

Title:

Asymmetric Warfare And Apple Pie

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Summary:

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Yet it is a term more readily heard in the media nowadays promulgated by the nation's defense planners and used quite frequently in reference to the war on terrorism.

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Article Body:

Asymmetric warfare is as alien to average 21st century Americans as the Martian landscape.

Yet it is a term more readily heard in the media nowadays promulgated by the nation's defense planners and used quite frequently in reference to the war on terrorism.

Asymmetric warfare is simply the application of unique, creative, and unconventional methods with the intention to defeat a numerically and technologically superior enemy. It takes many forms including combat and psychological warfare.

The 9/11 attacks and bombing of the U.S.S Cole were examples of applying this type of warfare as were the recent verbal assaults by Venezuelan and Iranian presidents upon the United States at the UN.

Although asymmetric warfare has its roots as far back as the Trojan Campaign in Ancient Greece and Hannibal's assault on Rome, it was Americans that brought it

to a fine art form, if not a pure science.

Some have said that asymmetric warfare is as American as apple pie.

Very few military historians would dispute that the Continental Army of the Revolutionary War and the Army of Northern Virginia during the Civil War fostered forms of asymmetric war at its best.

The guerrillas Francis Marion (the Swamp Fox) and Daniel Morgan (hero of the Cowpens) drove General Cornwallis from South Carolina. On a much grander scale General Washington's victory at Trenton was a fine example of this type of warfare. So was Stonewall Jackson's Valley of Virginia Campaign and John Mosby's exploits during the Civil War, not to mention Douglas MacArthur's island hopping campaign during World War II.

A major part of the new Rumsfeld Doctrine embraces the concept of asymmetric warfare to such a high degree that it is changing American's global defense posture on a radical basis. It is no secret that top brass within the Pentagon and the Defense Secretary are locking horns over the issue on a very frequent basis, not to mention a horde of retired generals raising alarm bells.

Our leaders tell us that asymmetric warfare is a new and unproven field of military endeavor used by terrorist cells and terrorist nations bent on our destruction. That we don't fully understand and grasp the nature of the Islamic fundamentalist mind -- and have never faced such a determined or fanatical foe.

Someone needs to tell that to the boys who served on those aircraft carriers in the South Pacific during World War II. Those Japanese kamikazes and kaitens were just as dedicated to their Emperor as Islamic fundamentalists are to Allah.

We could not stop those crazed Japanese willing to sacrifice their lives in the name of their cause and neither can we stop the dedicated Islamic radicals bent on attacking our homeland.

The difference today is there's no Harry Truman at the helm.

That simple farmer from Missouri knew the head of the octopus had to be crushed in order to stop the carnage being inflicted in the central and south pacific theaters of war.

So he did --- very quickly and effectively.

And this begs the question.

How long are American leaders going to allow terrorist oriented nation-states to finance and use asymmetric warfare --- through their proxy organizations such as al-Qaeda --- against the United States and continue to divert attention from the more important strategic issues at hand, such as the growing Chinese threat?

Some say it is a diversionary ploy designed to shift the public's attention away from other pressing issues such the environment, trade concerns, job losses, and income stagnation.

The Bush Administration wants us to believe the war on terror is a multi-decade long struggle requiring a dangerous redeployment of American defense resources away from cold war postures.

U.S. leadership has an intimate understanding of asymmetric warfare.

If it does not interdict the use of this lethal form of tactical warfare against America's vital interest immediately, using whatever means necessary at its disposal --- however ugly --- it will eventually have a very negative effect on both the economic and military institutions of the nation and a profound impact on its political stability as well.

And maybe that's what our enemies want after all. And then the octopuses of the world will eat that apple pie for desert.