different terrorist groups, that each group is comprised of different types of members or component entities, and that there also are external individuals whose involvement could be essential to facilitate a successful terrorist WMD attack;
- Identify the specific leverage points that could be used in an attempt to influence each of the different groups and their component entities as well as outsider aiders and abettors;
- Disaggregate, as needed, among the types of WMD in crafting any influencing strategy and in evaluating the prospects for success;
- Think broadly in terms of “who” does the influencing – not simply governments;
- Be prepared to use both soft and hard power, words and deeds;
- Seek to identify and begin by implementing potential cross-cutting influencing actions that would impact “terrorist targets” among the full set of groups and their component entities.

Consider each of these concepts in turn.

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2 See the discussion in Section 2, Part 2 of the “rationale for instrumental violence” of selected terrorist groups.

3 The discussion that follows draws partly on a small session on “Shaping Terrorists WMD Use Calculus” held at SAIC on July 29, 2007. That session included experts with backgrounds in strategic analysis, counter-terrorism, and particular terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda. This discussion also has benefited from the reaction to an initial version by participants in the Roundtable Series on WMD Terrorism.
1.1 INFLUENCING TERRORISTS WMD CALCULUS

U.S. and global actions should aim at influencing the overall terrorist WMD calculus regarding the perceived costs and benefits of escalating from more traditional “bombs and bullets” terrorism to the use of WMD (including whether or not to seek to acquire WMD in the first place). This emphasis on influencing calculations encompasses the concept of deterrence – whether by threat of punishment that the costs of action would outweigh the gains or by denying terrorists the benefits sought in any number of ways. But the concept of influencing differs in two important respects from these more traditional concepts. On the one hand, the concept of influencing terrorists’ calculus points toward a broader set of actions that might be pursued than simply punishment or denial. On the other hand, the concept of influencing opens up a wider range of terrorist actions that could or should be subject to attempted influence than only a “yes-no, binary” decision whether or not to use WMD. Indeed, to the extent possible, such influencing efforts should seek to influence terrorist choices – and those of outside aiders and abettors – as early as possible in the chain of decisions leading up to a use or not use choice.

1.2 FOCUS ON MANY DIFFERENT TERRORIST WMD-RELATED CHOICES

More specifically, some of the other choices that an influencing strategy could seek to influence are identified in the accompanying text box. They range from an initial choice to seek to acquire WMD up to various choices tied to how to carry out a WMD attack. The two most critical choices would be the initial decision to seek WMD and the decision to use it. But other decisions also would have an important impact on the nature of the specific WMD threat, including the prospects for successful interdiction or consequence management as well as its ultimate magnitude. While the discussion that follows focuses most on the decisions to acquire or use, it returns at times to some of these other dimensions of influencing terrorists’ WMD calculus.

This emphasis on influencing terrorists’ WMD calculus rests on several assumptions that should be made explicit. Consistent with what is known about the goals of today’s terrorists groups, especially al-Qaeda, it assumes that those goals go beyond simply “killing Americans.” Rather, terrorist use of violence – as argued more extensively in Section 2 of this report – is intended to serve certain goals and values. There is a rational calculus at work – if only in terms of the internal logic of the group, its leaders, and its members. Thus, the pursuit or use of WMD is likely to reflect at least in part some view of costs and benefits, of the impact of use on the organization’s goals.

This is not to say that costs-benefits calculations will be the only factor involved or in some instances, the most important one. As also discussed above, group dynamics, external socio-political influences, organizational survival, and individual leadership psychology may be all (or in part) involved in this decision. Escalation to use of WMD also could sometimes be
opportunistic, the result of a capability becoming available or of necessity, vice any weighing of costs and gains. But there are sufficient grounds to believe that there often would be an element of rational calculation in terrorist decisions about WMD use to warrant thinking about influencing that calculus – even if the available leverage points and means of impacting them may or may not be sufficient in specific instances to affect that calculus decisively.

13 **DISAGGREGATE THE TERRORIST “WHOM”**

There is a wide variety of “whom” that effort to influence terrorists’ WMD calculus could be directed toward. These different potential targets of any such influencing efforts can be disaggregated in terms of: first, the specific group; second, the types of individuals likely to be involved in any terrorist WMD attack – or what is termed here the group’s component entities; and third, the wider set of outsider potential “aiders and abettors” of a WMD attack (including state supporters).

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More specifically, as discussed in Section 2 of this report, there is a wide range of terrorists groups and component entities. For ease of reference, these groups are divided most broadly into al-Qaeda and the non-al-Qaeda. As discussed in Section 2, the latter’s motivations are considerably lower to escalate to WMD violence, especially indiscriminate violence. In addition, possible lone-wolf terrorists seeking to use WMD need to be included in this initial typology of “groups.”

In addition, with the exception of lone wolf individuals, it is important to distinguish among the many different component entities that comprise a terrorist group – and whose support and involvement would be needed to carry out a successful WMD attack. Some of these component entities are quite clear-cut, e.g., the leaders that would make the decision to escalate to a WMD attack and the dedicated operatives that would seek to carry it out. Particularly with regard to al-Qaeda, it is useful to distinguish the core leadership represented by Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri from newly emerging leadership associated with the insurgency in Iraq, as well as al-Qaeda inspired individuals in affiliated groups and self-directed cells. In still other groups, e.g., Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, there may also be a distinction between the leadership of more versus
less extremist factions. But two other entities need to be considered. There also could well be insider aiders and abettors, that is, ideological supporters or fellow-travelers of the terrorist group who could provide important indirect support to a successful WMD attack. Examples could include financiers, providers of information and technical assistance, and individuals prepared to offer lodging or other logistics aid. Finally, influencing efforts also could be directed at more youthful potential future recruits and supporters to a terrorist organization.4

Finally, in thinking about the “who” of whose WMD use calculus to try to influence, there is a wide spectrum of outside “aiders and abettors.” Contrasted with the insider aiders and abettors already discussed, these entities would not be directly affiliated with the terrorist group. An A.Q. Khan-like individual selling technical know-how to al-Qaeda would be one example; a disaffected Russian scientist selling access to a nuclear-weapon storage site would be another. A criminal organization helping a terrorist group transport stolen nuclear weapons material out of the former Soviet Union would be still a further example. In all of these instances, the outsider aiders and abettors would not be members of a particular terrorist group or supporters of it but they could cooperate with it.

Among these outsider aiders and abettors, an initial distinction is between state sponsors on the one hand and individual or organization aiders and abettors on the other. The former category of state sponsors also needs to be broken down further into different types of potential state sponsor involvement: authorized and official support to acquisition of WMD by a terrorist group; unauthorized involvement by officials or other nationals, possibly resulting from a lack of effort in putting in place measures to prevent such involvement; and unintentional entanglement, reflecting terrorist access to WMD-related know-how, materials, or personnel despite government best-faith efforts to prevent that access.

Within the set of individual and organization outsider aiders and abettors, it also is useful to distinguish among types of support. Here, a functional approach can be followed. Depending on the person or organization, outsider aiders and abettors can provide support of different types. Technical know-how and art – the often-unwritten knowledge needed to make a particular production process work effectively or to carry out a given operational step in an attack – may be the most important type of support. From Aum Shinrikyo’s failed attempt to aerosolize anthrax to the aborted 2004 ricin plot, lack of access to such technical art has been a repeated source of terrorist attack failure. At the other end of the attack chain,

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4 The importance of including more youthful potential future recruits, including individuals conceivably in their teens, was suggested both by Stephen Lukasik (one of the SAIC team members) and by Dr. Walid Phares (a participant in the Shaping Terrorist WMD Use Calculus session.)
assistance in acquisition could help a terrorist group to defeat national control measures. Or as discussed in Appendix 5, criminal organizations could help a terrorist group to transport WMD inputs or even a full-up weapon.

1.4 IDENTIFY POTENTIAL LEVERAGE POINTS

Of equal importance to disaggregating the “whom” of the terrorist WMD threat, any effort to influence terrorists WMD calculus needs to be based on an identification of the potential leverage points that might be used in targeting specific groups and their component individuals. The analysis in Part 1 of this report suggests that at least in principle there is a spectrum of such possible leverage points. Is the use of WMD – and quite possibly the killing of innocent civilians – justifiable and legitimate in the terms of whatever religious or moral teachings adhered to by the group and equally so its wider public audience of potential supporters? Most broadly, how smart would be the use of WMD as a means to achieving the goals that animate the group and its members? What is the prospect of technical success whether in acquiring WMD or in carrying out a successful attack – the feasibility issue? Are there other, better ways to use existing technical, organizational, financial, operational, and other resources than seeking to acquire and then use WMD – again related partly to the prospects for a successful attack? And how much risk would be involved in attempting to acquire and use these weapons?

Depending on the group as well as the components within it, the answers to such questions are almost certain to vary. In some instances, as noted below, there may be no high confidence leverage point to influence terrorists’ calculations. For those cases, other counter-terrorist means, including denial measures, will bear the entire burden of protecting the United States and its allies and friends. In other instances, however, there may well be leverage points that can be used in an influencing strategy. Moreover, even if those influencing efforts do not fully succeed in influencing the choices of different individuals, those efforts may still lead individuals to hesitate, to make mistakes, and to increase the likelihood that other prevention to interdiction efforts may block a terrorist WMD attack.

1.5 DISAGGREGATE AMONG THE TYPES OF WMD

The differences among the types of WMD – chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons – are well acknowledged. Efforts to influence the terrorists WMD use calculus should take those differences into account. In particular, depending on the specific type of WMD, different leverage points could take on greater importance. For example, for nuclear weapons, issues of the justifiability of indiscriminate mass killing would be a key issue as well as the smartness of such killing as a means to the group’s goals. Or, to the extent that access to biological agents in a future of global science and bio-industries could be through the missteps of an individual scientist, an emphasis on creating codes of good scientific conduct could come into play. In turn, the possibility of more discriminate uses of chemical or biological weapons may open up influencing opportunities aimed at using denial efforts to create a presumption that limited use is not an effective use of resources and may be too risky
given potential payoffs. At that same time, there may well be many cross-cutting leverage points across the different WMD types.

1.6 THINK BROADLY REGARDING “WHO” DOES THE INFLUENCING

Many different entities need to be involved in any such efforts to influence terrorists’ WMD acquisition and use calculus. At one level, governments have a role to play. To the extent possible, the United States should seek the support and involvement of other like-minded governments. This would include not only traditional U.S. friends and allies, but also other governments throughout the Muslim world.

Influencing terrorists’ WMD calculus, however, is not simply a government problem. There also is likely to be a role for international, non-governmental, and community organizations. International organizations include traditional entities, from the United Nations to regional political groupings. Depending on the type of individual to be influenced, traditional and non-traditional non-governmental organizations may be sometimes a means of influencing. Examples would include professional, scientific, and academic organizations in the biological sciences, industry associations across the chemical, biological, and nuclear fields, Islamic but also non-Islamic religious councils and associations, non-violent wings of domestic political-separatist movements across different countries, and prominent groupings of individuals with religious, social action, or other affiliations. Certain types of individuals alone, e.g., a highly-respected clerical authority, also could be sources of influence on at least some of the possible groups and component individuals. Moderate American Muslims also may be able to exert some impact on the thinking of the wider Muslim community around the globe that is the ultimate audience as well as the source of recruits for the Jihadist movement inspired by al-Qaeda.

1.7 USE SOFT AND HARD POWER, WORDS AND DEEDS

Influencing the WMD acquisition and use calculus of different terrorist groups and their component entities will call for a mixture of both soft and hard power or words and deeds. At the core of soft power could be efforts to foster a debate and influence perceptions of the legitimacy and justifiability of WMD use – and the impact of that use on the wider audience’s of different groups. Efforts to encourage moderate Islamic leaders, clerics, and community groupings to speak out against WMD use would be one example. National declaratory policies also could contribute to de-legitimizing WMD use among a wider audience as well as influencing perceptions of the risks of becoming involved in WMD terrorism. From a narrowly American perspective, what officials say can also influence perceptions around the globe of American intentions, policies, and ultimately whether the United States is seen to be a factor of “good or evil” in world affairs.

Hard power also figures into implementation of this overall framework for influencing the terrorist WMD calculus. Perhaps most clearly, such power can influence perceptions of whether involvement in WMD acquisition and use would be smart as well as whether such activities would be imprudent or too risky. Hard power ranges across the spectrum of organizations from law enforcement to covert operations to outright military operations. It includes not only military power but also economic and financial means. In turn, actions not directed at influencing terrorists’ calculations clearly also can have an impact for good or ill, e.g., provision of assistance to victims of natural disasters, support for economic and political
change, efforts to encourage the resolution of internal and regional disputes, and uses of force to support American interests.

More specifically, the potential blowbacks from the uses of hard power in increasing the perceived acceptability of WMD use among a terrorist group’s wider audience need to be carefully considered. One of the goals of terrorist attacks, including not least by al-Qaeda or al-Qaeda affiliates may well be to provoke an overreaction by the United States that would strengthen their support among their publics. Somewhat differently, a widespread distrust and condemnation of the United States within the Islamic world has been one of the adverse spillovers of the war in Iraq, thereby making it more likely that any al-Qaeda or affiliate use of WMD against the United States would be tolerated if not applauded. Conversely, American support for tsunami aid to Indonesia may have had the opposite effect, at least slightly muting negative perceptions of the United States in that country compared to some other Muslim countries.5

In the areas of applying both soft and hard power to influence terrorists’ WMD calculus, however, the United States is playing catch-up. There still has not been an authoritative, moderate Islamic response to the 2003 Sheik al-Fahd fatwa justifying mass killing, while U.S. public diplomacy to influence negative Muslim attitudes toward the United States has made very little progress in changing those attitudes. As noted, the war in Iraq has generated deep resentment and fear of the United States in those very audiences of Islamist extremists. In turn, more than six years after the 9-11 attacks, both Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri remain at large as does the still unknown “anthrax mailer” of late 2001. Their escapes cannot but effect perceptions of the risks of being caught and punished for carrying out or aiding or abetting a WMD attack.

1.8 SEEK INITIAL CROSS-CUTTING INFLUENCING ACTIONS

Finally, in implementing any such influencing strategy, top priority should be paid to any cross-cutting actions that might influence more than simply a single group or component entity. Such cross-cutting actions, as will be argued below, exist. Their pursuit would be a place to begin to implement this type of influencing strategy even while fine-tuning the approach to specific groups and entities.

2. INFLUENCING TERRORISTS WMD CALCULUS – ILLUSTRATING THE CONCEPT, ASSESSING THE PROSPECTS

Turning now to a set of specific groups-component entities, the following section illustrates how the preceding conceptual framework could be applied in practice. To do so, it first presents a summary overview assessment of the applicability of the potential leverage points across different terrorist groups and component entities. With that background, the discussion then turns to the specific cases. These cases have been selected to cover the spectrum of potential “influencing challenges,” from the al-Qaeda core leadership (the toughest case) to individual outsider aiders and abettors (potentially the case most susceptible

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5 On a series of questions, Indonesian public attitudes toward the United States were negative but slightly less so than in Morocco, Egypt, or Pakistan. See Steven Kull, Principal Investigator, “Muslim Public Opinion on US Policy, Attacks on Civilians and al Qaeda,” WorldPublicOpinion.ORG, University of Maryland, April 24, 2007, p.; 9-13.
to influence). This analysis includes judgments of the prospects for successfully influencing the WMD calculus of given terrorist groups-entities. These judgments draw partly on the research team’s analysis and partly on the reactions of terrorism experts and others held to the model set out here.6

2.1 INFLUENCING TERRORIST WMD CALCULUS – AN OVERVIEW ASSESSMENT

Although U.S. counter-terrorism policy and posture now acknowledges the legitimacy of thinking about how to influence the thinking of terrorist groups concerning acquisition or use of WMD, there remains considerable skepticism about successfully influencing terrorists’ WMD acquisition and use calculus. The accompanying summary (Table 3.2.1) on the following page suggests that such skepticism both has merit but that it also should not be overdone. More specifically, some overarching points stand out:

- Depending on the particular group and its component entities, the availability of potential leverage points clearly varies considerably. Not surprisingly, there is a significant difference between the al-Qaeda core leadership and its affiliated groups or inspired cells and the non-al-Qaeda. Within the constellation of al-Qaeda related entities, however, there also are differences in possible susceptibility to influence. There also appear to be more potential leverage points for seeking to influence the calculations of outside aiders and abettors, including individuals, organized criminal groupings, and state-related entities.

- Across the different terrorist groups and component entities, efforts to influence perceptions of the more instrumental aspects or “smartness” of WMD acquisition and use appear the most promising – its role in serving the group’s goals, its feasibility, its effective use of group resources, and its potential risk or backlash. In regard to the latter leverage point, particularly for less committed individuals as well as outsider aiders and abettors influencing perceptions of risk may be very important. Even so, for some entities, efforts to influence perceptions of the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use should not be dismissed out of hand.

- A number of leverage points to influence the calculations of insider aiders and abettors providing different types of indirect support to an operation also are evident. To a greater degree than more dedicated operatives, such supporters may be subject to influence through raising questions about the feasibility, effectiveness, and risk of their involvement.

- Closely related, multiple, promising leverage points for seeking to influence outsider aiders and abettors are a prominent feature. Indeed, this set of individuals may be the most promising target for such influencing efforts, using multiple approaches. A focus on outsider aiders and abettors also is consistent with efforts to apply an influencing strategy as early as possible in possible pursuit of a usable WMD capability by terrorist groups and their component entities. Multiple leverage points also exist to influence state supporters.

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6 In addition to the small expert session held at SAIC, the results were briefed to an ongoing “terrorism roundtable” organized by Rita DiCasagrande and Michael Moodie.
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<th>Group-entity/ Potential leverage from perceptions of:</th>
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<th>Serves organization’s goals</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Effective use of organizational resources</th>
<th>Too risky or imprudent</th>
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Table 3.2.1: Influencing Terrorists WMD Use Calculus – Applicability of Potential Leverage Points
Application in practice of any influencing strategy clearly will depend on an ability to tap into detailed knowledge about the thinking and workings of a wide range of terrorist groupings and component entities. For that reason, it will be important to think through possible priorities for influencing actions across the groups and entities as well as to seek to identify potential cross-cutting actions that might be pursued regardless of the specific group or entity. (Nonetheless, as noted below, a number of cross-cutting actions to work these leverage points also stand out and could be pursued regardless of the specific group or entity).

Turning to the specific groups and component entities, the following discussion illustrates these points in a series of specific cases. Particular attention is paid to elements of al-Qaeda, given its immediate threat to the United States and the fact that it stands out from the next generation WMD terrorist threat. Brief consideration also is given to some of the “non-al-Qaeda” groups and entities. For these groups, as discussed in Section 2, there are significant constraints on their pursuit or use of WMD within the next generation terrorist threat. An influencing strategy would seek to reinforce those constraints. Two final cases considered are state-supporters and the broad category of outsider aiders and abettors that could assist any group’s pursuit or use of WMD.

For any one of these illustrative cases, readers may question one judgment or another concerning the potential applicability of different leverage points, what specific actions to take and their potential effects, and overall how best to influence that group-entity’s WMD calculus. Nonetheless, taken together, the set of cases serves to reinforce the initial contention that efforts to influence terrorists WMD calculus should be one part of an overall strategy for countering next generation WMD terrorism.

2.2 THE AL-QAEDA CORE LEADERSHIP

Efforts to influence the WMD calculus of the al-Qaeda core leadership – Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and their close associates in al-Qaeda center presumed to be located in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border – are the toughest case. Their writings and statements make clear that for them, even indiscriminate killing using nuclear or biological weapons is seen as fully legitimate and justifiable. Once in possession of WMD, the core leadership would have no moral or religious compunctions concerning use. For them, there is no controversy about the legitimacy or morality of using WMD against all enemies even if it results in loss of life among Muslims.” This leverage point simply does not apply.

SMARTNESS OF WMD ACQUISITION AND USE

By contrast, the core leadership’s perception of whether WMD use would serve their core goals, be a feasible and effective use of the organization’s now-constrained resources, and be prudent are more promising leverage points. In effect, any influencing strategy aimed at this...
core leadership would need to look for ways to influence that leadership’s perceptions of whether WMD use would be smart. Consider several dimensions.

Whether or not WMD use would have a decisive impact in changing U.S. policies would be a key element in the al-Qaeda core leadership’s thinking about WMD use. That leadership’s goals are well-known: eliminating U.S. influence from the Middle East and the wider Muslim world, encouraging an Islamic renewal, and ultimately creating a new Caliphate. To the extent that WMD use is seen likely to shatter U.S. political will and resolve, the attraction of WMD acquisition and use would grow. By contrast, effective U.S. and global pursuit of the full suite of denial measures set out in the preceding section would create uncertainties in that leadership about the feasibility and impact of WMD use. From prevention to consequence management, from detection to interdiction, those activities all contribute to this dimension of an influencing strategy. Moreover, even if these measures were not completely effective, they still could have an important influencing impact in two ways. First, these actions could limit the expected potential impact of a WMD attack, which would be important if the core leadership’s wanted to be able to impose a very high level of WMD damage on the United States and not simply to carry out an isolated or limited WMD attack. Second, by adding uncertainties about the prospects for success, these measures could lead the leadership to invest its scarce resources in the more proven “bombs and bullets” modes of attacks that have long been at the core of its operational code.

In this context, the types of population protection initiatives already discussed – as well as efforts to enhance public resilience – take on even greater importance. The potential role of population protection in influencing the al-Qaeda core leadership’s WMD calculus provides yet another argument to step up to the challenge of protecting the American public from terrorist WMD attack. Closely related, plans, procedures, and capabilities to manage successfully the physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences of a radiological weapon attack and promoting resiliency could contribute to influencing the core leadership’s thinking about that mode of attack. To maximize their potential influencing impact, such actions could be packaged into a well-publicized Presidential commitment to the goal of protecting the American population, beginning first with the less difficult challenge of protection against more discriminate uses of biological agents, to be followed by actions to enhance protection against high-lethality biological agents and to protect nearby publics from the secondary effects of a nuclear detonation.

Other U.S. actions also can be used to signal to the al-Qaeda leadership that escalation to WMD will neither break U.S. will nor bring about an al-Qaeda victory. The outcome of the Iraq War is likely to be a key factor in shaping those perceptions of U.S. resolve for better or

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8 The participants in the SAIC session on “Shaping Terrorists’ WMD Calculus” as well as those in the “Roundtable Series on WMD Terrorism” concurred that what is termed here an influencing strategy directed at the core leadership should focus on that leadership’s perception of whether WMD use would be smart.

9 This point was made by several participants in the SAIC session on “Shaping Terrorists’ WMD Calculus”.

10 See the discussion of al-Qaeda’s goals in Section 2, Parts 3 and 4 above.

11 This possibility that the size of the possible attack could be a factor in the core leadership’s calculus about whether to use or not use WMD was suggested to the author by Dr. Walid Phares.

12 For one discussion of al-Qaeda’s operational code, see Dunn, “Can al-Qaeda be Deterred from Using WMD?” op. cit., pp. 8-17.
for worse. At the least, it would be important to signal U.S. intentions to remain engaged in the Middle East even after that war ends. Building habits of global cooperation against WMD terrorism along the lines discussed above also serves to signal the core leadership that WMD use would not defeat the United States and other countries.

**ENCOURAGING DEBATE WITHIN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY**

Still another but more controversial influencing action would seek to heighten concerns that WMD use would provoke a backlash among the wider Muslim audience that al-Qaeda seeks to rally to its cause. One way to do so would be to encourage more moderate Muslims at all levels to speak out against WMD use. Across the global Muslim community, as reflected in recent public opinion data, there is widespread rejection of Jihadist attacks on innocent civilians, including American civilians. Islamic religious associations and other groupings should be urged to speak out to this effect. Though it would be difficult and probably counter-productive for U.S. officials to encourage them to do so, the United States could seek to work behind the scenes with friendly Muslim government to achieve that objective. In turn, a wider theological debate on the issues of justifiability and legitimacy should be encouraged. Opinion differs, however, on the impact of such efforts.

On the one hand, some U.S. experts argue that the core leadership ultimately arrogates to itself the right to act on behalf of the right-thinking community. It also believes that a successful use of WMD that forced the United States out of the Muslim world would rally Muslims to al-Qaeda. Thus, the core leadership would not be prepared to temper its actions in response to concerns about Islamic public attitudes.

On the other hand, the fact that the core leadership has invested considerable energies in arguing for the legitimacy of WMD use is but one indication that there has been push-back on this question. Indeed, the most authoritative Jihadist religious discourse on this subject, the May, 2003 fatwa by Nasir bin Hamd al-Fahd, explicitly acknowledges such questions about killing innocent civilians by its references to “specious arguments” against the use of WMD before seeking to counter each of those arguments. In addition, in his October 11, 2005 letter to Musab al-Zarqawi, Ayman al-Zawahiri expressed concern about the excessive violence of al-Qaeda in Iraq and went on to emphasize that:

> If we are in agreement that the victory of Islam and the establishment of a caliphate in the manner of the Prophet will not be achieved except through jihad against the apostate rulers and their removal, then this goal will not be accomplished by the mujahed movement while it is cut off from public support. . . .

Al-Zawahiri continued that “[t]herefore, the mujahed movement must avoid any action that the masses do not understand or approve, if there is no contravention of Sharia in such

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13 See Kull, op. cit. passim.
14 These points were emphasized by Paul Jabber in the SAIC session on “Shaping Terrorists WMD Calculus.”
15 Recall the discussion of this dimension in by DeMarce, Kovner, and Moran and Givner-Forbes and Kovner in Section 2, Parts 3 and 4.
avoidance, as long as there are other options to resort to . . . ."17 Most recently, Osama bin Laden spoke out in his October 23, 2007 audiotape against the “fanaticism” of the “mujahidin in Iraq,” stressed that “[t]he strength of the faith is the strength of the bond between Muslims and not that of a tribe or nationalism,” and urged that “. . . the interest of the Umma should be given priority . . . .”18 Somewhat differently, this message again highlights the extent to which the al-Qaeda core leadership is sensitive to the impact of actions on the wider Muslim community.

Readers can strike their own balance between these two perspectives. At the least, the preceding statements suggest that the argument should not be dismissed out of hand that one part of any influencing strategy should include efforts to encouraging concerns among the core leadership about the impact of WMD use on the wider Ummah. There also would few if any downsides of seeking to do so as part of an overall influencing strategy.

Setting aside efforts to encourage the wider Muslim community to speak out against WMD and attacks on innocent civilians, the message sent by senior-most U.S. officials about how the United States would respond to use of WMD also is a means to influence the al-Qaeda core leadership’s WMD use calculus – influencing its perceptions of whether use would serve its goals, be effective, and be prudent.19 At first glance, signaling that any attack would provoke an all-out mobilization of American energies to destroy al-Qaeda’s leadership as well as the network could be seen as one way to raise the perceived risks of WMD use. But U.S. and Western signaling that an attack would provoke a completely no-holds-barred effort to destroy the leadership could conceivably backfire. One goal of any WMD use by al-Qaeda’s leaders could well be to provoke an indiscriminate American reaction, striking out widely against potential al-Qaeda sanctuaries in other countries, perceived supporters, and possibly even including intensified police and other actions against American Muslims. Such a response would help in turn to rally support for al-Qaeda’s goals among the wider Muslim community, while radicalizing the more moderate American Muslim community. For that reason, U.S. policymakers would need instead to send the message that any American response would be very costly to the pursuit of al-Qaeda’s goals but also tempered and tailored in such a manner as to make it harder for al-Qaeda to build support within its wider Muslim audience.

One final possibility concerning the use of WMD – especially nuclear weapons – by al-Qaeda’s core leadership warrants brief mention. For bin Laden and al-Zawahiri once in possession of a nuclear weapon, that weapon could be “too valuable to use.” That is, a nuclear weapon or even several nuclear weapons could offer a means to deter attack, coerce adversaries, and claim legitimacy as well as power throughout the Islamic world. This approach would be consistent with bin Laden’s past declarations in which he has offered a truce to those countries that would break with the United States as well as with other actions.

19 This discussion draws on the author’s discussion with a variety of experts at several workshops at which this basic concept of influencing terrorists WMD calculus was set out. These terrorism experts repeatedly stressed the possibility that any al-Qaeda leadership attack would be partly intended to provoke an American extreme overreaction abroad but also at home.
that showed him thinking as a virtual state-in-becoming. Nonetheless, even assuming that the core leadership could choose not to use a nuclear weapon but to hold it in reserve, there appears little if any acceptable room for the United States to influence that particular bin Laden calculation.20

2.3 AL-QAEDA AFFILIATES AND AL-QAEDA INSPIRED JIHADIST CELLS – LEADERS AND OPERATIVES

The leaders of al-Qaeda affiliated organizations and of al-Qaeda inspired Jihadist cells comprise two other entities. The former are typified by the leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia, the latter by the cells responsible for a series of terrorist attacks or attempted attacks in the United Kingdom in 2005, 2006, and 2007. Contrasted with the al-Qaeda core leadership of bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, as suggested by Table 3.2.1 above, the leaders and operatives that make up these entities may be somewhat more subject to influence.21 There is some evidence, for example, that there have been differences within the leadership of Jemaah Islamiyah about escalation to WMD violence and that off-shoots from the mainstream may be more likely to use WMD.22 Within South Asia, whether or not to go beyond traditional bombs and bullets terrorism also is far from a foregone conclusion. Somewhat differently, more ad hoc al-Qaeda inspired Jihadist cells also face greater resources and operational constraints, thereby affecting their choice of means.

The top priority of influencing efforts aimed at these two sets of entities would be the types of actions already identified aimed at influencing perceptions of the “smartness” of WMD use. As in the case of the al-Qaeda core leadership, the goal would be to create uncertainties within the leaders and operatives about whether WMD use would be serve the group’s goals (or possibly backfire), whether it would be an effective use of the group’s organizational talents and resources compared to other traditional terrorist means, and the risks of seeking to acquire and use WMD.23 Closely related, still other actions could seek to influence perceptions of the feasibility of successful acquisition and use. Specific actions to influence these leverage points could range widely from advances in U.S. and other denial capabilities from interdiction to protection against WMD attack, from preventing access to materials to consequence management of lesser WMD attacks. The specific initiatives discussed in Section 2, Part 1 above would fit in here as well. To have an influencing payoff, however, it would be necessary to use declaratory policy, exercises, and other visible means to demonstrate enhanced capabilities.

In contrast with the al-Qaeda core leadership, the potential impact may be somewhat greater of efforts aimed at influencing the perceptions of the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use within affiliated or inspired cells, especially of WMD use entailing indiscriminate

20 This possibility is explored somewhat further in Dunn, “Can al-Qaeda be Deterred from Using WMD,” op. cit.
21 This judgment was put forward by several experts on the Jihadist movement at the SAIC session on influencing terrorists WMD calculus.
22 See, Rohan Gunaratna, op. cit., Appendix VII, p. 4; also see the discussion of Jemaah-Islamiyah in DeMarce, Kovner, and Moran, Section 2, Part 3 above.
23 It has been suggested that the relatively greater difficulty of acquiring chemical and biological weapons may have been one reason why Jemaah Islamiyah’s leaders emphasized instead use of conventional weapons. Gunaratna, Ibid., p. 15, 16.
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Influencing Terrorists’ WMD Acquisition and Use Calculus

Section 3 – Part 2

The effort set out above to foster a wider theological and public debate within the Islamic world on this issue would fit in here. One specific target of such influencing actions should be the next generation of possible Jihadists among the youth as well as the wider clerical community that may influence the thinking among the pool of potential next generation Jihadists. These younger individuals are the future of Jihad. Unlike the core leadership, they may yet be open to arguments about the legitimacy and justifiability of WMD use.

As for the prospects for successfully influencing the WMD use calculus of these al-Qaeda affiliates and inspired Jihadist cells or leaders, the prospects for success are difficult to gauge. Those prospects do appear greater in the case of these affiliated and inspired organizations than in that of the al-Qaeda core leadership. Equally so, there would be few if any downsides in seeking to do so.

2.4 Al-Qaeda Aiders and Abettors – Insiders to Fellow-Travelers

Within al-Qaeda itself, there would be aiders and abettors all along the chain from acquisition of WMD through a successful attack. Some of these persons may provide support without any knowledge of its ultimate purpose, for example, in the case of financiers that would simply contribute to the overall efforts of the organization. But other persons might be more directly linked to the WMD effort. Among these aiders and abettors, their direct level of involvement in the organization could vary, from relatively committed insiders to fellow-travelers and sympathizers. Closely related, there are likely to be differences among individuals in terms of their readiness to run risks – up to putting their well-being and life in jeopardy. (Outsider aiders and abettors are discussed separately below).

A influencing strategy aimed at influencing aiders and abettors within the al-Qaeda-Jihadist movement could seek to make use of several potential leverage points: questions about the feasibility of acquiring and then carrying out a WMD attack, uncertainties about whether providing support to such an effort was the most effective way to support the goal of global jihad, and not least, perceptions of the potential risks of involvement. More so than with the al-Qaeda core leadership, questions about the justifiability and legitimacy of use of WMD if it entailed mass killing of innocent civilians cannot be simply set aside as a potential factor in the thinking of some of these individuals. Again, one purpose of these influencing efforts would be create second thoughts on the part of these insider aiders and abettors with the possibility that such hesitation could lead to mistakes, delays, and in other ways make a successful attack less likely.

Many of the influencing actions already identified would apply, as well, in the case of al-Qaeda aiders and abettors. Particular emphasis could be placed, however, on actions aimed at influencing perceptions of the perceived risk to individuals of indirectly or directly becoming involved in efforts to acquire the means for a WMD attack or to carry out such an attack. One place to start would be explicit declaratory policy statements by the United States and as many like-minded countries that they would join together to hold individuals accountable for

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24 At the SAIC “Shaping Terrorists’ WMD Calculus” session, there was a general consensus that an influencing strategy might have greater effect among these al-Qaeda affiliated and inspired groups-entities.

25 Several participants in the SAIC session highlighted efforts to influence the pool of younger future Jihadists, not only on this issue of WMD use but more generally.
such WMD-related activities. These statements could be couched partly in terms of support for universal adherence to and implementation of the International Convention to Suppress Acts of Nuclear Terrorism which obligates all of its parties to cooperate against nuclear terrorism. Reference could also be made to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 which in its case obligates all states to put in place controls against non-state actors efforts to acquire WMD. Highly publicized support for efforts by all states to put in place needed legal authorities and other mechanisms to allow cooperation to apprehend and/or extradite or prosecute WMD aiders and abettors also would signal heightened risks.

Going a step further, states could cooperate to make examples of publicly known figures detected involved in helping non-state actors gain access to WMD materials or know-how. Well-publicized prosecutions could be one means to do so; more direct covert action is another. Again the purpose would be to cause still other on-looking individuals to reassess their own risks and the desirability of becoming a party to WMD-related terrorism.

2.5 NON-AL-QAEDA – LEADERSHIP OF ISLAMIST GROUPS

For the foreseeable future, as argued in Section 2, the leadership of the most prominent other Islamist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah is likely to believe that there are good reasons not to escalate to WMD violence. The challenge for influencing efforts, therefore, is to reinforce those reasons. Several specific leverage points exist.

Perhaps the most important leverage point would be uncertainties about whether WMD violence would serve the organization’s goals. For Hamas and Hezbollah, these uncertainties likely include whether such use would make it harder to achieve respectively the creation of a Palestinian State or a radical Islamist-dominated Lebanon. WMD use could well alienate their internal audiences as well as friendly states and groupings (e.g., the European Union), provoke Israel, and undermine their claims to legitimate authority. Questions about the feasibility of acquiring and using WMD effectively as well as comparisons with the relative effectiveness of more traditional means also would be leverage points. Not least, for the leaderships of both Hamas and Hezbollah, the risks of escalation to WMD violence could be considerable. Both entities court European official opinion, depend on outsider financial and political support, and control territory and constitute political entities subject to retaliation. Nor is the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use by these Islamist groups taken as a given. Indeed, more indiscriminate WMD use also could harm key constituents due to spillover effects, eroding in turn the legitimacy of the groups’ claim to leadership.

Continued efforts to strengthen the international consensus against WMD terrorism would be a starting point to reinforce these existing reasons not to escalate to WMD violence. Visible cooperation on the part of the United States and its European allies, for instance, would help to signal that WMD use would undermine needed external support. Conversely, at least in the case of Hamas, progress toward an eventual Palestinian State would undercut any arguments about the need for even more extreme violence. The many types of actions already discussed to make it harder for any type of non-state actor to acquire WMD also could contribute by influencing perceptions of the feasibility and relative effectiveness of that course of action. Still other efforts to encourage moderate Islamic clerics and leaders to speak out against the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use could reinforce the perception that such
use would not be welcomed by the core constituencies of either Hamas or Hezbollah but would weaken the legitimacy of both groups’ leaderships.

2.6 NON-AL-QAEDA – LEADERSHIP OF NON-ISLAMIST GROUPS

Taken as a whole, as discussed in Section 2, the next generation non-al-Qaeda terrorist groups also are unlikely to be attracted to the acquisition and use of WMD violence of any type or level. Indiscriminate killing would be at odds with the more political-instrumental use of violence that they have pursued in the past. For these groups, use of more traditional means holds out greater potential to influence rather than alienate their domestic and international audiences – and to advance their agendas. However, the possibility cannot be dismissed that over time at least some of these groups and their component entities time could be attracted to more discriminate uses of WMD violence. Further, two of the most prominent past uses of WMD involved non-Islamic extremists – the use of both anthrax and sarin by Aum Shinrikyo and the use of hydrogen cyanide by the Tamil Tigers (LTTE).

In the former case, the leadership kept its plans secret from the members who would have found such use at odds with the organization’s overall moral code; in the latter case, use was highly opportunistic, reflecting a mixture of an available means and a military necessity.

In thinking about influencing the thinking about WMD acquisition and use of the leadership of this set of non-Islamist, non-al-Qaeda groups, four points are in order. First, even more so than in other cases, influencing actions should be focused not only on use but also on acquisition as well as the other prior steps leading up to use. This relative focus would be justified by these groups’ more limited motivations to acquire WMD in the first place.

Second, virtually all of the leverage points and related actions already discussed apply. Influencing actions can seek to influence leaders’ perceptions of whether WMD use would serve the group’s goals, be feasible, be a diversion of resources from potentially more effective strategies, and be too risky. Different ways of seeking to influence perceptions across these leverage points have already been highlighted, not least that wide range of denial steps aimed at making it harder for terrorists to acquire the materials for and to carry out successfully a WMD attack. Highly visible international cooperation against individual WMD terrorists also could heighten the perceived risks of taking this step beyond traditional “bombs and bullets” terrorism.

Third, for the leaders of these non-al-Qaeda groups, the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use (including indiscriminate WMD use) is not taken as a given. In principle, therefore, the payoffs could be greater of influencing actions aimed at reinforcing the illegitimacy of WMD use and the perception that such use would erode the leadership’s position among the group’s own followers. In practice, it may be difficult to influence directly those perceptions, given the lack of any ongoing debate as appears to exist within the Islamic community. Instead, influencing actions should be aimed at influencing the overall social, cultural, religious, and behavioral milieu in which leadership decisions would be made. By way of example, leaders of non-Islamic religious, political, and social organizations in countries suffering from terrorist violence could be urged to speak out against WMD use. Efforts

26 Comment to the author by Dr. Marc Sageman, based on his study of the Aum Shinrikyo incident.
might also be made to identify and counter any emergent advocates of such use among the non-al-Qaeda entities, perhaps evidenced initially by discussions within Internet chat rooms. More general efforts aimed at de-legitimizing WMD also could play a part in influencing the overall global milieu, e.g., reaffirmation by the NPT parties of the goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons, well-publicized cooperation by many states to implement UNSCR 1540 to prevent non-state actors from gaining access to WMD, and declarations by the Security Council as well as regional political groupings. Whether or not the United States and other countries condemn more limited WMD use also could be a factor. This is especially so because some of these non-al-Qaeda groups, as discussed in Section 2, could be attracted to more discriminate WMD use. (For this reason, the lack of global condemnation of the use of an explosives-chlorine mixture in Iraq is lamentable).

Fourth, to the extent possible, progress in meeting the underlying political agendas of the leaders of these non-al-Qaeda terrorist groups could contribute to influencing their perceptions of whether to escalate to WMD violence. Unlike al-Qaeda, the leaders of these groups – typified by ethno-nationalist and separatist movements like the Tamil Tigers and the Chechnyan insurgents today and the Irish Republican Army at its peak – have a narrower political agenda. They also ultimately require some degree of cooperation from a government to achieve some or all of that agenda. As such, this provides another potential pathway to influence their choices.\(^{27}\)

2.7 STATE SUPPORTERS OF WMD TERRORISM – AUTHORIZED, OFFICIAL, BY NEGLECT

Access to state “resources” figures prominently in many pathways to acquisition of WMD by terrorist groups. In particular, direct state involvement would be one way that a terrorist group could acquire access to the needed “art” that could make the difference between a technically flawed WMD attack and a technically successful WMD attack. Such “art” is the often-unwritten or not easily obtained technical know-how about how to make or deliver different types of WMD.\(^{28}\) The importance of such “art” – has been repeatedly demonstrated by past unsuccessful terrorism WMD attacks – from the failed Aum Shinrikyo attempt to use anthrax through Aum’s crude means of delivering Sarin to the more recent attempted al-Qaeda attack in London with ricin. Or, captured evidence indicates that there were serious technical flaws in the biological weapons research and development efforts of both al-Qaeda (prior to 9/11) and Jemaah Islamiyah.\(^{29}\) More indirect state involvement by key technical personnel without clear-cut authorization but due to the neglect of state authorities to take preventive measures also could provide access to such know-how.

As part of an overall influencing strategy, the United States and other like-minded countries can take steps to influence the calculations of other states in two closely related dimensions. On the one hand, an influencing strategy should seek to encourage actions by states to prevent unauthorized involvement or unintended support to a terrorist WMD attack by individuals within that state. On the other hand, an influencing strategy should seek to

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27 On these groups and the constraints on WMD violence set by their political agendas, see the discussion in DeMarce, op. cit.
28 This point was emphasized by the experts in the small SAIC session on “Shaping Terrorists’ WMD Use Calculus” and has also been highlighted in other forums dealing with this subject.
29 See Gunaratna, op. cit., p. 8, 12.
dissuade official, authorized, and intentional support by a state’s leadership to a terrorist WMD attack. Consider first the potential leverage points that exist, then some specific influencing actions aimed at influencing state leaders’ calculations. Finally, one important caveat to be borne in mind is in order.  

Leaders’ perceptions that direct support for terrorist acquisition of WMD (or indirect support by not acting to put in place effective controls against diversion) would not serve their personal or national goals comprise one important potential leverage point. Equally so, concern about the possible risks of such support is another leverage point. This judgment is supported by the extent to which potential state supporters of WMD terrorism, from North Korea to Iran, appear to have carefully weighed the benefits and risks of supporting more traditional terrorist actions.  

A belief that assistance to WMD terrorism is neither justifiable nor legitimate state behavior also could conceivably have some effect in influencing the leaders of still other “mainstream” states to take actions to prevent indirect or unauthorized support.

Given the preceding leverage points, the enunciation of a clear declaratory policy by the United States and other countries that they would cooperate to hold accountable the leaders of states providing direct or indirect assistance to an act of WMD terrorism would be a key possible influencing action. They also could make clear that how that policy would be implemented in practice would be left to be determined in the specific situation. By leaving the response to be adapted to the circumstances, this type of declaratory policy would provide needed flexibility to take into account different degrees of state leadership involvement, the relative certainty with which a particular terrorist WMD attack or attempted attack could be tracked back to those leaders, and other unique situational dimensions. Whether or not the United States and others would be prepared to seek international legitimation for that response by going to the United Nations Security Council would need to be determined. There are both pluses and minuses of agreeing to seek such authorization – including on the one hand, possibly greater ease in advance in gaining widespread support for a ‘holding accountable’ posture and on the other hand, possibly greater complexities in following-through with that warning should the need arise.

Still another influencing action would be to continue building up habits, institutions, and mechanisms of international cooperation against WMD terrorism. The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 – as well as for the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism – are three such examples. Building these habits of cooperation would help to create a

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30 The possibility also has been suggested by Dr. Walid Phares that a state could penetrate a branch of a terrorist group such as al-Qaeda, resulting in a situation in which a terrorist WMD attack actually could be a state attack in disguise. This possibility reinforces the importance of influencing the calculus of state leaders.

31 This point was made by a long-standing observer of terrorism who participated in both of the SAIC workshops. This participant made this point in the context of arguing that though certain states had become considerably more cautious since the 1980s in supporting terrorism, that caution needed to be reinforced by U.S. and other countries’ policies.

32 A variant on this declaratory policy would state that the United States and others would hold states accountable for “knowingly assisting.” In the above formulation, the flexibility of response would make it possible to tailor the response to the degree of certainty. It also would allow for responses in the case that a state’s benign neglect – vice knowing assistance – had been at issue.
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presumption of response in the minds of possible state supporters. It also would make it easier for all states to take needed actions to prevent unintentional assistance.

The relative effectiveness of these types of efforts to influence state leaders’ calculations clearly would depend on the perceived ability of the United States in collaboration with other countries and possibly international organizations to track a terrorist WMD attack back to the source. Unless the perpetrator can be known, it will not be possible to hold that state accountable. Attribution will depend partly on technical forensics. It also would entail cooperation among intelligence and law enforcement authorities both in the United States and abroad. Attribution already is being emphasized as part of U.S. counter-terrorism actions. In support of an influencing strategy, it would be desirable to publicize advances in U.S. capabilities to the extent possible without compromising sensitive technical information. In turn, international cooperation could be highlighted not only through official statements and efforts to universalize the International Convention but also through attribution exercises designed to build habit of cooperation in this area. Again, the purpose would be to send a signal to any leaders that might be weighing the payoffs and risks of direct support to WMD terrorism as well as how much of an effort to make in ensuring needed controls on the activities of their subordinates and other nationals.

2.8 AIDERS AND ABETTORS – OUTSIDERS

Outsider aiders and abettors of a terrorist WMD attack would not be ideologically committed to or members of a terrorist group. Instead, as perhaps typified by A.Q. Khan, their main motivation would be personal gain. But fear and blackmail also cannot be precluded as motivating forces. In turn, some individuals could well provide assistance unknowingly, whether due to the disregard of established procedures to control sensitive information, through unguarded conversations, or in other ways.

With regard to today’s top threat of an al-Qaeda WMD attack, efforts to influence the calculus of this group of outsider aiders and abettors take on particular importance in any influencing strategy for two reasons. First, as already noted for state support, it is widely agreed that access to outside assistance is likely to be an important factor in successful acquisition and use of WMD by a terrorist group. By way of example, outside aiders and abettors could provide any of the following types of critical support: insider knowledge to facilitate diversion of WMD-related materials, agents, or weapons; insider knowledge to defeat detection and interdiction actions; direct supply of needed inputs; know-how and art to produce and deliver WMD; technical information to defeat control mechanisms; and many other types of support. Second, outside aiders and abettors appear likely to be much more subject to influence when compared to other potential “targets” of influence, including al-Qaeda’s leadership as well as al-Qaeda-affiliated or inspired groups or cells. This difference reflects the motivations and risk-taking propensities of the individuals involved.

Several potential leverage points are applicable. Particularly for those aiders and abettors that might become unintentionally involved – or involved only for financial gain – appeal to a desire not to have innocent blood on their hands could be the surrogate of uncertainty about the justifiability and legitimacy of WMD use. Feasibility also could provide leverage, e.g., in

33 The experts that commented on the influencing strategy put forth herein also emphasized the importance of influencing the actions of these outside aiders and abettors.
terms of perceptions of the prospects for successfully trading WMD-related materials, know-how, or access for financial or other personal gain. That said, given the motivations at work, influencing actions aimed at influencing perceptions of risk may have the highest payoff for these individuals. (By contrast, considerations of organizational goals as well as the use of organizational resources would not come into play for most of these aiders and abettors, possibly with the exception of criminal groups).

Many of the influencing actions already identified also would apply here. For instance, efforts of many sorts to deny terrorists access to WMD-related inputs would help to impact perceived feasibility. In turn, U.S. and others declaratory policies, well-publicized efforts to enhance international habits of cooperation, to buttress international legal and political mechanisms to counter non-state actors, and to put in place enhanced national controls all would help to influence that perception. Still other actions to encourage different technical communities, especially in the biological sciences area, to develop their own codes of conduct and other internal norms of behavior would be one approach to enhance individual responsibility. Possibly even more than in the case of those aiders and abettors more directly linked to al-Qaeda, actions could be taken to bring to justice any individuals providing support to terrorist pursuit of WMD. This could be done legally, using existing national laws and international mechanisms. But the option for taking direct action in a particularly egregious case should be kept on the table. Well-publicized, its purpose would be to send a signal concerning risks both to other known aiders and abettors as well as to other individuals whose identities might not yet be known.

3. SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS IN INFLUENCING TERRORISTS WMD CALCULUS

Many different U.S. and international actions to counter the threat of WMD terrorism are now underway. These actions provide the core, as well, of U.S. and global responses to next generation WMD terrorism. Within this set of responses, particular attention is rightly being paid to those actions that would could have a direct and immediate impact: actions to enhance controls over WMD-related materials and weapons as well as other inputs to terrorist acquisition of one or another type of WMD; enhanced national and international efforts at detection, protection, and interdiction; and the overall ongoing effort to counter terrorist groups from using whatever type of violence. Though limited, the preceding discussion of actions to influence terrorists thinking about whether to pursue or use WMD demonstrates that such influencing actions should be considered a potentially valuable adjunct to the overall set of actions to counter WMD terrorism. Influencing actions are not the answer but they are part of the answer.

With that in mind, there are a number of next steps that the United States and like-minded countries could take to begin to implement an influencing strategy to influence the thinking of different terrorist groups and their component entities about escalation to WMD violence. These include the following:
3.1 IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE HIGHEST PRIORITY INFLUENCE “TARGETS”

An initial step would be to identify the highest priority influencing targets from among the groups and component entities that comprise the next generation WMD terrorism threat. In part, priority would be based on the immediacy of the threat; in part on the prospects for successful influencing efforts. So viewed, the list of top priority influencing efforts would include the al-Qaeda core leadership, al-Qaeda aiders and abettors, the leaders of al-Qaeda affiliated groups as well as al-Qaeda-inspired cells, the leaders of non-al-Qaeda Islamic groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, and the wider set of outsider aiders and abettors. (The al-Qaeda core leadership is included not because prospects for successful influencing are high, but because it is too dangerous to exclude completely). In turn, the influencing strategy discussed here clearly depends on intelligence and information on the thinking and calculus of these different groups and entities. Thus, existing guidance for intelligence analysis as well as efforts to tap outsider expertise could be modified, as needed, to include an explicit emphasis on assessing possible leverage points and identifying related actions to influence those leverage points for the groups and component entities highlighted.

3.2 ALSO THINK IN TERMS OF CROSS-CUTTING INFLUENCING ACTIONS

Based on the case-by-case discussion above, as summarized by Table 3.2.2 on the following page, many of the actions to influence terrorists’ WMD calculus would apply across different groups and entities. This determination is important because it suggests that implementation of a influencing strategy could prove considerably more manageable than might be thought – or even as implied by the emphasis in the conceptual discussion at the start of this Part on the need to think in terms of influencing the calculations of particular groups and their component entities. Instead, there do appear to be a number of cross-cutting actions that would form the core of an influencing strategy. Equally important, many of these actions would not entail a major commitment of additional resources and would be consistent with the overall thrust of U.S. counter-terrorist activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group-entity/Leverage:</th>
<th>Justifiability and legitimacy</th>
<th>Serves goals</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Effective use of resources</th>
<th>Too risky or imprudent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al-Qaeda core leadership</td>
<td>• Not applicable - taken as a given by core leadership</td>
<td>• Encourage Islamic WMD use debate</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Signal tailored, tempered, but costly U.S. response - vice striking out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Qaeda affiliated groups &amp; inspired cells</td>
<td>• Encourage Islamic WMD use debate</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• As above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Qaeda aiders and abettors - insiders</td>
<td>• Encourage Islamic debate on legitimacy &amp; justifiability of WMD use</td>
<td>• As above</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Declaratory policy - U.S.-others will hold accountable • Enhance global consensus, means, &amp; habits of cooperation • Punish aiders-abettors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-al-Qaeda (Islamic - Hezbollah, Hamas) - leaders</td>
<td>• Deal with underlying causes of terrorism • Encourage Islamic debate</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Enhance global consensus, means, &amp; habits of cooperation against WMD terrorism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-al-Qaeda and Non-Islamic - (LTTE, FARC) -- leaders</td>
<td>• Deal with underlying terrorism • Encourage debate</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Enhance global consensus, means, &amp; habits of cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State supporters - unauthorized or authorized and official</td>
<td>• Encourage debate on justifiability &amp; legitimacy • Declaratory policy – U.S.-others will hold accountable</td>
<td>• Suite of denial of benefits actions</td>
<td>• Declaratory policy – U.S.-others will hold leaders accountable • Enhance global consensus, means, &amp; habits of cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsider aiders and abettors - individuals and organizations</td>
<td>• Reinforce individual responsibility &amp; norms of behavior • Declaratory policy hold accountable • Punish aiders and abettors</td>
<td>• Punish aiders and abettors</td>
<td>• Punish aiders-abettors</td>
<td>• Enhance global consensus, means, &amp; habits of cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2.2: Influencing Terrorists WMD Use Calculus – Influencing Actions vs. Groups-Component Entities
3.3 PRIORITY CROSS-CUTTING INFLUENCING ACTIONS

Based on the preceding discussion – from concepts to practice – a set of priority actions for influencing the WMD acquisition and use calculus of different terrorist groups and their component entities is evident. Implementation of these actions all could be initiated on a generic basis, while over time fine-tuning their application with a view to specific groups and entities. Their sustained pursuit would give substance to the injunction to take steps “to deter and dissuade terrorist WMD use” of the U.S. National Implementation Plan for combating WMD terrorism. In so doing, such influencing actions would fill an important gap in overall U.S. actions to counter todays and the next generation al-Qaeda-Jihadist terrorist threat. Not least, such actions could contribute to countering the potential next generation WMD terrorist threat from non-al-Qaeda groups and entities as well as from their individual aiders and abettors or state-supporters.

3.4 PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS

Within the U.S. official community, there is a greater readiness to consider the role of deterrence in combating WMD terrorism. Within the analytic community, there now is an emerging consensus on how to approach this task, with an emphasis on a broader set of actions to influence the WMD calculus of different terrorist groups and component entities. The challenge now is to move ahead to implement that emerging consensus. This discussion has put forward one way to do so via a set of influencing actions derived from the potential leverage points across the different this generation and next generation terrorist groups. These influencing actions should be viewed as one part of the overall U.S. and global approach to deal with the threat of WMD terrorism. They are not and do not purport to be a sufficient answer. In conjunction with the other types of responses already underway and discussed herein, influencing actions can increase the prospects for successfully preventing or at least containing next generation WMD terrorism.