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## Finishing Business: Ten Steps to Defeat Global Terror

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Ullman, Harlan. *Finishing Business: Ten Steps to Defeat Global Terror*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2004, 241pp. \$29.95

Harlan Ullman's new book, *Finishing Business: Ten Steps to Defeat Global Terror*, is a worthy read for Americans concerned with the long-term security of our country. It focuses on two areas: understanding what Ullman considers to be the most important near- and long-term threats to the United States, and a strategy to defeat the challenge.

Ullman uses the term "jihadist extremism" to identify the threat. In the foreword, Newt Gingrich says of Ullman, "He begins by correctly noting that the global war on terror is a misnomer. The real threat to America comes from an irreconcilable Islamist faction that has a coherent worldview and a very clear strategy."

In the introductory chapter Ullman is more specific: "In blunt terms, the bulk of the danger—modern variants of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany—that threatens this nation and much of the world emanates from radical Islam and the potential realities and excesses that fuel it. Jihadist extremists have hijacked Islam. Osama bin Laden and others like him, reminiscent of the extremists and anarchists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, are using this perversion of Islam as a revolutionary ideology. Their purpose, like Lenin's and Trotsky's, is to seize power. Terror is the tactic. Its purpose is to terrorize. Furthermore, these extremists share a common geography—the crescent of crisis that runs from the eastern Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal and then to the eastern tip of Indonesia.

"The end state for bin Laden is some form of fundamentalist regime banked by Saudi oil money and armed with Pakistani nuclear weapons. Whether this regime will require a host state as Bolshevism did or if it can be borderless is unclear. The appeal of this theocratic formula stretches across much of the Islamic world. However, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are potential dominoes in this battle, as well as key targets of Islamic extremists."

To further accentuate the threat, in chapter 3 Ullman quotes a portion of Osama Bin Laden's "letter to the American people" published in the *London Observer* on 24 November 2002. The quote includes Bin Laden's rationale for targeting Americans anywhere in the world as originally decreed in his, and his associates', 23 February 1998 *fatwa*, "Jihad against Jews and Crusaders." Although not cited or quoted by Ullman, the *fatwa* says in part, "On that basis, and in compliance with Allah's order, we issue the following *fatwa* to all Muslims: The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it." Although the book does an admirable job of helping readers understand the characteristics of the current threat, other sources, such as chapter 2 of *The 9/11 Commission Report*, will be useful for gaining a fuller understanding of the historical roots of the theology and thinking that drive "jihadist extremism."

In the introduction to chapter 1, "From Destruction to Disruption," Ullman raises the question of why our powerful country is less secure today than perhaps at any time since the Civil War. His answer is that extremist groups can

be expected to strike frequently to disrupt society, the strikes will be difficult to identify and stop, and a progressively more integrated world will continue to foster easier access and more effective networks.

In chapters 4 through 7, Ullman deals with a wide range of strategy options for dealing with the threat. His focus is on the causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; autocratic rule in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, and Egypt; the Indian-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In the final chapter (chapter 8), Ullman does an excellent job of pulling his thoughts together and summarizing elements of a countervailing strategy that are addressed individually in the earlier parts of the book. They include international considerations such as a revised alliance system as well as domestic recommendations involving Congress, the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and national security education. Overall the chapter presents a comprehensive and well thought out approach for tackling the threat of Islamic extremism. As such, it overcomes a minor distraction of earlier chapters, where the author occasionally digresses from his central focus to provide possibly unnecessary background information.

Overall, I recommend the book to any reader concerned with Islamic extremism. Much has been written about the subject, but Ullman is to be commended for his contribution to our understanding of the challenge and for his wide-ranging and insightful suggestions for a countervailing strategy.

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Ferguson, Charles D., William C. Potter, et al. *The Four Faces of Nuclear Terrorism*. Monterey, Calif.: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2004. 378pp. \$19.95

Only readers well prepared for a sobering analysis of the likelihood of the use of nuclear materials by terrorists and its consequences should read this book.

*The Four Faces of Nuclear Terrorism* stands alone as a realistic and scientific treatment of a dire threat. It is well researched, credible, and easily understood despite delving into nuclear physics. The authors, all with impeccable credentials, have effectively framed their discussions around four situations that chillingly illustrate how nuclear materials may find their way into a devastating weapon of mass destruction.

Each of the “four faces” is a distinct scenario of nuclear terrorism and a frightening apparition of what our nation confronts. The first example is theft and detonation of an intact nuclear weapon, without question the most worrisome, followed secondly by theft or purchase of fissile material leading to the fabrication and detonation of a crude nuclear weapon or, as the authors say, an “improvised nuclear device.” The third example is an attack on, or sabotage of, nuclear installations, causing the release of large amounts of radioactivity. The final manifestation is terrorist dispersal of highly radioactive material by conventional explosives, commonly referred to as a “dirty bomb” or, in the authors’ words, a “radiological dispersion device.” For each of these calamitous circumstances, the authors provide a cacophony of story lines, any one of which would make a riveting movie.