

into combat operations in Muslim countries, where its presence is likely to increase terrorist recruitment.

## Changing the Symbols

The backbone of this two-front strategy should include focusing on careful police and intelligence work at home and abroad. This would include ending the notion of a "war" on terrorism and replacing it with such concepts as *counterterrorism*, which most governments with a significant terrorism problem use. This change might seem pedantic but would have significant symbolic importance. Moving away from military references would indicate that there was no battlefield solution to countering terrorism. Indeed, former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld had serious reservations about using the term *war on terror* because he was "concerned that the word 'war' led people to overemphasize the importance of the military instrument in this multidimensional conflict."<sup>4</sup> Individuals, such as Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden, should be viewed and described as criminals, not as holy warriors. "The notion of a war on terrorism," one British intelligence official told us, "suggests to Muslims abroad that the United States is fighting a war on Muslims. And the response has to be jihad, or holy war. War convinces people to do jihad."<sup>5</sup>

In Britain, for example, the government shunned the phrase *war on terror* despite a long history of dealing with such terrorist groups as the IRA. Hilary Benn, Britain's international-development secretary, argued that the phrase suggests that only military measures could be a useful response. "In the UK," he noted, "we do not use the phrase 'war on terror' because we can't win by military means alone and because this isn't one organized enemy with a clear identity and a coherent

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<sup>4</sup> Feith (2008, p. 87).

<sup>5</sup> Interview with UK intelligence official by Seth G. Jones, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2008.