

ily reduce terrorist activity. But once the situation in an area becomes untenable for terrorists, they will simply transfer their activity to another area, and the problem remains unresolved.¹⁷ Terrorist groups generally fight wars of the weak. They do not put large, organized forces into the field, except when they engage in insurgencies.¹⁸ This means that military forces can rarely engage terrorist groups using what most armies are trained in: conventional tactics, techniques, and procedures. Most soldiers are not trained to understand, penetrate, and destroy terrorist organizations. Former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld ironically noted in a private memo in 2003 that U.S. Department of Defense capabilities were not adequate to defeat terrorist organizations: "DoD has been organized, trained and equipped to fight big armies, navies and air forces. It is not possible to change DoD fast enough to successfully fight the global war on terror."¹⁹

On the one hand, military tools have increased in precision and lethality, especially with the growing use of standoff weapons and imagery to monitor terrorist movement. These capabilities may limit the footprint of U.S. or other forces and minimize the costs and risks of sending in military forces to potentially hostile countries.²⁰ On the other hand, even precision weapons have been of marginal use against terrorist groups. For example, the United States launched cruise-missile strikes against facilities in Afghanistan and Sudan in response to the 1998 bombing of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. But they had no discernible impact on al Qa'ida. The use of massive military power against terrorist groups also runs a significant risk of turning the population against the government. This terrorist strategy is often referred to as *provocation*: Terrorist groups seek to goad the target government into a military response that harms civilians within the terrorist organization's home territory. The aim is to convince the population that

¹⁷ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, New York: Praeger, 1964, p. 72.

¹⁸ See, for example, Luttwak (2001).

¹⁹ Rumsfeld (2003).

²⁰ Pillar (2001, pp. 97–110); Hoyt (2004).