

War as Risk Management

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the reconceptualisation of war as risk management. It is suggested that recent wars exhibit repetitive patterns revolving around the central concern of managing systemic risks to security in an age of globalisation. It implies continuity where one might expect discontinuity in US and British campaigns over Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq from 1998-2003, given the different US Administrations and strategic contexts involved. The challenges it poses relate to 'classical' notions associated, rightly or wrongly, with war such as 'noble' heroic purposes, to decisive outcomes in the form of surrender ceremonies. Such notions have hampered a proper appreciation of the various forms war can take. Furthermore, the predominant International Relations (IR) approach relating to war and security - Realism - appears to contribute incomplete explanations to these wars. The alternative perspective developed here is based on 'risk management'.

Underpinning this study is what sociologists call the Risk Society where risk management has emerged as an axial organising principle. Social science disciplines, notably sociology and criminology, have incorporated these theories into their research agendas, yielding richer perspectives as a result. Yet, IR has largely not done so in a concerted way, despite its inherently cross-disciplinary nature and increased prominence of risk in the strategic context. The framework informing this study is thus adapted from recent theorising on risk management strategies in the wider social sciences. The purpose is to systematically analyse using the theoretical framework developed herein, how concepts of proactive risk management such as active anticipation, the precautionary principle, 'reshaping the environment' and appreciating 'non-events' can be usefully applied to understanding contemporary war and IR.

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APM	Anti-personnel Landmine
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
DoD	Department of Defence (US)
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Kabul)
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff (US)
J-STARS	Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (US)
KFOR	Kosovo Force
MoD	Ministry of Defence (UK)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSC	National Security Council (US)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PGM	Precision-Guided Munitions
QDR	Quadrennial Defence Review (US)
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies
SAM	Surface-to-air missile
SDR	Strategic Defence Review (UK)
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UNMOVIC	UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Iraq)
UNSCOM	UN Special Commission (Iraq)
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

CHAPTER ONE

The Problem at Hand

‘When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world and we knew exactly who the they were. It was us versus them and it was clear who them was. Today we’re not so sure who the they are, but we know they’re out there somewhere’. – George W. Bush, 2000¹

Introduction

To what extent is war itself becoming a ‘risk management’ strategy? This thesis is a study of emerging patterns of contemporary warfare. It seeks to put in broader perspective recent wars waged by Washington and supported to a lesser degree by London, between 1998-2003 that are in some important aspects not yet fully understood in their entirety. The need for rethinking aspects of war has materialised in particular events which have not been amenable to satisfactory explanation in ‘traditional’ terms. This project can be seen as a general response to such events. Three puzzles motivated this study.

Firstly, George W. Bush’s sentiments quoted above encapsulated the conundrum that he and his predecessor Bill Clinton faced in guiding the greatest military machine in history without the previous Cold War template to go by, and even more so after the September 11 2001 terrorist attacks (hereafter 9/11). America’s defence budget by 2003 exceeded the next eight powers combined. Yet wars were still being fought without overarching doctrines of containment and deterrence against dangers, made exponentially more amorphous and ill-defined by systemic changes such as globalisation and the end of Cold War constraints.

¹ Frank Bruni, ‘The 2000 Campaign: the syntax’, *New York Times*, 23 January 2000

Secondly, conventional ‘maximalist’ notions of war such as noble ‘heroic’ purposes, decisive battles, and clearly defined outcomes such as surrender ceremonies do not quite live up to contemporary wars in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Lastly, leading Realists such as Henry Kissinger and John Mearsheimer have maintained a notably hands-off approach to these wars as will be discussed later in this chapter. If realism, normally associated with questions of war and security cannot or does not seek to explain these wars, what can?

Two closely-related questions and hypotheses flow from these puzzles:

- i) Firstly, the primary focus of this study is, given the lack of existential survival threats, can Washington’s rather frequent wars in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq from the late 1990s to the turn of the millennium be construed as ‘risk management’? Thus, the main hypothesis to be assessed is that under specific circumstances and parameters, these wars bore hallmarks consistent with ‘risk management strategies’ in terms of impetus; manner of implementation and justifications given; and criteria for evaluating success.
- ii) The secondary related hypothesis to be examined suggests that these risk management features suggest a better ‘fit’ with contemporary wars than the ‘conventional’ notions outlined above.

The goal of social science, argued Stephen Walt, is to develop relevant knowledge to understanding important social issues. It should be guided by criteria of precision, logical consistency, originality and empirical validity.² This opening chapter, and indeed the thesis as a whole, aspires to meet the above criteria. I begin by setting out the problem at

² Stephen Walt, ‘Rational choice and international security’ in Michael E. Brown, Owen R. Cote Jr, Sean Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller (eds), *Rational Choice and Security Studies: Stephen Walt and his critics*, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), p.8-9. Precision means identifying boundaries and assumptions to avoid misapplying theory in unsuitable circumstances. Logically consistent theories have conclusions that flow logically from initial premises. Originality means theory should help researchers see familiar phenomena in a new way and tells us things we did not originally know. It imposes order on phenomena previously hard to understand and addresses conceptual or empirical problems that earlier theories could not adequately explain. Empirical validity determines usefulness of a theory by comparing it against appropriate evidence.

hand and the need for new ways of conceptualising the age-old concern of war. The chapter then proceeds to signpost research parameters more precisely, to avoid theory being misapplied where it is not suitable. The final section outlines the selection and use of case studies to assess empirical validity and logical consistency of theories developed here.

I. Old wine in new bottles?

For much of the 20th century, ‘major war’ between Great Powers was most feared and analysed, culminating in concerns about nuclear Armageddon. This type of war now appears obsolete.³ The West was still in the ‘war’ business but the business at hand had changed significantly. Wary of the changing forms of war, even military historian John Keegan refrained from defining war in his 1998 BBC *Reith Lectures*. He would only define it minimally as ‘collective killing for collective purposes’.⁴ This thesis certainly does not take up this monumental challenge of defining war but more modestly seeks to explore how war has changed.

Contemporary wars over Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq have raised issues going to the heart of what we normally understand by ‘war’ that remain to be systematically explored. Although NATO forces were taking and returning fire, the main lesson in Kosovo for Tony Cordesman was ‘that war can no longer be called war’.⁵ Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Wesley K. Clark claimed the operation was ‘not really a war’. Clark felt the air operation violated all known principles of war as we know it.⁶ What was it then? By the 2001 Afghan campaign, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was calling for a paradigm shift in conceptualising a new type of war with unseen successes and no clearly defined end-points, although Washington had

³ See John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: the obsolescence of major war*, (New York: Basic Books, 1991); Michael Mandelbaum, ‘Is major war obsolete?’, *Survival*, Vol. 40 No 4, Winter 1998-9

⁴ See text of the lectures published in John Keegan, *War and our World*, (London: Hutchinson, 1998), p72. Many definitions of war exist which I do not address in detail. Hedley Bull’s *The Anarchical Society* defined war as organised violence by political units against each other for a political purpose. Raymond Aron’s *Peace and War* defined ‘perfect’ war as between two states recognising each other but there are of course many forms of war. Clausewitz’s famous definition of course is that war is a controlled, rational political act: ‘War is not only an act of policy, but a true political instrument, a continuation of political discourse, carried out with other means’. Karl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p.75

⁵ Anthony Cordesman, *Lessons and non-lessons of the Kosovo Air War*, (Washington D.C: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, July 1999) Executive Summary, p.9

⁶ Wesley Clark, *Waging Modern War*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), p. xxiii, 418, 423

already embarked on that war in August 1998 with cruise missile strikes at terrorist infrastructure- Operation *Infinite Reach*. America's first full-scale 'pre-emptive' war on Iraq in 2003 stoked massive controversy over the lack of an imminent threat- a 'smoking gun', neglecting similar protests over Operation *Desert Fox* in December 1998.

Rather than simply anomalous occurrences, these examples taken on the whole suggest a need for an overall explanatory framework to rethink conventional notions often associated with war. The need arises from the fact that long-held mental models of war imply incontrovertible grounds for war as a response to aggression or clear well-defined threats; willingness to sacrifice for 'heroic' purposes, rapid decisive battles, visible successes and clearly distinct end-points.⁷ Yet these traditional images cannot be easily reconciled with contemporary warfare from the Kosovo campaign to Afghanistan.⁸ Conflicts like World War Two are the most cited Western analogies for war. Perceptions are shaped partly by such earlier monumental events, even in supposedly 'new' circumstances of any war.⁹ Such a conceptual orientation towards a different operational environment of the industrial age does not match contemporary reality. War is not a constant but a dynamic and diverse concept and adhering too tightly to conventional notions described above hampers researchers from properly grasping its ability to change forms. After all, as Holsti pointed out, 'the forms of warfare have diversified to the point where we can no longer speak of war as a single institution of the states system'.¹⁰ The point here is simply that war is not singular but a multifaceted phenomenon that can manifest in various forms and one of its contemporary forms is that of risk management.

⁷ Admittedly the notion that wars do not have decisive ends is not new. The 1950-3 Korean War for example has technically not ended after 50 years, being in a state of 'temporary' armistice. It also involved no victors or vanquished. Nonetheless, the point remains that most perceptions of war revolve around surrender ceremonies like those ending World War Two clearly separating victors and defeated. See an analysis of these notions of war in Christopher Coker, 'How wars end', *Millennium*, Vol. 26 No. 3, 1997, p.615-629

⁸ Although an argument could be made that defending 'others' in far-away places like Kosovo is an heroic purpose in itself, this is far from universally accepted nor vindicated by the way events unfolded in the air campaign.

⁹ See Martin Evans and Kevin Lunn (eds), *War and Memory in the twentieth century*, (Oxford: Berg, 1997)

¹⁰ Kalevi Holsti, *Peace and war: Armed Conflicts and international order 1648-1989*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 272.

An alternative perspective

Various discourses have been applied to studying war. Relevant literature will be addressed in Chapter Two. At this point it is sufficient to note none have examined war through the specific prism of systemic ‘risk management’ of dangers relating to globalisation and the end of Cold War constraints. Even where ‘risk’ is discussed, much literature pertains to ‘tactical’ issues of risk-averse warfare : fears about casualties and collateral damage- Edward Luttwak’s ‘post-heroic’ war being the most cited. This hardly broached the broader questions. As then-Commander of US Pacific Command Admiral Dennis C. Blair complained, ‘I look longingly at the foreign affairs intelligentsia, but no one is addressing the cosmic issue; everyone’s going tactical. What’s the United States going to do with its superpowerhood? It drives me crazy’.¹¹ Indeed, Colin Gray has been scathing about what he saw as widespread mistakes by theorists confusing tactics with strategy.¹² Rather than add to this already extensive debate on ‘tactical approaches’ to risk-averse war, this study addresses the broader question of strategic approaches to war as risk management.

War has changed substantially in recent years, not least due to changes in the international structure and society at large. Complex issues have emerged such as WMD proliferation, ethnic cleansing and trans-national terrorism. The distinctiveness of the issues concerned required an innovative approach more sensitive and attuned to the broader context in which governments, society and the international system have evolved.

In his magnus opus *On War*, Karl von Clausewitz emphasised historicist notions in the need to understand historical contexts. He wrote, ‘each age has its own kind of war...its own limiting conditions...using different methods and pursuing different aims...Each would therefore also keep its own theory of war’. Rather than ‘anxious study of minute details’, to understand war we require ‘a shrewd glance at the main features... in each particular age’.¹³ Thus, 18th century wars to maintain the balance of power reflected a Newtonian fascination with mechanistic structures, and more generally,

¹¹ Quoted in Dana Priest, ‘A Four Star Foreign Policy? US Commanders wield rising clout, autonomy’, *Washington Post*, 28 September 2000

¹² See Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)

¹³ Clausewitz, *On War*, Book VIII, 6B, p.586-93, (edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976)

secular calculability of cause and effects characterising that age.¹⁴ Philip Windsor argued that the Cold War was a particular historical epoch dominated by its own particular mode of strategic thinking.¹⁵ What features of the contemporary era should we be sensitive to in understanding implications for war and strategic thinking?

In October 2002, *Washington Post* columnist Robert Samuelson presciently observed that snipers stalking Washington, terrorism, economic uncertainties and war on Iraq were stark ‘metaphors for the defining characteristic of our new era...It is *risk*’.¹⁶ Since 1945, the West has steadily emphasised safety over other concerns: ‘The only acceptable risks, to our modern way of thinking, were those we deliberately courted ourselves’.¹⁷ Extending this mindset to IR, this study contends that recent wars reflect a logic of thinking about the world in terms of managing systemic risks involuntarily imposed on the West.

Examining closely official justifications employed when explaining wars over the past five years, together with policy documents, a pattern began to emerge- stretching across two very different US administrations and strategic circumstances- of evidence of a broadly similar underlying premise. Policymakers employed the catch-all phrase ‘the risks of inaction outweigh the risks of action’ from Kosovo to Afghanistan. A fixation with uncertainty and ‘risks’ rather than concrete ‘threats’ permeated major American and British defence guidelines from the UK’s 1998 *Strategic Defence Review (SDR)* (updated in 2002 after the September 2001 terrorist attacks), NATO’s 1999 *Strategic Concept*, to the 2001 US *Quadrennial Defence Review*. The 1998 *SDR* for instance shifted its focus from ‘threats’ towards ‘risks and challenges’ such as WMD proliferation, regional instability, massive humanitarian suffering, rogue regimes and terrorism. The ‘challenge... was to move from stability based on fear to stability based on active management of these risks’.¹⁸ By 1999, while the Kosovo campaign was ongoing, NATO’s new *Strategic Concept* reaffirmed that ‘the security of the Alliance remains subject to a wide variety of military and non-military risks which are multi-directional

¹⁴ Jeremy Black, *Why wars happen*, (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), p.87

¹⁵ Mats Berdal & Spyros Economides (eds), *Strategic Thinking: An introduction and farewell Philip Windsor*, (London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p172-77

¹⁶ ‘Rediscovering Risk’, *Washington Post*, 23 October 2002

¹⁷ ‘Put Risks in Perspective’, *New York Times*, 19 October 2001

¹⁸ UK Ministry of Defence, *Strategic Defence Review*, July 1998, Cm 3999, paras 40 and 54, and Chapter 1 ‘A Strategic Approach to Defence’.

and often difficult to predict. These risks include uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area and the possibility of regional crises at the periphery of the Alliance, which could evolve rapidly.¹⁹ The MoD's February 2001 report, *The Future Strategic Context of Defence* advocated a 'forward thinking' approach, describing an international environment with 'new and more diverse risks, challenges and opportunities'. What is lacking so far in scholarly analyses of recent wars is due recognition of the role of 'risk management' in its impetus, prosecution and outcome evaluation. Highlighting the presence of these features in a systematic manner, it is suggested here, enriches our understanding of contemporary war.

The difficulty remained in terms of distilling from these statements and official documents in an intellectually engaging manner the evidence I needed.²⁰ Theory was needed to help explain patterns and problems. The key appeared to lie in the fields of sociology and criminology. The very fact that one is a student of strategy, declared Colin Gray, means one is 'at least interested in the ways societies provide for their security'.²¹ Currently, 'risk management' strategies appear to be prevalent in crime control and wider society as a whole. Indeed sociologists claim that the international system itself has become a global risk society. Propounded by sociologists Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, Niklas Luhmann and others, the theory of Risk Society highlighting 'risk management' as a key organising principle has been widely studied in criminology and sociology but as yet remain largely sidelined in IR.²² In particular, the possible implications of these societal and broader systemic changes for war remain unexplored.

There is no off-the-shelf 'risk management' theory and the method employed here thus seeks to explicate a theoretical 'key' from these non-IR sources, and apply it to contemporary IR cases. I alter the original focus of these largely sociological, criminological analyses while adhering as close as possible to the theories themselves. If

¹⁹ *The Alliance's Strategic Concept agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C., 23rd and 24th April 1999*, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

²⁰ This approach is hardly novel and indeed similar to Andrew Bacevich's *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), Preface.

²¹ Colin S. Gray, *Strategic Studies and Public Policy*, (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1982), p184

²² A brief sample includes Les Johnston, *Policing Britain: Risk, Security and Governance*, (Harlow: Longman, 2000); Pat O'Malley (ed), *Crime and the Risk Society*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998); Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992)

as Anthony Giddens observed, risk illuminates core elements of modernity, this study explores what risk management reveals about contemporary warfare. Compelling and useful theoretical insights highly relevant to IR's new concerns can be drawn from these seemingly unrelated fields. Such a theory, it is argued, can provide a useful mode of entry for investigating new features of war, helping plug loopholes in current knowledge. The concept has not yet been applied systematically to strategic studies although some attempts have been made in security studies and critical geopolitics. The typical focus was on reconstructing NATO's security policies or the 'securitisation' of risk²³, rather than a specific analysis of contemporary warfare. More concerned with global ecological and technological risks, and addressing security risks only after 9/11, Beck's writings even then had little to say about war and these will be explored in more detail in the next Chapter.²⁴ Much of the debate on Risk Society has taken place at the level of what Beck called 'bold theories' rather than empirical exploration attempted here.

Risk Society and Risk Management

Risk Society, broadly speaking, is organised in significant ways around the concept of risk. Preventively managing risks to calm widely felt anxieties has supplanted the previous concern with producing and distributing goods. The complexities of this theoretical framework are not discussed in detail at this stage but one should stress that it is neither particularly attuned to IR, nor is it solely derived from the work of Ulrich Beck. While Risk Society provided the overall context and ethos within which risk management has become prominent, Beck did not provide in-depth study of the idea of 'risk management'. Thus, in consolidating what Beck and other sociologists did say about risk management, theories and strategies have also had to be derived from 'policing' concepts in criminology and more specific risk management textbooks. These issues posed obstacles to utilising the theories for IR purposes. Furthermore, the associated concepts are so broad that it is impossible to assess all various claims advanced. Even defining the

²³ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, 'Reflexive security: NATO and International Risk Society', *Millennium*, Vol. 30 No.2, 2001, p.285-310; Johan Eriksson (ed), *Threat politics: new perspectives on security, risk and crisis management*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001); also Gearoid O'Tuathail, 'Understanding Critical Geopolitics: Geopolitics and Risk Society', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 22 No. 2/3, June/Sep 1999, p.107-124

²⁴ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 8; Ulrich Beck, 'The terrorist threat: World Risk Society revisited', *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 19 No. 4, August 2002, p.39-56

slippery terms of risk and risk management itself is a matter of debate to be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. What can be attempted here however is to flag and identify a group of principles and concepts that collectively define 'risk management', as the term is understood in this study based on an analysis of textbooks on the issue. This approach aids in the systematic analysis of empirical evidence, alerting us to the presence of similar features in war. Presented in greater detail in Chapter Three, the following themes, as per the hypothesised question, guide analysis:

- i) The impetus for military action arose from systemic risks related to globalisation and end of the Cold War. 'Risk' components of probabilities and consequences are increasingly relevant, in addition to existing 'threat' components of capabilities and intent.
- ii) In implementing risk management, the not-yet event is a stimulus to proactive measures. 'Active anticipation', and consideration of counter-factuals is the key to preventive policy designed to avert 'potential victimhood' in a probabilistic insecure culture where concerns about victimhood are prominent. The Precautionary Principle helps in managing ill-defined risks. Surveillance serves to obtain information as a contributor to preventive action. More modest utilitarian goals like trying to prevent the worst and avoid harm, are emphasised over attaining something 'good' like justice, serious nation-building or grand historical narratives. 'Reshaping' the environment reduces opportunities for incurring harm rather than focusing on morality of individuals identified as posing risks, or the rehabilitation of failed/failing states. Managing risks is a patient ongoing process which should be as routine as possible.
- iii) In outcome specification, researchers must bear in mind the minimalist aim of risk management is not to eliminate problems or provide perfect solutions, but more modestly to reduce risks and prevent hypothesised future harm from occurring. Non-events are thus indicators of success, but risk managers must beware the

‘boomerang effect’ where action to manage initial risks can create new unintended ones in the process. The process is cyclical without clear end-points.

The goal here is not to reify any ‘risk management’ model or Beck’s works in particular. Rather it provides, like all theories, simply the conceptual lens through which recent military actions can be systematically analysed where the goal is to uncover and grasp a deeper understanding of its dynamics. No in-depth comparison or critique of contending theories and explanations is attempted. Rather, short comparisons below, where appropriate, serve to highlight the relative advantages of the risk management approach.

Contending explanations

An alternative discourse is the Realist paradigm, usually associated with war and security. Realism (as the broad overarching approach here subsuming neo-Realism as well) covers such broad grounds that it is impossible to rehash every single precept or subtle differences nor is it the purpose to do so here.²⁵ Briefly, the key points are a anarchic self-help world exists where states seek to maximise power and influence in pursuing their national security interests. States are concerned about relative gains in comparison to others. This certainly still endures in the geopolitical map after 9/11. Russia and China cooperated with the war on terror in their own interests. ‘All the players, main characters and walk-ons’, argued Colin Gray, ‘have followed a realist script’. Realism was not ‘revealed to be conceptually deficient in its satisfactory explanatory power’.²⁶ All states are differentiated only by their relative capabilities and it is these capabilities we have to watch out for. Military capabilities largely determined the survival of states. International order is still dependent on military commitment by the hegemon, while Realism had certainly worried about security implications of globalisation before 9/11. The Bush Administration was additionally of a more Realist

²⁵ There are of course differences between Neo-realism and Realism such as varying emphases on issues of morality, human nature and the agency-structure debate (system or state). The key neo-Realist text is Kenneth Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics*, (Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1979)

²⁶ Colin Gray, ‘World Politics as usual after September 11: Realism vindicated’, in Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (eds), *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the future of global order*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.227

bent than Clinton's. It focused on traditional security concerns (rogue states, proliferation) rather than new ones (environmental degradation). Its Realist view saw states as the main actors, and trans-national terrorists ultimately still needed state support to operate from.²⁷

However, a key chink in Realism's explanatory armour is that its leading lights want to have nothing to do with, and even disavowed the wars in question. Realists rightly seek to use force sparingly and only for vital interests. Henry Kissinger opposed war over Kosovo, claiming it did not pose a direct threat to US interests, traditionally conceived. Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer criticised war in Iraq for distracting from the hunt for Al Qaeda and causing regional repercussions. Realists broadly supported war in Afghanistan but John Mearsheimer admitted state-centric Realism had little to say about trans-national terrorism.²⁸ The Kosovo and Afghan campaigns were also not about maximising power and influence but minimising systemic risks from ethnic cleansing or terrorism. Realism is weak on issues other than survival. The West hardly faces Cold War-equivalent survival threats, not even from terrorism. Realist emphases on 'threat' in terms of a state's military capabilities and intentions were also misplaced when hijackers with simple boxcutters can topple the Twin Towers. This classical 'net assessment' model has been undermined.²⁹ Realism as a policy-relevant theory is limited, and even reckless with John Mearsheimer's prescription for Germany to acquire nuclear weapons.³⁰ Furthermore, prominent realists like Barry Posen, and Stephen Van Evera weren't being solicited in Washington either.³¹ Without survival threats and concrete military capabilities of state actors to assess, could risk management focused on probabilities and elusive dangers explain more than the realist paradigm can?

²⁷ David H. Dunn, 'Myths, motivations and 'misunderestimations': The Bush Administration and Iraq', *International Affairs*, Vol. 79 No. 2, April 2003, p.284

²⁸ The opinions of these writers will be discussed in the context of specific case studies.

²⁹ A fact acknowledged by the US *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, February 2003), p.16. For further discussion of the concept, see John Mearsheimer, Barry Posen & Eliot Cohen, 'Reassessing net assessment', *International Security*, Vol. 13 No. 4, Spring 1989, p.128-179

³⁰ John Mearsheimer, 'Back to the future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War', *International Security*, Vol. 15 No. 1, Summer 1990

³¹ For a lengthy analysis of what realists would say about recent wars, see Nicholas Lemann, 'The war on what? The White House and the debate on who to fight next', *The New Yorker*, 09 September 2002

II. Research Parameters

In setting its analytic and conceptual boundaries, this thesis distinguishes between what Colin McInnes termed the 'Transformation of war' debate and the 'Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) debate'.³² Set squarely within the former, this study analyses how broader changes in the international system and society relate to war, rather than technological innovation. As such it is not a 'guns and bullets' approach to strategic studies. This thesis shares a further similarity with McInnes, in its attempts to discern trends, regularities and patterns in recent military campaigns that reflect these changes. These will be outlined in Chapter Two. As with all generalisations, the view of war propounded in this study requires qualification.

Risk management assumes fundamentally that it is 'feasible' and 'desirable' to reduce risks through proactive action. This has become feasible to the extent it never was in the Cold War without bipolar constraints and concerns about nuclear escalation. This general assumption of 'feasibility' underpins this study. It does not claim universal applicability. Thus, Iraq was 'manageable' to the extent North Korea was not, given Pyongyang's more advanced nuclear and conventional capabilities.³³ Managing risks entails multiple means and methods. While diplomacy, poverty and development programs and other non-military means are equally important, the focus here is on military force. The notion of security risks and thinking in terms of the concept of 'risk' has gained credence in a Risk Society peculiar to material and historical conditions in the West. No paradigm is eternally valid. This study thus addresses only specific case studies from 1998 to 2003 - a crucial caveat to theories applied here.³⁴ Given the temporal proximity to events in question, caution also needs to be sounded when analysing events

³² Colin McInnes, 'A different kind of war? September 11 and the United States' Afghan war', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 29 No. 2, April 2003, p.165

³³ A similar line of thought is revealed in Tony Blair's musings. When asked why focus on Saddam but not Robert Mugabe or the Burmese junta, the PM replied: 'Yes let's get rid of them all. I don't because I can't but when you can you should'. Of course the risks from Iraq were greater but the feasibility factor remains. See Peter Stothard's *Thirty Days: Tony Blair and the test of history*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2003).

³⁴ While it is suggested that America's wars of risk management are modest in scope, 1930s America also fought modest 'small wars' in Latin America. These were however within an overarching framework of noble goals, and as War Secretary Elihu Root earlier suggested in 1912, 'obligations...of the highest character'. Quoted in Robert Tucker & David Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1992), p.149

without the considerable benefit of historical hindsight. As Mao Zedong once remarked on the impact of the French revolution in 1789, it was still too early to tell.

Researchers need to manage expectations of what can and cannot be achieved in their analyses. Through the theoretical framework applied, this study inevitably underemphasised certain equally important aspects of wars such as decision-making models and domestic politics (media coverage, public opinion, casualty-aversion and so on). It highlighted others: risk-related concepts such as 'reshaping the environment', the precautionary principle, active anticipation and surveillance. Thus, it is admittedly susceptible to the charge of oversimplifying reality in what is a hugely complex issue. But for theory to be useful and tested, parameters and limits have had to be set within the 'laboratory' conditions of a PhD. The issue is not whether theory can explain everything but whether it can explain selected things better. The main purpose here is not to critique existing literature but rather to assess an original angle to a significant problem in IR. The aim is simply to bring to attention in an intellectually engaging and coherent manner, the relevance of risk management to our understanding of war. This study does not claim that it was somehow 'right' to fight the wars in question or whether it was even the 'right' option. Nor does it seek to investigate whether risk management was a coherent consciously constructed choice or simply stumbled into on an ad-hoc basis. I do not undertake detailed decision-making analysis of policymakers-makers or their risk perceptions. This has already been done through formal Rational Choice models, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita's game theory modelling, and the more socio-cognitive Prospect Theory.³⁵ Many decisionmaking approaches abound and no purpose is served here scrutinising these with a fine comb.³⁶ Instead, the goal is a broader one, to determine if

³⁵ See Rose McDermott, *Risk-taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in US Foreign Policy*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998); Rose McDermott and Jacek Kugler, 'Comparing Rational Choice and Prospect theory analysis: The US decision to launch Operation Desert Storm', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24 No.3, Sep 2001. Recent debates on Rational Choice can be found in Michael E. Brown et. al (eds), *Rational Choice and Security Studies: Stephen Walt and his Critics*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000). A rational actor model suggests a conscious level of calculation, rationality and full access to information to weigh up cost-benefit. However, responses to risk are not necessarily conscious or 'rational' nor is full information and calculability assumed.

³⁶ For good surveys see Michael Clarke and Brian White (eds) *Understanding Foreign Policy*, (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1989); Irving Janis, *Groupthink*, (London: Houghton Mifflin, 1982); Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision*, (New York: Longman, 1999), 2nd ed

certain repetitive patterns of recent wars, fall within a conceptual framework of 'risk management'.

The theory of risk-management, it is conceded, may not resolve comprehensively all anomalies and contradictions in policies. Ultimately no single overarching factor can explain particular intricacies and idiosyncrasies. One cannot ignore the pressure of domestic constituencies or public opinion, bureaucratic politics and inter-agency tussles, or personalities, misperceptions and desire of leaders to leave a 'legacy' or fulfil God-given 'visions'. Effects of the Internet, policymakers and media misreading public aversion to casualties can also set parameters of action.³⁷ However on the whole and more consistently than the other factors outlined above (and it certainly is not the intention here to assess relative importance of these factors), a 'risk management' framework developed in this study is able to explain recent wars. Furthermore, as with social science theories, it is unrealistic to claim with one hundred percent certainty that the results constitute incontrovertible evidence of a 'one size fits all' model. The more modest aim here is to advance the 'transformation of war debate' by providing a richer framework for discussion, transcending IR's disciplinary boundaries to raise new perspectives and questions.

Furthermore, this study acknowledges that London and Washington do not necessarily share all common premises and assumptions. While Bush's America adopted a more Realist/Hobbesian approach to security; Blair's Britain preferred a more Kantian one to bring justice, and democracy. Nonetheless, it is possible to utilise a risk management perspective to demonstrate the similarities both allies share. After all, undertaking five military operations (Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, twice in Iraq) in six years, often in coalition warfare with both Clinton and Bush, Tony Blair has assumed the mantle of the most interventionist post-empire British Prime Minister. Although analysis is inevitably skewed towards the American perspective as the 'senior partner', sentiments in London are incorporated to the fullest possible.

³⁷ See Steven Kull, *Misreading the Public*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press ,1999). For recent scholarship on media and war, see Susan Carruthers, *The Media at war*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan,2000); Philip Taylor, *War and media: Propaganda in the Gulf War*,(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)

An inter-disciplinary approach

This thesis is also a response to the influence and high profile of 'risk management' in contemporary society and the wider social sciences. It argues that International Relations should take stock of possible theoretical links with these developments. Hoping to be policy-relevant, and at the same time academic in nature, it thus combines interdisciplinary approaches in a real-world context to strike a balance between empirically rich case studies guided by theoretical premises..

IR is an essentially eclectic discipline. IR's subfield of strategic studies is best studied from an interdisciplinary perspective.³⁸ Relying on arts, sciences and social sciences for ideas, many big hitters have come from elsewhere: Herman Kahn was a physicist, Thomas Schelling an economist. Notable theoretical advances in IR have also come through 'borrowing' from other social sciences. Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* utilized concepts from microeconomic theory. Irving Janis' *Groupthink* built on ideas from social psychology. In light of new developments in theory and the international structure, Chris Brown argued International Relations will benefit through re-connecting with the wider research agenda of general social sciences and social knowledge.³⁹ The development of IR theory, after all, is a product of developments in the world, debate in the subject itself and influence of new ideas within other areas of social science. This thesis thus seeks to import new concepts of risk management into the IR discourse.

Risk studies itself is integrating interdisciplinary approaches and developing new ideas. There have been calls to further extend the scope of risk management to issues like chronic diseases, crime, and ecosystem.⁴⁰ Indeed, the debate has recently expanded from its original focus on health, personal and environmental risks to risks associated with genetic and cybernetic technologies but the field has not yet extended to international security risks.⁴¹ While Beck's *Risk Society* placed risk on the sociological agenda, the IR

³⁸ See John Baylis and James J. Wirtz, 'Introduction' in *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An introduction to strategic studies*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

³⁹ Chris Brown, Chapter 12 'Conclusion: New Agendas', *Understanding International Relations*, (2nd ed), (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001)

⁴⁰ Ortwin Renn, 'Three decades of risk research: accomplishments and new challenges', *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 1 No 1, 1998, p55

⁴¹ See Barbara Adam, Ulrich Beck and Joost Van Loon (eds), *The Risk Society and Beyond*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000)

agenda in particular strategic studies, has yet to do so fully. As Johan Eriksson observed, since 'risk' currently dominates and legitimates our politics, it would 'definitely be an achievement' if specialised scholars in their own sub-fields were able and ready to cross disciplinary boundaries through theoretical cross-fertilisation.⁴² This thesis seeks to do that sort of academic bridge-building, between thematically related but academically dissociated fields of study such as international relations, sociology and criminology. This only reflects a wider trend where policymakers are also engaged in idea-harvesting. Bill Clinton for instance was a 'naturally gifted politician', who 'appropriated a few ingredients picked up from the marketplace of ideas and kneaded it into something he could proudly claim was his own creation'.⁴³ If politicians and academics are both open to new ideas and concepts, of course with the caveat that these have a fully-examined theoretical grounding, this bodes well for inter-disciplinary approaches to IR.

A brief note on sources

With the advantages accrued to researchers by the Internet, most official reports have been relatively accessible electronically. Obviously, secret files and briefings have yet to be declassified. This is a significant obstacle for IR researchers on contemporary topics who do not have the same access as historians do to declassified files, although on occasion leaked documents such as the US 2001 *Nuclear Posture Review* were widely available on the Internet.

For ease of academic access and scrutiny, the primary sources consulted here are publicly available open-source official statements and speeches, interviews given by key policymakers to the media, declaratory policy documents such as the American *National Security Strategy* and British *Strategic Defence Review*, and press briefings by official spokespersons. This researcher recognises that statements by key officials cannot always be taken at face value, especially on such contentious issues as war. They could simply be using carefully crafted words to advance other agendas than their own views or simply depict themselves in a more appealing manner. Careful, systematic and rigorous analysis is thus required. This is another reason why statements from different sets of officials

⁴² Eriksson, 'Conclusion', in Eriksson (ed), *Threat Politics*, p.224-5

⁴³ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p89-90

from different US administrations from 1998-2003 pertaining to the same case study were relied on and examined within an overarching basic theoretical framework to demonstrate conceptual consistency in approaches to war. Official websites such as the UK Parliament's Hansard, Ministry of Defence, and Number 10; NATO, the White House, State Department and Defenselink provided all key transcripts of major speeches and information presented here.

Of course, it is unwise to rely too heavily on primary sources providing only raw information without detailed analysis. Thus, the resort to secondary sources which helped augment primary information, including learned academic journals such as *Foreign Affairs* and the *Review of International Studies*. Numerous articles and books which supplied more reasoned and cogent analysis were consulted especially where they analysed new developments and sources. Keeping to the inter-disciplinary ethos of this study, I have also delved in-depth into sociological and criminological literature to help in understanding risk management. These supplied necessary theoretical background especially since this is an under-researched sector of strategic studies with hardly any relevant IR literature to consult. Newspapers of repute such as the *Washington Post* and the *Times of London*, and Internet news portals such as the BBC served as other sources of secondary information. Fast changing events, especially towards the end of writing this study, made it imperative to keep pace with developments which might undermine or enhance arguments presented. This made researching more tedious but every effort has been made to ensure evidence presented is updated.

III. Case Studies

To determine the empirical validity of theories developed, a case study method of analysing recent historical episodes is preferred over constructing formal mathematical models. Mathematics cannot capture adequately the complexity of human behaviour, and can be too complicated to grasp when the aim should be making research as accessible as possible. Each case study opens with a short historical primer, and addresses conceptual issues pertinent in terms of unsatisfactory explanations so far provided and new features of war which risk management can address. I then utilise a structured comparison approach to all cases applying a common set of structured questions to key issues,

assessing if outcome and results match predictions. This is not infallible as sometimes outcomes may be driven by independent variables left out of the study, or other incomparable aspects of cases. Theory obviously cannot explain all things at all times but it can try to make sense of a pattern of regularities and repetitions. That is the more realistic goal here. The danger of extrapolating too much from case studies certainly exists. The aim here is not to produce claims pertaining to all possible scenarios but to develop contingent generalisations and patterns, within parameters stated in the previous section. Furthermore case studies analysed do not cover all aspects of events in question, only those relevant to the research agenda. The abundance of secondary material led down the wrong research path occasionally. Nevertheless, utilising the basic framework developed in this study, best efforts have been made to ensure case studies were as consistently analysed as possible.

To assess the broad applicability of the risk management paradigm, case studies covered different strategic circumstances (before and after 9/11) and geographical regions, across different US Administrations. The Blair government, in office throughout the period in question, served as a useful constant in the analysis. Case studies were selected where there was sufficient documentation to analyse and controversies surrounding them were most illustrative of the new security environment: globalisation, destabilised states, rogue states and terror networks based in failed states. Kosovo and Afghanistan in particular occurred beyond the traditional strategic focus of US planners on Western Europe, East Asia and the Persian Gulf. These implications have yet to be clearly sketched. Case studies also posed systemic risks related to globalisation, probabilistic worst case scenarios, and dramatic media-enhanced consequences of a possible catastrophic scale- criteria that risk theorists suggest would garner significant policymakers' attention.

The Kosovo campaign of 1999 introduced useful variables into the analysis, undertaken by a different US administration under President Clinton in greatly differing circumstances. Analysis involved a destabilised state racked by internal strife rather than a rogue state or terror networks. One can also assess applicability of the risk management paradigm prior to 9/11, where risks are not as inter-connected as Iraq and Afghanistan were in terms of terrorism. The concerns about ethnic cleansing and humanitarian

intervention are of a somewhat different strategic mould but still fall within the rubric of systemic risk. Yet it shared similarities with Iraq in 2003, being launched also without explicit UN Security Council authorisation. Would events in Kosovo belie the expectations of theory developed here?

Events in Iraq from 1998-2003 contained significant implications for concepts of war. The overlapping time frames spanning the Clinton and Bush administrations complicated analysis but it also strengthened the analysis presented here by introducing a longer-term perspective rather than a stand-alone one focused only on immediate events. Methodologically, Iraq posed significant challenges to the hypothesis examined here, introducing a powerful set of different variables into the equation. It involved two wars spanning two Administrations- from Desert Fox through the no-fly zone skirmishes, to regime change in 2003. It concerned more strategic than humanitarian motives of Kosovo; attracted much less legitimation than the 2001 Afghan campaign, and involved a far narrower coalition. Most significantly, Bush moved further along the 'escalation ladder' towards regime change that could nullify what is being claimed here since elimination is not normally part of the risk management repertoire. How would theory fare in light of these developments?

Afghanistan was selected not simply because it formed part of President Bush's 'first war of the 21st century', where Donald Rumsfeld and America's top soldier General Richard Myers called for 'new thinking'. For methodological purposes, as a control mechanism it also introduced different variables to the equation to see if this would alter predicted outcomes. It was more or less sanctioned by UN Security Council authorisation, had broad international political, legal and military support, in response to a direct attack on the US homeland. Afghanistan seemed to be more a war of 'no choice' than a 'war of choice' than Kosovo and Iraq. Yet results predicted by the theory of risk management are broadly similar. Afghanistan had also been target of cruise missiles before in 1998 under President Clinton and this again provided some historical perspective to more recent events.

Summary Findings

In emphasising features of risk management manifest in recent wars, this study has sought to provide an alternative approach, casting events in a somewhat different light. The following count among the key findings of this study, again divided roughly into impetus for war, implementation and outcomes:

- i) The evidence suggested that stimulus for recent wars stemmed from systemic risks such as ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, terrorism in Afghanistan or WMD proliferation/terrorism in Iraq. Probabilistic thinking based on risk components has come to supplement specific threat-based approaches focused on enemy military capabilities or intentions, despite official protestations to the contrary about a pressing threat from Iraq and a relatively clear menace from Al Qaeda.
- ii) There was a transition from 'reactive' to more 'proactive' military stances in all three case studies, based on anticipating and averting risks. Evidence also suggests that the Precautionary Principle guided wars launched on less than absolutely concrete evidence. Iraq and Kosovo especially involved 'false positives' where risks turned out less severe than originally thought. Surveillance served as an instrument of managing risks by providing information and early warning to aid in military action, especially in Iraq before 2003, and Kosovo. Rather than noble 'heroic' goals, there was more minimalist 'reshaping the environment' to reduce opportunities of harm being inflicted on the West, especially in Afghanistan. War aims were increasingly utilitarian and modest. 'Nation-tending' to simply keep risks managed was preferred over ambitious 'nation-building', particularly in Afghanistan. Dictators and terrorist leaders posing risks were demonised in all three cases. Yet wars ended up managing them, more concerned with reducing risks than bringing them to justice, especially with Slobodan Milosevic. At this writing, regime change in Iraq appeared as an unnecessarily drastic exception to this developing feature of risk management in light of post-war revelations about

missing WMD and premature elevation of the actual risks Baghdad posed into an urgent threat.

- iii) Non-events and negatively defined ‘invisible’ successes were helpful in evaluating wars especially in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Outcomes from *Desert Fox* were similarly ill-defined. Even with more visible ‘perfect solutions’ such as regime change in Iraq, a non-event - Saddam’s missing WMD and collapse of his forces- vindicated the risk management process towards Baghdad over the years which had kept Iraq weak. War as risk management should be seen as a cyclical and ongoing process rather than a linear activity with clearly defined end points. This could be attributed to the ‘boomerang effect’ whereby actions to reduce an original risk created new risks in the process, notably in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Chapter Two begins with a brief sketch of the contemporary security context in comparison to that of the Cold War, providing the necessary background to this study. The second section surveys the current state of knowledge with major works on war and strategy in the post-Cold War era. The task is to distil themes and ideas driving analysts, and identify aspects which my research can then consolidate.

Chapter Three introduces the reader to the methodological and theoretical framework applied in this study. It starts with a definition of key terms and proceeds to investigate the major theoretical disputes, namely the relative merits and flaws of various approaches to risk. The second section outlines main tenets of the ‘Risk Society’ paradigm developed so far from sociologists such as Ulrich Beck and how it has been utilised by criminologists such as Richard Ericson. It then describes core features of ‘risk management’ strategies which have become prominent in a ‘Risk Society’. The final part of the chapter details the key features of the framework adopted in this study.

Chapter Four develops the concept of ‘risk management’ in practice through a case study on the Kosovo campaign in 1999. It is broadly divided into three sections: identifying systemic risks as stimulus for action; implementation of risk management and justifications given; and evaluating outcomes. Applying a thematic matrix of structured

questions to determine the extent to which empirical evidence unearthed was congruent with predicted results, this case study assesses the explanatory prowess of the model being developed here.

Chapter Five seeks to map the presence of 'risk management' concepts again in three sections: identifying systemic risks, implementation and outcome specification. By means of a case study of Operation *Enduring Freedom*- the war launched in Afghanistan after the September 11 2001 terrorist attacks- it gauges the validity of the theoretical framework in matching empirical evidence with theorised results.

Chapter Six is the final case study in this thesis. Once again, the same set of thematic structured questions on risk identification, implementation and evaluation is applied to ascertain the applicability of the framework in explaining certain aspects of recent military actions towards Iraq: Operation *Desert Fox* in December 1998 through to Operation *Iraqi Freedom* in March 2003.

The concluding Chapter Seven draws some summary observations from cross-comparison of case study results, analysing where they have fallen short and where they have proved fruitful. It then identifies analytical guideposts for future research avenues and other perspectives on war which have not been covered but might prove productive. A brief discussion of rhetorical 'wars' on AIDS and drugs, and a mini-case study of 'social netwars' waged by trans-national NGO campaigns, both serve to expand the analysis undertaken here and suggest theoretical enhancements. Finally, some policy prescriptions and cautionary lessons are drawn from the findings of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

The State of the Art: War and emerging strategic principles

Introduction

The aims of this chapter are twofold. One, to provide historical grounding and establish the strategic context for this thesis. Two, to examine important themes, ideas and concerns that have been raised by scholars in discussing war. The objective here is not to critique existing literature in a negative fashion but rather build on aspects where an alternative investigative approach may be undertaken, yielding potentially new insights and richer explanations. This alternative framework to be developed in the next chapter, will then be applied in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

In this chapter, the first section briefly discusses Cold War strategic principles, in order to facilitate comparative analysis with emerging notions of risk management. It injects historical caution and background to what are normally considered ‘novel’ features of the contemporary strategic landscape. The next section outlines contours of the post-Cold War international environment, highlighting the presence of ‘risk’ within that context. These include a shift from ‘reactive’ containment and specific ‘threat-based’ approaches, towards ‘preventive’ policies and more ambiguous ‘risk-based’ scenarios. The final section of this chapter reviews selected major works on the transformation of warfare and strategy relating to themes outlined in the context described above. This brief sketch of the genre serves to demonstrate how war is understood today. In so doing, it is possible to draw out shortcomings, and relevant themes relating to ‘risk’ which have emerged so far but require more systematic elaboration.

I. Cold War strategic assumptions

This is not the place to examine in detail Cold War history. What follows is simply a short, and necessarily crude, summary. The task here is to compare and contrast concepts of ‘risk management’ with doctrines of containment and deterrence, and to stress that certain aspects of risk management do have historical precursors. Familiarity resulting from this brief discussion of risk management also helps ensure a deeper understanding of the concept at a later stage of this thesis.

The Cold War was essentially a purposeful historical struggle between competing ideologies. George Kennan, the father of containment, felt diplomacy and the ‘City on the Hill’ example of American social systems could sway Soviet thinking on IR and ‘regime change’ would come about eventually and peacefully. The Truman Doctrine thus described contests between ‘alternative ways of life.’ President Truman himself preferred the term ‘democracy’ over ‘anti-communism’ to show he stood *for* something.¹ The Nixon-Khrushchev ‘kitchen debate’ bizarrely highlighted the competing nature of social systems involved. John Kennedy’s New Frontier; Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society all provided grand visions for the American polity. To be sure, by the 1960s Daniel Bell’s *The end of ideology* suggested that disillusion and appeal of affluence had eclipsed idea-oriented rhetorics. However, former Secretary of State Dean Acheson’s memoir *Present at the creation* described an unavoidable challenge from Moscow. Noted Cold War analyst Raymond Garthoff similarly concluded that the Cold War’s fundamental underlying cause was a mutual belief that confrontation was inevitable between alternative sets of universal ideologies, imposed by history.² As Isaiah Berlin once noted, ‘Faith in universal, objective truth...of perfect and harmonious society... is an ideal for which more human beings have sacrificed themselves than perhaps any other cause in human history’.³ Such ideals were certainly not limited to the Cold War but seemed to infuse the American polity throughout much of the 20th century’s wars. Woodrow Wilson took America into World War One, seeking to end the ‘German feudal system’ and Prussian militarism as a ‘modernising project’.⁴ In 1942, many in the American establishment ‘seemed to salivate at the prospect of building a better world’. As a writer for *The Nation* enthused right after Pearl Harbour, ‘it is the hour for elation. Here is a time when a man can be what an American means, fight for what America always meant—an audacious, adventurous seeking for a decent earth’.⁵

Notwithstanding President George W. Bush’s late conversion to moralistic tones after September 11 (hereafter ‘9/11’), today in 2003 we talk the more modest, utilitarian, even negative dystopian language of risk and precaution unsupported by utopian ideologies. Media reports on Bush’s first *National Security Strategy* focused on ‘pre-

¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A critical appraisal of postwar American National Security Policy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)

² Raymond Garthoff, *A Journey through the Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p15

³ Quoted in Robert G. Patnam, *Security in a post-Cold war world*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p274

⁴ See L. Gardner, *A Covenant with Power: American and the World Order from Wilson to Reagan*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.11

emption', rather than its more idealistic sections protecting freedom and civilisation. Bush's January 2003 State of the Union address described 'Great causes' consisting of eliminating 'unbalanced dictators', 'scattered networks of killers', AIDS and the 'Healthy Forest Initiative'. These are laudable goals but hardly comparable to John F. Kennedy's stirring pledge that America will 'pay any price, bear any burden' to defend freedom and democracy.

Yet in a way, there is nothing new really about today's more minimalist approach to war and strategy. After all, nuclear weapons had previously introduced some minimalist tones. As Bernard Brodie mused, while the previous aim of strategy was to win wars, now it was to avoid them. The major post-war security document NSC-68 also sought not unconditional surrender, but tolerable coexistence and to modify Russian psychology. Conventional definitions of victory were also not employed in the Vietnam War for example. John McNaughton, then assistant secretary of defence, defined victory as 'demonstrating to the Vietcong that they cannot win'. For General Westmoreland, victory was persuading the enemy that he would lose, rather than destroying his forces.⁶ Recognising the constraints of the overarching Cold war and South Vietnamese domestic political context, the US sought not to lose rather than win. Thus a negative definition of victory is certainly not unique to the international environment of 2003.

That said, at least in the Cold War, there were clear overriding constraints to seeking a clear-cut military victory. Ideological conflict, the Soviet Union and its nuclear arsenal dominated almost every strategic issue. What is different now is an anxious ethos associated with a 'risk age' well-aware of its limits, where constraints are in part self-imposed, although of course political and strategic restraints do remain. Although toleration was preferred to annihilation, each side in the Cold War was nevertheless prepared to decimate mankind if necessary.⁷ This led Philip Windsor to warn that humankind and survival itself lost all meaning when humans begin to even consider annihilating the human race to ensure their own values and historical purpose.⁸ In a post-ideological world, a 'safety-first' mentality rather than historical narrative is firmly entrenched as the basis underpinning risk management's minimalist outlook.

⁵See David Brooks, 'A modest little war', *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 2002

⁶ James W. Gibson. *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam*, (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2000), p.97

⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, *The long peace: inquiries into history of the Cold War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p236-7

⁸ Mats Berdal & Spyros Economides (eds), *Strategic Thinking: An introduction and farewell Philip Windsor*, (London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p165

How did the Cold War system function and how is it different now? Competition was channelled through arms control, bloc discipline or extra-European regional contests. Bipolar certainties, nuclear deterrence and satellite reconnaissance were major regulating instruments. In the post-Cold War world, neat bipolar symmetries have now been replaced by ‘strategic uncertainty’ in US policy documents without specific ‘threat-based’ approaches.⁹ That said, one should not exaggerate the relative clarity of the Cold War. Precise assessment was elusive, and as now, we also tended towards worst case scenarios. (Bomber Gap, Missile Gap, ‘windows of vulnerability’). In fact, there was much more indeterminacy and an ‘American tendency to exaggerate’ threats.¹⁰ At least in the Cold War, there were more concrete enemies embodied in a physical territory and real material military threats. Now both are more elusive as we focus on probabilistic risk scenarios.

Deterrence and containment of the Soviet threat were unsurprisingly major reference points for Cold War strategic policy but what was the nature of these policies? Stressing strong military forces to deter and defeat cross border attacks, deterrence was a largely reactive strategy involving calculation by adversaries of possible nuclear response to aggression.¹¹ Despite containment’s numerous mutations, its essence was clear. ‘Containment’, argued leading Cold War historian John Gaddis, ‘implied a defensive orientation, *reacting* to rather than initiating challenges’.¹² Kennan first described containment as, ‘a long-term, patient but vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies...with unalterable *counter-force* at every point where they show signs of encroaching.’¹³ Eisenhower’s ‘massive retaliation’, Kennedy’s ‘Flexible Response’ or Nixon-Kissinger’s Détente were mostly reactive in nature.¹⁴

However, suggestions in 2003 of a complete break with reactive policies in favour of proactive ones are historically inaccurate. Much as we discussed ‘anticipatory self-defence’ in 2003 against rogue states like Iraq, this had also been invoked previously before by Washington justifying the blockade of Cuba during the 1962 Missile Crisis.

⁹ See for example America’s latest *Quadrennial Defence Review*, (Washington D.C: Department of Defence, September 2001)

¹⁰ Robert Johnson, *Improbable dangers: US conceptions of threat in the Cold War and after*, (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1994), p2

¹¹ Berdal & Spyros Economides (eds), *Strategic Thinking: An introduction and farewell Philip Windsor*, p54, 168

¹² John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A critical appraisal of postwar American National Security Policy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), Preface viii. (italics added)

¹³ George Kennan, *American Diplomacy 1900-1950*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p99, 104 (italics added)

¹⁴ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, p.147

Raymond Garthoff revealed that 'preventive war' in the Cold War's early stages against Moscow before it became strong enough also had some credence.¹⁵ John Kennedy also seriously considered destroying nascent Chinese nuclear facilities.¹⁶ Moscow and Beijing were major powers seeking to retool an existing system and could pose serious threats. Today's tinpot dictators, rogue states and terrorists however do not menace foundations of the whole system; rather they pose systemic risks to be managed. As Michael O'Hanlon noted, pre-emption is not entirely novel within a broader historical perspective. Strategic Air Command in the 1950s had planned pre-emptive nuclear strikes against Moscow. The Grenada and Panama campaigns were partly justified on pre-emptive grounds although in response to past provocations. The 1998 cruise missile strikes against Afghanistan, and the 1999 Kosovo campaign were all examples of pre-emptive action in varying degrees. Pre-emption has been around for years, employed by both Republican and Democrat Administrations.¹⁷ The conceptual differences between 'preventive' and 'pre-emptive' war will not be discussed at this stage. It is sufficient to bear in mind that these 'proactive' ideas do have historical precedence. What is different as noted in Chapter One, is that without the Soviet Union's nuclear deterrent to fear nor an overarching global strategic competition to consider, these concepts are now more feasible and 'actionable' on a larger scale.¹⁸ This is a key assumption.

Over time, the *process* of containment obscured the original *objective* of changing Soviet concepts of IR. In Vietnam especially, as Kissinger famously remarked, 'we would not have recognised victory...because we did not know what our objectives were.'¹⁹ The Cold War implied unlimited duration, for its ideology supported a 'permanent war economy' with no defined condition of termination. World War II in contrast had a definable end, with a formal surrender treaty.²⁰ Similar dangers lurk for risk management: success is defined by vague criteria of 'non-events' and avoiding harm. It is an ongoing process without clear end-points. At least the Cold war had ideology to

¹⁵ See Raymond Garthoff, *A Journey through the Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p15

¹⁶ Recently declassified US documents support this view. See William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, 'Whether to "strangle the baby in the cradle": The United States and the Chinese nuclear program 1960-64', *International Security*, Vol. 25 No.3, Winter 2000/01, p.54-99

¹⁷ Michael E. O'Hanlon, 'The Bush Doctrine: strike first', *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 14 July 2002

¹⁸ Grenada and Panama were relatively small-scale campaigns that occurred in America's own backyard. Recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are a different matter altogether in terms of force structure, power projection capabilities and firepower deployed.

¹⁹ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, p.238; Kissinger quoted in Berdal and Economides, *Strategic Thinking*, p.143

buttress flagging resolves. Its nebulous end however produced no winners, only losers²¹: the US too suffered social and economic decay, while dubious interventions undermined its moral standing. Indeed, war won as it still endures in risk management mode.

II. The post-Cold War strategic context

As the late Gerald Segal once wrote, the 'Great Book' providing the 'Great Explanation' for the post-Cold War era still eludes us. The journal *Foreign Policy* offered cash prizes for a term to encapsulate this new age. In a sense this is not new: after World War II, there was no clear framework until NSC-68 of 1950. Without serious military or ideological challenges, foreign policy lacked a 'strategic guidepost'.²² Arguably, the 9/11 attacks have given America a new sense of direction but even the serious challenges of catastrophic terrorism, argued neo-Realist Kenneth Waltz, were hardly equivalent to overwhelming survival threats posed by the Soviet Union.

Modernity and the Enlightenment had once 'projected human perfection into the future'. War became a proactive historical instrument to bring that perfection about.²³ Today, grand narratives and utopian visions are conspicuous by their absence amid exhaustion of ideological universalism. A clearly identifiable Soviet threat replaced by diffuse dangers only produced insecurity on the victor's part. America now wielded power globally without a project, it simply managed problems.²⁴ Without meaning, responsibilities are measured only in utilitarian cost terms which the notion of risk management recommends itself to. Recent wars from Kosovo to Afghanistan have been justified on such utilitarian rather than grandiose terms: of simply avoiding future harm. As part of this broader pattern of recognising limits, European responses to African crises have also shifted from long-term development aid, towards simply managing conflicts and providing humanitarian aid. Failed and underdeveloped states are no longer seen as possessing potential for progress and development, but in terms of the risks they posed

²⁰ Seymour Melman, *The Permanent War Economy: American capitalism in decline*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), p.16

²¹ An argument made by Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein's *We all lost the Cold War*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993)

²² Emily Goldman & Larry Berman, 'Engaging the world: first impressions of the Clinton foreign policy legacy' in Colin Campbell & Bert Rockman (eds), *The Clinton Legacy*, (New York: Chatham House Publishers, 2000), p252

²³ Philip K. Lawrence, *Modernity and war*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p13-14, 19

²⁴ Zaki Laidi, *A World without meaning: Crisis of meaning in International Politics*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.109

from epidemics, refugees, terrorists and war.²⁵ However, Bob Woodward noted in his study of *Bush at War*, President Bush liked ‘casting his mission and that of the country in the grand vision of God’s master plan’.²⁶ Notwithstanding, ‘hardly anyone in Congress talks about foreign affairs as a contest of values and ideals...we no longer go into wars enthusiastic about opportunities to spread democracy and freedom afterward...we go in with resolve but obsessively aware of the limits of what we can achieve...the modesty of our war aims are surpassed only by the timidity with which we conclude them’.²⁷ The lack of ‘confidence in America’s ability to improve the world’ characterises the ‘modest’ wars it currently fights.²⁸ The obsession with ‘minimising footprints’ and exit strategies exemplifies this paucity of ambition which ‘minimalist’ risk management is well-placed to explore.

Two key drivers most relevant to this thesis, characterised the new strategic context by 1999, and still do: uncertainty associated with the end of the Cold War, and security risks associated with globalisation. Without overarching everpresent threats like the Soviet Union, Colin Powell warned in 1992 in his then capacity as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ‘the real threat we now face is the threat of the unknown, the uncertain’.²⁹ The Pentagon spawned ‘Uncertainty Hawks’ who now deemed any remotely possible danger worthy of attention.³⁰ CIA Director James Woolsey provided another memorable description: the US had slain the Soviet dragon but now faced a jungle of poisonous snakes. As President Clinton noted, NATO was now oriented towards providing security to members from insecure and unpredictable conditions, rather than a hostile bloc.³¹ In 1999, then US Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki called for a shift in thinking from ‘traditional enemies’ to what he called ‘complicators’ such as terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, 9/11 only confirmed this trend. The nature of security problems had changed and so too should approaches towards tackling

²⁵ See Gorm Rye Olsen, ‘Europe and Africa’s Failed States: from development to containment’, Paper presented to conference on The global constitution of failed states: the consequences of a new imperialism?, University of Sussex, 18-20 April 2001; also Paul Rogers, *Losing Control: Global security in the 21st century*, (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p.60

²⁶ Quotes cited in Ben MacIntyre, ‘Bush fights the good fight with a righteous quotation’, *The Times*, 08 Mar 2003

²⁷ David Brooks, ‘A modest little war’, *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 2002

²⁸ Brooks, ‘A modest little war’

²⁹ Quoted in Robert Johnson, *Improbable Dangers*, (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1994), p47

³⁰ See Carl Conetta & Charles Knight, ‘Inventing Threats’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 53 No. 2, March/April 1998, <http://www.thebulletin.org/issues/1998/ma98/ma98conetta.html>

³¹ Remarks by President Clinton and others at NATO/Russia Founding Act signing ceremony, Paris, France, 27 May 1997

these problems. Such shifts can be incorporated by the concept of risk management, which acts specifically in uncertainty domains.

Globalisation and security

The security dimension of globalisation has also concerned policymakers and academics.³² Tony Blair observed in his famous speech on the *Doctrine of the International Community*, that rather than the clarity and simplicity of the Cold War, ‘we now have to establish a new framework. No longer is our existence as states under threat...furthermore the world has changed in a more fundamental way’ through globalisation. But he warns ‘globalisation is not just economic. It is also a political and security phenomenon.’³³ Many domestic problems, he went on to note, are caused by issues the other side of the world: Balkan conflicts also created more refugees for Britain and America. Globalisation, thus declared Thomas Friedman, is not just a trend or fad but ‘the new international system that has replaced the Cold war system.’³⁴ By December 2000, the US National Intelligence Council report, *Global Trends 2015*, described globalisation as a key driver that will shape the world of 2015. Although Clinton noted that globalisation had historical precursors in the pre-World War One era, he also warned that ‘everything from the strength of our economy to safety in our cities now depends on events not only within our borders but half a world away. There is a danger that deadly weapons will fall into the hands of a terrorist group or outlaw nation.’ Clinton saw great challenges in ensuring ‘our people are safe from dangers that arise perhaps halfway around the world- dangers from proliferation, terrorism, from drugs, from multiple catastrophes that could arise from climate change’.³⁵ The December 1999 US *National Security Strategy* was unequivocal: ‘globalisation also brings risks’.³⁶ This document, often seen as the clearest indicator of an Administration’s strategic approach to the world, went on to describe risks from globalisation in the form of ethnic conflicts threatening regional stability, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, diseases and environmental degradation. NATO’s 1999 *Strategic Concept* talked of these same uncertain ‘security risks and challenges’. These very risks are the object of this study.

³² Lynn E. Davis’s *Security Implications of Globalisation*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003) for example highlights terrorism, ethnic cleansing, WMD proliferation, and infectious diseases.

³³ Prime Minister’s Speech, Doctrine of the International Community, Economic Club of Chicago, 24 April 1999

³⁴ Thomas Friedman, ‘A Manifesto for the Fast world’, *New York Times Magazine*, 28 March 1999, p.42

³⁵ Remarks by the President on Foreign Policy, San Francisco, California, 26 February 1999

It appeared that in an age of globalisation of insecurity, the issues that America needed to contend with had extended to infectious diseases and environmental concerns. The US Defence Intelligence Agency even commissioned a report into water hyacinths in Africa's Lake Victoria which, according to the predominant probabilistic thinking and worst-case scenarios, could trigger a chain-reaction of negative events leading to state collapse. Indeed, some scholars suggested that if the 'answer to question of whether everything is a security issue depends on how nervous you are...a fulsome concept of security must surely include whatever presents us with an apparent insecurity'.³⁷ With globalisation and the advent of an insecure risk age, managing the planet had in a way, become a matter of security.

Events such as September 11 2001, and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo thus came to be seen as part of the globalisation motif. Globalisation might have been largely a US initiative and benefit but also exposed it to risks by providing the infrastructure for possible harm to befall the West. Indeed, the term 'proliferation' has now been expropriated to describe almost any danger that can spread, such as ethnic instability, terrorism, crime and disease quite apart from its original meaning relating to WMD.³⁸ What currently animates the West's security agenda and its anxieties is the need to combat such 'security risks'. In an interdependent world, even the most powerful is invulnerable as September 11 showed. The nation-state will be replaced by what Philip Bobbitt called 'market states' which 'maximise opportunities' for their citizens in the global marketplace. Rather than maximising opportunities, this study argues states 'minimise risks' in the global risk society the international system has become.

Furthermore, in an age of globalisation, instantaneous flows, and porous boundaries, there is 'profound resentment against bearing the consequences of victory in responsibility for day to day administration of conquered lands'.³⁹ Bare bones 'lily pad' bases rather than huge ones like Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, are now touted for troops rotating to parts of the world requiring management action. This has implications for the consequences of military action. Rather than 'nation-building', there is minimalist

³⁶ *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, December 1999), Chapter I, p.1

³⁷ Hugh Dyer, 'Environmental security and international relations: the case for enclosure', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 27 No. 3, July 2001, p.441-3

³⁸ David Mutimer, 'Reconstituting security? The practices of proliferation control', *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 4 No.1 , March 1998, p.99-129

³⁹ Zygmunt Bauman, *Society Under Siege*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), p.100

talk instead of ‘nation-tending’- simply to ensure security risks justifying intervention in the first place remain sufficiently reduced.⁴⁰

By 2002, another key factor was tacked onto the strategic equation: the spectre of failed states has concerned policy documents on both sides of the Atlantic. The US *National Security Strategy* released September 2002 and the UK MoD’s Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre report *Strategic Trends* published in March 2003, both identified failed or failing states as primary security dangers in an age of globalisation. President Bush explains: ‘America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones... Weak states like Afghanistan can pose as a great a danger to our national interests as strong states’.⁴¹ Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, speaking at Birmingham University on 06 September 2002, introduced the ‘at risk’ concept, ranking states according to ‘risk factors’ of how likely they are to collapse such as public service provision. Especially after Sep 11, preventing states from failing and resuscitating failed ones qualified according to Straw as ‘one of the strategic imperatives of our time’. Just as multinationals and medical practitioners practise risk assessment, Straw contended that ‘governments now need to put similar calculations at the heart of their foreign policy’. This ‘risk’ concept implied a strategy of ‘management’ through development and diplomatic tools, sanctions and military force if necessary. Whereas ideology in the Cold War and Great Power competition determined which nominally unimportant territory attracted strategic interest, now it is concern about risks. Clearly, the ‘risk concept’ has come to policymakers’ attention.

From threats to risks

The conventional Realist ‘net assessment’ model of ‘threat’ in IR that guided the Cold War depended on two components: intentions of the Soviet Union and measuring capabilities in actuarial terms counting tanks and military hardware. The groundbreaking post-war US security document NSC-68 of 1950 after all described a quite specific ‘threat’ from Moscow in terms of its hostile designs/intentions and formidable capabilities. Even with détente, ‘threat’ always remained because it was defined as

⁴⁰ See a description of ‘nation-tending’ in Jeffrey Record, ‘Collapsed countries, casualty dread and the new American way of war’, *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, Vol. XXXII No. 2, Summer 2002

⁴¹ *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C: The White House, September 2002), Introduction. This document brought to the centre the focus on failed states which was first discussed in security documents of the late Clinton years.

‘capabilities’ rather than ‘intent’.⁴² At least the threat during the Cold War was more estimable, material and the logic behind the balance of terror ensured it was relatively calculable, according to means-end rational rules of deterrence.⁴³ Through touting ‘perfect solutions’ to threats, such as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), America was to be made invulnerable to the dangers states have historically faced from military attack.

Contemporary security problems are no longer addressed solely in terms of concrete capabilities and intentions.⁴⁴ President George W. Bush’s resurrection of the Clinton term ‘rogue nations’ effectively obviated the notion of ‘threat’, removing ‘any need to evaluate the political motivation or actual capabilities of states placed in this category’.⁴⁵ Instead, a combination of a militarily pre-eminent America, a globalised world without clear military threats and porous borders led to an emphasis on ‘risk’ components: probabilities and consequences.⁴⁶ We lack what Anthony Giddens called ‘ontological security’. We lack adequate knowledge of what to expect. In contrast, both sides during the Cold War at least had some ontological security.⁴⁷ ‘Living in an age of constructivism’, the future is viewed in terms of probabilistic scenarios of what *may* potentially transpire.⁴⁸ We consider counter-factuals and alternative courses of actions when dangers are vague and ill-defined. Risk is becoming the key operative concept of Western security.⁴⁹

The notion of post-Cold War America besieged by elusive dangers hard to define and defend against, bore the fingerprints of the Clinton administration and carried over into the Bush White House. Bush warned of ‘car bombers and plutonium merchants, cyber terrorists and unbalanced dictators’- ‘sentiments that could have been lifted directly from the web site of the Clinton White House’.⁵⁰ NATO’s first post-Cold War *Strategic*

⁴² Raymond Garthoff, *A Journey through the Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p391

⁴³ Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, *9-11: Globalisation, Security and World Order*, DUP Working Paper 2002/2, (Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Affairs, 2002), p.11

⁴⁴ This is not to suggest that the ‘threat’ concept is no longer employed at all. The purpose here is simply to illuminate aspects of the debate where the ‘risk’ concept might offer better explanations.

⁴⁵ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.220

⁴⁶ The differences in core components of the two concepts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

⁴⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p.35-69; for irony of ontological security, see Christopher Coker, *War and the 20th century: the impact of war on the modern consciousness*, (London: Brassey’s, 1994), p.197-225

⁴⁸ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p.133

⁴⁹ Mikkel V. Rasmussen, ‘Reflexive security: NATO and International Risk Society’, *Millennium*, Vol. 30 No. 2, 2001, p.285

⁵⁰ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.203

Concept issued in November 1991 is worth quoting at length, illuminating the new environment of 'risks' not 'threats'. It described 'Security Challenges and Risks' where:

'the threat of a simultaneous, full-scale attack on all of NATO's European fronts has effectively been removed...in contrast with the predominant threat of the past, the risks to Allied security that remain are multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which makes them hard to predict and assess... Risks to Allied security are less likely to result from calculated aggression against the territory of the Allies, but rather from the adverse consequences of instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes, which are faced by many countries in central and eastern Europe...a great deal of uncertainty about the future and risks to the security of the Alliance remain.'⁵¹

By 2002, President Bush's first *National Security Strategy* crystallised this shift away from measuring concrete military capabilities: 'enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now shadowy networks of individuals can wreak great havoc and chaos on our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank'.⁵²

Strategic planning in the Cold War largely focused on either repelling Soviet armoured thrusts through the Fulda Gap or nuclear deterrence. Now, rather than a specific 'threat-based' approach focused on the Soviet Union, Donald Rumsfeld envisioned a 'paradigm shift' towards addressing risks 'we can't identify by country'. Since no one knows what dangers will arise, US capabilities must be developed to handle a full range of likely future challenges.⁵³ The 2001 *Nuclear Posture Review* described 'a situation where the United States might face multiple potential opponents, but we're not sure who they might be'.⁵⁴ Accordingly, 'we don't do countries'. We do 'uncertainties'.⁵⁵ The Pentagon's 2002 *Annual Defence Report* now argued, 'contending with uncertainty must be a central tenet in US defence planning'.⁵⁶ Furthermore, there is no way of totally insuring from globalised dangers: back in 1998, 'twenty first century threats know no

⁵¹ *The Alliance's Strategic Concept agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council*, Rome, 08 November 1991, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b911108a.htm>. A second Strategic Concept was later issued in 1999

⁵² *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, September 2002), Chapter I

⁵³ cited in Jim Garone, 'DoD Balancing Risks, Missions', *Armed Forces Information Service News Articles*, 08 Aug 2001

⁵⁴ Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security J.D Crouch, 'Special briefing on the Nuclear Posture Review', *DoD News Transcript*, 09 January 2002

⁵⁵ See James Der Derian, 'Global events, national security and virtual theory', *Millennium*, Vol. 30 No. 3, December 2001, p.680

⁵⁶ *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, (Washington D.C: DoD, 15 Aug 2002), Chapter 1

boundaries' warned Madeleine Albright.⁵⁷ The December 2002 *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* warned that the United States must 'undertake every effort to prevent states and terrorists from acquiring WMD' but acknowledges 'we cannot always be successful'.⁵⁸ After 9/11, Paul Wolfowitz declared, 'the era of invulnerability is over'.⁵⁹ Perfect security is a chimera in an age of globalisation and uncertainties. It is only possible to manage risks and insecurity.

Reactive versus proactive strategies

How are we going to manage risks? 'For more than 50 years, we were constrained by a bipolar rivalry with a superpower adversary,' observed then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General John Shalikashvili in 1997, 'to deal with such a world we relied on a strategy of containment and designed our military forces to *react* in case the strategy failed'.⁶⁰ As discussed earlier, containment was essentially reactive. In contrast, President George W. Bush's watershed *National Security Strategy*, formally crystallised the proactive calculus of risk. Declaring the obsolescence of a 'reactive posture' of containment and deterrence, it plumped instead for anticipatory actions 'even if uncertainty remains as to time and place of the enemy's attack'.⁶¹ Cold War deterrence, it argued, was effective against a status-quo enemy who viewed nuclear weapons as last resort. It fails against an enemy seeking wanton destruction and martyrdom. A security stance based on *proactively* addressing ill-defined risks is somewhat distinct from traditional security policy *reacting* to more immediate concrete threats.⁶² The term 'pre-emptive' and actions associated with it however are not unique to the Bush Administration. In December 1993, then Defence Secretary Les Aspin, unveiling the Defence Counterproliferation Initiative, was widely seen as suggesting that Washington could deal with rogue states in either a 'reactive' or 'pre-emptive' mode.⁶³ Clinton's last

⁵⁷ 'Remarks and Q & A session', Howard University, 14 April 1998

⁵⁸ *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*, (Washington D.C: The White House, December 2002), p.2, 6

⁵⁹ Prepared Statement for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees: 'Building a military for the 21st century', 3-4 October 2001

⁶⁰ See *Report of the Quadrennial Defence Review*, (Washington D.C: The White House, May 1997), Section X. (italics added)

⁶¹ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C: The White House, 20 Sep 2002), Chapter V. Secretary of State Colin Powell later clarified that pre-emption was simply an existing tool of statecraft that had been elevated after 9/11, rather than a new doctrine displacing all other existing tools such as containment or deterrence.

⁶² The specific 'action dynamics' of these two concepts will be addressed in detail in Chapter Three

⁶³ Remarks by Secretary of Defence Les Aspin at the National Academy of Sciences Committee on International Security and Arms Control, 7 December 1993

years in office were also spent lobbing cruise missiles at Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo to varying degrees of pre-emption, without UN approval- just as Bush has done.

Official documents such as the still-classified 2001 *Nuclear Posture Review* reflect this proactive logic. Judging from snippets leaked to the media, it appeared to be pondering more scenarios for first-use of new low-yield ‘bunker-busters’. During the Clinton era, it was already being suggested that nuclear weapons could be used to deny states with only ‘prospective access’ to WMD.⁶⁴ In the post-Cold War world, Mutually Assured Destruction no longer applies between Washington and potential proliferates. This removed many constraints on military action and the RMA made war usable as a political instrument again without fear of nuclear escalation.⁶⁵ The Clinton Administration ‘believe(d) it has a good chance to deny proliferants rudimentary second-strike capabilities through force without paying an unacceptable price’.⁶⁶ Loosening nuclear use was not initiated by the Bush Administration. While counter-proliferation previously emphasised diplomatic and political measures such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Washington is now considering proactive risk-based military strategies.

Washington also aimed to proactively ‘shape the international environment’, although this officially did not mean military force. This catch-all phrase first coined by the Clinton Administration in the mid-1990s, formed the bedrock of the 2000 *National Security Strategy* and 1997 *Quadrennial Defence Review*. The aim according to Defence Secretary William Cohen was to : ‘shape other people’s opinions about us in favourable ways. To shape events that would affect our livelihood and our security’.⁶⁷ The 1998 *Annual Defence Report to Congress* outlined the key goals in an interdependent world of ‘fostering an international environment where critical regions are stable, at peace; in which democratic norms and human rights are widely accepted; in which the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical and other potentially destabilising technologies is minimised’.⁶⁸ This previously meant defence diplomacy, port visits, and joint training exercises. However, Andrew Bacevich observed that the post-9/11 American reliance on using military force and technology implied ‘fresh opportunities to ‘shape the

⁶⁴ See Martin Kettle, ‘US strategy on nuclear war’, *Guardian (UK)*, 09 Dec 1997

⁶⁵ Lawrence Freedman, ‘The Revolution in Strategic Affairs’, *Adelphi Paper 318*, (Oxford: OUP for the IISS, 1998)

⁶⁶ See James J. Wirtz, ‘Counterproliferation, conventional counterforce and nuclear war’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 23 No 1, March 2000, p.7

⁶⁷ Quoted in Andrew Bacevich, ‘Do-goodism gone bad: the lesson of the USS Cole’, *National Review*, 20 November 2000

⁶⁸ Chapter 1: The Defence Strategy and the National Security Strategy, *Annual Defence Report to Congress and the President*, Washington D.C: DoD, 1998

environment’.⁶⁹ US military might after all has been crucial in ‘reshaping the international environment’ over the past 5 years: Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, and Iraq in 2003.⁷⁰ In 2002, Geoff Hoon noted in the New Chapter to Britain’s *Strategic Defence Review* that expeditionary operations from the Balkans to Afghanistan had ‘enabled the UK to have a key role in shaping the international security environment’.⁷¹ These cases are the subject of later chapters of this study. More interestingly, as we shall see in Chapter Three, ‘reshaping’ environments is a similar risk management strategy practised in criminology.

III. Academic perspectives

What follows is an examination of selected major works on security and the broader ‘transformation of war’ debate by IR academics, former high-ranking politicians and military analysts. These will be addressed in relation to various sub-texts raised in the contemporary strategic context described earlier and also themes which testify to the possible advent of trends anticipated by Ulrich Beck’s writings.

These include:

- Systemic changes comprising the globalisation of risks, the rise of rogue states, and strategic uncertainty rather than concrete military threats to survival from Great Power rivalry or peer competitors
- Societal trends such as managing risks for minimalist purposes rather than grand causes and emphasising victimhood over heroism
- An emphasis on preventive policies

It will be shown how these themes, to varying degrees, have been raised in the discourse, as well as why an analysis based on Beck’s *Risk Society* and associated notions of risk management is pertinent within this context. Indeed, these concepts suggest a novel way of illuminating questions of war in the contemporary strategic context.

⁶⁹ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.242

⁷⁰ Peter Riddeli, ‘America must share its imperial burden’, *The Times*, 24 April 2003

⁷¹ Geoff Hoon, *The Strategic Defence Review: A new chapter*, London: MoD, July 2002, Introduction

Systemic changes

As previously discussed, policymakers have recognised that globalisation and the end of the Cold War have introduced security risks to the West. There is a similar broad consensus among academics. Some interesting policy prescriptions relating to 'risk' concepts have been suggested. However, unresolved issues from these studies pointed to an apparent lack of a theoretical framework within which to situate a response comprising war as a tool of risk management.

Ulrich Beck

Risk Society, the book providing much background to this thesis by German sociologist Ulrich Beck, was first translated into English in 1992.⁷² The key themes raised included:

- i) The management and distribution of risks and 'bads' now superseded the previous emphasis on production of 'goods' in an industrial society. The concept of risk is prominent.
- ii) We now sought to 'prevent the worst', fearing 'victimhood' and harm of all sorts rather than attain something good through 'heroic' endeavours. A 'heroic' myth as the 'eternal truth' central to modernity no longer exists. Society is aware of its limits and no longer embraces heroism but aims to monitor, avert risks and manage, distribute them.
- iii) Society is disillusioned with grand ideas of linear progress and suspicious of historical purpose after the consequences for the environment and human health had been highlighted by the Chernobyl disaster for example.
- iv) A 'minimalist' utilitarian ethos revolving around probabilistic worst-case scenarios drives society focused on preventing 'bads' from occurring.

Beck was mainly concerned with the risks involved in nuclear power, radioactivity and environmental concerns. *Risk Society* was predominantly a sociology

⁷² Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*, (London: Sage Publications, 1992) (trans. Mark Ritter)

thesis relating to theories of ‘reflexive modernisation’ and a new modernity, and ostensibly had nothing to add to our knowledge of war and security. Its contents and concerns were largely not examined in detail by IR theorists or cited in most IR literature for much of the 1990s. In fact, *Risk Society* merits much closer scrutiny which will be provided in the next Chapter. Beck suggests himself to this study because he deliberately cast the question of society in the post-Cold War world in terms of ‘risk’ and this actually provides much-neglected insight into the complex interplay of ‘risk’ and IR. If Beck is correct in asserting that ‘risks’ now define the post-Cold War world, the critical question that arises is whether war too is being reconfigured as risk management in the process? However, it should be noted that this study does not rely completely on Beck although he provides a key theoretical cornerstone. It instead incorporates a wider body of literature on risk and risk management. Beck’s is simply the more prominent one highlighted here to provide themes to facilitate the literature review.

It was only much later in 1999 that Beck’s *World Risk Society* and his 2000 effort *What is Globalisation?* related more closely to IR.⁷³ In these works, he sought to show how the post-Cold War world was moving from one of clearly identifiable enemies, to one of dangers and risks to fill the enemy vacuum. The principal claims made were:

- i) As a consequence of globalisation and systemic risks, a new frame of reference and a paradigm shift is needed. The idea of linear progress, certainty, controllability and security of early modernity has collapsed, replaced by fear of risks.⁷⁴
- ii) The theory of *World Risk Society* highlighted the limited controllability of the risks we face and raised the crucial question of how to deal with them since traditional control mechanisms and institutions are now insufficient. One cannot insure against or eliminate incalculable global risks eluding traditional time-space limitations such as global economic recession, or nuclear meltdown. These can only be managed and there are no ‘perfect solutions’.

⁷³ Earlier works on IR could include Ulrich Beck, *Democracy without enemies*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998) where he also discussed the lack of a grand consensus creating ambivalence and doubt without ever-present enemies. However this work was less geared towards IR than his later writings.

Beck dwelt mainly on the systemic shift to a global ecological and financial Risk Society, and the implications for democratisation, politics of risk-definition, the state, and decision-making processes within a society, rather than international security risks. More concerned with positive notions of risk rather than war to manage the negative downsides, Beck concluded a 'cosmopolitan manifesto' uniting the world was needed. 'Risk communities' should now form around a theme of risk uniting disparate areas of international and trans-national politics from human rights to the environment.⁷⁵ In its focus on globalisation, this was perhaps an archetypal text of the period although Beck still adopted a rather more sociological perspective. He initially stopped short of the next logical step : to analyse negative aspects of his paradigm despite having already identified refugee flows, trans-national terrorism, and WMD proliferation as new systemic risks.⁷⁶ The 'dangers of military confrontation between states are compounded by newly emerging dangers of fundamentalist or private terrorism' with access to WMD broken out of Cold War security structures, aided by globalisation. This will become a 'new source of danger'.⁷⁷ Beck emphasised the interaction between risks: 'there are no limits to the nightmare scenarios of how the various dangers could all come together'. It is 'precisely this which the diagnosis of a world risk society is meant to address'.⁷⁸ Yet Beck's prescription of transnational cosmopolitanism is premature with his unconvincing assumption that global risks serve integrative functions where nations negotiate rather than fight.⁷⁹

9/11 provided the stimulus for Beck's first concerted foray into analysing international security risks, with contributions to a collection of essays edited by the Foreign Policy Centre in London and an LSE public lecture on the topic. Beck now considered global terror one of three 'axes of world risk society' besides ecological conflict and financial crises.⁸⁰ Yet even then, he did not address the negative side of his paradigm where force might be used to manage risks. Instead, he continued to argue globalised terror created possibilities for a new era of cooperation, a cosmopolitan state

⁷⁴ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p.2-3, 69

⁷⁵ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p.5. In particular he ascribes a crucial role to trans-national NGOs. This issue will be taken up in more detail in the Concluding chapter.

⁷⁶ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p.3

⁷⁷ Ulrich Beck, *What is globalisation?*, trans. Patrick Camiller, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p.40

⁷⁸ Beck, *What is globalisation?*, p.41.

⁷⁹ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p.14

⁸⁰ Ulrich Beck, 'The World Risk Society Revisited: the terrorist threat?', LSE Public Lecture, London 14 February 2002; 'Terror and solidarity' in Mark Leonard (ed), *Re-ordering the world*, (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, 2002)

sharing solidarity with foreigners inside and out, addressing causes of terror. This, according to him, was the last bond in a world where God, nations and historical purpose are increasingly disavowed. This laudable goal is however a long-term one. It is regretfully inadequate and even somewhat naive against urgent risks posed by Al Qaeda who cannot be negotiated with but only fought. These types of risks require new control mechanisms involving war as a risk management strategy. Beck's paradigm of *World Risk Society* suggests potentially significant implications for IR to be explored.

IR Perspectives on systemic risks from globalisation and end of the Cold War

Several writers such as Robert Cooper and Paul Rogers have also emphasised the risks globalisation posed and the need for a strategic framework as the West's response. But both came to different and somewhat unsatisfactory conclusions. Tony Blair's onetime foreign policy guru, Cooper warned that in an age of globalisation, failing states in the pre-modern world may foster terrorism, crime and drugs menacing post-modern states. Military intervention may be necessary if risks for the West become intolerable.⁸¹ More concerned with the idea of 'postmodern imperialism', Cooper neglected developing the wider implications of his model for war. Paul Rogers similarly observed that the 'overall security paradigm' was one where globalisation created new and diverse vulnerabilities but a pre-eminent America had necessary military capacity to cope.⁸² Rogers concluded the core requirement is sustainable development to tackle fundamental causes. Both authors alerted researchers to globalisation risks but did not particularly focus on war.

The few focused analyses of globalisation and security risks in relation to Beck's paradigm were undertaken by Christopher Coker and Mikkel Rasmussen. While both produced cogent analyses, the role war had to play in managing these risks was underemphasised. In his Adelphi Paper *Globalisation and Insecurity in the Twenty-First Century: NATO and the Management of Risk*, Coker addressed NATO's role in managing the security dimension of globalisation from landmines to migration. While his subject matter is closely related to this thesis within the wider framework of risk, Coker appeared more concerned with the definitions and dialectics of globalisation that obstruct the transformation of NATO into Beck's concept of a 'risk community'.

⁸¹ Robert Cooper, *The Post Modern state and world order*, (London: Demos, 2000), p.41; 'Why we still need Empires', *The Observer*, 07 April 2002

⁸² Paul Rogers, *Losing Control: Global security in the 21st century*, 2nd ed, (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p60

Rasmussen - juxtaposing Beck's idea of 'reflexive' rationality with traditional means-end rationality- analysed how NATO is re-conceptualising post-Cold War security in terms of 'risks'.⁸³ Borrowing from constructivist security studies in social construction of dangers, Rasmussen's focus predictably lay more in how to 'spot' risks rather than my concern with managing them. His constructivist approach had certain warnings for researchers, in particular the problems of subjectivist risk perceptions and the common mistake of confusing 'risk' and 'threat' concepts.⁸⁴ Chapter Three will discuss these methodological problems of utilising 'risk' concepts in detail. Solely relying on Beck's theories and not to mention, Beck's unsatisfactory definition of 'risk', Rasmussen also undervalued the wider body of literature on risk that this thesis incorporates in its theoretical framework which would have made for a much richer set of explanations. Rasmussen rightly concluded that managing transformation of the post-Cold War European system now replaced clearly defined ends as indicators of success. The more intriguing question left unanswered is how to tackle security risks such as terrorism that Rasmussen acknowledges require 'management'. Indeed, Beck has noted there are two sides to his work: Realists stress the *risk* aspect, while constructivists emphasise how risks are constructed and new relations forged.⁸⁵ This constructivist side has already been analysed by Rasmussen. The *risk* aspect remains relatively unexplored, in particular how war has been reinvented in managing systemic risks.

Rogue states in the now infamous 'Axis of Evil' also constituted post-Cold War systemic risks posing probabilistic dangers to the international order suggested by various scholars. Yet no consensus exists to the same extent as containing the Soviet Union and whether force is to be used. Facing a post-Cold War 'threat blank', Michael Klare argued that like containment, the Rogue Doctrine eventually provided a policy compass in an uncertain environment which as we have already seen, lacked concrete threats. Rogue states 'posing risks' now come into their own ; previously they were seen as derivatives of the Soviet threat which imposed some constraints on both their behaviour and how they were addressed.⁸⁶ However, Robert Litwak concluded that political motives in lumping states such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea into this category created strategic

⁸³ Mikkel V. Rasmussen, 'Reflexive Security: NATO and International Risk Society', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 2001, Vol. 30. No.2, p.285-310

⁸⁴ For a rather unsatisfactory critique of Rasmussen, see Shlomo Griner, 'Living in a World Risk Society: A reply to Mikkel V. Rasmussen', *Millennium*, 2002, Vol. 31 No. 2, p. 149-160

⁸⁵ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p.25

⁸⁶ Michael Klare, *Rogue states and nuclear outlaws: America's search for a new foreign policy*, (New York: Hill & Wang, 1995), p21, 204

inflexibility.⁸⁷ It nevertheless struck a chord in official lexicon and public discourse because of concern about systemic risks involved rather than any intrinsic capabilities or fundamental survival threat they might pose. Litwak suggested a variety of tools existed for 'comprehensive containment' of rogue states- sanctions, diplomacy to use of force- although opinions varied on which were best. Indeed, in a chapter contribution entitled 'Managing Risks in International Relations', Jacob Bercovitch and Patrick Regan suggested it was better tackling such states through international institutional enforcement (such as institutional membership to entice, peacekeeping, negotiations and third-party mediation).⁸⁸ The concept of 'managing risks' has been raised all too briefly in relation to rogue states or so-called 'risky states' in Bercovitch and Regan's parlance, but not so much the use of force.

Preventive policies

Proactive policies as we have seen, have been gaining attention in major recent strategy documents. Prevention is also a key sub-text of *Risk Society* as we become active today to prevent the risks of tomorrow. The ability to 'anticipate dangers and deal with them has assumed increased importance'.⁸⁹ 'Anticipationism' is thus integral to risk management. Globalisation and the lack of an everpresent enemy has led several IR writers to similarly emphasise prevention but again outstanding issues remained in terms of systematically incorporating these preventive policies into the use of force.

William Perry and Ashton Carter, two former senior officials in the Clinton Administration turned academics, suggested 'Preventive Defence' in the absence of imminent clearly-defined Cold War threats, addressing more amorphous concepts like 'Danger'.⁹⁰ Such 'dangers' should not be mismanaged and allowed to develop into full-scale threats. 'Preventive defence', they added, employs all policy instruments- diplomatic, economic, military and political- to forestall such dangers before they require drastic remedies or war. Sharing a similar view, John Steinbrunner suggested that huge disparities in military force and globalisation mean more refined concepts are needed. As dangers stem from diffused processes rather than traditional premeditated aggression,

⁸⁷ Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue states and US foreign policy: Containment after the Cold War*, (Washington D.C: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 2000)

⁸⁸ Jacob Bercovitch and Patrick Regan, 'Managing Risks in international Relations', in Gerald Schneider and Patricia Weitsman (eds) , *Enforcing Cooperation: Risky states and intergovernmental management of conflict*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p.187

⁸⁹ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p.76

strategies of 'prevention' are more suitable than 'reaction'.⁹¹ The previous organising principle of international security was military deterrence against an over-arching ever-present threat. Now, contagion effects from state collapses fuel weapons proliferation, terrorism and drugs with global implications.⁹² Steinbrunner concluded diffuse issues such as environmental decay and diseases require continuous monitoring, and prevention since it is difficult to identify a particular agent to *react* against.

From the brief survey above, 'prevention' and 'monitoring' has clearly emerged as a key theme in IR. Yet, the notion of 'prevention' has largely remained a traditional one: it involved largely non-military means such as monitoring, preventive diplomacy or deployments as an alternative to military force. As Francois Heisbourg recently pointed out, preventative actions now actually entailed military force to avert undesirable outcomes or stop another party from developing a threatening military capability.⁹³ Indeed, 'monitoring' now also contributed to preventative military actions. This was seen most explicitly in Iraq and also to varying degrees in Kosovo and Afghanistan. It is also this aspect that war as risk management most clearly addresses with its emphasis on preventing some hypothesised future harm from occurring.

The transformation of war debate and changing war forms

Broader changes in the international system and society have given added currency and impetus to the vigorous 'transformation of war' debate which has been ongoing for much of the 1990s, generating countless books and articles in the process. Furthermore while the modern era was characterised by war or the threat of war, as Michael Clarke observed, the 'Western world has a real problem with the concept of war these days'.⁹⁴ A selection of these works will be discussed below but at this writing, none have seriously addressed the idea of war as a tool to manage uncertain systemic risks rather than compelling security threats based on enemy military capabilities. Major selected issues that emerged from these studies revolved around 'humanitarian intervention'; the validity

⁹⁰ Ashton B. Carter & William J. Perry, *Preventive Defence: A new security strategy for America*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p.8

⁹¹ John Steinbrunner, *Principles of Global Security*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.195

⁹² Steinbrunner, *Principles of Global Security*, p.146

⁹³ See Francois Heisbourg, 'A Work in Progress: the Bush Doctrine and its consequences', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26 No.2 , Spring 2003. Also see a short description in Richard Haass, *Intervention: the use of American military force in the post-Cold War world*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p.51

⁹⁴ Michael Clarke, Review Article: 'War in the new international order', *International Affairs*, Vol. 77 No. 3, July 2001, p.663

of the Clausewitzian paradigm and associated concepts of war. Speculation about a new 'American way of war', or 'Third Wave' war was also integral to the debate. These suggested useful themes for this study to pick up on, as well as highlight the stimulus behind the growth of this body of literature.

Tactical Risk-Averse war

The predominant focus on technology by many writers actually provides only limited insight to the wider transformation of war debate which is the concern of this study.⁹⁵ What is somewhat relevant however is how the existing Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), debates on non-lethal weapons (NLW) and precision-guided munitions (PGMs) serves to minimise tactical risks of casualties and collateral damage such as harming the environment: after all an important sub-text raised by Beck.⁹⁶ Indeed NATO's Defence Capabilities Initiative after the Kosovo campaign emphasised the requirement to conduct air operations that minimise collateral damage through PGMs. This type of risk-aversion is crucial in gaining legitimacy especially when NGOs, civil society and individual citizens can now monitor operations through real-time media, 24-hour news cycles or the Internet. This also explains the strict demarcation made by politicians and generals between 'regime' and 'society' targets to be spared. As Alvin and Heidi Toffler noted, 'one of the foremost objectives in the development of new weaponry should be the reduction or total elimination of human risk'.⁹⁷ Such is the context within which wars must now be fought as 'a fundamental societal transformation is the intolerance of casualties' according to Edward Luttwak.⁹⁸ The concern with tactical risks and RMA technologies has been well-documented in academic discourse. While tactical risks do

⁹⁵ A short sample includes George and Meredith Friedman, *The Future of war: Power, technology and American world dominance in the 21st century*, (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 1996); Robert Bateman (ed), *Digital War: a view from the front lines*, (Novato: Presidio Press, 1999); Michael O'Hanlon, *Technological Change and the future of warfare*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2000). For an especially techno-centric approach, see James Adams, *The Next World War: Computers are the Weapons and the Front line is everywhere*, (London: Hutchinson Press, 1998)

⁹⁶ On environmental concerns, see Jay E. Austin and Carl E. Bruch (eds), *The environmental consequences of war: legal, economic and scientific perspectives*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2000). On the political appeal of non-lethal weapons, see Brian Rappert, *Non-Lethal weapons as legitimising forces: technology, politics and the management of conflict*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003)

⁹⁷ Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-war: Making sense of today's global chaos*, (London: Warner Books, 1995), p.131

⁹⁸ Edward Luttwak, 'From Vietnam to Desert Fox: Civil-military relations in modern democracies', *Survival*, Vol. 41 No.1, Spring 1999, p.99

influence approaches to war, the main concern of this thesis is managing broader systemic risks resulting from globalisation and end of the Cold War.⁹⁹

Lawrence Freedman's Adelphi Paper *The Revolution in Strategic Affairs*, rightly warned that attention must be paid to the impact of political change rather than just technology. RMA technologies developed from Cold War needs for usable non-nuclear weapons now matched contemporary concerns about casualty-aversion.¹⁰⁰ The revolution in strategic affairs, concluded Freedman, was driven more by uncertain political conditions and endless permutations of enemies than technological advances. Chris Hables Gray similarly emphasised the need for understanding war's wider discourse system rather than just technology.¹⁰¹ This, he situated within 'postmodernity', concluding that we are witnessing 'post-modern war' given the prevalence of paradoxical situations and contradictory trends. Gray recognised that war was trying to survive coherently by reconfiguring and reinventing itself amidst immense changes in technology and politics of conflict. Indeed, the inadequacies of focusing on the RMA alone have led writers to focus on the wider international and societal trends influencing war. Technology and information flows play important parts in contemporary war but it is the nature of security concerns today and the way we cope with them that are primary drivers for changes in concepts of war.

Post-Clausewitzian war and changing war-forms

The recent resurgence of interest in war derives from broader systemic and societal changes previously outlined. When discussing war, the predominant image or concept of war in the West has been the Clausewitzian model focused on: 1) the importance of decisive battles; 2) 'noble' purposes widely backed by moral determination, public enthusiasm and contests of will; 3) heroism and courage; 4) speed, momentum and mass; and 5) titanic struggles between state actors, mainly Great Powers. With these features, the Clausewitzian model derived largely from Napoleonic wars of the modern era, could be seen as the 'maximalist' counterpart to a more 'minimalist' late modern world of the insecure anxious *Risk Society* fighting modest inconclusive wars more concerned with averting victimhood than heroism, great causes or decisive battles. Furthermore as Beck

⁹⁹ I will discuss the interplay between tactical and systemic risks in more detail in Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁰ Lawrence Freedman, *The Revolution in Strategic Affairs*, Adelphi Paper 318, (Oxford: OUP for the IISS, 1998), p.78

¹⁰¹ Chris Hables Gray, *Post-modern war: the new politics of conflict*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1997).

suggested, we no longer face clearly defined dangers from Great Powers or peer competitors in a Clausewitzian context of states, but more ill-defined enemies and risks. What have academics been saying about the Clausewitzian paradigm and has anything related to ‘minimalist’ themes of Risk Society been raised that could be developed further? Indeed, several authors within the ‘transformation of war’ debate such as Mary Kaldor and Martin Van Creveld have suggested the Clausewitzian paradigm is now outmoded and in need of replacement.

Kaldor for one believed ‘new wars’ in economically-weak regions are best understood in the context of globalisation as a contradictory process of fragmentation and integration.¹⁰² These breached Clausewitz’s Trinitarian mould in the following respects: non-state actors like trans-national NGOs, diasporas, and criminal networks replaced state armies, diluting the political essence of Trinitarian war. ‘Identity’ politics replaced the ‘geopolitical’ or ‘ideological’ goals of earlier wars. ‘New’ wars also avoid decisive battle, targeting civilians instead. In a similar vein but taking a broader historical context, Martin Van Creveld discerned a new epoch of ‘non-Trinitarian warfare’, of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) since 1945 at least.¹⁰³ The end of the Cold War further transformed the concept of war itself. With terrorists, mercenaries, drug-smugglers motivated less by professionalism than religious or ethnic loyalties or individual gain, the idea of state actors fighting ‘for’ some noble cause might also become inapplicable. Both authors indicated to researchers that wars are fought not so much within traditional contexts of inter-state Great Power competition but elusive more complex problems that are non-state or internal in nature such as terrorism and ethnic cleansing, further complicated by globalisation. Van Creveld in particular emphasised that Trinitarian war was not war with capital ‘W’ but merely one of many forms war has assumed throughout history and thus needs reconfiguring.¹⁰⁴

Kaldor and Van Creveld are not alone in their dissatisfaction with the Clausewitzian paradigm, given the changing international system and societal impacts on war. Indeed, Great Powers previously would have exploited the Yugoslav crises to maximise influence and power rather than shun them.¹⁰⁵ To Edward Luttwak, ‘post-

p149. A similar view is expressed in Philip K. Lawrence, *Modernity and War*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), Chapter 3

¹⁰² Mary Kaldor, *New and Old wars*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p3

¹⁰³ Martin Van Creveld, *On Future War*, (London: Brassey’s, 1991) p2

¹⁰⁴ Van Creveld, *On Future War*, p.71

¹⁰⁵ Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: The logic of war and peace*, (revised and enlarged edition), (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), p70

heroic' wars have no great national purposes suggested by the Clausewitzian paradigm, arousing no public enthusiasm. As Michael Clarke similarly noted, the Western world was confused. It had far more superior militaries but was convinced their publics do not allow them to take risks. 'Yet it had interests to protect and consciences to salve'.¹⁰⁶ Without offering one, Luttwak suggested that only a new post-Napoleonic and post-Clausewitzian concept of war could fully exploit and explain any slow cumulative form of combat over Napoleonic concepts of mass, momentum, and quick decisive results. This would require a patient and modest approach to appreciate partial results when doing more would be too costly but doing nothing would hurt world order.¹⁰⁷ Luttwak exhibited particularly clearly the need expressed among scholars for more 'minimalist' approaches to war than the 'maximalist' Clausewitzian one. Indeed, viewed collectively, according to Andrew Bacevich, the cruise missile strikes in 1998 against Afghanistan and the endless policing of no-fly zones over Iraq in fact 'signified a radical departure from past practice' of overwhelming force and decisive outcomes. As 'bombing became routine, it also became non-controversial'. When it came to military force, post-Cold War America 'followed particular routines. Preferences repeatedly exercised became something like habits'.¹⁰⁸ War had become minimalist, more modest in purpose and even 'routine' with little public enthusiasm, without decisive outcomes that have to be appreciated rather than heroic successes.

While not necessarily critiquing Clausewitz, these 'minimalist' themes also resurfaced in Christopher Coker's *Waging War without warriors*, where he addressed two themes raised by Luttwak and Van Creveld: the end of heroism and erosion of ideas of fighting for some 'noble' cause, both of which characterise a Risk Society. According to Coker, war is no longer about heroic warriors but technicians emotionally detached from conflict. The nature of war practised by the West had become more utilitarian and instrumental, rather than the previous idea of war as all-encompassing, existential or expressive of one's purpose. 'Utility is now more important than the act' and this, argued Coker, had an impact of the 'heroic' warrior spirit.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Michael Clarke, Review Article: 'War in the new international order', *International Affairs*, Vol. 77 No. 3, July 2001, p.665

¹⁰⁷ Edward Luttwak, 'Toward post-heroic warfare', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1995, Vol. 74 No.3, p.116-120

¹⁰⁸ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, M.A: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.148,154-5, 166

¹⁰⁹ Christopher Coker, *Waging war without warriors: the changing culture of military conflict*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p.7, 12, 34

Whether Clausewitz's writings on war remain valid cannot be resolved conclusively given the complexity and broad spectrum of the so-called Clausewitzian universe, nor is it the intention here to do so. What is clear from this brief survey however is that some 'maximalist' Clausewitzian notions of war, be it decisive battles with clear starting and ending points, or a great national purpose no longer apply clearly as Luttwak and Kaldor have suggested. An alternative more 'minimalist' framework incorporating notions of *Risk Society* can thus help to reconceptualise war, which as Van Creveld observed, can take many forms. Yet, in *Modern Strategy*, Colin Gray- Clausewitz's staunchest defender- argued 'nothing vital to the nature and function of war and strategy changes, in sharp contrast to the character of war'.¹¹⁰ Political goals have always been central to war despite the different ways we fight. Clausewitz's emphasis on the holistic analysis of war and historicism also certainly stands the test of time. Such an holistic approach would not be complete without incorporating one of the foremost concerns of the age: risk. Indeed, Clausewitz's most quoted statement that war is simply the continuation of politics by other means still rings true. War now served as the instrument for political goals of risk management. This instrumental view of war would also extend Coker's thesis that war was now increasingly utilitarian.

Conventional meanings of 'war' also changed over the second half of the 20th century. The late 19th century version meant clear starting points with formal hostilities states, followed by peace treaties with neat endings. This is a common perception of what war should appear, how it is organised and fought. By the late 20th century, irregulars within states fought 'war', while peace agreements like that ending the Gulf War are only elements in an ongoing military struggle.¹¹¹ These changes served as a useful starting point for the analysis of new features of war as risk management. As suggested so far, strict conventional notions of war cannot appreciate the characteristics of recent wars.

While authors within the transformation of war debate such as Van Creveld and Kaldor chose to address the Clausewitzian paradigm, others not writing specifically about Clausewitz also reached the same conclusion that war was being transformed amidst wider changes in society and the international system. Beck's theme of more complex dangers for instance has been reflected in futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler who suggested that rather than a 'singular threat' of nuclear war and competition between

¹¹⁰ Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p1

¹¹¹ See the useful contributions in Gwyn Prins & Hylke Tromp (ed), *The Future of War*, (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000)

states, we now faced ‘multiple niche threats’ from ethnic cleansing and WMD proliferation. To address these dangers, the Tofflers claimed a transition to ‘third wave’ knowledge economies now generated distinctive ‘third-wave’ war-forms based on information, de-massified destruction, and smart ‘niche soldiers’ such as Special Forces.¹¹² To understand how we fought war, they insisted, we needed to understand how we made wealth. Despite its overly broad and underdeveloped theoretical nature, the idea of a Tofflerian transition generating new war-forms suggests potentially useful insights. Does a shift from Industrial Society to Risk Society also herald a new war-form based on risk management?

Without wars of survival and, as Beck suggests, no clearly defined enemies but risks and dangers, war seemed to be more about ‘policing’ the international order against potential disruption from non-state actors, diffused processes such as environmental degradation or failed/rogue states, than traditional concerns about Great Power rivalry. Even China appeared more intent on joining the system than radically reshaping it. Jeremy Black for example concluded war still existed albeit in different forms as globalisation increased possibility of conflict with anti-globalists, Islam or rogue states. Although military action against rogue states was labelled ‘policing’, war in that guise, may become more common in future.¹¹³ Black left unanswered the crucial question he himself posed: how can states control dissident groups and attain security in such an uncertain world? Paul Hirst similarly suggested that the unfair economic structure and transformations in technology and economic conditions benefited only advanced states, and together with environmental degradation, created potential for dissident forces to grow. This meant more wars in future. War, Hirst suggested with more historical insight, was also being redefined, as legitimate only against those interfering with free trade, reverting to the Liberal era.¹¹⁴ Hirst and Black suggested to researchers that war was perhaps being redefined to rein in disturbances from anti-globalists or rogue states to the international order, free trade and globalisation. Yet, as Hirst concluded, these dissident forces are presently incapable of replacing the rich, only disturbing them. In other words, they posed systemic risks to be managed rather than existential threats.

¹¹² Toffler, *War and Anti-war*, p.106. ‘First wave’ war was based on agricultural production, ‘Second Wave’ based on industrial means.

¹¹³ Jeremy Black, *War in the New Century*, (London: Continuum, 2001), p3

¹¹⁴ Paul Hirst, *War and Power in the 21st Century: The state, military conflict and the international system*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002)

In light of such vague dangers, the ‘policing’ metaphor in IR and war is increasingly prominent. Richard Haass for example described Post-Cold War America as the *Reluctant Sheriff*, managing the world to allow more benign norms to flourish.¹¹⁵ No-fly zones over Iraq were also called ‘policing operations’. These are open-ended ‘damage-limitation’ operations in a quasi-hostile environment designed neither to defeat opposition nor solve underlying problems but simply to make the situation a bit more tolerable.¹¹⁶ The Kosovo campaign was seen by Howard Caygill as an example of NATO acting as international ‘police’ in its new post-Cold War role managing a ‘condition of turbulence’ that might endanger security interests rather than a clearly identifiable enemy normally associated with war.¹¹⁷ The ‘police’ concept is thus not particularly directed at a particular goal or grand narrative, and actually avoids Clausewitzian-style ‘decisive battle’.¹¹⁸ Such emerging concepts of war blurred with ‘policing’ operations are much less maximalist than those implied in a Clausewitzian paradigm and perhaps more suited for an age of risks rather than clearly defined enemies and Great Power rivalry.

With the changeover from total wars of the past, war was furthermore becoming something removed for the West in Colin McInnes’ recent *Spectator Sport War*. The central idea that total war has been replaced by spectator sport warfare related to systemic and societal changes: post-Cold War operations are no longer plagued by fear of nuclear escalation. Societies at large spectate like sports fans through the media instead, with different levels of engagement from temporary involvement to obsession, but experience is nonetheless removed and disengaged.¹¹⁹ While wars of survival within the West are effectively obsolete, localised wars of choice with the non-West still occur no longer subsumed within a previous overarching global contest. Enemies are no longer states, societies or even hostile forces but regimes, leaders or individuals, while overwhelmingly superior Western forces are expected to suffer no casualties. Wondering if the Afghan campaign was really the ‘new’ type of war it was claimed to be, Colin McInnes writing later in the *Review of International Studies*, concluded that in fact ‘the Afghan campaign

¹¹⁵ Richard Haass, *The Reluctant Sheriff: the United States after the Cold War*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1997); and a more recent re-appraisal by Fraser Cameron, *US Foreign policy after the Cold War: Global hegemon or reluctant sheriff?*, (London: Routledge, 2002)

¹¹⁶ Haass, *Intervention*, p.60

¹¹⁷ Howard Caygill, ‘Perpetual Police? Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No.1, February 2001, p.74 -76

¹¹⁸ Caygill, ‘Perpetual police?’, p.76

¹¹⁹ Colin McInnes, *Spectator Sport War*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p2

bore many hallmarks of Western military operations in the 1990s' and was not fundamentally different from those features he first identified in *Spectator Sport War*.¹²⁰

The analysis of repetitive patterns in war across various cases in combination with systemic and societal changes has also proved a fruitful research endeavour for several writers. Jeffrey Record, Eliot Cohen and Andrew Bacevich, among others, now suggest a combination of societal factors in exaggerated casualty-aversion, and changes in the international system where failed/failing states now posed the main source of insecurity rather than great power rivalry and existential threats, together with long-range low-risk precision technology available for aerial assaults, is in fact creating a 'new American way of war' in places of previously secondary interest- Somalia, Kosovo to Afghanistan.¹²¹ Cohen and Bacevich suggest Americans had an 'unsubtle strategic culture' and do not like such murky causes and war against such second-order or third-order interests, but prefer clear 'noble' objectives and enemies- a 'conventional' notion of war as I have suggested.¹²² Yet, there were security risks to be managed and this led to US 'interventions on the cheap'.

What all these prominent writers share, despite their varying perspectives, is considerable broad agreement that war has changed, propelled by transformations in society and the international system. These include a society lacking enthusiasm for wars or grand purposes, and the notion that we now face not clear military threats from Great Power competition but ill-defined dangers which have implications for security interests and war. It is precisely these changes that make the transformation of war debate so dynamic and multi-faceted. The key sub-texts of Beck's Risk Society were implicitly reflected in the process but not addressed specifically. There is clearly an evident desire for articulation of a more subtle 'minimalist' approach to war in the post-Cold War era, in particular a replacement for 'maximalist' Clausewitzian approaches to war

¹²⁰ Colin McInnes, 'A different kind of war? September 11 and the United States' Afghan war', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 29 No.2, April 2003, p.178

¹²¹ Jeffrey Record, 'Collapsed countries, casualty dread and the new American way of war', *Parameters*, Vol. XXXII No. 2, Summer 2002, p.4-23. Also Andrew Bacevich and Eliot Cohen (eds), *War Over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). Max Boot also touched on this issue but appeared more interested in 'tactical' approaches than a 'strategic' approach to war with his focus on military hardware such as UAVs. Max Boot, 'The New American Way of War', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82 No.4, July/August 2003. Others drew parallels with the 'British Way of Warfare' championed by Liddell Hart in the 1930s. Economic sanctions, and surgical operations by mobile, technologically superior forces policed a colonial world without close competitors, only local or regional rogues. Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.828

¹²² Stephen Biddle, 'The new way of war', Review Article, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81 No.3, May/June 2002, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020501faessay8063/stephen-biddle/the-new-way-of-war.html>

incorporating systemic and societal changes. It is these issues which this thesis seeks to explore through the prism of *World Risk Society* and associated concepts of 'risk management'.

Humanitarian wars and tentative wars of choice: from threats to risks?

Refugee flows and ethnic cleansing constituted key systemic risks relating to globalisation in Beck's *World Risk Society* paradigm. Beck also highlighted the lack of clearly defined enemies but ambiguous risks instead. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, policy documents such as NATO's latest *Strategic Concept* in 1999 have identified such ill-defined risks rather than overwhelming threats from the USSR, as the main security challenges in an uncertain world. Indeed, security dangers now stem not from Great Power rivalries and state competition but 'risky' situations such as ethnic cleansing. Unsurprisingly, many writers have addressed this theme of humanitarian intervention as a new variant of war which Michael Ignatieff claimed, was now the 'chief raison d'etre for Western armies'.¹²³ War in the West, according to Christopher Coker, is also being re-valued with humanism as reasons for waging war and the risk-averse conduct of it due to deeper shifts in society's moral, philosophical and social basis. Making wars more humane by minimising suffering on both sides is now the 'great project in a post-metaphysical, post-Christian era where we hold ourselves accountable not to God but to one another'.¹²⁴

However as Coker also observed, Western interventions appear tentative and uncertain about the real stakes involved, even lacking in moral conviction on a supposedly highly-charged moral issue. Although humanitarian objectives may also be considered noble and just, these do not evoke the will to sacrifice blood and treasure. There is less glory and even fewer heroes in such operations. Victims are highlighted instead, from victims of ethnic cleansing to interveners shot down as victims of war. These were after all not wars of survival against clear specific threats but more wars of choice against ambiguous security risks in an uncertain strategic and societal context.

The tentative nature of humanitarian intervention is manifest in several works and highlights the difficulties of the human rights discourse in war. Ignatieff thus sought to illuminate why nations never more immune to risks of war should remain so unwilling to run them. 'Virtual' aspects of war over Kosovo, to Ignatieff, permeated the conflict, from

¹²³ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p.162-3

¹²⁴ Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p.4

how ‘virtual’ RMA technologies mitigated death for both sides to ‘virtual’ ‘victory’, with no final political settlement.¹²⁵ ‘Virtual war’ without sacrifice had dangerous potential for ignoring the bloody reality of war. Values are not worth much, lamented Ignatieff, if impunity is necessary before they are defended. A similar conclusion is reached in James Der Derian’s *Virtuous War*, where technology works in the service of virtue, with the ethical imperative to inflict violence from a distance with no or minimal casualties.¹²⁶ Violence is sanitized by promoting humanitarian hygienic wars where death is out of sight. Der Derian raised important concerns about whether virtuous war is replacing the reality of war by killing without responsibility. The support of moral values apparently again stopped short of incurring casualties.

Other recent contributions highlighted the theme of humanitarian intervention and its problems. Without the ‘Soviet threat’ and not limited by the Soviet deterrent, argued David Chandler, war was increasingly situated within the discourse of humanitarian interventions and human rights, given the apparent demise of ideological or structural explanations for conflict.¹²⁷ Chandler suggested that talk of human rights from Kosovo to Kabul was simply a fig leaf for Great Power domination over weaker states, gravely undermining sovereignty and international law. However he was perhaps too quick to dismiss structural causes for conflict. In fact, globalisation and its associated security risks, as we have seen, has been a key shared theme in these recent wars. It is true however that previous ideological explanations for war are no more. This partly explained why intervention was undertaken in a context of casualty intolerance on the part of interveners, as pointed out by Colin McInnes. Airpower was the appropriate instrument in this political context yet it would prove largely ineffectual against events on the ground and cannot act alone without the threat of ground forces or wider diplomatic efforts.¹²⁸ The overall picture that emerges is again one of tentative interventions where means selected did not quite match desired ends or rhetorical proclamations.

The discourse of ‘human rights’ is one angle to approach war but while important, it does not adequately explain recent wars against Afghanistan and Iraq and not even the ostensibly humanitarian intervention in Kosovo as the writers surveyed above

¹²⁵ Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, p.138

¹²⁶ James Der Derian, *Virtuous War: Mapping the military-industrial-media-entertainment network*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), xv

¹²⁷ David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: human rights and international intervention*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002)

¹²⁸ Colin McInnes, ‘Fatal attraction? Air Power and the West’, in Colin McInnes and Nicholas Wheeler (eds), *Dimensions of Western military intervention*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002)

demonstrated.¹²⁹ The debate on Iraq for example revolved around ‘risk’: the risk of Saddam acquiring WMD or allying with Al Qaeda.¹³⁰ Removing the Taliban and terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan served to reduce the risk of further terror attacks. Human rights rhetoric in both cases were tacked on apparently only as an afterthought. Furthermore, the works of Coker, Der Derian and Ignatieff revealed their shared concern that recent Western interventions were hesitant about the real interests involved despite high-sounding rhetorics. Coker summed up it well: humanitarian wars lacked moral purpose associated with imperialism that could justify losses and indefinite occupation. The West intervened not for grand historical purposes or metanarratives but to manage problems with minimal casualties. Humane warfare is thus unsustainable since we remain reluctant to sacrifice too much for it.¹³¹ It was purely utilitarian. Der Derian in particular feared that the Pentagon was more concerned with the condition of ‘uncertainty’ and ‘virtual enemy’ than any clearly defined enemy or threat.¹³² The Serbs after all were only ‘virtual enemies’ according to Ignatieff since insecure Western societies did not seek mass demonisation to bolster their already weak convictions on the issue.¹³³

Rather than clearly defined existential ‘threats’, this lack of an identifiable enemy suggested that society was not only lacking in conviction but also we were more concerned about a condition of uncertainty and amorphous systemic ‘risks’ instead. Uncertainty is ultimately concerned with risk components of probabilities and consequences, of what *might* happen if no action was taken, rather than Cold War-style evaluation of an enemy’s concrete military capabilities and intentions posing an existential ‘threat’. This has been underemphasised in the discourse.

IV. Conclusion

This chapter has described both the emerging strategic context associated with globalisation, and explored major works on war in the post-Cold War world according to themes raised in the wider international environment and also Ulrich Beck’s works. It

¹²⁹ Ignatieff later suggested that despite humanitarian rhetoric, the Kosovo campaign, the Afghanistan and Iraq wars after 9/11 shared an overall ‘imperial’ framework. Michael Ignatieff, *Empire-lite: nationbuilding in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan*, (London: Vintage, 2003). This ‘empire’ discourse will be addressed in the Conclusion

¹³⁰ A point grasped also by Robert J. Samuelson, ‘Rediscovering Risk’, *Washington Post*, 23 October 2002

¹³¹ Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p.128. And Clarke, ‘War in the new international order’, p.668

¹³² James Der Derian, ‘Global events, national security and virtual theory’, *Millennium*, Vol. 30 No. 3, December 2001, p.676-677, 680

¹³³ Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, p.138

was suggested that globalisation brought with it security risks such as ethnic instability, WMD proliferation, failed states, and trans-national terrorism among others. Furthermore, the end of Cold War constraints, which might have helped keep these issues in check, complicated the risks in question. As classical 'net assessment' of threats in actuarial terms of capabilities and intentions is increasingly untenable. Uncertainty and probabilistic risk scenarios rather than the overwhelming Soviet threat now prompt precautionary action in a strategic context of globalised risks. Today policymakers contemplate proactively 'shaping the environment' rather than 'reactive' strategies of the past such as containment.

Although less prominent in IR, Beck's *World Risk Society* thesis provided considerable explanatory power for this new globalised environment even before 9/11 and especially after. Just as Beck emphasised preventive approaches to risk, IR writers such as Carter, Perry, and Steinbrunner have prescribed preventive policies. Cooper and Rogers also warned that globalisation carries risks but both did not give due recognition to the role of war in managing these systemic risks. The 'risk' concept has cropped up intermittently in literature surveyed and also in the broader strategic context, but no scholars (not even Beck) have so far adopted 'risk management' as the centrepiece of an attempt to understand war and our world. Several writers have incorporated ideas and concepts related to 'risk' but only Coker and Rasmussen have so far adopted a rather more systematic approach to understanding the implications of Beck's *Risk Society* paradigm in IR. Yet even they did not investigate in detail the key concepts of 'risk management' in relation to systemic risks and warfare, nor incorporate the wider richer body of literature on 'risk' beyond Beck's sociological works that will be explored next in Chapter Three. Other scholars have drawn attention to the prominence of 'risk' in warfare but chose instead to highlight the importance of RMA technologies for example in managing tactical risks such as casualties or collateral damage

That war is changing is not a new notion as the wider 'transformation of war' debate has been ongoing for the past decade from Van Creveld's 1991 effort *The Transformation of War* to Kaldor's *New Wars and Old Wars* in 1999. As Ignatieff, McInnes and Der Derian also show, war for the post-industrial West has been reinvented either as, humanitarian intervention, 'spectator sport' war or 'virtuous war'. Observers from the Tofflers to Chris Gray agree war has reconfigured itself and simply assumed different war forms, based on observations of broad transitions in society and the international system. The accounts offered above are compelling in their own right and

reveal different aspects of contemporary war. Authors such as Chandler and Ignatieff have raised questions about the ‘humanitarian intervention’ discourse on war where actions did not quite match humanitarian rhetoric and indeed cannot adequately explain the wars in question from Kosovo to Iraq. Furthermore, Luttwak and Van Creveld have suggested more ‘maximalist’ Clausewitzian concepts of war- ‘noble’ purposes, heroism, speed, mass, momentum and the importance of decisive victories with clear-cut ends - are now in need of replacement. Yet Clausewitz’s emphasis on historicism and holistic analyses of war remain relevant as Colin Gray argued. In particular, Coker realised the need for security in a post-metaphysical age which lacks will and purpose.

One promising avenue of inquiry that might suggest answers to these concerns and themes raised has been largely passed over in the literature reviewed above: risk management. More modestly managing systemic risks for utilitarian purposes and appreciating cumulative partial results, instead of achieving unequivocal victories guided by grand historical or even moral narratives such as human rights is a more accurate representation of recent wars. This study undertaken here, is to the best of my knowledge, the first to analyse war specifically through the prism of *World Risk Society* and ‘risk management’ in an age of globalisation and end of Cold War constraints. Concepts of risk management in fact increasingly guide the West’s wars and it is thus to the theoretical framework employed in this study that we now turn to in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

Risk management, IR and war

Introduction

Having previously highlighted the prominence of risk concepts, the crucial task of this chapter is to delve deeper into the wider theories relating specifically to *Risk Society* and risk management and in so doing provide a working framework to facilitate systematic analysis undertaken in the following chapters. This is not only an essential part of understanding the concepts involved but also because this discussion can go some way towards answering the question of how risk management concepts help meet the need for a more ‘minimalist’ concept of war highlighted in the previous chapter.

To attain some precision in the theory developed, the first section sets conceptual parameters to avoid circumstances where this theory would not apply. It then proceeds to discuss definitions of key terms. For conceptual clarity, I explore the limits and difficulties of operationalising an ambiguous concept like ‘risk’ for analytical purposes in IR. After demonstrating how scholars have addressed, or more commonly neglected this issue, a working definition of ‘risk’ encapsulating its core characteristics is offered, although an ideal definition admittedly is impossible. The third part of the chapter provides the inter-disciplinary theoretical background to this study by integrating a broad range of thematically related yet academically dissociated literature. Sociology and criminology in particular have placed risk and risk management prominently on their research agendas. The Risk Society thesis of sociologists Niklas Luhmann, Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and others, provides a core but by no means totally exclusive, conceptual frame for understanding implications for comparative trends in strategic studies. I also utilise the observations of other risk theorists such as John Adams and Mary Douglas who do not necessarily fall within the Risk Society school. Late-modern criminology has also experienced contemporaneous paradigmatic shifts towards ‘New Penology’ and proactive risk management strategies in policing that warrant exploration in the theoretical framework developed here. The final section addresses specific nuances and

complexities of risk management the concept itself, and two features that may be relevant to this study: surveillance and the precautionary principle.

Rather than furnish a water-tight methodology, the dual purposes here are to: firstly highlight the limits of applying an inter-disciplinary study of risk to IR; and in so doing derive a reasonably consistent thematic matrix from sociology and criminology to examine aspects of war through the prism of risk management.

I. Risk Management, not Perception

In the study of risk, risk perception and assessment have attracted most research attention. John Adams categorised everyone as a 'risk expert' because individual backgrounds and experiences influence risk perceptions. Perceptions also depend on how risk is shaped and occasionally misrepresented by NGOs, media, politicians, 'talking head' experts, and a country's political culture.¹ Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky claimed there is in fact no increase in *real* risks, only in *perceived* risks because very influential social actors claimed so.² This is a complex debate which I will not go into much detail. The politics of risk definition has assumed utmost importance, as successfully asserted definitions are a 'magic political wand' to which most resources and policies must flow.³

There are ample IR works and the Copenhagen School's 'securitization' approach demonstrating how risks are socially constructed through Ole Weaver's 'speech act'. Rasmussen's constructivist analysis of how NATO defined its post-Cold War threats is another.⁴ This study does not address nor contribute to this body of knowledge but acknowledges such approaches exist. It should be stated unequivocally here that research presented here is not predominantly about constructivism, risk perception or assessment. Instead, as a theoretical effort in strategic studies, it concentrates on providing a coherent conceptual framework to analysing use of organised military force for political purposes of managing risks. Indeed, as I have suggested in Chapter Two, Rasmussen's work has addressed the *constructivist* aspect of Beck's works. This study focuses on managing the *risk* aspect.

¹ See an analysis of the various societal actors involved in defining risks in Stuart Allan, Barbara Adam, & Cynthia Carter, *Environmental Risks and the media*, (London: Routledge, 2000)

² See the discussion of Douglas in Deborah Lupton, *Risk*, (London: Routledge, 1999) p38

³ Ulrich Beck, *What is globalisation?*, trans. by Patrick Camiller, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p100

⁴ See Johan Eriksson (ed), *Threat politics: new perspectives on security, risk and crisis management*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001); Mikkel Rasmussen, 'Reflexive security: NATO and International Risk Society, *Millennium:Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 30 No.2, 2001, p.285-310

Nonetheless, this study accepts that risk is culturally constructed, and subjective perceptions vary among and within societies. It is impossible to ignore this fact. Ulrich Beck appeared to incorporate both a realist and weak constructivist approach- there are objective 'real' risks but the nature of risk is conceptualised differently in the West compared to earlier eras and other societies.⁵ Furthermore, risks do not simply exist 'in themselves'. They become a political issue also when people are made aware of them, strategically defined by media or politicians.⁶ This thesis thus adopts a 'Realist constructivist' perspective, recognising that some dynamic interplay exists between material and cultural factors. Risks are socially and culturally predicated as far as we choose and define which risks to address. Its focus however is Realist in that it is concerned with questions of war and security, and how policymakers *apply* definitions of the situation in dealing with the world.

As the executive director of America's *Federal Commission on Risk Assessment and Risk Management* commented, 'many reports have been written about how to improve risk assessments, but very few addressed what you *do* with the risk assessment, which is the point. The goal after all is risk reduction, not developing quantitative descriptions of risk'.⁷ Ultimately, Beck concedes the question of how and whether a risk is constructed or real is irrelevant. What matters is the actualisation of risk in policymakers minds, how it is responded to and acted upon.⁸ I share this focus.

The conceptual language of risk is increasingly a discursive framework within which responses to problems are conceived, designed and legitimated. As a Cabinet Office Strategy Unit report noted, 'the language of risk is now used to cover a wide range of different types of issues' from terror attacks to BSE, and railways.⁹ While cognisant that vested interests may employ the language of risk as a fig leaf to legitimate policies, analysis undertaken here centres only on information available in the public record, not hidden agendas or conspiracy theories which by definition are difficult to verify. As with all wars, there are multiple reasons for war. The suggestion

⁵ For this view, see Lupton, *Risk*, p. 59-60

⁶ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p.22

⁷ Quoted in Amy Charlene Reed, 'Federal Commission Proposes Risk Management Framework', *RiskWorld News*, <http://www.riskworld.com/NEWS/96Q1/nw5aa010.htm>, 13 June 1996

⁸ See Barbara Adam & Joost Van Loon, 'Repositioning Risk: the challenge for social theory', in Barbara Adam, Ulrich Beck and Joost Van Loon (eds), *The Risk Society and Beyond: Critical Issues for Social Theory*, (London: Sage Publications, 2000), p.24

⁹ Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, *Risk: improving government's capacity to handle risk and uncertainty*, November 2002, London, available at: <http://www.strategy.gov.uk/2002/risk/risk/report/report/summary/summary.htm#bk001>

that managing risks could be one certainly does not preclude other possible justifications.

This study suggests that the rise of war as risk management can be understood in light of similar social, political and economic trends studied in sociology and criminology. Information presented will thus be analysed within an inter-disciplinary framework, assessing how far certain concepts of risk management can have empirical relevance to contemporary warfare. The methodology combines deductive-theoretical tools with an inductive empirical approach using case studies in recent real-world contexts. It seeks 'a parallel demonstration of theory' by explicating a particular theory, then demonstrating and interrogating its utility applied to case studies.¹⁰ While many current concerns could benefit from this approach, constraints of space and time dictate that only a few are studied in detail.

II: Risk and its nuances

The Problem of Definition

Risk is the 'defining characteristic of our age', and one of the most powerful concepts in contemporary life.¹¹ It is broadly applicable, yet riddled with complex subtleties. 'Risk' remains an imprecise and slippery concept despite rapidly growing literature on it. It manifests in varying 'risk domains' from economic investment, accounting scandals to food safety, nuclear energy and terrorism. Furthermore, risk has acquired multiple meanings from probability (risk of terrorism), to consequences (risks to security produced by ethnic cleansing), to describing perilous situations. (Saddam Hussein 'poses risks' or is a 'risk to peace') Risk can form part of a strategic calculation, exist materially on its own or often overlap between the two. It can be a normative concept implying the desirability of avoidance actions or a purely descriptive one. When policymakers warn 'we face new risks' they are simply describing a situation, or they can argue 'the risks of inaction outweigh the risk of action' in justifying decisions. Where possible throughout this thesis, it will be indicated whether risk is used as a descriptive term, normative one or combination of both. Mostly it involved a combination of both. This thesis does not believe a rigid

¹⁰ See Rose McDermott, *Risk-taking in international politics: Prospect Theory in US Foreign Policy*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), p9

¹¹ John Adams, *Risk*, (London: UCL Press, 1995), p.180

usage of risk will be helpful to understanding various real-life conditions where it has been employed. Instead, it strives for a measure of conceptual precision by defining essential components of the concept as theoretical guideposts while employing the multifaceted concept in a broad manner reflecting its complexity and richness.

Fortunately, IR has always dealt with what W.B. Gallie called 'essentially contested concepts'¹² such as 'National Interest', and 'Power'. IR has thrived partly because it used general observations that stoke debate. Arnold Wolfers' article '*National Security as an Ambiguous symbol*' warned the concept of 'security' 'may not have any precise meaning at all'; Barry Buzan noted 'security' is a 'weakly conceptualised but politically powerful concept which can provide a useful perspective to IR'.¹³ These are as imprecise as they are influential concepts that deserve study, requiring additional analysis to identify boundaries of application, internal contradictions and relevance of new developments. Ulrich Beck appeared more intent on understanding the implications and political significance of risk than defining the concept. However, it is worthwhile dissecting the concept in some detail. Although precise definitions are elusive, this study suggests one not hoping it will garner universal agreement (an impossible task) but simply as a foundation stone for my theoretical framework. By providing reasonably clear markers of risk and refining its various forms and meaning within specific IR contexts, lack of an overall definition should not preclude theoretical enterprise or empirical verification

Risk: historical connotations

Humankind has always faced danger and uncertainty about the future panics in the past could be situated within magic or a Christian context of Bible, judgment and apocalypse. These provided the West conceptual and behavioural means of coping with dangers such as demons, death and disease. The original meaning of risk fell within this context.

Risk is not a new concept with origins dating to at least the Renaissance, supposedly deriving from the Italian 'risico' meaning dangers of maritime voyages from storms and rocks. The concept of risk then excluded ideas of human fault but was largely attributed to acts of God or force majeure. People saw the world in terms

¹² W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially contested concepts', in Max Black (ed), *The importance of language*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962), p121-46

¹³ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, (2nd ed), (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1991), p.3

of fate, luck or random events beyond control. Personal decisions assumed less significance than it currently does. Changes came with modernity and science, rational thinking, progress and order. Risk became probabilistic and scientified where all probabilities were technically calculable and controllable, confident in the powers of rationalisation. By the 19th century, it extended to human conduct and society.

Contemporary risk however focuses on what Beck called incalculable 'manufactured risks' as outcomes of science and technology. These are uncontrollable and unknowable and can no longer be transformed into rationalised calculable risks. In the West where control over one's life is paramount, 'risk' replaced older ideas about causes of misfortune such as sin, and even more secular notions of 'accidents'. More importantly, 'risk' now assumes human responsibility as causes of risk, and that something can be done to avoid harm.¹⁴ This focus on risk suited an increasingly secular culture. To Beck, risk can be a modern notion that unanticipated results may occur due to our own activities or decisions, rather than fate or nature. But increasingly, we confront globalised high-intensity risks such as nuclear meltdown, remote from personal choice but a result of someone's actions. Global risks are now the focus rather than more personal ones of early modernity. These are of unprecedented scale which can no longer be delimited spatially or temporally. This fuels even more motivation to manage involuntary risks.

The world faces the same old risks and many new ones. An important distinction is that of human responsibility. Even 'old' risks such as disease, famine and floods are no longer seen as acts of God but traced to avoidable human activities. The Ebola virus was attributed to human logging. Cancer and AIDS are not about 'divine judgments' but failure to manage risks. The previous no-fault paradigm of disease has been replaced by the at-fault paradigm. Potential victims have responsibility to self-manage risks. It is their fault if they fail to act preventively. In extreme cases, 'pre-emptive' surgery is suggested to avoid high-risk cancers.¹⁵

Risk has increasingly displaced words like danger, hazard or threat. It has gained new uses and political prominence. To Mary Douglas, 'risk' resonated with political claims in vogue, 'the language of risk is reserved as specialised lexical

¹⁴ Lupton, *Risk*, p.3

¹⁵ 'Surgery is best option for high-risk cancers', *The Times*, 28 Sep 2002; also M Greco, 'Psychomatic subjects and 'duty to be well'', *Economy and Society*, Vol 22 No. 3, 1993

register for political talk about undesirable outcomes'.¹⁶ 'Risk' legitimates or discredits policy, and can be a political weapon to blame others for bads that happen. Politicians declaring something 'at risk' are more likely to get attention by sounding quasi-scientific rather than simply being 'concerned'. Douglas argued that 'risk' replaced 'danger' also because it formed part of a complex of new ideas, globalisation and heightened vulnerability to dangers. Governments have to provide new forms of protection especially in a litigious culture. What was passively accepted as inevitable is no more. Accidents like children being run over or failures in cancer screening are seen as 'avoidable failures', and the 'system' blamed for not managing risks.

The idea of being 'at risk' is now equivalent to being 'sinned against'. We adopt the role of 'potential victim', threatened by risks imposed by others or one's inactions, rather than previously bringing retribution to oneself through one's 'sinful' actions.¹⁷ Ribbons now indicate empathy with victimhood such as red ribbons for AIDS awareness. Rather than flag waving for 'heroic' soldiers fighting a noble cause, we don yellow ribbons and lay wreaths outside bases. The politics of victimhood trumps old-fashioned patriotism. The 'Unknown Victim' now has a memorial much like the 'Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'.¹⁸

Some suggested definitions

Little is precise about 'risk' and no commonly accepted definition can exhaust its meaning and usage. However, all risk concepts share one common element: the distinction between reality and possibility.¹⁹ Risk is thus associated with the possibility that an adverse state of reality may occur as a result of natural events or human action. Risk would be irrelevant if the future was fated or independent of human action. It implies contingent losses resultant from contingent events. These consequences are, more importantly, viewed from a non-fatalistic viewpoint, so they can theoretically be altered through either modifying the initiative activity or mitigating its impacts.²⁰

¹⁶ Mary Douglas, *Risk and Blame: essays in cultural theory*, (London: Routledge: 1992), p.14, 24

¹⁷ Douglas, *Risk and Blame*, p.24

¹⁸ Mick Hume, 'Are they heroes or victims? We're tying ourselves in knots with yellow ribbon', *The Times*, 31 March 2003

¹⁹ Andreas Klinke and Ortwin Renn, 'Precautionary Principle and discursive strategies: classifying and managing risks', *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 4 No. 2, April 2001, p 159

²⁰ See Ortwin Renn, 'Three decades of risk research: accomplishments and new challenges', p.50 and Eugene A. Rosa, 'Metatheoretical foundations for post-normal risk, p.28 *Journal Of Risk Research*, Vol 1 No 1, Jan 1998; Frank Furedi, *The Culture of Fear*, (London: Cassell,)1998, p17

Frank Knight in the 1920s distinguished between uncertainty and risk. The classic technical meaning of risk lay in formal probability theory within the domain of economics and decision analysis. It depended on conditions in which probability estimates of an event and all possible outcomes are known. But this is only one meaning of risk. In many other cases assigning probability figures is impossible such as 'social risks' or 'security risks'. Uncertainty meant immeasurable probabilities since theoretical and empirical basis for assigning probabilities were unknown. Uncertainty meant not knowing the odds or outcomes, while risk meant knowing the odds and possible outcomes but not exactly what would happen. 'Risk' and 'uncertainty' were nominally and formally separate ideas but each is now associated with the other. This is a 'fundamental difficulty in the narrow risk approach' which is strictly compartmentalised. The colloquial synonymous usage of 'risk' and 'uncertainty' created confusion as their strict formal definitions has become largely obscure.²¹ The formal distinction between risk and uncertainty now appeared untenable and made no practical sense as applied throughout this study to ambiguous and unquantifiable security risks.

The previously neutral concept of 'risk' used in economics and marine insurance incorporated probability of both losses and gains. Risk comprised two dimensions: a positive element of investment decisions, financial gains or psychological thrill-seeking; and a negative element endangering security and safety. Lacking its previous positive connotations, risk now means simply unacceptable 'danger, and negative outcomes', without the original number-crunching of probability multiplied with magnitude of losses *and* gains.²² Rather than narrowly scientific definitions of risk as quantifiable probability, John Adams adopts a broader definition of risk as unquantifiable 'danger, hazard, exposure to mischance or peril'. Risk in this sense embodies the concepts of probability and magnitude found in quantified technical definitions of risk but does not insist they be precisely knowable, an impractical proposition.²³ In lay parlance, 'risk' is now used to describe phenomenon that has potential to deliver substantial harm, regardless of whether probability of harm is estimable.²⁴ This definition is adopted here.

²¹ Tim O'Riordan, James Cameron and Andrew Jordan (eds), *Reinterpreting the Precautionary Principle*, (London: Cameron May, 2002), p77

²² Mary Douglas, *Risk and Blame: essays in cultural theory*, (London: Routledge: 1992), p.22

²³ Adams, *Risk*, p.26-27

²⁴ Lupton, *Risk*, p9-10

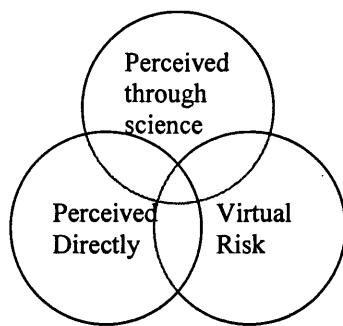
Types of risk and their characteristics

Risks comprise:

- i) socio-political risks from internal or external foes
- ii) economic risks
- iii) natural risks from ecological dangers
- iv) technological risks from science.

These often overlap. Human behaviour can combine technology and WMD. Social risks include negative externalities from choices and actions of one party creating risks for others. Terrorism and drunk driving are common externally imposed risks.²⁵ Beck's narrow definition of 'manufactured risk' discussed later, fails to capture the complexity of the concept. Some risks are knowable and perceived through scientific knowledge (using a microscope to see bacteria). Others can be perceived directly such as rock climbing. The last and most controversial are 'Virtual Risks' ('risk of a risk' or 'unknown unknown') where experts cannot agree or do not know enough. These include BSE, global warming, mobile phones and terrorism. The figure below demonstrates the often interlinked nature of risks.²⁶

Fig 1: Risks



²⁵ Royal Society, *Risk: Analysis, perception and management*, (London: Royal Society, 1992), p.13, p.135

²⁶ John Adams, 'Frameworks for thinking about risk', Paper presented at *Goodenough-Chevening Conference on Risk*, 11 April 2002, Goodenough College, London.

Approaches to risk

There are differing approaches to risk. Cognitive psychologists focus on perception; professional risk assessors and insurers prefer quantitative approaches; sociologists study the broader significance of risk. An institutional approach addresses rules and norms and how organisations manage risk. There is no 'correct' approach to risk. The emphasis placed on particular aspects varies according to concerns of analysts and inherent limits of case studies.

Britain's Royal Society in 1992 witnessed such disagreement about the nature and meaning of risk- 'scientific' risk, and 'perceived' risk- that its report on risk was issued not in the Society's name but a 'study group'. As Paul Slovic argued, where experts describe 'real' or 'scientific' risk in 'objective' narrow quantitative ways through formal technical mathematical models, the public has a more complex qualitative approach to 'perceived risk'. There is no 'single correct perception of risk'. Slovic, the father of risk perceptions, outlined three dimensions of risk:

- i) the dread factor (emphasising lack of control, catastrophic potential, fatal effects, unfair distribution)
- ii) the unknown factor (risk tends to be overestimated if it is novel, unobservable with relatively unknown consequences)
- iii) scale of risk (the number of people exposed).

Risks due to human action or novel technologies are especially feared such as weapons of mass destruction. This 'contextualist view of risk' is subjective, value-laden and multi-dimensional.²⁷ It embodies not only traditional risk parameters of probabilities and consequences but also takes into account individual or collective risk, catastrophic potential, voluntariness, dramatic coverage and so on. A narrow definition of risk confined to numerical models is sufficient only if probability and consequence are well-known. Risks such as terrorism are now incalculable or hard to predict compared to earlier calculable risks such as earthquakes, subject to private insurance. We now face 'hard-to-manage risks' rather than 'quantifiable risks'.²⁸ After September 11, the private insurance sector 'cannot insure risks that are infinite

²⁷ Howard Kunreuther and Paul Slovic, 'Science, values and risk', in Howard Kunreuther and Paul Slovic (ed), Challenges in risk assessment and risk management: Special Volume, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 545, May 1995, p.122

²⁸ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p31

and impossible to price'.²⁹ This thesis adopts a qualitative social science approach to risk rather than quantitative 'scientific' approaches and formal mathematical tools.

A taxonomy of risk could look like this:

More acceptable risks	Unacceptable risks
Voluntarily undertaken	Involuntary
Individual control, 'extreme sports'	Loss of individual control
Naturally occurring risks	Man-made, a result of human activities or science and technology
Latent, slow-developing or ongoing long-term harm of low impact such as car accidents	Catastrophic potential, sudden and dramatic such as terrorism
Reversible impacts	Irreversible impacts

Source: Professor Rod Smith, 'Risk And Society- Is science dangerous', *Imperial College and LSE Joint Lecture Series*, 11 March 2002, London School of Economics, London

It is essential to specify carefully what risks are addressed in this thesis since risk is complex and multi-faceted as we have seen. The risks in question possess some 'tombstone-ability': the capacity to produce deaths or victims through dramatic catastrophes that command media coverage and focus public opinion. Tragedies provide 'policy windows' for policy changes.³⁰ Security risks to be studied were selected based on criteria viewed as most unacceptable to society and attract policymakers' attentions:

- i) high levels of incertitude on probability of occurrence
- ii) dramatic and catastrophic potential outcomes
- iii) involuntary and imposed, collective rather than individual

²⁹ 'US Securities and Insurance industries: Keeping the promise', Hearing of the House Financial Services Committee, 107th Congress, 1st session, 26 Sep 2001

³⁰ Christopher Hood, Henry Rothstein and Robert Baldwin, *The Government of Risk: Understanding Risk Regulation Regimes*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.140

- iv) irreversible harm, difficult to control
- v) adverse consequences for which decisionmakers think they will be held accountable
- vi) where future outcomes are novel and hard to predict, risks that are analogous or uppermost in decisionmakers' minds might be extrapolated to the original risk in question.

Throughout this thesis, 2 sets of risks are discernible: systemic risks posed by problems such Saddam Hussein's Iraq, terrorism and ethnic cleansing; and tactical risks posed by a policy remedy including allied or civilian casualties. These risks are dynamic and can evolve in intensity according to circumstances. As discussed in Chapter Two, tactical risks have solicited most attention. In a recent classified study done for Donald Rumsfeld by Richard Schultz, Tufts University expert on unconventional warfare, even US Special Forces Command was found to be hamstrung from aggressively hunting Al Qaeda by a culture of 'risk-aversion' and safety. An ostensibly 'tactical' risk such as incurring friendly or civilian casualties could evolve into 'strategic' impact in terms of policymakers losing public support and political office.

Nonetheless, this thesis is largely concerned with what Ulrich Beck and Blair's Cabinet Office Strategy Unit termed 'systemic risks [which are] now high on the agenda of many countries'.³¹ 'Systemic' risk, arises from peculiarities of the international structure where ethnic tensions, terrorist flows, destabilised or rogue states have broken free of Cold War control systems. Globalisation, greater connectedness of infrastructure, and media coverage also mean that citizens are aware and potentially more vulnerable to economic crises and indirect impact of civil wars half a world away, diseases and terrorist networks. NATO's 1999 *Strategic Concept* cautioned against the 'spilling over' of 'serious economic, social and political difficulties' in countries 'in and around the Euro-Atlantic area'. With globalisation and instant media, risks 'proliferate' to the West easily. An ostensibly marginal

³¹ See Ulrich Beck, 'The World Risk Society Revisited: the terrorist threat', *LSE Public Lecture*, 13 February 2002, London; Cabinet Office Strategy Unit report, *Risk*

location like the Balkans can become symbolically strategic with images of genocide and instability broadcast through global media.³²

'Risk', 'Threat' or 'Hazard'?

These terms are used interchangeably and loosely by policymakers and scholars, further complicating what is already a complex subject matter. 'Hazard' is often used in health and safety and the environment. 'Threat' is often associated with security. 'Hazards' or 'threats' may be 'physical entities, conditions, substances, activities capable of causing harm', a 'condition which introduces the possibility that loss, or damage will result'. In this sense, 'hazards' or 'threats' are objects of risk management to reduce the possibilities.³³

However there is no universal acceptance on terminologies described above. Some suggest that 'threat' implies an imminent well-defined danger very close in time and highly likely to strike but this definition is hard to support. Others such as Johan Eriksson, betraying some frustration, argued that 'threats, risks, dangers- *or whatever they are called-* are social constructions'.³⁴ Eriksson's collaborators concurred that any difference between 'risk' and 'threat', is hardly of any practical importance. Technical definitions might not be understood in everyday language. So risk, hazard and threat, to them are synonyms, defined according to its everyday usage. Mikkel Rasmussen asserted 'risks' were post-Cold War 'threats of the times' without exploring in detail subtle differences between 'risk' and 'threat'. Rasmussen further claimed that 'in risk society, threats are often the consequences of one's own actions'.³⁵ This is a limited conceptualisation of risk where the more pertinent concerns are those dangers involuntary imposed on someone. Shlomo Griner's response to Rasmussen picked up subtle conceptual differences, suggesting that 'risk and threat are not the same', but provided no convincing distinction. Griner narrowly conceived of risk as something one incurred through one's own actions, suggesting incredulously that 'terrorist activity surely entails a risk, but for the terrorists *themselves*'. He emphasized internalisation of risk where agency and responsibility

³² Gearoid O Tuathail, 'Understanding Critical Geopolitics: Geopolitics and Risk Society', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 22 No. 2/3, June/Sep 1999, p117-118

³³ Alan Waring and A. Ian Glendon, *Managing Risk: Critical Issues for Survival and Success into the 21st century*, (London: Thomson Learning, 1998), p.3-4

³⁴ Johan Eriksson, 'Introduction', p.9 (italics added) and Lennart Sjoberg, 'Risk perceptions: taking on societal salience', p.21-2, in Eriksson (ed), *Threat Politics*

³⁵ Rasmussen, 'Reflexive security?', p.285

arise from internal processes, neglecting involuntary risks imposed by external 'others'.³⁶ Griner misread the inherent complexity of the risk concept. There is a big difference between those who take risks or incur risks through their own actions or choices (this is the most common conception of risk), and those who are involuntarily victimised- or put at risk- by other risk-makers and fail to take preventive action. It is the latter category that the United States and Britain feel they fall within and need to take preventive action, which is my concern.

Yaacov Vertzberger and Mary Douglas both noted that risk in everyday language now simply meant 'danger', 'threat' or some unhappy event that may occur while formal definitions focus on quantified probabilities and outcomes. Deborah Lupton noted that for Beck also, 'risk' simply means 'threat' or 'danger'. John Adams further criticised Beck's definition of risk (as 'a systematic way of dealing with hazards, insecurities induced by modernisation itself'), for creating 'unnecessary misunderstanding' given the common usage of both risk and hazard as synonyms.³⁷ Beck suggested the criteria for risk-threat distinction lay in regulatory systems. The 'operational criterion for distinguishing risk and threat' is denial of private insurance protection. This implied 'a presumed distinction between controllable consequences (risks) and uncontrollable consequences (threats) in industrialism. If risks that cannot be delimited spatially and temporally now elude the logic of private insurance and are no longer quantifiable, the boundary between 'predictable' risks and uncontrollable threats is breached.³⁸ Beck here muddied waters even further, implying that 'risks' had simply become 'uncontrollable threats'.

'Risk' is however more than simply an existence of a hazard or threat but a broader concept incorporating likely scale of unwanted consequences, probability, frequency and duration. Giddens argued that 'risk' should be separated from 'hazard' or 'danger'. It entails much more action than simply a hazard that exists as a given and could lead to harm. Risk implies probability that an action or inaction may produce undesirable outcomes. Risk implies things where humans have potential control, the active assessment and management of future hazards as societies try to shape the future. Choice is also crucial to risk. There are no 'risk-free choices, even

³⁶ Shlomo Griner, 'Living in a World Risk Society: A reply to Mikkel V. Rasmussen', *Millennium*, Vol 31, No.1, 2002, p.157

³⁷ Adams, *Risk*, p180; Lupton, *Risk*, p59-60

³⁸ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p55; Ulrich Beck, *Democracy without enemies*, trans. Mark Ritter, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p25-26

the decision not to decide. Avoiding active decision may entail more risk than making an active choice.³⁹ Risk, Beck admits, is 'an intermediate state between security and destruction' and is irrelevant when risk occurs.⁴⁰ This implied choice to avert harm. Niklas Luhmann further distinguished between 'risk' and 'danger', in that 'risk' involved potential loss as a consequence of decision or non-decision, invoking a concept of attribution. 'Danger' is something that occurs externally regardless of our decisions or non-decisions, actions and non-actions. The novelty of the 'risk' phenomena is that we are transforming more and more 'dangers' into 'risks' as an expanding array of threats like terrorism or technological hazards are attributed to decisions or indecisions.⁴¹

To complicate matters further, what Barry Buzan described as threats can also apply to risks in terms of uncertainty and probabilities as the table below shows.

The intensity of threats

Low Intensity	High intensity
Uncertain, diffuse, latent processes rather than particular actor (terrorism, global warming)	Specific, immediate, with clear focus and source (Soviet nuclear arsenals)
Distant (time-space) eg pollution	Immediate, Close (time-space)
Low probability and consequences	High probability and consequences

Source : Barry Buzan, *People, states and fear*, (2nd edition), (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), p140

³⁹ For further discussions of 'risk' and 'hazard', see Waring and Glendon, *Managing Risk*, p.3-4; also Yaakov Vertzberger, *Risk-taking and decision-making: Foreign military intervention decisions*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p25

⁴⁰ Beck, *World Risk Society* p3, p.135

⁴¹ Niklas Luhmann, *Risk: a sociological theory*, (New York: Adline de Gruyter, 1993), trans Rhodes Barrett, p.22, 46

Threats, to Buzan, are highly complex unlike 'a clear set of calculable, constant and comparable risks like those faced by players of chess'.⁴² Buzan assumes, as many do, that risks are calculable and constant when this is no longer so. He also brings the threat concept into probability domains : 'probability has to be weighed against consequences as well'.⁴³ This thesis suggests that when addressing dangers in terms of probabilities and consequences, it is better conceptualised within domain of risk. Societies after all conceptualise dangers in different ways.

In Risk Society, dangers are considered at the level of their potentiality and riskiness, rather than immediate consequences or capabilities and intentions. The 'risk management process begins by identifying hazards or threats and analysing them in terms of potential consequences through risk profiling'.⁴⁴ According to the US General Accounting Office (GAO), a threat analysis, the first step in determining risk, identifies and evaluates each threat on the basis of various factors, such as its capability and intent to attack an asset, the likelihood of a successful attack, and lethality. Risk management is then the process of understanding 'risk'--the likelihood that a threat will harm an asset with some severity of consequences—and deciding on and implementing actions to reduce it.⁴⁵ Again, the GAO formulation of 'risk' and 'threat' is by no means definitive. It merely indicates one way of approaching the problem. This study suggests that first analysing 'threats' based on capability and intent, as the GAO recommends, and *then* the likelihood of that threat occurring (risk), is being undermined. Increasingly we have neglected the first step of properly analysing threats, and are now focused simply on 'risk' in terms of likelihood and consequences. This is the logical consequence of a way of thinking about dangers dominant in a probabilistic culture characterised by the Risk Society. This is the main conceptual difference between the two concepts adopted in this study, which will be demonstrated next.

⁴² Barry Buzan, *People, states and fear*, (2nd edition), (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), p141

⁴³ Buzan, *People, states and fear* p133-141

⁴⁴ Waring and Glendon, *Managing Risk*, p.8

'Threat' and 'risk': conceptual components

Perhaps the best way to understand threats and risks is through their respective components. Both imply different ways of conceptualising danger. 'Risk' emphasises the *probability* and *magnitude* of *consequences*. In IR under the 'Old Security Paradigm', the conventional notion of 'threat' was usually defined narrowly in terms of a military threat composed of assessing an opponent's *intentions* and military *capabilities*. Strategic studies then was preoccupied with reducing very concrete military threats of nuclear confrontation with missiles facing off across Europe, and analysing impact of weapons systems like SS-20s on the strategic balance. Threat is defined by notions of power, power-resources and means of power rightly or wrongly perceived as overwhelming or not. 'Without power, there will be no threat'.⁴⁶ Conventional Realist approaches see security as a derivative of power where the actor with the strongest power capabilities would feel secure. A Weberian means-end rationality approach normally assumed the realisation of a state's interests depended on the balance of capabilities between that state and others.⁴⁷

A 'New Insecurity Paradigm of Risk' does not revolve on power capabilities but probabilities. Consequently, even powers with strongest capabilities feel insecure rather than secure. As the UK MoD's March 2003 *Strategic Trends* report noted, greatest dangers stem not from conquering states but failed and destabilised states posing risks through globalisation, terrorist and refugee flows, diseases. These dangers are conceptualised in terms of their probabilities and consequences, as risks since their material capabilities or intent are impossible to gauge or even non-existent. A Realist model sees war and security as a struggle for power determined by balance of capabilities. But war is no longer for these reasons but to minimise probabilities and risks. The 1997 US *Presidential/Congressional Commission on Risk Assessment and Risk Management* defined how risky a particular situation is, and its evaluation as a product of two factors: probability of occurrence of adverse event; and extent and magnitude of that consequence. Francois Ewald argued that rather than 'danger' or 'hazard', 'risk' goes better with ideas like chance and probabilities.⁴⁸ To Niklas

⁴⁵ See GAO, *Combating Terrorism: Threat and Risk assessments can help prioritise and target program investments*, Report Number NSIAD-98-74, 09 April 1998, Washington D.C

⁴⁶ Bertel Heurlin, *The threat as a concept in international politics*, (Copenhagen: The Information and Welfare Service of the Danish Defence, 1977), p5, 6

⁴⁷ Rasmussen, 'Reflexive Security', *Millennium*, p.289

⁴⁸ Francois Ewald, 'Insurance and Risk', in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.199

Luhmann, the present structural novelty means that since we cannot know the future, the future can only be ‘perceived through medium of probabilities to provide the present with some basis for decisions’. The popular usage of ‘risk’, contended Mary Douglas, reflected the impact of a late modern way of ‘probabilistic thinking’ on our culture, regardless whether this probability is quantifiable or not. Where risk is culturally constructed, John Adams further observed, a previously deterministic rationality of science is replaced by ‘conditional, probabilistic rationalities’.⁴⁹

‘Risks’ have long been discussed under the guise of military ‘threats’ and ‘new non-military threats’ but doing so dilutes the traditional essence of threat based on intentions and military capabilities. Christopher Dandeker suggested that the uncertain post-Cold war era is composed of ‘risk complexity’ where it is difficult to identify circumstances in which a ‘bewildering array of risks (defined as capabilities not matched to intent) might become identifiable threats’.⁵⁰ With diminished security threats across Western Europe, armed forces were now geared towards diffuse risks: ‘presumed or possible hostile intent not matched by capabilities or vice versa.’ These included terrorism, refugee flows, and WMD proliferation. Dandeker’s definition of ‘risk’ is certainly more nuanced than most but is still derived from traditional benchmarks of capabilities and intents. This study suggests, it might prove productive to incorporate probabilities and consequences as well. NATO’s first post-Cold War *Strategic Concepts* suggested a further distinction between ‘threat’ and ‘risks’ in terms of probabilities and uncertainty: ‘the monolithic, massive and potential immediate threat’ of Soviet attack had gone. ‘In contrast to the predominant threat of the past, the risks to Alliance security that remain are multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which make them harder to predict and assess’.⁵¹

Action-reaction dynamics

‘Threat’ and ‘risk’ also elicit different action dynamics. Richard Ulman defined national security threats as ‘an action or sequence of events that threatens dramatically

⁴⁹ Niklas Luhmann, *Risk: A sociological theory*, (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993), trans Rhodes Barrett, p.49; Mary Douglas, *Risk and Blame: essays in cultural theory*, (London: Routledge: 1992), p.39; Adams, *Risk*, Preface ix

⁵⁰ See Christopher Dandeker, ‘New times and new patterns of civil-military relations’, in Jurgen Kuhlman and Jean Callaghan (eds), *Military and Society in 21st Century Europe: a comparative analysis*, (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2000), p30

⁵¹ *The Alliance’s Strategic Concept agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Rome, 08 November 1991*, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b911108a.htm>.

and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life of a state's citizens, or limits policy choices'.⁵² Ulman's definition suggested threats present themselves to be 'reacted' to within a short time frame. Threats are crucial parts of an 'action-reaction' relationship as an output of policy (making threats against others), or input upon policy to be reacted upon (threats from others). In strategic thinking, the 'threat' concept is best described as a necessary reactive answer to aggressive actions from an adversary. The nature of 'threat-avoidance' policy normally saw threat as an impact on the polity coming from the outside to be 'reacted upon'.⁵³ John Hertz's 'Security Dilemma' highlighted the 'action-reaction' dynamics involved in an anarchic system as states seeking to increase their own defence capabilities, incurred even more suspicion from other states who responded in kind. This manifested during the Cold War arms races but hardly applies when dealing proactively with terrorism or destabilised states. 'Risk-management' policy on the other hand is 'proactive' and 'anticipatory'.⁵⁴ Although we can also proactively address possible threats of the future, this study suggests that where this occurs, it falls largely within the risk discourse. The term 'threat' normally meant imminent and well defined to some analysts, which we have to react to.⁵⁵ As Paul Wolfowitz suggested, 'during the Cold War, our security environment had an appearance of predictability...in the 21st century the threat is not nearly as clear'.⁵⁶ Indeed, it is suggested here that risks are much more imprecise and uncertain, requiring 'proactive' management.

Fear versus anxiety

Threats generate fears; risks generate anxiety. This suggests a final subtle distinction between the two concepts. With huge social changes ranging from gender roles, and individualisation, 'it is now a matter of sociological common sense to identify ourselves as living through a period of acute insecurity and high anxiety'.⁵⁷ To Beck, 'threats to the future...cannot be perceived or explained because they do not exist yet

⁵² Richard H. Ulman, 'Redefining security' in *International Security*, Vol.8 No. 1, Summer 1983, p.133

⁵³ Heurlin, *The threat as a concept in international politics*, p16-17, 21

⁵⁴ Christopher Hood and David K.C. Jones, *Accident and Design: contemporary debates in risk management*, (London: UCL Press, 1996), p.10

⁵⁵ Ashton B. Carter & William J. Perry, *Preventive Defence: A new security strategy for America*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p.8

⁵⁶ Prepared Statement for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees: 'Building a military for the 21st century', 3-4 October 2001

⁵⁷ Iain Wilkinson, *Anxiety in a Risk Society*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p.42

but they cause anxiety.⁵⁸ Public controversies about health and environmental dangers create a 'generalised climate of risk which for most people becomes the source of unspecific anxieties'.⁵⁹

Sigmund Freud suggested that in relation to dangers, there is a distinction between fear or anxiety. Fear requires a 'definite' object of which one is afraid and it tends to be more immediate, specific and focused. Apprehension (anxiety) implies a certain condition of expectation of danger and preparation. People experiencing anxiety generally tend to feel threatening uncertainty about the future and are troubled when the cause and nature of anticipated danger is unclear. It has a 'quality of indefiniteness and lack of object'.⁶⁰ Although the September 11 attacks killed less than 10 percent of annual highway fatalities in America, these risks aroused anxiety because they were dramatically reported by the media, unexpected and random, creating unfocused vulnerability. 2002 was an uneasy time of anxiety with snipers, repeated terror warnings, corporate scandals and Iraq; a sense of stepping into the unknown. Admittedly, in everyday language, it is hard to maintain a clear distinction between fear and anxiety. Yet it appears the key difference between them is the amount and quality of knowledge we possess about anticipated danger. Anxiety thrives on tension between knowledge and ignorance of fearful situations. Once we have fuller understanding, vague uncertainties of anxiety can be transformed into known objects of fear.⁶¹ For Beck and Giddens, the significance of uncertain knowledge of risk lies in extent to which it engenders more uncertainty and anxiety about the future, undermining our sense of ontological security.

II: The 'Risk Society'

Identification of risk occurs within specific sociocultural and historical contexts, rather than now largely discredited notions that some cultures are simply more fearful than others. Historical sociology of risk and the cultural construction of risk are equally important in understanding how risk is experienced. There is no particular consensus among sociologists, even between Giddens and Beck, on reasons behind the current preoccupation with at least 6 broad categories of risk: lifestyle,

⁵⁸ Ulrich Beck, *Democracy without enemies*, trans. Mark Ritter, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p38

⁵⁹ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p109-143, 181-208

⁶⁰ Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, (London: The International Psycho-Analytical Press, 1922), trans. C.J.M Hubback, p.9

⁶¹ Iain Wilkinson, *Anxiety in a Risk Society*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p.20-1

environmental, medical, economic, criminal and interpersonal relationships. International security risks were largely neglected until recently. Although Beck and Giddens concur that the prominence of risks today is because of their global scale, for Giddens, it is also a result of increased vulnerability and ontological insecurity in a post-traditional society. Niklas Luhmann further raised pertinent questions about a society that understood misfortune in terms of 'risk' rather than magic, fate, or God. How does society cope with a future that is only more or less probable, and intensely concerned with extreme improbabilities?⁶²

What follows is a hopefully concise summary of main features of the Risk Society thesis drawn mainly from sociologists such as Beck, Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman, and Niklas Luhmann, which have been filtered for their relevance to this thesis. The complete Risk Society agenda incorporates a far broader agenda than my present concerns. Its overarching theories also had to be narrowed down or supplemented for IR purposes. Beck and Giddens, like any academic work, have their detractors and the focus here is not debating the validity of their propositions- this study actually disagrees with some of Beck's conclusions, and definition of risk. Rather, my concern is applying their insights on risk and risk management. The Risk Society thesis encapsulates the current state of our world and supplies theoretical guidelines of potential use to IR researchers in conceptualising contemporary problems and dynamics. The following key concepts are flagged for discussion:

- i) reflexive modernisation
- ii) active anticipation
- iii) manufactured insecurity and global risks
- iv) Risk Society's minimalist ethos

These should be read as interlinked notions, rather than strictly segregated ideas. While not all themes raised here are directly pertinent for our purposes, it was felt necessary to briefly discuss them to help provide clearer understanding.

Risk Society, broadly speaking, is organised in significant ways around the concept of risk and increasingly governs its problems in terms of discourses and

⁶² Niklas Luhmann, *Risk: A sociological theory*, (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993), trans Rhodes Barrett, Introduction viii-ix

technologies of risk.⁶³ Rather than postmodernism which sees politics as at an end, risk is a dynamic force for change and how we interpret risk, negotiate and live with it will structure our culture, society and politics for coming decades.⁶⁴ Politics now takes on new meaning and subtleties in terms of risk. Risk assessment and management have assumed almost mythical status. Risk assumes a different significance from previous historical eras. Much contemporary public discourse appears geared to warnings about risks and possible catastrophes. In Britain, even gardening was called 'the ultimate danger sport' in March 2003 with gardening injuries reportedly soaring. What makes contemporary fears qualitatively different is we are not only more aware but new types of fears have emerged. Modernity produced far greater uncertainties and dangers, with globalisation of risk in terms of intensity(nuclear war) and more events which can affect whole populations such as global economic collapse or global warming, BSE, AIDS and SARS, terrorism. Human activity and technology have 'manufactured' risks such as mobile phone radiation requiring specialised scientific expertise, and cannot be directly observed. An increasingly affluent society with no obvious material needs, is no longer prepared to accept risks or side-effects tolerated in the previous struggle against scarcity.

According to Beck, the 'entry into risk society occurs....when hazards now undermine or cancel established safety systems of the provident state's existing risk calculations.'⁶⁵ It all began with the environmental issue as people started questioning the consequences of industrial processes. Risks used to be calculable. Yet contemporary risks such as environmental catastrophe or deterritorialised, de-nationalised terrorism are incalculable because they elude time-space categorisation. 'Calculating and managing risks no one really knows has become a main preoccupation.'⁶⁶ Governments can no longer escape the 'risk manager's role, since the future looks increasingly threatening'.⁶⁷ There is another crucial difference in global risks. While ecological and financial risks are largely *unintentional*, terrorism *intentionally* produces bads.

⁶³ See Pat O'Malley, 'Introduction', in Pat O'Malley (ed), *Crime and the Risk Society*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing,1998)

⁶⁴ Jane Franklin, 'Introduction' in Jane Franklin (ed), *The Politics of Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p1

⁶⁵ Ulrich Beck, 'Risk Society and the Provident State' in Scott Lash, Bronislaw Szerszynski, & Brian Wynne, (eds), *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, (London: Sage, 1996), p31

⁶⁶ Ulrich Beck, 'Politics of Risk Society', in Franklin (ed), *The Politics of Risk Society*, p12

Reflexive modernisation and risk-conscious modernity

Risk is also more prominent due to reflexive modernisation and the declining hold of tradition and trust. In post-traditional society, 'social reflexivity' means action is constituted by constantly renewing flows of new information than pre-given modes of conduct. Reflexivity arises because an agent regards its actions or inactions in terms of their potentially adverse consequences even before these have materialised.⁶⁸ Risk Society is characterised by ongoing reflexivity regarding risk assessments and management. Society becomes reflexive when it replaces earlier assumptions of controllability, linearity and progress, with the 'self-endangerment argument'. The impetus for social transformation is no longer instrumental rationality but risks, dangers and globalisation.⁶⁹ 'The discourse of risk begins where trust in our security ends and ceases to be relevant when the potential catastrophe occurs.'⁷⁰ Losing trust in traditional regulators, society manages risks in new ways. Previous faith in regulators of the international system too has been displaced, with new approaches proposed to new problems. We continuously assess security less in terms of what is but what may yet materialise with uncertain information.

Citizen groups are increasingly willing to raise their concerns. Subpolitics meant 'direct' politics, by active citizen groups or NGOs outside representative institutions of political systems.⁷¹ Knowledge gained new political significance with Beck's idea of 'normal chaos of risk conflict' describing experts and counter-experts dispensing contradictory facts.⁷² The absence of what Anthony Giddens called 'ontological security', -the certainty of knowledge- is characteristic of risk scenarios.⁷³ 'Guardians of knowledge' in early modernity assumed exclusive access to knowledge, their position bestowed on them morally based on tradition. In contrast, expert knowledge is fallible, susceptible to challenge. However, while ecological or economic risks involved purification of experts and counter-experts, this has been undermined by Governments' unilateral definitions of security risks post-9/11. While 'subpolitics' is largely not utilised here, its impact on societal structures and the pressures policymakers face from domestic constituencies is recognised in a mini-case

⁶⁷ Martin Woolacott, 'The Politics of Prevention' in Franklin, (ed), *The Politics of Risk Society*, p122

⁶⁸ See Anthony Giddens and Christopher Pearson, 'Conversations with Anthony Giddens', (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p115; Also Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, p20

⁶⁹ See Ulrich Beck, *The reinvention of politics*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p23, 28

⁷⁰ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p2, 135; also Beck, *The reinvention of politics*, p134

⁷¹ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p39

⁷² Beck, *World Risk Society*, p107

study in the Concluding chapter on the role of trans-national NGOs in war and security.

Active Anticipation and Risk Society

Future-mindedness, claimed Susan Sontag, was as much the 'distinctive mental habit of the 20th century, as history-mindedness, as Nietzsche pointed out, transformed thinking in the 19th century'.⁷⁴ This future-mindedness that Sontag described had evolved so much so that especially by the late 20th century, we were more concerned with *averting* possible negative futures than *attaining* historically driven futures and utopias. Calculations of the future once associated with linear notions of progress, have now morphed into dystopian nightmarish visions. As Beck put it, 'the questions of development of technologies are now eclipsed by questions of 'management' of the risks' involved.⁷⁵ Risk Society alerts us to centrality of concerns over insecurity, risks and their 'management', 'how best to pre-empt any adverse outcomes, and a tendency to imagine problems that may occur in future'.⁷⁶ The British Medical Journal in 2001 thus banned the word 'accident', claiming that even earthquakes are predictable and preventable events that governments should warn us to avoid.

Risk is a way of controlling or colonising the future. The 'not-yet event' is a stimulus to action as we become 'active today to prevent, alleviate or take precautions against the problems and crises of tomorrow and day after'. The centre of risk consciousness lies in the future as 'unknown and unintended consequences dominate history and society'. Risk Society 'marks the dawning of a speculative age'.⁷⁷ We tend toward proactive actions especially when the scale of possible consequences is much higher. It means adopting a calculative attitude to possibilities of action or inaction. Risk Society identifies dangers before they materialise, not retrospective help offered by the old welfare state.⁷⁸ The NHS- initially providing retrospective treatment- now warns 'preventively' of smoking and alcohol risks.

⁷³ Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p.183-185

⁷⁴ Susan Sontag, *AIDS and its metaphors*, (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p89

⁷⁵ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press,1992), p.19

⁷⁶ Frank Furedi, *The Culture of Fear*, (London: Cassell, 1997), p29

⁷⁷ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press,1992), p22, 33, 73

Manufactured insecurity and global risks

Risk Society's principal dangers are produced by civilisation that cannot be delimited in space or time. 'Reflexive' and 'manufactured' risk are created by our industrial and scientific processes. Beck argued threats were previously constructed in terms of an enemy or foreign 'Other'.⁷⁹ It was God, nature or another human entity that was source of an 'external' risk. Perpetrator and victim become almost identical with what Beck called the 'democratisation of risk'. With MAD for example, the aggressor is also destroyed. However, this researcher disagrees, for often, anxieties about risk still tend to be projected onto 'Others' posing risks such as SARS. Such groups are then subject to surveillance, and precautions taken regarding their activities.⁸⁰ Risk discourse positions social actors in two ways: those responding to risks identified as threatening them and undertaking risk management, or those known as risk-makers who cause risks and require surveillance and intervention.⁸¹ While Beck assumes the two now merge, a practical meaningful distinction still exists.

In this study, risk is largely attributed to someone else's actions, and contingent events which we may alter to avoid harm. This clearly differed from Beck's 'manufactured risk'. I agree with Frank Furedi that Beck's conceptualisation of risk as technologically manufactured is too narrow. Rather, to be 'at risk' is a condition of life, a 'free-floating anxiety' attaching to whatever danger is brought to public attention. This comprises non-technological concerns such as ethnic cleansing, crime and child abuse.⁸² Criminologists have also utilised the Risk Society thesis with its focus on risk management, without necessarily importing 'manufactured risk' which is even applied inconsistently by Beck, to issues from global warming to 'post-modern' terrorism, WMD proliferation and cross-border refugee flows. The last three are only tangentially linked to technology. Rather than 'manufactured' risk, this study prefers 'strategic' or 'systemic risk' which has been outlined earlier.

The 'minimalist' ethos of Risk Society

The industrial society's normative project was the ideal of 'equality' and eliminating scarcity. In Beck's Risk Society, the 'normative counter-project', its ideal, basis and

⁷⁸ See Woolacott in Franklin, (ed), *The Politics of Risk Society*, p121

⁷⁹ Beck, *World Risk Society*, p.50

⁸⁰ Lupton, *Risk*, p124-144

⁸¹ Lupton, *Risk*, p106

⁸² Furedi, *The Culture of Fear*, 1998, p8, p20

motive force is 'safety'. Strikes in autumn 2002 on the London Underground for instance were more concerned about safety cover than equal pay. Propelled by fear and anxiety, the focus is on developing new strategies of risk management to calm anxieties. Materially satisfied, the value system is largely negative, striving to prevent the worst, rather than obtaining something 'good'.⁸³ Industrial society concerned itself with production and distribution of goods. Risk Society is driven by managing and distributing dangers and 'bads'. Consequently, the risk management approach that arises is based on a profoundly 'utilitarian moral calculus that replaces other moral criteria such as generosity, guilt or fairness. By focusing on the avoidable, it does little more than perpetuate a negative if not dystopian outlook.'⁸⁴ Giddens called modernity the 'risk culture'. To him, late modernity had a 'double-edged character', no longer simply promising human progress and production of goods associated with 'simple modernity'.⁸⁵ Ideological conflicts are replaced by the discourse of globalisation and managing associated risks. There is a notable absence of previous narratives of hope and progress; vulnerability defines the human condition.

East-West confrontation is replaced by doubt arising not from ignorance but from greater knowledge and questioning. People are no longer encouraged or willing to exert themselves to attain moral ideals. With moral ambivalence comes tolerance. Zygmunt Bauman argued that 'modernity did not declare war on suffering, it only swore extinction to a purposeless, functionless suffering. *Pain*, if it served purposes...could be, and should be inflicted.'⁸⁶ Such purposes are now elusive. Historical thinking was one significant product of the Enlightenment, geared towards essentially positive purposive transformation of the human condition, rejecting the previous metaphysical system of divine revelation and God in favour of History and progress. In a risk age, the purposive transformation of humankind is replaced by the negative management of risks.

Typical of this is the changes in attitudes toward heroism. Early 20th century mass culture celebrated heroic deaths of soldiers with monuments. Late 20th century risk society views fatalities as unmitigated disasters. Risk society recognises limitations which undercuts the omnipotence of heroes. The *zeitgeist* or 'spirit of the

⁸³ Beck, *Risk Society*, p49

⁸⁴ David Lyon, *Surveillance Society: Monitoring everyday life*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), p.49

⁸⁵ See Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity*, p3

⁸⁶ Zygmunt Bauman, *Post-modern Ethics*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p225

age' is about victimhood, not heroism. A society that no longer embraces heroism aims to avert risks and manage, distribute them. A 'heroic' myth as the 'eternal truth' central to modernity no longer exists. The 'heroic warrior' and 'imperial self' have been replaced by the cautious 'Minimal self'.⁸⁷ Humankind has lowered its sights from grand historical purposes to immediacy of a preoccupation with the self. 'Risk Society's fear of victimisation seems to be the great equaliser. Society sees itself as survivors, victims or potential victims. Victims, not heroes enjoy moral superiority. There is loss of faith in humanly engineered progress based on scientific rationality, replaced by a shift towards 'risks anticipating' based on reflexivity'.⁸⁸ Knowledge of risk no longer implied confidence in calculative reason assessing these risks but a recognition that limits impose a sense of foreboding doubts.

Concepts and concerns in Late-modern criminology

The following section details how criminology has employed the risk discourse to analyse changes in policing and crime control strategies, extrapolating possible implications for war. This 'borrowing' of concepts from criminology is not new. Howard Caygill has already demonstrated how it is possible to employ 'policing' concepts to studying war where the object of action is not so much a clearly identifiable 'enemy' but a 'condition of turbulence and instability' which 'policing' strategies address.⁸⁹ Similarly, President Bush and National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice have both vowed 'zero-tolerance' towards Iraq, a term first popularised in crime control strategies. UK Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon, speaking at RUSI in July 2002, also promoted 'upstreaming' - combating terrorists at source before they can hit us, an idea borrowed from the 'war' on drugs. What follows is a brief survey of contemporary policing and criminological concepts related to risk and risk management.

Richard Ericson and Kevin Haggerty contended in *Policing the Risk Society* that the centrality of risk assessment and management in policing strategies and legal

⁸⁷ Christopher Lasch, *The Minimal Self: Psychic survival in troubled times*, (London: Norton, 1984), Preface; and Christopher Lasch, *Culture of Narcissism: American life in an age of diminishing expectations*, (London: Abacus Press, 1980), p72

⁸⁸ Zygmunt Bauman, Times Higher Education Supplement, 13 Nov 1992, p.25

⁸⁹ Howard Caygill, 'Perpetual police? Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No.1, February 2001, p76

norms reflected the institutionalisation of risk in modern society.⁹⁰ A ‘future-oriented’ probabilistic consciousness obsessed with safety and security, disillusioned with modernist notions of progress, contained in Risk Society is seen by criminologists as key to understanding the rise of risk management strategies in crime prevention.. Methodological caveats however exist. Some criminologists discern a New Prudentialism where responsibility for risk protection was distributed to individuals and community-based organisations with advice from Governments as the welfare state was whittled down. However, there is little individuals can do to directly reduce sources of systemic risks such as terrorism. After September 11, ‘suddenly, that state and politics should be replaced by the market seems unconvincing’.⁹¹ Governments have largely retaken responsibility for risk management such as airport security. Criminology also tends to see risk in a Foucauldian sense of social regulation and control, whereas sociologists see risks resulting from macro-social trends. Nonetheless, both approaches share central views that risk is now the central operating concept and a probabilistic approach to problems. There is however no single correct risk management method: criminologists lean towards statistical aggregates while sociologists conceive risks as unquantifiable. It is up to the analyst to select research tools appropriate to case studies. In our case, a probabilistic approach is adopted, which need not be precisely quantifiable. What is important to note here is the proactive probabilistic *ethos* of criminology than a statistical one.

From dangerousness to risk

Robert Castel claimed new preventive social administration strategies have shifted from the notion of ‘dangerousness’ to that of ‘risk’. A concrete subject as the previous focus of an immanent internal quality(dangerousness) is now replaced by a combination of ‘risk factors’. This has important practical consequences. A risk thus arises not from a particular precise danger embodied in real attributes of an individual. Rather, risk is a combination of abstract factors and probabilistic aggregates which render more or less probable the occurrence of undesirable outcomes. This promotes new-style surveillance known as ‘systematic pre-detection’ where the main goal is ‘not to confront a concrete dangerous situation but to anticipate all possible forms of

⁹⁰ Richard Ericson & Kevin Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society*, (Toronto & Buffalo: University of Buffalo Press, 1997)

⁹¹ Ulrich Beck, ‘The fight for a cosmopolitan future’, *New Statesman*, 05 Nov 2001, p33

danger'.⁹² To be subject to intervention, it is enough to display whatever characteristics the experts responsible for defining preventive policies have constituted as risk factors.⁹³

The New Penology

'Paradigm shifts' are occasionally exaggerated: elements of the old often remain, intermixed with the new. 'Zero-tolerance' policing for instance combines old-style 'disciplinary' enforcement with 'risk-based' surveillance and information processing.⁹⁴ The role of 'risk' should also not be overstated- targeting high-risk areas may simply reflect a need to work more efficiently with limited resources.

Nonetheless, some emerging aspects of 'New Penology' merit discussion. 'Old Penology' was concerned with responding to crime by diagnosis, intervention and rehabilitation of individual offenders, through concepts such as establishing responsibility, causes, morals, and guilt. Crime was seen as 'deviant' abnormal acts. Soaring crime rates, questionable results from rehabilitation, and declining budgets led to alternative strategies. The previous concern with 'mind' in terms of intentions, and motivation has shifted towards concern with 'body', altering physical and social structures within which individuals behave. We now manage environments, and populations rather than intervening and treating individual offenders.⁹⁵ Conceptions of 'risk' displaced previous notions of 'normality' and 'deviance'.⁹⁶ The new policy goal is identifying and managing risks as part of protecting the public rather than rehabilitative rhetoric. Government action emphasises risk management, utilitarian purposes over moral considerations. 'Justice seems less important than 'risk' as the politics of safety have overwhelmed justice in the institutions of late modern politics'.⁹⁷ Vocabulary of justice is overshadowed by risk in discussions about those deemed at risk of offending. In this context, there is 'widespread recognition that at best crime, given its routine social normality and presence, may be better understood

⁹² Robert Castel, 'From dangerousness to risk', in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.287-8

⁹³ Clive Norris and Gary Armstrong, *Maximum Surveillance Society*, (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p.24

⁹⁴ Ericson & Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society*, p.41

⁹⁵ Malcolm Feeley and Jonathan Simon, 'Actuarial Justice: the emerging new criminal law' in David Nelken (ed), *The Futures of Criminology*, (London: Sage Publications, 1994) ,p.173

⁹⁶ Ericson & Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society*, p.92

⁹⁷ Barbara Hudson, 'Punishment, rights and difference: defending justice in the risk society', in Kevin Stenson and Robert Sullivan (eds), *Crime, risk and justice: the politics of crime control in liberal democracies*, (Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing, 2001), p144

as a risk to be managed'.⁹⁸

Crime is now seen as a 'routine part of modern consciousness, an everyday risk to be managed and assessed in much the same way we deal with road traffic'.⁹⁹ This new strategy seeks modest improvements at the margin, better management of risk and resources, reduction of likelihood of crime, better support for victims; all 'less than heroic objectives' with little confidence to 'solve' permanently the problem of crime by reforming moral and pathological characteristics of 'criminal' man.¹⁰⁰ It assumes that crime occurs routinely because of criminogenic situations and opportunities. Addressing crime before it occurs, not afterward, situational crime prevention for example is a 'pre-emptive approach' that reduces criminal opportunities by 'reshaping' environments, not rehabilitation or improving society.¹⁰¹ The focus is not on welfare needs of maladjusted social groups or individuals but reducing potential opportunities for crime, prevention rather than cure. The aim is not to eliminate problems or address causes, but reduce or redistribute the risks. It is managerial, not corrective or transformative.¹⁰²

Rehabilitation, the idea that people can be changed or transformed for the better as the core of a modernist approach and metanarrative of 'progress', still endures but no longer expresses the overarching ideology. It is increasingly subordinated to less 'heroic' strategies to regulate groups, and manage risk. According to Gordon Hughes, 'offenders' are treated only to the extent it helps protect the public by reducing the risk. Rehabilitation is now seen as part of managing risks, rather than a purely 'welfarist' or 'correctionalist' project. Probation and parole have downplayed their social work functions in favour of risk-monitoring functions to manage risks.¹⁰³ It has shifted from offender need and rehabilitation towards protecting the public.

Previously, crime was seen 'retrospectively' and individually to allocate blame and punishment. New criminologies tend to view crime 'prospectively' by calculating risks and preventive measures. There is a shift away from 'deterrent penalism' and 'reactive policing' strategies responding quickly and decisively to crime, to

⁹⁸ Gordon Hughes, *Understanding Crime Prevention: Social control, risk and late modernity*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998), p.7

⁹⁹ David Garland, *The Culture of Control: Crime and social order in contemporary society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 446-7

¹⁰⁰ Garland, *The Culture of Control*, p.446-7

¹⁰¹ Hughes, *Understanding Crime Prevention*, p60, 63

¹⁰² Pat O'Malley (ed), *Crime and the Risk Society*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), p234

¹⁰³ Hughes, *Understanding Crime Prevention*, p14

'proactive' and 'preventive' policing which predicts dangers to be prevented.¹⁰⁴ These policing systems are 'symptomatic of a broader shift towards predicting and pre-emption of behaviours where knowledge of probabilities is key in assessing risks'.¹⁰⁵ It is a future-oriented forward-looking view managing risks and preventing future offences rather than a backward-looking one focused on responding to past offences and punishing the individual. Les Johnston concluded, 'commercial risk management is actuarial, proactive and anticipatory. The public police ethos is also shifting towards information gathering, anticipatory engagement, proactive intervention and systematic surveillance.' Due to risk-orientated thinking, policing has become increasingly 'proactive'. While 'reactive' post-hoc policing still occurs, information is collected for purposes of future risk assessment.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, this could be seen as 'reacting' in a 'proactive' fashion. Rather than focusing on retrospective moral concerns such as retribution, correction, justice or revenge; the proactive, more utilitarian goal is simply to prevent repetition if harm has already occurred.

With victims routinely invoked to justify laws such as Megan's Law in the US, it is politically imperative that victims and potential victims must be protected. Home Secretary David Blunkett argued we should be 'rebalancing the whole system in favour of the victim, not placing the criminal at the top of the agenda'.¹⁰⁷ Previous principles of individual responsibility and rehabilitation are replaced by management and precautionary incarceration of potential offenders based on risk profiles. Dangerous and sexual offenders who pose a public safety risk can be imprisoned indefinitely, according to proposals by Blunkett in summer 2002. Britain's new proposed Mental Health Bill replaces the 'treatability' criterion of an individual, with a single broad category of 'high risk' offenders who can be detained without committing any crime yet. Precautionary, probabilistic calculations have replaced the moral or clinical description of individuals.

This discussion of risk management ethos and strategies in policing and crime control bears directly on the questions posed in the Introductory chapter, namely is war becoming risk management? For policing strategies in this account, can be seen as illuminating any sets of similarities that might be exhibited in contemporary

¹⁰⁴ Hughes *Understanding Crime Prevention*, p14

¹⁰⁵ David Lyon, 'Chapter 1: Surveillance as social sorting' in David Lyon (ed), *Surveillance as social sorting: privacy, risk and digital discrimination*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p16

¹⁰⁶ Les Johnston, *Policing Britain: Risk, security and governance*, (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd, 2000), p56, 157

concepts of war to be explored in the case studies. It provides readers with a deeper understanding of the concepts involved and ethos behind it, as well as the wider application of risk management theories in society and social sciences.

III: Risk Management

Government as risk manager

Risk management is increasingly politicised and institutionalised. In a ‘managerial age’, regulatory states set, monitor and enforce ever increasing rules rather than direct ownership of production or subsidies. We have ‘risk bureaucracies’ such as the Health and Safety Executive, Food Standards Agency, and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat. Most industries have safety watchdogs while consumer groups from Rail Safety Passengers to mobile phone users demand and monitor regulation, producing their own research reports. Organisations must be seen to do everything possible to protect the public. Even school trips now have ‘safety supremos’, while local councils and hospitals have ‘risk managers’.

In November 2002, Downing Street’s Strategy Unit published a study on risk and uncertainty, with a foreword from Prime Minister Blair emphasising his concern to manage risks better. It argued, ‘handling risk is increasingly central to the business of government’ and ‘explicit consideration of risk should be firmly embedded in government’s core decision-making processes’¹⁰⁸. Rising public expectations for governments to manage risk are set against a backdrop of declining trust, and increasing activism around risks amplified by the media. Furthermore, many risks such as terrorism are global and transnational rather than individual. With safety and well-being as top political imperatives in a Risk Society, there is ‘an increasing need to address the sub-discipline of risk management’.¹⁰⁹

The Royal Society noted that ‘governments are now seen to have a plain duty to apply themselves explicitly ...to remove all risk or as much of it as possible.’¹¹⁰ Many government activities can be described as risk management- ‘some risks form

¹⁰⁷ David Blunkett on BBC Radio 4 ‘Today’ Program, July 17 2002

¹⁰⁸ Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, *Risk*

¹⁰⁹ Denis Smith & Steve Tombs, ‘Conceptualising issues of risk management within the Risk Society’, in Eve Coles, Denis Smith & Steve Tombs (Eds), *Risk Management and Society*, (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), p.1

¹¹⁰ Royal Society, Cited in John Adams, *Risk*, (London: UCL Press, 1995), p.11

the raison d'être of government itself, the protection of persons and property from villains within nation and outside it'.¹¹¹ Security risks form an under-researched part of an expanding set of risks subject to government intervention from finance, GM food, transportation, environment, new technology like mobile phones to terrorism. Risk management policy can be 'any government activity designed to reduce risk or reallocate it'. Strangely, 'risk management is not generally viewed or studied as a function of government'.¹¹² Relatively little is known about public risk management, compared to its private sector equivalent. Risk management policies are extensive but less tangible than other government functions such as building schools which are easily apparent. Governments possess special risk management qualities from its monitoring capacity to enforcement ability. Despite America's *laissez faire* image, the Federal Government's role as what David Moss called the 'ultimate risk manager' was crucial before and especially after September 11. With the November 2002 Federal Terrorism Insurance Act, Washington served as 'insurer of last resort' since private insurers can no longer efficiently manage risks from catastrophic terrorism. Moss argued that since 1960, risk management dramatically expanded from businesses and workers, to protect *all* citizens from an ever-widening array of risks as 'imperatives of personal security rivalled and even perhaps exceeded those of economic growth in the United States.' Moss concluded that as people became richer, 'most fascinating of all, risk management policy in the US reflects an unmistakable shift in priorities from economic growth to security over two centuries'.¹¹³

Definitions and Assumptions

Risk management is a complex subject with differing approaches to diverse areas from health and safety, business and finance, to terrorism and crime. There is no single generic widely-accepted definition or model of risk management, only broad principles and general methods. Empirical case study work, such as those attempted here, remains a priority in developing more generalised models.¹¹⁴ This is especially so in IR where research on systemic risk management has hardly taken off. The US

¹¹¹ William T. Stanbury, 'Reforming risk regulation in Canada: the next policy frontier?', in Laura Jones (ed), *Safe Enough? Managing risk and regulation*, (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 2000), p197

¹¹² David Moss, *When all else fails: the government as the ultimate risk manager*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p1-2

¹¹³ Moss, *When all else fails*, p9, 13

2001 *Quadrennial Defence Review* (QDR) described ‘Managing Risk’, as a central ‘strategic tenet’.¹¹⁵ Its risk-management framework however appeared geared toward organisational risk than systemic risks, balancing and mitigating operational force management, institutional risks and future challenges.¹¹⁶ This is too broad for our purposes, which is concerned with reducing systemic risks rather than balancing them against others.

An important assumption in risk management is that is it ‘both feasible and desirable...that risks are eliminated, reduced or controlled’. There has to be ‘continuous striving to reduce risks to a level deemed tolerable or as low as can reasonably be achieved’. It can be defined generally as ‘a field of activity seeking to eliminate, reduce and generally control pure risks’.¹¹⁷ One aim of risk management is to ‘act pre-emptively upon potentially problematic zones, to structure them in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of undesirable events or conduct occurring’.¹¹⁸ Reducing likelihoods or probabilities is key to the concept. In criminology, risk management can take two forms: intervention to change and alter individual thinking and behaviour (now largely abandoned); and broader intensive strategies involving regular surveillance and intervening on factors which may result in undesirable outcomes.¹¹⁹ Risk management features competing world views between ‘anticipationism’ and ‘resilience’. Anticipationism is ‘bound up with the precautionary principle’ as ‘proactive risk management is a standard part of the process’.¹²⁰ This study prefers anticipationism over resilience. The latter is less desirable for significant harm has already occurred and addresses ‘consequence management’ issues such as first-responders.

Various processes, not necessarily clearly segregated or sequential as implied here for discussion purposes, are involved in risk management. Purely ‘anticipatory’

¹¹⁴ For good surveys of the concept, see Eve Coles, Denis Smith & Steve Tombs (eds), *Risk Management and Society*, (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000; also Waring and Glendon, *Managing Risk*

¹¹⁵ *Quadrennial Defence Review*, (Washington D.C: DOD, 30 Sep 2001), pp.13

¹¹⁶ *Quadrennial Defence Review*, pp.57

¹¹⁷ See Denis Smith & Steve Tombs, ‘Conceptualising issues of risk management within the Risk Society’, in Coles, Smith & Tombs (Eds), *Risk Management and Society*, p.24; also Waring and Glendon, *Managing Risk*, Introduction; Christopher Hood and David K.C. Jones, *Accident and Design: contemporary debates in risk management*, (London: UCL Press, 1996), p.7

¹¹⁸ N.Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing political thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) , p237

¹¹⁹ Hazel Kemshall, *Risk Assessment and Management of known sexual and violent offenders*, London: Policing and Reducing Crime Unit, Home Office, April 2001, p.39-45

¹²⁰ Hood and Jones, *Accident and Design* p.10

strategies systematically scan the landscape for any risks to be managed providing the impetus for action. The UK MoD Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre report *Strategic Trends* released in March 2003, thus argued that 'horizon scanning' and 'assessment of likelihood' to understand future risks is increasingly recognised by governments as a 'valuable tool to reduce or manage risks'.¹²¹ 'Tombstone'-style strategies on the other hand manage risks which literally explode on the agenda with dramatic media coverage of catastrophic disasters like rail crashes, or terrorism. The goal is to avoid repetition.¹²² A clear distinction is untenable: 'tombstone' risks after Srebrenica were associated with Kosovo by 'horizon scanning', as was Iraq after 9/11. This is not easy with incomplete knowledge, often involving subjective perceptions and difficulty convincing those affected that an assessment is valid.

The second part of risk management involves options and implementation. According to the Royal Society, there are four basic methods to manage risk:

- i) Providing information through forecasting, monitoring and the Precautionary Principle
- ii) Deploying resources
- iii) Laying down regulations
- iv) Through state organisations like armed forces, 'direct action is always important for handling some risks such as crime or terrorism'.¹²³

Strategies can include eliminating agents of loss, direct action to reduce, distribute or transfer risks, and feedback mechanisms. This involves considering whether any strategy may itself create new risks together with a reduction in existing risks. Continuous surveillance of risks is undertaken, and actions taken to reduce them if necessary. Good risk management will be proactive, and a 'routine' activity well integrated into general management activity.¹²⁴

Outcome specification is another crucial process. Successfully managing 'pure risks' means avoidance of loss such that 'no harm results from a particular hazard or

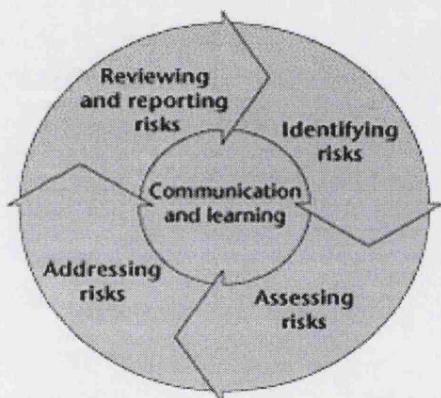
¹²¹ Ministry of Defence, *Strategic Trends*, Introduction, March 2003, London

¹²² For tombstone-style strategies, see Christopher Hood, Henry Hothstein and Robert Baldwin, *The Government of Risk: Understanding Risk Regulation Regimes*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p183

¹²³ Royal Society, *Risk: Perception, analysis and management*, (London: Royal Society, 1992), p.142-143

threat'.¹²⁵ This means it is difficult to quantify results. Non-events are indicators of success. Linear approaches to risk management separate assessment and management activities. However, a cyclical approach is preferred, emphasising the importance of feedback and monitoring mechanisms on how a particular risk evolves rather than static pre-set goals.¹²⁶ This is an ongoing process with no finite end because risks can only be minimised, not eliminated. Risk management can also create what Beck called the 'boomerang effect' where initial actions to manage risk created additional new ones.¹²⁷

The risk management process (Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, *Risk: Improving government's capacity to handle risk and uncertainty*, November 2002)



Surveillance

IR, in contrast to surveillance studies and risk theory, has largely ignored the increasing role of 'monitoring power'.¹²⁸ The IMF seeks greater surveillance capacities; trade and environmental regimes contain power to inspect. The UN has been inspecting Iraq for much of a decade. This study focuses on surveillance as the

¹²⁴ A recommendation by the New Zealand Society of Risk Management, <http://www.risksociety.org.nz/dealing.html>, accessed 22 November 2002

¹²⁵ Waring and Glendon, *Managing Risk*, Introduction xxii, p.5. On the other hand, 'speculative risks', in the entrepreneurial sense of calculating positive risks and returns, involve spectacular gains, or losses. This is associated with economics and finance where risk management normally meant diversification of portfolios.

¹²⁶ Denis Smith & Steve Tombs, 'Conceptualising issues of risk management within the Risk Society', in Coles, Smith & Tombs (Eds), *Risk Management and Society*, p.25-7, 47 ; also R.E. Hester and R.M. Harrison (eds), *Risk Assessment and Risk Management*, (Cambridge: The Royal Society of Chemistry, 1998), p.6

¹²⁷ A concept suggested by Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society*, trans. Mark Ritter, (London: Sage Publications, 1992), p.37

¹²⁸ See for example, Michael V. Deaver, *Disarming Iraq: Monitoring power and resistance*, (Westport: Praeger, 2001), p.5

‘preferred vehicle of risk management’.¹²⁹ Surveillance is crucial to obtaining knowledge that determines risk and aids risk management- the purpose of the National vCJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh. Indeed, ‘risk management is an increasingly important spur to surveillance’.¹³⁰ According to the Royal Society, ‘monitoring is the tool for investigating how things stand and a contributor to precautionary action in the face of uncertainty or ignorance.’¹³¹ Effective risk-management needs to generate the necessary information on risks involved and account for how these risks might change over time.¹³²

Surveillance here means not simply ‘spying’ on someone but systematic bureaucratised gathering of information for management of populations and monitoring behaviour. In Surveillance Society, the aim is not simply to watch every actual event but also to ‘plan for every eventuality’.¹³³ What was previously the domain of police and intelligence agencies has become routine as businesses monitor consumer choices everytime a credit card is swiped or internet site is visited, to ubiquitous CCTVs in British cities. This continuous monitoring is ‘embedded’ in apparent normalcy rather than a heavy handed Orwellian Big Brother. Surveillance has expanded with the rise of extensive computer coordinated technologies, together with contemporary demands to reduce uncertainties and control outcomes. All sections of society from credit agencies to consumer groups now seek to ‘pre-empt’ and manage risk by discovering as many risk factors as possible. September 11 only intensified these prevailing trends.

Surveillance is closely associated with Risk Society and the shift away from Old Penology. According to Richard Ericson and Kevin Haggerty, ‘Risk Society policing is fuelled by surveillance, the routine production of knowledge of populations useful for their administration... and to determine what is probable and possible for them’. Rather than retrospective knowing of a crime and then punishing wrongdoing or deterrence measures, it seeks knowledge through surveillance of who or what constitutes a risk and if necessary deploy police resources in advance of a

¹²⁹ Pat O’Malley, *Crime and the Risk Society*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), p109

¹³⁰ David Lyon, ‘Introduction’ in David Lyon (ed), *Surveillance as social sorting: privacy, risk and digital discrimination*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p8

¹³¹ Royal Society, *Risk: Analysis, Perception and Management*, (London: Royal Society, 1992), p.53

¹³² Michael Crouhy, Dan Galai and Robert Mark, *Risk management*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001), pp.109

¹³³ David Lyon, *Surveillance Society: Monitoring everyday life*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), p.2, 47-49; also Christopher Dandeker, *Surveillance, power and modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), Preface vii

possible crime. Supervision is increasingly 'prospective'.¹³⁴ We now sort people into suspicious and risky categories, using 'pre-emptive and anticipatory surveillance' to anticipate, pre-empt and prevent something from happening.¹³⁵ We not only monitor past and present movements but also try to anticipate future flows. The 'emphasis on risk makes everyone a legitimate target of surveillance. Everyone is guilty until the risk profile assumes otherwise'.¹³⁶ The anticipatory ethos of risk management entails monitoring activity as 'basis of prognostication to inform anticipatory measures'.¹³⁷ It can provide advance warning, estimate possible consequences, foretell possible occurrence of events by identifying circumstances that could lead to undesirable outcomes.

Classical forms of Benthamite Panoptic surveillance required physical proximity between watcher and watched. As David Lyon noted, 20th century surveillance was limited to specific sites such as factory floors within nation-states. However with late 20th century technologies, 'surveillance went global'. Surveillance became 'post-modern', 'distantiated', 'disembodied', and even 'post-Panoptical' as abstract data and images replace embodied persons previously co-present with each other. Through satellites and trans-continental fibre optic cables, employers monitor workers simultaneously at different locations. According to Lyon, improved speed of searching, and collecting information at great distances is deemed the best way to monitor and pre-empt risks by indicating where a potential offender may strike next in a globalised world. The ECHELON system tracks specific words on the Internet, voice and fax communications. Such 'coding' supposedly contains the means of anticipating events like terrorism and crimes. Globalised, transnational policing now aimed to reduce risks through 'knowledge-based risk management'.¹³⁸

The precautionary principle and risk management

As Beck wrote, 'risks only suggest what should *not* be done, not what *should* be done. Doing nothing and demanding too much both transform the world into a series

¹³⁴ Ericson & Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society*, p41, 55-58

¹³⁵ David Lyon, 'Surveillance as social sorting: Privacy, risk after September 11', *LSE Public Lecture*, 06 Nov 2002, London

¹³⁶ David Lyon, 'Introduction' in Lyon (ed), *Surveillance as social sorting*; Also see Clive Norris and Gary Armstrong, *Maximum Surveillance Society*, (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p.24

¹³⁷ Hood and Jones, *Accident and Design*, p.15-6

¹³⁸ See Lyon, *Surveillance Society*, p. 89, 104; David Lyon, 'Chapter 1' in Lyon (ed), *Surveillance as social sorting*, p24, 39

of indomitable risks. This could be called the *risk trap*.¹³⁹ After all, the ultimate deadlock in Risk Society is the gap between knowledge and decision. No one really knows the global outcomes but nonetheless decisions have to be made. One oft-cited way out is the precautionary principle, which arose in the 1970s when environmental impact assessments revealed gaps between significant risks of serious harm and accuracy of scientific forecasts. It is now a recognised general principle of international law from the Montreal Protocol to the 2000 Cartagena Biosafety Protocol. The 1992 Rio Declaration is often deemed to enshrine the essence of the principle: ‘...a precautionary approach should be applied...where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation taking into account costs and benefits of action or inactions.’ (although other definitions exist, suggesting that where uncertainty exists, do not act) There is a reversal of burden of proof away from those likely to be harmed by a possible action to those seeking to change the status quo, the creators of risk. People are thus inclined to take anticipatory action to prevent harm if something bad might happen. Precaution re-orders victim powerlessness towards emphasising new mechanisms of victim avoidance and favours would-be victims rather than beneficiaries of risk-related decisions.¹⁴⁰ Opponents criticise this broad obligation, for stifling innovations.

While the principle remains linked to decisions taken under scientific uncertainty, there is widespread perception that it is a culturally framed concept as much due to changing patterns of governance, participation and values in a complex world as it is about.¹⁴¹ The principle has moved from environmental, scientific and legal realms to become a fully politicised phenomenon taking into account non-scientific public opinion and social values. Precaution became politically explicit in February 2000 with the European Commission’s noting it ‘is particularly relevant to the management of risk’ by decisionmakers. It stated that ‘absence of scientific proof of a cause-effect relationship...should not be used to justify inaction’, and ‘recourse to the principle presupposes that potentially dangerous effects deriving from a

¹³⁹ Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, p.139-141.

¹⁴⁰ Hood and Jones, *Accident and Design*, p.190

¹⁴¹ Poul Harremoes; David Ge; Malcolm MacGarvin; Andy Stirling; Jane Keys; Brian Wynne; Sofia Guedes Vaz (eds), *The Precautionary Principle in the 20th Century*, (London: Earthscan Publications, 2002), Foreword xi, p.4-5; Tim O’Riordan, James Cameron and Andrew Jordan, ‘The Evolution of the Precautionary Principle’, in Tim O’Riordan, James Cameron and Andrew Jordan (eds), *Reinterpreting the Precautionary Principle*, (London: Cameron May, 2002), p9

phenomenon, product or process has been identified, and that scientific evaluation does not allow the risk to be determined with sufficient certainty'.¹⁴² The Council of Ministers' Nice Decision later that year went further by accepting precautionary action without proper scientific evaluation could be taken due to urgency of the risk. Sometimes it is argued Washington favours 'precautionary approach' over 'precautionary principle', for fear of 'principle' being abused as a political rhetorical weapon stifling innovation and trade. The difference lies more in name than substance. The 1999 White House Declaration on Environment and Trade stated: 'precaution is an essential element of US regulatory policy given that regulators often have to act in absence of full scientific certainty.' The President's Council on Sustainable Development in 1996 noted: 'even in face of scientific uncertainty, society should take action to avert risks where potential harm to human health or the environment is thought to be serious or irreparable'. US legislation has moved from 'requiring evidentiary proof of actual harm, towards anticipation and preventing possible harm'.¹⁴³

Levels of incertitude, probability and catastrophic potential have significant implications for risk management strategies adopted. 'Normal' risks are defined by little statistical uncertainty and low catastrophic potential. According to Andreas Klinke and Ortwin Renn, a purely 'risk-based' management strategy presupposes that probability of occurrence and extent of damage are relatively well-defined. This includes smoking and AIDS. More pertinent to our purposes are 'intermediate' and 'intolerable' risks such as terrorism where certainty is contested, dramatic catastrophic potential may be great, with irreversible damage. Problematically, the new 'riskiness to risk' is such that it is even disputed whether risks exist at all. These 'unknown unknowns' lie outside traditional risk-benefit assessment, requiring further precautionary action to anticipate, and reduce 'surprises'. 'Precautionary-based' risk management strategies are thus adopted where there are high levels of uncertainty about probabilities and extent of occurrence which are of catastrophic potential.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² See John D. Graham, 'A future for the precautionary principle?', *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 4 No.2, April 2001, p.109-110; European Commission, *Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle*, Brussels, 02 February 2000, p.4

¹⁴³ O'Riordan, Cameron and Jordan, 'The Evolution of the Precautionary Principle', in O'Riordan, Cameron and Jordan (eds), *Reinterpreting the Precautionary Principle*, p27

¹⁴⁴ Andreas Klinke and Ortwin Renn, 'Precautionary Principle and discursive strategies: classifying and managing risks', *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 4 No. 2, April 2001, p 162-168

Risks vary in degrees of uncertainty. The precautionary principle does not apply where likelihood and severity of impacts are well-known since level of uncertainty is low. When the harm associated with risk is slight and occurrence very unlikely, little needs to be done. It is triggered only when harm is severe and irreversible. Even when harm is catastrophic with little uncertainty about its occurrence, the choice of action is straightforward. The problem arises in grey areas where harm is catastrophic with uncertainty about its occurrence: 'a good deal of political decisionmaking is now about managing risks'.¹⁴⁵ Policymakers have to bridge the gap between what analysis can provide and making a reasoned decision under uncertainty. The precautionary principle may provide that bridge.

It is important to distinguish between 'false negatives' (where agents or activities were considered harmless until evidence of harm emerged- asbestos) and 'false positives' (where precautionary action was later proved to be unnecessary- the Y2K bug and war on Iraq). Contemporary blame is also divided into two types: blame for commission (such as polluters creating a risk) and blame for omission (for not managing the risk sufficiently).¹⁴⁶ Policymakers thus see incentives to undertake precautionary action especially in a litigious age. Actions generate risks but inactions can sometimes generate even greater risks. There is a need to balance the risks involved.¹⁴⁷ Applying the precautionary principle, we should not just focus on the 'risk of not acting without considering all the indirect risk and costs of action, and evaluating whether these consequences are worth avoiding the former consequences of the status quo'.¹⁴⁸ Considering pros and cons are however often difficult. The costs of preventive action are often tangible and clearly allocated while costs of inaction are less tangible, less clearly distributed and often long-term.

¹⁴⁵ Anthony Giddens cited in Jane Franklin (ed), *The politics of Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p.29

¹⁴⁶ Mark Neal, 'Risk Aversion: the rise of an ideology', in Laura Jones (ed), *Safe Enough? Managing risk and regulation*, (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 2000), p21

¹⁴⁷ Richard J. Zeckhauser and W. Kip Viscusi, 'The Risk Management Dilemma', in Howard Kunreuther and Paul Slovic (ed), Challenges in risk assessment and risk management: Special Volume, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 545, May 1996. p150

¹⁴⁸ John D. Graham, 'Decision-Analytic Refinements of the Precautionary Principle', *Journal of Risk Research*, Vol. 4 No.2, April 2001, p.127

IV. Conclusion

A thematic matrix of risk management

The following three categories derived from the previous discussion of risk management will thus guide case studies through a structured comparison approach:

i) Identifying risks as impetus for war

Systemic risk

Was systemic risk highlighted in terms of globalisation and end of Cold War constraints? Did these arise from ‘anticipatory horizon-scanning’ or was it more a concern with avoiding repetition of ‘tombstone-style risks’ or a combination of both?

Risk or threat?

Besides threat components of intentions and capabilities, did risk components in terms of probabilities and consequences help conceptualise dangers?

ii) Implementing risk management

Active Anticipation

Is society’s active anticipation of risks being transferred to the international scene? Did ‘potential victims’ adopt preventive victim-avoidance strategies? Was probabilistic thinking evident in heightened awareness of counter-factual consequences of action or inaction? Have we eschewed ‘reactive’ policies for ‘proactive risk management’ strategies?

The precautionary principle

How compelling was evidence? Were there ‘false negatives’ or ‘false positives’? Were policymakers concerned about blame for ‘omission’(not taking precautions)? Was it purely ‘anticipatory’ or involved some desire to avoid repetition of ‘tomb-stone’ style risks?

Surveillance

Were there continuous review processes through ‘anticipatory surveillance’ and ‘systematic pre-detection’ seeking to prevent dangers in advance? Did long-term monitoring aid risk management actions?

Utilitarian ‘less than heroic’ strategies of risk management

Did a utilitarian moral calculus of safety-first override notions of justice or fairness? Did war become ‘routine’ instrumental activity against an everyday risk like crime to be managed? Did war ‘reshape’ environments to reduce opportunities, likelihoods of unwanted events, rather than rehabilitate ‘failed’ states or offending individuals? Consequently, are there parallels in IR where we prefer modest ‘nation-tending’, rather than ambitious ‘nation-building’- doing just enough to reduce risks?¹⁴⁹

iii) Outcome specification

Non-events and minimalism

Were non-events the intangible minimal negative indicators of successful preventive action and victory? Was there recognition of limits? Were there ‘less than heroic strategies’ aimed at ‘simply preventing a bad’ rather than complete solutions to an underlying problem or grand historical narratives?

Cyclical open-ended processes

Was risk management patient, cyclical and cumulative, or linear and one-off? Did risks evolve and were new risks created while reducing original risks: the ‘boomerang effect’?

The following three chapters on case studies will be analysed through this thematic schema. It is to these that we now turn.

¹⁴⁹ Jeffrey Record, ‘Collapsed Countries, Casualty Dread and the New American Way of War’, *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, Summer 2002, p4-23; Paul Schroeder, ‘The risks of victory: An historian’s provocations’, *National Interest*, No. 66, Winter 2001-02, p31

CHAPTER FOUR

The Kosovo Campaign: War as a ‘risk management exercise’

‘We cannot turn our backs on the violations of human rights in other countries if we want to feel secure.’ – Tony Blair, Economic Club of Chicago, 22 April 1999

Introduction

The rhetoric of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention has dominated the discourse on the Kosovo campaign. However, as Michael Mccgwire rightly argued, there was more than simply humanitarian rhetoric; Adam Roberts also noted that as a ‘humanitarian war’ Kosovo failed to live up to its billing.¹ As with the later ‘war’ on terrorism, policymakers and academics had difficulty categorising certain aspects of the Kosovo ‘war’. NATO even expunged the ‘war’ word from its vocabulary. Although a coalition operation, the chief military contributor was America and its actions dominate analysis.

This chapter adopts an alternative approach not yet attempted in academic discourse. At some risk of ascribing more coherence to Washington’s ‘strategy’ than demonstrated during the campaign, it assesses to what extent the Kosovo ‘war’ could be construed as ‘risk management’. Employing a set of common questions and predictions inferred from the test theory developed in Chapter Three, the chapter asks if these predictions are congruent or incongruent with observed evidence presented to assess the theory’s empirical validity. The task here is to identify trends surrounding the Kosovo issue which have implications for developing the broader notion of war as a risk management exercise.

Firstly, systemic risks providing impetus for war had to be identified. Secondly, the paper explores how policymakers justified the ‘proactive’ aspects of their actions, and

¹ Michael Mccgwire, ‘Why did we bomb Belgrade?’, *International Affairs*, Vol. 76 No. 1, Jan 2000, p.14; and Adam Roberts, ‘NATO’s Humanitarian war over Kosovo’, *Survival*, Vol. 41 No.3, Autumn 1999, p.102, 108, 120

implementation of risk management by examining the precautionary principle touted over Kosovo. Other questions explore if there was surveillance of risks, and whether Kosovo reflected a utilitarian ‘routine’ use of force to manage risks by ‘reshaping the environment’? The chapter finally evaluates outcomes from a risk management perspective of non-events, avoiding harm and less than perfect solutions as indicators of success. Unlike finite ends associated with ‘war’, it is a patient ongoing process without clearly-defined endpoints, exhibiting the ‘boomerang effect’.

Brief History

For much of the 1990s, under Ibrahim Rugova, the majority Kosovar Albanians largely adopted a non-violent strategy of passive protests and parallel administrative institutions after Belgrade withdrew its autonomy in 1989. This posed little concern to regional security. This appeared to have changed after the Dayton Accords in 1995 ignored Kosovo in the desire to get agreement on Bosnia. Milosevic also refused to discuss Kosovo then. To some Kosovars, the passive strategy had failed. Furthermore, the collapse of neighbouring Albania into near anarchy in 1997, led to widespread looting of army arsenals. These fell into the hands of the newly formed Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Significant new risks arose with the KLA and local support inflamed by brutal Serb responses. The complex historical background or possible reasons why Milosevic capitulated will not be analysed. Numerous other books have done so. The detailed negotiation positions, mistaken assumptions of both sides entering the war, are also not subject of discussion. What follows is simply a brief description of the immediate run-up to the air war and its conduct.

Diplomacy by October 1998 had secured a shaky ceasefire. Observers entered Kosovo and aerial surveillance by NATO proceeded under UN Security Council Resolution 1199 which warned of ambiguous ‘further action’ if agreements were flouted. After the collapse of last-ditch talks at Rambouillet to end renewed fighting, Operation *Allied Force* was launched on 24 March 1999. Ethnic Kosovar Albanians soon started flooding into neighbouring Albania and Macedonia. The stated goals of the air campaign were: demonstrate the seriousness of NATO opposition to Belgrade, deter Milosevic from continuing attacks on civilians and create conditions to reverse ethnic cleansing, and

degrade Serbia's capacity to wage war against Kosovo in the future or spread the war to neighbours.² Relying on airpower alone, and explicitly renouncing ground troops was hardly a well-thought out 'strategy'. Clinton chose the best 'among a bunch of bad options', having rejected both ground troops, and walking away after putting NATO credibility on the line. Hopefully, this 'bomb-and-pray' strategy would work.³ Milosevic eventually signed up to a Military-Technical Agreement in June 1999 and Serb forces withdrew from the province.

The Kosovo campaign: conceptual issues

Much has been written criticising the motives, legality and wisdom of NATO's recourse to war: for example Noam Chomsky's polemical *The New Military Humanism* and Ted Galen Carpenter's *NATO's empty victory*- a less polemical but still far from satisfactory analysis. The ethics and moral defensibility of risk-free war from afar also generated much discussion. Sometimes, the debate degenerated and 'fragmented into a series of mini-arguments about details and episodes'.⁴

This chapter thus addresses the Kosovo issue from a broad thematic risk management perspective rather than an episodic chronology which has been well documented elsewhere. Kosovo recommends itself as a case study for several reasons. It was NATO's first major sustained combat operation without UN endorsement and most intense use of military force in Europe by the West since 1945. Besides being the longest US combat operation since Vietnam, it also 'revealed the distinct attributes of a new American way of war', and arguably has 'important things to tell us about how developed countries will wage war in the future' and 'holds the key to understanding the decade that has just passed' and the changing international security environment.⁵ Indeed, Stephen

² Secretary of Defence William S. Cohen & Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Henry Shelton, 'Joint Statement on the Kosovo After-action Review', presented before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 14 October 1999, http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct1999/b10141999_bt478-99.html

³ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.99, 209

⁴ See Paul W. Kahn, 'War and Sacrifice in Kosovo', *Philosophy and Public Policy*, Spring-Summer 1999; see Christopher Cviic, 'A victory all the same', *Survival*, Vol. 42 No.2, Summer 2000, p174

⁵ Andrew Bacevich and Eliot Cohen (eds), *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), Introduction

Biddle suggested that 'this curious little war had important implications for US military policy in the three years since'.⁶

Much like Iraq in 2003, the Kosovo campaign also heralded great change in the foundations of international relations. Michael Ignatieff concluded that humanitarian intervention is now the 'chief raison d'etre' for Western armies'.⁷ Tony Blair in his famous Chicago speech, argued that the campaign shifted the balance between human rights and state sovereignty. Timothy Garton Ash called Kosovo the first 'post-Westphalian' war in nearly three centuries where neither the nation nor state had a major role. Instead, it was fought not for territory but for foreigners, the first 'humanitarian conflict' in history.⁸ As Vaclav Havel put it, 'the bombardment of Yugoslavia...elevated human rights above the law of states'.⁹ There is a growing acceptance of war as 'lesser evil' to address 'human wrongs'. With the end of the Cold War and decline of ideological and structural explanations for war, David Chandler felt 'war came to be defined through human rights discourse'.¹⁰ Kosovo was thus the first 'humanitarian war' where direct threats to vital national interests were lacking. In fighting 'humanitarian war', President Clinton chose the most appropriate means, 'immaculate coercion'.¹¹ Clinton understood that in such wars, political support was sustainable only if it was bloodless. This was not a blanket aversion to casualties. According to Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Wesley Clark, the Army preferred showdown on the Korean Peninsula or the Gulf.¹² Such interventions serving US national interests resulting in casualties could be tolerated, an important caveat to analysis presented here.

Yet, to Krauthammer, 'humanitarian war' had no future because it was a contradiction of bloodless war, no vital interests were engaged and rewards were hardly

⁶ Stephen Biddle, 'The new way of war', Review Article, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81 No.3, May/June 2002, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020501faessay8063/stephen-biddle/the-new-way-of-war.html>

⁷ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and beyond*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p.162-3

⁸ Timothy Garton Ash, 'Round Table: the global order in the twenty-first century, *Prospect*, August/September 1999, p. 50-8

⁹ cited in S. Zizek, *The Fragile Absolute: Or why is the Christian legacy worth fighting for?*, (London: Verso, 1999), p.56

¹⁰ David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human rights and International Intervention* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p.17, 168

¹¹ Charles Krauthammer, 'The Short unhappy life of Humanitarian War', *The National Interest*, Fall 1999, No.57, p6

¹² Wesley K. Clark, *Waging modern war*, (Oxford: Public Affairs, 2001), p.166-7

satisfying.¹³ The post-war independent International Commission on Kosovo concluded that the international community willed a humanitarian end, without willing sufficient means: what Michael Ignatieff called 'our madness'.¹⁴ Indeed it was rumoured that one Milosevic residence escaped bombing because it allegedly held a Rembrandt work. Michael Ignatieff wrote, 'This is one measure of our madness that we allow a Rembrandt to save a criminal- but to us it is a necessary madness, since the truth is that we are more anxious to save our souls than to save Kosovo.'¹⁵ The tentative 'minimalist' nature of the campaign was clearly evident.

Furthermore, the Kosovo operation failed to meet the Westphalian and UN legalist model of using force only in response to international aggression, or more practical military requirements of the Powell doctrine advocating clearly identifiable vital interests and ends achieved with overwhelming military force. Although the Powell doctrine was eventually validated on overwhelming force (more than 1000 warplanes were deployed by June 1999), clear vital interests and endgames elude easy definition. Andrew Bacevich was however adamant that Kosovo was an 'imperial management' strategy. Rather than protecting Kosovars, its purpose 'had been to sustain American primacy on a continent of vital importance to the United States, one that had advanced the furthest toward the openness and integration defining the ultimate goal of American grand strategy'.¹⁶

This chapter suggests that 'risk management' rather than 'imperial management' or 'humanitarian intervention' was the main purpose. While Kosovo may have been the last 'humanitarian war' by Krauthammer's calculation and seemed to overturn many conventional legal and practical military requirements for understanding war, it fulfilled many criteria for risk management.

Yet, NATO participants in Kosovo were not allowed to call it 'war'. Some commentators suggest NATO's operation was not really a 'war' but perhaps a 'police'

¹³ Krauthammer, 'The Short unhappy life of Humanitarian War', p.7

¹⁴ Independent International Commission on Kosovo. 'Conclusions', www.kosovocommission.org; Michael Ignatieff, 'A post-modern war', *Time*, 12 April 1999

¹⁵ Micheal Ignatieff, 'A post modern war', *Time*, 12 April 1999, p.78

¹⁶ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002),p.196

operation to manage a ‘condition of insecurity’.¹⁷ Not for national survival, it was limited and carefully constrained under the media spotlight; victory was carefully defined. This, to Wesley Clark, was modern war.¹⁸ In what BBC correspondent Jonathan Marcus called the ‘war that dared not speak its name’, President Clinton clarified that he ‘did not intend to deploy ground troops to fight a war’.¹⁹ NATO Secretary General Solana was more emphatic: ‘Let me be clear: NATO is not waging war against Yugoslavia’.²⁰ Three weeks into the campaign, Defence Secretary Cohen argued that, ‘we’re certainly engaged in hostilities; we’re engaged in combat. Whether that measures up to, quote, a classic definition of war, I’m not prepared to say’.²¹ British Defence Secretary George Robertson was less circumspect, ‘it is not a war’.²²

What lay behind these verbal gymnastics? This involved political and public opinion purposes but also legal reasons to do with war being largely prohibited by the UN Charter; the power of Congress in particular to formally declare war as well as discomfort with what NATO had in fact started.²³ At the same time, could the conceptual problem also have arisen since this type of war was new, where risk management was its purpose rather than ‘classic’ definitions of war as conventional inter-state contests with clear outcomes and peace treaties? Then NATO Secretary General Javier Solana repeatedly stressed, ‘we are engaged in this operation not to wage war against anybody but to stop the war (in Kosovo)’.²⁴ Yet NATO was taking and returning fire on a sustained and large-scale basis, a war to most people. A year after the end of hostilities, NATO still clung to its guns: ‘This was not a war’.²⁵ To General Klaus Naumann of NATO’s Military Committee, Milosevic ‘had accepted war but NATO had accepted just

¹⁷ Howard Caygill, ‘Perpetual police? Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No. 1, February 2001, p.74

¹⁸ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War*, (Oxford: Public Affairs, 2001), p.11

¹⁹ President Clinton, Address to the Nation, 24 March 1999, The White House

²⁰ Press Statement by Dr Javier Solana, Press Release (1999) 040, 23 Mar 1999, Brussels, Belgium

²¹ Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 15 April 1999

²² Quoted in Roberts, ‘NATO’s ‘Humanitarian War’ over Kosovo’, p.112

²³ See Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO’s Air War for Kosovo: A strategic and operational assessment*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), p51

²⁴ Press Conference by Secretary General Dr Javier Solana and SACEUR Gen. Wesley Clark, 25 March 1999, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium,

²⁵ Lord Robertson, ‘The aims of the air campaign’ and ‘Could it have been done better?’ in *Kosovo: One year on*, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium, Oct 2000

an operation'.²⁶ Neutral words like 'operation' and 'disrupt' suggested a purely utilitarian use of force rather than an emotive word like 'war'. Even before hostilities erupted, when asked to comment on NATO's upcoming 'peacekeeping' mission in Kosovo, General Sir Michael Rose pointedly noted that 'you are imposing a political settlement which can only be done by force of arms. That is not a peacekeeping mission. That is war!'.²⁷ Clearly, the concept of war needs to be refined in order to take account of these new situations which do not fit traditional notions associated with it.

Even more telling questions have been raised over whether the campaign was a war or coercive diplomacy. General Clark felt Kosovo was not a 'war' but 'coercive diplomacy'. It was called a 'war' (by media, not officials) simply for ease of public understanding.²⁸ Ignatieff also observed, 'this sounded and looked like a war: jets took off, buildings destroyed, and people died... but this was not a war at all, but an exercise in coercive diplomacy designed to change one man's mind'.²⁹ Others such as *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, wanted a 'real air war'. Friedman found it absurd that Belgrade held concerts while other Serbs rampaged in Kosovo. Richard Haass argued that in contrast to *Desert Fox* over Iraq in December 1998, at least air power over Kosovo was compelling, linked to a specified set of demands that Milosevic had to meet.³⁰

Thomas Schelling defined 'coercive diplomacy' as less heroic, less military, less impersonal than force used to militarily overpower an opponent.³¹ Schelling distinguished between brute force and coercion. Brute force aims to deny enemy use of certain assets by their destruction. Coercion aims to compel enemy to do your will by threat of force, or limited use of force, with prospect of more to come as its most

²⁶ cited in Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p105

²⁷ Quoted from 'Minutes of evidence' given on 03 February 1999. in the House of Commons Defence Select Committee Report, *The Future of NATO: The Washington Summit*, 31 March 1999, p.48

²⁸ Interview with Wesley Clark cited in James Der Derian, *Virtuous War*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2001), p192

²⁹ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and beyond*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p3, 110

³⁰ Richard Haass, *Intervention: The use of American military force in the post-Cold War world*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1999 revised edition), p174-5

³¹ Quoted in Donald C. F Daniel, Bradd C. Hayes, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, *Coercive Inducement and the Containment of International Crises*, (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1999), p22

important component.³² However the distinction between the two is not always clear-cut.³³ Problematically Kosovo involved elements of both. The Americans and British were not totally united on the aims of bombing- there were subtle differences. Michael Clarke rightfully noted that while American statements sometimes seemed to imply that bombing was a coercive diplomacy strategy, the British took a more ‘managerial’ and instrumental policy of denial than coercion.³⁴ As Defence Secretary George Robertson argued, ‘objective here is not to get into his mind. It is to use strategic precision bombing on military targets to reduce his ability to order the kind of ethnic cleansing we have seen up to now.’³⁵ The British position was thus more conceivably a risk management strategy than coercive diplomacy.

NATO’s approach to the Kosovo war involved a mix of escalation theory and hi-tech warfare. Washington never desired all-out war or the Air Force doctrine of ‘parallel warfare’ stressing simultaneity in attacking strategic targets and fielded forces. It opted for phased gradualism, expressing a desire to stop bombing and settle the dispute politically, rather than use military force for a military victory. What NATO fought did not resemble war as most military practitioners conceive it: ‘it was not fought using all combat arms, implemented tentatively without any shock or decisiveness or simultaneity.’³⁶ Herein lies the problem which this paper seeks to address: did Kosovo not fit traditional pre-conceived notions of war because it was a new form of war as risk management? While there are strong arguments that the Kosovo campaign was more coercive diplomacy than war, this paper assesses if risk management could provide another plausible explanation.

Two levels of risks are pertinent here. The first entails systemic risks of human rights abuses and the resulting conflagration destabilising its Balkan neighbours. The

³² Thomas Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); *Arms and Influence*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), p2-3

³³ Colin McInnes, ‘Fatal attraction? Air Power and the West’ in Colin McInnes and Nicholas Wheeler (eds), *Dimensions of Western Military Intervention*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002), p42-43

³⁴ Michael Clarke, ‘British perceptions’ in Mary Buckley and Sally N. Cummings (eds), *Kosovo: Perceptions of war and its aftermath*, (London: Continuum, 2001), p.80

³⁵ House of Commons Defence Committee, Session 1998-9, ‘The Future of NATO: the Washington Summit’, HC 39, Evidence, P.147, Q.375

³⁶ Stephen P. Aubin, ‘Operation Allied Force: War or ‘coercive diplomacy’?’, *Strategic Review*, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, Summer 1999, p5-8

second applies on a more tactical level which attracted most attention.³⁷ These include risks to allied personnel, collateral damage, and the environment. Concern with tactical risks and 'force protection' was all too obvious. Washington subcontracted to private company DynCorp to monitor ceasefires and NGOs to airdrop food; planes bombed from 15000 feet, politicians promised to reduce the risks of unintended damage, Apache gunships were not used because of risks from Serb missiles. Sometimes these overshadowed the original concern with systemic risks. As SACEUR Gen. Wesley Clark later argued, occasionally even 'insignificant tactical events' (such as losing a NATO pilot) can have political or strategic consequences: a key characteristic of modern war.³⁸ Kosovo, especially the Task Force Hawk deployment of Apache helicopters and ruling out of ground troops, has been described as '*Disjointed war*' despite current emphasis on modern joint military operations. Multiple objectives of minimising collateral damage, and avoiding friendly casualties were in contradiction.³⁹ General Clark's memoirs revealed that the first requirement was to avoid the loss of any aircraft and NATO casualties, one of four 'measures of merit' he issued to guide *Allied Force*. This was necessary to maintain public support.⁴⁰ Unsurprisingly then, Kosovo was the first war conducted under 'post-heroic' rules: no casualties for fighting forces and no deliberate attacks on enemy populations.⁴¹ Kosovo consolidated trends in warfare which targeted 'regime' targets, not society. NATO repeatedly stated it was not 'making war on the Serb people'. However, the concern of this paper is not so much tactical risks of casualties or collateral damage. Rather it is the systemic risks of ethnic cleansing triggering regional instability that NATO sought to manage, although the alliance was greatly constrained by tactical risks of execution.

³⁷ For example Charlie Lyon, 'Operation Allied Force: A lesson on strategy, risk, and tactical execution', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 20 No. 1, Jan-Mar 2001

³⁸ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War*, (Oxford: Public Affairs, 2001), p.11

³⁹ See Bruce R. Nardulli et al. , *Disjointed War: military operations in Kosovo 1999* , (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Arroyo Centre, 2002), p.2

⁴⁰ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging modern war*, (Oxford: Public Affairs, 2001), p. 185, 348

⁴¹ Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: the logic of peace and war*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), p76 and p.201

I. Identifying systemic risks

The first step in risk management is identifying systemic risks serving as impetus for action. However, risks are generally ambiguous and risk perception is inherently a subjective and culturally constructed process. Different actors may perceive a risk differently in terms of probability and consequences. The list of variables influencing risk perception is endless: from international and domestic political structures, experiences in life, recent events, to factors such as cultural background, cognitive mindset of decision-makers who might see in information only what they prefer to see and so on. Secretary of State Albright, who lived in Yugoslavia for some time and spoke some Serbo-Croatian, was known to drive hardline US policy: journalists dubbed the war 'Madeleine's War' especially after the rigid manner she conducted Rambouillet made conflict more unavoidable. Albright repeatedly drew analogies to Hitler and past failures to act in Bosnia. Whether leaders believe in what they say has always been an elusive methodological issue for students to pinpoint. The gap between action and words can sometimes be huge. Furthermore, factors such as Tony Blair's alleged desire to strut the world stage cannot be clearly separately considered from issues of geopolitics, balance of power, history, ideology, bureaucratic infighting among highest levels of American government and military, differences with NATO allies, domestic politics especially in Germany with its Red-Green coalition, all of which interact in complex ways.

Nonetheless, data gathering and analysis of statements can provide a useful guide to patterns, regularities and outcomes to be analysed here.⁴² Furthermore, since the focus of this thesis is not explaining risk perceptions and other institutional or normative constraints in decision-making, it serves no purpose to elaborate further on complexity of risk perceptions. The aim here is more about understanding the chosen policy and its implementation/consequences, rather than detailed decision-making analysis of how that policy was chosen.

Risk is used here as a descriptive term to refer to a situation. The conflict in Kosovo entailed 'risks of horizontal escalation' spreading to neighbouring countries as well as 'vertical escalation' involving ever more savage attacks on civilians. The

⁴² Mary Buckley and Sally N. Cummings, 'Introduction' in Mary Buckley and Sally N. Cummings (eds), *Kosovo: Perceptions of war and its aftermath*, (London: Continuum, 2001), p.3

concerns here are not so much balance of power in the past and jostling for interests and gains between great powers but simply avoiding risks of conflict spread.⁴³ Historically speaking, Great Powers have always tried to contain Balkan conflicts much like today—from the Bosnian revolt of 1876, Macedonian uprisings in 1903 and the Balkan wars of 1912-13. Despite Bismarck's well-known comment that the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the region was to embroil Germany in World War One and more than a hundred years later over Kosovo in 1999. The main aim then, as now, was to prevent Balkan conflicts destroying international stability. It was never believed these conflicts could be fully resolved, only limited.⁴⁴ While there is nothing new here (Benjamin Disraeli warned back in 1878 that 50,000 crack European troops were necessary to maintain order in the Balkans), until 1914 and a full-scale world war, the powers did not go to the extent as NATO did in going to war to support its interests or indirectly its favoured side. Mutual interests and rivalries then were also muted by considerations for the Balance of Power. Over Kosovo in 1999, most 19th century members of the Concert of Europe were on the same NATO side, except for Russia. There was hardly any significant concern for balance of power concepts, perhaps only on the Russian side.

What is more important now is the end of the Cold War, globalisation and associated systemic risks. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was very much related to the end of the Soviet Union and communism as forces previously holding the federation together came apart. Communist apparatchiks like Milosevic played the nationalist card to keep power. Some scholars argued the Kosovo campaign also marked NATO's elision and blurring of its role from a military alliance into a 'police organisation' where its object was now to 'manage turbulence that might affect security, interests of its members' rather than exclusively directed against an identifiable enemy such as the

⁴³ For this concept, see David McLaughlin, *Managing Conflict in the Post-Cold War world*, (Aspen, CO: The Aspen Institute, 1995), p.74-5

⁴⁴ Michael Howard, 'Managing Conflict: lessons from the past', in McLaughlin, *Managing Conflict in the post-Cold War world*, p.37

former Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Indeed, as Ignatieff noted, even the Serb people- ostensibly opponents of the West - remained 'virtual enemies' only.⁴⁶

Subsequently the concept of globalisation came into play. Tony Blair candidly admitted, 'twenty years ago we would not have been fighting in Kosovo'. Speaking at the Economic Club of Chicago, the Prime Minister also noted that 'globalisation is not just economic. It is also a political and security phenomenon'. He went on to describe how 'we are all internationalists now. We cannot turn our backs on conflicts and the violation of human rights in other countries if we want still to be secure.'⁴⁷ Blair also referred to more than one million refugees in the EU from the Former Yugoslavia. The US *National Security Strategy for a New Century* in December 1999 was unequivocal: 'globalisation, however, also brings risks. Outlaw states and ethnic conflicts threaten regional stability in many parts of the world'.⁴⁸ This was a case of 'anticipatory horizon-scanning' of the strategic landscape for any possible security risks. However, it was also clear in the minds of policymakers like Blair and Albright that a desire to avoid repetition of previous 'tombstone-style' risks such as Srebrenica motivated their actions.

Before *Allied Force*, hard-nosed Realist Henry Kissinger wrote that 'proposed deployment to Kosovo does not deal with any threat to American security traditionally conceived'.⁴⁹ Indeed, new concepts of risk are more relevant. During the Cold War, at least there were clearer ideological, economic or security interests involved from Korea to Vietnam. Post-Cold War Kosovo seemed a most unlikely place for intervention.⁵⁰ Washington's security interests in Kosovo in 1999 seemed even less important than those over Iraq or Osama bin Laden.⁵¹ The trigger was mainly risk of possible regional instability and of course risks to civilians being ethnically cleansed.

⁴⁵ Howard Caygill, 'Perpetual police? Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No. 1, February 2001, p.78

⁴⁶ Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, p.138

⁴⁷ Prime Minister's Speech, Doctrine of the International Community, Economic Club of Chicago, 24 April 1999

⁴⁸ *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, (Washington D.C: The White House, December 1999), Chapter 1, p.1

⁴⁹ Henry A. Kissinger, 'No US ground forces in Kosovo', *Washington Post*, 22 Feb 1999, P.A15

⁵⁰ Tony Weymouth, 'Why war, why NATO? ' in Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig(eds), *The Kosovo Crisis: The last American war in Europe?* , (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2001),p 1

⁵¹ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.2

Launching Operation *Allied Force*, NATO leaders repeated verbatim the purpose to avert a humanitarian catastrophe. Yet military means employed clearly were insufficient to attain the immediate objectives of halting ethnic cleansing. However, there are several ways of looking at the issue and it was not 'purely a humanitarian intervention but engaged certain national interests of the major powers...'.⁵² Adam Roberts argued that since Allied Force failed to avert a humanitarian disaster in the short term, it is a 'questionable model of humanitarian intervention'. The 'motives for NATO military action included many elements which were not purely humanitarian'.⁵³ These ranged from guilt over earlier inaction on Bosnia, credibility, to reluctance to accept more refugees. The key considerations according to Roberts were humanity and credibility. Indeed as Dana Allin recently concluded, 'NATO employed military force in the Balkans only when moral imperatives were reinforced by compelling interest in European stability'.⁵⁴ Blair acknowledged as much, 'the mass expulsion of the Kosovars demanded the notice of the rest of the world. But it does make a difference that this is taking place in such a combustible part of Europe'.⁵⁵ If not a model of humanitarian intervention which Adam Roberts dismisses, could it be a model of risk management?

The Pentagon's *Kosovo/Allied Force After-Action Report* identified four key NATO interests in the campaign: stability in Southeastern Europe; human rights; NATO credibility; and maintaining a positive relationship with Russia which opposed military action.⁵⁶ The so-called 'Christmas warning' in 1992 by the first Bush Administration clearly identified a geopolitical 'red line' over the Kosovo issue as a strategic interest if the conflict in Bosnia spread south. Milosevic was warned that if Serbia started a war in Kosovo, Washington would feel obliged to act. This was repeated by the Clinton Administration. In 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher cautioned that Albania, Greece and Turkey could be sucked into any Kosovo conflict: 'the stakes for the US are to prevent broadening that conflict to bring in our NATO allies, and vast sections of

⁵² William G. O'Neil, *Kosovo: An unfinished peace*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner publishers, 2002), p17

⁵³ Adam Roberts, 'NATO's Humanitarian war over Kosovo', p.102, 108, 120

⁵⁴ Dana H. Allin, *NATO's Balkan Interventions*, Adelphi Paper 347, (Oxford: OUP for the IISS, July 2002), p99

⁵⁵ Prime Minister's Speech, Doctrine of the International Community, Economic Club of Chicago, 24 April 1999

⁵⁶ Department of Defence, *Report to Congress: Kosovo/Allied Force after-action Report*, 31 Jan 2000, (Washington D.C.), p.3-4

Europe and perhaps a World War.⁵⁷ Mark Danner argued that by autumn 1991 Washington did not act in the first phase of the Balkan Wars because it judged that 'complete inaction did not pose the risks action did'.⁵⁸ As then Secretary of State James Baker noted, 'we've got no dog in this fight'. His deputy Lawrence Eagleburger believed the war posed risks only to those directly killing each other. NATO thus failed to act robustly until 1995 when the corrosive effect on trans-Atlantic relations and between NATO's European members was becoming obvious. Missing from this sort of calculus over Bosnia was that inaction might entail its own risks detrimental to US interests.⁵⁹

This calculus became more apparent over Kosovo as will be shown. Kosovo and possible pan-Albanian nationalism, bordered by Macedonia, Albania, and Greece was deemed a different set of risks altogether.⁶⁰ It posed more risks to regional security than the Bosnian conflicts. Apart from substantial human rights concerns, violence in Kosovo, a critical area at the heart of a combustible region could spread to neighbouring states, threatening NATO's southern flank. Michael Mccgwire believed that the 'Christmas Warning' and fear of war spreading beyond Kosovo was the key to understanding resort to NATO military action.⁶¹ Despite Clinton's argument that 'we act to prevent a wider war... diffuse a powder keg in the heart of Europe'⁶², there was in fact little real chance of triggering Great Power confrontation over Kosovo much like Sarajevo 1914. As Kissinger again commented, 'Milosevic is no Hitler but a Balkan thug, in no position to threaten global equilibrium'.⁶³ Rather it was second-order and third order risks like destabilising Macedonia; NATO credibility and humanitarian concerns.

⁵⁷ cited in Mark Danner, 'Endgame in Kosovo' in William J. Buckley (ed), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p.63

⁵⁸ Danner, *ibid* , p.63

⁵⁹ Danner, *ibid* , p.63

⁶⁰ Danner, 'Endgame in Kosovo', p.63; also see James Hooper, 'Kosovo: America's Balkan problem', *Current History*, Vol. 98 No. 627, April 1999, p.159

⁶¹ Michael Mccgwire, 'Why did we bomb Belgrade?', *International Affairs*, Vol. 76 No. 1, Jan 2000,p.14

⁶²Address to the Nation, 24 Mar 1999, The White House, Washington D.C

⁶³ Henry Kissinger, 'Kosovo and the Vicissitudes of American foreign policy', in William J. Buckley (ed), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p.268

Risk or threat?

This brings us to the capabilities and intentions of Milosevic in ascertaining whether he posed a threat. Milosevic's Serbia hardly constituted a direct survival threat to Britain or America. UN sanctions since 1992 had crippled the economy and its population levels and GDP had dropped sharply. Despite constant emphasis on 'degrading his military capability', Milosevic's military hardly qualified as an existential threat despite being clearly primed for ethnic cleansing and Serb anti-air capability was certainly robust. As for the campaign itself, the Pentagon noted 'this was not a traditional military conflict. There was no direct clash of massed ground forces. Milosevic was unable to challenge superior Allied military capabilities directly. His fielded forces were compelled to hide throughout most of the campaign'.⁶⁴ Rump Yugoslavia certainly had no chance militarily against NATO, with 35 times its armed forces, annual defence budget 25 times larger, and 696 times its national wealth.⁶⁵ Furthermore, some contended that it is not the Serbs with expansionist motivations in the southern Balkans, but the KLA's declared goal to achieve a Greater Albania through secession of Kosovo.⁶⁶ Even if Milosevic's much touted *Operation Horseshoe* intended to create many more refugees and destabilise the region, the intention could also have been to settle his own Kosovo problem once and for all. Intelligence assessments of how Milosevic would respond to threat of bombing were misguided. US intelligence agencies were 'utterly divided' on how to read his intentions and troop movements into Kosovo in early 1999: was it purely sabre-rattling or war preparations?⁶⁷

Instead we seemed to focus more on risks: based on probabilistic thinking and possible catastrophic consequences. President Clinton in a speech, presaging his decision to bomb, declared 'the true measure of our interests lies not in how small or distant' a place like Kosovo is. Instead 'the question we must ask ourselves is, what are the

⁶⁴ Department of Defence, *Report to Congress: Kosovo/Allied Force after-action Report*, 31 Jan 2000, Washington D.C., p.6

⁶⁵ Figures from Stephen Biddle, 'The New way of war?', Review Article, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81 No.3, May/ June 2002

⁶⁶ See for example Ted Galen Carpenter, 'Bill Clinton, Aggressor', *CATO Institute Daily Commentary*, 23 March 1999

⁶⁷ See Elaine Sciolino and Ethan Bronner, 'How a President, distracted by scandal, entered Balkan war', *New York Times*, 18 April 1999

consequences of letting conflicts fester and spread'.⁶⁸ Clinton's White House Press Release argued on 26 Feb 1999, 'there is clear national interest in ensuring Kosovo is where the trouble ends... if we don't stop the conflict now, it will clearly spread. And then we will not be able to stop it, except at far greater cost and risk'. The components of risk were clearly present: the probability of not acting and undesirable consequences. NATO's retrospective report *Kosovo: One year on* noted that the international community 'became increasingly concerned about the human rights situation and its potential to spread instability to neighbouring countries in the region'.⁶⁹ The Pentagon also noted the 'potential to exacerbate rivalries between Greece and Turkey', NATO allies.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the catastrophic consequences emphasised by policymakers drew references to 'genocide' and the need to prevent another Holocaust. In the Western mindframe, few other stark catastrophic consequences come closer, although 'genocide' does not exactly describe what was actually ethnic cleansing and enforced population displacement.

In March 1998, the Council of the European Union identified Milosevic's use of force against Kosovars as 'unacceptable violation of human rights', placing 'the security of the region at risk'. The Contact Group similarly issued a statement that 'the risk of an escalating conflict requires immediate action'.⁷¹ Concern operated on two levels: a humanitarian one and a security and stability factor on the other. Upon launching air strikes, President Clinton outlined two sets of 'risks of failing to act': one to the innocent people who might be killed or driven from their homes; the second related to risks for regional stability.⁷² Prime Minister Blair's statement to Parliament just before bombing began, stressed the primary aim to 'avert what would otherwise be a humanitarian disaster in Kosovo.' But Blair also raised security concerns, 'if Kosovo was left to the mercy of Serb repression, there is not merely a risk but a probability of re-igniting unrest

⁶⁸ Remarks by the President on Foreign Policy, San Francisco, California, 26 February 1999

⁶⁹ Lord Robertson, Secretary General of NATO, *Kosovo One Year on*, 'Background to the crisis', <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/repo2000/backgrou.htm>, 21 March 2000, (Italics added)

⁷⁰ Department of Defence, *Report to Congress: Kosovo/Allied Force after-action Report*, 31 Jan 2000, (Washington D.C.), p.3-4

⁷¹ Common Position of 19 Mar 1998, defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union on restrictive measures against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (98/240/CFSP), Brussels.; Statement on Kosovo adopted by the members of the Contact Group, Rome 29 April 1998

⁷² Statement by President Clinton on Kosovo, 24 March 1999, *Office of the Press Secretary*, White House, Washington D.C.

in Albania; Macedonia de-stabilised; almost certain knock-on effects in Bosnia, and further tension between Greece and Turkey.⁷³ This sounded like a revived version of the Domino theory, only now it is couched in terms of risks, not communist expansionism.

The risk to NATO credibility of not acting also received wide attention. As Foreign Secretary Robin Cook argued, 'Last October NATO guaranteed the ceasefire...What possible credibility would NATO have next time that our security was challenged if we did not honour that guarantee?'.⁷⁴ NATO acknowledged in its report on Kosovo one year on, 'If NATO had failed to respond to the ethnic cleansing, it would have betrayed its values and cast permanent doubt on the credibility of its institutions'.⁷⁵ As Michael Clarke rightly noted, NATO credibility was at stake after very publicly issuing its Activation Orders (ACTORDS) in late 1998.⁷⁶ NATO's leading members did not emerge with their reputations unscathed from Bosnia and now Kosovo was a key test for NATO credibility, its continued relevance on its 50th anniversary and 'out of area' actions.

Geopoliticians argued that without a specific rationale prompting NATO involvement, 'geopolitical imperatives' were the explanation. The geopolitical concept of a Balkan 'shatterbelt' was to be transformed into a stable region by NATO actions.⁷⁷ However, the language of risk, rather than geopolitics dominated the new *Strategic Concept* which outlined the 'complex new risks' that face NATO. 'Dangers of the Cold War have given way to more promising but also challenging prospects, to new opportunities and risks'.⁷⁸ This Concept has been criticised for a very vague definition of NATO's geographical limits. Almost anything from stalled economic reform, terrorism,

⁷³ Statement by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in the House Of Commons, 23 March 1999, *Hansard (House of Commons Daily Debates)*,

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmhansrd/vo990323/debtext/90323-06.htm>

⁷⁴ House of Commons Debate on Kosovo, 25 Mar 1999, *Hansard*, cols. 537-53

⁷⁵ Lord Robertson, 'A just and necessary action' in *Kosovo: one year on*, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium, Oct 2000

⁷⁶ Micheal Clarke, 'British perceptions' in Mary Buckley and Sally N. Cummings (eds), *Kosovo: Perceptions of war and its aftermath*, (London: Continuum, 2001), p.80

⁷⁷ See John Hillen & Michael P. Noonan, 'The Geopolitics of NATO Enlargement', *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, Vol. 27 no. 3, Autumn 1998, p.21-34; and J.O. Loughlin & V. Kolossov, 'Still not worth bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier: the geopolitics of the Kosovo war 1999', *Political Geography*, Vol. 21 No. 5, June 2002, p. 573-599

⁷⁸ The Alliance's Strategic Concept approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

to ethnic instability could be considered a potential security issue. There is some truth that 'new NATO is not focused on an enemy state but an enemy concept: instability'.⁷⁹ In NATO's defence, this mindset is required in managing uncertain and unpredictable risks.

II. Implementing risk management

Active Anticipation

Risk management strategies are generally proactive since the locus of action is the future and avoiding negative outcomes. The notion of 'risk' allows potential victims to take avoidance action. In justifying NATO intervention in Kosovo, policymakers often sought to avert a 'humanitarian catastrophe' and regional instability, with clear 'anticipatory' aspects to it. At the same time, it is true that NATO also 'reacted' to events on the ground with fighting already underway in Kosovo. The key here is how NATO reacted in a 'proactive' fashion. Its locus of action was future possible consequences and to prevent repetition of a Srebrenica-like situation, rather than seeking retrospective revenge or justice for victims of Milosevic. This is as predicted in the test theory and discussed in greater detail later. Risk here is not only a descriptive term but a normative one implying the need for preventive action. It also formed part of a strategic calculation.

NATO's post-Cold War rationale essentially revolved around two issues: enlargement and proactive 'out of area' missions.⁸⁰ In various Strategic *Concepts* and negotiating the 1997 *Founding Act* with Russia, NATO emphasised that it would not attack unless it was attacked. It was a *reactive* Alliance. However over Kosovo, NATO became a 'proactive military organisation'.⁸¹ As NATO's original mission of collective defence against the Soviet Union disappeared, a more proactive role developed for dealing with a broad array of risks. The focus appears more on Article 4-type contingencies and 'possible developments posing risks to members' security', than

⁷⁹ Richard Rupp, 'NATO 1949-2000: from collective defence toward collective security', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 23 No. 3, Sep 2000, p.172

⁸⁰ Ted Galen Carpenter, 'Kosovo as an omen: the perils of a new NATO', in Ted Galen Carpenter (ed), *NATO's Empty Victory*, (Washington D.C: CATO Institute, 2000), p174-5

⁸¹ Ted Galen Carpenter, 'Relations with Russia and China' in Carpenter (ed), *NATO's Empty Victory*, p78

Article 5 events.⁸² NATO's new Security Concept clearly envisions a more proactive approach: 'an important aim of the Alliance is to keep risks at a distance by dealing with potential crises at an early stage'.⁸³ NATO did fail in preventive diplomacy in Kosovo despite numerous warnings throughout the 1990s but waged proactive war to forestall a full-blown crisis.

Even before the Kosovo war, then NATO Secretary General Javier Solana argued that 'the challenges of the next century suggest that our security policies must become increasingly proactive... many problems and potential conflicts can be anticipated and many solutions devised, before it is too late.'⁸⁴ After considering counter-factual and alternative course of actions, this proactive argument is reflected in how both President Clinton and Prime Minister Blair justified NATO action in Kosovo. This reflected a trend of policy statements employing similar proactive language that persisted to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Clinton on commencing air strikes observed,

'this action is not risk-free. It carries risks... However, I have concluded that the dangers of acting now are clearly outweighed by the risks of failing to act- the risk that many more innocent people will die or be driven from their homes; the risks that the conflict will involve and destabilise neighbouring nations. It will clearly be much more costly and dangerous to stop later than this effort to prevent it from going further now.'⁸⁵

Tony Blair warned similarly, 'the potential consequences of military action are serious... but the consequences of not acting are more serious still for human life and peace in the long term...we have always been in favour of taking action sooner rather than later'.⁸⁶ Kosovo could thus be seen as the first major experiment of a newly proactive NATO engaged in managing systemic risks, and averting 'potential victimhood' both for the

⁸² The Alliance's Strategic Concept approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>; also see David Yost. *NATO Transformed: the Alliance's new roles in international security*, (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1998), p80

⁸³ The Alliance's Strategic Concept, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

⁸⁴ Preparing NATO for the 21st Century: Keynote address by Dr Javier Solana, Maritime Symposium, Lisbon, Portugal, 04 Sep 1998

⁸⁵ Statement by President Clinton on Kosovo, *Office of the Press Secretary*, The White House, Washington D.C. , 24 Mar 1999

⁸⁶ Statement by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in the House Of Commons, 23 March 1999, *Hansard (House of Commons Daily Debates)*, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmhansrd/vo990323/debtext/90323-06.htm>

Kosovar Albanians and NATO's credibility, and the alliance itself falling victim to the unwanted consequences of ethnic cleansing in the form of regional instability.⁸⁷ Indeed, the Clinton Administration's December 2000 *National Security Strategy for a Global Age* noted approvingly that 'the United States has led the transformation of what were defensive entities into proactive instruments for meeting post-Cold War challenges'.⁸⁸ NATO action in Kosovo was cited as a successful example.

A war of precaution?

Recent rhetoric in 2003 about a new US security doctrine of pre-emption is actually not that novel. Some precursors were evident in Kosovo. It was a form of precautionary action designed to pre-empt worse atrocities and possible regional instability, further corrosive effects of another Srebrenica on the Alliance, and 'damage Serb capacity to wage war against Kosovo in the *future* or spread the war to its neighbours'.⁸⁹ As Daalder and O'Hanlon argue, 'a full-scale war in Kosovo between KLA and Serbia would *likely* have been particularly bloody; compounding the likely humanitarian disaster was the *potential* for refugees with consequences for stability across the region'.⁹⁰

How much did Western intelligence actually know about the infamous *Operation Horseshoe*? Was there compelling evidence about Serb plans of massive ethnic cleansing to justify military action? Or was there some semblance of the precautionary principle at work here? Some evidence suggests action was taken in spite of uncertain and indefinite proof. As Tim Judah testified on the rationale for intervention, 'at any time we could have had a new Srebrenica: how was one supposed to know that was not going to happen?'⁹¹ A NATO spokesman tellingly argued in August 2000 after the International

⁸⁷ The idea of 'victimhood' was played out in fact on all sides of the conflict. The Kosovar Albanians portrayed themselves as victims of Milosevic to attract NATO intervention, while Belgrade made itself out to be the victim of NATO bullying during the air campaign. See Lawrence Freedman, 'Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo war', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26 No. 3, July 2000

⁸⁸ *National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, Chapter 1, p.1 (Washington D.C: The White House, Dec 2000),

⁸⁹ Michael O'Hanlon, 'The Bush Doctrine: Strike First', *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 14 July 2002; also Alan W. Dowd, 'NATO After Kosovo', *Policy Review*, Dec 1999, No. 98, Web-version, <http://www.policyreview.org/dec99/dowd.html>

⁹⁰ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.1 (italics added)

⁹¹ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Fourth Report, 1999-2000 session, 23 May 2000, Para 123

Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) failed to corroborate NATO claims of genocide in Kosovo, 'the point is did we successfully pre-empt or not...We would rather be criticised for overestimating numbers who died than for failing to pre-empt'.⁹² Clearly there was concern about omission, for not taking precautionary action. During the bombing, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea suggested that Pristina football stadium had become a massive concentration camp. Inflated figures of those killed by Serb forces were provided. Before the war, President Clinton and Secretary Cohen regularly tossed out figures of 100,000 dead.⁹³ The State Department even upped the ante to 500,000.

In the post-war period however, the figures dropped until by August 2000, the ICTY announced numbers below 3000. Atrocities alleged at Trepca mine where hundreds of bodies were said to be incinerated or thrown down the mineshaft, turned out to be false as nothing was found at all. Unsurprisingly, after the war, there were calls in Britain by Alice Mahon MP of the Balkans Committee for Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to answer questions that the Government deliberately misled the public, inflating scale of deaths to justify bombing. This became a case of 'false positives' inherent in the resort to the precautionary principle. The risk ultimately turned out to be less serious than initially suggested. This set a precedent for later wars in Iraq. Christopher Layne claimed that in fact there was no large-scale organised ethnic cleansing ongoing in Kosovo until NATO intervened. Albanian refugees were simply fleeing the fighting between Serb forces and KLA guerrillas.⁹⁴

Refugee flows from guerrilla fighting or ethnic cleansing are similarly destabilising from NATO's point of view. Milosevic had indeed adopted brutal tactics against Albanian villagers. Figures from the UNHCR Special Envoy for the region stated that on 23 March 1999 before NATO action, there were over 260,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Kosovo, over 100,000 refugees in the region and over 100,000 outside the region. 2000 had been killed by March 1999, mostly during KLA spring and Serb summer counter-offensives before OSCE monitors were deployed in October 1998.

⁹² NATO Acting Spokesman Mark Laity cited in Jonathan Steele, 'Motivated to believe the worst', *Guardian (UK)*, 18 Aug 2000

⁹³ See Daya Kishan Thussu, 'Legitimizing humanitarian intervention? CNN, NATO and the Kosovo crisis', *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 15 No.3, September 2000, p73

⁹⁴ Christopher Layne, 'Collateral Damage in Yugoslavia', in Ted Galen Carpenter, *NATO's Empty Victory*, (Washington D.C: CATO Institute, 2000), p51-52

It may seem callous to call the Kosovo air war one of anticipation when in fact large scale human suffering had occurred. Would this count as a 'humanitarian catastrophe'?

Despite extreme Serb brutality, in terms of casualties inflicted and individuals at risk, the violence in Kosovo was substantially less than what happened in Rwanda and not much greater than Bosnia previously. This was deemed by Michael Mccgwire 'unsubstantial' and insufficient to justify in January 1999 summoning various parties to Rambouillet and the absolute insistence on KFOR under NATO direction. The real aim was thus actually to forestall a full-scale civil war.⁹⁵ Jonathan Charney argued that the NATO action in Kosovo could only be understood as 'anticipatory humanitarian intervention' since the extent of human rights violations prior to withdrawal of OSCE observers was not 'massive and widespread'. Such intervention in absence of proof of widespread violations, the argument went, allowed hegemonic states to use force against international law.⁹⁶ A somewhat more balanced analysis later conceded that strictly speaking, Belgrade's earlier actions of summer 1998 was not ethnic cleansing but brutal counter-insurgency tactics.⁹⁷

But Jonathan Charney and other critics of NATO intervention on this premise miss the point despite themselves raising the concept of 'anticipatory humanitarian action'. Surely a more credible argument, as Daalder and O'Hanlon point out, can be made that despite such claims of relatively low-level violence and that Kosovo had not (yet) become a full-fledged humanitarian disaster, 'there was good reason to believe that without intervention things would get much worse' and 'the death toll would not remain modest'.⁹⁸ If events were allowed to continue unabated, a full-scale civil war with predictably dire humanitarian and regional consequences would occur. By then it would be no good intervening. NATO however failed initially to anticipate or prevent the intensified ethnic cleansing immediately after hostilities began. Over the past decade, military force on the side of 'right' against 'wrong' has a moral ring to it lacking since the colonial period. Even humanitarian NGOs like Medecin sans Frontieres are lobbying

⁹⁵ Michael Mccgwire, 'Why did we bomb Belgrade?', *International Affairs*, Vol. 76 No. 1, Jan 2000, p.14

⁹⁶ Jonathan I. Charney, 'Anticipatory humanitarian action in Kosovo', *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 93 No.3 , October 1999, p.834-41

⁹⁷ Dana H. Allin, *NATO's Balkan Interventions*, Adelphi Paper 347, (Oxford: OUP for IISS, July 2002), p 60-1

⁹⁸ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.12, 207

for pre-emptive humanitarian intervention by force. Its founder and later administrator of Kosovo, Bernard Kouchner, argued that Western states have the right to 'intervene as a preventive measure to stop wars before they start and stop murderers before they kill'.⁹⁹

Most recently, various commentators have stated that, after passing several criteria and preconditions, 'military action can be legitimate as an anticipatory measure in response to clear evidence of likely large-scale killing or ethnic cleansing' within a state.¹⁰⁰ The idea of anticipatory action is thus evident in the Kosovo campaign from a humanitarian and legalistic viewpoint. It was also indicative of a precautionary approach to reduce risks of humanitarian catastrophe and wider regional instability. Having said that, NATO moved quicker than before perhaps learning from previous experiences in Bosnia. This is reflective of a 'tombstone' style approach to risk management, seeking to avoid similar dramatic disasters garnering media attention rather than a purely 'anticipatory' stance.¹⁰¹ Blair warned 'of masked irregulars separating out the men: we don't know what has happened to them...recall that at Srebrenica they were killed'.¹⁰² There were historical precedents and somewhat less uncertainty than a purely precautionary approach would suggest. Nonetheless, the basic premise of 'better safe than sorry' encapsulated in the precautionary principle was reflected in NATO action.

Surveillance

Surveillance is the vehicle of risk management, collecting information on risks and assessing whether they require more management action. During the Cold War, NATO had mechanisms designed to provide advance warning of Soviet military moves. These consisted of 'indications' of steps an adversary had to take to prepare military action which could become visible to outside observers. This system focused largely on quantitative military developments and were based on more concrete capabilities. The

⁹⁹ Cited in David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human rights and International Intervention* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), Foreword xiv

¹⁰⁰ Gareth Evans and Mohamed Sahnoun, 'The responsibility to protect', *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2002, Vol. 81 No. 6

¹⁰¹ For these two approaches to risk management, see Christopher Hood, Henry Rothstein & Robert Baldwin, *The Government of Risk: Understanding Risk Regulation Regimes*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) , p.183

¹⁰² Statement by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in the House Of Commons, 23 March 1999, *Hansard (House of Commons Daily Debates)*, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmhansrd/vo990323/debtext/90323-06.htm>

post-Cold War environment extended risks beyond that of traditional aggression to non-military and unconventional ones like ethnic instability.

NATO normally obtains early warning through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council as well as internal NATO bodies like the North Atlantic Council and the Political and Military Committee. Additionally, a New Intelligence Warning System (NIWS) has been developed. The NIWS is a much more inclusive system developed to take account of risks such as ethnic cleansing identified in the Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept during the Kosovo campaign. It is based on the *qualitative* informed judgement of analysts as opposed to the more mechanistic *quantitative* approach of the Cold War. It continuously monitors and assesses a wide range of risk indicators not only for NATO but around the Euro-Atlantic area and periphery, rather than enemy military capabilities.¹⁰³ As predicted, a continuous review process of risks is now in place anticipating possible dangers, rather than more concrete indicators of observable military capabilities.

In the run-up to the Kosovo air war, there were already precursor surveillance operations in place. Together with unarmed OSCE monitors on the ground, Operation *Eagle Eye*, the NATO Air Verification Mission, aimed to verify Serb reduction of troop levels and compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1199, assess and report on developments. The Clinton Administration then subcontracted the high-risk task of monitoring Serb withdrawal to a private military company, DynCorp. This distributed risks away from American servicemen, taking the risk management ethos to its logical conclusion: even the tactical risks involved in monitoring systemic risk are to be managed. UAVs such as the Predator and manned surveillance platforms such as the U-2, RC-135 Rivet Joint, and RAF Canberras were involved. Such surveillance helped provide contributory information on the risks, and action which turned out to be necessary.

Verification flights ended on 24 March 1999 with the launch of Operation *Allied Force*, but surveillance flights continued to support NATO targeting and monitoring Serb ethnic cleansing in real-time. In Kosovo, the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles(UAVs) for surveillance avoided losses of manned aircraft without forgoing benefits of loitering

¹⁰³ John Kriendl, 'Anticipating Crises', *NATO Review*, Winter 2002, No. 4, Web-version, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue4/english/art4.html>

and low-altitude flights. As one senior military officer noted, 'the UAVs died for their country and no one mourned'.¹⁰⁴ On 01 April 1999, human rights groups and religious organizations gathered at Washington's National Press Club to ask the Clinton Administration to release satellite and UAV imagery of atrocities to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Washington, recognizing the public relations value, promptly released images of possible mass graves in Kosovo, including Glodane, Velika Krusa, Glogovac. The availability of satellite imagery to the public was unprecedented.¹⁰⁵ It was also hoped, perhaps incredulously, that making the Serbs aware of such surveillance might help reduce the risks by discouraging ethnic cleansing.¹⁰⁶ Easy access to commercial satellite imagery in the future may help maintain public scrutiny of humanitarian risks where governments might not see the same value as in Kosovo of releasing satellite images. During the Kosovo campaign, satellite and unmanned surveillance monitored evidence of Serb atrocities. Tracking the civilian toll had high stakes in a war supposedly fought for moral values, as well as the broader risks of refugee flows destabilising neighbouring Macedonia and Albania. Further management action was then taken transferring displaced Albanians to countries like Germany to relieve the burden on Macedonia. As Paul Virilio observed, 'we now have the Eye of humanity skimming over oceans and continents in search of criminals', with satellite surveillance, manned and unmanned aircraft. After the formation of the National Imagery Agency in 1996, the surveillance function is complete with NIMA's 'eyes' complementing the eavesdropping Echelon network.¹⁰⁷

Despite more than four years of UN administration, Kosovo remained subject to risk surveillance. From January 2002- May 2003, the UN Development Program's Kosovo Early Warning System provided integrated assessment and forecasting capacity of factors that might affect Kosovo in the near future and to forecast potential crises and prevent them. Four risk areas were continuously monitored: socio-economic stability;

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Ralph Crosby Jr, 'The path forward for NATO and EU defence capabilities: information dominance and precision strike', *World Systems Procurement Edition*, Vol. 3 No. 1, January 2001, p121

¹⁰⁵ Yahya A. Dehqanzada & Ann M. Florini, *Secrets for Sale: How commercial satellite imagery will change the world*, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), p7

¹⁰⁶ Jack Smith, 'Eyes over Kosovo', *ABCNEWS.com*, 07 April 1999

¹⁰⁷ Paul Virilio, *Strategy of Deception*, (London: Verso, 2000), p14-15, 21-3

political and institutional stability; ethnic community relations; and personal and public security.

After KFOR entered Kosovo, UAVs were re-tasked to force protection and area surveillance missions. The outbreak of fighting in Macedonia and increased levels of risk in March 2001 saw the despatch of more Predators to provide surveillance. A Florida-based private military company AirScan Inc, is also involved in monitoring security risks such as smugglers and terrorists trying to cross the border, locating weapons stashes and watching suspect premises. In March 2001, with increasing tensions in Presovo valley in North-east Kosovo, the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje originally established in 1992, enhanced its activity along the Macedonia-Kosovo border to collect more information. As predicted by the test theory, every time a security risk in Kosovo from ethnic cleansing, terrorists and smugglers to ethnic tensions along the border is identified, surveillance and monitoring is undertaken to further assess it and action taken in advance of possible harm. Additionally, there was focus on anticipating possible risk scenarios and indicators rather than a concrete military danger.

Utilitarian 'less than heroic' strategies of risk management

'Routine' war

To some observers, war has become 'a housekeeping arrangement, a series of more or less routine tasks'.¹⁰⁸ Did such routine tasks extend to managing systemic risks? After all, risk management manuals tell us, good risk management should be routinely integrated into general everyday activity. Was ethnic cleansing seen, like crime, as everyday risks to be managed? War became routine in two senses: it became familiar, and also instrumental to manage risks. Kosovo did not engage the passions of the American people and instead the Dow Jones closed above 10000 for the first time ever. 'Never during US involvement in a war had American stock portfolios fattened so generously and so quickly.'¹⁰⁹ As predicted by the test theory, the act of war had become an emotionally detached, utilitarian instrument to manage risks. Risk management in

¹⁰⁸ Don DeLillo, 'Human Moments in World War Three', *Esquire*, July 1982.

¹⁰⁹ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.192

Kosovo helped keep the Balkan house in order through almost routine applications of force. By the late 1990s, naval deployments to the Eastern Mediterranean in support of Balkan operations exhibited a clear 'routinisation of what would otherwise be legitimately known as crisis response'.¹¹⁰ As President Clinton argued when he announced air strikes, 'we used diplomacy and force to end the war in Bosnia. Now trouble next door in Kosovo puts the region's people at risk again'.¹¹¹ So, the argument went, the same model of military force must be used against what seemed to be seen in Washington as an almost commonplace occurrence of the 1990s: the risks ethnic cleansing posed for Balkan stability.

We have grown accustomed to cruise missiles lifting off, often at night for dramatic effect; or cockpit gun camera footage. As Andrew Bacevich observed, since 1993 from Somalia to Haiti to Iraq and Afghanistan to Kosovo, the Clinton Administration had 'made the use of force routine'.¹¹² US involvement in two simultaneous air wars – one over Iraqi no-fly zones and now Kosovo- illustrated the thinking behind Clinton adapting preponderant American military power to the post-Cold War world: a Presidency with quasi-imperial prerogatives, ever expanding capabilities in air power, and eagerness to use force far removed from traditional national security requirements. Such new requirements involved managing systemic risks. In the preceding 6 months before Kosovo, the Clinton Administration had 'managed' three countries: cruise missile strikes against Afghanistan and Sudan; Operation *Desert Fox* against Iraq and the low-level air war over no-fly zones. This series of events and thinking behind them is revealing for it illuminates how force is being used to manage security risks in a 'routine' manner. Kosovo was simply the latest in a line-up of risks to be managed.

Bacevich argues a new military doctrine no longer reliant on brute force, has developed in using precision-guided air power 'to conduct carefully calibrated, long-range strikes' at little risk of friendly casualties.¹¹³ Luttwak concluded such 'largely one-sided combat' against enemies that could hardly react also meant it was more a

¹¹⁰ Thomas Barnett & Henry H. Gaffney, Jr, 'Top ten post-Cold War Myths', *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 172/2/1, 176, February 2001, p.32-38

¹¹¹ Statement by President Clinton on Kosovo, 24 March 1999, *Office of the Press Secretary*

¹¹² Andrew Bacevich, 'The bombing: Over-the-top statecraft', *Washington Post*, 28 Mar 1999; also Andrew Bacevich and Eliot Cohen (eds), *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a global Age*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), Introduction xi

¹¹³ Bacevich, 'The bombing', *Washington Post*

'management' challenge than war.¹¹⁴ The vague language used of 'degrading', and targets 'struck and restruck' until NATO achieves desired levels of 'degradation',¹¹⁵ could of course as Andy Bacevich pointed out, simply be a face-saving tactic for the White House to simply declare victory without admitting failure. Such language also reflected risk management's minimalist ethos which simply seeks to reduce risks, a less heroic strategy. Indeed, the Clinton Administration lacked a broader political vision on Kosovo. 'There is no sense here, as perhaps there was among an earlier generation of idealists, that our liberal-democratic principles are of universal validity.'¹¹⁶

Personifying risks

War as risk management should theoretically be managerial in nature, not correctional. As with recent developments in criminology, the focus should be utilitarian, and more modestly managing the risks posed by a person to a wider population, rather than trying to reform that person. It should also not be too concerned with questions of justice, right or wrong, or morality. Was there any evidence of this in Kosovo? Recent advances in airpower allowed for greater precision to target the enemy leadership, no longer the state or its society and citizens. Wesley Clark's briefings constantly employed pronouns alluding personally to Milosevic in describing 'his' air defences, 'his' storage plants. The Serb leader was also indicted for war crimes at the Hague. While special envoy Richard Holbrooke negotiated with Milosevic in the run-up to the air campaign, some US Senators and the State Department had misgivings about lending legitimacy to the authoritarian leader. Yet there was no prospect of regime change and Holbrooke was convinced that Milosevic held the key to peace.¹¹⁷

Milosevic was often identified as the root cause of the Kosovo conflict. NATO Secretary General Javier Solana stressed that 'the person responsible for creating the humanitarian catastrophe has a name, and his name is President Milosevic, not NATO'. Secretary of State Albright had her spokesman James Rubin declare that 'Milosevic is not

¹¹⁴ Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: the logic of peace and war*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), p76 and p.201

¹¹⁵ President Clinton, Address to the Nation on Kosovo, 24 March 1999; and Linda D. Kozaryn, 'No silver bullet to stop Serb aggression', *American Forces Press Service*, 31 Mar 1999

¹¹⁶ A. Wolfson, 'Humanitarian hawks? Why Kosovo but not Kuwait?', *Policy Review*, Number 98, December 1999/Jan 2000, Web version, <http://www.policyreview.org/dec99/wolfson.html>

¹¹⁷ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and beyond*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p15-16 , 95

part of the problem. Milosevic is the problem.¹¹⁸ A callous, ruthless political operator, the West over the years has 'alternated between vilifying him and finding him indispensable'.¹¹⁹ Milosevic did not actually create the problem and there are many other factors such as history and latent Serb nationalism; but he did exploit it for political purposes. Some such as Herbert London, John Olin Professor of Humanities at New York University complained that as long as Milosevic was in power, there was no 'victory' despite NATO achieving most of its goals.¹²⁰ A Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty report found the war in Kosovo 'disappointing' because it resulted in a 'Saddam Hussein peace' after the 1991 Gulf War, similarly leaving Milosevic in power.¹²¹ Furthermore as Edward Luttwak observed, the paradox of strategic air power is such that the bombing may be precise yet ineffectual from the perspective of enemy leaders. Perhaps Milosevic saw air campaigns as useful or neutral in keeping him in power.¹²² Vastly superior NATO forces did not seek 'regime change' or battlefield defeat of the Yugoslav army (VJ). Instead, the goal was diminish and degrade its capabilities. This was perhaps a reflection of the limited and indirect security interests in the region as well as the fact that Milosevic was seen as potentially influential in ending the violence.¹²³

On the other hand, an ethos of risk management does not seek correctionalism: seeking Milosevic's removal misses the point somewhat. Rather the goal is managerial and more modest. It is fundamentally utilitarian. As long as the risks are managed to a sufficient degree, it is enough to stop hostilities. Compromise deals have had to be struck with him from Dayton to ending hostilities in Kosovo. Demonising Milosevic may have made the war easier to prosecute for public opinion purposes, but it diverted attention from the complex nature of the Kosovo problem and Serbia did indeed have some legitimate interests in Kosovo. While Western governments decided after the Kosovo

¹¹⁸ Press Conference by Secretary General Dr Javier Solana and SACEUR Gen. Wesley Clark, 25 Mar 1999, NATO HQ, Brussels ; Rubin cited in Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.69

¹¹⁹ Michael Mccgwire, 'Why did we bomb Belgrade?', *International Affairs*, Vol. 76 No. 1, Jan 2000, p.3

¹²⁰ See Sabrina P. Ramet, 'The USA: To war in Europe again', in Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig(eds), *The Kosovo Crisis: The last American war in Europe?* , (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2001),p 177

¹²¹ RFE/RL Balkan Report, *Confronting Evil*, Vol. 4 No. 52, 14 July 2000, Prague, Czech Republic

¹²² Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: the logic of peace and war*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), p76 and p.201

¹²³ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.2

campaign ended, to engineer Milosevic's ouster through economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, aid to opposition parties and democracy programs¹²⁴, it was significant that the Kosovo war left him in power.¹²⁵ Just as justice has been overshadowed by utilitarian risk management in crime control, this suggested that NATO apparently went to war not so much to seek redress for the thousands killed indirectly or directly as a result of Milosevic's political agenda or capture him to face war crimes charges, but to manage the related systemic risks.

Reshaping the environment

Given that Milosevic was not apprehended or killed, reshaping the situation suggests another risk management tool to reduce opportunities for harm rather than focusing on individuals. Some analysts have called the Balkans a recently 'reshaped region' that served American 'imperial' interests.¹²⁶ This is inaccurate and ascribes a grander 'imperial' vision to military action rather than the hesitant one exhibited in the campaign. NATO did not seek Milosevic's removal or even conquest associated with previous notions of war but simply altered the conditions within which he operated, constraining his freedom of action. As President Clinton argued in his April 1 1999 speech at Norfolk: 'had we not acted, the Serbian offensive would have been carried out with impunity'. In explaining NATO's inability to account for destroyed Yugoslav tanks, General Clark argued in his Kosovo post-strike assessment, that 'air strikes forced heavy equipment into hiding, unable to conduct operations against Albanians. What we had been successful in doing was keeping it in hiding, under wraps, ineffective'.¹²⁷ NATO thus fought to 'establish conditions' rather than 'win' in the classic sense' of destroying the opponent's military and an identifiable enemy.¹²⁸ This meant managing the previous 'conditions of turbulence and instability' which triggered military action in the first place.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Thomas Carothers, 'Ousting Foreign Strongmen: Lessons from Serbia', *Carnegie Endowment Policy Brief*, Vol. 1 No. 5, May 2001

¹²⁵ Although Milosevic was later put on trial in the Hague for war crimes, this was not the direct result nor stated goal of *Allied Force*

¹²⁶ Quoted in Cilina Nasser, 'Reshaping region is real US goal', *The Daily Star(Beirut)*, 04 December 2001

¹²⁷ Kosovo Post-strike assessment Press Conference, SACEUR HQ, Mons, Belgium, 16 Sep 1999

¹²⁸ Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo: A strategic and operational assessment*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001, p.219

¹²⁹ Caygill, 'Perpetual police?', p.78

NATO thus fought a 'Goldilocks war' –neither too hot nor too cold.¹³⁰ The initial worry was not causing too little damage to Serbs but that too much damage might help the KLA. This certainly was not 'heroic' all-out war. Lord Robertson reiterated one year after the campaign that 'it was a careful operation designed to disrupt the Yugoslav campaign of violence in Kosovo....it was not designed to 'militarily defeat Yugoslavia'.¹³¹ War now meant simply reducing opportunities for violence rather than decisively attacking the enemy military. Had NATO not acted, argued Lord Robertson, 'the region would have been condemned to continuing warfare and instability for years to come'. Instead, 'today we are helping to shape a peaceful future'.¹³² The Pentagon described the earlier preventive deployment in Macedonia as part of 'Shaping the International Environment' since it 'lessens the conditions for conflict'.¹³³ The Clinton Administration's final *National Security Strategy* described military actions over Kosovo as a good example of such 'shaping'.¹³⁴ The campaign can be seen as Washington's 'shaping strategy' in action, although the original concept emphasised activities mostly in peacetime. By 'reshaping' the Balkans first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo, NATO in effect denied Milosevic opportunities to implement his nefarious plans, rather than removing him outright. This was predicted in the test theory.

Nation-tending

Old-fashioned imperialism could overcome the problem of human rights abuse by simply conquering and imposing 'civilised' standards. Yet victory and empire can no longer be a realistic goal in a post-imperialist age.¹³⁵ Instead we have re-shaped situations, quasi-protectorates and more minimalist 'nation-tending'. For example, in February 2000, after attacks on American forces searching Serb parts of Mitrovica, US troops were no longer deployed outside their own secure sector. When French forces realised other NATO

¹³⁰ cited in Ivo Daalder & Michael O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, 2000, p104

¹³¹ Lord Robertson, 'The aims of the air campaign' and 'Could it have been done better?' in *Kosovo: One year on*, NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium, Oct 2000

¹³² Lord Robertson, 'Could it have been done better?'; Statement to the Press by Lord Robertson, Florence, 24 May 2000

¹³³ Department of Defence, *Annual Defence Report to Congress and the President*, Chapter 1: The Defence Strategy and the National Security Strategy, Washington D.C, 1998

¹³⁴ Chapter 1: Fundamentals of the Strategy, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, (Washington D.C: The White House, Dec 2000)

¹³⁵ Robert Cooper, *The Post Modern state and world order*, (London: Demos, 1996), p.44

troops were avoiding effort and risk, they too stopped intensive foot patrols, causing 'post-heroic multinational troop degradation'.¹³⁶ President Vojislav Kostunica questioned whether NATO was a military or humanitarian organisation, being more concerned with simply protecting its own people, rather than disarm Albanian rebels.¹³⁷ The UN Balkans human rights envoy also blamed KFOR for being 'too timid' and 'not willing to risk anything to comply with its task'.¹³⁸ NATO officials claimed America's 'body bag' syndrome was hampering attempts to quell Balkan conflicts. A European officer complained that, 'Because they (Americans) hardly leave their camps, when they do, it looks like the 7th Cavalry'.¹³⁹ Indeed the West's response to Balkan crises has always been to seek the least risky and least costly approach.

Lacking an 'imperial' ethos, Washington especially under Bush has not been enthusiastic about nation-building or peacekeeping and the air campaign itself certainly did not contain a grand conceptualisation for rebuilding Kosovo. US forces in Kosovo were dubbed 'Ninja Turtles', more concerned with force protection than peacekeeping and foot patrols. 'Kosovo remains a non-state', while Washington 'appeared to lose interest in staying the course of post-conflict reconstruction'.¹⁴⁰ Ideally, as Zygmunt Bauman argues, 'a globalising war' fought in the name of a postulated international community and shuns territorial conquest would be a hit and run affair' like nomadic warfare without taking responsibility for consequences.¹⁴¹ This ideal situation cannot happen simply because to walk away could leave the original systemic risks that triggered intervention to bubble up again. Instead, we have uncertain 'nation-tending' efforts designed simply to keep the situation from boiling over without solving the underlying problem. Enmeshing NATO allies and the UN to provide administrators and legitimacy helped reduce the prominence of the US role. This might prove the best model

¹³⁶ Edward Luttwak, *Atlantic Unbound Roundtable: Picking a good fight*, April 11 2000, <http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/roundtable/goodfight/luttwak2.htm>

¹³⁷ 'US cools on NATO role as conflict flares', *Guardian*, March 9 2001

¹³⁸ 'NATO too timid over guerillas', *Daily Telegraph*, 3 March 2001

¹³⁹ 'American body bag syndrome holding back NATO', *Daily Telegraph*, 21 March 2001

¹⁴⁰ *Strategic Survey 2002/03*, (Oxford: OUP for the IISS, May 2003), p.59

¹⁴¹ Zygmunt Bauman, 'Wars of the globalisation era', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No.1, 2001, p. 11-28

for reconstruction by an administration famously averse to nation-building and a superpower 'ill-suited for empire'.¹⁴²

III. A victory... of sorts? Defining success

Non-events and the minimalist criterion for success: acceptance and patience

How would a war to manage risks end? Hypothetically, it would conclude with a reduction of risks and define success minimally with non-events such as avoiding risks occurring. Almost all the wars in historian A.J.P. Taylor's *How wars end* concluded with a great peace conference to settle issues. But 20th century wars have had a nasty habit of eluding neat conclusion from the First World War to the Second. Yet, 'we still like to think of wars with formal declarations, ending with peace treaties, clearly delineating victors from defeated'.¹⁴³

Unfortunately, this ideal state of events did not happen in Kosovo either. President Clinton was perhaps right that 'this(Allied Force) is not a conventional thing, where one side is going to lose, one side is going to win'.¹⁴⁴ The nebulous end to hostilities had both sides claiming victory. Milosevic retained power (initially), and kept Kosovo under formal Yugoslav sovereignty. Militarily, NATO launched some 38000 sorties and dropped 26000 bombs or missiles with only 2 non-combat losses and about 20 cases of collateral damage. Anthony Cordesman called this an 'amazing tactical and technical achievement'.¹⁴⁵ Despite later Battle Damage Assessment revealing that NATO exaggerated its battlefield success, Lord Robertson retorted that 'relying on numbers misses the point'.¹⁴⁶ This was a concept of war where success is not measured by destroying the enemy military.

On the strategic and political side, the eventual KFOR deployment to Kosovo came as more of a relief than an ecstatic victory. General Clark noted, 'it didn't feel like a victory. There were no parades. Military and diplomats were simply relieved the

¹⁴² Joseph S. Nye, 'Ill-suited for empire', *Washington Post*, 25 May 2003

¹⁴³ Christopher Coker, 'How wars end', *Millennium*, Vol. 26 No. 3, 1997, p.615-629

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in 'Verbatim Special', *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 82 No. 6, June 1999, p.51

¹⁴⁵ Anthony Cordesman, *The lessons and non-lessons of the Kosovo air and missile war*, (Washington D.C.: CSIS, July 1999), <http://www.csis.org/kosovo/LessonsExec.pdf>

¹⁴⁶ Lord Robertson, 'Could it have been done better?', *Kosovo: One year on*

operation was concluded, and were absorbed in the next mission, working on the ground inside Kosovo.¹⁴⁷ This 'empty' feeling was alien to previous wars but would become commonplace as the West undertakes war as risk management. War had become more utilitarian rather than emotive. Victory meant being Kosovo's guardian indefinitely, the 'most thankless and most pointless task imaginable'. Others think the only winners were the Albanian mafia *fares* criminal clans.¹⁴⁸ The views of Michael Mandelbaum and Charles Krauthammer are not untypical. Mandelbaum saw a 'Perfect Failure' where consequences were all opposite of NATO intentions from exacerbating Kosovar suffering to alienating Russia and China. Krauthammer observed, 'the ends of humanitarian intervention are also difficult'. It merely freezes the status quo, since the West is not prepared to brutally pacify and control anymore. Occupying dangerous regions peripheral to US strategic interests is the 'reward'.¹⁴⁹

The only clear victory lay in returning refugees back to Kosovo ultimately and securing Serb withdrawal. Otherwise, much was ambiguous from the eventual 'settlement' to the grand 'prize' of having Kosovo as de facto international protectorate indefinitely. As Ignatieff observed, 'instead of Serb surrender, NATO contented itself with a Military-Technical Agreement which specified terms and timing of Serb withdrawal and entry of NATO troops, but left entirely undefined the constitutional or juridical status of the territory over which the war was fought' in the first place. The ambiguous 'victory' was 'virtual', producing no regime change or final political settlement.¹⁵⁰ Several important aspects were diluted in what has been described as a 'Rambouillet-lite' accord: there was no more mention of KFOR's 'right to unrestricted passage' throughout the FYR contained in Rambouillet's Appendix B. There was also no reference to a three-year transition period or referendum on Kosovar independence. KFOR was deployed under UN, not NATO auspices. NATO did however gain the

¹⁴⁷ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging modern war*, (Oxford: Public Affairs, 2001), p.421

¹⁴⁸ Ted Galen Carpenter, 'Introduction: A Great Victory?' in Ted Galen Carpenter (ed), *NATO's Empty Victory: A postmortem on the Balkan War*, (Washington D.C.: Cato Institute, 2000), p.8; Frank Cillufo & George Salmiragh, 'And the winner is...the Albanian mafia', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 22 No. 4, Autumn 1999, p.21-5

¹⁴⁹ Michael Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78 No. 5, September/October 1999, p.2-9; Charles Krauthammer, 'The Short unhappy life of Humanitarian War', *The National Interest*, Issue 57, Fall 1999, p 6-7

¹⁵⁰ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and beyond*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p138, 208

withdrawal of all Serb forces; this was not the case before. The tortured legal situation was such that in 1999, Washington did not recognise 'rump' Yugoslavia, yet Kosovo independence was opposed in favour of autonomy within this rump state.¹⁵¹ The reasons given are largely negative- fear of secessionism or ideas of Greater Albania destabilising the region. (although there are some positive arguments that partition would undermine the European notion of multicultural, multiethnic states.) General Clark warily intoned, 'there is no peace settlement. The ultimate division of political power has not been settled'.¹⁵² It was not a perfect solution but a compromise one that sufficiently managed the risks. That is indicative of risk management's more modest goal.

Why was such an ambiguous result- described colourfully as 'the mother of all compromises',¹⁵³ accepted despite overwhelming military odds in NATO's favour and the ultimately impressive display of aerial firepower? The view encapsulated by the title of Daalder and O'Hanlon's *Winning Ugly* is illuminating: 'the outcome achieved in Kosovo, while hardly without its problems, represented a major improvement over what had prevailed in the region up to that point, and certainly over what would have happened had NATO chosen not to intervene'.¹⁵⁴ Clinton's final *National Security Strategy* in December 2000 defended NATO action as having 'prevented the real risk that violence in Kosovo would create turmoil throughout the region'.¹⁵⁵ Two of General Clark's so-called 'measures of merit' that guided the operation actually 'focused not on achieving objectives but on preventing bad things from happening'.¹⁵⁶ Preventing a risk occurring and non-events alluded to above are precisely the minimalist criteria for assessing risk management. By this count, despite initially placing great strain on Albania and Macedonia (admittedly a failure), that the region as a whole had *not* been destabilised was a success in itself. Leading US Senators lamented the prize of 'winning' : occupying Kosovo indefinitely at huge costs. If this was 'victory' what would defeat look like? Real

¹⁵¹ William J. Buckley, 'Not losing sight of justice', in William J. Buckley (ed), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p.238

¹⁵² Wesley Clark quoted in Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, p.94

¹⁵³ Unnamed UN official quoted in William G. O'Neil, *Kosovo: An unfinished peace*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner publishers, 2002), p30

¹⁵⁴ Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's war to save Kosovo*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.6

¹⁵⁵ *National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, (Washington D.C: The White House, Dec 2000), p.41-2

¹⁵⁶ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.185

defeat would have been much worse for NATO, the trans Atlantic security relationship and regional stability. The least bad outcome was thus defined as a victory.

The fudge on Kosovo created continued tension. Yet to do more than that itself risks encouraging further Albanian expansionism. The KLA's declared goal of 'Greater Albania' comprised parts of Macedonia (including its capital Skopje), Greece, Montenegro and the fringes of southern Serbia. After all, Kosovo's status had been ignored partly because a viable permanent solution such as partition or independence could destabilise the fragile inter-ethnic mix in the region. Ironically, after intervening on behalf of Kosovar Albanians, NATO now had to restrain their sentiments for independence and protect Serbs instead. Edward Luttwak argued that uninterrupted war without outside intervention would have created some sort of peace. Ceasefires and imposed 'settlements' only allow recuperation and prolong wars indefinitely.¹⁵⁷ This argument however ignores the systemic risks involved in letting wars burn themselves out. Rather than a perfect solution, the minimalist outcome is something NATO had to accept, given the prevailing conditions. Today, ethnic tensions are still high, with effective partition of cities like Mitrovica into Serb and Albanian halves. The myth of multi-ethnic administration remains elusive. In Serb enclaves in Kosovo such as Strpce, teachers and municipal workers draw salaries from both Belgrade and UNMIK. Yugoslav dinars continue to be used together with the official currency Euro. These dual structures serve little function other than to support Belgrade's claim of sovereignty. Yet the international community refuses to confront the possible solution of partition.¹⁵⁸ In August 2001, 'UNHCR remains extremely concerned that more than two years after the entry of the international community, there is no freedom of movement; there is no guarantee of security for non-Albanian population'.¹⁵⁹ NATO's first air war ended with a damp squib than a bang, symptomatic of risk management. The ethos is minimalist, seeking to avoid rather than attain.

¹⁵⁷ Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: The logic of war and peace*, (revised and enlarged edition), (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), p61

¹⁵⁸ See Anna Matmeeva and Wolf-Christian Paes, 'Trapped in its own maze', *The World Today*, Vol. 58 No. 7, July 2002

¹⁵⁹ Cited in William G. O'Neil, *Kosovo: An unfinished peace*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner publishers, 2002), p63

An open-ended process

Problems, public patience in the West wears thin quickly - the inevitable public 'wobble' in any campaign. Much as President Bush two years later was to call for patience in Afghanistan, President Clinton during the Kosovo campaign reminded us, 'this air campaign is not a 30-second ad'. Senior officials warned there is no 'silver bullet' to stop Serb aggression immediately.¹⁶⁰ Worse still, war as risk management leads to open-ended operations which have to continually manage new risks or resurgent old ones. There is no clean end associated with traditional concepts of war. Instead, KFOR's mission elided from military into a 'perpetual police' operation, with each role blurring into the other.¹⁶¹ Since risks cannot be totally eliminated, only reduced, risk management is best described as an ongoing cyclical process rather than a linear one towards a clearly defined end goal. Evidence suggests that as long as there are low casualties, not concentrated in the spate of a few days, the American public can tolerate open-ended commitments. The foreseeable future will only see American soldiers on 'near-permanent' sentry duty in the Balkans.¹⁶² While exit dates from Bosnia initially of one year were promised and then broken to Congress, the Clinton team avoided such specific deadlines for Kosovo. With the quandary over Kosovo's ultimate political future of partition or independence unresolved, the most likely result will be a quasi-protectorate for indefinite periods of time. Perhaps the commitment to stay is reflected by Camp Bondsteel at Urosevac- the largest US base built since Vietnam, housing 5000 troops with a helicopter base and all amenities of home.¹⁶³

Despite KFOR's entry, systemic risks were reduced but not eliminated. In March 2001, patrols along the Kosovo-Macedonia border sought to manage fresh risks to Kosovo's shaky peace as fighting flared between Albanian separatists and Skopje. NATO Secretary General George Robertson on launching Operation *Essential Harvest* to collect demobilised weapons argued in predictably proactive fashion, 'there are risks involved...

¹⁶⁰ President Clinton, CBS Interview with Dan Rather, 31 Mar 1999; Linda D. Kozaryn, 'No silver bullet to stop Serb aggression', *American Forces Press Service*, 31 Mar 1999

¹⁶¹ Caygill, 'Perpetual police?', p.79-80

¹⁶² Henry A. Kissinger, 'Kosovo and the vicissitudes of American foreign policy, in William J. Buckley (ed), *Kosovo: Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p.305

¹⁶³ 'The Future of Kosovo: An indefinite NATO presence', *IISS Strategic Comments*, Vol. 6 Issue 1, Jan 2000

but the risks of not sending them are far greater'.¹⁶⁴ In May 2001, Serb forces re-entered the Ground Safety Zone established as a buffer zone between Kosovo and Serbia. NATO troops unwilling to vigorously interdict Albanian separatists, dumped the task onto Belgrade. What was previously concern for regional stability and ethnic cleansing became, after September 11, considerations of 'potential for terrorist activity emanating from the Balkans'.¹⁶⁵ Although there is no concrete evidence at present, the region exhibited risk factors: large numbers of Western troops in a largely Muslim land populated with many mujahideen fighters and porous borders in the region. KFOR will have to undertake continuous monitoring and management. In August 2002, *Jane's Intelligence Digest* warned that 'risk of far wider instability remains a key concern' especially over the failure to resolve the so-called Albanian question of Greater Albania and its impact on Macedonia.¹⁶⁶ Clearly the problem over Kosovo is by no means resolved; only the risks managed to an appropriate degree. Risks furthermore tend to evolve. Even three years after the entry of KFOR, risks remained for 'Balkan instability retains the capacity to punish Western inattention'.¹⁶⁷ Kosovo is still an 'unfinished peace'.¹⁶⁸

Given that risk policies operate under conditions of high uncertainty, they create what Ulrich Beck termed the 'boomerang effect'. An initial action to tackle a risk could generate more unintended consequences and risks. The Kosovo air war brought about new risks which themselves had to be managed: the tidal wave of refugees (which paradoxically strengthened NATO's political will), strained relations with China and Russia; the KLA emerged with greater credibility and legitimacy than Rugova. As Michael Mandelbaum ruefully mused, although 'every war has unanticipated consequences,... in this case virtually all the major political effects were unplanned, unanticipated and unwelcome'.¹⁶⁹ Despite being surprised by the intensity of Milosevic's

¹⁶⁴ Statement by NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson Following the North Atlantic Council decision to launch Operation Essential Harvest, NATO HQ, Brussels, 22 Aug 2001

¹⁶⁵ 'Bin Laden and the Balkans: the politics of anti-terrorism', *International Crisis Group Report*, 09 November 2001

¹⁶⁶ 'Back to the Balkans', *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, 16 Aug 2002

¹⁶⁷ Dana H. Allin, *NATO's Balkan Interventions*, Adelphi Paper 347, (Oxford: OUP for IISS, July 2002), p.9

¹⁶⁸ O'Neil, *Kosovo: An unfinished peace*

¹⁶⁹ Michael Mandelbaum, 'A Perfect Failure', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78 No. 5, September/October 1999, p.2-9

stepped-up ethnic cleansing after bombing began, NATO generally coped well with the refugee outflow which was the most visible unintended consequence. NATO had prepositioned 13000 troops and humanitarian aid which then proceeded to build refugee tents. During the campaign, NATO would feed and shelter 850,000 people for three months. 'Kosovo is the only case in modern history where a systematic removal of ethnic groups has been reversed.'¹⁷⁰ However one could question the price: about 2500 people had died in Kosovo before NATO intervened. In 11 weeks of bombing, although precise figures may never be known, an estimated 3000 died, mostly Albanians killed by Serbs together with about 500 civilians killed in the air campaign.¹⁷¹ Depleted Uranium projectiles and unexploded cluster bombs remain, posing significant risks to peacekeepers, civilians and the environment which this paper will not go into. Generally, the 'boomerang effect' was relatively well-handled and NATO-Russian relations were back on an even keel soon afterwards.

IV. Conclusions

Although proponents of the Kosovo campaign think it could herald a new doctrine of humanitarian intervention, it might also well turn out to be a strategic anomaly in that respect. Despite some controversy classifying the Kosovo operation as 'war' or 'coercive diplomacy' or something else, what it does demonstrate is the extent to which war for the West is becoming a tool to manage risks.

Evidence presented in this case study demonstrates that characteristics of risk management such as anticipatory action and some tendencies toward 'overestimating the worst' latent in the precautionary principle (albeit not fully-formed) were present. Official rhetoric and documents clearly appealed to the need for proactive action on addressing risks. As predicted by the test theory, there was evidence of surveillance activity and continuous monitoring of risks as precursor to action. The utilitarian nature of war as risk management was also apparent. Andy Bacevich saw use of force over Kosovo as simply part of a 'routine' series of 'housekeeping tasks'. Good risk management practices after all should be as routine as possible. Once again, as with

¹⁷⁰ Alan W. Dowd, 'NATO after Kosovo', *Policy Review*, Dec 1999/Jan 2000, No. 98, Web-version, <http://www.policyreview.org/dec99/dowd.html>

¹⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, *Civilian Death Toll in NATO's Air Campaign*, Feb 2000

Saddam Hussein in the 1990s, Milosevic personified the risks, yet he was managed by reshaping the environment in which he operated rather than removed from power. Managerialism trumped correctionalism or notions of justice.

In defining success minimally and through non-events such as avoiding regional destabilisation, a risk management perspective further allows better understanding of the ambiguous end of hostilities and the open-ended commitment involved in Kosovo. There was more earnest nation-building than nation-tending. This refuted predictions by the theoretical framework and was largely due to the multinational nature of the intervention. Taken together, these aspects allow reconceptualising war as risk management, further accentuating the West's utilitarian, instrumental approach to war in the 21st century. For an anxious democracy in a risk age seeking to manage systemic risks with minimal costs, the blueprint unearthed in Kosovo could recommend itself to future wars.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Afghan Campaign and the ‘war’ on terrorism: ‘Risk management’ vindicated? ¹

‘Risk managers face challenges of bracing for the unimaginable’ - *New York Times*, October 20, 2001

Introduction

After September 11 (9/11) attacks, policymakers have waxed lyrical about a ‘war’ on terrorism. In the West, it fuelled unrealistic public expectations. ‘War’ terminology spawned inaccurate comparisons with war in its ‘classical’ form rather than the more appropriate risk management variety suggested here. This chapter seeks to provide a more appropriate analytic prism for understanding a strange war where enemies are elusive networks, the aim is simply avoiding harm with no prospect of closure, and success is defined more by non-events rather than what can be seen.

The purpose of this second case study is to assess again the validity of the test theory developed in Chapter Three. Again, a common set of structured questions generated by the test theory guides analysis to see if predictions are congruent with evidence presented. The task is to identify trends surrounding the Afghanistan campaign in particular, and more generally the struggle against terrorism, which have potential implications for reconceptualising war as risk management.

Firstly, systemic risks concerned in Afghanistan are identified as the stimulus for action. The second section analyses implementation by examining the precautionary principle; and how policymakers justified the ‘proactive’ aspects of military actions. Other questions explore if there was surveillance of risks, ‘reshaping the environment’ and whether Afghanistan reflected a utilitarian ‘routine’ use of force. Finally, the chapter closes with an assessment of results. Non-events like simply avoiding harm are the

¹ An earlier version of this chapter appeared as ‘Unravelling the war on terrorism: A risk management exercise in war clothing’, *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 33 No 2, June 2002. I am grateful for permission to reproduce certain sections of the article.

benchmark for successful risk-management, not perfect solutions. Outcomes will neither be apparent, or decisive as suggested by ‘war’. Would the ‘boomerang effect’ and cyclical, open-ended risk management also describe a protracted struggle where disrupted terror networks regroup and new ones constantly emerge? There is certainly no finite end normally associated with ‘war’.

A brief history

This chapter describes the Afghan campaign from a risk management perspective rather than a lengthy chronological narrative. Only a short historical primer is provided setting the general background. The Western intelligence community has long warned of security risks posed by terrorism. Terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan have concerned US administrations before. In August 1998, President Clinton launched Operation *Infinite Reach*, cruise missile strikes on terrorist facilities in Afghanistan after US embassies in east Africa were bombed, allegedly by Al Qaeda. On September 21 1998, President Clinton told the UN General Assembly that terrorism should be on the ‘top of our agenda’.

This ominous warning rang true on September 11 2001, when terrorist hijackers crashed two planes into New York’s World Trade Centre, toppling the twin towers, and another into the Pentagon. A third crashed into a Pennsylvania field after passengers on board apparently wrestled for control with the hijackers. The horror and outrage invoked an unprecedented wave of solidarity with the US. UN Security Resolution 1373 authorised action to combat terrorists endangering international security. On October 7 2001, American and British forces launched Operation *Enduring Freedom*, the military phase of the ‘war’ on terrorism. The campaign’s opening stages had sceptics decrying a ‘Kosovo Redux’ with proxy ground forces while air power delivered ordnance.² The campaign aims were initially unclear. The official stated aim was to ‘degrade and disrupt’ terrorist networks, and ‘prevent further terrorism’. At the onset, it seemed the Taliban were to be coerced into handing Bin Laden over and expelling Al Qaeda. Eventually the goal became regime change. US ground forces were also not inserted in large numbers initially, delegating ground combat to local allies like the Northern Alliance following the

² See Max Boot, ‘This victory may haunt us’, *Wall Street Journal*, 14 November 2001

Kosovo model. This allegedly allowed Osama Bin Laden to slip the dragnet at Tora Bora in December 2001 as well as many Taliban/Al Qaeda in the Shah-I-kot valley in March 2002's *Operation Anaconda*. At this writing, sporadic skirmishes continue.

The Afghan campaign and the 'war' on 'terrorism': Conceptual Issues

Two levels of analysis are relevant here. The first comprises the rhetorical war against 'terrorism' (a common noun) which by definition can never surrender, like 'war' on crime. Realists were right in this respect that Bush should not have declared war on 'terrorism', but Al Qaeda. Terrorism is more a concept, phenomenon or method of political violence, rather than a clear set of adversaries. It has no territorial boundaries, flags or capitals to be captured. Yet American Presidents since Johnson have declared 'metaphoric' wars since the first one on poverty in 1964. It is militarily impossible to attack an 'ism'. Terrorism the 'concept' cannot be physically combated but *terrorist groups* that pose risks can. In this way, the war on terrorism currently translates into war on trans-national Al Qaeda networks.

The second level of analysis thus involves more concrete manifestations of warfare against Al Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan: almost a 'conventional' war against states (a proper noun which can surrender). Yet, in Afghanistan capturing Bin Laden and destroying the Taliban have been sidelined in favour of less visible results and non-events such as preventing further terrorism generally. There were no surrender ceremonies either. The Afghan campaign has been subsumed within the war on terrorism so much so that little practical difference existed between the two. This chapter combines these two levels by extrapolating features of risk-management from military action in Afghanistan that might be relevant to the broader campaign against terrorism and vice versa.

America's war on terror is open-ended, ill defined and lacks parameters. Although the 'Bush Doctrine' pursues 'every terrorist group of global reach', this chapter focuses on Al Qaeda. US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also accepted that eliminating all terrorism would be 'setting a threshold that is too high'.³ Al Qaeda's agenda and reach is

³ Quoted in Neil King Jr. and Jim VandeHei, 'Allies hope antiterror effort won't ignore local fights', *Wall Street Journal*, 26 September 2001

exclusively global compared to 'traditional' terrorists such as the IRA. Furthermore, the dangers posed by Al Qaeda far exceeds the IRA. The main aim of defeating Al Qaeda should not be distracted by targeting other terrorist organisations not involved with it.⁴

The 'war' on terrorism is an interesting case for reconceptualising war for several reasons. As Michael Clarke noted, this conflict was extremely unpredictable, had much potential for unintended consequences in the international system and we had to expect the unexpected.⁵ Breaking with precedents set in Kosovo, policymakers were quick to employ the word 'war'. Yet explicitly using the word created more problems than answers. Susan Sontag decried the use of a phantom 'war' as a metaphor with no foreseeable end: 'what kind of war is that?'⁶ Metaphoric wars have no definite endings. In late September 2001, Rumsfeld observed that the 'war' on terrorism was 'very, very different from what people think of when using the word 'war' or 'campaign'. We need to fashion a new vocabulary and different constructs for what we are doing'.⁷ This paper argues that the language of 'risk-management' serves the purpose of understanding George W. Bush's 'first war of the 21st century'. Momentous change in IR was arguably in the works, with new ideas of sovereignty where states unable to rein in terrorists are liable to outside intervention. If other states fail to protest vehemently, 'their behaviour could well constitute acquiescence in yet another change to customary international law'.⁸ Many claimed Washington finally had its defining mission after ten years of drift. US forces established Central Asian bases for the first time ever, with Moscow's tacit consent. Globalisation also reared its dark head, subverting conventional Realist calculations of material power capabilities as failed states thousands of miles away now posed risks, rather than powerful ones. We face the globalisation of insecurity in perhaps the first 'major war in the age of globalisation'.⁹

A central difficulty of terrorism is defining the amorphous concept. Since attempts to do so are often inconclusive- 'one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter'- this chapter will not delve deeply into the issue. The US State Department report

⁴ Jonathan Stevenson, 'Pragmatic Counter-terrorism', *Survival*, Vol. 43 No. 4, Winter 2001-2002, pp.35-48

⁵ Michael Clarke, 'Unpredictable', *World Today*, Vol. 57 No. 11, November 2001, p. 7-9

⁶ Susan Sontag, 'Real battles and empty metaphors', *New York Times*, 10 Sep 2002

⁷ 'Department of Defence (DoD) News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld', 20 September 2001

⁸ Michael Byers, 'Terror and the future of international law', in Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (eds), *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the future of global order*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p124

⁹ Kurt M. Campbell, 'Globalisation's first war?', *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2002, Vol. 25 No.1, p.7-14

Patterns of Global Terrorism defines terrorism as 'premeditated, politically motivated violence against non-combatant targets by subnational or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience'. Al Qaeda's brand of terrorism however aims to destroy, not influence an audience. It is also not the purpose here to discuss the pros and cons of responding to terrorism as 'war'.¹⁰ Terrorism is difficult to conceptualise purely as war and this is not a new problem. In August 1984 Robert Sayre, State Department anti-terrorism director, called terrorism 'low-level warfare' but called it a police matter. George Shultz, then Secretary of State, more categorically insisted terrorism was 'a form of warfare'.¹¹ Part of the rhetorical campaign since the 1980s has been to call it 'war'.

Combating terrorism involves political, military, diplomatic, financial, intelligence and police tools of statecraft. It is multi-faceted: addressing root causes, prevention and preparedness, and strengthening the international framework for multilateral action. Military force is admittedly a 'blunt instrument'; its hierarchical structure unsuited for tackling 'networks'. It might also be counterproductive, fuelling more hatred. Emphasising military tools may neglect also the equally important need to address poverty, political repression and inter-cultural dialogue. These are rather more long-term goals. However, this chapter is limited to addressing short-term urgent risks posed by Al Qaeda where negotiation is impossible. As a former State Department counter-terrorism czar observed, 'there's no point addressing root causes with Bin Laden. He doesn't like America. We are the root cause'.¹² We face what Michael Ignatieff termed 'apocalyptic nihilism', where terrorism is not linked to political demands but simply ever-escalating violence. They 'cannot be reasoned with. They can only be fought'.¹³ Furthermore, CIA chief George Tenet's Congressional testimony in February 2002 emphasized that 'intelligence will never give you 100% predictive capability on terrorist events'. Where terrorists want to destroy, not bargain; and intelligence and diplomatic cooperation cannot be fool proof, the focus here is on military tools.

¹⁰ For this issue, see David Tucker, *Skirmishes at the edge of empire: The United States and international terrorism*, (Westport: Praeger, 1997)

¹¹ cited in Tucker, *Skirmishes at the Edge of Empire*, p34

¹² Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p29

¹³ Michael Ignatieff, 'It's war- but it doesn't have to be dirty', *The Guardian*, 01 October 2001

Using the word ‘war’ normally implies spectacular military action against fixed, easily identifiable adversaries- preferably states, and a clearly defined end-point producing decisive highly visible results in a media age shaped by images of smart bombs in the Gulf War.¹⁴ This conventional notion of ‘war’ contained drawbacks. Some prefer ‘police action’ to snatch Bin Laden. The context of modern war is traditionally between fixed enemies like states and massive armies. The war on terror first targeted the Taliban, hardly an established state, while Al Qaeda is a loosely organised, trans-national network. There are no clear frontlines or massed troops. When states use force to destroy terrorist groups and those who harbour them, we may use the term ‘war’ in theory. But unlike conventional inter-state wars, this ‘war’ had no fixed set of clearly identifiable enemies even in Afghanistan. Fundamentally, the nature of victory is unclear, outcomes will be neither easily apparent nor decisive. There will be no prospect of closure with surrender ceremonies on the battleship *Missouri*. Instead success is defined by what does *not* happen rather than what does. The language of war may serve as a semantic instrument for mobilizing public support but the vocabulary of risk-management better explains the ‘quirky character of this new war’. ¹⁵ Furthermore, the context of war in the West has been shifting from inter-state Great Power conflict to intra-state and rhetorical ‘wars’ on drugs, crime and now terrorism. Indeed, James Lindsay remarked that the campaign against terror ‘is more like the drug war’.¹⁶ Instead of the dominant inter-state connotations outlined above, it makes more sense to use the word ‘war’ in this way to mean mobilizing resources against a dangerous activity, which can never be eliminated but reduced to a tolerable level.¹⁷

While ‘old’ style terrorism is normally inclined to negotiations, ‘new’ terrorism is now seen as part of a ‘war paradigm’ adopted by terrorists.¹⁸ This takes a strategic campaign-oriented view of protracted violence rather than episodic efforts in the past. Unlike the ‘coercive diplomacy’ paradigm of terrorism, there is now no proportionate relationship between force employed and aims. It is less targeted at officials but

¹⁴ Michael Howard, ‘What’s in a name?: How to fight terrorism’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No.1 January/February 2002, p.22-35

¹⁵ Don Melvin, ‘Enemy, victory hard to define’, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 18 September 2001

¹⁶ Quoted in Melvin, ‘Enemy , victory hard to define’, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

¹⁷ Michael Howard, ‘What’s in a name’, *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb 2002, Vol. 81 No. 1, p.22-35

¹⁸ Ian O. Lesser, Bruce Hoffman, John Arquilla, David F. Ronfeldt, Michele Zanini, Brian Michael Jenkins, *Countering the New Terrorism*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p.46

wholesale and indiscriminate. Although they still want a lot of people watching, they also want lots of people dead. Unrestrained by political concerns, the aim is simply to inflict death. Indeed, terrorists have often declared 'war' on America before and considered themselves 'armies'. President Clinton too invoked the imagery and language of war by describing military retaliation after the 1998 embassy bombings as the 'first shot of protracted war', although his actions were hardly sustained. This 'war paradigm' was relevant before 9/11 and it is disingenuous to claim a sudden paradigm shift in the nature of war and terrorism. If terrorists are adopting such a paradigm and becoming a major security concern, the targeted then need to adopt a 'paradigm shift' and make terrorism additionally a military problem rather than one simply for policemen and courtrooms.¹⁹

Many theses have been put forth in IR to describe the 'war' on terrorism. Most interestingly, leading realist John Mearsheimer admitted that realism 'has not a heck of a lot' to say about trans-national terrorists, being more focused on Great Powers.²⁰ To Mary Kaldor, it validated her 'new wars' paradigm of globalisation and non-state actors; James Der Derian saw 'virtuous wars' in action, while Lawrence Freedman wondered if this was the Third World War.²¹ Already strategists like Eliot Cohen have called this a 'strange war', while counter terrorism experts like L. Paul Bremer have called for new strategies to fight 'new terrorism'.²² As for the Afghan campaign itself, despite the 'Afghan model' being touted as a new dawn in warfare, fortunately Colin McInnes reminded us that the decade before 9/11 already contained much talk of new trends in warfare. McInnes wondered if 9/11 merely confirmed these trends or was the Afghan war really new.²³ Although 9/11 brought war closer to the West than any other conflict in the 1990s, McInnes concluded it didn't change fundamentally the way subsequent military

¹⁹ Lesser et al. *Counter the New terrorism*, pp. 70; Daniel Pipes, 'War, not crime: Time for a paradigm shift', *National Review*, 01 October 2001; Caleb Carr, 'Terrorism as warfare', *World Policy Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 4, (Winter 1996-97), p1-13

²⁰ 'Through the Realist lens: Conversation with John Mearsheimer', Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 08 April 2002;

<http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people2/Mearsheimer/mearsheimer-con5.html>

²¹ James Der Derian, '9.11: Before, After, and in between', *Social Science Research Council*, http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/der_derian.htm; Lawrence Freedman, 'The Third World War?', *Survival*, Vol. 43 No. 4, Winter 2001-2002, pp.61-88; Mary Kaldor, 'Terror in the US', *Fathom*, September 13 2001, <http://www.fathom.com>

²² Eliot Cohen, 'A strange war', and L P Bremer, 'A new strategy for the new face of terrorism', both in *The National Interest*, No. 65, 2001

²³ Colin McInnes, 'A different kind of war? September 11 and the United States' Afghan war', *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 29 No.2, April 2003, p.165-85

operations were conducted: 'the Afghan campaign bore many hallmarks of Western military operations in the 1990s'. Although not as localised as before with war possibly spreading to the 'axis of evil', the enemy was still a regime, not its people. Officials repeatedly stressed the Taliban 'regime' was the target, not the Afghan 'people'. Tommy Franks exulted, 'this was the most precise bombing campaign in history' in avoiding civilian casualties. While tactical risks of casualties certainly constrained the campaign, this chapter focuses on analysing repetitive trends in managing systemic risks.

Stephen Biddle also saw more continuity than novelty in the Afghan campaign. Contrary to popular belief, close quarter ground combat was still needed to dislodge Taliban positions despite innovative embedding of Special Forces forward air controllers with Northern Alliance forces. 'Much was new, much was not new ...continuities were as important as novelties in the outcome.' In sum, the 'Afghan war shows that even today, continuity in nature of war is at least as important as change'.²⁴ Andy Bacevich similarly concluded that the Afghanistan campaign 'bore the imprint of US military practice as it evolved during the previous decade'.²⁵ This chapter does not pretend to offer a definitive interpretation of events but suggests Afghanistan also exhibited broader continuity with the earlier Kosovo campaign in terms of a strategic approach to war in reducing systemic risks.

I. Identifying Systemic Risks

Risk management involves firstly identifying systemic risks highlighted as impetus for war. This inevitably involves perceptions and factors ranging from a country's strategic culture, history, personal agendas to bureaucratic interests. However, this thesis is not about risk perceptions and it serves no further purpose to analyse cognitive or institutional constraints in decision-making over Afghanistan. Whether leaders mean what they say and whether words translate into action admittedly pose methodological hurdles. Nevertheless, systematic analysis of statements and data gathering matched with empirical evidence, examined within the basic theoretical framework devised in Chapter Three can provide a meaningful avenue of analysis of the systemic risks involved.

²⁴ Stephen Biddle, 'Afghanistan and the future of warfare', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82 No.2, March/April 2003, p.32, 46

²⁵ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.236

Afghanistan has been subject of Great Power tussles before, the infamous 'Great Game' and later Cold War struggles. The rise of the Taliban and initial neglect of the country by the West related to the collapse of the Soviet Union and systemic changes. Not much strategic interests now remained in that country after Moscow withdrew, creating chaos and a failed state posing risks as a terrorist haven. After 9/11, a power with hitherto no colonial history in the region intervened. The US did so for purposes of managing globalisation and its associated systemic risks, rather than colonialism.

As President Clinton declared in 1998, terrorism had a 'new face in the 1990s...the new technologies of terror and their increasing availability, and the increasing mobility of terrorists, raise chilling prospects of vulnerability to chemical, biological and other kinds of attacks, bringing each of us into the category of possible victim.'²⁶ 9/11 highlighted the oft-neglected dark side of globalisation- what Paul Wolfowitz called 'the parallel globalisation of terror' alongside economic interdependence²⁷ - as terrorists based in Afghanistan could strike at the US homeland. Terror was now 'franchised' by Al Qaeda in its quest to 'globalise terrorism', relying on tools of globalisation like air travel, email and faxes, free flow of people, and electronic money transfers.²⁸ Al Qaeda, noted the US *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 'exemplifies how terrorists have twisted the benefits and conveniences of our increasingly open, integrated and modernised world to serve their destructive agenda'.²⁹ To Vice Admiral Thomas Wilson, Director of the Defence Intelligence Agency, 'encouraging, furthering and consolidating the positive aspects of globalisation -- while reducing and managing its downsides and defeating its enemies -- may well be the civilized world's measure of merit for the next decade.'³⁰

With the impact of 9/11 fresh in their minds, the desire to avoid repetition of similar 'tomb-stone' style risks clearly dominated policymakers' concerns. Risk

²⁶ Remarks by the President to the Opening Session of the 53rd United Nations General Assembly, 21 September 1998

²⁷ Prepared Statement for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees: 'Building a military for the 21st century', 3-4 October 2001

²⁸ See David Martin Jones and MLR Smith, 'Franchising Terror', *The World Today*, Vol.57 No10, October 2001, p. 10-12

²⁹ *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington D.C: The White House, February 2003),p.7

³⁰ Quoted in Jim Garamone, 'Intelligence chief calls Sept 11 first move of post-Cold War struggle, *American Forces Press Service*, 19 Mar 2002

management literature terms this type of action the managing of ‘tombstone-style’ risks where the goal is to ensure no repetition of the mass slaughter of 9/11 but it also contains ‘anticipatory’ aspects as well. These two aspects cannot be clearly separated.

Risk is here largely used as a descriptive term to refer to a perilous situation. Risks now engulf seemingly everything: anthrax in the post, to hijacked planes or trucks crashing into nuclear plants and ‘dirty’ bombs. Terrorism is not ‘just what has happened, but also what might happen in the future’, a risk so to speak.³¹ Deputy Defence Secretary Wolfowitz noted ‘we are in a new era, facing new risks’. To President Bush, Al Qaeda or Saddam Hussein are ‘both risks. They’re both dangerous.’³² Terrorism has been called a ‘strategic risk’, prompting a new chapter to Britain’s *Strategic Defence Review* (SDR).³³ The risks of attack have increased as 9/11 demonstrated the ease with which foreign terrorists can commit mass terrorism in the continental US. However shocking terrorist blows may be, they hardly undermine the basic foundations of their targets’ global domination.³⁴ Kenneth Waltz also accepted that ‘although terrorists can be terribly bothersome, they hardly pose threats to the fabric of a society or seriously threaten the security of a state’.³⁵ These are dangerous times but not as dark as those of World War II or nuclear arms races when state survival was at stake. Perhaps ‘risk’ is a better description of the situation than existential ‘threat’.

Risk or threat?

International terrorism exhibits components of risk: probability and consequences. We were increasingly focused on risk components of high consequences, low probability attacks even before 9/11, rather than gauging more precisely threat components of capabilities and intentions of terrorists. This degenerated into limitless vulnerabilities, ‘fact-free scaffold of anxieties’ and ‘apparent over-reliance on worst case scenarios

³¹ Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p141

³² Wolfowitz quoted in Linda D. Kozaryn, ‘Wolfowitz says NATO ties are essential’, *American Forces Press Service*, 02 Feb 2002; ‘President Bush, Colombia President Uribe discuss terrorism’, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 25 Sep 2002

³³ UK Ministry of Defence, ‘Public discussion on the new chapter for the Strategic Defence Review’, http://www.mod.uk/Issues/sdr/new_chapter/glance.htm, London, February 2002

³⁴ Zygmunt Bauman, *Society Under Siege*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), p.101

³⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, ‘The Continuity of international politics’, in Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (eds), *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the future of global order*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p349

shaped primarily by vulnerability assessments rather than factors in technical complexities and motivation of terrorists'.³⁶

Al Qaeda admittedly poses an immediate serious threat rather than a risk: its intentions are clear (to cause catastrophic mayhem and death) as are its capabilities. Bin Laden has outlined his intentions clearly, acquiring WMD was a 'religious duty'. Al Qaeda also clearly demonstrated its capability on 9/11 but this is hardly conventional military capability we are used to in conceptualising war. All it needed were simple box cutters, not sophisticated military hardware. Terrorism is after all a weapon of the weak rather than powerful states posing 'threats' in the conventional security paradigm. Indeed, the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* acknowledges explicitly the difficulty of breaking down Al Qaeda terrorism into its threat components: 'the shadowy nature of terrorist organisations precludes an easy analysis of their capabilities or intent. The classic net assessment of the enemy based on the number of tanks, airplanes or ships does not apply to these non-state actors'.³⁷ The US *National Security Strategy* notes 'enemies in the past needed great armies and industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now shadowy networks of individuals can bring great suffering and chaos to our shores for less than the cost of a single tank'.³⁸ The focus is no longer on conventional capabilities but according to the logic of risk, 'weak states like Afghanistan can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states'.

In contrast, the Cold War nuclear threat was more material. People knew largely what to expect and it was more predictable. With mass-casualty terrorism, people are more anxious because they don't know what to be afraid of, with so many possible doomsday scenarios. An increasingly risk-conscious and anxious society even before 9/11, it is no surprise security in an age of terrorism is conceptualised in terms of probabilistic scenarios and all sorts of 'what-if' situations rather than more realistic evidence. In an ill-fated attempt to scour the marketplace for assessing the probability of terrorist events, the US Defence Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) plan

³⁶ See Bruce Hoffman, 'Terrorism by weapons of mass destruction: A reassessment of the threat', in Carolyn W. Pumphrey (ed), *Transnational Threats: Blending law enforcement and military strategies*, conference proceedings, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, November 2000), p.95

³⁷ *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington D.C: The White House, February 2003), p.16

³⁸ *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington D.C: The White House, 20 September 2002), Foreword

called Policy Market Analysis envisioned online trading of futures in Middle East events and terrorism. Although the plan was scrapped, the focus on probability was evident in conceptualising the dangers from terrorism. CIA officials turned to Hollywood producers for doomsday scenarios. Even the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001 in Britain, it was argued, demonstrated vulnerability to bioterrorism. Absent the ability to clearly identify Al Qaeda capabilities or even its members themselves, Michael O'Hanlon warned 'there are an unlimited number of potential vulnerabilities'.³⁹ Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge conceded, 'there is a universe of potentials we have to deal with' and possible attacks might 'come from anywhere at any time'.⁴⁰ In Rumsfeld's words, 'prepare for the unknown, uncertain, the unseen and the unexpected'.⁴¹ Britain's Homeland Security coordinator Sir David Ormand similarly argued 'we have to be able to deal with low-probability, high-impact events'.⁴² The June 2003 US government report to the UN Monitoring Committee on sanctions against Al Qaeda warned of 'a high probability' of an Qaeda WMD attack in two years.⁴³ Emphasising catastrophic consequences such as 'dirty' bomb attacks causing mass casualties combined with ill-defined probabilistic scenarios situated us within the risk discourse.

II. Implementing risk management

Active Anticipation

Two approaches to terrorism exist. Antiterrorism involves steps and measures involved in to reduce the probability of a terrorist act occurring. It is the proactive, preventive stage and involves things like acting on intelligence and reducing vulnerabilities of installations. Counterterrorism on the other hand involves tactical actions taken in response to a terrorist incident, including legislative efforts and consequence

³⁹ O'Hanlon quoted in Bill Miller, 'Study urges focus on terrorism with high fatalities, cost', *Washington Post*, 29 Apr 2002

⁴⁰ Ridge cited in 'US tries to guess next terror target', *Guardian Unlimited*, 03 November 2001, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uslatest/story/0,1282,-1287584,00.html>;

⁴¹ Rumsfeld quoted in 'Terror prompts huge US military revamp', *BBC News Online*, 01 February 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/1795102.stm>

⁴² Quoted in Peter Preston, 'Return of Mr Unspecified-threat', *Guardian*, 26 May 2003

⁴³ Quoted in Edith M. Lederer, 'US rates chance of Al Qaeda WMD attack', *Associated Press*, 09 June 2003

management. However, there is no clear distinction. The war in Afghanistan could be seen as a response to the 9/11 attacks but also in anticipation of further terrorist strikes. Risk in this context of anticipation is used not only as a descriptive term referring to a potentially dangerous situation but also a normative one implying the desirability for avoidance action. It also formed part of a strategic calculation.

Risk-management is proactive, its locus of action situated in the future going beyond simply punishing and retaliating but preventing and averting as well. This involves considering counter-factuals and alternative courses of action. As President Clinton observed earlier, each of us is now a 'possible victim'. As predicted by the test theory, this underlies the new security mantra of proactively averting 'potential victimhood'. The centre of consciousness for combating terrorism thus lies in the future, reducing the risk of it occurring and becoming a victim in the process. Terrorism is unpredictable, dependent on the smallest whim of individuals and loosely strung groups, compared to the relatively static hierarchy of militaries that inter-state warfare implies. Planning should be based on several possible images of the future, not just a single one.⁴⁴ President Bush observed that 'our nation is preparing for a variety of threats we hope will never arrive. Yet the best way to fight these dangers is to anticipate them and act against them with focus and determination'.⁴⁵ Although sometimes sensationalistic, discussing possible scenarios has been generally helpful in conceptualising alternate sets of risks.

Preventing terrorist actions has always been accorded a central place on the agenda. Indeed, 'preventing', 'potentials' and 'future' are key words in counter-terrorism documents. The *National Commission on Terrorism*'s 'priority one is to prevent terrorist attacks...Military force and covert action can often preempt or disrupt terrorist attacks'.⁴⁶ Secretary Rumsfeld agrees 'we must be preventative'.⁴⁷ The joint US Congressional report on 9/11 released in July 2003 concluded that atrocity was 'preventable' although there was no clear 'smoking gun'. It focused on all sorts of 'what if' situations that could have prevented the attacks such as eliminating inter-agency turf struggles on intelligence. The onus in counter-terrorism is clearly now on preventive proactive actions.

⁴⁴ Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, p229

⁴⁵ George W. Bush, *Weekly Radio Address*, 15 February 2003, Office of the Press Secretary

⁴⁶ Report of the National Commission on Terrorism, *Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism*, June 2000, <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/commission.html>

⁴⁷ Remarks at Defence Ministers Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, Belgium, 06 June 2002

The old approach to terrorism however viewed it as criminal, a law enforcement matter for the courts where terrorists or their state sponsors are retaliated against retrospectively after they committed terrorism. Some commentators argue that America should now dispense with higher levels of proof needed in treating terrorism as a crime, in effect waging war.⁴⁸ For all the controversy over a supposed new doctrine of 'anticipatory self-defence', the actual precursor can be traced back almost 20 years. In 1985, after Libyan terrorists bombed the La Belle discotheque in Berlin, the US response came to be known as the Abe Sofaer Doctrine after the official who drafted the State Department memorandum.⁴⁹ This stated that the US had a right of 'preemptive self-defence' against future acts of terrorism, when a country aids or gives sanctuary to terrorists. This doctrine was invoked in the 1986 bombings of Tripoli and again during the 1998 cruise missile strikes against Afghanistan and Sudan. The difference now is that 9/11 was much more grievous than those in the past.

Codenamed Operation *Infinite Reach*, cruise missile strikes on Afghanistan in August 1998 set significant precedent. President Clinton justified his actions in terms of self-defense against an 'imminent threat of further terrorist attacks against the United States' and the strikes were to 'prevent and deter additional attacks'.⁵⁰ Although Clinton cited specific intelligence of a terrorist meeting that day in Afghanistan, to justify an 'imminent' threat, the real aim behind destroying the Al Shifa plant in Sudan was 'less retaliatory than preemptive, the first shot in a campaign to deny would-be terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction'.⁵¹ Using military power now indicated that the US 'intended to take a proactive approach'.⁵² The official proactive goals were to 'preempt future terrorist acts and disrupt the activities of those planning for them. While

⁴⁸ Daniel Pipes, 'War, not crime: Towards a new paradigm', *National Review*, 01 October 2001

⁴⁹ Former State Department Legal Advisor Michael Scharf's contribution to 'Is this a new kind of war? September 11 and its aftermath', 07 October 2001, *Crimes of War Project*, <http://www.crimesofwar.org/expert/paradigm-scharf.html>

⁵⁰ Text of a letter from the President to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President Pro Tempore of the Senate, 22 August 1998; <http://clinton6.nara.gov/1998/08/1998-08-22-text-of-a-letter-on-afghanistan-and-sudan-strikes.html>

⁵¹ Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.111

⁵² Bacevich, *American Empire*, p.153

our actions are not perfect insurance, inaction would be an invitation to further horror...it is very likely that something would have happened had we not done this'.⁵³

After September 11, the stakes became too high to wait for terrorists to strike first, especially with WMD. The approach is similarly proactive. In October 2001, US Ambassador to the UN John Negroponte submitted a letter to the Security Council reporting US military action against Afghanistan. In it, he reserved the right in the future to 'further actions with respect to other organisations and states...United States armed forces have initiated actions designed to prevent and deter further attacks on the United States'.⁵⁴ This letter taken together with other statements to act against 'axis of evil' states implied that 'anticipatory self-defence' appeared to be the justification. According to FBI Director Robert Mueller, the 'the prevention of another terrorist attack remains the FBI's top priority'.⁵⁵ Shifting from a reactive to proactive orientation, it now seeks to prevent and disrupt terrorist plans by being 'predictive', and to 'anticipate attacks'.

Proactive risk-management is a standard part of the managing process. Terrorism expert Walter Lacquer observes 'no society can protect all its members from attack but can reduce the risk by taking the offensive, keeping terrorists on the run rather than concentrating on defence alone'.⁵⁶ The October 2002 Council on Foreign Relations report *America still unprepared, still in danger* advised that 'a proactive mindset is key'.⁵⁷ It noted two strategic means to manage terror risks. While the Homeland Security Department reduced vulnerabilities and opportunities for terrorism by 'hardening' 'soft' targets, the Pentagon directly reduced risks overseas. Fighting terrorism more accurately refers to managing the risk that it can happen. Blair warned that 'if we failed to act, the risk is simple and direct: more British lives lost through terrorism'.⁵⁸ Blair's official

⁵³ Press Briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, 20 August 1998, <http://clinton6.nara.gov/1998/08/1998-08-20-press-briefing-by-albright-and-berger.html>

⁵⁴ Letter dated 07 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/2001/946

⁵⁵ Statement for the record on the War on terrorism, before the Congressional Select Committee on Intelligence of the US Senate, Washington DC, 11 Feb 2003

⁵⁶ See Walter Laqueur, 'Left, right and beyond- the changing face of terror', in James F. Hoge & Gideon Rose (eds), *How did this happen? Terrorism and the new war*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), p81

⁵⁷ Gary Hart and Warren Rudman (Co-Chairs), *America still unprepared, still in danger*, Report of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Washington D.C., 22 Oct 2002, p.10

⁵⁸ Quoted in 'Tackling terror in UK's interest', *BBC News Online*, 07 October 2001, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1584000.stm>

statement on commencing Operation *Enduring Freedom* noted there are ‘dangers in acting, (but) the dangers of inaction are much higher.’⁵⁹

This sort of proactive probabilistic reasoning was reflected in military strikes against Afghanistan three years earlier. President Clinton warned then ‘the risks from inaction to America and the world would be far greater than action’.⁶⁰ Three years later, Rumsfeld described pursuing terrorists as a ‘proactive’ policy since it was impossible to defend against terrorists everywhere everytime. He later stressed that actions such as Operation *Anaconda* were not ‘retribution’ or ‘revenge’ for September 11, but rather ‘to protect our country and people from further attack’: terrorists under fire in Afghanistan have less time to plan attacks.⁶¹ Similarly, in August 1998, US Under-secretary of State Thomas Pickering emphasised that cruise missile strikes on Afghanistan and Sudan ‘was not retaliation; it was to prevent further attacks’.⁶²

Concern about averting adverse futures, rather than revenge, is indicative of risk management’s largely utilitarian ethos. As Michael O’Hanlon mused, ‘prevention rather than revenge should be the guiding principle for US military action’ since the central objective is to ‘reduce the probability and severity of future attacks’.⁶³ Probability and severity are key indicators of risk concepts. The war on terrorism fulfilled not only a desire to hit back at terrorists but also reduced the risk of further terrorism. However, pre-emption, legally speaking, is not really an issue here since Washington is simply engaging in traditional self-defence against an ongoing series of armed attacks, from the 1998 Embassy bombings to September 11.⁶⁴ Furthermore, America was ‘reacting’ to the 9/11 attacks. Nonetheless, what is more important, as we have previously seen in Chapter Three and from the examples cited above, is the ‘proactive nature’ of ‘reacting’ against

⁵⁹ Prime Minister’s statement on military action in Afghanistan, 07 October 2001

⁶⁰ Address to the Nation by the President, 20 August 1998

⁶¹ See ‘Secretary Rumsfeld Interview with the Telegraph’, *DoD News Transcripts*, 23 February 2002; and Kathleen T Rhem, ‘Coalition turning up the pressure, but battle not over’, *American Forces Press Service*, 06 March 2002

⁶² US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering, US Information Agency Foreign Press Centre Briefing, Washington D.C., 25 August 1998

⁶³ Michael O’Hanlon, ‘The case for a careful military response’, *Brookings Institution Analysis Paper 1: America’s response to terrorism*, 25 September 2001

⁶⁴ Anthony Clark Arend, ‘International Law and the preemptive use of force’, *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26 No. 3, Spring 2003, p99

terror with the focus on *preventing* repetition rather than retrospective concepts like demanding revenge or justice relating to past events.

Over the past 50 years, it was assumed that Washington would respond quickly and decisively to aggression but would not initiate attacks. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* argued this is outdated when terror groups operate outside control of governments and engage in symbiotic relationships with failed states. Aiming to inflict maximum death and destruction, and without any territory at stake, they appear immune to retaliation. It thus makes sense to strike first. During the Cold War, there also existed the constraining factor of the Soviet Union. This no longer exists, a crucial factor making anticipatory risk management plausible. UK MoD consultations on a new Chapter of its *SDR* similarly provided an inkling of emerging future-oriented concepts in counter-terrorism. There was to be 'more emphasis on being proactive, pre-empting problems than waiting for them to come to us.'⁶⁵

Since 9/11 and the dawn of mass-casualty terrorism, this is serious because 'there is no margin for error and no chance to learn from any mistake' according to President Bush.⁶⁶ Clearly here we are talking about 'anticipationism' rather than a reactive 'resilience' approach to risk management. Declaring that he 'will not wait on events, while dangers gather', the tone of Bush's 'axis of evil' speech was proactive and anticipatory, indicative of a risk-manager's mindset. Colin Powell's strategy is that 'we can reduce the likelihood of those (terrorist) incidents if we go after those terrorist organisations'.⁶⁷ This is as clear a statement as any about proactive risk management to reduce the risks/liability of terrorism.

War and the precautionary principle

How much did Western intelligence actually know about Al Qaeda's role in 9/11? Was there compelling evidence, or are we increasingly resorting to the precautionary principle in responding to terrorism? Professionals in finance and economics who practise risk management now scramble to manage risks never thought possible before. Catastrophic

⁶⁵ Michael Evans, 'Forces take on anti-terror role', *The Times*, 15 February 2002

⁶⁶ Remarks by President Bush, 'President calls for quick passage of defence bill', Office of the Press Secretary, 15 March 2002

⁶⁷ Jeremy Paxman interviews Colin Powell, *BBC Newsnight*, 21 September 2001,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/events/newsnight/newsid_1563000/1563074.stm

terrorism eludes private insurance coverage. The US Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of November 2002 thus requires the government act as insurer of last resort. However, 'terrorism is still an extremely difficult risk to predict'.⁶⁸ Preparing the nation for the worst is an act of prudence, not fatalism', notes the report *America still in danger, still unprepared*.⁶⁹ After September 11, in the words of a World Health Organisation (WHO) spokesman warning about a terrorist smallpox attack, 'the unthinkable is no longer unthinkable and we need to prepare for that'.⁷⁰ The challenge is to properly define and respond to risk and we seem to be erring on the side of caution. The WHO felt it 'prudent' and not 'alarmist', to bring forward the release of its report on biological or chemical attacks.⁷¹ A US-wide system of environmental monitors called Bio-Watch has been deployed 'to prepare the country for whatever the weapon and whomever the culprit might be'.⁷²

Authorities do not know about terrorist cells or sleepers and their frequently changing tactics to assign clear probabilities, which is why precautionary-based strategies like those above are resorted to. These act amidst high uncertainty on risk potentials. It is difficult to ascertain attribution in terrorist incidents. Even if an organisation were to claim responsibility, how can we believe it or what if no one claims responsibility? No one has yet done so for the 9/11 attacks. Reliable sources are often lacking and the level of evidence is often different from that needed in a court of law or jury.⁷³ The UK government dossier on Al Qaeda published on November 2001 conceded that it 'does not purport to provide a prosecutable case against Osama Bin Laden in a court of law. Intelligence often cannot be used evidentially'.⁷⁴ Tony Blair however claimed to have seen 'absolutely incontrovertible proof'. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson announced himself satisfied with the 'compelling' and 'conclusive' evidence that

⁶⁸ Elisabeth Bumiller, 'Government to cover most costs of insurance losses in terrorism', *New York Times*, 27 Nov 2002

⁶⁹ *America still unprepared, still in danger*, Report of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Washington D.C., 22 Oct 2002, p.32

⁷⁰ Anthony Browne, 'UN's smallpox terror alert', *The Observer*, October 21 2001

⁷¹ 'Governments warned on germ warfare attacks', *Ananova*, 25 September 2001, http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_407043.html

⁷² Judith Miller, 'US is deploying monitor system for germ attack', *New York Times*, 21 Jan 2003

⁷³ Edward F. Mickolus, 'How do we know we're winning the war against terrorists? Issues in measurement', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 25 No. 3, May-June 2002 p151-160

⁷⁴ 'Responsibility for the terrorist atrocities in the United States, 11 September 2001 – an updated account', 10 Downing Street, London (accessed 26 May 2003), <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3682.asp>

Washington presented to NATO councils. However, what was the evidentiary test required? Communications intercepts? The US claimed that Al Qaeda and its Taliban supporters were responsible but failed to provide 'sufficient factual evidence'. It only provided 'conclusory reasons and not the factual basis for them'.⁷⁵

There was no direct information linking Afghanistan or terror groups based there to the 9/11 attacks. Evidence found in Afghanistan however suggested terrorist experimentation with goats and dogs using gas. Bin Laden's infamous home video was also found, where he was shown gloating over the 9/11 attacks. The risks were indeed present and this meant the Afghan campaign was based relatively less on 'false positives' in resorting to the precautionary principle than the previous Kosovo campaign. Indeed, the precautionary principle applied only to the extent that information was not perfect but was considerably more concrete than normally assumed.

Yet, with so many terrorist scenarios, 'uncertainty is the sea within which all experts are frantically swimming'. Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge cautioned that 'the information we have to work with is very vague'. Terrorism expert Daniel Benjamin notes 'we are surrounded by a cloud of unknowing'.⁷⁶ There will be an imperfect understanding of the risks involved and somehow making decisions to manage risks. Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz emphasised the 'uncertainty' of information about terrorist targets, aims and methods'.⁷⁷ Donald Rumsfeld told NATO Defence Ministers of the need for 'taking decisions based on imperfect information', that 'absolute proof cannot be a precondition for action'.⁷⁸ Given the elusive nature of risks we face, the standards of proof demanded retrospectively for Al Qaeda's guilt might be dispensed with in future in favour of the precautionary principle.

⁷⁵ Jonathan Charney, 'The Use of force against terrorism and international law', *American journal of International law*, Vol. 95 No 4, October 2001, p.836

⁷⁶ Quotes cited in David von Drehle, 'Uncertainty is sea where all swim', *Washington Post*, 16 Feb 2003

⁷⁷ See Jim Garamone, 'No certainty from global war on terrorism', *American Forces Press Service*, 18 Oct 2002.

⁷⁸ Quoted in Ian Black, 'Rumsfeld tells NATO to face up to terror danger', *Guardian*, 07 June 2002

Surveillance

Surveillance is crucial to risk management strategies, collecting information on risks and assessing whether they require anticipatory action. If necessary, this is implemented. While US surveillance assets during the Cold War monitored concrete Soviet military capabilities such as missile silos and nuclear submarines, now they shifted towards identifying who or what constituted elusive security risks. Declassified Keyhole-11 satellite photos were used to brief media on 1998 cruise missile strikes on Afghanistan. According to Keith Hall, then Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, IMINT (image intelligence) 'helps to reduce the terrorist threat. It can help to locate terrorist camps and facilities and provide other information that helps us to track terrorists'.⁷⁹

The US government invoked its 'shutter control' rights buying all images from the commercial *Ikonos* satellite during the 2001 Afghan campaign, fearing Taliban or Al Qaeda elements using such images to locate coalition forces. A public-private division of sorts emerged on risk surveillance. With advances in commercial technology, private companies such as Digital Globe contracted to provide not only an extra set of eyes, but also the big picture which more precise government satellites can complement. The Global Hawk strategic UAV made its operational debut while armed Predator surveillance drones made their combat debut. Satellites and surveillance planes are monitoring about 15 suspected cargo ships allegedly owned or used by Al Qaeda. UAVs have been overflying the Horn of Africa for similar purposes from bases in Djibouti. As White House spokesman Ari Fleischer commented: 'we're going to be on the lookout for them when they (terrorists) emerge'.⁸⁰ Reports suggested that Operation *Anaconda* was launched after months of monitoring Taliban/Al Qaeda regrouping. Al Qaeda's Yemen coordinator Qaed Sinan Harithi was assassinated by Predator drones after being under surveillance for months. 'Risk makers' displaying such risk factors require monitoring and intervention actions if necessary, according to theories of surveillance. This then reduced the likelihood of terrorist attacks. Such capabilities to launch precision strikes within a short sensor-to-shooter time frame have received prominence in the leaked Pentagon *Defence Planning Guidance* 2004-2009.

⁷⁹Remarks to the National Network of Electro-Optical Manufacturing Technologies Conference, 9 February 1998, Tuscon, Arizona.

⁸⁰ Press Gaggle by Ari Fleischer aboard Air Force One, 05 November 2002, *Office of the Press Secretary*

After September 11, Beck noted the increased importance of 'surveillance states' to monitor terrorists. MI5's preferred policy of 'risk management' involves monitoring terror suspects to gather as much intelligence as possible, although it has been prodded towards a 'risk averse' policy of arrests sooner rather than later.⁸¹ The Pentagon runs an electronic surveillance program called Terrorism Information Awareness that seeks to forestall terrorism by scanning computer databases.⁸² We also need more intelligence-based 'preshcreening and monitoring based on risk criteria'.⁸³ The *National Commission on Terrorism* also recommended the Secretary for Health together with the State Department, establish an international monitoring program to give early warning of infectious disease outbreak and terrorist experimentation with biological agents. Furthermore, the nature of risks evolves and needs open-ended monitoring. The UN Monitoring Group on terrorism was thus set up to assess measures taken against terrorism and issues regular assessments. As President Bush put it, 'the war on terror will require a constant evaluation on progress.'⁸⁴

As predicted in the test theory, security risks like terrorism require surveillance to assess it and take management action if possible. This war 'requires constant vigilance and surveillance. Final success remains elusive', rather than triumphal celebrations like V-E Day.⁸⁵ As predicted by the test theory, surveillance was very much in evidence in with continuous review processes and trying to forestall terrorism.

Utilitarian 'less than heroic' strategies of risk management

Routine war

The double-edged character of this war defies conventional categories. Drafts, mobilisation, rationing, or other sacrifices normally associated with war are not being considered. Exactly one month after 9/11, the American S&P 500 index was back to pre-

⁸¹ Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Security services switch to early swoop policy', *The Guardian*, 18 Nov 2002

⁸² This controversial program was initially called Total Information Awareness until pressure from Congress banned it from spying on Americans and the Pentagon changed it to its present name.

⁸³ Gary Hart and Warren Rudman (Co-Chairs), *America still unprepared, still in danger*, Report of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Washington D.C., 22 Oct 2002, p.3

⁸⁴ 'Plain speaking: the US President talks about plans for New Year, race and prospect of war with Iraq', *US News and World Report*, 13 December 2002

⁸⁵ 'Retaliation may be underway but victory is distant', *Boston Globe*, 08 October 2001

attack levels. Within a year of Pearl Harbour, millions of Americans were fighting and dying. Instead, the White House now urged Americans to go about their routines yet maintain heightened awareness. Accounting scandals and economic problems jostled for public and media attention. Was terrorism, like crime before it, about to become simply a commonplace risk to be managed routinely as predicted by the test theory?

War on terror in Afghanistan was becoming routine in two senses: it was becoming all too familiar, and instrumental rather than fervent. Before 9/11, Operation '*Infinite Reach*' amounted to little more than a targeting exercise'. Unlike 'real war', in which adversarial interaction is full of uncertainty, the 'fight' if it could be called that, was on American terms, eliminating any possibility of enemy surprises.⁸⁶ By 2002, American air power over Afghanistan became largely an exercise in precision guidance; its pilots technicians fighting wars largely devoid of passion and danger. US squadrons waged war virtually unopposed- few squared off with SAMs-, doing the 'Kabul-ki Dance' waiting for targets to hit. 'Combat has become a procedure, deliberate and calculated, more cerebral than visceral- even if it does still have its moments'.⁸⁷ This not only reinforced the West's existing instrumental approach to war, but also reflected risk management's utilitarian ethos. The war against Afghanistan also assumed an all-too familiar almost 'routine' nature in Britain: it was the fifth time Tony Blair had used military force in his tenure, with the customary press briefings and cockpit imagery.

With such ill-defined goals and elusive enemies, by May 2002, US troops were gathered in formal 'recommitting ceremonies' to remind them of their mission. This would have been unnecessary in an heroic existential struggle. Instead, war quietly shifted into Phase 2 intelligence and police work, ammunition seizures and arrests, routine sweeps and preventing Taliban remnants regrouping. There is clear indication of 'routinisation' of this war and soon counter-terror patrols will assume the routine nature of naval drug patrols in the Caribbean. By 2003, attacks on coalition forces, engagements with Al Qaeda/Taliban elements were reported in low-key fashion, as the war appeared almost 'forgotten'. 'Americans will have to live with the risk of large-scale terrorist

⁸⁶ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.153

⁸⁷ See Mark Bowden, 'The Kabul-ki Dance', *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2002

violence' for some years ahead.⁸⁸ The 'war' on terrorism is going to become routine as terrorism comes to be seen as an everyday day risk, like crime or drugs, to be managed.

Personification of risk

A risk-management approach to terrorism is based on a profoundly utilitarian moral calculus that effectively replaces other moral criteria such as generosity, guilt, or evil. It is managerial, not corrective. It does not address problems or causes, or rehabilitate erring individuals but shapes the environment within which individuals operate, reducing risks to the wider population. As we have seen, the Kosovo campaign dwelt on the evils of Milosevic yet left him untouched. Similarly, while Bin Laden presently remains at large, the focus in Washington at least publicly has shifted from the 'evil one' 'dead or alive', to simply managing the risks he posed.

Shrugging aside suggestions that Washington's Afghan campaign had failed in its most important manhunt, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice stressed 'the most important thing is to disrupt the capability of this network to operate'⁸⁹. To President Bush, 'focusing on one person' misunderstood the 'scope of the mission'; 'terror is bigger than one person' and Bin Laden was now 'marginalised'.⁹⁰ Admiral Robert Natter, commanding the Atlantic Fleet, felt that 'the answer to this war is not that we have captured Bin Laden, but rather keeping them running'.⁹¹ In April 2002, General Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), announced somewhat disingenuously, 'the goal has never been to go after specific individuals, it was to disrupt the terrorists'. Echoes of this can be found in August 1998 after the first missile strikes against Al Qaeda when White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry similar noted in response to a question whether Bin Laden was specifically targeted, said 'there were not individual human targets; it was an organisation and infrastructure that were the targets'.⁹²

⁸⁸ Daniel Byman, 'Are we winning the war on terrorism?', *Brookings Institution Middle East Memo #1*, 23 May 2003

⁸⁹ Rice cited in 'Bin Laden search brings frustration', *Guardian Unlimited*, 15 February 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/latestory/0,1280,1521784,00.html>

⁹⁰ 'President Bush holds Press Conference', 13 March 2002, *Office of the Press Secretary*

⁹¹ Adm. Natter quoted in 'USS Roosevelt returns home', *Washington Post*, 27 March 2002

⁹² Remarks of Mike McCurry to the Media Pool, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 20 Aug 1998

Furthermore, terror networks like Al Qaeda can function without Bin Laden. It is a loose grouping of people around the world who use modern technology to coordinate. New networked terrorist groups are less affected by losing individuals. They cannot be decapitated in the traditional sense but can only be disrupted. Eliminating Bin Laden would only mean a 'stuttering', not a 'pause' in terrorist operations. He is only a 'cog, albeit a large one, in a system that will outlast his demise'.⁹³ For this reason, Rumsfeld suggested it was 'unwise' to personalize the conflict as Gulf War I was.⁹⁴ Having said that, the Administration clearly downplayed the role of Bin Laden to mask its frustrations and failure at nabbing the biggest fish of all, shifting its war aims in the process. However, from risk management's negative utilitarian perspective, it is enough that risks are reduced suitably, even without dishing out justice to Bin Laden the individual as Bush initially promised.

As in crime control, utilitarian risk management now trumped notions of justice, as predicted in the test theory. Secretary Rumsfeld remarked on alleged 'dirty bomber' Jose Padilla, 'our interest..is not law enforcement. It is not punishment.' But simply to 'try to find out everything he knows so we can stop other terrorist acts'.⁹⁵ Brian Jenkins concurred that 'America's goal is not revenge for the September 11 attacks. The goal is not even bringing individual terrorists to justice. It is the destruction of a terrorist enterprise that threatens American security'.⁹⁶ This certainly was a less than heroic, more utilitarian strategy. As with other rhetorical wars on crime for example, multi-tiered networks are the predominant form; singling out individuals will only divert scarce resources. Plenty of middle-level operatives can still inflict real damage or replace those killed. Many cells can plan operations without much guidance. The focus should thus be on disruption, not decapitation.

⁹³ Lesser et al, *Countering the New Terrorism*, pp.132; Walter Pincus, 'Al Qaeda to survive Bin Laden, panel told', *Washington Post*, 19 December 2001; Paul Dibb, 'The future of international coalitions: how useful? How manageable?' *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25. No.2, (Spring 2002), pp.131-144

⁹⁴ 'Secretary Rumsfeld Television interview with MSNBC', *DoD News Transcripts*, 28 March 2002

⁹⁵ Quoted in Kathleen T. Rhem, 'Intelligence, not prosecution is US first priority with Padilla', *American Forces Press Service*, 11 June 2002.

⁹⁶ Brian Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002), Summary ix

Reshaping the environment

Given the difficulties in decapitation and personifying risks, does the war in Afghanistan then manifest 'shaping' concerns as predicted by the test theory in reducing opportunities for terrorism? The US campaign has certainly reshaped the environment substantially but only to the extent needed to manage systemic risks. It is a form of active military engagements, not always assuming the conventional shape of war. A Congressional bill of April 1996 dictates the president 'use all necessary means including...military force, to disrupt, dismantle, and destroy international infrastructure used by international terrorists'.⁹⁷ Furthermore, more aggressive, international police and intelligence coordination have meant a less 'permissive environment' within which Al Qaeda could operate with impunity.⁹⁸ Using force and aggressive intelligence operations to reshape environments have curtailed opportunities for terrorists to plan and strike. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge's strategy is to 'reduce vulnerabilities, to make it progressively more difficult for terrorists to attack successfully'.⁹⁹ UK Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon has described his strategy of denying terrorists the 'opportunity' of surprise and hitting terrorists in their own back yards before they can hit us as 'up-streaming', a concept borrowed from the global fight against drugs.¹⁰⁰ Wars are now into the business of denying terrorists opportunities through proactive action.

RAND counter-terrorism expert Ian Lesser argued that 'environment shaping' around the world can reduce terror risks.¹⁰¹ In the context of Afghanistan, applying Lesser's notion of 'environment shaping', we can 'shrink zones of chaos and terrorist sanctuary' by destroying terror infrastructure and conditions there that make them conducive for terrorists and prevent new zones from forming. This concept is reflected in the US *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* released in February 2003, which described a 'structure of terror' where the 'international environment defines the

⁹⁷ cited in Christopher Harmon, *Terrorism Today*, (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p257

⁹⁸ Daniel Byman, 'Are we winning the war on terrorism?', *Brookings Institution Middle East Memo #1*, 23 May 2003

⁹⁹ Quoted in Walter Pincus, 'Less intelligence role seen for security department', *Washington Post*, 18 July 2002

¹⁰⁰ Geoff Hoon, *The New Chapter: A Blueprint for Reform*, Lecture at the Royal United Services Institute, 30 July 2002, London.

¹⁰¹ Ian O. Lesser, 'Countering the new terrorism: implications for strategy', in Ian O. Lesser et al., *Countering the New Terrorism*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p.134

boundaries within which terrorist plans take shape'. The ultimate goal of US policy is to 'create an international environment inhospitable to terrorists and all those who support them by attacking sanctuaries, leaderships and command and control, disrupting their ability to plan.'¹⁰² Terrorist infrastructure is important to terrorist training, argued Chair of the JCS General Myers, 'and so we're going to deny them the opportunity to continue to use them...we are trying to set the conditions inside that country that terrorism will no longer be supported'. Secretary Powell noted the goal is to 'make it far more difficult for such organisations to exist.'¹⁰³

War now meant denial of opportunities and making environmental conditions inimical to terrorists, not just militarily defeating them in the conventional sense of a 'heroic' war against a clearly identifiable enemy or a discrete subject. As then US commander of Combined Joint Task Force(CJTF)-180 Lieutenant-General Dan McNeill observed on ongoing operations in late June 2002, 'I don't have a particular name affixed to what I'm going up against'.¹⁰⁴ Disruption means targeting a terrorist organisation by not only stopping one of its particular operations, but rendering all its activities more difficult. US Colonel John Campbell, commander of forces in southern Afghanistan remarked in late February 2003, 'my mission is to deny sanctuary to Taliban and Al Qaeda. Anytime we go in, we disrupt their communications and planning, and put people on the run or in hiding'.¹⁰⁵ Constantly chipping away at Al Qaeda can at least curtail its ability to strike at will.

Further afield, the CJTF-Horn of Africa mission statement sought to 'deny opportunity for re-emergence of terrorist groups in the Horn of Africa'.¹⁰⁶ The Pentagon is already looking at bare-bones basing agreements in lawless regions in north and sub-Saharan Africa which could be 'potential havens'. As the European Command's Director

¹⁰² *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington D.C: The White House, February 2003), p.6-11

¹⁰³ DoD News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers, 09 October 2001; Secretary Powell interview with Jeremy Paxman, BBC Online, 21 September 2001

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Peter Ford, 'Where's Osama and how much should we care?', *Christian Science Monitor*, 27 June 2002

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Carlotta Gall, 'US-led Afghan sweep yields unclear results', *New York Times*, 05 Mar 2003

¹⁰⁶ See 'Added Forces Strengthen Horn Of Africa Task force', *American Forces Press Service*, 13 June 2003

of Plans and Policy noted, 'What we don't want to see in Africa is another Afghanistan. That's what we're trying to prevent'.¹⁰⁷

The ability of networks like Al Qaeda to hijack weak states makes it more imperative to do so, although it is unclear what impact modern communication technologies have on the need for quasi-virtual organisations.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, Afghan terrorist camps were perhaps 'now unnecessary' as Al Qaeda operated as a 'virtual entity'.¹⁰⁹ The only infrastructure needed were safe houses. However, this obscured the importance of Afghanistan as a magnet attracting terrorists, a safe and secure location to train and recruit openly and select the best. Kurt Campbell and Philip Zelikow, leading the Aspen Strategy Group study on homeland security, emphasised that a principal achievement so far has been depriving Al Qaeda of its Afghan base and harassing its operatives worldwide.

Nation-tending

Washington is famously averse to nation-building, keen on exit strategies and 'light footprints'. As Tommy Franks quipped in November 2001, 'this is a conflict that probably has the easiest exit strategy in years..the destruction of terrorist networks with global reach, and in this case, the Taliban who harbour them...and provide support architecture'.¹¹⁰ Resisting the international peacekeeping force beyond Kabul, Washington's overriding priority remained the hunt for terrorists rather than more 'heroic' nation-building. Washington spends \$10 billion a year on the 9,000 American troops chasing Taliban/Al Qaeda remnants in the eastern and southern Afghanistan but less than \$1 billion on reconstruction since 2001, although Congress has authorised more.¹¹¹ Britain's top soldier Admiral Michael Boyce criticised America's 'single-

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in 'Pentagon seeking new access pacts for Africa bases', *New York Times*, 05 July 2003

¹⁰⁸ See Lesser et al., *Countering the New Terrorism*, pp.134; Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, 'The Terror', *Survival*, Vol. 43 No. 4, (Winter 2001), pp.5-18; Ray Takeyh & Nikolas Gvosdev, 'Do terrorist networks need a home?', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25 No. 3, Summer 2002, p.97-108

¹⁰⁹ *Strategic Survey 2002/2003: An evaluation and forecast of world affairs*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the IISS, May 2003), p. 9-10

¹¹⁰ Interview with Tommy Franks, ABC TV, *This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts*, 04 Nov 2001

¹¹¹ 'Belated help for Afghanistan', *New York Times*, Editorial, 09 August 2003

minded aim' of destroying Bin Laden in a 'high-tech Wild West' operation, ignoring 'rebuilding'.¹¹²

However, utilitarian concerns in Washington overrode other moral reasons for reconstruction as Donald Rumsfeld's main 'goal in Afghanistan is to ensure that country does not again become a training ground for terrorists... trying to stop terrorists from committing additional terrorist acts is our first priority'.¹¹³ As a US diplomat reportedly quipped, 'we go in, we hunt down terrorists, and we leave as if we'd never been there'.¹¹⁴ US Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz maintained that, 'we've got to deny the sanctuaries everywhere we're able to'.¹¹⁵

After 9/11 states realised that reconstruction now involved greater national interest than previously thought. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* clearly stated 'America is now threatened less by conquering states that we are by failing ones'.¹¹⁶ There is however little talk here of nation-building in the conventional sense but what Michael Ignatieff called 'nation-building lite' to safeguard strategic interests at lowest possible cost.¹¹⁷ The American reliance on local warlords without substantial peacekeeping beyond Kabul has improved life marginally but promises of financial aid and reconstruction have not been met. Hamid Karzai's writ does not run throughout most of Afghanistan still riven by feuding warlords. Most are used for humanitarian and food services, rather than reconstruction. This is clearly 'nation-tending' rather than 'nation-building'.¹¹⁸ Just as classical rehabilitation in the modernist sense in criminology has given way to rehabilitation only to the extent it manages risks, this is paralleled in Afghanistan. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* noted it will rebuild Afghanistan 'so it will never again abuse its people, threaten its neighbours and provide a haven for

¹¹² Quoted in Richard Crockatt, *America Embattled*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p.152

¹¹³ Testimony of US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld before the Senate Armed Services Committee on progress in Afghanistan, Washington D.C, 31 July 2002

¹¹⁴ Jeffrey Record, 'Collapsed Countries, Casualty Dread and the New American Way of War', *Parameters*, Summer 2002, p4-23

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Greg Miller, 'Despite Apparent success in Yemen, risks remain', *LA Times*, 06 Nov 2002

¹¹⁶ *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C: The White House, September 2002), Introduction

¹¹⁷ Michael Ignatieff, 'Nation-building lite', *New York Times Magazine*, 28 July 2002;

¹¹⁸ See Record, 'Collapsed countries, casualty dread and the new American way of war', p.4-23

terrorists'.¹¹⁹ Utilitarian concerns about possible negative outcomes rather than addressing causes or rehabilitation dominate the debate. The Bush Administration belatedly deployed civil affairs specialists to help reconstruction.

Pentagon officials insisted Afghanistan is not nation-building simply for the sake of Afghanistan but security-building. President Bush ostensibly accepted at his October 10 2001 news conference the need for 'so-called nation-building', but preferred calling it 'stabilisation of a future government' to make it inhospitable to terrorists. This was a clear indicator of 'nation-tending'. Strategically marginal Somalia was abandoned in 1994 only for Washington to worry after Sep 11 it had terrorist bases. The Horn of Africa has been identified as another risky place. 'Instability can be a breeding ground for terror', noted Geoff Hoon. 'It is now in our interests to stop these conditions developing or to change them when they have already emerged. It is far better to minimise risks to UK interests by being forewarned about them'.¹²⁰ As predicted, Washington's renewed interests in Africa are based on more utilitarian concerns to prevent terrorist sanctuaries rather than moral concerns seeking to rebuild weak or failed states.

III. Defining success

Non-events and the minimalist criterion for victory: acceptance and patience

How would a war to manage risks end? Hypothetically, it could conclude when the risks are reduced to a tolerable level with success defined minimally in non-events such as avoiding risks occurring. Success in conventional 'war' is normally defined by desirable outcomes like defeating a fixed identifiable enemy, taking its capital or surrender ceremonies. It has a visible finite point. Terrorism spawned from foreign countries has the best chance of being called 'war'. But the practical aim of military action remains the same: more effective suppression indicative of risk-management, rather than total elimination evocative of 'war'. As the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* acknowledges, 'in this different kind of war, we cannot expect an easy or definitive end

¹¹⁹ *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington D.C: The White House, 20 September 2002), Chapter III

¹²⁰ Geoff Hoon, *The New Chapter: A blueprint for reform*, Lecture at the Royal United Services Institute, 30 July 2002, London.

to the conflict'.¹²¹ Senior US officials like George Tenet have tried a 'body count' approach while President Bush reportedly keeps a 'scorecard' of major terrorist leaders arrested, disrupted or killed. Such an approach is appealing for it provides a concrete measure of success.

This can be misleading especially the majority of those arrested are low-ranking cadres and if Al Qaeda is able to easily regenerate and replace even top planners like Khalid Sheikh Mohamed. It also does not reflect on the dispersed cells, fundraising skills, morale and residual ability of Al Qaeda to strike which are almost impossible to precisely gauge. Even those who genuinely believe they are donating to Al Qaeda-linked charities might not know they are indirectly supporting Al Qaeda. 'Serious data problems, put a more comprehensive and sophisticated approach to measuring success nearly beyond reach'.¹²² Nonetheless, less than precise data is still better than relying exclusively on a 'body count' approach. Chairman of the JCS Richard Myers warned of 'old think' and that 'if you try to quantify what we're doing today in terms of previous conventional wars, you're making a huge mistake.' Rumsfeld further noted that the Afghan campaign was 'a notably different situation' where success will not be defined by tonnage of bombs dropped as previous measures of success.¹²³ Clearly 'new thinking' is required and this is provided by risk management criteria of non-events.

What would 'victory' look like? The only visible battlefield victory was ridding Kabul of Taliban and Al Qaeda, yet this produced no prospect of closure. There were no grandiose victory parades. The Taliban collapse produced relief rather than rejoicing in Western capitals. Otherwise much was ambiguous. Mullah Omar and Bin Laden remained at large, and Taliban fighters simply disappeared. Struggling to define victory without surrender papers, Secretary Rumsfeld will hunt terrorists 'until Americans can go about their lives without fear' and 'relative freedom'.¹²⁴ When such a stage is attained is impossible to visibly gauge. Attorney General John Ashcroft in November 2001 suggested that America had 'emerged victorious in the opening battle in the war on

¹²¹ *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington D.C: The White House, February 2003), Conclusion p.29

¹²² See an in-depth analysis on defining success by Daniel Byman, 'Scoring the war on terrorism', *The National Interest*, Issue 72, Summer 2003

¹²³ DoD News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers, 09 October 2001

¹²⁴ Rudi Williams, 'War will continue until Americans live without fear', *American Forces Press Service*, 29 October 2001

terrorism' simply because 'two periods of extremely high threat have passed' without another attack.¹²⁵ As predicted, such are the non-events and negative indicators of success in this war. The absence of another terrorist spectacular on US soil so far, even during the Iraq war, was touted as success until the Riyadh and Casablanca bombings of May 2003.

Why were such minimalist outcomes defined as victory? The key benchmark of successful risk-management here is simply avoiding harm.: we want to prevent the worst, rather than attain something good, despite Bush's invocation of 'freedom' in his speeches. The war is less about we stand *for*, but what we seek to *avoid*. We 'reduce vulnerabilities' and 'minimise impacts'. As Condoleezza Rice observed, 'perhaps most fundamentally, 9/11 crystallised our vulnerability'.¹²⁶ The language used has been overwhelmingly negative: 'prevent', 'disrupt', 'deny', 'avoid', 'degrade', 'suppress'. By focusing on avoidable harm, the risk-management approach fosters a negative if not dystopian outlook, for the rhetorical war on terrorism is like the war on drugs, 'unwinnable'. Indeed, 'terrorism as a phenomenon is so diffuse with so many points of risk that 100 percent success in counter-terrorism is not realistic'.¹²⁷

What can be done is to make it more difficult for terrorists to operate. The least bad outcome was accepted as victory. Donald Rumsfeld accepts 'that is not your preferred outcome but it is a better outcome than nothing....the goal is to have the terrorists *not* win'.¹²⁸ In September 2002, responding to suggestions that the war in Afghanistan had not been too successful lately, Rumsfeld again defined success in terms of non-events: 'we may not be finding large numbers (of Taliban) but that's because we have been successful, not unsuccessful. We've been successful in dispersing what large numbers there are, and what's left are the bits and scraps'.¹²⁹ A traditional 'events approach' measures the number of terrorists incidents that occur to indicate whether terrorism is increasing. But it cannot be precise because fluctuations could be for various reasons: better precautions, disruption or simply because terrorists need more time to

¹²⁵ Quoted in Robert Kagan and William Kristol, 'Getting Serious', *Weekly Standard*, 19 Nov 2001

¹²⁶ Dr Condoleezza Rice discusses President's National Security Strategy, Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 01 October 2002

¹²⁷ Don Melvin, 'Enemy, victory hard to define', *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* 18 September 2001

¹²⁸ DoD News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen Myers, 08 April 2002

¹²⁹ DoD News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers, 03 September 2002

prepare a spectacular.¹³⁰ Instead, as suggested by the test theory, we seem to be moving towards a 'non-events' approach in which any incident that does *not* occur is regarded as a success. Even Paul Wolfowitz accepted that 'victory is going to be measured by what does not happen as opposed to what does happen'.¹³¹

President Bush's address to the Joint Session of Congress on 20 September 2001 made clear, actions include dramatic strikes as well as covert operations, 'secret even in success'. People aren't going to see 'exactly what's taking place on their TV screens'. Yet visible results have been assumed to be the context of modern war especially since the Gulf War. The difficulty of measuring success in Afghanistan was exemplified by calls for Washington to produce numbers of enemy dead in Operation *Anaconda*. UK Defence Secretary Hoon noted that success of operations in Afghanistan 'will not be measured by the number of enemy dead. It will be measured more by our ability to deter terrorists and disrupt the activities which support them'.¹³² So we have a new concept of war where success is not defined by defeating the enemy militarily. Success will be low-key, unpublicised, sometimes even unknown, disrupting and quashing of networks.

Events from Afghanistan suggest that counter terrorism is about 'managing risks, not confronting certainties'.¹³³ Non-events like everyday that goes by without a terrorist outrage can be considered a triumph of risk-management. Success must be defined in terms of 'reducing both the probability and consequences of further attack'.¹³⁴ Many successes will not be visible to the public eye and the benchmark of success will not be quantifiable. As predicted by the test theory, talk of risk components: probability and consequences locates us in the risk discourse where non-events are indicators of success. Attorney General John Ashcroft warned that 'the potential for us to be hit again is a very real potential...but that we minimise the potential whenever we are alert'.¹³⁵ According to Secretary Powell, 'success may never come in the form that there is never another

¹³⁰ Edward F. Mickolus, 'How do we know we're winning the war against terrorists? Issues in measurement', *Studies in Conflict and terrorism*, Vol. 25 No. 3, May/June 2002, p.152

¹³¹ Rudi Williams, 'Wolfowitz: Al Qaeda is no snake but like a disease', *American Forces Press Service*, 10 July 2002

¹³² Geoff Hoon, *The New Chapter to the Strategic Defence Review: a progress report*, Speech to the City Forum Roundtable, 23 May 2002

¹³³ Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, p232

¹³⁴ Kurt M. Campbell and Michele A. Flournoy, *To prevail: An American strategy for the campaign against terrorism*, (Washington D.C: CSIS Press, November 2001), p300

¹³⁵ John Ashcroft speaking on 'Fox News Sunday', 03 August 2003

terrorist incident. Success may well be in the form that we bring this under control and make it far more difficult for such organisations to exist'.¹³⁶ This is typical risk management language cognisant of limits, rather than those traditionally associated with war.

Yet, encouraged by the terminology of 'war', the prevalent strand of thinking about counter-terrorism is an erroneous tendency towards absolute solutions and quickly eradicating terrorism, rather than something to be managed and reduced over a longer-term process.¹³⁷ In contrast, Europe's long struggle with terrorism views the problem as an 'inevitable and permanent feature of modern life. The French system thus seeks to manage and minimise the problem rather than to solve it'.¹³⁸ In contrast, the idea of a 'war' on terrorism implies it will end someday when the Afghan campaign at this writing shows no signs of conclusion. In fairness, US policymakers have urged lower expectations. As Bush noted in his weekly radio address of 16 February 2003, 'there is no such thing as perfect security against a network of hidden killers'. This mirrored Madeleine Albright's acknowledgement in August 1998 that missile strikes at were 'not perfect insurance'.¹³⁹ Daniel Byman agrees 'no strategy guarantees complete security. The United States and its allies must accept the inevitability of a large, global movement bent on murder as a form of political expression'.¹⁴⁰ The National Strategy for Homeland Security admits 'it is not possible or practical to eliminate all risks'.¹⁴¹ Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge insisted he doesn't talk about fear. Instead, he was 'more into acceptance. The acceptance that we cannot provide a perfectly secure environment and still remain an open society'.¹⁴² There is a clear recognition of limits and no perfect solutions exist. Terrorism will soon seem, like crime, to be an everyday problem, and we can only at best manage the risks.

¹³⁶ Jeremy Paxman interviews Colin Powell, *BBC Online*, 21 September 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/events/newsnight/newsid_1563000/1563074.stm

¹³⁷ Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, p5-6

¹³⁸ Jeremy Shapiro & Benedicta Suzan, 'The French experience of counter-terrorism', *Survival*, Vol. 45 No 1, Spring 2003, p.88

¹³⁹ Press Briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, 20 August 1998

¹⁴⁰ Daniel Byman, 'Are we winning the war on terrorism?', *Brookings Institution Middle East Memo #1*, 23 May 2003

¹⁴¹ *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, (Washington D.C: Department of Homeland Security), July 2002, p.64

¹⁴² Quoted in Mark Leibovich, 'The Image of security', *Washington Post*, 22 May 2003

An open-ended process: Tackling the Hydra effect

War as risk management, it is theorised, leads to open-ended operations to continually manage new risks or resurgent old ones. Was there evidence of this in Afghanistan? Tony Blair urged ‘patience’ and digging in for the ‘long-haul’ as the customary public ‘wobble’ emerged early in the campaign with no visible successes. President Bush’s warning that ‘this is not an instant gratification war’ resonates for the finishing line is not easily apparent when managing risks entails constant monitoring, taking repeated action if necessary. Despite taking Kabul, US-led forces have had to constantly attack regrouping Al Qaeda and Taliban elements. In November 2001 and January 2002, the Zawar Khili cave complex was struck repeatedly. In March 2002, Operation *Anaconda* reminded the world the conflict was not over yet. Such actions suggest that the endgame is far from clear. Geoff Hoon described the deployment of Royal Marine Commandos to Afghanistan in March 2002 as ‘open-ended’. If Al Qaeda attempts to regroup, Bush will respond with a ‘sustained, tireless, relentless campaign’ to keep terrorists on the run, and ‘we’re going to stay at it for however long it takes.’¹⁴³ Only in May 2003, almost 16 months after the fall of the Taliban, was there a declared end to major combat. The vague criteria for measuring progress – disrupting terror networks and keeping them running – leaves open the possibility that more action will follow assessments that terrorists once again are capable of causing harm.

By October 2002, CIA Director Tenet warned in Congressional testimony that despite a year’s worth of efforts Al Qaeda was ‘reconstituted’ and ‘coming after us’, posing almost as serious a risk as 2001. The UN reported in December 2002 that Al Qaeda recruitment and finances remained robust.¹⁴⁴ In May 2003, the International Institute for Strategic Studies’ *Strategic Survey 2002/2003* proclaimed that Al Qaeda had ‘reconstituted’ and ‘remains more insidious and just as dangerous’. The Afghan campaign and other efforts only ‘impelled an already elusive trans-national network to become even harder to identify and neutralise’. It further notes that ‘if minions were

¹⁴³ ‘Bush pledges to hunt terrorists, calls for quick budget approval’, *American Forces Press Service*, 15 March 2002

¹⁴⁴ Daniel Byman, ‘Are we winning the war on terrorism?’, *Brookings Institution Middle East Memo #1*, 23 May 2003

caught or killed, their spectacular demise...moved others to take their place. The process was, in theory, self-perpetuating'.¹⁴⁵

The Afghan campaign suggests risk-management lessons. In risk-management, it is essential to constantly assess effectiveness of measures taken: a cyclical and ongoing process, rather than a linear progression. In sum, it lacks a finite point. Policy should not be gauged in terms of definitive endgoals but by way of an ongoing process of risk management. Perhaps we should see the 'war' on terrorism in light of other interminable, unwinnable rhetorical wars on drugs for example where a similar lack of clarity of mission and the 'hydra effect' predominate.¹⁴⁶ With American forces deployed from Georgia to the Philippines and talk of action against Iraq, calls were made both in Congress and the media for the Bush Administration to better define new missions, how long they will last and clarify objectives.¹⁴⁷ However, counter terrorism should not be too obsessed with the flavour of the moment or specific timeframes, for there are always others about yet to appear and ready to replace Bin Laden- the so-called 'Hydra effect'. President Bush suggested that 'patience will be one of our strengths', in a 'task that does not end'.¹⁴⁸

Managing terror risks has no clear endgame because of the need to constantly disrupt terrorist cells and deny safe havens. Noted terrorism expert Walter Lacquer suggested that there perhaps will be no discernible end to the war on terrorism in the 21st century.¹⁴⁹ Back in 1998, President Clinton already claimed that the US was in a 'long, ongoing struggle' with terrorism.¹⁵⁰ As Tony Blair realised, this 'does not have a finite point'. Tom Ridge further warned that coping with Al Qaeda would be a 'permanent condition'.¹⁵¹ This sounds more like risk-management than war, which presumes at least a defined end point. While 9/11 fuelled new determination to end terrorism, history does

¹⁴⁵ *Strategic Survey 2002/2003*, p. 8-11

¹⁴⁶ Eva Bertram & Kenneth Sharpe, 'The unwinnable drug war: What Clausewitz would tell us', *World Policy Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 4, (Winter 1996-97), p41-53

¹⁴⁷ Congress presses Bush on terror war, *Associated Press*, 04 March 2002

¹⁴⁸ Presidential Address to the Nation', 07 October 2001; 'Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People', 20 September 2001, *Office of the Press Secretary*

¹⁴⁹ Walter Laqueur, *No End to War: terrorism in the twenty-first century*, (London: Continuum Press, 2003)

¹⁵⁰ Clinton cited in Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, p1

¹⁵¹ Blair quoted in 'A World Transformed', *The Times*, 09 March 2002; Ridge cited in Bill Miler, 'Ridge close to unveiling new warning system', *Washington Post*, 09 March 2002

not suggest optimism. The 9/11 attacks have been described as the 'Fourth Wave' of terrorism. Even as the latest wave recedes, another cause will emerge unexpectedly. History tells us that terror groups can be eliminated and terrorism rendered less significant, but terrorists always invent new methods.¹⁵²

Allied maritime patrols in the Mediterranean have only forced terrorists to use overland routes through north Africa. Apparent successes in Afghanistan dispersed Al Qaeda to lawless regions of Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan's tribal areas and even South-East Asia the so-called Second Front. There are concerns Al Qaeda is establishing new infrastructure in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley with Hezbollah. This suggested a predicted 'boomerang effect' where initial action to manage risks created more risks as a result. Paradoxically, due to the success of the Afghan campaign, scattered remnants and a more splintered decentralised command structure driven underground might also make it harder to monitor. There are also fears about relatively simple attacks by 'Lone Wolves' broadly sympathetic to Al Qaeda but not part of it, or cells who plan without guidance. Thus, information about high-level leaders may turn out to be less important than before 9/11. The risk simply evolved rather than disappeared. Indeed, Al Qaeda had a 'remarkably protean nature', constantly adapting.¹⁵³ Removing leadership alone won't eliminate Al Qaeda. Furthermore, intelligence sources suggest Al Qaeda is hardly a centralised, disciplined organisation like the IRA. Instead, it is a network of loosely allied local or regional Islamic groups. These include the Jemaah Islamiya behind the October 2002 Bali bombings, and the Salafia Jihadia allegedly behind the May 2003 Casablanca bombings.

¹⁵² David Rappoport, 'The Fourth Wave: September 11 in the History of Terrorism', *Current History*, Vol. 100 No. 650, December 2001, p434-437

¹⁵³ Jessica Stern, 'The Protean Enemy', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82 No.4, July/August 2003, Web version, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030701faessay15403/jessica-stern/the-protean-enemy.html>

IV. Conclusion

Many pointed to the Afghan campaign as a new form of war. The aim of this chapter was to assess instead the continuities with previous campaigns in Kosovo in terms of risk management. Despite conceptual difficulties related to ‘war’ terminology, what was clearer was the extent to which the Afghan campaign served to manage systemic risks according to themes identified in Chapter Three. Employing ‘war’ terminology focused attention on military actions against easily identifiable state enemies, attaining clear-cut decisive positive results at the end. None of these were observed in Afghanistan.

Despite the high profile of military force in Afghanistan, it exhibited more features of risk-management than conventional warfare: the philosophy of ‘anticipationism’ informed proactive military action against Al Qaeda to prevent further attacks. Recourse to the precautionary principle however was weaker since America had been attacked first although there were inclinations to assume the worst. Continuous surveillance processes provided information on who or what constituted risks and taking preventive action where possible. In reshaping the environment, evidence suggested that the campaign goals indeed became denial of opportunities for terrorists to plan rather than win or fight concrete enemies in a military sense. Bin Laden, while demonised, was predictably sidelined in favour of disrupting the environment he operated within. In opting for ‘nation-tending’ than ‘nation-building’, there was more evidence of risk management’s minimalist mindset. War in Afghanistan became somewhat ‘routine’ in nature against an everyday risk of terrorism. As forecast, the war became an open-ended endeavour against Hydra-headed enemies where results are not easily apparent. Non-events were clearly the benchmark for success, while the ‘boomerang effect’ meant more risks were actually generated in the process. In sum, a risk-management approach explained these aspects of the Afghan campaign better than conventional ‘war’ itself.

CHAPTER SIX

Iraq :

Textbook ‘risk management’ or flawed strategy?

Introduction

Iraq alone among the case studies experienced two phases of sustained military action from 1998-2003 to be analysed. By 2003, ‘regime change’ under the Bush Doctrine of ‘pre-emption’ arguably broke new ground in war and strategy. Yet unbeknownst to most, the Bush White House justified war in terms mirroring those of the Clinton national security team in the late 1990s. Washington, despite protests to the contrary, had in effect been warring with Baghdad since 1998 with the quickly forgotten ‘preventive’ *Desert Fox* campaign, followed by a little-noticed open-ended struggle over no-fly zones. This defied traditional conceptions of war as decisive and finite with dramatic successes. Any semblance of continuity crumbled underneath the rush to criticise Bush’s unilateralism and the maximalist goal of regime change. Yet, the criticisms of Bush (oil, personal revenge) were ‘unhelpfully vitriolic and unnecessarily public’, and unconvincing. There was ‘little understanding of the American approach, what motivates it... also little understanding of the continuities in US foreign policy that this approach represents.’¹

In a similar vein, this final case study assesses the extent to which use of force towards Iraq from December 1998 to May 2003 exhibited continuities in terms of ‘risk-management’. It does not claim that Washington’s case is especially persuasive or justified nor does it pretend to offer a definitive interpretation. Rather it asks whether war is possibly addressed through highlighting the presence of risk concepts. Events are assessed thematically, not chronologically. The same framework of structured questions applied to earlier case studies is repeated. The task here is to identify trends surrounding the Iraq issue which might have implications for the notion of war as risk management. Would hypotheses generated by the test theory satisfy empirical evidence?

¹ David H. Dunn, ‘Myths, motivations and ‘misunderestimations’: the Bush Administration and Iraq’, *International Affairs*, Vol. 79 No 2, April 2003, p279-297

The first section discusses whether systemic risks or imminent threats provided impetus for action. It then examines military actions for evidence of risk management in practice and official justifications provided. Was there future-oriented proactive anticipatory action and resort to the precautionary principle? Was surveillance undertaken and did utilitarian use of force through ‘routine’, patient operations reshape the environment? Finally, the chapter discusses whether policy was more appropriately evaluated on minimalist grounds of non-events and *avoiding* adverse outcomes, not perfect solutions. Rather than definitive endgoals associated with ‘war’, could one discern instead an ongoing cyclical process and a ‘boomerang effect’?

A brief history

In August 1990, UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 661 imposed comprehensive economic sanctions on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. These were to remain in place until UNSCR 687 of April 1991 was complied with, the certification that Baghdad had destroyed all its weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The International Atomic Energy Agency and UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) were charged with monitoring and implementing these provisions. However, Iraq repeatedly obstructed inspectors until their expulsion in 1998. Consequently, Britain and America launched a 70-hour air campaign Operation *Desert Fox* in December 1998 to ‘degrade’ Iraqi WMD facilities. UNSCOM was replaced by the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) which returned for short-lived inspections from November 2002 to March 2003. On 20 March 2003, the United States launched Operation *Iraqi Freedom* with a ‘decapitation’ strike intended to kill Saddam Hussein. Shortly afterwards, coalition ground forces surged into Iraq and despite resistance from irregular *Fedayeen*, entered Baghdad on 09 April 2003.

The no-fly zones in northern Iraq above the 36th parallel (Operation *Northern Watch*) and southern Iraq below the 33rd parallel (Operation *Southern Watch*), were set up by America, Britain and France somewhat haphazardly after the 1991 Gulf War to protect Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north from reprisals after their failed uprisings. The zones are not explicitly UN-authorised although the coalition cites UNSCR 688 of 5 April 1991, which deemed Iraqi repression a ‘threat to international peace and security’.

However the resolution was not passed under Chapter VII mandates. It became eventually clear that these zones served not only humanitarian purposes, but also to keep Saddam 'in his box' and constrain his actions. After the end of *Desert Fox*, low-key but active sorties continued in no-fly zones against Iraqi air defence targets which increasingly accosted coalition warplanes. Airstrikes had been carried out both for policing no-fly zones as well as punishing Iraqi non-compliance with disarmament provisions. These actions are part of a wider strategy of risk management.

Two phases are discernible here: the late Clinton/early Bush Administration and post-9/11. Initially there was no significant policy change which the new Bush administration promised, apart from 'smart' sanctions. Early tough talk about regime change was notable by its absence. Even Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, the Administration's resident hawk admitted there was no plan in the works: 'I haven't seen it yet'.² The Bush Administration gradually found itself 'adopting the same Iraq policy pursued in recent years by the Clinton administration- a policy President Bush and his top aides previously condemned'.³ In December 2000, Secretary of State-designate Colin Powell seemed to endorse continuity: 'we will continue to contain him, and then confront him, should that become necessary again'. President Bush described air strikes against Iraq in February 2001 as 'part of a strategy, and until that strategy is changed, ...we will continue to enforce them'.⁴ Nonetheless, these statements left room for change. Prior to September 11, both Administrations viewed Iraq largely in terms of proliferation risks and regional stability. Terrorism was seen as separate.

After 9/11, the two issues became intertwined rightly or wrongly, and not without precedent either. America's 'rogue doctrine' by the late 1980s had already linked WMD and terrorism concerns to Third World states quite apart from their previous status as Soviet surrogates.⁵ After despatching the Taliban, on 11 December 2001, President Bush unveiled his 'next priority' was preventing terrorists acquiring WMD and 'rogue states are clearly the most likely sources of such weapons'. Although Washington emphasised

² Testimony of Paul Wolfowitz, 'Nomination of Paul Wolfowitz to be Deputy Secretary of Defence', Senate Armed Services Committee, 27 February 2001.

³ 'Forging a new Iraq policy', *Washington Post*, 04 March 2001

⁴ Colin Powell quoted in CNN, *The Survival of Saddam Hussein*, 16 Jan 2001, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/gulf.war/unfinished/war/index4.html>; Remarks by President George W. Bush and President Vicente Fox in Joint Press Conference, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 16 Feb 2001

⁵ Michael Klare, *Rogue states and nuclear outlaws*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), p.26-7

Saddam's brutal regime, and refusal to disarm as more concrete issues, the possibility of him re-acquiring WMD or passing it to terrorists most animated policymakers. Bush shifted from Clinton's policy of 'containment plus' (containing Saddam in the short run through 'smart' sanctions, air strikes and aiding the opposition, overthrow in the long term) to overt regime change: 'the Bush Administration's approach has been characterised by a desire to meet threats head-on rather than manage them'.⁶ This posed significant challenges for risk management. Viewing Iraq as part of the broader war on terror also created analytical difficulties for this study. It introduced new variables, since previous risks from Iraq could no longer be judged on their own basis.

Various factors account for this policy shift. These are discussed only in brief. 9/11 reinforced existing cognitive perceptions and strengthened the hand of hawks like Paul Wolfowitz. Rightly or wrongly, policymakers drew analogies such as the need to act preventively. Iraq became 'part of the insecurity we now feel' argued Condoleezza Rice.⁷ That Iraq, an impoverished state wracked by sanctions for a decade, should cause concern appeared linked to this insecurity than any real concrete evidence. Furthermore, difficulties involved in destroying Iraqi weapons by air alone were considerable: Baghdad concealed its systems underground after Israel's Osirak raid destroyed its above ground reactors, and knew American tactics well. The role of intellectuals in the Project for a New American Century such as William Kristol should however not be overstated. The 'pre-emptive' strike was the logical consequence of a way of thinking, especially post-9/11. It is also important to note subtle differences between London and Washington. Blair was careful to stress WMD and disarmament, not regime change or Al Qaeda links to the same extent that Washington did.

Iraq: Conceptual Issues

Iraq posed interesting and significant questions for understanding a category of war which defied conventional criteria. As Eliot Cohen observed in late 2002, 'the Gulf War did not end in February 1991. For a decade now, we've been fighting this low-level war

⁶ Dunn, in note 1, p294

⁷ Condoleezza Rice quoted in David Sanger, 'Debate over attacking Iraq heats up, *New York Times*, 01 Sep 2002, and also *Avenging Terror*, Channel 4 (UK), 31 Aug 2002

without calling it such.⁸ In December 1998, Britain and America had already attracted condemnation for using force against Iraq without explicit UN authorisation. Especially since 1998, British and American jets routinely forayed into Iraq, unleashing precision-guided munitions and getting shot at in return. War, broadly construed, described such sustained combat operations. Yet then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright insisted, 'we are talking about using military force but we are not talking about a war'.⁹ Furthermore, between December 1998 and the end of the Clinton era, *Southern Watch* aircraft reported coming under fire some 670 times. More than 5000 combat sorties were flown from December 1998 to August 1999 in Operation *Northern Watch* alone. An 'inconclusive war of attrition thus resulted...unique in the annals of air combat'.¹⁰ This operation further lacked the guidance of the Powell doctrine which held that military campaigns should have clear goals. Many worried that a 'lack of clear consistent Iraq policy deprives military operations of a guiding purpose or rationale'.¹¹ This conclusion appears rather harsh if the operation is judged by standards of risk management.

In the run-up to regime change, the low-grade war over no-fly zones was ratcheted up to 'shape' the battlefield involving even B-1 strategic bombers, degrading Iraq air-defences and Ababil-100 surface-to-surface missiles. Later, it emerged that the no-fly zones operations actually involved a plan called *Southern Focus* which included striking the fibre optic networks Baghdad used for communications, radars and other key military installations. Coalition forces were thus able to launch ground offensives without extensive air strikes as 606 bombs had already been dropped on 391 selected targets.¹² There was no clear distinction between outbreak of war or simply continuation of hostilities from no-fly zones. Michael Walzer noted that Washington was already fighting a 'little war' despite all the UN shenanigans for authority to fight a 'big war'.¹³ Can risk management provide perspectives to understand the preceding 'little war' and subsequent 'big war'?

⁸ Quoted in Thom Shanker, 'Wage war but don't start one', *New York Times*, 24 Nov 2002

⁹ Remarks at Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tennessee, 19 February 1998

¹⁰ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.152

¹¹ Floyd D. Spence, 'US policy toward Iraq', Hearing before the Committee of Armed Services, House of Representatives, 10 March 1999, H.A.S.C. No. 106-10, (Washington D.C: US government Printing Office)

¹² See 'US air raids in '02 prepared for war in Iraq', *New York Times*, 20 July 2003

¹³ Michael Walzer, 'What a little war in Iraq could do', *New York Times*, 07 March 2003

By March 2003, Anglo-American resort to war again without UN approval created serious diplomatic rifts, despite policymakers being more forthright about using the term 'war'. 'This is the first hyperpower war', noted Eliot Cohen, 'where the dominant power in the system sees a huge problem that it is determined to resolve even with quite serious opposition of major players'.¹⁴ Yet explanatory discourses such as 'imperialism' and even leading Realists had difficulty analysing such a major event in IR.¹⁵ This was also the first time Washington had launched full-scale preventive war and appeared to herald momentous change in the international system. The lack of a so-called 'smoking gun' especially concerned many analysts who feared 'sexed up' dossiers about Iraqi WMD programs exaggerating the 'imminent' threat.

Despite widespread conspiracy theories, regime change in 2003 was furthermore largely *not* motivated by traditional markers such as economic or geopolitical advantages or even moral ones like revenge or justice for Saddam's victims. Instead, it seemed a 'safety-first' approach based on risk - of Saddam linking up with Al Qaeda or acquiring WMD- was the most compelling answer.¹⁶ Even with the very visible success of capturing Baghdad in April 2003, there was no traditional end-game associated with war such as surrender ceremonies. Saddam was not captured or killed. These features can be addressed through the prism of risk management.

For all the hype over a 'shock and awe' campaign in 2003 utilising network-centric 'effects-based' warfare dramatically shrinking sensor-to-shooter times, age-old adages still endured in the 'fog' of war. Describing unanticipated resistance from Iraqi militias, US Army V Corps General William Wallace commented, 'this enemy is a bit different from what we war-gamed'. The dangers of 'mirror imaging' still persisted. Clearly, some continuity in war remained. Were there also any similarities with previous wars in terms of risk management? Military action against Iraq over the years, mirroring trends in Kosovo and Afghanistan, distinguished government structures (so-called 'regime targets') from society per se. President Bush enthused at his St Louis speech on

¹⁴ Quoted in Dana Milbank, 'For Bush, war defines presidency', *Washington post*, 09 Mar 2003

¹⁵ See Joseph S. Nye, 'Ill-suited for empire', *Washington Post*, 25 May 2003; John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, 'Keeping Saddam Hussein in a box', *New York Times*, 02 Feb 2003. David Dunn, in note 1, however noted the continued relevance of Realism in explaining Bush's resort to war: security problems such as terrorism were embodied in traditional IR actors, rogue states like Iraq.

¹⁶ See Robert Samuelson, 'Rediscovering Risk', *Washington Post*, 22 October 2002

16 April 2003, 'by a combination of creative strategies and advanced technology, we are redefining war on our terms...In this new era of warfare, we can target a regime, not a nation.' Strategists will doubtless note the precision targeting and 'every possible care' emphasised by politicians to avoid harming civilians (even dropping laser-guided concrete blocks to minimise shrapnel risks), both during *Desert Fox*, no-fly zones operations and *Iraqi Freedom*. Older Block 30 F-16s unable to fire Precision-Guided Munitions (PGMs) minimising the risk of collateral damage were not deployed to no-fly zones. Concerns over tactical risks to airmen meant no-fly zones tactics evolved from a 'reactive to a pre-emptive approach' of pre-planned strike packages to reduce the chances of an Allied plane downed over Iraq.¹⁷ British spokesmen argued that 'every now and then we had to take action to manage the risk to our aircrew'.¹⁸

This chapter however leaves such intriguing aspects of tactical risk-management to others. Here we are more concerned with systemic risks from Iraq, although tactical risks clearly constrained operations. Analysts have done impressive work evaluating policy toward Iraq since 1991 but none adopt a broad risk management approach.¹⁹ These focused on specifics such as finetuning sanctions policy, helping Iraqi opposition groups, and targeting pillars of Saddam's regime such as the Special Republican Guard. The legality of war also preoccupied analysts.²⁰

I. Identifying systemic risks

Identifying risks that served as impetus for action is the first step in risk management. Risk is inherently subjective and constructed and Iraq constituted a perfect case study for constructivism: EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana observed that fundamentally 'there

¹⁷ Colonel Paul K. White, Airpower and a decade of containment, *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 27, (Winter 2000-01), pp.38

¹⁸ MoD spokesman cited in 'RAF jets bomb Iraqi targets', *Ananova*, 10 Aug 2001, http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_372069.html?menu=

¹⁹ See Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *Confronting Iraq: US policy and the use of force since the Gulf War*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000); Paul K. White, *Crises after the storm: an appraisal of US air operations since the Persian Gulf War*, (Washington D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1999). Recent contributions include Michael W. Isherwood, 'US Strategic Options for Iraq: Easier said than done', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25 No.2, Spring 2002, p/145-160; William F. Donaher & Ross. B. Deblois, 'Is the current UN and US policy toward Iraq effective?', *Parameters*, Winter 2001-02, p.112-125

²⁰ Adam Roberts, 'Law and the use of force after Iraq', *Survival*, Vol. 45 No. 2, Summer 2003, p.31-57

are different perceptions of risk on both sides', between America and 'old' Europe.²¹ Once again, this study is not about explaining different risk perceptions. Instead it is more concerned with understanding a chosen strategy rather than the various decision-making factors behind *how* that strategy was chosen. Admittedly, policymakers may not mean what they say with cognitive factors and bureaucratic tussles affecting policies. However, it is possible, using the theoretical framework developed, to analyse regularities of statements and patterns of action systematically to collate empirical evidence for assessing the hypotheses.

Were systemic risks then involved in Iraq? Risk here was used largely as a descriptive term to refer to a potentially dangerous state of events or situation. These included proliferation, clandestine WMD programs, cross-border aggression or alleged links to terrorists. The idea of a 'rogue state' posing systemic risks, as I have suggested in Chapter Two, now came into its own with the end of the Cold War. The 'global trade' in WMD, warned the 2002 US *National Security Strategy*, has become a danger to all nations of the world.²² Previous Cold War constraints on WMD materials are much looser than before, creating proliferation risks posed by rogue states. Similar concerns were raised throughout Clinton's security documents. Both Presidents Bush and Clinton warned of 'plutonium merchants' and 'unbalanced dictators'. During the Clinton era, there were also suggestions that Iraq masterminded the first World Trade Centre bombing in 1993. Relying on now infamous crude forged documents, US and British intelligence claimed that Iraq sought uranium from Niger. UNSCOM also discovered covert transactions between Iraq and 500 companies from more than 40 countries between 1993-98. These allegedly sought out weapons components such as aluminium tubes. Like Clinton, Bush also worried that in today's open world, Saddam could deliver a WMD with a modified L-39 trainer/UAV or short-range cruise missile smuggled off the US coast on a container ship, or a 'suitcase nuke'. These probabilistic globalisation-linked scenarios of catastrophic consequences were certainly not unique to the Bush Administration. This was certainly a case of 'anticipatory horizon-scanning' of the strategic landscape for any possible security risks. However, the experience of Iraqi

²¹ Quoted in 'For old friends, Iraq bares a deep rift', *New York Times*, 14 February 2003

²² *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington, D.C: The White House, 2002) Chapter V

aggression in the first Gulf War and - rightly or wrongly- that of 9/11 also led to a desire to avoid repetition of similar dramatic catastrophic ‘tombstone-style’ risks. As suggested, these two aspects of approaching risks cannot be clearly isolated.

Throughout the 1990s to 2003, the relative priority of risks shifted from containing Iraq, regional stability, to increasing concern about Al Qaeda links, WMD and regime change.²³ This chapter sees policy not so much as a static coherent whole but an aggregation of actions evolving over time, sometimes haphazardly, sometimes purposefully. As Anthony Cordesman noted, ‘simple and consistent policy on paper is desirable but can rapidly fail under the pressure of events’.²⁴ Strategies implemented were hardly static too, responding to changes in strategic context.

Clinton’s policy towards Iraq initially was geared towards at least a reduction of WMD, limitation of proliferation, and regional security. The maximal goal, sometimes espoused, sometimes eschewed throughout the late 1990s was the removal of Saddam. Considering the difficulties throughout the 1990s involved in removing Saddam and the aftermath, it made sense to simply manage him as best as possible.²⁵ Lacking a viable policy, support of Arab partners, and Security Council mandate, the first Bush administration preferred to keep him isolated and militarily weak: a policy continued by Clinton for the same reasons. Washington largely preferred the minimalist option of Saddam in power over a fragmented Iraq causing regional instability. Then, the systemic risks were about regional security and proliferation. Containment through sanctions, inspections, no-fly zones and bombing was the risk management strategy adopted.

Having said that, it was under Bill Clinton that ‘regime change’ and the Iraq Liberation Act became US policy in 1998. The risks shifted towards emphasis on WMD and regime change, as sanctions faltered, inspections ended and the 1991 anti-Saddam coalition frayed. Richard Haass, now head of Policy Planning at Powell’s State Department, argued then that ‘the next Desert Storm will be far more difficult and costly if we confront an Iraq armed with WMD. There is also fear that Iraq would make its weapons available to terrorists. Depending on US threats of retaliation against such

²³ Daniel Byman, ‘After the storm: US policy toward Iraq since 1991’, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115 No 4, Winter 2000-01, p495

²⁴ Anthony Cordesman, *Iraq: sanctions and beyond*, (Boulder, Colorado, 1997), pp.6

²⁵ Daniel Byman, Kenneth Pollack, Gideon Rose, ‘The Rollback Fantasy’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78 No.1, January/February 1999, p.24-41

actions by Iraq is far from ideal'.²⁶ 'Comprehensive containment' of rogue states like Iraq involved multiple tools of statecraft: economic sanctions, diplomacy and coalition-building, intelligence gathering, supporting opposition movements and military force.²⁷ These are not necessarily exclusive, but the balance between them shifted over time. Oil smuggling, sanctions fatigue, humanitarian concerns and weak Iraqi opposition groups made no-fly zones and more aggressive military action the de-facto cornerstone of US policy by 1999. These military actions are analysed here, with the acknowledgement that multiple tools were also involved. Confronting Iraq evolved from a multilateral UN operation into a more bilateral one involving Washington, supported to a lesser extent by London. Nonetheless, invasion was not seriously contemplated before 9/11.

Advocates of containment supported regime change in 2003 because of the collapse of sanctions and unpredictability of Saddam's reaction to deterrence. For Kenneth Pollack, the risk is not so much a Baghdad-Qaeda alliance but Saddam's reckless decision-making and his crossing the nuclear threshold.²⁸ September 11 also meant a sea-change in public opinion making invasion plausible. There was also risk to US credibility if regime change was not implemented. Others however disagreed that Saddam is irrational and undeterrible.²⁹ Sceptics argued Bush needed an easy victory because Al Qaeda was more complicated. To realists such as Stephen Walt, lumping the two together may also obfuscate and undermine international cooperation on terrorism, just as Washington initially misread the Communist bloc as a monolithic entity.

But to President Bush, Al Qaeda or Saddam Hussein are indistinguishable, 'they're both risks. The danger is that they work in concert'.³⁰ Bush further characterised Saddam as 'a risk to peace... Tony Blair understands that Saddam is a risk'.³¹ Rumsfeld observed that 'what has changed is our experience on September 11. What has changed is our appreciation of vulnerability- and the risks the US faces from terrorist networks and

²⁶ Richard Haass, 'Containing Saddam, *Washington Times*, 10 November 1998

²⁷ Robert Litwak, *Rogue states and US foreign policy: containment after the Cold War*, (Washington D.C: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 2000), p. 105

²⁸ Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: the case for invading Iraq*, (New York: Random House, 2002)

²⁹ John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, 'Keeping Saddam Hussein in a box', *New York Times*, 02 Feb 2003

³⁰ 'President Bush, Colombia President Uribe discuss terrorism', *Office of the Press Secretary*, 25 Sep 2002

³¹ 'New SEC Chairman sworn in - President's Remarks', *Office of the Press Secretary*, 18 Feb 2003

terrorist states armed with weapons of mass destruction'.³² Clinton's National Security Adviser Sandy Berger weighed in, 'A nuclear-armed Hussein sometime in this decade is a risk we cannot ignore', while Jack Straw warned Saddam 'posed an intense risk'.³³ The language of risk is apparent but did policymakers in 2003 then confuse 'risk' with 'threat' in their loose usage of terms, as forewarned in Chapter Three? Furthermore, the grounds for war constantly shifted from terrorism to WMD to human rights.

Risk or threat?

'Risk' and 'threat' occupy different positions on a conceptual spectrum of dangers.³⁴ This issue merits some analysis especially in 2002-03 where regime change can be construed as 'threat elimination' aggressively resolving problems, implying a powerful shift away from 'risk management'. Did the drastic impatient means chosen mean the risk had somehow solidified into an imminent threat? According to Bush, 'if we wait for threats to fully materialise, we will have waited too long. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge'.³⁵ Blair similarly argued: 'taking action in respect of a gathering threat or danger that is coming, may be more sensible than to wait for the threat to materialise and then take action'.³⁶ These statements suggested that the vague danger remained a risk requiring proactive management to forestall it becoming a fully-formed threat, rather than an imminent one.

Yet in September 2002 Secretary Rumsfeld detailed to Congress the dangers in terms of 'intentions and capabilities' and concluded Saddam posed an inevitable threat.³⁷ These two components normally form the basis of classical Realist 'net assessment' of 'threat' in IR and as will be shown, proved inadequate in conceptualising the dangers from Iraq. Kenneth Pollack, contradicting Rumsfeld's assessment, believed Saddam was

³² Prepared Testimony before the House and Senate Armed Services Committee regarding Iraq, Washington D.C., 18-19 September 2002

³³ Sandy Berger, 'Building Blocks to Iraq', *Washington Post*, 01 Aug 2002; Jack Straw, BBC Radio 4 'Today' Program, 22 Aug 2002

³⁴ I thank Christopher Coker for discussions on this issue. Also see research project on International Risk Policy at Otto Suhr Institute, Free University Berlin, Germany.

³⁵ President Bush delivers graduation speech at West Point, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 01 June 2002

³⁶ Tony Blair, Transcript of evidence given to the House of Commons Liaison Committee, 16 July 2002, available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmliains/1065/106501.htm>

³⁷ Prepared Testimony before the House and Senate Armed Services Committee regarding Iraq, Washington D.C., 18-19 September 2002

'probably several years away from being an irredeemable danger. This is a matter of both capabilities and intentions'.³⁸ Top US military officials believed in summer 2002, based on intelligence about Iraqi WMD capabilities, that Saddam posed 'no immediate threat'.³⁹ Even unearthing a 'smoking gun' atomic bomb program cannot be proof for a crime not yet committed. Iraqi military forces remain weak, and several years away from nuclear status. Paul Pillar concluded that 'Iraqi terrorism has been limited more by intentions than capabilities'.⁴⁰ Saddam has shown little inclination to use terrorism against the US since a botched assassination attempt on former President Bush in 1993. Even the CIA was unsure what Saddam's intentions were regarding Al Qaeda. Bin Laden apparently met Iraqi intelligence (Mukhabarat) officials in Khartoum in 1996 but it is unclear if this developed further. Despite sharing a common enemy, top Qaeda planners in custody allegedly told US intelligence that Bin Laden had rejected an alliance.

Washington's case for regime change is strong based on Saddam's history of aggression and WMD use. However flaws rested with assuming Hussein's future intentions- that he would develop WMD and slip one to terrorists to attack America and its allies. But Saddam could simply be seeking his own deterrent in a dangerous region.⁴¹ Perhaps the fear was Washington itself might be deterred by a nuclear-armed Iraq. If Saddam's foremost concern was regime survival, he can theoretically be deterred, unlike stateless terrorists. This however assumed 'mirror imaging' that Hussein shared Washington's rationality and would not miscalculate. Intentions and capabilities thus did not quite reflect our concerns over Iraq.

Perhaps it might be more helpful to highlight 'risk' components in the equation: consequences and probabilities rather than classical 'net assessment' of 'threats'. Post-9/11 America's concern with mass-casualty terrorism led it to 'focus on consequences rather than probabilities, the Bush team argued that the possibility that Iraq could use WMD or supply them to terrorists justified the pre-emptive or preventive use of force'.⁴²

³⁸ Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: the case for invading Iraq*, (New York: Random House, 2002), p148-149

³⁹ Thomas E. Ricks, 'Some top military brass favor status quo in Iraq', *Washington Post*, July 28 2002

⁴⁰ Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and US foreign policy*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p.104

⁴¹ See Daniel Byman, 'Iraq After Saddam', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24. No. 4, (Autumn 2001) pp. 151-162

⁴² *Strategic Survey 2002/03*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the IISS, May 2003), p.65

Although the ideological gap between Hussein and Al Qaeda suggested such transfer was unlikely, Pollack argued Hussein was 'not likely' to do so but the 'possibility cannot be ruled out.'⁴³ Saddam could supply WMD to his 'Palestinian connection', if not Al Qaeda. It is also extremely difficult to trace biological attacks as October 2001 anthrax mailings showed. Indeed, the 'bulk of informed opinion coalesced not around probabilities but consequences...if cooperation took place, the risk to American populations would be unacceptable grave'.⁴⁴

This type of risk assessment seemed more relevant to the debate. America's new security doctrine is now couched in terms of risk scenarios rather than an actual concrete and specific threat. Anxiety thrived on the tension between our knowledge and ignorance of risks like Iraqi links to terrorists. Policymakers seemed more concerned with possibilities, rather than correctly assessing intentions. Tony Blair's speech to Parliament on 18 March 2003 argued that 'the central security threat today... is not big powers going to war with each other...' Blair accepted the association between rogue nations seeking WMD and terrorism was 'loose' but the 'possibility of the two coming together is a real and present danger'. In the post-war furore over WMD, it emerged that the US Defence Intelligence Agency in September 2002 –when officials were claiming otherwise-reported that 'although we lack any direct information, Iraq *probably* possesses chemical agent in chemical munitions' and '*probably* possesses bulk chemical stockpiles'.⁴⁵ Increasingly we are going to war on such probables and possibilities.

Risk-oriented thinking allows us to comprehend the focus on probabilities and catastrophic *consequences*. Condoleezza Rice told CNN in September 2002 'we don't want the 'smoking gun' to be a mushroom cloud.' The 2002 *National Security Strategy* emphasised 'the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries choice of weapons'.⁴⁶ President Clinton similarly justified *Desert Fox* by arguing that 'if we fail to act...he can do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. Some

⁴³ Pollack, *The Threatening Storm*, p180

⁴⁴ Toby Dodge & Steven Simon, Introduction, in Toby Dodge & Steven Simon (eds), *Iraq at the crossroads: state and society in the shadow of regime change*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the IISS, January 2003), 14

⁴⁵ See Dana Priest & Walter Pincus, 'Bush certainty on Iraq arms went beyond analysts' view', *Washington Post*, 07 June 2003

⁴⁶ *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Chapter V, (Washington D.C.: The White House, September 2002)

day, I guarantee you he'll use that arsenal'.⁴⁷ Focusing on consequences and probabilities situated us within the risk discourse during the Clinton and Bush administrations. However as will be shown, Washington in 2003 employed impatient means of elimination. The lack of evidence and ontological uncertainty, suggested that elevating the risks to an imminent threat was somewhat premature. Perhaps to make the war sound more like one of necessity than choice that it actually was (and thus more acceptable to public opinion), the intelligence and the risks were hyped into an imminent direct threat rather than the potential dangers Saddam actually posed.⁴⁸

II. Implementing risk management

Active Anticipation

The West did not yet face a direct fully developed threat from Baghdad. The concern instead was *possible* security risks. If risk was not addressed immediately, it was not clear harm would definitely occur for much uncertainty existed. Yet, preventive action was advocated for not acting was seen as more risky. Using the notion of 'risk', Washington and London saw themselves as potential victims of some hypothesised future harm from Saddam. The idea of 'risk' also gave them the choice of taking preventive avoidance measures. Up to this point, in terms of active anticipation of risks, evidence matched theorised outcomes in terms of understanding rationales for action. Risk here is not only a descriptive term but also a normative one implying the desirability of avoidance action. It also formed part of a strategic calculation.

Contemplating counter-factuals and alternative courses of action that can shape the future, so prevalent in contemporary society, has jumped into security planners' notebooks. After all, 'proactive risk-management' is a standard part of the process. Future events that might not even occur became the focus of present action.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Andrew Sullivan, 'Clinton talked a good war- Bush has to fight it', *Sunday Times*, 09 March 2003

⁴⁸ See Tom Friedman, 'The war over the war', *New York Times*, 03 August 2003

To Paul Wolfowitz,

'the fundamental question is how to weigh the risks of action against the risks of inaction...the risk of the Iraqi regime using these terrible weapons or giving them to terrorists is unacceptably high...at the end of the day we are trying to judge what will happen in the future along different courses we might take'.⁴⁹

This certainly did not imply an imminent threat existed where no choice existed. Invading Iraq itself carried high risks such as significant American and civilian casualties, WMD attacks, terrorist strikes, fractured Iraq, regional instability, and higher oil prices. Not to mention, the long-term consequences for international institutions and law. Wolfowitz's boss Donald Rumsfeld reminded us that 'there are clearly risks to acting. But there are also risks in not acting. And those have to be weighed'. The penalty for not acting, was another September 11.⁵⁰ The catastrophic consequences and potentially being a 'victim' were prominent. This could arguably be seen as a 'reactive' response to past events like 9/11. But the key point here is not so much backward-looking concepts like justice or retribution, but rather the locus of action was in the future, to prevent repetition of similar harm. Indeed, Rumsfeld suggested that 'the case against Iraq does not depend on an Iraqi link to 9/11. The issue is not vengeance, retribution or retaliation- it is whether the Iraqi regime poses a growing danger to the safety and security of our people and the world'.⁵¹

While such statements could come from any politician considering policy options, Washington emphasized the graver risks of not acting while others focused on the risk of acting. It predictably opted for victim-avoidance actions through proactive risk management. Both Vice President Cheney and Secretary Rumsfeld concluded that 'the risks of inaction are far greater than the risks of action'.⁵² Blair argued that 'we have got

⁴⁹ Remarks by Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Fletcher Conference, Washington D.C, 16 October 2002

⁵⁰ Department of Defence (DoD) News Briefing- Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers, 03 September 2002

⁵¹ Prepared Testimony before the House and Senate Armed Services Committee regarding Iraq, Washington D.C., 18-19 September 2002

⁵² Vice President speaks at VFW 103rd National Convention, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 26 Aug 2002 ; DoD News Briefing – Secretary Rumsfeld, 03 September 2002

to act on it (the risk of WMD in the hands of terrorists), because if we don't, we will find out too late the potential for destruction.⁵³ President Bush warned that,

'the risk of doing nothing, the risk that somehow inaction will make the world safer is not a risk I'm willing to take...I think of the risks, and calculated the costs of inaction versus the cost of action'.⁵⁴

Just before invading, Bush again emphasised that 'we are now acting because the risks of inaction would be far greater'.⁵⁵ This proactive statement bore stark similarities to Clinton's justification for air strikes against Kosovo in 1999 and Blair's on striking Afghanistan in 2001. In 2003, the fear of 'potential victimhood' (in the sense of being a victim again) drove Bush and his 'never again' mindset after 9/11. At Camp David with Tony Blair in early February 2003, Bush noted that American 'strategic vision shifted dramatically' after September 11. 'I realise that the world has changed and my most important obligation is to protect the American people from further harm'. Addressing the nation just before war, he declared that 'instead of drifting along toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety'.⁵⁶ His is clearly a risk manager's safety-first mindset.

This sort of proactive thinking is by no means limited to the Bush administration or 2003. In December 1998, Tony Blair justified air strikes on Iraq similarly, 'whatever the risks we face today, they are as nothing compared to the risks if we do not halt Saddam Hussein's programme of developing chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction'.⁵⁷ There is more continuity between the Clinton and Bush Administrations on Iraq than normally acknowledged. Clinton's statement on *Desert Fox* reflected the same proactive calculus: 'heavy as they are, the costs of action must be weighed against the price of inaction. If Saddam defies the world and we fail to respond, we will face a greater threat in the future'.⁵⁸ The underlying proactive premise on risk was similar. The difference was the increased sense of urgency after 9/11.

⁵³ Tony Blair cited in *Campaign Against Terrorism: A coalition update*, 11 Mar 2002, <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/page4591.asp>

⁵⁴ President George Bush discusses Iraq in National Press Conference, 06 Mar 2003, *Office of the Press Secretary*

⁵⁵ President says Saddam Hussein must leave Iraq within 48 hours, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 17 March 2003

⁵⁶ President says Saddam Hussein must leave Iraq within 48 hours, 17 March 2003, *Office of the Press Secretary*

⁵⁷ Prime Minister's statement to the House of Commons on US/UK airstrikes on Iraq, 17 December 1998

⁵⁸ President Clinton's statement on air strikes against Iraq, 16 Dec 1998, *Office of the Press Secretary*

To prevent or preempt?

Among the case studies, Iraq stirred up greatest controversy on whether it was ‘pre-emptive’ or ‘preventive’. This merits some discussion. ‘Prevention’ in strategic discourse previously meant crisis prevention or preventive deployment as an alternative to force. Now it implied ‘preventative’ military action to avert undesirable outcomes. Legally speaking, Bush’s ‘preemptive’ doctrine could qualify as ‘anticipatory self-defence’. However, the ‘threat from Iraq to the United States is neither specific nor clearly established nor shown to be imminent’: conditions under which ‘anticipatory self-defence’ could be invoked.⁵⁹ ‘Pre-emption’ under ‘Just War’ doctrine developed by its foremost proponent Michael Walzer was justifiable only if there was serious intent to harm, active preparations making that intent a real danger, and a situation under which doing nothing greatly increased the danger. The potential harm must also be of gravest nature: loss of territorial integrity or political independence. The mid-19th century *Caroline* case – where British forces sank pre-emptively an American ship helping Canadian rebels- and resulting diplomatic correspondence outlined the criteria accepted since for anticipatory action: the ‘necessity’ must be ‘instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means and no moment of deliberation’. Iraq posed no such specific urgent threat to the US. Instead, Saddam posed potential risks based on possible unsubstantiated Al Qaeda links. The Bush Doctrine tackled potential and future risks rather than imminent threats. It was ‘preventive’ rather than ‘pre-emptive’.

The Pentagon defines ‘preventive war’ as ‘initiated in the belief that military conflict, while not imminent, is inevitable and that delay would involve great risk’. In contrast, ‘pre-emption’ is an ‘attack initiated on the basis of incontrovertible evidence that enemy attack is imminent’.⁶⁰ If Iraq was ‘pre-emptive’, evidence was hardly watertight. Secondly, the definition of ‘imminence’ has shifted. Condoleezza Rice argued that extremists and ‘new technology requires new thinking about when a threat becomes imminent’. While preemption previously was legitimated on a visible mobilisation of armies navies and air forces for attack, ‘we must adapt the concept of imminent threat to

⁵⁹ William A. Galston, ‘Why a first strike will surely backfire’, *Washington Post*, 16 June 2002

⁶⁰ See US Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington D.C: DoD, 12 April 2001), p. 333, 336

today's adversaries.' These can use WMD without any warning.⁶¹ In this way, Washington actually advanced a 'sophisticated legal argument for the legitimacy of its position regarding pre-emption' by noting international law recognises that states need not suffer an attack before they can take action against imminent attack.⁶² Indeed, international law and the UN charter was not created to deal with new and more elusive dangers like terrorism or WMD but more conventional ones from states and regular armies that require obvious mobilisation to commit aggression.⁶³

Pre-emptive war has some legal sanction but not preventive war. Israel pre-emptively struck first in 1967 with Arab troops clearly massing on its borders. Professor Christopher Greenwood however observed that the Israeli raid in 1981 on Iraq's Osirak reactor was widely condemned, 'not on the ground that there was no right of anticipatory self-defence but rather on the ground that the risk was too distant, too far in the future'.⁶⁴ It was preventive, not preemptive. Washington has a record of preventive actions against Iraq: *Desert Storm* targeted WMD facilities unrelated to liberating Kuwait; and *Desert Fox*. Lawrence Freedman argued that 'prevention perhaps better defines what is often currently referred to as preemption'. Prevention confronts 'factors' likely to contribute to a threat before it has become imminent. Preemption is a more desperate strategy employed in the midst of crises.⁶⁵ Without convincing evidence of a Baghdad-Al Qaeda strategic alliance or that Iraqi aggression was imminent, Freedman concluded the rationale for *Iraqi Freedom* was preventive. Reconsidering the concept of 'imminence' as the National Security Strategy suggests, thus required recognising that prevention, not preemption is the key here. Francois Heisbourg similar agreed that the 'semantics at play – notably the interchangeable use of preemption and prevention to summarise this new strategy', required careful examination not least because they blur essential distinctions in

⁶¹ Dr Condoleezza Rice discusses President's National Security Strategy, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 01 October 2002

⁶² Walter B. Slocombe, 'Force, pre-emption and legitimacy', *Survival*, Vol. 45 No 1, Spring 2003, p125

⁶³ Anthony Clark Arend, 'International law and the preemptive use of force', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26 No 2, Spring 2003, p.97

⁶⁴ House of Commons Select Committee 2002/2003 on Foreign Affairs Second Report, *Disarming Iraq*, 19 December 2002, Line 157

⁶⁵ For a detailed discussion of pre-emption and prevention, see Jeffrey Record, 'The Bush Doctrine and War with Iraq', *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, Vol. XXXIII No 1, Spring 2003, p. 4-21; Lawrence Freedman, 'Prevention, not preemption', *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2003, Vol. 26 No 2, p.105

international law.⁶⁶ Preventative actions generally, and especially *Desert Fox*, fall within the domain of proactive risk management strategies geared toward ambiguous risks than compelling or imminent threats

Desert Fox created similar unease about a controversial doctrine of ‘preventive war’ against ‘abstract Iraqi threats’ stretching anticipatory self-defence and ‘imminence’ to breaking point. Many critics berated the unauthorised enforcement of the Security Council’s ‘will’ and Anglo-American auto-determination of a material breach of Iraqi obligations. Marc Weller concluded that legalism cannot explain such actions.⁶⁷ International law does not recognise the right to preventative action against more or less abstract threats of the future, but proactive risk management does. Concern about the future was present in the declared purposes of air strikes. President Clinton stated the campaign aim to prevent reconstitution of Saddam’s WMD and ability to threaten his neighbours in the future. Madeleine Albright noted the difficulties of communicating, and comprehending the dangers because ‘it is a threat of the future rather than a present threat, or present act’ such as aggression.⁶⁸

While traditional approaches to counter-proliferation involved diplomatic and political measures, Washington even during the Clinton era was considering military measures against emerging WMD arsenals.⁶⁹ The 2001 *Nuclear Posture Review* advocated greater use of Precision-Guided Munitions (PGMs) in a ‘new mix’ of nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities. Technological advances have increased the possibilities of conventionally attacking enemy WMD facilities.⁷⁰ Operation *Desert Fox* demonstrated this. Furthermore, ‘the right of self-defence includes a right to move against WMD programmes with high potential danger to the United States while *it is still feasible to do so*.’⁷¹ Once a rogue like North Korea acquires WMD, effective action against it may be untenable. Iraq is comparatively more manageable. At this stage, the justifications behind

⁶⁶ Francois Heisbourg, ‘A Work in Progress: the Bush Doctrine and its consequences’, *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26 No.2, Spring 2003, p.75

⁶⁷ For these issues, see Marc Weller, ‘The US, Iraq and the use of force in a unipolar world’, *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 4, Winter 1999-2000, pp81-100

⁶⁸ Press remarks on military attack on Iraq, 17 Dec 1998

⁶⁹ James. J Wirtz. ‘Counter proliferation, conventional counterforce and nuclear war’, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 23, No.1, March 2000, p.5-25

⁷⁰ Excerpts of leaked report available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm>

⁷¹ Walter B. Slocombe, ‘Force, pre-emption and legitimacy’, *Survival*, Vol. 45 No 1, Spring 2003, p125 (italics added)

preventive military actions from *Desert Fox* to the more controversial Bush Doctrine still chimed with outcomes predicted by the test theory.

War and the Precautionary principle

To US strategic thinkers, September 11 confirmed that the rules of the game had changed, with much more uncertainty, erosion of deterrence and incalculable risks in possible links between Iraq and Al Qaeda. The unthinkable had to become thinkable and acted upon. Does the precautionary principle predicted by the test theory apply here? This over-caution existed before Bush came to power. In 2000, State Department spokesman Jamie Rubin stated that US policy on sanctions was 'prepared to err on the side of caution', so as not to let any dual-use material leak through.⁷² As Congressional drafters of the Iraq Liberation Act wrote to President Clinton in August 1999, 'if international security could be assured by waiting until we find evidence that Saddam has developed weapons of mass destruction and responding to the threat at that time, there would have been no need for Operation Desert Fox.' The whole point was that we could not wait to have conclusive evidence before taking military action.⁷³ The question of evidence and overcaution clearly also animated the *Desert Fox* campaign, though not to the same extent as *Iraqi Freedom*.

By 2003 the precautionary language of environmental discourse had seeped more prominently into strategy. 'Unknown unknowns', a concept espoused by Robin Grove-White, (leading British advocate of the principle on environmental change) described lurking risks and unanticipated outcomes that we might know nothing of. This concept, ad verbatim, featured prominently in Donald Rumsfeld's ruminations on Iraqi complicity with terrorists.⁷⁴ Rumsfeld described 'known unknowns...things we now know we don't know' and 'unknown unknowns: things we don't know we don't know' – a classic distinction prevalent in the risk discourse where precautionary strategies are taken to reduce and anticipate dangers and surprises. Speaking like a risk management guru on the precautionary principle, Rumsfeld argued that 'absolute proof cannot be a precondition

⁷² James Rubin, State Department Presentation on Iraq, 29 February 2000

⁷³ Text of letter available at <http://www.nci.org/c/c81199.htm>

⁷⁴ Robin Grove-White, Panel remarks on *Do we live in a culture of fear?*, Goodenough College and 21st Century Trust Conference on Risk, 11-12 Apr 2002, London. For Rumsfeld's use of 'unknown unknowns', see DoD News Briefing - Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers, 12 February 2002

for action' and that 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence', while emphasising the 'catastrophic consequences of WMD attack'.⁷⁵ The endgame boiled down to this dictum. Almost enshrining the Precautionary Principle in the process, the 2002 *National Security Strategy* categorically stated that where the danger is grave, there is a need for 'anticipatory actions even if uncertainty remains as to time and place of the enemy's attack'.⁷⁶

As both sides of the Atlantic expressed unease about the lack of evidence, Rumsfeld acknowledged, 'convincing the publics of the world that there's a need to take preventative action, stop something before it happens is always difficult'.⁷⁷ He however derided those seeking perfect evidence as living 'back in the 20th century and still thinking in pre-9/11 terms...if Congress or the world wait for a smoking gun, we will have waited too long. A gun smokes *after* it is fired'.⁷⁸ Precautionary risk management strategies lower the requirement for conditions of proof. It involves risk potentials characterised by relatively high degrees of uncertainty about the probability of occurrence and extent of damage. 'We don't know' appeared to be the consensus answer at Congressional hearings to ascertain the nature and urgency of threat. As Anthony Cordesman testified, 'we will not have a clear smoking gun' for the 'first pre-emptive war'. Quipped Senator Bob Graham, 'the central reality is uncertainty'.⁷⁹ The British Government's first dossier also hardly provided 'the killer fact'.⁸⁰

Yet this uncertainty drove regime change. President Bush described Saddam Hussein as 'an enemy until proven otherwise'.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Remarks at the Defence Ministers Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, NATO HQ, 06 June 2002, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020606d.htm>; and DoD News Briefing, 12 February 2002

⁷⁶ *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington D.C: The White House, Sep 2002), Chapter V

⁷⁷ Remarks to the Hoover Institute, 25 February 2003

⁷⁸ Prepared Testimony before the House and Senate Armed Services Committee regarding Iraq, Washington D.C., 18-19 September 2002

⁷⁹ Sen. Graham quoted in Joby Warrick, 'In Assessing Iraq's arsenal, the reality is uncertainty', *Washington Post*, 31 July 2002; Cordesman quoted in James Dao, 'Senators want to know the unknowable on Iraq, and time is running out', *New York Times*, 03 Aug 2002

⁸⁰ *Iraq's weapons of mass destruction: The Assessment of the British Government*, (London: The Stationery Office, 24 Sep 2002)

⁸¹ President Bush discusses Iraq, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 10 Aug 2002

Iraq, warned Bush,

‘gathers the most serious dangers of our age in one place...Saddam Hussein is harbouring terrorists and the instruments of mass destruction...the risk is simply too great that he will use them or provide them to a terror network...we have every reason to assume the worst, and we have an urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring’.⁸²

Such overvigilance bore classic tenets of a precautionary principle and concern about omission (being blamed for not taking precautionary action). Richard Perle summed up cogently, ‘we cannot know for sure, but on which side would it be better to err?’⁸³ The war on Iraq was thus fought ‘in the subjunctive- based on a string of *ifs*.’⁸⁴ If Saddam has usable WMD, *if* Saddam uses his UAVs to launch an attack on Washington, or as Bush put it, ‘secretly and without fingerprints, he *could* provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists or help them develop their own’. This sort of thinking matched that of precautionary risk management strategies at this point. However, Washington also sought to move against Iraq now partly because of analogies drawn with 9/11 and the desire to avoid similar harm. This is indicative of ‘tomb-stone’ style approaches to risk rather than a purely ‘precautionary approach’. As suggested before, these cannot be strictly segregated. Nonetheless, the ‘precautionary’ aspect has gained most attention.

Post-war searches of Central Command’s top suspected WMD sites drew blanks and war appeared based on ‘false positives’ since the level of risk turned out less serious or urgent than originally thought. There was perhaps no need for such a drastic operation like regime change. The very same ‘precautionary’ sentiments voiced by Washington could have translated into more ‘minimalist’ approaches to war like inspections and expanded no-fly zones. Like the Kosovo campaign earlier, there were calls for inquiries into whether the British and American governments exaggerated the scale of dangers to justify war. The US 75th Mobile Exploitation Force was subsequently withdrawn; private companies have been contracted to help the hunt by the Iraq Survey Group. The secretive Task Force 20 comprising the shadowy Grey Fox military unit proved equally unsuccessful. One should probably not expect arms caches of WMD but bits and pieces

⁸² President Bush outlines Iraqi threat, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 07 October 2002

⁸³ Richard Perle, ‘Why the West must strike first against Saddam Hussein’, *Daily Telegraph*, 09 Aug 2002

⁸⁴ Jack Beatty, ‘In the name of God’, *Atlantic Monthly*, 05 March 2003

here and there, a paper trail to be followed. Nonetheless, two mobile trailers thought to produce biological weapons were later dismissed as simply producing gas for artillery balloons. The search continued at this writing in July 2003.

Surveillance

Surveillance is the vehicle of risk-management, for investigating how things stand and a contributor to action in the face of uncertainty about future consequences. Iraq is a prime example for 'monitoring power'. It involved formal inspections or surveillance operations to gather information.⁸⁵ In Iraq, intelligence gathering and surveillance was carried out either through covert or military-technical means such as satellites, U-2 spy planes and no-fly zones. A continuous monitoring and review process gauged the level of risk and effectiveness of management measures taken.

The ethos of constant monitoring is aptly encapsulated by naming no-fly zones over Iraq as Operations *Northern Watch* and *Southern Watch*. Since 1991, the United States averaged over 34000 sorties per year supporting the zones. These were enforced for more than 10 years to provide early warning of Iraqi aggression and general observation of the risks Baghdad posed, among other reasons like constraining Saddam's freedom of action. According to Rumsfeld, no-fly zones helped 'keep good awareness of what Saddam is doing.'⁸⁶ In June 1998, the Security Council was given U-2 overflight photographs of sites where Iraq claimed no activity was ongoing. Satellite surveillance also helped monitor what constituted risks by uncovering nuclear programs, gauging their progress and tracking movement of components. The Director of the National Reconnaissance Office argued that without satellites, 'we would know a lot less about the weapons programs of Saddam Hussein', and 'these programs would be more dangerous than they are today'.⁸⁷

Surveillance served not just retrospective knowing of wrongdoing but also to deploy resources in advance of possible offences. As theorised, where military action is

⁸⁵ Michael V. Deaver, *Disarming Iraq: Monitoring power and resistance*, (Westport : Praeger, 2001), p5, 20

⁸⁶ Philip Gibbons, 'US No-fly zones: To what end?', Washington Institute for Near East Policy, *Policy Watch* No. 632, 01 July 2002

⁸⁷ Keith Hall, Remarks to the National Network of Electro-Optical Manufacturing Technologies Conference, 9 February 1998, Tuscon, Arizona.

demanded as a result of monitoring, this is implemented if necessary. During Operation *Desert Fox*, this was reflected in Tony Blair's official statement: 'If we have serious evidence from our intensive surveillance, or from intelligence, that his capability is being rebuilt, we will be ready to take further military action.'⁸⁸ President Clinton stressed earlier that the US 'would carefully monitor Iraq's activities' and if Saddam 'seeks to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction, we will be prepared to strike him again'.⁸⁹ Bush similarly argued before 9/11: 'we're going to watch very carefully as to whether he develops weapons of mass destruction, if we catch him doing so, we're going to take appropriate action'.⁹⁰ After 9/11, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice noted 'there is plenty of reason to watch Iraq', referring to its WMD programs.⁹¹ The Pentagon, observed Rumsfeld, has 'always been attentive....for at least more than a decade now' with respect to Iraq.⁹² There is clear evidence of a monitoring ethos toward Baghdad given the risks it posed.

After Iraq's nuclear programme was discovered to be broader than expected, the International Atomic Energy Agency adopted new protocols to better detect undeclared activity. With new hyperspectral sensors on commercial satellites detecting unnatural camouflage and chemicals in the soil and air, a new dimension of surveillance was added.⁹³ UNMOVIC received satellite imagery of Iraq's activities both from states and commercial imagery from Colorado-based Space Imaging now in colour. This served to maintain an up-to-date database, gather intelligence as well as assist planning for inspections.⁹⁴ Non-state actors also jumped onto the bandwagon. Japanese network NTV produced in May 2002 commercial images of Iraqi facilities at Al Qaim, Tuwaitha, and Sharqul possibly reconstructed after *Desert Fox*. Even so, such images will not provide a

⁸⁸ 'Statement by the Prime Minister on Iraq', 17 Dec 1998

⁸⁹ Remarks on Iraq by President Clinton to Pentagon personnel, 17 Feb 1998, *Office of the Press Secretary*

⁹⁰ Remarks by President George W. Bush and President Vicente Fox of Mexico in Joint Press Conference, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 16 February 2001

⁹¹ Robert Kagan and William Kristol, 'Getting Serious', *Weekly Standard*, 19 November 2001

⁹² Quoted in Kathleen T. Rhem, 'US, Pentagon attention on Iraq is long-standing', *American Forces Press Service*, 12 Feb 2002

⁹³ Yahya A. Dehqanzada & Ann M. Florini, *Secrets for Sale: How commercial satellite imagery will change the world*, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), p6

⁹⁴ *Ninth Quarterly Report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission under Paragraph 12 of Security Council Resolution 1286 (1999)*, 31 May 2002, S/2002/606

'smoking gun image' showing clearly atomic bomb construction. It can only provide images of suspected facilities to aid risk management actions.

With weapons inspectors withdrawn in 1998, US satellites were central to monitoring Iraq, supplemented by commercial providers. In August 1999, US satellites imaged reconstruction of the Al-Kindi missile facility damaged in *Desert Fox* eight months earlier. Infrared satellites detected test flights of short-range Al-Samoud missiles. Lacrosse radar imaging satellites monitored Iraqi weapons storage sites, and bomb damage assessment. In March 2002, Washington provided the Security Council satellite photos of modified Iraqi trucks allegedly mounting missile launchers. In August 2002, satellites detected Iraqi trucks moving material from weapons facilities. Satellites are non-intrusive, provide wider spatial resolutions covering broader swathes of territory, and are less vulnerable to Iraqi fire, which has downed Predator surveillance UAVs. The dangers lie in misinterpretation of images and limited overflight times. They can best supplement inspectors on the ground, not replace inspections totally.⁹⁵

Inspections are another way to monitor risks and indeed even generated the information necessary for management action through airstrikes. Commentators agreed it was 'much better to have UNSCOM without sanctions than to impose sanctions without UNSCOM', 'leaving Saddam's arsenal unwatched is folly'.⁹⁶ However, Saddam consistently employed 'tactics of resistance' involving all sorts of deception, camouflage and denial, ultimately expelling inspectors.⁹⁷ In March 1999, a UN panel advocated that 'reinforced monitoring and verification' systems were necessary to prevent reconstitution of Iraqi WMD programs.⁹⁸ Inspectors returned in late 2002 but failed to uncover the 'smoking gun' Washington hoped would legitimise military action. Although regime change in 2003 ended any further efforts at monitoring, it appeared that the inspections process before it ended in 1998 provided the most reliable information for intelligence agencies. Seven years of inspections allegedly provided intelligence for US targeting

⁹⁵ In May 1999, US F-15Es mistakenly bombed shepherds after analysts misinterpreted water troughs for missile launchers

⁹⁶ Gregory Gause III, 'Getting it Backward on Iraq', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1999, p.54-65. For more sceptical views, see Patrick Clawson, 'Inspections in Iraq: A test for Saddam, not a good solution for WMD', *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Policy Watch 590, 20 Dec 2001.

⁹⁷ For analysis of Saddam's tactics, see Deaver, *Disarming Iraq*

⁹⁸ John Springer, UN Panel on Iraq recommends 'reinforced' monitoring regime, *Arms Control Today*, March 1999

during *Desert Fox*. Such surveillance operations now helped in the waging of war. 'Once the inspectors were gone, it was like losing your GPS guidance'.⁹⁹ Analysts were reduced to groping for fragmentary information such as reports of Baghdad's interest in aluminium tubes or uranium from Niger. A more patient surveillance could have worked to manage Iraq. Expanding the existing low-grade air war over no-fly zones coupled with inspections suited a more subtle concept of war as risk management.

The utilitarian 'less than heroic' strategies of risk management

Routine war

In criminology, crime is seen as an everyday risk to be managed, a routine part of life. Did actions against Iraq manifest this? As with recent wars over Kosovo and Afghanistan, war over Iraq from late 1998 to 2003 hardly affected Western societies or engaged passions for a noble goal. There was no grand narrative previously associated with 'war'. War became routine in two senses: it was largely instrumental rather than existential, and almost an everyday occurrence as risk management theory prescribes. The fact that Baghdad hardly reacted to *Desert Fox* constituted management challenges for coalition forces placing ordnance on target, rather than real 'combat'. The utilitarian approach to the operation was encapsulated in then Central Command chief General Zinni describing it as a 'degrade and diminish' tasking. These bombings were quickly forgotten as was the subsequent air war over no-fly zones.

For reasons previously described, no-fly zones became by default the 'cornerstone of containment' after *Desert Fox*.¹⁰⁰ The concept emerged as a new dimension of containment and US air power. Cat-and-mouse tussles with Iraqi gunners from late 1998 hardly merited any space in newspaper columns. Yet coalition fliers were firing at and being fired on an almost daily basis, by most accounts a definition of war. Repetitive air strikes became so commonplace that hardly anyone kept count. Good risk management should be routinely integrated into general activity, and Clinton appeared to have

⁹⁹ For detailed analysis of intelligence estimates on Iraq, see 'In Sketchy data, trying to gauge the Iraqi threat', *New York Times*, 20 July 2003

¹⁰⁰ Paul K. White, 'Airpower and a decade of containment', *Joint Force Quarterly*, No. 27, Winter 2000-01, p.38

succeeded. The no-fly zones became a forgotten war. The Clinton administration announced air strikes in a low-key manner, making Iraq seem like an everyday risk to be managed, as predicted by the test theory. By February 2001, ten years after the Gulf War, the continuity in bombing missions over Iraq reached, such a stage as to be described by President Bush as 'routine'.¹⁰¹ US naval presence in the Gulf also became 'routine' over the years. There is clear 'routinisation' of what used to be legitimately described as crisis response.¹⁰² War had become utilitarian, patient 'housekeeping' tasks to keep Saddam in order. Bombing no-fly zones after *Desert Fox* were not directed at Iraqi ability to rebuild WMD, nor was it explicitly linked to anything else. It became part of a routine of general management of Iraq, a 'policing' action straddling the boundaries of war rather than traditional concepts of warfare such as decisive battles. Indeed, it has been within the context of no-fly zones that the concept of 'policing' became increasingly prominent. 'Policing' action is after all a routine activity in society now elided into military force to indefinitely manage conditions of risk and uncertainty rather than seek grand narratives and clear goals.¹⁰³

While 'regime change' was out of the ordinary and went against the 'routine' grain of risk management, it suggests useful lessons. Before 2003, while other major powers disapproved of the intermittent coalition bombings, no acrimonious major split on the Security Council or among NATO allies was produced in contrast to regime change. Indeed, other powers such as Russia and China in late 2002 were even willing to cooperate on getting weapons inspectors back despite the no-fly zone bombings. This strengthened the risk management process as a result, albeit only with the more unpalatable alternative of 'regime change' in play. Low-key 'routine' war might well be the optimum level of force for risk management if the risks in question require military action but are not urgent, as Iraq now turns out to be in hindsight. Taking on the appearance of an everyday occurrence, it does not cross the threshold of 'maximalist' force which other allies and powers might find unacceptable. Germany and France even

¹⁰¹ Remarks by President Bush and President Vicente Fox of Mexico in joint press conference, *Office of the Press Secretary*, 16 February 2001

¹⁰² Thomas Barnett & Henry H. Gaffney, Jr, 'Top ten post-Cold War Myths', *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 172/2/1, 176, February 2001, p.32-38

¹⁰³ See Howard Kaygill, 'Perpetual Police? Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4 No.1, February 2001, p.74-76

suggested an expansion of no-fly zones over the whole of Iraq together with inspections as an alternative to regime change: an implicit endorsement of their value as a risk management tool. Continuing with what had after all been an ongoing 'routine' war against Iraq, together with surveillance and inspections might have managed the risks better. This type of protracted low-level 'war' over the years in no-fly zones with low media interest and 'virtual public consent' and no casualties appeared most sustainable.¹⁰⁴

Personifying risks

Risk management should not seek to reform particular individuals or bring justice to them, but manage risks they pose. It entails a profoundly utilitarian moral calculus that effectively replaces other moral criteria such as justice, guilt or fairness. Was this evident in Iraq? Focusing on Saddam the individual - the so-called 'biology' approach¹⁰⁵ - drove many aspects of US policy. The Clinton Administration's Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Edward Walker asserted in March 2000 that Iraq under Saddam 'cannot be rehabilitated or reintegrated as a responsible member of the community of nations'.¹⁰⁶

Despite demonising Saddam however, in February 1998, Defence Secretary Cohen and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright declared that Washington was 'not seeking to topple Saddam, not destroy his country', but to 'contain him'.¹⁰⁷ Cohen further emphasised the goal of *Desert Fox* was to 'degrade' WMD facilities, and not 'destabilise the regime'-¹⁰⁸ a view echoed by both Tony Blair and Bill Clinton. To be sure, containment was also linked confusingly to his removal. President Clinton remarked that, 'sanctions will be there until the end of time, or as long as he (Saddam) lasts.'¹⁰⁹ This ambiguity served to bolster the anti-Saddam coalition as well as satisfy domestic

¹⁰⁴ An idea also raised by Francois Heisbourg, *Warfare*, (London: Phoenix, 1997), p.14. 'Virtual' consent is suggested in Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 2000), p.138

¹⁰⁵ See Ofra Bengio, 'Couldn't be worse?: Iraq after Saddam', *The National Interest*, Issue 66, (Winter 2001-2002)

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Judith Yaphe, 'Iraq: the exception to the rule', *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24 No 1, Winter 2001, p.126

¹⁰⁷ cited in Avigdor Haselkorn, *The Continuing storm: Iraq, poisonous weapons and deterrence*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Chronology xxii

¹⁰⁸ cited in Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue states and US Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*, pp.139

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Barbara Crossette, "For Iraq, A Doghouse with Many Rooms," *New York Times*, 23 Nov 1997

constituents baying for his demise. Some argue that Clinton erroneously sought to contain Iraq and WMD rather than focus on 'evil' Saddam himself. Yet, mirroring recent trends in criminology, utilitarian risk management policies undertaken trumped any concern for 'evil' or avenging Saddam's 'guilt' in gassing the Kurds. Despite the mounting civilian toll of sanctions, Madeleine Albright declared the cost was worth it as long as Saddam was contained and risks suitably managed. Demonising Saddam largely helped bolster support for policies to manage, rather than remove him. The overwhelming practical focus of policy before September 2001 was risk-management tools - air strikes and revised 'smart' sanctions.¹¹⁰

After 9/11, the 'evil' tag all too often described America's nemeses, from bin Laden to Condoleezza Rice describing Saddam as an 'evil man' who was not 'reformable'.¹¹¹ Here again was an individual deemed to pose risks but did we manage or eliminate him? Expressing a more management perspective, Jessica Matthews contended that the Bush Administration's newly energised efforts to oust Saddam were misplaced: 'the number one problem' should remain the risk of Saddam acquiring WMD, rather than Hussein himself.¹¹² The Carnegie Endowment in September 2002 thus suggested 'coercive inspections' accompanied by UN-approved airmobile and armoured cavalry forces with air support and J-Stars surveillance planes, supporting go-anywhere anytime inspectors. France and Germany also suggested expanding no-fly zones to cover the whole of Iraq. This approach is better suited to risk management than impatient regime change focused on one man. Non-proliferation goals also carry more legitimacy, and can assist, not undermine long-term cooperation in fighting terrorism. However, many believed the only option was regime change: even with UN inspectors in the 1990s, many programs remained hidden until the 1995 defection of Hussein Kamal, Saddam's son-in-law.

In a tactical shift to re-insert inspectors in autumn 2002, even 'regime change' was redefined, further complicating analysis here. Secretary Powell suggested 'the Iraqi people would be better off with a different leader and regime. But the principal offence

¹¹⁰ Morton H. Halperin & Geoffrey Kemp, *A report on US Policy Options toward Iraq*, Council On Foreign Relations, June 2001

¹¹¹ Condoleezza Rice quoted in Mike Peacock, 'Key Bush Aide says Saddam must be dealt with', *Reuters*, 15 August 2002

¹¹² Jessica Matthews, 'The Wrong Target', *Washington Post*, 04 March 2002

here is weapons of mass destruction...all we're interested in is getting rid of these weapons. Then you have a different kind of regime no matter who's in Baghdad'.¹¹³ President Bush hinted that as long as Saddam disarmed and distanced himself from terrorists, 'these steps would also change the nature of the regime itself' and 'signal the regime has changed'.¹¹⁴ Whether Bush really meant what he said is impossible to tell. The aim apparently became not removing one man, despite his 'evil' human rights abuses, but eliminating WMD. On the eve of war, Bush was even willing to let 'evil' Saddam go into exile as long as the risks were subsequently reduced – hardly the right moral move but a correct one from the utilitarian risk management perspective. US officials sought to downplay Saddam to avoid tricky questions similar to those about Bin Laden's fate. Secretary Powell noted that 'whether or not he is there at the end, and is found or not, is almost irrelevant'.¹¹⁵ However by personifying the issue to the extent it did rhetorically- and with two 'decapitation' attempts and later a bounty on his capture -, the Bush Administration clearly targeted the Iraqi leader rather than managed him.

Reshaping the environment

On 10 March 2003, *Financial Times* editor Philip Stephens reflected a common view that the US previously policed the world. Now it sought to remould it in its image. But is this correct? The war went beyond traditional aims of militarily defeating an enemy. Wolfowitz suggested that the invasion's strategic reordering of the region was a 'huge' consequence.¹¹⁶ Democratic Iraq, so went the argument, would trigger a reverse domino theory- a so-called 'demonstration effect' through 'shock and awe' would rein in or remove regimes that breed terror through repression rather than poverty. The Bush Administration actually could have something of a Middle East vision, suggested Philip Gordon. This meant using American power to 'reshape the Middle East' by removing Hussein and promoting gradual reforms in moderate Arab states.¹¹⁷ Whether this 'grand

¹¹³ Colin Powell, NBC's 'Meet the Press', 20 October 2002; Interview with *USA Today* Editorial Board, 02 October 2002

¹¹⁴ 'President Bush outlines Iraq threat', Cincinnati, 07 October 2002; 'President discusses foreign policy matters with NATO Secretary', 21 October 2002, *Office of the Press Secretary*

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Michael Evans, 'The last stand of Saddam', *The Times*, 05 April 2003

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Julian Borger, 'General admits chemical weapons intelligence was wrong', *The Guardian*, 31 May 2003

¹¹⁷ Philip H. Gordon, 'Bush's Middle East Vision', *Survival*, Vol. 45 No 1, Spring 2003, p.155

strategy' is workable is another matter. Eliot Cohen is dismissive that Washington had the vision: 'I don't think its in their nature to be grand conceptualisers'.¹¹⁸ Perhaps more utilitarian goals could be the reason.

Before 2003, given the difficulties of removing Saddam as discussed above, 'reshaping the environment', another risk management instrument, shaped the milieu within which actors operate, simply reducing opportunities for offending and risks of harm occurring. Containment, the Clinton notion of 'keeping Saddam in a box' and no-fly zones clearly constrained his freedom of action moving south or north rather than removing him outright. For much of the 1990s, sanctions, inspectors and routine bombing pressured Iraq to divert resources to smuggling, hiding and making reconstitution of WMD more difficult. UNSCOM also placed remote monitoring sensors and cameras at suspect sites. Operation *Desert Fox* aimed to degrade/diminish WMD capabilities because it was going to 'make it more difficult for Iraq' to use WMD against its neighbours.¹¹⁹ Clinton contended that *Desert Fox* 'made it less likely that we will face these dangers in future'.¹²⁰ The importance of no-fly zones, argued Clinton, lay in the fact that 'because we effectively control the skies over Iraq, Saddam has been unable to use his air power to repress his own people or lash out at his neighbours'.¹²¹ Rather than militarily defeating an enemy, war now seemed geared toward reducing an enemy's chances to offend in future. The combined effects of inspections, *Desert Fox* and no-fly zones re-shaped Saddam's strategic environment, reduced the likelihood and opportunities for him to reconstitute WMD or commit aggression.

There was similar evidence in the Bush administration of denial of opportunities for Saddam to cause harm, this time with terrorists after 9/11 as the risks evolved. Colin Powell's Davos speech on 26 January 2003 warned that 'the more we wait, the more chance there is for this dictator with clear ties to terrorist groups including Al Qaeda to pass a weapon, share technology or use these weapons again'. Iraq posed risks similar to North Korea, which Sandy Berger and Robert Galluci called the 'world's first nuclear Wal-Mart' where terrorists could have easy access to WMD such as anthrax, sarin, and

¹¹⁸ Quoted in Dana Milbank, 'For Bush, war defines presidency', *Washington post*, 09 Mar 2003

¹¹⁹ Quotes can be found at Secretary of Defence Cohen's DoD News Briefings, 18 and 21 December 1998

¹²⁰ Address to the Nation, 16 December 1998, *Office of the Press Secretary*

¹²¹ Remarks at Y2K and Social Security Event, 28 December 1998, *Office of the Press Secretary*

VX nerve agent. If Washington's goal was to prevent terrorists acquiring WMD- Bush had identified rogue states as their 'most likely source'- , regime change arguably reduced their chances despite post-war looting. Indeed Foreign Secretary Jack Straw suggested that one reason for action is that Baghdad, 'if it ever saw opportunities to develop other terrorist networks on which it could rely on, it would do that and it would then be used against the West'.¹²² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) General Richard Myers similarly claimed: 'What we're doing in Afghanistan and what we're doing in Iraq is in many cases the same thing: we're denying terrorists sanctuary...and we're denying terrorists getting their hands on weapons of mass destruction'.¹²³ Was the war then about 'reshaping the environment' to reduce opportunities for harm than traditional conquest? Bush however seemed more intent on eliminating Hussein. Washington's haste furthermore meant the departure of inspectors who could have continually reduced opportunities for Saddam to develop WMD.

Nation-tending

Judging from the post-Saddam chaos, some suggest 'America's postwar strategy is flawed because of a failure to accept the implications of its imperial role.'¹²⁴ The underlying problem is its resistance to nation-building by emphasising 'exit strategies' and 'shrinking footprints'. These reflect however not an 'empire' leitmotif but minimalist 'nation-tending' to reduce risks rather than effectively remake nations. Post-war reconstruction had little grand design. US/UK casualties from guerrilla-style attacks caused much domestic consternation. More importantly, Senator Richard Lugar, chairing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee warned that 'to leave (Iraq), as we usually do, is to leave a situation which is an incubator for terrorism, and we're back where we were with Al Qaeda in Afghanistan'.¹²⁵ Concern with the shortcomings of reconstruction revolved not around rebuilding Iraq per se or whether America had an obligation to foster

¹²² Formal evidence given to House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee Second Report, 'Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against terrorism', Para104, HC196, published 19 December 2002, London

¹²³ Quoted in 'Iraq operations providing intelligence on Al Qaeda', *Agence France Presse*, 30 July 2003

¹²⁴ Peter Riddell, 'America must share its imperial burden', *The Times*, 24 April 2003

¹²⁵ Quoted in Thomas E. Ricks, 'Top Iraqis believed targeted in US strike', *Washington Post*, 23 June 2003

democracy, but simply the utilitarian argument that lawlessness would breed terrorism and provide terror sanctuaries.

Notwithstanding Bush's vision of post-war Iraq as beacon of democracy, the motive force for war was fear about a Saddam-Qaeda alliance or prospect of nuclear-armed Iraq. Most people 'smell that he (Bush) is not really interested in repairing the world. Everything is about the war on terrorism'. Virtually all of Bush's speeches were about protecting America rather than visions of nation-building. 'America as a beacon of optimism is gone'.¹²⁶ The goal in post-war Iraq, declared General Tommy Franks, is to 'assure ourselves that another safe haven for terrorism and export of WMD is not created'.¹²⁷ As predicted, rehabilitation of Iraq appeared to be done only to the extent necessary to keep systemic risks tolerable. Rather than America's 'mission', Bush pointedly emphasised he had no 'empire to extend or utopia to establish'.¹²⁸ He seemed more intent on 'protecting America from further harm'. This indicated a minimalist dystopian risk management approach of 'nation-tending', not a grand 'imperial' one. Although Bush implemented the maximal goal of regime change, US policy afterward reverted to a minimalist ethos. Indeed, in its hour of triumph, the Bush team appeared more 'dull' than heroic, the mood 'calm and corporate methodical problem-solving', not 'grand visions of a new world order'.¹²⁹ Even victory parades had to avoid 'triumphalism' previously associated with victorious campaigns.

III. DEFINING SUCCESS

Non-events and the minimalist criterion for success: acceptance and patience

How would war as risk management be assessed ? Theoretically, as an ongoing process seeking only non-events like avoiding harm, the benchmark for 'success' should correspondingly reflect this. I do not intend to suggest how policies could have been better implemented or whether risk management was indeed the 'best' policy.

¹²⁶ Tom Friedman, 'Repairing the world', *New York Times*, 16 Mar 2003

¹²⁷ General Tommy Franks, Address to the House Armed Services Committee, Washington D.C, 11 July 2003

¹²⁸ 'Remarks by the President at Graduation exercise of the United States military academy', West Point, New York, 01 June 2002, *Office of the Press Secretary*

¹²⁹ David Brooks, 'Bore, bore beats war, war any day in the White House', *The Times*, 10 April 2003

Lambasting policy before 9/11 for failing simply because Saddam remained in power was a red herring; the more appropriate minimalist benchmark was managing risks. We still like to think wars end decisively and neatly with formal surrenders. Unfortunately, this did not happen neither during the no-fly zone air war; *Desert Fox* nor *Iraqi Freedom*.

It is undoubtedly important to assess policy in terms of national security as well as humanitarian implications. However, evaluating policy in positivist terms of ‘solving the problem’ furnishes an incomplete picture.¹³⁰ Many argued that despite sanctions, Saddam had not abandoned his WMD. Rather, the question should be what if there were no sanctions at all?¹³¹ ‘Minimalist’ risk-management exercises are different from policy geared toward clearly defined goals or higher expectations. By focusing on avoidable harm, it emphasized preventing negative outcomes like reconstitution of WMD, rather than positive goals like rehabilitating Iraq or eliminating problems.

Critics pointed to Saddam’s survival but the more important thing was keeping Saddam contained, slowly eroding his military power and WMD capabilities and maintaining sanctions and inspections if possible. John Hillen lamented that containment ‘is inconclusive, having not yielded even the glimmer of a solution to the Iraq problem over the past eight years’.¹³² Patience was needed, counselled Defence Secretary Cohen. Indeed, Americans need to abandon their penchant for complete solutions when sometimes managing problems is the only plausible option. Attacking WMD facilities ‘won’t solve the problem of Iraq’s unconventional weapons, but they should reduce its scope’.¹³³ Senior officials, to their credit, admitted it was impossible to eliminate all WMD, which was why they used the word ‘degrade’. Madeleine Albright emphasised there was no ‘silver bullet’.¹³⁴ Indeed, we now have a concept of war where patience is a virtue and a risk management approach helps appreciate modest partial success not defined in terms of visible results or ‘perfect solutions’.

¹³⁰ See Eugene J. Caroll Jr, ‘Bombing Iraq won’t solve problem’, *Newsday*, 17 Dec 1998 or Micah Zenko, ‘Airstrike on Iraq seeks wrong goal’, *The Baltimore Sun*, 21 Feb 2001

¹³¹ Byman, ‘After the storm: US policy toward Iraq since 1991’, pp.501

¹³² Statement of Dr John Hillen, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Hearings on US Policy on Iraq, 10 March 1999, US House Armed Services Committee

¹³³ Richard N. Haass, ‘Again, half a loaf may have to do’, *The Los Angeles Times*, 09 Feb 1998; also ‘Containing Saddam’, *Washington Times*, 11 November 1998

¹³⁴ Interview on NBC’s Meet the Press with Tim Russert, 20 December 1998

Edward Luttwak might have approved, having lamented that the 1991 *Desert Storm* air campaign shifted to support the ground offensive due to a misplaced Clausewitzian emphasis on urgency and decisive battles, leaving Iraqi WMD facilities untouched. 'The novel instrument of strategic precision air attack, slow but effective in cumulative results, could not fulfil its true potential.'¹³⁵ This slow cumulative form of combat and partial results was certainly mirrored in *Desert Fox* and the no-fly zones. Furthermore, 'policing' operations over the no-fly zones are after all open-ended 'damage-limitation' operations not designed to 'solve the underlying problem', achieve clear political goals or win 'decisive battles' but simply to make the situation more tolerable by reducing the risks.¹³⁶

Criticism is also overstated and fails to appreciate that policies had actually been 'a qualified success'.¹³⁷ Despite Iraqi evasion and cheating, UNSCOM destroyed reportedly 817 of Iraq's 819 Scud missiles, chemical weapons, and generally made it more difficult for reconstitution. Sanctions also limited Iraqi military capability. A December 2001 National Intelligence Estimate concluded that 'coalition bombing, IAEA and UNSCOM inspections significantly set back the (Iraqi WMD) effort'.¹³⁸ However, the harm to Iraqi civilians cannot be discounted.

As we have seen, risk-management is about preventing and avoiding negative outcomes. Success is thus measured in non-events. Inevitably, this complicates outcome specification, for non-events obviously are not as clear-cut as removing Saddam. In August 1999, a bipartisan Congressional group wrote to President Clinton, lamenting 'continued drift in US policy toward Iraq'.¹³⁹ Anthony Cordesman opined after *Desert Fox*, 'we have not set out what we're doing beyond degrade, we haven't defined what success is'.¹⁴⁰ However, clearly defined 'success' cannot be reconciled with risk-

¹³⁵ Edward Luttwak, 'Toward post-heroic warfare', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1995, Vol. 74 No.3, p.116-120

¹³⁶ Richard Haass, *Intervention: the use of American military force in the post-Cold War world*, (Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p.60; Caygill, 'Perpetual police?', p.80

¹³⁷ See Cordesman, *Iraq: sanctions and beyond*, pp.211; Byman, 'After the storm: US policy toward Iraq since 1991', pp.513, and White, *Crises after the storm*

¹³⁸ National Intelligence Estimate, *Foreign Missile Developments and the ballistic Threat through 2015*, December 2001, http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/other_products/Unclassifiedballisticmissilefinal.htm

¹³⁹ Cited in Byman, 'After the storm', pp.493

¹⁴⁰ Cited in Ian Black, 'Caged but for how long?', *Guardian*, 21 Dec 1998

management. This was active military containment which did not necessarily look like full-scale war.

A more ‘minimalist’ yardstick of managing risks should replace the stark margin between success and failure. Indeed, in February 1998, the Clinton Administration backed away from using force to coerce Saddam to unconditionally accept inspectors. Instead, the bar was set even lower: military force served to simply reduce Iraqi WMD capacity and generally constrain Iraqi action, leaving Washington to decide when ‘success’ had come about.¹⁴¹ It is hard to establish a clear marker as a result. Clinton repeatedly argued that sanctions had denied Saddam \$120 billion that would *otherwise* have gone into WMD programs: a non-event. Although maximal goals like Saddam’s ouster were not met until April 2003, at least minimal ones and non-events like preventing Iraqi aggression were. The best that can be achieved in managing risks is that no harm results. Saddam had not invaded his neighbours for more than a decade. This was progress from a regime which had done so almost every year since 1979. Policy would be better off judged not in terms of ‘perfect solutions’ but rather in terms of how a particular risk is managed.

Even after achieving the ‘perfect solution’ deposing Saddam, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, interviewed by *Vanity Fair* magazine on 09 May 2003, reeled off a list of non-events as successes: no environmental disaster, Israel was not attacked, no urban warfare in Baghdad or use of WMD, Turkey did not intervene, no friendly governments collapsed. Unsure of its convictions or even the goal, public relief, rather than rejoicing normally associated with victory in war, accompanied US troops into Baghdad as the now customary ‘public wobble’ evaporated. The war also created the biggest non-event in recent times: where were Saddam’s WMD ? Without finding these weapons, did Saddam pose more a ‘risk’ than a concrete ‘threat’ then? Indeed, at this writing in August 2003, the failure to find concrete proof of WMD in fact appeared to vindicate the patient risk management approach towards Baghdad over the years. While more convincing evidence may yet be found, it had appeared to produce the desired non-event by constraining the full reconstitution of Iraqi WMD programs and the weapons themselves. If so, then there was perhaps no need for impatient invasion. Just ‘plans’ for programs

¹⁴¹ Richard Haass, ‘An Iraq Attack Ensures Nothing’, *Boston Globe*, 15 February 1998

alone, were rather different from a WMD threat touted as so ‘imminent’ that the Bush Administration rejected more inspections.¹⁴²

An Ongoing, cyclical process

On 3 March 1991, President George H.W. Bush reported to Congress that ‘aggression is defeated, the war is over’. However, a month before, Bush intimated to his diary: ‘it hasn’t been a clean end; there is no battleship *Missouri* surrender’. ¹⁴³ Events from late 1998 certainly eluded easy closure since war as risk management leads to operations of indefinite duration to continually manage new risks or resurgent old ones. Risks cannot be totally eliminated. The finishing line is not easily apparent in cyclical risk-management processes which are ongoing and non-linear. This defied conventional appraisal of definitive end-goals as the measure of policy ‘success’ or conclusion of wars. The vague criteria for measuring progress in *Desert Fox* – ‘degrading and diminishing’ – also left open the possibility that more action would follow assessments that Baghdad once again could cause harm. Cabinet officials Albright, Berger and Cohen declared US commitment to use force against Iraq was ‘open-ended’. ¹⁴⁴ Tony Blair warned that if increased Iraqi WMD activity were detected, military action would result again. The campaign supposedly set back Baghdad’s ballistic missile program by a year.

However, bombing created more risks in the sense that any international consensus for inspections was now undermined irrevocably: the postulated ‘boomerang effect’. Iraq paradoxically became freer after the bombing to continue its WMD efforts without having to divert resources to hiding from inspectors, and portrayed itself as victim of superpower bullying. The alleged use of UNSCOM information to generate targets also greatly discredited the international arms control system as a cover for US espionage, undermining trust in international cooperation. *Desert Fox* thus created ‘one of the worst possible outcomes:’ a discredited monitoring agency unable to re-enter Iraq,

¹⁴² An intriguing theory has been raised by Saddam’s aides who claimed that he did in fact destroy his WMD but deliberately kept the world guessing to divide the international community and deter US invasion.

¹⁴³ Quoted in Gerard Baker, ‘Analysis: Did the Gulf War really end?’, *New York Times*, 15 October 2002

¹⁴⁴ Thomas Lippman, ‘US warns Iraq of more raids’, *Washington Post*, 21 Dec 1998

low-intensity undeclared air war, further divided Security Council and continuation of sanctions with huge humanitarian impact.¹⁴⁵

Since the announced end of the 70-hour *Desert Fox* campaign, low profile but robust sorties continued over the no-fly zones against air defence assets which hardly seemed linked to *Desert Fox* goals of degrading WMD facilities. Greatest unease was expressed over the intermittent bombing of no-fly zones, derided as pointless with no end in sight.¹⁴⁶ Critics argued this was not 'conclusively linked to an end game in Iraq'.¹⁴⁷ This is an unfair assessment from the risk-management perspective, which suggests patient open-ended commitment and ambiguous results such as avoiding harm, not decisive instant solutions. Operations over no-fly zones appeared consigned to a fate of 'perpetual policing' which seeks in fact to 'avoid decisive battle' of the Clausewitzian paradigm. Rather than a clear-cut political goal in mind, it served to manage a condition of risks and turbulence that might affect security interests.¹⁴⁸ This dispensed with the artificial setting of maximalist goals of problem-resolution in an intractable situation such as Iraq when the more realistic aim should be risk management. Expectations could then be managed better and results judged more appropriately.

Regime change by April 2003 seemed to draw the finishing line clearly and more decisively in the sand. However, just as there was a 'rolling' start to the war, there was a 'rolling victory'.¹⁴⁹ There was no neat tidy end where all guns fell silent. US generals lolled around in Saddam's palaces, clearly a symbol of victory. Yet there were no vanquished to sign formal capitulation documents which for much of the modern era, had defined the conclusion of wars. A month after President Bush declared the end of major combat in May 2003, US forces were still engaged in numerous sweeps to eliminate pockets of resistance north of Baghdad which had inflicted increasing US casualties. Disappointment and puzzlement greeted these operations as public opinion is driven by clean-ends and Bush's proclamation appeared to provide that. Two months after Bush's

¹⁴⁵ Susan Wright, 'The hijacking of UNSCOM', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 55 No. 4, July/August 1999, <http://www.thebulletin.org/issues/1999/mj99/mj99wright.html>

¹⁴⁶ Micah Zenko, 'Firing Blanks at the Iraqi military', *The Chicago Tribune*, 29 March 2001, described no-fly zones as 'a counterproductive mission in search of an overall strategy'

¹⁴⁷ See testimony of Thomas A. Kearney and John Hillen before the House of Representatives Committee of Armed Services, 'US Policy toward Iraq', 10 March 1999

¹⁴⁸ See Kaygill, 'Perpetual policing', p.74-76

¹⁴⁹ Peter Slevin and Bradley Graham, 'Rolling victory key to US endgame', *Washington Post*, 04 April 2003

proclamation, the US ground commander in Iraq admitted 'we're still at war'. Furthermore, as President Bush declared in his dramatic landing on the carrier *Lincoln* on 01 May 2003, 'the battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror... and still goes on'. If war was about the risk of terrorists acquiring WMD, that risk was certainly not eliminated. Reports suggested WMD was smuggled to Syria or other groups in Iraq. The post-war chaos led IAEA chief Mohamed El Baradei to warn repeatedly that looting of WMD installations especially at Tuwaitha could mean WMD falling into terrorist hands. Former weapons inspector Terry Taylor worried that looting increased the original proliferation risk and there was a 'real risk that certain materials could leak out' of Iraq.¹⁵⁰ Out of work scientists might also work with other rogue states or terrorist groups. The world not much safer than before although much of Tuwaitha's nuclear material was eventually recovered. The US invasion could also create backlash such as the May 2003 bombings in Riyadh and Casablanca, and aid terrorist recruitment. International cooperation on terrorism could also be undermined although Paris and Washington later appeared to paper over their differences in this respect. Rather than conclusively solving the problem through regime change, new risks were created through the 'boomerang effect'. This is certainly suggestive of the inconclusive nature of risk management.

IV. Conclusion

From the evidence presented in this chapter, risk-management provided an alternative explanation to recent 'wars' over Iraq in certain respects. Previously distinct sets of proliferation and stability risks posed by Baghdad during the late Clinton/early Bush period became interlinked after 9/11 with terrorism and created significant analytical difficulties for this study. Nonetheless, these dangers, it was demonstrated, were better understood through risk components than threat components. Policymakers were more concerned with risk components yet plumped for threat-elimination instead.

While largely dissimilar in strategic context and eventual results, wars from 1998 until 2003 nonetheless shared several features of risk management worth highlighting. It

¹⁵⁰ See Oliver Burkeman, 'Iraqi weapons general arrested and concern grows over inspection chaos', *The Guardian*, 28 April 2003. Also see the report on 'Nuclear Nightmare in Iraq', *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, 28 May 2003, which highlighted the 'security risks' and the golden opportunity for terrorists amid the chaos

was anticipatory in nature, concerned with probabilistic thinking in terms of counter-factuals, and preventing unwanted futures. Indeed, the language and justifications used by both administrations were strikingly similar whether justifying *Desert Fox* or *Iraqi Freedom*. Contributing to anticipatory actions, aerial and satellite surveillance and inspections provided information on the level of risks Iraq posed, until the Bush Administration tired of the process. The precautionary principle was applied to the letter especially after 9/11. Rumsfeld sounded in particular like the archetypal risk manager. Bush, like Clinton, saw war as a utilitarian tool to avert harm rather than achieve grand visions or justice. Post-war reconstruction was confused, verging on more modest nation-tending, rather than nation-building. Before 9/11, Saddam Hussein was managed by reshaping the environment through inspections, sanctions, no-fly zones and bombing. This simply reduced his opportunities to cause harm, despite ostracising him throughout. Even regime change, argued US officials, was a measure designed to reduce opportunities for terrorists to acquire WMD or sanctuary from Iraq.

In evaluating risk-management, it should be seen as a 'minimalist' ongoing process of avoiding harm, not attaining positivist end goals. Thus, non-events before 9/11 such as caging Saddam could be considered a 'success'. The much-criticised open-ended nature of policing no-fly zones could receive less brickbats if understood as a non-linear process of management. Even with regime change, some outcomes were non-events indicative of an existing risk rather than a fully formed threat. Indeed, the failure to find WMD at this writing in July 2003 vindicated the patient risk management approach over the years: creating a 'non-event' in which preventing the reconstitution of Saddam's WMD was apparently successful. There was even evidence of the 'boomerang effect' as regime change, instead of permanent solving the problem, only created new sets of risks with missing WMD and increased Al Qaeda recruitment.

Before 9/11, the Bush Administration in fact 'ended up affirming the basic course set by Democrats' on no-fly zones.¹⁵¹ Containment, rather than regime change was the de facto policy despite rumblings to the contrary. What was an almost textbook risk management strategy in the late Clinton/early Bush years however turned into threat-elimination by 2003 under the impact of 9/11 and the drawing together of analogous but

¹⁵¹ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.199

not necessarily similar sets of risks. This revealed flaws in risk management. Policymakers became too impatient and escalated towards the other end of the ladder: threat elimination. Problematically, risk perceptions diverged even among close allies. Acting on the precautionary principle and worst case scenarios without rigorous assessment in retrospect appeared unnecessary. Linking the security risks Iraq posed, with those from terrorism was perhaps unwarranted in hindsight.

Yet, the language, rationale and negative ethos of *Iraqi Freedom* certainly bore classic hallmarks of risk management, even more so than *Desert Fox* or the no-fly zones operations. Warning of the 'risks of inaction', President Bush sought only to 'prevent the worst' (the exact phrase Beck used to describe the negative mindset of Risk Society) while certainly making the right noises about the need for precautionary actions- all intrinsic components of a risk management package. After all, Bush's emphasising the Iraq issue at the UN, backed by military force, had already produced the return of inspectors for the first time in 4 years with even France and Germany suggesting an expansion of no-fly zones. However, the impatient means selected- combined arms ground invasion and regime change- were not suited for managing risks, reflecting once again the need for a more subtle concept of war. Even then, rather than invalidating the model of risk management, the continued difficulties in finding a 'smoking gun'- a fully reconstituted WMD program, weapons and/or compelling terrorist links - at this writing, suggested that Saddam Hussein in fact posed risks, rather than an imminent threat. A more patient risk management war-form - inspections, continuous surveillance and occasional military force where necessary, routinely policing no-fly zones to 'reshape the environment', appreciating partial results - like that practised before 9/11 and even arguably, in the months before regime change, would thus have been more appropriate than full-scale threat-elimination. After all, no one seemed to notice the 'small war' already going on with Iraq.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the validity of the main hypotheses advanced in Chapter One and key summary findings of the study will firstly be re-evaluated through a structured cross-comparison of case study results. Some concerns were left unresolved, some admittedly problematic but none of which fatally undermined the hypotheses as a whole. The second section discusses research limitations and suggests future research avenues where theories developed here could be enhanced and applied. This is done by way of a mini-case study of NGOs and a shorter analysis of rhetorical ‘wars’ on AIDS and drugs. The final section provides a broad overview and recap of the study, and then suggests some cautionary policy-relevant lessons. This draws to a close a theoretical enterprise that began with a perceived need to reconceptualise war in response to real-world events.

This study has sought to highlight the relevance of concepts of ‘risk management’ to the ‘transformation of war debate’ as risk societies in the West and the international system increasingly reoriented toward concerns about ‘security risks’. The additional challenge it posed related to conventional understandings of war such as noble ‘heroic’ purposes and the desire for clearly defined outcomes in the form of surrender ceremonies. War as risk management instead is minimalist and involved less than heroic strategies without clear prospect for closure. The thesis also demonstrated that classical ‘net assessment’ or specific threat-based approaches of the past could not readily explain recent wars where the enemy’s military capability hardly posed serious challenges and intentions were underemphasised, misread or simply unknown. Cumulative evidence presented here suggested that risk-based approaches composed of probabilities and consequences provided a better alternative understanding of war.

Such an approach largely persisted through the change in US administrations in 2001- the Bush White House even accentuated some aspects of risk such as the role of precaution in justifying war. Indeed, over Afghanistan some analysts suggest it ‘implemented the new way of war even more completely than in Kosovo. The Clinton

Administration at least agreed to a major post war US peacekeeping contingent'.¹ Similarly, this study found continuity where one might normally expect to see discontinuity.

Many compelling theses on the transformation of war and international security have been suggested over the past decade. It was certainly not the intention here to dislodge any of them from the pantheon of works deserving of study and respect. Rather the goal was to contribute to them. No effort has also been made here to deny that subjective perceptions of policy makers or bureaucratic infighting had an influence on policy outcomes and there are many existing analyses of such decision-making processes. This thesis instead adopted a broader investigative angle and sought to highlight the presence of recurrent patterns in warfare across different recent cases that were consistent with risk management strategies. By also emphasising the theoretical benefits IR can derive from an inter-disciplinary approach, hopefully it served to stimulate more debate and research on this hitherto neglected, yet increasingly significant, dimension of 'risk management' in war and International Relations.

I. Review of Summary Findings

Emphasising and highlighting the elements of 'risk management' in war, this study helped address conceptual loopholes from conventional notions of war in understanding contemporary warfare such as the desire for neat tidy ends and visible successes. Furthermore, the explanatory power of Realism does not extend to wars such as Kosovo and Iraq, lambasted by the likes of Henry Kissinger and Stephen Walt mainly because there was neither a direct or imminent threat to the United States. Utilising a 'risk management' framework developed in Chapter Three, this study highlighted certain aspects of recent wars that could be seen in a different light with greater explanatory power. The broad findings indicated that while empirical evidence surveyed in the case studies validated theoretical predictions to varying degrees, these reflected in the main a transition to war as risk management. Key characteristics were evaluated in this study and

¹ Stephen Biddle, 'The New Way of War?', Review Article, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81 No. 3, May/June 2002, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020501faessay8063/stephen-biddle/the-new-way-of-war.html>

the findings detailed below. The two main hypotheses presented in the introduction will be re-evaluated in light of evidence presented. These inter-linked hypotheses were:

- i) **Under specific circumstances and parameters, Britain and America's recent wars in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq bore hallmarks of risk management in terms of impetus for action; justification provided and modes of implementation; and criteria for evaluating success.**
- ii) **Risk management features 'fit' better with contemporary wars than classical notions of war**

The findings were as follows:

Impetus

- i) In combination with an increasingly probabilistic culture focused on managing 'risk scenarios', the main impetus for military actions were 'systemic' risks relating to globalisation such as free flow of people and materials across porous borders, and the demise of Cold War constraints. Previous chapters highlighted the difficulties of conceptualising dangers purely in terms of 'threat' components. This is not to claim that intentions and capabilities were no longer relevant. Rather, this is a logical consequence of a post-Cold War world where classic 'net assessment' of threats in actuarial terms of counting military hardware is no longer as applicable: a fact acknowledged by the US *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. In none of the case studies did opponents pose serious and imminent survival threats in terms of military capabilities. Iraq, in particular, posed risks which did not warrant its premature elevation to an imminent threat requiring regime change. Intentions of adversaries, while still important, were misread or underemphasised in favour of 'risk' components – probabilities and consequences. This often

involved a combination of ‘anticipatory horizon-scanning’ for any possible security risks, and a desire to avoid repetition of ‘tombstone-style’ risks happening again.

Implementation and justifications given

- ii) The proactive language of risk used in justifying wars from Kosovo to Iraq was broadly similar. Policymakers in question, whether Bill Clinton, Tony Blair or George W. Bush, employed the same catch-all phrase for action, repeated almost ad verbatim in all the cases surveyed: ‘the risks of inaction outweigh the risks of action’. Probabilistic future-oriented ‘forward thinking’ in terms of counter-factuals and alternative scenarios was present as theorised. In case studies surveyed, there was evidence of a shift from previous ‘reactive’ approaches to more ‘proactive’ ones. NATO became a proactive alliance over Kosovo; counterterrorism in Afghanistan became proactive; while ‘preventive’ military action was launched against Iraq as early as December 1998. This fostered an approach to war seeking to ‘prevent’, ‘avert’, or ‘avoid’ rather than attain ‘heroic’ noble goals normally associated with war. Britain and America acted to avert ‘potential victimhood’ of some hypothesised future harm, taking preventive victim-avoidance strategies to avoid being a victim again at the hands of Milosevic, Bin Laden or Hussein.
- iii) Rather than the ‘smoking gun’ that many associated with conventional notions of war, Iraq in 2003 represented the clearest IR case of the precautionary principle: in Rumsfeld’s words, ‘absolute proof cannot be a precondition for action’. The Kosovo campaign in 1999 also exhibited some indications of the principle as both NGOs and NATO preferred to overestimate the worst. However evidence of ethnic cleansing was more concrete than Saddam Hussein’s links to Al Qaeda. As for the Afghan campaign in 2001, it was hardly precautionary in nature since the US had been attacked first on that fateful September day. Nonetheless,

Government dossiers acknowledged they offered less than evidentiary proof and officials stressed the need for taking actions under the domain of uncertainty. Iraq and Kosovo both represented ‘false positives’ as precautionary actions which ultimately proved to be less than urgent or necessary.

- iv) Continuous surveillance served as the vehicle of risk management, providing information necessary to anticipate and act on who or what constituted uncertain risks. For more than a decade over Iraq, notable instances were the long-term surveillance Operations *Northern Watch* and *Southern Watch*, which elided easily into military actions from 1998-2003. However, regime change ended any further surveillance. Kosovo was monitored by a precursor air surveillance mission before *Allied Force* and continuously since for possible risk factors. Satellite and aerial surveillance provided much information on terrorist movements and infrastructure in Afghanistan and other potential havens elsewhere, aiding in targeted assassinations and air strikes.
- v) War as risk management employed utilitarian ‘less than heroic’ strategies aimed at simply reducing systemic risks. These included the ‘routine’ application of force, ‘reshaping the environment’ and ‘nation-tending’. Rather than the existential struggle previously associated with wars, war to manage risks became ‘routine’ in two respects – it was largely passionless, instrumental and almost familiar. This was especially noted in the low-key daily skirmishes over Iraqi no-fly zones. Kosovo was another ‘routine’ war which hardly engaged the enthusiasm of Western publics. In Afghanistan, terrorism seemed like another everyday risk to be managed, just like crime.
- vi) ‘Reshaping the environment’ served to reduce systemic risks by managing conditions of instability and turbulence, rather than previous visible

criteria of gauging wars such as destroying enemy hardware. Most evident in Afghanistan, this meant shrinking zones of sanctuary and generally creating a less permissive environment for terrorists. The Kosovo campaign ultimately managed the risks in question by denying Milosevic freedom of action in the region although militarily speaking the campaign was not successful in terms of 'tank-plinking'. Coalition air operations over no-fly zones prior to regime change certainly constrained Baghdad's ability to harm its neighbours despite no apparent end-games associated with war. Regime change in 2003 could be construed as reducing opportunities for terrorists to gain WMD or safe haven from Iraq, although Washington was more concerned with eliminating Saddam.

- vii) 'Nation-tending' was most obvious in Afghanistan. As predicted, Washington's overriding goal was simply to reduce risks by making it inhospitable to terrorists rather than properly rehabilitate the country. Iraq garnered more attention but utilitarian concerns raised again revolved more around lawlessness breeding terrorists rather than moral obligations to rebuild that country. Kosovo experienced the most successful reconstruction due to several factors: the war and rebuilding was more multi-national in nature, America was willing to subcontract reconstruction to the UN and EU. Kosovo suggests perhaps the most appropriate form of multilateral nation-tending reducing the footprint of individual powers and managing risks in the process, without actually solving underlying problems. This not only lent more legitimacy, but also helped in stability operations notwithstanding the difficulties of coalition warfare and war by committee.
- viii) Risks were personified in all cases: Milosevic in Kosovo, Hussein in Iraq, Bin Laden in Afghanistan. However, it seemed more important to reduce opportunities for their offending rather than focus on bringing these 'errant' individuals to justice. Despite indictments for war crimes,

Milosevic remained in power until October 2000, tolerated as long as he posed no serious risks. Kosovo proved the best example of this. Capturing Bin Laden would strike a mortal blow to Al Qaeda but military operations became more focused on disrupting terrorists rather than capturing the 'evil one' as Bush promised initially. 'Prevention' rather than 'revenge' or 'justice' was the core utilitarian concern. As long as the risks posed by Baghdad were tolerable and since there were no other feasible options, Saddam was kept throughout the 1990s in his 'box' rather than removed despite his 'evil' tag. Regime change in April 2003 constituted the strongest counter-argument that personifying risks now meant elimination, not management. Yet the Bush Administration's redefinition of 'regime change' in October 2002, suggested no matter how implausible, that it could conceivably live with a disarmed regime posing less risks.

Outcome evaluation

- ix) 'Non-events' and avoiding harm were, as predicted, key criterion for success rather than 'perfect solutions' and surrender ceremonies normally associated with war endings. Patience, acceptance of limits and partial results were required. This minimalist definition was especially relevant to Afghanistan. Success was measured in what does not happen (terrorist incidents) than what does. The Kosovo campaign ended with the vague 'mother of all compromises' and regional instability was largely averted. Successfully managing Iraq before regime change was also negatively defined: preventing Saddam committing aggression, or WMD reconstitution. Even while regime change departed from the 'minimalist' script of risk management, key outcomes were non-events: where was Iraq's WMD? While paper trails and more concrete evidence may yet be found, the failure to find a fully reconstituted WMD program and weapons themselves may in fact vindicate the patient risk management processes undertaken over the years producing the desired non-event.

- x) The ‘boomerang effect’ meant risk management was cyclical with no clearly-defined endpoints normally associated with war. Risks cannot be eliminated; only reduced and constantly managed. While risk of regional instability was ultimately reduced in Kosovo, more risks were initially created through accelerated expulsions. Attempts to root out terrorists in Afghanistan only dispersed the networks underground and elsewhere, paradoxically making them more difficult to track in a campaign without a finite end. Open-ended ‘police actions’ over Iraqi no-fly zones typified the lack of endpoints. *Desert Fox* created more risks by undermining UNSCOM inspections and Saddam was paradoxically freer to pursue WMD programs. Even an ostensible threat-elimination operation to conclusively solve the Saddam problem - regime change in 2003 - only created new risks, for terrorists could acquire WMD in the post-war chaos.

The theoretical framework used to explore these issues reflected the widely-held notion that strategic studies was essentially eclectic in nature, receptive to ideas and concepts from other social sciences. Furthermore, new developments in theory and the world meant that novel approaches were necessary. The theory adopted was not in any way reified by this thesis. Instead, it merely served as a useful mode of investigating systematically what seemed obscure or tenuous links not only between case studies but also the disciplines of International Relations, sociology and criminology.

II. Research limitations and future research avenues

Networks and Netwars

In this section I suggest how risk management concepts presented earlier could be enhanced or modified by drawing upon two other academic perspectives on ‘war’. As discussed in Chapter Three, the process of risk management is multi-faceted and complex with so many related concepts it is impossible to utilise all of them without sacrificing quality for quantity. It is hoped this section helps address some gaps in the theoretical prism adopted in preceding case studies, as well as demonstrate its wider validity.

Rhetorical 'wars' against drugs or AIDS will be discussed later. Here we address campaigns waged by trans-national NGO coalitions against what they perceive to be unacceptable situations in war that pose risks, and how states respond. Three purposes are served here:

Firstly, this thesis has so far advanced the notion that war is changing and needs to be reconceptualised. An open mind receptive to new ideas was advocated. Its basic premise of war nonetheless remained a rather conventional one involving use of military force by armies. Less conventional commentators now claim to discern an age of networks and 'social netwars'.² 'Network-centric' warfare has admittedly been fashionable in British and American military thinking. 'Netwar' however refers to emerging modes of conflict at societal levels, short of traditional military warfare. Protagonists involve not armies but small groups or dispersed organisations using network forms of organisation, strategy, and technologies attuned to the globalised information age. All too often, attention has centred on terrorist networks or drug cartels. A much-neglected positive side is trans-national NGO coalitions utilising the tools of globalisation to coordinate campaigns against landmines and cluster bombs.³ This mini-case study thus seeks to extend the applicability of risk management concepts to these 'social netwars' which has not yet been attempted in academic discourse.

Secondly, previous case studies have focused on managing systemic risks relating to globalisation. In recognition of the myriad ways risk can manifest within war, I attempt to revisit tactical risks arising from cluster bombs and landmines whose significance has admittedly been underemphasised in my case studies on Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, these ostensibly tactical risks can now take on an almost systemic factor with globalisation and trans-national networks. Analysing NGO advocacy on these issues thus contributes a new dimension of globalisation and trans-national organisation to the already well-worn debate on tactical risks of casualties and 'collateral damage'.

Thirdly, case studies analysed so far could be criticised for being too 'Realist' and state-centric. This had been necessary both in order to set the necessarily controlled

² See for example John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, 'The Advent of netwar revisited', in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds), *Networks and Netwars: the future of terror, crime and militancy*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), p.5; also Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996)

³ A point made by Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 'the Advent of netwar revisited'

research parameters required here, and also to address more obvious and pressing issues of military force today which are still largely in state hands. This is not to suggest non-state actors such as NGOs have no role in today's globalised security environment. NGOs in fact add some balance to this thesis, incorporating the 'cosmopolitan manifesto' and constructivist perspective that also characterised Beck's work. Indeed, case studies so far emphasised the 'risk' aspect of Beck's *Risk Society*. It neglected the 'society' aspect and the formation of new forms of 'risk communities'. NGOs also comprise what Beck termed 'subpolitics' where citizen initiative groups campaign outside established politics. The template of risk management employed in this study has furthermore been limited to directly reducing risks through military means. It inevitably downplayed other risk management methods such as 'risk distribution'. Risk after all also presents market opportunities.⁴ Risks are now distributed by states to 'risk-fighting businesses' such as US-based RONCO Consulting specialising in de-mining, and through cooperation with specialist NGO de-miners.

Two previously unexplored elements of risk management unearthed from this mini-case study- 'risk communities' and 'risk distribution'- provide theoretical enhancements and research potential for the future, while two selected aspects of the existing theoretical prism are broadly applicable- risk surveillance and concern with victimhood. What follows will be a brief discussion of these concepts.

Conceptual issues

The December 1997 Ottawa Convention was the first legally binding disarmament instrument to ban a widely deployed weapon of war: anti-personnel landmines. In March 1999, it became the quickest major international agreement ever to enter into force. Anti-personnel landmines (APMs) are defined in the Convention as 'a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons'. Britain has ratified the treaty but America has prevaricated. APMs cannot discriminate between combatants and non-combatants. The random nature of risk that remains long after the conflict is over, particularly concerned campaigners.

⁴ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p46

Although not addressed at Ottawa, cluster bombs and unexploded ordnance (UXO) constitute additional risks in the long litany of landmine-related woes. A cluster bomb is a metal canister dropped from aircraft, or artillery. At pre-set times or altitudes, it releases sub-munitions of bomblets or minelets and are mostly used against area targets, troop concentrations and soft-skinned vehicles. These fall by gravity often unguided.⁵ However, not all bomblets detonate. Many 'duds' lie on the ground, in effect functioning like 'victim-activated' landmines. The International Committee on the Red Cross reported that by May 2000 in Kosovo, 151 injuries were caused by unexploded bomblets.⁶ Clearing bomblets is even more dangerous than removing landmines. This caused the first British fatalities in Kosovo. NATO used about 1400 cluster bombs in *Allied Force*. More than 60% were American CBU-87 bombs. 52% of all RAF bombs dropped were RBL755 cluster bombs. The June 1999 Human Rights Watch (HRW) report on cluster bombs in Kosovo, *Ticking Time-bombs*, sent a clear message of lurking risks.

Afghanistan was the most mined country in the world even before *Enduring Freedom*. HRW reported that US forces dropped approximately 1228 cluster bombs between October 2001 and March 2002. From October 2001 to November 2002, at least 127 civilians as well as two deminers were killed or injured by cluster bomblets.⁷ US food packages and unexploded cluster bomblets also have a similar yellow colour which attract children. The NGO coalition International Campaign to Ban Landmines has called for Washington to stop using such weapons.

In April 2003, the UK confirmed it had used in Iraq the L20 cluster bomblet on the AS90 self-propelled howitzer and at least 88 airdropped cluster bombs. HRW charged that US forces had acknowledged dropping some 1500 air-dropped cluster munitions but had not provided adequate information on ground-launched clusters from

⁵ General Sir Hugh Beach 'Cluster bombs: A case for banning?', *ISIS Briefing Paper 79*, February 2001, p7

⁶ ICRC figures cited in Beach, 'Cluster bombs', p11

⁷ See 'Fatally Flawed: Cluster bombs and their use by the United States in Afghanistan', *Human Rights Watch*, December 2002, available at <http://hrw.org/reports/2002/us-afghanistan/>

its Multiple Launch Rocket Systems.⁸ Even before *Iraqi Freedom*, Iraq was already considered one of the most mine-affected regions in the world.

While previous restrictions on weapons systems were instigated by states, the trans-national NGO coalition, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), was crucial, underlined by its receipt of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. However, NGO influence should not be overstated. Major powers such as the US, and China have yet to sign the treaty. Canada's sponsorship was also crucial, retrieving the issue from the Conference on Conventional Weapons (CCW) where it languished among anti-ban powers.

Nonetheless, UN Deputy Secretary-General Louis Frechette in 1999 described the emergence of NGOs in the late 20th century as a phenomena as important as the rise of the nation-state in earlier centuries.⁹ The Nobel Committee on awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to ICBL lauded it for helping form with governments a new form of diplomacy to deal with global concerns. Research into NGO advocacy in security and military issues resulting in binding international law is minimal. NGO roles in issues such as trade and the environment are however relatively well documented.¹⁰ The landmines and cluster bombs issue is thus important for denoting a significant NGO inroad into the heart of state sovereignty: military methods and weapons.¹¹

Furthermore, the ICBL was a 'seminal case of a worldwide social netwar'.¹² Trans-national NGO coalitions using network-centric tactics such as 'swarming', anti-globalisation protests by networked NGOs have also taken on the trappings of 'war' with the so-called 'Battle of Seattle' in November 1999 at the World Trade Organisation meeting and NGOs use of 'media special forces' adept at perception management.

Yet, IR theories do not satisfactorily explain the APMs issue. The notion that perceptions of crisis/shock engender ideational or normative change privileges the state

⁸ See 'Iraq: Clusters info needed from US, UK', *Human Rights Watch*, 29 April 2003, <http://hrw.org/press/2003/04/us-uk042903.htm>

⁹ Remarks at the 52nd Annual UN Department of Public Information and NGOs Conference, 'Challenges of a Globalised World', 17-18 September 1999, www.conferenceofngos.org/ngomeet/dpingo.htm, accessed 20 April 2003

¹⁰ Kenneth Rutherford, 'A Theoretical Examination of disarming states: NGOs and Anti-personnel Landmines', *International Politics*, Vol. 37 No. 4, Dec 2000, p.472

¹¹ Rutherford, 'A Theoretical Examination of disarming states', p.472

¹² Arquilla and Ronfeld 'The advent of netwar revisited', p.5

in identifying a problem. On APMs, society voiced concerns first. The standard unit of security is normally the state. Individual security is usually assumed subordinate to higher-level political structures of the state.¹³ However, as we shall see, the APMs issue placed 'human security' uppermost. Realism's strict demarcation between domestic and international spheres, and neo-realism's focus on material capabilities can hardly accommodate non-state actors and societal concerns about risk and probabilities impinging on state actions, especially in military issues.¹⁴ Rational Choice Theory is deficient as it cultivates an illusion of control and understanding, induced by 'scientific mathematical' approaches and the supposedly limited number of possible outcomes. It is only suitable when the international scene is relatively settled, the number of actors is limited to states and does not include new non-state actors working from below.¹⁵ Complex interdependence theory does recognise the role of trans-national actors but since Keohane and Nye's *Trans-national Relations and World Politics*, the focus has been mostly economic or environmental. The strength of risk theory thus lies in its ability to analyse both states and non-state actors in the globalisation of security risks.

NGOs and globalisation of risk

The historically specific context of globalisation created the necessary trans-national social space for a free-floating risk consciousness to lodge itself onto landmines and cluster bombs. Without a strict central organising authority, globalisation has augmented the role of NGOs in problems which states are unable or unwilling to address. The significance of global civil society lies in trans-national political networks who are in a sense 'imagined communities' challenging the state-system from below.¹⁶ With globalisation, free movement of weapons, landmines and arms traders make it difficult for states alone to track these risks. The concern with landmine and UXO risks also had to do with the post-Cold War focus on internal wars rather than bipolar competition. With an estimated 80 to 100 million landmines scattered across 64 countries worldwide, these certainly pose global problems. It is thought there is one victim every 22 minutes.

¹³ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, (2nd Ed), (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p.54

¹⁴ See Richard Price, 'Reversing the Gun sights: Transnational Civil Society targets landmines', *International Organisation*, Vol. 52 No. 3, Summer 1998, p.613

¹⁵ See Anatol Lieven, 'Nasty Little Wars', *The National Interest*, Issue 62, Winter 2000/01, p.75

¹⁶ Price, 'Reversing the gun sights', p.613

Information Technology (IT), central to globalisation, will be a major building block for 'empowering non-state actors' according to the US National Intelligence Council's December 2000 report, *Global Trends 2015*. States will have less control over information flows and NGOs will play increasingly larger roles in international affairs and war. The ICBL certainly demonstrated how NGO coalitions use communications technologies to increase opportunities for changing state behaviour.¹⁷ ICBL was greatly helped in their day-to-day organisation and advocacy through email and its website although face-to-face meetings were still crucial. Working trans-nationally with IT, ICBL turned a growing awareness by aid workers about landmine and UXO risks into a grass-roots movement and then a global cause for 'social netwar'.

The applicability of existing risk management concepts

Averting potential victimhood

According to former Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, the basic unit of analysis in 'human security' is individual human needs, not the state. Once an ostensibly military issue like landmines is seen in humanitarian terms, non-traditional players are brought into the picture, such as human rights and development NGOs. As they frame their concerns about military practices in 'humanitarian' terms, states will be hard pressed to justify themselves. The concept of human security is in the final analysis about risks to the human body. Indeed, in the 2002 Landmine Monitor Report- the flagship ICBL annual publication- the term 'mine risk education' now replaced the previously used 'mine awareness'. This meant to encourage communities to behave in such a way as to reduce the risks from landmines.¹⁸

This resonated with Risk Society's concern with victimhood. As we have seen, President Clinton warned we were all 'potential victims' in an age of globalisation and mass terrorism. The post-Cold War humanitarian system has similarly been reorienting its focus from neutrality, to solidarity with victims. The ICBL with its images of

¹⁷ Ken Rutherford, 'The landmine ban and NGOs: The role of communications technologies', paper presented at conference sponsored by the Nautilus Institute, San Francisco, December 1999

¹⁸ *Landmine Monitor Report 2002*, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, www.icbl.org/lm/2002/intro/mre.html

victimhood, mainly women and children, created a surge of solidarity and campaigns on behalf of victims, survivors and potential victims. They spoke at ICBL conferences or distributed leaflets. Victims make compelling speakers, not easily ignored by governments. In an information age and 'netwars', ICBL made much use of media coverage, rather than traditional street protests. The high visual impact of physical disability served as a powerful tangible manifestation of the risks of landmines. This ensured constant debate and sensitised public opinion. The Ottawa Convention was also the first arms agreement to address victim assistance, due largely to advocacy of the NGO Landmine Survivors Network. The bright colours of dud cluster bomblets are also particularly attractive to children. ICRC claims children are more likely to be victimised by cluster bomblets than landmines. The prospect of a child victim is especially abhorrent to Risk Society.

Surveillance

Monitoring risks and assessing efforts to reduce risks is significant in the APM and cluster bombs issue, mirroring similar trends in earlier case studies. Treaties -even the Ottawa convention- do not formally give NGOs a role in monitoring procedures. ICBL thus took monitoring upon itself, establishing the civil-society based 'Landmine Monitor'. This is especially important since Ottawa lacked robust verification provisions, relying more on moral norms and voluntary state reports under Article 7. Another important development was the rapid dissemination and gathering of information by NGOs on the Web, placing recalcitrant under public scrutiny. The annual Landmine Monitor Report on state compliance and global APM developments is readily available on the Internet. This eroded the state's monopoly of information. It is 'an unprecedented initiative by the ICBL to monitor implementation of and compliance with the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, and more generally to assess the efforts of the international community to resolve the landmines crisis.'¹⁹ If any aspects of that risk reduction effort are unsatisfactory, red flags are noisily raised by NGOs in the media and Internet. This is also why the British Mines Advisory Group and leading NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) lambasted NATO use of cluster munitions in Kosovo, scrutinising and criticising

¹⁹ *Landmine Monitor Report 2000*, www.icbl.org/lm/2000/keyfindings.php3

NATO's targeting and weapons policies. These NGOs have also been the most outspoken critics in both Afghanistan and Iraq on the use of cluster munitions, often publishing Web-based reports.

Theoretical enhancements and future research avenues

Risk communities

The concept of 'risk communities' suggests possible theoretical enhancements to the prism developed so far. NGOs have assumed a niche role providing organised criticism of imperfections of international society, and a stimulant to progress. The risk of APMs and cluster bombs aroused a wide panoply of concerns as it harmed the values of diverse groups. It is thus a prime candidate for studying trans-national NGO 'risk communities' based on the central organising principle of risk. There is a new 'placelessness' and 'distanceless' to ideas of community supplemented by increasing awareness of global dangers.²⁰

As envisaged by the risk framework, trans-national NGO 'risk communities' coalesced around a common concern with APM risks. The ICBL united over 1,300 diverse groups ranging from development human rights, children, peace, disability, veterans, environmental, arms control, religious and women's groups in over 75 countries on the single issue of banning landmines and related concerns with cluster bombs. It had no secretariat and its major strength was the ability to cut across disciplines to present a united front. A steering committee set broad guidelines, which were implemented by member groups in different regions of the world according to their own design. While governments previously solicited scientific information generated by epistemic communities, 'risk communities' provide information not solicited or desired by governments. ICBL has no scientific authority as such but the ability to engage in moral proselytising through persuasion and knowledge generated by its conferences. The implication is that trans-national NGO advocacy may be needed on issues that states are unable or unwilling to address.

²⁰ Anthony Giddens's ideas cited in Michael Schechter, *The Revival of Civil Society*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p79

The idea of 'risk community' is not limited to NGOs and suggests future research avenues. NATO has replaced its Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) - previously charged in the Cold War with ensuring supplies flowed from America to Europe through Atlantic sea lanes- with Transformation Command to help the alliance better address new risks such as terrorism and WMD proliferation. The debate over NATO going 'out of area' is effectively resolved as NATO led the ISAF in Kabul and helped Polish troops deploy to Iraq. The alliance is realigning itself from a 'security community' focused on a specific threat, towards a 'risk community' concerned with security risks, from ethnic cleansing in the Balkans to terrorism in Central Asia.

Risk Distribution

US military personnel are forbidden from removing mines as part of humanitarian de-mining programs. This is different from military counter-mining where mines are cleared in order for military missions to be completed. Distributing risks and ideas of 'New Prudentialism' in de-mining has emerged as a rather distinct corollary of state responses to the NGO 'netwar' against weapons systems posing unacceptable risk. 'New Prudentialism' progressively removes responsibility for risk protection from state agencies, and places it in the hand of individuals or community-based groups. The concept of risk becomes privatised and entrepreneurial.²¹

Thus, post-Gulf War I Kuwait marked the beginning of the privatisation and commercialisation of de-mining. Private firms such as CMS Environmental Inc and Explosive Ordnance World Services were responsible for clearing the American sector of liberated Kuwait. This itself was a dangerous venture as 84 contract de-miners were killed, more than the number of American soldiers killed in combat by enemy fire.²² The Australian government similarly structures its aid to Mozambique's de-mining organisations such that Australian de-miners do not actually clear the mines. Risks are totally undertaken by locals.²³ There is an important distinction between contract de-

²¹ Deborah Lupton, *Risk*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p99

²² See Don Hubert, 'The challenge of humanitarian mine clearance, in Maxwell Cameron, Robert J. Lawson & Brian W. Tomlin (eds), *To Walk without Fear: the global movement to ban landmines*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), p321

²³ Bill Purves, *Living With Landmines: from international treaty to reality*, (Montreal: Rose Press, 2000), p126

mining companies and NGO humanitarian de-miners such as British-based HALO Trust and Norwegian People's Aid. The latter are generally more respected. HALO Trust is the first NGO to have humanitarian de-mining as its primary mission.

America's 'Demining 2010 Initiative' has the explicit aim of developing public-private partnerships for integrated mine action. In Kosovo, there was a good mix of NGO and contract de-miners. These ranged from NGOs like HALO Trust to private companies such as RONCO Consulting, International De-mining Alliance of Canada Inc and European Landmine Solutions Ltd.²⁴ Donor government agencies like USAID paid the bills for de-miners who bid for contracts tendered for humanitarian de-mining. On 18 August 1999, the US State Department awarded an Integrated Mine Actions Support (IMAS) contract to a consortium led by the RONCO Consulting Corporation, a name that inevitably crops up when it comes to commercial de-mining operations around the world.²⁵ British consultancies such as Bactec, and Defence Systems Limited, cleared landmines and unexploded cluster bombs for the UK Department for International Development. In April 2000, the UK MoD donated surplus army vehicles to the HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to help their de-mining efforts. This distributes risks away from service personnel, outsourced to private contractors and NGOs.²⁶

After the Afghan campaign in early 2002, RONCO again won a five-year contract from the State Department to defuse unexploded US cluster bombs and landmines, especially from the main US airbase at Bagram and the southern city Kandahar. The NGOs Save the Children and HALO Trust also received funding from the State Department for de-mining. In fact, humanitarian demining is the single largest industry in Afghanistan with over 4500 deminers, indigenous employees and support staff.²⁷

²⁴ See Landmine Monitor report 2000, available at www.icbl.org/lm/2000/report/LMWeb-25.php3

²⁵ See www.roncoconsulting.com/newsarchives/june99.html

²⁶ One interesting footnote to distributing risks occurred during the Kosovo air campaign itself, when USAID funded the NGO International Rescue Committee's (IRC) relief flights, which NATO had declined to undertake - slow, low-flying risky air drops to refugees in mountains. The IRC has a history of doing hazardous things Governments are unwilling to do, such as delivering food under fire to Mostar and Gorazde.

²⁷ See 'Demining in Afghanistan', Foreign Press Centre Briefing by Lincoln Bloomfield, Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs, 18 December 2001, Washington D.C; <http://fpc.state.gov/7453.htm>

Afghanistan also has the world's largest demining program, given more impetus by recent events.

In 2002, the State Department awarded grants to the NGOs Norwegian People's Aid and Mines Advisory Group for landmine detection and clearance in northern Iraq. Washington's three-year plan for Iraq beginning in April 2003 included grants for NGOs conducting Mine Risk Education programs, and a Quick Reaction Demining Force to be implemented again by RONCO Consulting in Al Hilla and Baghdad.²⁸ In April 2003 The NGO Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) was one of the first demining groups in Iraq after the recent war, funded by the US Government among others. Swiss Army professionals judged it too dangerous at that time.

The concept of risk distribution as an aspect of risk management suggests promising future research avenues. The East Timor intervention in 1999 was another example where the Clinton Administration 'subcontracted' the managing of a problematic situation to a willing partner (Australia) by providing it logistical and intelligence support. Elsewhere, the Africa Crisis Response Initiative is an effort to improve peacekeeping capabilities of select African nations, to lessen the risks and burdens imposed on US forces in the region's problems.²⁹ The US private military company (PMC) MPRI's role in training Croatian forces for Operation Storm in 1995 meant it 'effectively acted as a mechanism of US policy in the Balkans at less cost and lower political risk than that incurred if the US military were directly involved.'³⁰

With Congressional limits on official American participation in Colombia's drug wars, another PMC subcontractor DynCorp, employed mostly ex-Special Forces personnel to fly surveillance missions monitoring poppy production and eradication. These involved occasional heavy firefights with FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) guerrillas especially since DynCorp employees piloted helicopter gunships as escorts when crop-dusting aircraft are attacked.³¹ US actions in Colombia came close to eliding the thin line between counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency. Human Rights

²⁸ See 'The US Humanitarian De-mining Program in Iraq', Fact Sheet, Bureau of Political Military Affairs, Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs, US Department of State, Washington D.C, 02 July 2003

²⁹ Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.158

³⁰ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Intervention*, Adelphi Paper 316, (London: Oxford University Press, 1998),p.62

³¹ 'Secrecy in Colombia', *Jane's Foreign Report*, 29 March 2001

Watch complained that 'deniability is the name of the game' and 'We're outsourcing the war in a way that is not accountable'.³² The rise of Private Military Companies is generating increasing attention from IR academics and policymakers, and the notion of risk distribution in helping to manage both systemic and tactical risks, suggests a potentially fruitful research angle to explaining this phenomenon and its particular appeal to governments.³³

Rhetorical 'wars'

Rhetorical 'wars' on drugs and AIDS also suggest wider application of the risk management approach. These will be briefly discussed. The 'war' on drugs concerned systemic risks conceptualised through globalisation, and probabilities rather than military capabilities. Afghanistan accounted for 90% of heroin on British streets as Tony Blair emphasised. Colombia runs the world's largest aerial crop eradication program funded by Washington. Expanded interdiction and crop spraying was a proactive 'upstreaming' policy to tackle problems at source rather than retrospective rehabilitation of drug addicts. British warships patrolled the Caribbean conducting maritime interdiction patrols. This helped 'reshape the environment' by making it more difficult for drug smugglers to operate. The drugs war, like that on terror, seemed interminable and cyclical. One cartel eliminated was simply replaced by another, much like hydra-headed terror networks. Risk management concepts suggest insights to understanding this protracted 'war' without decisive battles normally associated with war.

The metaphorical 'war' on AIDS suggests another possible contender on which to apply the risk framework, laden with the imagery of war. Former US Ambassador to the UN Richard Holbrooke called it a 'war that must be waged'. Secretary Powell told the UN in June 2001: 'I know of no enemy in war more insidious or vicious than AIDS.' The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report *Progress of Nations 2000* also

³² Quoted in Secrecy in Colombia', *Jane's Foreign Report*, 29 March 2001

³³ A recent analysis would include for example Eugene B. Smith, 'The New Condottieri and US policy: the privatisation of conflict and its implications', *Parameters*, Vol. XXXII No 4, Winter 2002-03, p.104-119

suggested a ‘war-footing’ to combat Aids. Its executive director Carol Bellamy labelled it ‘a war of liberation’.³⁴ Yet such ‘wars’ are again not amenable to Realist explanations.

Conceptual issues

Scholars such as David Fidler argued that the globalisation of disease seriously challenged traditional boundaries of understanding IR.³⁵ Realism is not a very useful framework for analysing the globalisation of public health ‘now a permanent feature of IR’, with its focus on unilateral state action enhancing power, military capabilities, and neglect of non-state actors. AIDS does not pose military threats but a related chain of worsening economic problems, resource struggles fuelling civil conflict, state failure and regional instability. AIDS is not only seen as a health and development issue but increasingly a strategic concern.³⁶ After all, as Richard Holbrooke noted on the challenges of AIDS, ‘post-Cold War security is about more than guns and bombs and the balance of power’.³⁷ AIDS and infectious diseases were subject of a National Intelligence Estimate on *The Global Infectious Disease Threat and its implications for the United States* in December 1999, and concerned the US National Security Council for the first time. Also venturing into uncharted waters, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1308 in July 2000 against a health issue, declaring that ‘the HIV/Aids pandemic, if left unchecked, may pose a risk to stability and security’.

Concepts of risk management suggest more fruitful investigative approaches. AIDS posed security risks posed in terms of probabilities rather than military capabilities and intent. It needed preventive rather than reactive policies. How does one gauge ‘intent’ of a pandemic? Indeed, ‘in implementing preventive strategies, governments must prepare for what are only theoretical possibilities’ when it comes to globalisation of infectious diseases.³⁸

³⁴ BBC News, ‘War-footing urged to fight Aids’, 12 July 2000,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/newsid_830000/830144.stm

³⁵ David P. Fidler, ‘The globalisation of Public Health: Emerging Infectious Diseases and International Relations’, *Indiana Journal of Global Studies*, Vol. 5 No. 1, Fall 1997,
<http://www.law.indiana.edu/glsj/vol5/no1/fidler.html>

³⁶ See a recent analysis by Stefan Elbe, *Strategic Implications of HIV/AIDS*, Adelphi Paper 357, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the IISS, July 2003)

³⁷ ‘Ambassador Holbrooke Testifies to Congress on HIV/Aids’, 8 March 2000, USIS Washington File

³⁸ Lynn E. Davis, *Security Implications of Globalisation*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), p3

Globalisation

AIDS as a systemic risk has also been conceptualised through globalisation. Other diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome SARS) which dominated headlines in March-May 2003 were clearly related to jet travel in an age of globalisation. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), a 'communicable disease in one country today is the concern of all'.³⁹ With globalisation, US interests combating AIDS in Africa on moral, humanitarian, economic and transnational security grounds will be seen in global terms.⁴⁰ More strategically important regions such as China and the former Soviet Union faced similar pandemics.

Averting Potential victimhood

The 'war' on AIDS also reflected the risk management approach previously outlined. Diseases such as AIDS could previously be seen as divine judgement or no-fault of the victim. With the notion of risk, the no-fault paradigm has been replaced by the at-risk paradigm and preventing 'potential victimhood'. Victims are no longer blameless but are responsible for managing the risks they face and thus avoiding. Thus, the UN Declaration of Commitment on Aids in June 2001 had prevention as 'the mainstay of our response'.⁴¹

Surveillance

The surveillance functions of risk management have been reflected in HIV Sentinel programs. Disease surveillance is defined as the 'ongoing systematic collection, collation, analysis of data; and the dissemination of information...such that action may be taken'.⁴² HIV surveillance is carried out to assess the seriousness of the situation, to monitor the rate of HIV spread, increase awareness of impact of the disease and to promote effective planning and policy. The main epidemiological tool used is HIV 'sentinel surveillance', which can provide more accurate indications of trends of HIV infection in selected

³⁹ WHO Fact sheet No. 200 'Global infectious disease surveillance', June 1998

⁴⁰ See Stephen Morrison, 'The African Pandemic Hits Washington', *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2001, Vol. 24 No.1, p.197; Solomon Benatar, 'South Africa's Transition in a globalising world: HIV/AIDS as a mirror and window', *International Affairs*, Vol. 77 No. 2, April 2001, p.347-376

⁴¹ UN Special Session Declaration on AIDS, 27 June 2001

⁴² WHO Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response,
<http://www.who.int/emc/surveill/index.html#surveillance>

population groups and sites. Relatively simple and cheap, this made it feasible even in resource poor settings. One of the WHO's main methods of creating a global surveillance system is developing a 'network of networks', linking together existing local, national, regional and international laboratories and research centres.⁴³ This is being constructed with the 191 WHO member states and partners like the US Department of Defence's Global Emerging Infections System.

III. Summing up: War and the management of systemic risks

What has hopefully emerged from this study is that an understanding of contemporary warfare based on conventional notions of warfare such as 'heroic' purposes and visible successes ending neatly in surrender ceremonies is inadequate. Risk management allows us to reconceptualise wars in alternative ways through 'less than heroic' strategies and non-events defined as success. Furthermore, recent wars have been disdained by leading Realists, mindful of the need for war only against clearly-defined threats. A focus on classical 'net assessment' of 'threats' is insufficient for a more complete understanding of World Risk Society and peculiar strategic circumstances of the 21st century. The main outlines of this set of circumstances were outlined in Chapter Two: the end of the Cold War; American pre-eminence without existential threats on a scale posed by the Soviet Union; an interdependent world of globalisation and looser constraints on states, people and material moving across porous borders; and failed states endangering security rather than powerful conquering ones. It is however not only within this specific historical context that the concept of war as risk management recommends itself. It would also have to be feasible in the first place. In the cases studied here, this condition was satisfied. In others such as North Korea, this specific set of conditions was unfulfilled.

The evidence presented here indicated that core justifications resorted to by both the Clinton and Bush administrations in publicly explaining wars reflected a negative, minimalist, and dystopian ethos. The crucial issue in all cases, was that both Presidents Clinton and Bush, and Prime Minister Blair sought largely to prevent the worst, rather

⁴³ WHO Fact sheet No. 200 'Global infectious disease surveillance', June 1998, <http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact200.html>

than attain a good despite relatively more positive visions from London. The main theoretical background was described in Chapter Three:

- i) A society that understands misfortune and harm in terms of avoidable risks rather than magic, fate or God
- ii) General disillusionment with notions of 'progress' and greater recognition of limits, a negative dystopian ethos focused on avoiding harm
- iii) Concern with managing risks rather than producing goods, a forward looking probabilistic mindset focused on averting extreme improbabilities in a future that is only more or less probable.

Risk, wrote *Washington Post* columnist Robert Samuelson, was the 'defining characteristic of our era'. This claim is interesting to consider not only in the domestic context he described (terrorist warnings, accounting scandals and Washington snipers) but also the international security domain of this thesis. Risk-based approaches to IR suggest that risk management is the central organising principle as this study has demonstrated. As discussed in Chapter Three, one of the chief criticisms of the few IR researchers who have attempted to employ theories derived from Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society* is their weak distinction of the differences between concepts of 'threat' and 'risk'. This is certainly an important methodological problem and it is hoped this study has paid sufficient attention to this issue. Additionally, by clarifying the 'risk-threat' distinction, the thesis adds to the understanding of an increasingly important strategic issue of systemic risks. With Francis Fukuyama's *Our Post-Human Future*, the 'post' prefix seemed to cover almost everything from post-human, post-Cold War to post-Westphalia and post-modern. Yet this study demonstrated also the increasing prevalence of the 'pre' prefix from 'pre-crime' in popular culture (Tom Cruise's *Minority Report* is one notable example), to 'systematic pre-detection' in surveillance studies, to 'pre-emptive' surgery against high-risk cancers. The 'pre' prefix encapsulates the proactive essence of wars as risk management.

Inevitably, there will be those who argue that in a world of international anarchy, talk of 'risks' is simply an updated definition of a Hobbesian world of dangers and perils.

Studying it is a pointless exercise which would yield no useful or original insights. In its defence, this study has clearly stated its assumptions in Chapter One, that it is time-bound and pertinent only to specific historical circumstances. It speaks only to this particular period of time where the notion of 'risk' has become predominant in mindsets and society. Life is not exactly nasty, brutish and short. Instead, it is increasingly comfortable as problems of weight-loss have replaced those of hunger. We seek additionally to manage and prevent security risks to our way of life, and not just accept undesirable outcomes as fated or God's will as the world of Hobbes was inclined to. The way we conceptualise dangers and perils is greatly different. Furthermore, the notion of 'managing risks' evokes memories of a 'managerial' or 'calibrated' approach to war long derided since the Vietnam War. Two points should be made here. First, the time periods and strategic contexts are hugely dissimilar. Second, Vietnam was seen as part of the overarching communist threat and thus infused with some ideological meaning. Risk management on the other hand, lacks such grand purposes and is largely utilitarian.

One methodological path this study eschewed was that of a 'null hypothesis': answering its questions by means of setting out what arguments could undermine the thesis and then going about debunking them. If it did adopt this method, would the Realist paradigm explain what has been attempted here? Realists such as Stephen Walt counselled against war on Iraq; Henry Kissinger against war on Kosovo. Clearly, leading Realists eschewed such wars and would not have wanted or been able to explain them adequately. Realism is too complicated a paradigm to go into much detail here but from the evidence accumulated thus far, it did not seem to provide a totally satisfying answer to the questions raised in this study. The analysis undertaken in this study has focused on the role of states and military force in addressing security risks. This might seem to validate Realist assumptions in IR. However, this thesis has hopefully demonstrated that on a deeper level, Realist premises based on concerns with survival, maximising power and influence, and focusing on capabilities of other states were not reflected in the evidence presented here. To understand the implications of a post-Cold War and especially post-September 11 world, the proper starting point suggested in this thesis is the focus on probabilistic mind-sets and minimising potentially catastrophic risks in a complex age of globalisation rather than neo-realism's focus on relatively static

distribution of capabilities among states and power-maximising. Furthermore, given the enemies the West has recently confronted, hard military data derived from 'objective' capabilities hardly justified war. The opinion that the current security context is composed of a 'risk complexity', of diffuse risks where presumed or possible hostile intent is not matched to that of capabilities or vice versa, has been reinforced and indeed further clarified in this study.⁴⁴

Nor is it totally accurate to suggest that an 'imperial' mindset informed the wars in question. At this writing in July 2003, the previously unfashionable and politically incorrect discourse of 'empire' has been resurrected as a legitimate tool of analysis.⁴⁵ Analysts from both left and right now referred to 'American empire' as the 'dominant narrative' of the 21st century.⁴⁶ However, America, noted Niall Ferguson, was an 'empire that dare not speak its name'. It was in denial, and lacked an 'imperial' ethos or metaphysical narratives; its military primed for high-intensity warfighting not patient colonial-style nation-building. Instead, it preferred minimalist nation-tending and 'reshaping the environment' simply to reduce systemic risks as we have seen from case studies. To many, the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad on 09 April 2003 signified the moment when the American Republic finally became an Empire, just like ancient Rome. In the heat of the moment, hubris occasionally overcame more reasoned analyses of recent evidence presented here that could have suggested otherwise. Donald Rumsfeld correctly insisted to Al-Jazeera that 'we don't do empire'. In fact, analysts suggest we don't even 'do conquest' anymore as an imaginable legitimate war aim.⁴⁷ What America *does* do is risk management, with its minimalist utilitarian ethos seeking only to 'reshape' environments, and 'prevent the worst' in Bush's words.

Overall, enough conceptual consistency in the patterns of recent wars survived the change in administration in Washington in 2001, to justify the collective labelling of

⁴⁴ Christopher Dandeker, 'New times and new patterns of civil-military relations', in Jurgen Kuhlman and Jean Callaghan (eds), *Military and Society in 21st Century Europe: a comparative analysis*, (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2000), p30

⁴⁵ A selection includes Michael Ignatieff, *Empire lite: nationbuilding in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan*, (London: Vintage, 2003); Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Niall Ferguson, *Empire: the rise and demise of British world order and lessons for global power*, (New York: Basic Books, 2003)

⁴⁶ Joseph S. Nye, 'Ill-suited for empire', *Washington Post*, 25 May 2003

⁴⁷ See Anna Simons, 'The Death of Conquest', *The National Interest*, Issue 71, Spring 2003, p.41-50

these wars as 'risk management'. This was most evident in the recourse to proactive war of an anticipatory nature, justifications given, and non-events defined as success on minimalist terms. Although evidence presented in Chapter Six does not suggest that regime change in Iraq was about risk management especially in the impatient and maximalist manner of ground invasion, the impetus, ethos and outcomes behind it closely parallel those of risk management. Indeed, the 'non-events' and 'hollow' victory in the afterglow of regime change strongly suggested ironically that risk management had been successful in the years before Saddam's ouster.

On a theoretical level, case studies demonstrated the need for a dynamic interdisciplinary approach, with IR engaged in a constant dialogue with theoretical developments elsewhere in the social sciences, to better address new theoretical challenges and the impact of real-world developments. As far as the author is aware, this thesis is the first such piece systematically and specifically focused on war as risk management, as its contribution to the field. This study underlined how new understandings of war can be arrived at through the exploration of risk and risk management strategies previously employed mainly in the disciplines of criminology and sociology. For example, the notion of 'reshaping the environment', a crime control mechanism to reduce the risks of offending, has clear parallels in the idea of 'shaping the international environment' first touted in strategy documents of the late Clinton years. These documents clearly suggested that Washington would take a more proactive approach, although the element of using force was initially largely absent. It was only towards the end of the Clinton era that it recognised military action over Kosovo constituted one such example of 'shaping' to reduce systemic risks. The concept of 'shaping' has since been employed in the Bush Administration's February 2003 strategy to combat terrorism, with its full implications of using force to reduce risks by attacking terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan and elsewhere. This lent further weight to the contention that risk management strategies such as 'reshaping the environment' employed in crime control can be usefully applied to the study of war.

Policy lessons

The purpose of analysis undertaken here is certainly not to claim that everything about recent wars could or should be conceptualised through the prism of risk management. The focus on implementing risk management has meant that certain aspects of these wars – the role of subjective perceptions, decision-making theories such as Prospect Theory, hidden agendas etc- were not addressed in-depth in this study. Yet there remain certain useful lessons to be derived in future attempts to understand, and if possible, avoid ‘precautionary risk management’ wars based on ‘false positives’.

The issue of perceptions has been raised often in explaining war. From the case studies examined, policymakers appeared to draw analogies from various different sets of risks, most popular of which were historical ones. In Kosovo, the analogy drawn was that of Hitler and appeasement and more recently Srebrenica and the failure to act. In Iraq, the analogy drawn was again that of Hitler and more recently September 11. These analogies, no doubt serving to portray politicians as learned students of history, however served no practical purpose in proper appreciation of the nature of risks involved. Brutal dictators such as Milosevic were, they were mere regional thugs as Kissinger memorably described him, not a Hitler with capability to fundamentally shift the balance of power. NATO further misread the intentions of Milosevic and how he would respond to military force, in its focus on worst-case scenarios for Kosovo. We need reasoned arguments based on more concrete evidence rather than continuously imagining worst possible scenarios especially over Iraq.

However, there is no sure way of getting around this problem as risks fundamentally involved perceptions and as the Copenhagen School will agree, politicians had the innate ability to ‘securitise’ issues through language and shaping the agenda. Policymakers, when presented with dissenting intelligence information, can shape it to suit their cognitive preferences. This was all too present in the post-war controversy over ‘sexed up’ dossiers in Britain, and the infamous 16 word-sentence in President Bush’s January State of the Union speech where he claimed Iraq had sought uranium from Niger without concrete intelligence backing. Still, perhaps the starker warning one can have for politicians is that a society already deficient in trusting political institutions, will turn even more cynical when presented with the apparent ‘false positives’ that seemed at this

writing to propel regime change in Iraq. This would damage future resort to the principle in situations genuinely requiring its application. A related cautionary lesson is the emphasis on worst-case scenarios and the impatience policymakers had on occasion in dealing with the issue. Low-probability high impact scenarios such as 'dirty bomb' attacks can divert resources from more probable low-impact events like truck bombings. Impatience as a result of inflating the risk into an 'imminent threat', meant other possible means of risk management were sidelined. Many still maintain that weapons inspections and patient containment could have reduced the risks associated with Saddam Hussein's Iraq without regime change and the costs in blood and treasure on both sides. More importantly, if policymakers can grasp the complex nature of elusive systemic risks they face rather than relatively straightforward threat-elimination, they could then better manage unrealistic public expectations of clearly decisive outcomes and end points.

Summary

The three main contributions of this thesis to IR relate to the three puzzles raised in Chapter One:

- i) It contributes a new perspective to understanding contemporary wars which largely eluded the explanatory power of conventional Realist theorising.
- ii) It reinforces the importance of an inter-disciplinary approach to IR in understanding the current strategic conundrum of ill-defined systemic risks.
- iii) It suggests novel and more satisfactory explanatory means to approach new aspects of warfare which defy conventional notions of war, further adding to the broader 'transformation of war debate'.

This research project took three case studies of wars in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq and used a theoretical framework to systematically map and assess the presence of cross-cutting risk management patterns in these wars.. The risk management framework

developed in Chapter Three, largely matched predictions with empirical evidence at least in impetus and outcomes, although evidence indicated that implementation was not as patient or 'minimalist' as predicted in Iraq by 2003. Yet, the aftermath of regime change with the failure to find compelling Al Qaeda link or fully reconstituted WMD actually warranted the previous more patient 'risk management' approach to war. That said, case studies presented here helped develop the concept of war as risk management, refining the concept in the process.

Two years after the September 11 attacks, and despite countless suggestions that 'everything has changed', this study demonstrated that such suggestions are premature at least in the regularities and patterns of warfare uncovered here. Rather than signalling a complete sea change, evidence from case studies presented in this thesis suggested that 9/11 only consolidated what had previously been an emerging trend: war as a tool to manage systemic risks in terms of impetus, implementation and justification, and outcome evaluation.

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