

ULTIMATE CAUSES OF WARS (LONG-TERM, STRATEGIC CAUSES) AND DIFFERING ROLES FOR INTELLIGENCE PRACTITIONERS, ACADEMICS, AND POLICY MAKERS

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Abstract

Promoting constructive relations between academics and intelligence practitioners in the US is a perennial challenge. Many centripetal forces drive us apart. This challenge will be illustrated by reference to four of the most important ultimate causes of wars and crises that all civilizations face today. Those long-term causes of conflict are: 1) Population Pressure; 2) Corruptions of Governance; 3) Militant Religion, and 4) Authoritarian Law.

That conclusion followed review of over 400 relevant books, structured interviews with over 100 long-term (>20 years' service) accomplished, military, intelligence and diplomatic personnel, and a similar number of long-term, accomplished peace advocates. This resulted in a book that won our National Peace Writing Award in 1999. (Andregg, 1997, 1999, 2001) The concept of a 'developing global crisis' (DGC) that underlies more proximate (more visible, & often less controversial) causes of wars has been presented at many military and intelligence colleges since then, where officers often struggle with the differences between strategic and tactical intelligence. Very few people want to get into unending wars, but militaries lean towards tactics. We reply that medicine teaches us that to cure grave problems one must identify ultimate causes, not deal just with symptoms.

Population Pressure is an ultimate (strategic) cause of wars well illustrated by contemporary Syria, by displacement of Native peoples in North and South America by European immigrants, and by many other examples. However, no US politician speaks about this openly due partly to opposition from organized religious groups. So our military is now trapped in wars that never end in places with high birth rates and endemic violence like Afghanistan and Iraq. Many try to promote "moderate" (non-violent) forms of Islam there. But our partners are often assassinated by terrorists who reject modernity, and who see collaboration with foreign occupiers as treason.

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Corruptions of Governance obstruct solutions to big problems everywhere. Academics are well informed about those, which makes us irritating. Intelligence professionals are usually employed by governments, as are policy makers, which make criticizing governments difficult for them. So academic critics of policy are often seen as nags or worse, and the scholars are frustrated by being ignored or even actively opposed by bureaucracies that resist change fiercely.

Militant Religion and Authoritarian Law interact synergistically, which complicates everything. This combination drives terrorist enthusiasm for violent "solutions" to the many problems they seek to overcome by ruling the entire world. Thus, "Caliphate" has become a label for militant, religious authoritarianism. I will tie each of these factors to implications for both practitioners and policy makers, despite their long-term and very problematic political implications.

Keywords: *causes of wars, intelligence practitioners, academics, and policy makers.*

Introduction to a simplistic Matrix

Theorists try to simplify even hyper-complex problems to better understand and discuss them. Therefore, I provide the very simplistic matrix below as a framework from which to discuss how these four major forces interact with the different job categories or roles we often find ourselves in. To emphasize our common goal, I quote America's recently retired top intelligence officer, former Director of National Intelligence and Air Force General James Clapper. "Factors like **food and water shortages** and poor living conditions – increasingly driven by **climate change** – **oppression** of political freedoms, **corruption** by **autocratic** governments and rulers who had been in place for decades – ... made them (failed states) extremely unstable." (Clapper and Brown, 2018) The only ultimate cause that Clapper does not mention in this one sentence is militant religion, but there are plenty of comments on that in his discussions of the apparently endless "war on terrorism."

A. Matrix of ultimate causes of wars by job categories of responders

NB: "IP's" means Intelligence Professionals, or Practitioners in this matrix.

	Practitioners	Academics	Policy Makers (PMs)
Population Pressure (PP)	Cannot affect PP, and work time dominated by short-term crises.	Can study for decades (and have) producing clues for solutions.	Must try to reconcile taboos on discussion <u>and</u> deal with mainly short-term crises.
Corruptions of Governance	Employed by Gov'ts, exposing corruption is very risky for IP's.	We love studying corruptions, often with no practical solutions.	PMs have to live, and secure real power, in corrosive environments.
Militant 'Religions'	Faced with huge #'s of unemployed, male, desperate, militarized radicals.	<u>My</u> 'practical' solution requires taboo violation which is risky for most. ('good vs. bad' religion)	Policy should support the 'good' spirituals, while defeating 'bad' religious terrorists.
Authoritarian Law (AL)	IP's internal order is paramilitary, but external problems require human rights.	'We' hate AL so much that many find it very hard to collaborate with IP's constructively.	Many PMs dream becoming 'dear leaders' if not a God's dictators with impunity.

Presume for the moment that there is neither doubt nor controversy over the proposition that population pressure is a powerful, ultimate cause of wars and other problems. The point here is to observe how different job types interact with that. First, intelligence practitioners are besieged daily with often time-urgent problems of tactical kinds. They have very little free time, and zero ability to do anything short-term about population issues. They also are almost never asked to attend to long-term issues by their taskers, and may even be punished for venturing into "policy." Academics, on another hand, have decades to ponder ultimate causes of conflicts and to work on potential solutions to those, relatively free from political constraints. Most policy

makers (in my experience) are fairly well aware of population issues, but seldom speak about them and almost never publicly, because they must survive intensely political environments, which can (and often do) reject and replace them if they dare to discuss taboos in public. Why population issues are politically taboo is a topic for another day, but every practical politician is familiar with that and why the taboos exist. Political opportunists exploit this factor by raising legitimate fears of immigration, then exaggerating these by demonization of ethnic or religious minorities.

Some large fraction of the endemic conflicts that seldom end in Africa and the Middle East, for example, are driven by these kinds of “tribal politics.” They are also driven by high birth rates. (Andregg, 2018) But it is much easier to talk about political and religious differences, about relevant histories and personalities of key leaders, than about the underlying tectonic force of high birth rates, which lead to population pressure, resulting in endemic wars and occasional genocides. That dynamic is almost never mentioned by people who want to keep their jobs in politics or even in academe.

We asked readers to “presume that there is neither doubt nor controversy over the proposition that population pressure is a powerful, ultimate cause of wars and other problems” knowing that there is much doubt and inevitable controversy over that proposition. Nazli Choucri and Robert C. North proved it in 1975, but their work failed to gain traction due to the pervasive opposition to thinking about high birth rates as a cause of conflicts. (Choucri and North, 1975) Therefore, we will spend some space on proving that proposition now. For the other three proposed “ultimate” causes of wars and genocides (Corruptions of Governance, Militant Religion, and Authoritarian Law) we will focus on implications for practitioners, academics and policy makers, rather than writing another book.

Evidence that population pressure is an ultimate cause of wars and genocides

The case of the disintegration of Syria from 2011 to the present day is particularly vivid and has more reliable metrics than many, so we will concentrate on that case here, then on historic genocides of North and South America. But there are many other historic examples, from Easter Island to World War II to the expulsion by force of Rohingya from contemporary Myanmar. (Blomquist, 2016; Blomquist and Cincotta, April 12, 2016) The danger is spending so much time on proving the importance of any factor that one loses focus on how differently academics, practitioners and policy makers must deal with such factors.

In 2010, the population growth rate in Syria was 2.4% per year. (CIA World Factbook, 2010) This leads to a doubling time of just under 30 years and a highly “pyramidal” age distribution with many more young than elders. In addition, the worst drought in Syria’s recorded history occurred during the four years prior, leading to migration of at least 1.5 million (of Syria’s then 22 million people) from barren farmlands into overburdened cities. (“A Syrian Refugee at COP21,” by Andrea Liverani, 21 October, 2015) Climate change contributed to that drought, and global warming is a substantial and significant consequence of the global increase in human populations and especially in consumption of fossil fuels. It is a derivative result of population pressure.

Syrian conflicts began with simple protests of largely students in Damascus, who sought a fairer distribution of job opportunities from the government of Bashar al-Assad. He was reserving the best for his Alawite ethno-religious group, with some for minority Christians in a predominantly Sunni country. He followed in his father’s footsteps by crushing protests, which introduces those other ultimate forces of corruptions of governance and authoritarian law. But this time, the tidal force of population pressure combined with militant religion, which was growing throughout the region. So, despite many casualties, protests endured, became more militant and better armed, and morphed over a few years into a hyper-complex and brutal series of civil wars. This led to over half a million dead, half of the pre-war Syrian population displaced, and at least 6 million refugees who fled to near neighbors (1 million went on to Europe) spreading population pressure to all those areas, but especially to fragile Jordan and Lebanon, and increasingly militant Turkey. (*UN High Commissioner for Refugees*, 29 August, 2015) Meanwhile, the Alawite population in Syria grew from 11% in 2010 to about 17% in 2014. (CIA World Factbook, 2014)

Moving back in time, we note quickly that “*Lebensraum*” (living room) was a powerful theme in Hitler’s excuses for invading his neighbors. Population pressure was also long seen in Japan as the primary reason for invading China first, then many Southeast Asian nations and Pacific islands. In fact, the Japanese Diet (Parliament equivalent) publicly debated the need to feed another million Japanese babies every year, and the impossibility of doing that on the resources of their largely mountainous island nation. Thus, real and imagined concerns about dire needs to secure the resources of weaker neighbors were a powerful force in the genesis of World War II.

The innumerable small wars in North and South America, and occasional outright genocides, provide some equally compelling numbers. For one example, the land on which my Universities stand and the entire territory

of Minnesota was 99% Native American “Indians” in the year 1800. By 1900, one short century later, the state of Minnesota was 99% whites of European ancestry, with only ½ % Native Americans. The remaining ½% was blacks who left the South after our own Civil War. (“Turn of the Century: Minnesota’s Population in 1900 and Today”) There was a seminal point, now called the US – Dakota War of 1862, when the native Lakota and Dakota Sioux were forcibly expelled to far away, barren territories. Bounties were even offered by our first Governor for scalps of Indian heads, a dramatic contrast to contemporary values and laws. Along with the Sioux, many Ojibwe, Ho-chunk, Winnebago, and other native tribes suffered and died, or moved to mainly remote and desolate areas.

This is actually a story as old as human history, and enumerating examples can take lifetimes. The lesson of Easter Island is especially instructive, because it was another island civilization that destroyed itself and its supporting ecosystem. From a high of 20,000 people on a 14 by 21 kilometer island with normal wood and other resources, they killed each other and deforested their island until when Captain Cook found it in 1774, there were only about 1,000 remaining. Novel diseases further decimated them, to a low of 114 survivors. More examples and technical analysis is found in Chapter 12 of the previously cited book on the causes of wars, pp. 62-73. (Causes of War, pp. 62-73, 2001) But talking about population pressure still remains quite difficult for academics and politicians.

Of course, there are contrary cases as well. For example, Russia has no intrinsic need for more land today. Its population growth rate is currently negative, and its residual empire occupies the largest area of any modern nation. (CIA World Factbook, 2018)¹ But President Putin misses the glories of the old Soviet Union, and his drive for power and wealth knows no limit. So today, Putin rules one of the most corrupt and authoritarian regimes on earth. They routinely assassinate critics and competitors to maintain Putin’s rule and oligarch wealth. Hybrid warfare destabilized Ukraine. Putin seized Crimea at a vulnerable moment with “little green men,” (“Annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation”) and maintains military forces in other “frozen conflicts” in Georgia and Moldova to this day. Population pressure is not a cause of those conflicts, rather corruptions of governance and Putin’s affection for authoritarian law.

¹ Sections on Russian geography and demographics: Russia currently occupies 17,098,242 square km, and their growth rate in 2017 was negative .08% per year.

Corruptions of governance

Virtually every adult with a brain recognizes that corruptions of governance are a powerful cause of wars and many other problems. Corruptions of governance also obstruct solution to problems, even when practical solutions are easily apparent to scientific and economic communities (as with climate change, or controlling inflation). However, law enforcement in general and intelligence agencies in particular face some immediate dilemmas that complicate effective action in support of their overall noble mission, which is protecting the peoples of nation states.

First, all involved are employed by governments, which make looking at local corruption risky. Gathering data on corruptions in adversary governments is often OK, and some intelligence professionals specialize in information operations employing such tradecraft.² Russian “active measures” have always included this dimension,³ and they have raised exploiting corruptions in other governments (and people) to an art form. But criticize their own government? The price in Russia is often death, with especially gruesome deaths for defectors from the security services.⁴

Second, noble police and armed forces are undoubtedly focused on protecting both states and people. However, their dangerous work, centuries of history, and the priorities of paymasters make each group more casual about “collateral damage” (a.k.a. murder of innocents) than most citizens are. Since states control definitions of terms like ‘murder’ and create euphemisms like ‘collateral damage’ to cover their own sins, it is quite hard for practitioners to ignore the obvious desire of governments to avoid

² Two very instructive cases are Peru under Alberto Fujimori, who was indicted after videos appeared showing his intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos bribing Congressmen, and Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan who went after the followers of an ex-patriate Imam named Fethullah Gulen who revealed corruptions at the top of Turkey. Both cases are hideously complicated, so I simply note these examples of information operations of great consequence that were focused on exposing corruptions at the top of nominal democracies.

³ “Active Measures” is the most important and well-credentialed documentary yet produced on Russian efforts to disrupt the 2016 US elections. It was produced by Jack Bryan and released on Hulu on 31, August 2018.

⁴ The murder by polonium 210 poisoning of KGB defector Alexander Litvinenko in London on 1 November, 2006, is a type case of this kind of retaliation against Russian intelligence veterans, because the cause and the poisoners are known, and the manner of death was very slow, gruesome, visible and incurable. The more recent attempt to poison double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia with novichok nerve agent in Britain on 4 March, 2018 is another. There are, unfortunately, many other such cases where precise causes and participants are less well known.

accountability for crimes that they cause. Most involved on that side of the power equation prefer impunity for their acts of violence and other crimes.

So, basically, many academics are decades ahead of many practitioners and policy makers on perceiving corruptions of governments, understanding their dynamics, and formulating possible solutions for both the big problems, and for the smaller but intense dilemmas that practitioners and conscientious policy makers face when their chain of command goes bad.⁵ This happens much more often than professors of intelligence studies tend to admit. Pity the good German Generals who recognized that Hitler's madness would destroy their great nation. Thousands were killed when their attempts to assassinate him failed. ("Assassination Plot against Hitler Fails") And pity whistleblowers from America's intelligence community today who try to reveal waste, fraud or abuse within their systems, much less wrongdoings that led to million-death "mistakes."⁶

You do not hear much about national security whistleblowers from police states like Russia, China or a long list of other nations we wish not to offend, because they are often killed or imprisoned so efficiently that their stories never make it to polite society. Intelligence practitioners are keenly

⁵ The most obvious example of solutions for insider moral dilemmas is whistleblower protection legislation. In the USA, most federal employees enjoy such protection from punishment for revealing waste, fraud and abuse – excepting specifically intelligence employees. Therefore, associations of retired IC members who support whistleblowers now exist, including VIPS (Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity) and a related National Security Whistleblowers Coalition, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Security_Whistleblowers_Coalition.

⁶ The best example of this from recent times was fraudulent intelligence presented to promote the second invasion of Iraq by US forces in March 2003. This is a very complicated example where there were plenty of simple mistakes and groupthink. But there were also examples of crudely forged documents, and fraudulent testimony of unverified "sources" in foreign countries that were more than just mistakes. The ultimate proof was failure to find any of the Weapons of Mass Destruction that were alleged to "certainly" exist in Iraq. Detailed reviews can be found in *A Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq, and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies*, by James Bamford, New York, NY: Anchor Books, division of Random House, 2005, and *The Greatest Story Ever Sold: the Decline and Fall of Truth in Bush's America*, by Frank Rich, New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2006. Retaliation against US government employees in this affair is also well documented in "Fair Game," both a book and a documentary about CIA veteran Valerie Plame Wilson and her diplomat husband Joseph. A review of these open sources combined with some secret (i.e. IC) sources was presented by this author at the Fifth "Need to Know" conference in Greifswald, Germany on 6 November, 2015 titled "The US Decision to Invade Iraq in March, 2003, Chasing Phantom WMDs: How Human Intelligence was Used, Abused and Politicized to 'fix the facts around the policy,'" accessible at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5750629760b5e9d6697be6cd/t/59dcd32651a58476eab47044/1507644200230/Need+to+Know+V+Greifswald+dfinal.pdf>.

aware of this consequence for looking into corruption of their police states, so even most conscientious practitioners look in some other direction. Lord knows, there are plenty of other threats to the state one can attend to, like real terrorists and organized crime. Corrupted intelligence services lose their loyalty to citizens, and often conclude that students, teachers and grandmothers protesting grievous wrongs are criminals or even “terrorists.” Police states are especially prone to equating peaceful protest with treason, or at least criminal riot, and they routinely label patriotic government whistleblowers as traitors to the state. Democracies are not immune to these perverse transformations of common language and traditional justice.

The history of intelligence “whistleblowers” in America is discouraging. Daniel Ellsberg became a national name when he shared Pentagon documents with major media that revealed years of government lying about the war in Vietnam. They threatened him with prison and possibly death, until a rare judge declared that whistleblowers are true patriots.⁷ A most recent example, Reality Winner, was sentenced on 23 August, 2018 to over five years in prison for revealing one NSA document on Russian meddling in the 2016 US elections. (Holpuch, 23 August, 2018) Before her, Edward Snowden achieved unwanted fame by revealing to our public and the world that the US government was routinely scanning most domestic telephone and many email communications in violation of our Constitution. Before him, Thomas Drake from the NSA was persecuted for discussing the same hard truths (a story stranger than fiction described on “60 Minutes”).⁸ Before him Army private Chelsea (a.k.a. Bradley) Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison for revealing unpleasant truths about our war in Iraq. (New York Times, 21 August, 2013) In each case, unusually conscientious intelligence professionals chose their oath to protect and defend our Constitution over contracts with US government agencies to keep all secrets no matter how severe, immoral or even illegal. Most were punished more severely than financial criminals who steal billions and injure millions.

⁷ Daniel Ellsberg was prosecuted under the 1917 Espionage Act, which stipulates the death penalty in extremis. Fortunately for Ellsberg, a judge dismissed the charges two years later because Ellsberg was not a foreign spy, but rather a patriot trying to alert our country about grievous wrongs planned in secret and lied about for many years. This dichotomy of “patriotic whistleblowers” vs. “treasonous secret leakers” is peculiar to democracies.

⁸ The “60 Minutes” story of Thomas Drake can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mVpMp9QLPE. A later interview with Drake for “Frontline” is archived at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/government-elections-politics/united-states-of-secrets/the-frontline-interview-thomas-drake/>

This puts a big strain on the consciences of many real patriots who make careers in intelligence, the military and law enforcement, especially when corruptions of high office become as blatant, egregious, and as damaging to true national security as we observe in 2018. But there is little relief for insiders unless other groups create “political space” for dissent among employees of the state. Even then, revelations from the professional military are fraught with danger. Moral dilemmas faced by policy makers are similar, and profound. They must succeed in toxic moral environments that make it very difficult for truly honest and good men or women to succeed.

One of our sources who achieved high office in an allied intelligence system pointed out that 80% of his work time had to be devoted to fending off efforts from domestic competitors for his job. This is more than just workload; it is one reason they all have armed security details. That is when the top leaders are relatively democratic and ‘clean.’ The dilemmas faced by patriots in decaying police states are rather more severe. My country is facing a very hard test today of the “checks and balances” created by the writers of our Constitution to deal with such high-level corruption. We currently endure the most corrupt President in living memory who is also acting like an asset of a foreign adversary, with thousands of nuclear weapons under his command. At the time of writing, anything could happen from impeachment to World War III.

Lord Acton’s most famous quote is relevant here: “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Acton has a much less famous comment for intelligence practitioners, judges and policy makers, which were: ***“Everything secret degenerates, even the administration of justice; nothing is safe that does not show how it can bear discussion and publicity.”*** (Gasquet and Abbott, 1906)

Therefore, in sum I conclude that the lion’s share of work on exposing government corruptions and proposing solutions must remain with the journalists and academics who have chosen that task aware of how many are imprisoned or even killed each year for their efforts to improve and secure the peoples of their nations. But I also educate policy makers and intelligence practitioners about this problem often, because their information cocoons can be so pervasive that some forget that our citizens are not ‘the enemy’ unless we are traitors to national values.

Militant ‘Religion’

One key to decoding this extremely problematic, ultimate cause of many wars and genocides lies in the definition of ‘religion’ and more cogently, on discerning fundamental differences between “good” religions

and “bad” religions. Therefore, a few words on that never-ending landmine are relevant here.

First, one can observe that even the scripture-based “religions of the book” display a spectrum from peace oriented, life-affirming, community building practices and people who try hard to elevate everyone to better health, wealth, and spiritual enlightenment, to a much darker group who truly believe that their ‘god’ loves them much more than any other persons. Those claim that their interpretation of religion or divine revelation is the only accurate version, and in the most extreme cases, that destiny desires them to rule the entire earth, often by violent means.

This spectrum is not limited to people who make religions of words, however allegedly perfect. Even gentle Buddhism can produce both gentle Buddhists and militant religionists who urge war against non-believers, as in the civil war in Sri Lanka from 23 July, 1983 to 17 May, 2009, and the expulsion of Muslim Rohingya by militant Buddhist armies in contemporary Myanmar.

Wishing to focus on how this difficult, strategic cause of wars affects the worlds of practitioners, policy-makers and academics, I submit an observation on the genesis of this odd phenomenon of religions animating both peacemaking and warmongering behaviors. The fundamentalist, and so often militant, end of the spectrum displays behaviors indistinguishable from the selfish genes of modern evolution theory. The spiritual, life-affirming end of this spectrum displays behaviors urged by all the prophets and often modeled by exemplary lives of service to all humankind. Those folks feed the hungry and heal the sick. The militants plot for power and commit crimes. People come in both kinds. And both may use “religion” as inspiration for their behaviors.

For policy makers, one practical result is that it is generally OK to point out the evil behaviors of “terrorists” in enemy camps, and even to detail how militant versions of their religion inspire and instruct them. If one points out that there are equally cruel members of the home religion, the power of the policy maker may disappear overnight, if indeed they survive the night.

Intelligence practitioners do more of their work in secrecy, so they have a bit more latitude, and every analyst with a brain recognizes that militant ‘religion’ is a cause of many problems today. But they still work in fairly authoritarian government groups. So if the boss is a member of a militant clan (or cult) their job can still be at risk. Whatever their position, intelligence agencies are notoriously prone to “politicization” of their

estimates, conclusions and recommendations. Therefore, this is a conundrum worth contemplating for conscientious intelligence professionals.

Once again, academics in non-police states are freer to comment bluntly on this factor, even on the similarities between militant religious groups and destructive cults.⁹ Therefore, I can say what practical politicians almost never do, that “religions” come in both good and bad varieties. One is life affirming, constructive, healthy, and often inspired by ‘revelation’ or spiritual figures including some called prophets. The other is not life affirming, but rather is selfish and arguably “Darwinian.” The latter also tends to be much more vocal about its “religion.” Since the militants are much more violent than authentic spirituals, they tend to dominate if not wipe those out.¹⁰

One practical aspect deserves comment for the intelligence professionals among us. Religious extremists often suppress women and express strong commitments to having large families. I have seen advertisements in their literature about this as a tactic of war, or to prevail in political competitions against their less zealous religious competitors. Thus, militant religion also tends to support high birth rates, another of the most powerful ultimate causes of wars and genocides. And thus, we are faced today with tens of millions of often poorly educated, barely employable teen-aged males with little hope for families much less healthy futures. Such men are easy to hire by demagogues who use “religion” as a cover for crass political greed of every kind. This also points to solutions, like strong encouragement of education for women, modernization of tribal codes and gender roles, and easy access to things like modern contraception despite predictable resistance

⁹ Research on destructive cults, fundamentalist religions and connections between those and “mainstream” religions is extensive, so we will cite just four books here. Margaret Thaler Singer wrote *Cults in our Midst: The Hidden Menace in our Everyday Lives*, with Janja Lalich, published by Jossey-Bass Publishers of San Francisco, CA, in 1995. *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and other Group Violence*, was written by Ervin Staub in 1989, and published by Cambridge University Press. *Enemies of Freedom: Understanding Right-wing Authoritarianism*, was published by Jossey Bass in San Francisco, and won the AAAS award for best Social Science research in 1988 for its author, Bob Altemeyer. Finally, perhaps the most extensive review of fundamentalist religions and their relations with other religions was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1991 as part of a long-term project. Its 888-page magnum opus was edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, titled *Fundamentalisms Observed*. This paradox of peaceful religions animating violent behaviours was so perplexing to this author that I camped with a group called the Christian Patriots Defence League at their freedom festival for three days in 1979, surrounded by armed militia who were protecting us from ... someone. I learned a great many things about this topic there, but since they are neither published nor easily reproducible, I will spare readers details here.

¹⁰ The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth can be cited as one example of a pacifist killed by militant competitors.

from the most militant wings of whatever religions prevail in that region. "They" want many obedient soldiers, with few options for making a viable life doing productive things.

Militant "religions" provide moral cover for the brutal activities of wars and genocides.¹¹ However, without actual, practical power, they will not prevail. Authoritarian Law provides the money, equipment, training, and legal justifications for large scale, organized armed conflict by states. Thus, the two factors in combination are much more dangerous than either one alone. Therefore, we turn now to Authoritarian Law.

Authoritarian law

Everyone recognizes that an American President (or a Russian President) could order a massive, nuclear attack against hundreds of cities half a world away at any time, resulting in probable destruction of civilization itself in the northern hemisphere. Such is the logic of "Mutual Assured Destruction," commonly known as MAD. It is less obvious, but no less true, that this capability is entirely dependent on authoritarian law.

First, is the chain of command, supported by vast recruitment, training, legal and educational foundations that teach millions of sworn officers and enlisted personnel that it is their solemn duty to obey the "Commander in Chief" no matter what.¹²

Second it comes the vast amounts of money expended over decades or even generations required to actually build thousands of nuclear warheads and their associated delivery systems. That money is not acquired by persuasion, but rather by laws backed by force that compel citizens to pay taxes for security purposes no matter what they feel about how their financial support is used.

Finally, third comes judiciary systems that reinforce the coercion of soldiers to obey, and citizens to support state violence regardless of personal

¹¹ ISIS, or "Islamic State," which is ironically neither authentically Islamic nor a state by any definition, provides the most graphic examples today of this paradox of militant 'religion' inspiring brutally cruel behaviours. There are many historic examples, but I do not want to irritate my neighbors with reference to "Manifest Destiny" or "Crusades."

¹² We could digress here to discuss the much weaker guidelines for U.S. officers and troops to resist, or even to disobey "unlawful orders." Any such order to fire nuclear weapons at targets under great time pressure, if properly authenticated, would likely be considered lawful, and our nuclear forces have refined their techniques to weed out anyone who might let conscience override training in a crisis. We are confident the Russians have trained and selected their nuclear troops to obey also. Thus, Authoritarian Law can become more powerful than pacific religion.

conscience. This is why protestors of state violence are commonly jailed, while perpetrators of state violence very seldom are. The judges and the laws are integral parts of authoritarian systems. Extended over generations, one result is a culture of authoritarian law that fundamentally supports state violence over international peace, or even human rights at home, which are often abandoned during declared emergencies.

Of course, governments vary a lot in their degrees of authoritarianism. Those differences are quite important, which is why I comment often on differences between police states and more enlightened governments. Virtually none exemplify the “Golden Rule,” which is mentioned in the scriptures of every written religion and in the principles of native peoples worldwide.¹³

Bob Altemeyer of Canada won the 1988 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) award for best work in Social Science that year by suggesting that authoritarian law is one byproduct of a personality trait. This work was preceded by a great deal of intense study of similar themes after the Nazi debacle in Europe, animated by the question of how or why so many “Good Germans” could become faithful followers of a madman who ultimately destroyed their own country along with many tens of millions of other victims. (Arendt, 1963, 1977, 2006; Adorno et. al. 1950) Altemeyer’s work was followed by hundreds of studies in political psychology and sociology that cited him.¹⁴

But our purpose here is probing how Authoritarian Law affects intelligence practitioners, policy makers, and academics. The first point to observe is that most intelligence practitioners work in authoritarian systems where obedience to some chain of command is the most highly prized virtue. By number, the most work in military intelligence organizations where strict obedience to mission and command has been reinforced by centuries of combat that show how important unity of command is. Yet even “civilian”

¹³ Native peoples, of course, can also be warlike and have been thousands of times in human history. We are not trying to be romantic here, just note that the same spectrum from life affirming, and humanity building spirituality to barbaric, warmongering savagery exists in every population we have seen so far. A deeper analysis suggests that this spectrum exists in the behavioural repertoire of normal human beings, who are products of evolutionary histories that put premiums on survival and reproduction, both of individuals and of the small (often tribal) groups they tend to associate with. Thousands of years of history including hundreds of genocides reinforce this behavioural template.

¹⁴ Also noteworthy were classic experiments by Stanley Milgram (Obedience to Authority, 1974) and Philip Zimbardo (The Stanford Prison Experiment, 1971) but we digress into political psychology again.

agencies (like the CIA in America) often operate like paramilitary organizations in terms of their command and control, rewards and punishments, and specialized rules of duty to their agency more than to their country, much less to citizens.¹⁵

Working every day in authoritarian organizations that control paychecks and pensions as well as mundane things like definitions of *duty*, *justice*, *freedom*, *legal*, *criminal* and other words with big consequences makes it very difficult for insiders to dissent in any meaningful way. And yet most of the really great problems on our earth require considerable respect for concepts like human rights, rule of law, and definitions of “justice” that are remarkably different from those used by police states. One might note for example the differences between such terms in the Romania of Nicolae Ceaușescu, as compared with any of its successor governments no matter their inevitable flaws. Like people, every government has feet of clay too, but the spectrum from better to worse is extremely important to both world security and human survival.

As usual, the academics have more freedom, but much less power to do anything significant. That challenge is compounded by the fact that many academics are viscerally opposed to authoritarian law in all its forms, often because they have been repressed in the past or because they have spent lifetimes studying repression and corruption among authoritarian systems.

This culture gap often makes it hard for academics and intelligence practitioners to work well together even when both sincerely want to. Key words have different meanings, so we often talk past each other. One group’s devotion to secrecy and one-way information flows clashes with the other’s devotion to free exchange of information, and constant testing of hypotheses against evidence from world-wide networks. Questions of ‘loyal to who or what’ loom over every interaction, and trust in the basic humanity, good will and honesty of collaborators is fragile.

That makes constructive collaboration difficult, sometimes exhausting, and occasionally dangerous. Many academics fear that any known connection to intelligence agencies will ruin their reputation among strictly academic colleagues. And some intelligence professionals are so afraid their precious secrets will leak that they seldom or never take the risks of collaboration.

¹⁵ As illustrated by the severe punishments applied to U.S. national security whistleblowers when compared with the many other sins committed by intelligence personnel, much less politicians. We all have feet of clay, but resistance to the god of authoritarian law is undoubtedly punished much more aggressively in the USA than most of our human transgressions.

Fortunately, enough intelligence professionals graduate to become professors at universities, and enough academics have family in security services to know that they do not eat babies every day.

Policy makers are in the delicate position of transcending such boundaries. Many are extremely dependent on secret information from professional intelligence services, so they obey the rules of secrecy, but they work (at least in theory) for the citizens of their nations. Whatever their political inclinations, they usually sincerely want to do the best they can for their countries and for *most* of the citizens of those countries. The special problem policy makers' face is that most are politicians of one sort or another. And like politicians everywhere, their most common secret dream is to become Commander in Chief of the Universe. Darwin talks to all of us.

Conclusions

The ultimate strategic challenge of our time is between civilization and barbarism, or in fact, between life and death for billions of people. The outcome is in doubt, and there is not infinite time to solve these great problems. Therefore, I urge every intelligence practitioner, academic, policy maker and hybrids thereof to do their best to both act on immediate crises effectively, and to develop the global vision and wisdom necessary to keep strategic challenges in mind.

For example, waves of migration from poor and violent areas toward richer and safer countries will continue for the foreseeable future. And even if they could be walled off perfectly by some imaginary structure or technology, the problems of failed states would fester until disease or WMDs find their way across borders. We must deal with ultimate causes, not just symptoms, and we must be global, not just local. Stopping excess migrants is dealing with a symptom only. Population Pressure, violence, and Corruptions of Governance are ultimate causes of migration.

Climate change is a tidal force that will keep pressure boiling in areas closer to the equator. And global warming is entirely a derivative consequence of relentless population pressure. Substantial solutions to those issues are well within the grasp of modern technology, if politicians would allow the engineers and biologists to do what they know is necessary, humanely, carefully, but expeditiously, before sea level rise puts every coastal region at risk and wars spread everywhere.

Corruptions of governance (and other institutions) frustrate solutions worldwide. The IT revolution makes exposing corruptions ever easier, but that same revolution also empowers police states today, as witness the plight

of the Uyghur people in Northwest China. Beijing is deploying facial recognition cameras everywhere there, and authoritarian police and intelligence forces with the best of artificial intelligence use 24/7 surveillance technologies to identify any trace of critical thought or resistance in the Xinjiang Uyghur “Autonomous” Region. (Denyer, 7 January, 2018) China’s plan to develop social obedience scores for every citizen is beyond even Orwell’s imagination.¹⁶

Repression often works for a while ... until it fails with catastrophic consequences as it did in Syria. Dozens of Chinese Emperors died because of that dynamic; you would think they would learn from their thousands of years of history. The same can be said for militant religion. No matter how barbaric, states founded on that principle always fall in the end because their zealous dogmas repel, imprison, or even kill the creative people who invent great things and build new businesses. When the cranks and critics are allowed to be different, some will create a Google.¹⁷

I claimed that time for solutions are not infinite. For example, Pakistan is a country in turmoil today. How long will it be before a Pakistani (or a North Korean) nuclear warhead finds its way to Islamic extremists elsewhere who are committed to delivering one to Tel Aviv? (Hoodbhoy, Pervez and Mian, August, 2018) Or two for Washington D.C. and Moscow simultaneously? How many other great cities would go up in flames elsewhere after such trigger events? No one knows, but I know that we must deal with root causes and very delicate strategic conundrums, because managing symptoms is not enough.

Nightmare scenarios are easy to conjure; solutions to great problems are considerably harder to achieve. But I have confidence in the intelligence of intelligence agencies (if not always of their wisdom). And I know that policy makers have children too, who depend upon us all to find real solutions that endure, even if that places some strain on careers.

It is also easy to find historic examples that support a theory, but accurate prediction is the ultimate test. Therefore, I will be a fool and venture a prediction that is easily testable. The current U.S. President is so remarkably

¹⁶ George Orwell is best known for two books that presented authoritarian law in its most lethal end state, the police state. These were *1984* (published in 1950) and *Animal Farm* (published in 1984, by Houghton Mifflin, NY).

¹⁷ Co-founder of Google and now President of Alphabet, Sergey Mikhaylovich Brin was born, ironically in Moscow, Russia on 21 August, 1973 and is now worth ~ 54.5 billion dollars. Creative people like Brin employ tens or even hundreds of thousands of people, and create new wealth in many ways. Crushing creativity is counterproductive.

corrupt and narcissistic that he will be prone to starting a foreign war (or wars) to distract attention from his domestic critics.¹⁸

The greatest danger of this will start near the date of the 24th IKS Conference (October, 2018) and extend through any moves to impeach Mr. Trump. The most likely targets are 1) Iran, and 2) North Korea, because they are both relatively small countries, much less powerful than the USA and far away. Venezuela is another possible target, but less likely for many reasons. Within one year, readers can know if this prediction of attacking a scapegoat to further Trump's political ambitions is correct or not. However, if he starts a war to distract discontent, it will not be because of population pressure in America (which is minimal) or militant religion. It will be because of profound corruptions of governance and Trump's deep affection for authoritarian law.

The strategic challenge of our time is between civilization and barbarism. We must heal the living system that supports us all, and stop destroying it by endless wars over petty, tribal, dominance issues. Civilization is life affirming (like authentic spirituality) while barbarism is not, and self-destructs where it dominates. Civilization took thousands of years to create; it is worth preserving and enhancing. Do your best to pass it on to our young.

Academics, practitioners and policy makers all have slightly different roles in the epic challenge of our time. I am confident readers will rise to that challenge if we are indeed professionals and patriots, dedicated to the security of our states and of the people in them.

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