Introduction

> There are two things that a democratic people will always find very difficult, to begin a war and to end it.
> —*Alexis de Tocqueville, 1840*[1]

TERRORIST CAMPAIGNS may seem endless, but they always end. Why?

There is vast historical experience with the decline and ending of terrorist campaigns over the past two centuries, yet few are familiar with it. Analysis of the lessons of that experience is vital if we are to inoculate ourselves against the psychological manipulation of terrorist violence, rise above unfounded assumptions and short-term passions in the wake of attacks, and think strategically about dealing with current and future threats. Modern terrorism draws its power from the nation-state, and the only way to avoid being drawn into a tactical dynamic of attack and counterattack is to understand how individual terrorist campaigns have ended and then drive toward that aim. Viewing this counterterrorism campaign as an endless "long war" is counterproductive and potentially self-defeating. The United States and its allies can use the lessons of how terrorism ends to avoid prior mistakes, save lives, conserve resources, and, most important of all, face their adversaries with a broader strategic perspective so as to win.

This book scrutinizes the closing phases of terrorist campaigns to lay out an intellectual framework that explains the recurrent patterns, common elements, and crucial points leading to their demise. Many people focus on the causes of terrorism, but few direct attention toward its end.[2] Yet, as we shall see, understanding the causes of terrorist campaigns tells us no more about how they actually end than understanding the causes of war explains war termination: naturally the question has some relevance, but it is overshadowed as the conflict unfolds. Objectively analyzing the historical record of how terrorism ends can clarify how best to construct a counterthrust.

Studies of terrorism are often event driven, spurred by attacks and the need to respond to a specific threat. As a result, the bulk of research is descriptive analysis focused on one group, detailing its organization, structure, tactics, leadership, and so on. True to this pattern, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been an outpouring of research on al-Qaeda, but little attention to analyzing terrorism within a wider

body of knowledge. To the extent that broader cross-cutting research has been done, it is largely concerned with root causes and narrow questions having to do with the weapons and methods being used. This bias reflects the strengths of the international security and defense community, which has far more expertise, for example, on nuclear weapons and proliferation than on the Arabic-speaking networks that might use them, on operational methods such as suicide attacks than on the operatives who employ them, and on the causes of wars than on their termination. Yet, just as a war's conclusion may be more portentous for the international system than its beginning, how terrorist campaigns end is vital to understanding the strategic implications of terrorism for the United States and its allies, and the shape of the new era.

In this age of pervasive popular paranoia, three crucial premises underlie the argument. First, like all other terrorist organizations, al-Qaeda *will* end.[3] Although a nebulous movement that both exploits and reflects the current international context, it is not unprecedented in all respects: some aspects are unusual, but many are not. The fear that a small organization with a loose network has metamorphosed into a protracted, monolithic, global ideological struggle without end is misguided and ahistorical. Second, ending terrorist campaigns is difficult. Terrorist movements are often at their most dangerous just before they die. But how terrorist movements end reflects, among other factors, the counterterrorist policies taken against them; it therefore makes sense to formulate those policies with a knowledge of historical precedents and a specific end in mind. Third, in counterterrorism, experience matters. We would not expect military strategists to create an effective battle plan without a solid grounding in military history and familiarity with the canon of strategic thought. This does not mean that war is unchanging, only that prior theory and experience matters. The same principle applies for counterterrorism policy. History provides centuries of practice with terrorist movements, and there are many important parallels with the current threat.

Those who argue that the past is irrelevant to Islamist terrorism are just as wrong as those who argue that al-Qaeda and its associates are little more than the IRA with long beards.[4] The truth lies somewhere in between. Current research on al-Qaeda and its associates fails to analyze them within a broad historical and political context. Yet this context sheds light on crucial assumptions and unanswered questions. What do scholars know about how terrorist movements end? What has worked in previous campaigns? Which of the lessons we can draw from them are relevant to understanding how, and under what circumstances, al-Qaeda will end? These are the questions addressed here.

Radical Islamists will pose a threat to the United States and allied interests for a long time to come. But there is a difference between sporadic

and local acts of terrorism by religious extremists, and the coordinated growth of al-Qaeda, with its meticulous planning, mass casualties, and global reach. The strategy to counter this group has comprised tactics such as targeting Osama bin Laden and his top lieutenants, and denying the organization the ability, finances, and territory to regroup. Similar approaches have been employed against other groups. Carefully analyzing comparable situations can shed light on what is required to close out an epoch dominated by al-Qaeda terrorism and help us move firmly toward a post-al-Qaeda world. While studying the history of terrorism is not sufficient to explain the threat we now face, it is certainly necessary if we are to extricate ourselves from the counterproductive policies and narrow doctrinal disputes that are absorbing all of our energies.

The Evolution of Terrorism as a Strategic Threat

Terrorism's efficacy is not just a reflection of al-Qaeda's recent inventiveness, but the culmination of longer-term global trends. Over the course of recent history, terrorism has been consistently tied to the evolving politics and identity of the state, steadily gaining in its capacity to draw power from the Western nation-state and moving from a peripheral nuisance to a central strategic threat. This book does not argue that terrorism is exactly the same as it always has been. The point instead is that meeting the current threat can best be accomplished by exploiting its classic vulnerabilities, thereby diminishing its adverse impact on the evolution of the state and the international system, and reducing the longer-term threat to us all.

Over the course of the twentieth century there developed a conviction that terrorism was a promising method of popular resistance to the nation-state and a valid means of rectifying injustice. Many intellectuals admired the "propaganda of the deed" of the Russian social revolutionaries in the late nineteenth century, but that enthusiasm was swallowed up in a larger wave of uncoordinated violence at the turn of the century. A few decades later, the sweeping force of decolonization after World War II brought with it another dramatic transition in international perceptions, from seeing attacks on innocent civilians as a scourge to be condemned, to again viewing terrorism as a romanticized and promising means of pursuing a cause. The argument in defense of terrorist attacks was that they were a lesser evil than the harms visited upon oppressed peoples by the state—a comparison that in terms of body counts was undeniable. In other words, if a population were desperate enough, it could be excused for using terrorist attacks against others to attain its ends: the questionable legitimacy of the act itself was sometimes overlooked in an enthusiasm for the outcome it was meant to support.[5]

This crucial change in attitudes toward terrorism was accompanied by four other developments. First, publics were increasingly exposed to images of civilians being killed in far-flung places that previously had been thought safe and secure.[6] As media technologies expanded, terrorist operatives were able to make impressions on a wider and wider audience. The powerful psychological and emotional effects of those images became more important politically than the military or tactical benefits of the violence itself—or, indeed, the response to the violence. The strategically targeted assassinations or bombings of major figures that were popular in the latter part of the nineteenth century were replaced in the twentieth by increasingly indiscriminate, publicized attacks on ordinary citizens, who were treated as proxies for their states.[7] Terrorism in the twentieth century thus became a repugnantly voyeuristic phenomenon. Reflecting on the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre, for example, surviving gunman Abu Daoud claimed that the murder of eleven Israeli athletes before the horrified eyes of millions of viewers "force[d] our cause into the homes of 500 million people."[8] The ability to intimidate grew exponentially. If kidnappings or gruesome murders could grab the attention of a broad swath of humanity, so the reasoning went, the organization's cause could achieve international staying power.

The second development was the close connection between terrorist groups and state sponsors. Particularly during the twentieth century, terrorism was often employed as a means of exercising power and indirectly accomplishing policy aims. The formal military standoff of the Cold War resulted in a proliferation of "proxy" organizations, carrying out campaigns underwritten either by Communist or Western states. Proxy war was preferable to central war, and illicit organizations sometimes played sponsors off each other. The Soviet Union, China, East Germany, and Cuba all ran training camps and operated a formidable support network for a wide range of terrorist groups. The United States also supported groups that used terrorist tactics, including the mujahideen in Afghanistan, the contras in Nicaragua, and UNITA in Angola. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the practice of direct state sponsorship declined internationally, although some states, notably Iran and Syria, continued to actively support terrorist groups. Yet the damage had already been done. State sponsorship not only increased the frequency of terrorism during the twentieth century, but also had a nefarious effect on its evolution: the popular sentiment that in some circumstances terrorism was acceptable was buttressed by evidence that certain state governments clearly thought so too, further degrading the legal and moral norm against targeting civilians for political ends. Condemning terrorism was seen by many as hypocrisy.

A third reason that terrorism's prospects seemed to improve after World War II was that some of its accomplishments were noteworthy. Terror-

ism extracted well-publicized concessions from states during the middle and late twentieth century. This was especially the case when it came to kidnappings and exchanges of prisoners. As the 1979–80 Iran hostage crisis dramatically demonstrated, helpless hostages held to blackmail elected governments exploited the link between the media, public opinion, and democratic decision-making. Many governments claimed that they would not "negotiate with terrorists." In fact, under the pressure of the publicized murder of innocents, most governments did maintain channels of communications with terrorist groups. Even when governments stood firm, the causes of those carrying out operations were disseminated by news media. The resulting distance between Western governments' public and private policies provided another point of leverage for nonstate groups.

Likewise, campaigns of suicide attacks played a role in compelling states to make territorial concessions, including the withdrawal of American and French military forces from Lebanon in 1984, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in 1985, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 1994 and 1995, and the recognition of at least a limited degree of autonomy for the Tamils and the Kurds by the Sri Lankan and Turkish governments in the 1990s.[9] The March 2004 train bombing in Madrid, the electoral defeat of the conservative Spanish government three days later, and the subsequent withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq, combined to create the impression that terrorism was an effective means of manipulating state behavior. The power of the individual to coerce a state government, especially to withdraw troops from occupied territories, seemed profound, especially in the context of increasing numbers of suicide attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Finally, terrorism's perceived success was linked to greater access to more lethal means of destruction. Technological advances, particularly the increasing sophistication and potency of explosives, seemed to favor the use of terrorist violence in the twentieth century. The attacks of September 11, 2001, were a logical continuation of established trends toward mass casualty attacks using conventional weaponry. Although there were fewer attacks overall in the 1990s than there were in the 1980s, the average number of casualties per incident grew.[10] Notable mass casualty attacks included the downing of aircraft such as Pan Am Flight 103 (1988; 270 killed) and UTA Flight 772 (1989; 171 killed), the bombings of Bombay businesses (1993, 317 killed), the truck bomb that obliterated the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City (1995; 168 killed), and the explosion of a 500-pound bomb at the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya (1998; 213 killed, over 5,000 injured).[11] The growing death toll gave the impression of a powerful wave of increasingly effective violence—perhaps moving inexorably toward terrorism with chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons.

Over the course of the twentieth century, terrorist organizations gradually demonstrated the ability to kill more people, gain more attention, catalyze government reactions, and act as proxies for powerful sponsors. Many terrorist groups were building reputations as formidable, legitimate actors, some even acquiring sufficient strength to launch insurgent attacks on military forces, prompting states to withdraw from territory. Groups employing a seemingly weak tactic were acquiring the capacity to achieve strategic results.

In the twenty-first century, terrorism has become a threat to the fabric of the Western liberal state, thanks to its lethality and an unprecedented access to powerful weapons, its strong transnational character, its perceived legitimacy (in some quarters), its connection to other types of violence, and its potential to compel states to undermine themselves through their responses. In particular, radical Islamist terrorism is a serious threat, not just because it (and the response to it) can kill significant numbers of civilians, but also because it has the potential to evolve into a broader systemic war that can further change states and even reshape the nature of the state system. This process is well under way. Whether or not it continues on its current trajectory depends on what Western states (especially the United States) do in response, as this terrorism draws its strength, even in some senses its guidance and inspiration, from the flaws of the twentieth-century nation-state.

In facing this threat, the crucial question is not "How are we doing?" but rather "How will it end?" The United States is searching in vain for "metrics" that will provide insight into counterterrorism's progress. The only way that the United States and its allies can effectively respond to twenty-first-century terrorism is to formulate their policy with an understanding of how terrorist campaigns end and then follow a plan built on that understanding. This strategy is what the book explains, analyzes, and advocates. Unless we understand the lessons of terrorism's end, translating the conflict onto grounds where evolving state power is likely to be most effective, there is little hope of recapturing the initiative and marginalizing this threat and those that will follow it. With respect to al-Qaeda, therefore, what is important is not the *next* attack, but the very *last* attack—and probing the lessons of history to construct intelligent policies that drive toward that end.

A Word about Scope and Terms

Terrorism is notoriously difficult to define, in part because the term has evolved and in part because it is associated with an activity that is designed to be subjective. Specialists have devoted hundreds of pages to developing an unassailable definition of the term, only to realize the fruit-

lessness of their efforts: Terrorism is intended to be a matter of perception and is thus seen differently by different observers and at different points in history.[12] It is a term like *war* or *sovereignty* that will never be defined in words that achieve full international consensus.

But also like *war* and *sovereignty*, the term does not require a perfect consensus. We may not agree that a particular action constitutes terrorism, but certain aspects are fundamental. First, terrorism has a political nature. It involves the commission of outrageous acts designed to precipitate political change.[13] At its root, terrorism is about justice, or at least someone's perception of it, whether man-made or divine. Second, although many other uses of violence are inherently political, including conventional war among states, terrorism is distinguished by its nonstate character—even when terrorists receive military, political, economic, and other means of support from state sources. No moral judgment is intended in this statement. States also employ force for political ends, many of which are perfidious and much worse than terrorism. When state force is used internationally, it is considered an act of war; when it is used domestically, it may be called law enforcement. But treacherous state actions are labeled crimes against humanity, a violation of the laws of war, genocide, and so on—there is an extended vocabulary to describe state uses of force. Not so for nonstate uses of force. Analysts speak of "terror from above" and "terrorism from below."[14] This book only deals with the latter: terrorism by nonstate actors. Third, state use of force is subject to international norms and conventions that may be invoked or at least consulted; terrorists do not abide by international laws or norms and, to maximize the psychological effect of an attack, their activities have a deliberately random quality that plays to an audience, either to intimidate or to inspire. Finally, terrorism has as its purpose the deliberate killing of civilians or noncombatants. It is violence intentionally directed at people who are generally considered to be defenseless, illegitimate targets.

Thus, at a minimum, the concept has the following four characteristics: a fundamentally political nature, the symbolic use of violence, purposeful targeting of noncombatants, carried out by nonstate actors. All of the cases examined in this book have these four features. For the sake of economy, entities that engage primarily in this type of violence will be called *terrorist groups* here.[15]

The Conceptual Framework

Most people think of terrorism as a dichotomous struggle between a group and a government. However, given their highly leveraged nature, terrorist campaigns involve *three* strategic actors—the group, the government, and the audience—arrayed in a kind of terrorist "triad." More specifically, the

three dimensions are the group that uses terrorism to achieve an objective, the government representing the direct target of their attacks, and the audiences who are influenced by the violence. These three broad factors are not arranged in a neat equilateral triangle, but have different effects as circumstances vary, and thus play different parts in the termination of a terrorist campaign. Some pathways of decline are more likely to be under the control of the state, others mainly relate to a nonstate group's activity and its tendency to implode, and still others reflect the influence or opinions of observers. But the only way to understand how terrorism ends is to analyze the dynamic relationship between all three actors: group, target, and audience.

With this triad in mind, six patterns in the decline and ending of campaigns emerge from the history of terrorism: (1) capture or killing the group's leader, (2) entry of the group into a legitimate political process, (3) achievement of the group's aims, (4) implosion or loss of the group's public support, (5) defeat and elimination by brute force, and (6) transition from terrorism into other forms of violence. Each represents a dynamic intersection between government, group, and audience. Patterns of decline reflect factors that are both internal and external to the campaign itself: again, terrorist groups implode for reasons that may or may not be related to measures taken against them. They are not necessarily separate and distinct, as individual case studies of campaigns may reflect more than one dynamic for their demise. Indeed, the presence of several case studies in more than one thematic chapter in this book—for example, Russia and Chechnya, Britain and the IRA, Turkey and the PKK, and Peru and Sendero Luminoso—demonstrates that terrorist campaigns may follow multiple pathways toward decline.

This book is consciously thematic in its treatment of endings, an approach that enables the reader to move beyond the scores of detailed studies of individual terrorist campaigns toward broader conclusions drawn across the seams of current scholarship. Each pathway is defined or explained at the outset of each chapter. While analyzing them separately is in some senses artificial, these six endings—referred to here as *decapitation*, *negotiation*, *success*, *failure*, *repression*, and *reorientation*—encompass the range of patterns that emerge repeatedly in modern history. The challenge is to understand why, when, and how these pathways affect a campaign's end.

Case Selection

The purpose of this book is to make sense of the most salient general patterns of how terrorist campaigns end—to determine how they work, when they work, and why. The book reflects comparative study of wide-

ranging cases from throughout the globe that meet the four criteria for terrorism described, and most effectively reflect each of the patterns under examination here. Cases are thus chosen on the basis of the presence of one of the six independent variables that potentially lead to the demise of a campaign.[16]

Preparation for this study included research into hundreds of groups, from which I drew the several dozen cases that are presented herein greater depth. I have selected major cases rather than minor groups, because there is less information about the latter; and then further reduced them to their core essentials, tracing causal processes (what political scientists call "process-tracing") and presenting structured, focused comparisons of each case.[17] Hence, this is not an encyclopaedic examination of the end of every terrorist group known to exist. Neither is it a collection of complete and definitive historical case studies incorporating every detail of a campaign during its demise. That is not the purpose here. Rather, this book is a thematic analysis intended to be a springboard for further research on pathways out of terrorism, laying out questions as well as answers.

Many of the cases here are drawn from the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) Terrorism Knowledge Base, a database that covers more than 800 terrorist organizations in operation after 1968.[18] Because of the temporal bias in that database, the cases in this book tend to be selected from the final years of the twentieth century and the first years of the twenty-first. This tendency was to some degree mitigated by broader historical study of primary and secondary sources on earlier terrorist organizations, but the book does not claim to present a universal analysis of the endings of all groups throughout history, especially pre-1968. While not every relevant case can be included in the descriptive chapters of the book, all are considered in the statistical analyses that underpin the overall arguments made about how terrorism ends, as is thoroughly explained in the appendix. The book considers all types of terrorism, including left-wing, right-wing, ethnonationalist-separatist, and religious or "spiritualist" terrorism, as well as all types of organizational structure, from networked to cellular to traditional hierarchical. It includes cases throughout the world, ranged against a wide array of governments, from democracies to authoritarian states. The goal is to use comparative case study analysis of terrorist campaigns in their final months so as to identify causal paths or common conditions under which terrorism ends.

Overview of Chapters

The six patterns of endings form the intellectual scaffolding for the first six chapters of this book. Chapter 1 examines the effects of decapitation in forcing the end of a campaign. It studies the unique role that leaders

of terrorist groups play in building the narrative that mobilizes followers, and how that function differs from political and operational leadership in more established organizations. Leaders of groups exercise highly variable degrees of operational control, from acting as figureheads for a cause to planning and carrying out attacks themselves. Naturally, terrorist organizations function in different ways. Even when horizontally structured, however, they have required some type of symbolic head or spokesperson to justify the political change they seek. As a result, counterterrorist campaigns almost always target the top. Chapter 1 then turns to a comparative examination of major cases where the leadership was captured or killed, establishing the conditions under which decapitation has, or has not, led to the demise of campaigns. Unexpectedly, the reaction of key audiences to a leader's removal, more than the structure of the group or the availability of a successor, is the most important influence on the long-term outcome.

Shifting from targeting leaders to talking to them, chapter 2 considers the sensitive questions of whether, how, and under what conditions negotiations successfully end terrorist campaigns. Mapping the vast intellectual gulf between the rhetoric and the reality of countering terrorism, the chapter studies the reasons why governments negotiate and why terrorist leaders talk, demonstrating that idealistic platitudes are as misguided as righteous exhortations about the evils of terrorism. Examining prominent case studies, including the Northern Ireland peace process, the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and negotiations with the Tamil Tigers, the chapter looks at the immediate effects of negotiations, from the splintering of organizations, to the stopping and starting of talks, to increases in short-term violence. Beyond individual case studies, it examines the recent record of terrorist negotiations, drawing conclusions about the general proportion of groups that talk and the degree to which the talks succeed or fail. The conclusions are surprising: after groups survive past the five- or six-year mark, it is not at all clear that refusing to "talk to terrorists" shortens their campaigns any more than entering into negotiations prolongs them. The chapter concludes by explaining seven key factors that help determine whether negotiations are likely to end terrorism.

Chapters 3 and 4 tackle the conditions under which terrorism ends when a group succeeds or fails outright. Chapter 3 first examines the rare instances where terrorism achieves a group's strategic aims, and the organization either disbands or stops engaging in violence. The goal is to determine why, how, and under what conditions terrorism succeeds and then ends. It dissects what "success" means in terrorist campaigns, particularly the crucial distinction between achievements that perpetuate violence and those that lead to its end. A wide range of statistics

demonstrates that terrorist groups typically neither enjoy longevity nor achieve their desired outcome. Sometimes they are cursed with *too much* short-term success, drawing unwanted attention from the wrong constituency. I analyze the few cases of strategic success, including Irgun Zvai Le'umi and Umkhonto, groups that used a range of methods in addition to terrorism, scrutinizing the key question of whether terrorist tactics themselves advanced the outcome. My overall conclusion is that, except where a state overreacts or a group becomes strong enough to transition to another form of violence, killing noncombatants through terrorist attacks is not a promising way of achieving strategic political ends.

Dealing with failure, the other side of the coin, chapter 4 covers cases where terrorist organizations implode, lose popular support, provoke a widespread backlash, or simply burn out. It is extremely difficult to maintain the momentum of a terrorist campaign. Pressured by police or security forces, many groups make mistakes or simply cannot endure. Scenarios for implosion covered in this chapter include failing to transition between generations, succumbing to infighting, losing operational control, and accepting exit pathways offered by the government. Case studies range from the left-wing groups of the 1970s to the Colombian group M-19. Marginalization means that popular support for a group or its cause has dissipated, robbing it of a constituency and therefore of resources and recruits. Popular support may be lost for a number of reasons, including apathy, fear of government counteraction, objections to the targets and methods of the terrorists, or the offer of a better alternative. A group may lose touch with the concerns of the masses, or its guiding ideology may become outdated or irrelevant. One of the most common reasons for popular revulsion is terrorist attacks themselves, especially when a group's constituents see them as poorly targeted, ill-considered, or illegitimate. The chapter covers targeting errors committed by groups as disparate as the Italian Red Brigades and the Egyptian group al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya. In short, it focuses on specific cases where terrorism has been self-defeating and explains when, why and how it was so.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with ending terrorism through the use of force. Chapter 5 concentrates on what the state does militarily in response to terrorist attacks, including using force at home and abroad. The most common response to terrorism, repression, by which I mean the use of overwhelming force, includes intervention, when the threat is located beyond the state's borders, and internal repression, when the threat is mainly domestic. State use of brute force has a long history: at some point in the last two centuries, countries in every part of the world—from Britain to China, Peru to Pakistan, and France to the Philippines—have tried to use force to stamp out terrorism at home or abroad, usually unsuccessfully. Indeed, it is more difficult to find cases where the state

did *not* use repressive measures, especially initially. States use force to enhance power and influence others' behavior in specific ways. Most groups aim to gain a foothold by developing a popular following first, and then move toward the eventual accomplishment of their aims. Mobilization is at the heart of the tactic of terrorism, especially in the context of new web-based means of communication; repression works only when it does not catalyze either a larger countermobilization within a constituent community or a demobilization of the government's own support. In any case, a type of learning usually occurs in the use of force; the end is determined by which party learns and adapts most quickly to its failures.

Chapter 6 examines shifts in the tactics used by groups. Terrorist campaigns can end when groups reorient their violence away from a primary reliance on symbolic anticivilian attacks, toward either criminal behavior or more classic types of warfare, including guerrilla attacks, insurgency, or even major conventional war. Many groups engage in criminal behavior, including kidnappings, assassinations, bombings, drug trafficking, and other illegal enterprises to raise funds for their activities. This chapter uses the case studies of the Colombian FARC (Fuerzas Armada Revolucionarias de Colombia) and the Philippine Abu Sayyaf to explore how transitioning to criminal behavior changes the nature of violence and the means to effect its end. This chapter also explores the relationships between terrorism and insurgency: their objective characteristics (numbers, relationship to territory, targeting, etc.) and the practical real-world effects of using such labels. Finally, the chapter discusses situations where terrorist attacks led, or could have led, to a cascade of state actions that spiraled out of control, escalating to major conventional war. It is the connections between these types of violence that hold the real lessons for war in the twenty-first century. The end of "terrorism" is not necessarily the beginning of "peace."

To what extent does any of this apply to the current threat? Chapter 7 addresses that question by exploring which lessons from the decline of earlier terrorist campaigns are relevant to al-Qaeda, and which are not. Al-Qaeda is an amalgam of old and new: it is a product of our times, yet it also echoes historical predecessors, expanding on such factors as the international links and ideological drive of nineteenth-century anarchists, the open-ended aims of Aum Shinrikyo, the brilliance in public communications of the early PLO, and the taste for mass casualty attacks of twentieth-century Sikh separatists or Hezbollah. Yet most analysts miss the connections with its predecessors and are blinded by its solipsistic rhetoric. The chapter begins by tackling aspects of al-Qaeda that are considered unique, such as its fluid organization, methods of recruitment, means of support, and means of communication. Then it turns to the six

scenarios for terrorism's end probed in the previous six chapters, relating each specifically to al-Qaeda. The conclusion explores the enduring implications for effective grand strategies against *any* actor that uses terrorism, as well as the broader benefits in understanding and projecting how terrorist campaigns end.