

2002

## To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign against Terrorism

Jon Czarnecki

Kurt M. Campbell

Michèle Flournoy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

---

### Recommended Citation

Czarnecki, Jon; Campbell, Kurt M.; and Flournoy, Michèle (2002) "To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign against Terrorism," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 55 : No. 4 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol55/iss4/12>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu](mailto:repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu).

## BOOK REVIEWS

---

### HOW INSIGHTFUL CAN THIS BE?

Campbell, Kurt M., and Michèle Flournoy et al. *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign against Terrorism*. Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, 2001. 416pp. \$18.95

As death and taxes are inevitable to citizens of the United States, so also are the contemporary strategic blueprints written *after* a crisis has occurred. In November 2001 the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank that focuses on national security, published *To Prevail*, offering a comprehensive strategy to guide the Bush administration's "global war on terror." From inception to press, the book took less than two months to complete. How insightful can such an "instant" piece of strategic reasoning really be? The answer is "surprisingly so."

*To Prevail* is a decidedly mixed bag of facts, analysis, insight, and recommendations. For example, the chapter on the Taliban appears quaint in light of very recent history (since November 2001). Other chapters, especially those dealing with military and economic issues, come across as shallow and too general for real utility. However, the overall conception of the book and its on-the-mark chapters dealing with intelligence, law enforcement, diplomacy, and foreign assistance make this an invaluable guide to the post-"9/11" national security world.

Reflecting the mixed nature of the book are findings and recommendations in the closing chapter that call for applause but lead to more questions. Meriting applause, the book's recommendations reassert the need for engagement and an active, focused diplomacy with the rest of the world. Readers are reminded that the United States must win this war with the cooperation of a "coalition of coalitions"; that the United States must win the information wars, not only in cyberspace but in the international public forum of debate (the press, television, and the Internet); and that it must pay attention to coordinating its aid efforts to focus such assistance so as to reinforce the public message that the country wishes and needs to send.

Also, *To Prevail* summarizes the intelligence needs for this conflict in ways that are only now being discussed among executive and congressional decision makers. The authors point out the dangerous parochialism within U.S. intelligence agencies and the overwhelming need for more and better human intelligence. This is coupled with the authors' argument for expanded international engagement, for

in the short term, other nations can provide the human intelligence capabilities that the United States currently lacks. Finally, the authors recognize that local and state officials rather than members of the federal government are on the front lines in one major theater of operations—the homeland. Consequently, the book recommends ways of allowing decentralized coordination among federal, state, and local authorities that maintain a balance between the civil rights of the citizenry and the necessity of prosecuting a vigorous campaign.

However, one must ask why—in light of their insightful recognition for the need for an integrated command, control, and coordination of an incredibly diverse repertoire of efforts to fight the war against terrorism—the authors refused to consider any real command and control organization, process, system, or doctrine. In place of such a useful, even vital capability, *To Prevail* merely calls for more commissions, more coordination, and more openness, and information sharing among existing agencies. The authors are Washington veterans who must know how naïve their recommendations on this matter sound. They recommend *against* forming a powerful department of homeland security that would be capable of integrating the diverse and often contradictory and self-defeating efforts of a variety of federal agencies. One never really fully understands who or what the authors are suggesting will conduct the overall campaign planning and oversight of the global war on terror. The fact is that at this writing, it is still not clear which federal entity is conducting the command and control functions of much of the global campaign. This

country learned quickly in World War II that crises alone, even sneak attacks, do not overcome bureaucratic turf wars; the nation is relearning that lesson now. The authors must know this, and they should propose an organizational framework to implement the wide array of global and domestic measures advocated in their strategy.

*To Prevail* is for the serious strategic thinker and decision maker. It is a commendable effort to bring together in one place a comprehensive strategy that can bring success in what promises to be a long and unusual war. My only quibble is the shortage of relevant citations, which is probably due to the quickness of editing and publication. Such is the price of currency.

JON CZARNECKI  
*Naval War College  
Monterey Program*



Baylis, John, et al., eds. *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002. 356pp. \$27.95

Although not recognized as an equal academic discipline by mainstream academics, the study of strategy has a long and honorable history—the result of numerous authors who, over the centuries, have developed their ideas and placed their own imprints on the discipline. Since the beginning of the Cold War, when the threat of nuclear destruction concentrated the minds of scholars, the field shifted from traditional military concerns to the study of nuclear deterrence. But now, more than a decade beyond the end of the Cold War, strategic studies return to their