

THE MATRIX

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Security is a just aim of all nations. Security is the soul desire of every man. From its Latin origins, se + cure, we know it means to be able to live without care.

We live in times where fear has penetrated the hearts of people. A collective as well as a personal concern. This has been brought about by a step-change in the nature and circumstances of trans-national strategic terrorism. This is a generic transition: from tactical-bilateral to theatre-strategic level terrorism. A threat without race, nationality or homeland. Until recently we have focused on the ethos of regional collective security as the cornerstone of our defences. Counter-terrorism, by contrast, is a war and conflict fought and won by intelligence and information, supported by science and technology, with all its implications. The need now is to move forward to the next stage and engage in the struggle more actively and realistically through what we should drive at: first a move from security intensively supported by labour, to security extensively supported by technology. Secondly, we need to draw the road map to a “Collective Intelligence and Information” - an aim to which we have so far attached somewhat limited importance and urgency.

Trans-national terrorism, also termed the “Asymmetric Threat”, is a threat to which we have no remedies or solutions, despite the fact that numerous official and government organisations are reaching for “one-size-fits-all” answers.

Our responses and counters to the “Asymmetric Threat” have to deal with the actual world and the contingencies of here and now. We have to work within the constraints of the legalities of the regional and national conditions of each particular area of risk or conflict, whether these are recent war zones, emerging democracies or, indeed, our own homelands.

No two nations, problems or business provinces, however similar, are exactly the same and each requires different and specialised solutions.

Against a particular potential threat in one geographical area there may be a call on international expertise in financial, engineering or information technology, or even linguistic and communication skills, as well as in standard military and security skills.

In a single area, operations may be mostly civilian, in another exclusively military, and at times everything in between the two.

In this way, our responses will be different, dissimilar and uneven. Thus they are by definition – asymmetric, and,

from there, an associated truly asymmetric doctrine can develop.

We can never emphasise too strongly our need for the development of asymmetric approaches. We need to conceive them. We ought to be designing them.

The key component that will ensure the smooth running of international alliances and organisations is the discussion and negotiation that is carried out within and around them, not merely in ministerial meetings, but in overlapping and dissimilar fora as well.

The way that these function and work successfully, especially this Symposium, is in bringing together the tremendous intelligence, innovative and technical capabilities of business towards an authoritative model for the way we approach these issues. It is also an example of how this Symposium and associated work should proceed.

The homeland security market is in an expanding mood. Business concern for security is increasing. The characteristic of the modern terrorist organisation is the lack of central authorities or clear hierarchies. This is especially true of Al Qaeda, but also for a number of other groups. They have adopted more of business-like structures. They treat the victim not as a target but part of a communication strategy. Our task is to prevent and counter terrorism.

This VII AFCEA Symposium convenes at the right moment. At the end of the day, by bringing together Defence, Business and Security, we hope that an asymmetric, business-like approach will emerge to counter the permanent threat that modern terrorism has engendered.

Science and technology have contributed to the emergence of an efficient society. This is also at the basis of some of our vulnerabilities. The world has increased on a personal, social, economic and political level. The energy, communication and transport infrastructures are threatened. The environment is under enormous pressure. Biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological weapons have proliferated. Explosives and information have been used as part of the arsenal that produces crisis, sometimes of a catastrophic dimension.

The question raised was, then, to know whether or not science and technology can make the efficient society prosper in an insecure world. After all it is at the roots of both. It was recognised that it can do so when it reduces the incentives that create and motivate terrorists. It can when it improves the means for terrorist detection. It can when it clears the way for the definition of a set of laws that will take away the controversy of a terrorist arrest. It can when it hardens and strengthens the target society. It can when it affords the means to diminish the number of things threatened or when it changes the means of threatening. It can when it steers the world economy from slipping into economic turmoil. Ultimately it can if it ever could deny the cause of the threat by understanding the roots of terrorism. It is also recognised that science policy, or for that matter policy, is not managed against terrorism and that it is stove-piped and highly non-interdisciplinary.

In a way it is felt that science and technology is in the fight against terrorism as the first line of defence of the

efficient society, traditional defence being somewhat in the rear making sure that the agrarian and territorial society are defended.

To this radical point of view, the need for the different communities to eliminate barriers between them is strongly voiced. The defence community has to be involved and a number of examples showed that this was already the case. The need for a very close and tight cooperation between the military, the science and technology and the political components of society is of key importance.

If all these matters will enhance the role of science and technology in improving security and advancing society, there is a strong reminder that solidarity has played a leading role in the development of the free world in more than fifty years of a prosperous peace and increased friendship amongst the nations of Europe and across the Atlantic. The case is made that apart from the technicalities of the defence of the efficient society, solidarity will pave the way in the future for a more secure world.

In the end, the answer to the question of whether or not increased technology has a role to play in the defence of the efficient society was found to be central because science is neither good, evil nor neutral.

In fact, energy, communication, transport and life support systems are linked to and by information – one of the pillars of our efficient society.

Recent events show the level of disruption brought about by the interruption of electrical energy flow. We have yet to experience a major breakdown in other forms of distributed energy. We dare not think of the consequences of both electrical and carbohydrate-based energy failing to reach each one of us. In the efficient society, each one of us needs energy to be delivered to us personally.

Where are the threats to this huge distribution network? In fact, the first network-centric distribution should be in the production and distribution of energy. To keep the efficient society prospering, the individual needs and concerns are fed back in real time to production. Energy production and distribution have to become more and more network-centric.

It is this network that requires both safety (protection) and security. Safety is mainly territorial and it could be argued that it could be defended by a network-centric force based on territorial defence. Both power plants and oil and gas fields come into that category. The distribution for most of the energy flows is transnational. Its safety requires an awareness of new dimensions. They are not dissimilar to the ones encountered when the problem of interaction between energy and life support systems is looked into. The protection of the environment and the production, distribution and use of energy is in itself a matter for long-standing, deep-time issues and problems.

However, the energy cycle security is the other side of the coin. It is in a way hidden or forgotten. But the recent events at the core of the efficient society both in Europe and the US show a major flaw.

In fact, the prompt availability of distributed energy has become a source of anxiety to people living both in towns and in remote locations. As is the case for the anxiety over scarce resources (like drinking water or clean air), the anxiety over the supply of energy generates a high degree of insecurity.

So far we, in the efficient society, have experienced this insecurity from lack of energy only very recently. Parts of the world experience it on a daily, sometimes hourly basis. They experience it at home when they sit with their families or in a hospital when someone is having surgery.

If we are to add that some of these populations sit over the deposits of our sources of energy, we see no difficulty in how that frustration can be channelled into being used to generate very dramatic forms of violence. It is a kind of violence in the name of energy.

We have to look into the problem in all its consequences to use the tools of analysis given to us, from probabilistic risk analysis to human and social dynamics. The problem is too complicated to afford a separation between C.P. Snow's two cultures. Energy availability has increased in our part of the world during our life span in both time and space. Its availability to more and more people across the planet is central to security.

Once security has become globalised, the distinction between military and civilian responsibilities becomes blurred.

The issues of environmental, food and economic security, that were once the realm of civilians and civilian authorities in many instances in the recent past, have been tasked to military forces on the ground. Now armies have to care about the environment. This is the public's perception at least. Armies are part of the ongoing nation-building process.

Intelligence gathering, policy, prevention, fire-fighting and civilian life organisation fall on both the civil and military.

In this process, both military and civilians have to work together to substitute the networks of influence that are informing and giving form to nations that have been without skills for so many years. There are nations where illicit trafficking is the mainstay and the only mainstay to countries' economies. There are even thoughts of remilitarising borders in order to prevent illegal criminal activities from feeding global terrorism. Criminal activities, specifically related to the illegal weapons trade and drugs, rely on the divide between the civil and military authorities to conduct their business.

We are an efficient and thus specialised society. But we can not be specialised to a degree where security is jeopardised and the anxiety of the unknown, fed by migration, resource scarcity, AIDS, ethnic conflict and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction will create a very insecure frame of mind.

There is, however, resistance for both civilian and military to share responsibilities. In the two communities, it is

felt that this will entail such a huge change in culture that they will lose their identity.

It may very well be true. Then I am afraid that the solution has to be copied from those who threaten and challenge our security.

Let us network. In a network, no-one loses his identity. In a network, everyone's potential is enhanced. We need this enhanced potential to guarantee that our national infrastructures are able to resist and even prosper either under a massive attack or through a slowing down with an eventual paralysis of the economy as is desired by terrorists. After all this is Ossama Ben Laden threat: " we shall bleed you economy to death".

If security is a frame of mind, where the individual or society does not feel any sense of vulnerability or think they are not threatened, or if so, they have the means to cope with it, then we have to produce the political decisions that will include defence and military defence.

We have an example to illustrate networking between civil and military or, if you wish, between defence and military defence.

Last year a workshop on "Civil and Military roles dealing with pandemic flu", or in other words the SARS virus, took place. But the measures that successfully tackled the global problem of SARS are the very same techniques which would be used to counter a biological weapons attack.

The problem of civil-military sharing of responsibilities is not a matter of de-institutionalisation. It is in generating between them an organic behaviour – a network. It is a question of where you have hostility you bring friendliness, where there is estrangement you bring familiarity, where there is indifference you bring tolerance.

Civil and military have to be part of the same network. Those generating insecurity are, by all means, getting inside our decision-making loop through their own network and destroying and disrupting each one of ours through the gaps we somehow maintain between defence and military defence.

In the efficient society, at present, there is a wide feeling of the existence of vulnerabilities for individuals and for society. It is felt that the technical pillars of the efficient society are not as solid as was taken for granted in the past. Security concerns over energy, communication, transport and life support systems do exist. In fact they are further enhanced when information is considered to be the meaningful method of the modern way of life.

Anticipation, prevention, preparation, response and recovery are at the core of the building up of resilience in the efficient society.

However, only one billion people have the benefits of innovation and modernisation. Something like three billion have no access to the modern world or have leaders that are terrified of modernity's personal costs.

Whatever the reasons, there are new dimensions of conflict and insecurity. Some are socio-economic. More and more people outside the efficient society are becoming aware of their marginalisation. The “knowledgeable poor” have increasingly frustrated expectations. They face the de-skilling of the labour force in some countries of the world, the pressures to migrate, the continuation of endemic problems of criminality and even anti-elite insurgencies. To these, environmental constraints as well as anxiety over scarcity and conflict over resources are added.

Additionally, there is the proliferation of military technologies. The impetus and the momentum of the spread and availability of Weapons of Mass Destruction, coupled with capabilities in ballistic and cruise missiles as well as high-impact munitions have by now globalised insecurity.

To these challenges is added a new one by the global media and the fact that the media lives, as appears at present, in the news. Any event that enhances drama is hailed as the herald of a new era. There is a mixing of the dramatic content of an event with its real significance. Health panics, re-militarisation of borders have sometimes been thus generated. It has even contributed to the depression of certain areas of the economy in the presence of terrorist attacks. Airline companies, tourism, oil and insurance have all had their problems increased by this new challenge.

But if there is a new threat to the efficient society it is the concept of living in “animated distraction” or “suspended animation” and that being alive today has narrowed down to merely staying alive by keeping safe and remaining alert inside a safe creche separated from others by walls of indifference, distance, of permissible civil behaviour and sometimes even the walls of temples.

Of course we have to be alert to create unnoticingly an environment of despairing rage where the terrorists will not hesitate to deploy the very new threat of mega-casualties in a terrorist attack. The very same technologies that

allow our troops to go safely to war are the ones that will cause vast casualties in a terrorist attack.

And, somehow we, in the information society, have been coaching and preparing future generations for a cataclysmic conflict.

As a matter of fact, we have all seen and are delighted with three updates of “The Matrix”. A messianic story. A millenar perspective. A group of initiates in search for a predestined. The one, who is going to save mankind.

The names are even the same you find in the Bible. Zion. Nabucodunozor. The fight is cataclysmic. The problem is the world division between good and evil. The resolution is the determinant of the Matrix. As in another movie “Terminator”, an initiate being travels back in time to kill the messiah, the father of the messiah, who will save humankind from evil in the machines. Again a messiah is the resolution of the human matrix in the foldings of time. Today’s age, in the media. It is the time of “The Lord of the Rings” – a trilogy. And there it is – the magi, a group of the initiated who prepare the messiah for the millenar fight of good and evil.

In all the fights the conflict is of cataclysmic proportions. They are not movies about jousting neither about cowboys that face each other at noon, nor even about an army against an army. No, they are about cataclysmic conflict. In the last of "The Lord of the Rings", even the dead are enlisted for the messiah to win the resolution of the matrix of the millenium by the complete slaughter and obliteration of the enemy.

We live in times of messiahs and millenium. Times as those lived in and invented by Luis Vaz de Camões in the sixteenth century, explained by Padre Antonio Vieira and prophesised by Bandarra, the Hebrew, the Trancoso shoemaker:

He will overwhelm all trash

He will be the peace in the world

Out of the four kings the second

Will know victory.

It will be of him such memory

For he is the Keeper of the Law

For the arms of this King

Will attain triumph and glory.

There is no difference between these verses and the arguments of the Hollywood films "The Lord of the Rings", "Terminator" and "The Matrix".

As in the first century and in the sixteenth century, we are looking for the messiah. We live again in times of a search for messiahs and empire. These are times of hidden horrors; times of preparation of the young for cataclysmic conflicts.

We need to establish the elegy of trust. We must reinvent the system that will counteract and prevent the precursors of the matrix of war, famine and pestilence. We must reinvent the humility of a new David; the humility to recognise that there is no matrix to encounter the solution for the last hidden problem of the shoemaker, Hebrew of Trancoso:

Oh! Who could have the power

To tell

The dreams each man dreams!

No one has.

We in the Seventh Atlantic Symposium are gathered to know: what and where we are and what we are for, to judge how we may become the trajectory for resilience. To engage others in our plans, visions and aspirations. And to have the will to take AFCEA action to get us there.

Our Matrix, members of the Atlantic Symposium, is made of Knowing, Judging, Engaging and Acting.

It is a difficult matrix to solve. The pursuit of knowledge has, in certain circles, been assumed to be both impossible and a distraction from more immediate vocational or practical orientations. As to Judging, we are consistently told there is no truth but rather many truths. Engagement in the contemporary world, as judged by participation rates in all manner of formal social institutions, is in terminal decline. And Acting itself is increasingly seen in a negative light today. Action leads to unintended or unforeseen consequences.

We, the participants of the Seventh Atlantic Symposium of AFCEA, are gathered here because we will set an asymmetric solution to today's cataclysmic matrix. We shall do so, aware of the perils of knowing, judging, engaging and acting and of the attacks of those that do the "talking of talk".

As AFCEAN's we will be walking the walk.