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Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict,

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United States, China, and Russia as it relates to oil pipelines and regional stability. He also goes into detail regarding neighboring states, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, and their respective agendas toward the region. These chapters round out a complete picture of all the factors affecting Central Asia's stability.

The author ends with a chapter that highlights the issues contributing to Central Asia's woeful situation and offers some thoughts about forging stability there. This latter portion is disappointingly short; Rashid devotes only nine pages to discussing possible solutions to alleviating Central Asia's plight. A more developed discussion would have been beneficial.

Aside from this flaw, *Jihad* provides an excellent overview of the reasons for the rise of militant elements in Central Asia. The book gives an understanding of the stakes involved in Central Asia's security and how the region applies to U.S. interests. Central Asia has become significant for U.S. interests not only because of the prospects for oil but also for its potential as a haven for terrorist bases.

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Klare, Michael T. *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. 304pp. \$15

Michael Klare argues that most wars of the future, like many of those of the past and present, will be caused by conflicts over natural resources, especially oil and water. As a consequence, he suggests that American national

security policy focus "on oil field protection, the defense of maritime trade routes, and other aspects of resource security." This position represents a reaffirmation of the industrial and economic dimensions of U.S. national security. In effect, if Klare is right, we are witnessing a resurgence of a materialist strand of American strategic thought that has been prominent at least since Alfred Thayer Mahan. For strategists, neither the clash of civilizations, the tragedies of identity politics, nor the long-buried animosities of religion or ethnicity are sufficient motivations for the major sources of conflict in the modern world. Rather, conflicts and national security policies are about the struggle for natural resources.

Lest anyone think that this is a purely American phenomenon, Klare suggests that the "economization" of international security affairs holds not just for the United States but also for most countries, including China, Japan, and Russia. Insatiable consumption coupled with finite, poorly distributed resources, as well as with a propensity to use armed force, leads to a conflict-ridden future.

Much of Klare's argument reads as if it were inspired by the tumultuous events of the 1970s, specifically after the first global oil shock helped to alert the world to upcoming neo-Malthusian dilemmas. The 1973–74 oil crisis, among other events, forced the United States and the world to face the reality that petroleum supplies are finite, poorly distributed across the globe, and vulnerable to rogue states. Academics and policy entrepreneurs then spent much of the decade cataloguing the vast number of critically important natural resources that were in short supply or projected to be, given consumption trends and

demographic growth. Klare continues to assume that resource shortages lie in wait for humanity as a whole and for specific societies in particular.

Unfortunately, Klare barely pauses to consider the possibility that diplomatic, economic, and political developments might ease potential resource conflicts before they escalate into armed conflicts. After all, countries fighting over access to water or oil could simply negotiate arrangements or allow market forces to dictate outcomes; the author himself notes examples and cases where diplomatic solutions have succeeded in the past. In fact, the absence of economic reasoning in this book is startling. After all, economists from cranks to countless mainstream professionals have demonstrated how market forces can help manage the worst aspects of resource shortages. Thus energy shortages that lead to price increases in turn encourage consumers to conserve; consumption is reduced, as well as overall dependence. Hence, despite tremendous economic growth, Western Europe, Japan, and even the United States have become much more energy efficient since the oil shock of the 1970s. Substitution effects are also possible, although perhaps not for a resource as fundamental and elemental as water.

This book is less than persuasive on the topic of politics. In its final section, which describes alternatives to war, Klare sets up a straw man, arguing that "it seems reasonable to ask whether a resource-acquisition strategy based on global cooperation rather than recurring conflict might not prove more effective than guaranteeing access to critical supply over the long run." He then answers his own question by claiming that "such a strategy would

call for the equitable distribution of the world's existing resource stockpiles in times of acute scarcity." In short, Klare suggests a utopian solution to a deeply practical set of problems. It is more likely that many, if not most, of the various potential resource "wars" outlined here will be settled short of war (or at least of a major war) by various methods of muddling through. Grand bargains over potentially equitable distributions of various resources seem unlikely given the present state of international politics.

Even if one accepts Klare's dire assumptions about the possibility of shortages and conflicts, his list is very traditional. Oil and water conflicts are old news. He does not mention the possibility of new competitions, for resources like satellite "parking spaces" or access to ocean fisheries, that might lead to clashes among great powers. Nor does he explore in great detail demographic realities that underlie competition for water and energy. For many of the water conflicts, for example, the key variable is tremendous population growth, which makes old agreements obsolete and intensifies bargaining over future resources.

Criticisms aside, *Resource Wars* offers readers a great deal. Klare provides thumbnail summaries of numerous conflicts great and small, from the South China Sea to the headwaters of the Nile. He represents each case with grace and economy. He reminds us of the oft-forgotten histories and details of geography that matter greatly in resource wars. More importantly, Klare provides a useful corrective to the ideational, historical, and political explanations of international behavior so popular today. Even the Arab-Israeli conflict is linked to competition for

land and water in ways that some who focus on the religious conflicts, the shadow of the past, and the various weaknesses of the Israeli-Palestinian and other Arab authority structures forget. In short, academics, policy makers, and military officers should pay close attention to those regions that have the greatest potential for armed conflict based on the relative scarce supplies of critical resources.

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Benjamin, Daniel, and Steven Simon. *The Age of Sacred Terror*. New York: Random House, 2002. 490pp. \$25.95

Were you to begin with the last chapter of this book, “A World of Terror,” you would note that radical Islamists do not have an exclusive hold on terror as a strategic weapon. In fact, you might be well advised to consider reading this chapter first, to understand that extremist adherents of Christianity as well as other faiths also have employed sacred terror as a tool in the pursuit of their aims. If, on the other hand, you choose to begin with chapter 1, you will receive a good overview of the terrorist events of the past ten to twelve years, with a focus on those of Islamic origin.

Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, senior staff members of the Clinton administration’s National Security Council, paint a coherent picture of the genesis of sacred terror, the response to it, and prospects for the future. The time frame also includes the end and the beginning of the two Bush administrations. Benjamin and Simon’s conclusion points out the long-term nature of

the issue and recommends that the West engage it with a view to the postconflict possibilities. The book’s purpose may include an attempt to influence history’s interpretation of the data, particularly with regard to the years of the authors’ involvement, but that hardly negates its significance.

Benjamin and Simon offer three particularly valuable discussions. First, they carefully tease three threads from the history of radical Islamism. Second, they give an airing to the workings of government—probably always less than transparent. In this, they do not hesitate to parcel out responsibility for good and for ill. Finally, they offer a strategic reflection that goes beyond radical Islamism.

That Islam was, and can be, a religion of the sword should come as no surprise. After Muhammad (d. 632), Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyya, born in 1269, an accomplished Islamic jurist at age twenty, established the intellectual underpinning of today’s radical Islamism. Ibn Taymiyya did more than anyone to erect *jihad*—actual warfare—as a pillar of Islam. From him descended in the subsequent centuries serious intellectuals, hard men ready to commit violence, messianic figures whose zeal seems most foreign to twenty-first-century realities. Together, “they feed into the eruption of jihadist Islamism that has confronted the West, America in particular, over the last decade.” Now, the warrior prince Usama bin Laden carries jihadism into the new millennium.

“Exactly when the name Usama bin Laden began appearing in American intelligence reports and FBI investigative materials is something we are unlikely to ever learn.” This observation,