

TERROR AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH

By Simon Dalby

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Carleton University, Ottawa

Draft paper for presentation to the National Policy Conference, Ottawa, October, 2002.

SEPTEMBER 11TH

In the aftermath of September 11th 2001 the term terrorism is on many people's lips and all over the media's screens and pages. The spectacular attack on the twin towers and the Pentagon was so unexpected that security experts and commentators immediately asked questions about the possibility of other unexpected violence. In military terms September 11th was the classic surprise attack. The simple combination of box-cutters and a determination to die for a cause combined with an old method of political protest, hijacking aircraft. In the lengthened list of possible threats that security officials now worry about notions of environmental terrorism periodically appear. Revived from the rhetoric of the Gulf war, environmental terrorism has a powerful rhetorical cachet. But does it amount to much more than this?

The terms are not always exactly clear. Why is there so much fuss about environmental terrorism? Obviously in the aftermath of September 11th Americans are worried about terrorism, but why specifically environmental terrorism as opposed to infrastructure terrorism or water supply terrorism or biological terrorism or any one of many other terrorisms? Is there something that resonates with larger cultural angst or links to prior discourses of danger in circulation in the U.S.? In short, and in parallel with Jon Barnett's (2000) recent paper on why the literature on environmental security in general, why here and now? This point needs a clear elaboration.

Why focus on the environmental vector? Does it add to the description of terrorism in a useful way? Should historical events that might be understood in terms of environmental terrorism suggest reason for concern to North Americans and to others as well? But are historical events that we might term environmental terrorism in the current rush to use the 'T word' better understood in other analytical terms? If not why not? Empirically we need to see, by way at least of a few examples, what the history of environmental terrorism might tell us. Where are the historical analogies that should worry at least Americans? And the Germans or the Why are we now concerned about this danger? Part of the answer is the population's heightened awareness of environment; it's politically correct to be in favour of environmental protection. Hence environmental terrorism is obviously wrong. This is a culturally resonant answer in the aftermath of September 11th.

But once one asks some simple definitional questions and tries to specify the environmental component it turns out not to be so easy. And it also turns out not to be very helpful either, especially in the aftermath of September 11th when so many people and activities can apparently be specified as a threat to the political order of North America. It is especially unhelpful to link environmental activists to terrorism although this link is made all too often. What is of more concern in the current context is the dangers of terrorism related to the "war on terror" a conflict that has some specific geographies that need explication and some particular conflict dynamics that require analysis. While no analyst can say with certainty that no acts of a

particular kind of terror will ever be perpetrated, environmental terrorism is not high on the list of dangers that Canada, or for that matter the United States, faces in current circumstances.

ENVIRONMENTAL TERRORISM AND ECOTERRORISM

Environmental terrorism can be defined in an apparently straightforward manner, as Timothy Schofield (1999), drawing on Arthur Westing's earlier work, has suggested recently:

Environmental terrorism, like environmental warfare, involves the utilization of the forces of nature for hostile purposes. Environmental terrorism includes both the targeting of the environment itself, such as deliberate contamination of water or agricultural resources, and the use of the environment as a conduit for destruction, such as releasing chemical or biological weapons into the atmosphere.

This is a very broad description including the use of all sorts of hazardous substances in conflict situations as environmental terrorism. Such formulations lead easily to the argument that an international crime of ecocide is needed to specify the terrorist variants on what has previously been a matter of the laws of war.

Daniel Schwartz's (1998) cautions about the enthusiasm shown for the concept are a useful corrective for such all encompassing definitional efforts. Schwartz suggests that removing the rhetorical flourishes and political opportunism from the use of the term allows a clarification of a specific form of political violence which reserves the use of the term environmental terrorism for "incidents in which the environment itself is disrupted or threatened by the perpetrator as a symbol that elicits trepidation in the larger population over the ecological consequences of the act" (1998, p. 484). This narrows the definition in a useful way focusing on fear and symbol. It parallels loosely Cronin's (2002, p. 121) recent summation of the three elements of terror: "the creation of fear; the seemingly random use of violence; and attacks on the innocent," but adds the symbolic dimension which is the important theatrical dimension involved.

But these definition do leave out the geographical dimension of who is threatened by whom and where the dangers and threats apparently come from. In a crisis political identities form quickly and political leaders can rally populations effectively if there is a common understanding of the source of the threat as external. There is a simple and powerful political geography to these matters, a point that has often been forgotten by theorists of revolutionary violence.

Beth Chalecki (2002) distinguishes what she calls eco-terrorism or what is sometimes called "ecotage" from environmental terrorism. This is a useful analytical distinction for our present purposes. When members of the Earth Liberation Front (with the very appropriate acronym ELF) or Earth First! destroy machinery in an attempt to stop corporations destroying forests or rivers or range-land it is a mode of political protest that extends civil disobedience into damage to property (Lee, 1995). Yes it's usually a violation of the law in an attempt to save destruction of environment; although it is important to remember that developers themselves are not necessarily in compliance with the law relating to environment.

Frequently acts of ecotage, whether tree spiking of the "monkeywrenching" variety or more traditional industrial sabotage, are protests at the failures of legal machinery to protect natural systems. Burning buildings storing transgenic crops to raise awareness of the damage to natural systems caused by bioengineering is not in these terms environmental terrorism. Its political protest about the failure of the system of law making to protect traditional ways of life

and their environments. In so far as this is the case its part of a long pattern of resistance to the disruptions of modernity (Boal, 2001). It's a part of the political history of most democratic states. And its probably inevitable in the context of the driving forces of contemporary economies which repeatedly change the patterns of life in the processes of new extractions of resources in many places.

It is important to see the larger context here; development is by definition a disruptive process in which new modes of economy displace old ones and generate resistance in the process (McCarthy, 2001). Its also important to see that this is mapped onto a complex politics of change and the patterns of state support for new economic initiatives. States usually support resource developments, dam building, road building and the extension of commercial agriculture into marginal environments. This is what economic growth is all about. While it is usually seen as a benefit for society in general what is usually forgotten is that it disrupts "the people in the way" who may strike back in various ways. Calling this ecoterrorism isn't very helpful. But in so far as it makes a distinction from environmental terrorism it is, perhaps, analytically useful.

On the other side of the issue military conflict has long involved attacking the natural resource base of an opponent. Poisoning wells, burning crops, spreading disease through contamination of various sorts is part of military history. In this sense the environment is a vector in warfare. But calling this environmental terrorism is likewise not necessarily helpful. Such actions may frequently violate doctrines of international law because they are counter to "jus in bello" criteria. Indeed there is international law on this matter in the form of the "ENMOD" convention outlawing the use of environmental modification. Such activities also may violate Geneva conventions outlawing targeting non-combatants. While such activities might also be called environmental terrorism it is important to note that such activities are a regrettable part of the history of warfare, and hence not especially new (Westing, 1997).

Again the definitional issues need attention. It can be argued, and was repeatedly asserted in 1991 and subsequently, that the withdrawing Iraqi troops who set fire to Kuwaiti oil wells had undertaken environmental terrorism. Well, maybe. Maybe too it was in part a desperate and effort to disrupt the devastating effects of American air-power by making a huge smokescreen? Again understanding it as economic warfare, sabotage on the large scale may be more useful in understanding the conflict dynamics that pertain to this particular episode. Especially in so far as the Kuwaiti "angle drilling" under Iraqi claimed territory and their use of cheap oil exports to depress world prices and so add to the debt burdens of Iraq were among the reasons that Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. The environmental destruction in terms of rainfall disruptions in Iran and dirty snow in the Himalayas was undoubtedly a consequence, but focusing on the environmental consequences of this military act may also distract from the main significance of destruction wrought by retreating troops. Scorched earth policies aren't exactly new; confusing the issue by focusing on the environmental vector may have had propaganda effects in vilifying the Iraqi regime and distracting the moral doubts about the massacre of retreating Iraqis by American air-power, but its not necessarily analytically helpful.

Across the "south" in the last decade political violence has been a tragic part of the political landscape. The literature in the ongoing debate about "environmental security" initially specified the relationships relating this violence to matters of environmental scarcity causing violence. Encapsulated in Robert Kaplan's (1994) nightmarish vision of "the coming anarchy" the assumption of neo-Malthusian conflict spreading across the world from the "wild zones" of Africa to the "tame zones" of post-modern prosperity, brought considerable attention to the issue. But as the research progressed it became clear that the links between environment and conflict

were much more complex (Homer-Dixon, 1999). Indeed more recent thinking has suggested that resource abundance, and the struggle to control the revenues from resource extraction is related directly to more violence than scarcity. The new resource wars in the south may not be all that new, although the pattern has become much clearer in the last few years (Renner, 2002). Here violence is of an old fashioned military nature. Bombing pipelines and destroying mines, roads, bridges and docks is part of the struggle. Mercenaries guarding mines in the wild zones of the South is not a new pattern; privatized security elsewhere isn't either even if it has become much more prevalent in North America recently.

When these resource war struggles coincide with the opposition of indigenous peoples to the encroachments of modernity onto their traditional lands the conflicts become much more complex (Gedicks, 2001). Here guerilla warfare, eco-terrorism and environmental conflict merge. The complex political economy of civil wars in places like Columbia and Sudan directly connect to investments by northern corporations in oil exploration and pipeline construction. Is a guerilla group destroying mining or pipeline infrastructure then an environmental terrorist and to be vilified as a consequence? The complexity of these issues is the point here; simple designations of this violence in terms of terrorism overlooks the complex political ecology of these struggles which are rarely simply about either environment or development (Watts, 2001).

VIOLENCE AND TERROR AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH

The lesson that terrorism is complicated and that specific circumstances need careful evaluation is the key point that can be drawn from this definitional exercise. Generalizing from ill defined notions of 'environmental terrorism' is not likely to help assess contemporary dangers. On the other hand outlining the numerous ways in which environment and conflict are interconnected does suggest that environmental terrorism as a novel danger is easy to exaggerate. Likewise lumping civil disobedience into categories of terrorism will confuse rather than clarify. The danger here is that arguing that everyone who opposes some aspect of the environmental destruction that is part and parcel of development is a terrorist obscures the specific dangers that may follow from the September 11th events and their aftermath.

The key reason that so much fear about un-planned for threats has emerged in the last year is that the modus operandi of the hijackers was in a narrow sense new; it was not among the obviously imagined threats that were taken seriously in the policy discussions beyond the professional community who are paid to worry about these things. The idea of a suicide airliner attack on Washington has of course been a matter of popular consciousness for the last few years because, like so much of the contemporary discussion of security matters it was incorporated into the plot of one of Tom Clancy's novels. In Debt of Honor a Japanese pilot flying out of Vancouver airport, hijacked his own plane by killing the crew, and targets the American government in a suicide crash. The difference there too is that this scenario required a well trained pilot rather than an amateur partly trained would-be martyr.

Many states have long histories of struggling with "terrorism" but few episodes that fit the various alarmist descriptions of environmental terrorism. Putting plutonium in New York's water supply isn't a new idea. Crashing airliners into nuclear power plants isn't new either, and it's not very likely. More usually discussions of airliners as weapons have discussed the possibilities of crashing them into sports stadiums to maximize the casualties. These ideas have been around as long as people have worried about the misuse of nuclear materials, which is since 1945. Italians struggled with terrorism in the 1970s and the 1980s without having episodes of environmental terrorism. The Irish and British likewise for a generation. The Baader-Meinhof

gang or the RAF in Germany didn't do environmental terrorism either. Biological weapons and chemical agents have been used in a number of incidents many of which are more ill conceived and bizarre than effective (Tucker and Sands, 1999). They have frequently been used by religious groups rather than more traditional political organizations.

Popular culture is full of such scenarios, but Chalecki (2002) ignores a prominent version of the genre in Tom Clancy's novel Rainbow Six. Here Clancy paints a scenario of the "mad scientist" in the form of genetic engineers, who modify an Ebola virus to wipe out most of humanity and so "save" the world. As usual the "good guys", in the form of American security agents, stop the danger to humanity but Clancy offers no suggestions as to how the danger to environmental systems from that humanity might be tackled. This does not matter once deep ecology has been dismissed by linking it to the genocidal plans of deranged scientists. This particular scenario hasn't eventuated; it was set in the context of the Olympic Games in Sydney a few years back. Nonetheless there is a deeply unsettling parallel in the "Anthrax in the mail" episodes that followed September 11th in the U.S.

Extrapolating from this and the "Unabomber" episode leads to fears of what might be better understood as technological terrorism. Contemporary societies are vulnerable in these ways precisely because of the complex and vulnerable infrastructure that literally fabricate the contexts for our lives are constructed by technologies that are potentially very dangerous. But confusing these matters with either ecoterrorism or environmental terrorism isn't helpful. Alas, there are mad scientists willing to play with biological and chemical agents as commuters on the Tokyo subway discovered to their horror and in a few cases to the costs of their lives and health, but does the attack using nerve gas by Aum Shinrikyo, a religious cult in Japan, count as environmental terrorism? Again the definitional confusion because of the transmission by air doesn't help here.

But these scenarios suggest an important theme that is frequently overlooked in the alarm concerning all sorts of terrorism in the aftermath of September 11th. This is the simple fact that biological and chemical weapons are difficult to manufacture and difficult to effectively disperse in public spaces where they are likely to have effect as agents of massacre. Nonetheless the small scale of the amounts of Anthrax involved in the "U.S. mail" episode in late 2001 once again supports the argument that such substances are difficult to handle and use as weapons.

One reason there have been so few successful examples of chemical or biological terrorism is that carrying out an attack requires overcoming a series of major technical hurdles; gaining access to specialized chemical-weapon ingredients or virulent microbial strains; acquiring equipment and know-how for agent production and dispersal; and creating an organizational structure capable of resisting infiltration or early detection by law enforcement (Tucker and Sands, 1999, pp. 50-51).

The crucial connections between the international dimension of terror and the possibilities of these forms of terror require further clarification. Are they technically likely and are there ideological and political sympathies that might lead to connections between Islamic terrorists and North American "environmental terrorists"?

TECHNOLOGICAL TERRORISM AND SEPTEMBER 11th

The military brilliance of September 11th comes from three factors. First, it accomplished tactical and strategic surprise. Second, it was simple in execution. It required minimal technological infrastructure and hence was unlikely to be detected prior to the smuggling of weapons onto the

airplanes. Third, the results were spectacular. Very dramatic, "live on television" mass death coupled to the horror of the everyday turned into a weapon. As political theatre, and that's what terror is, and 911 was, its unparalleled. Its virtually impossible to think of how it could be emulated. It is a singular political event; that crucial point needs to be remembered.

But to understand terror in context requires challenging the widespread American centered assumptions that the world is in a new era and that an entirely new geopolitical order has unleashed numerous threats to the West. It seems that war psychosis to invoke Michael Howard's (2002) term for the current frenetic public discussion of all manner of threats. Such geopolitical assumptions run counter to much of conventional wisdom in policy making circles in Washington. But once the initial panic of September 11th subsides, and one looks at the geopolitical context without privileging the victims' view from Manhattan, matters appear in a slightly different light. In short the implicit geographies in these formulations need more explicit attention. Whence the threat is an important question whose answer is not obvious in the conventional wisdoms of the day.

But what is not being asked frequently enough is the matter of the geography of the 911 events. Focusing on the increasing attacks on the U.S. and its assets in various places in the 1990s suggests a global terror that violates assumptions about sovereignty, warfare and the legitimacy of the state in providing security (Cronin, 2002). Describing these attacks against American targets in terms of global terror and international threats overlooks the core issue of the al Qaeda operation and its primary stated goal to remove the infidels from the Arabian peninsula. The rising attacks on American assets and on 911 follow from the stationing of American troops in the Arabian peninsula at the time of the Gulf war. It seems that this is the primary issue. Invoking global threats obscures the very specific geography of this matter.

Fears of environmental terrorism or sophisticated terrorist attacks to come may be entirely understandable overreactions in the aftermath of 911. In part this is because the specific modalities of the September 11th attack have been misconstrued. The attack on September 11th wasn't sophisticated. It was brilliant in that it used the technologies of the U.S. system against itself. It was a huge gamble. Alert security agents in various U.S. airports on the morning of September 11th could easily have foiled the whole operation. The most obvious point about the targets, that they were huge structures easy for amateur pilots to find and hit is usually overlooked too. Again this was a simple and unsophisticated operation in terms of everything except the genius of the mode of surprise that made it successful.

Its strategic purpose has also been overlooked in the rush to announce war on terror and to portray the threat as global, or a clash of civilizations or in other millennial but inaccurate terms. Part of the problem has been that the assumption in most commentators' minds is that the events were an "attack on America." Its much more likely that the real power struggle of which the September 11th events are a dramatic horizontal escalation is within the elite of Saudi society. The September 11th events, if read as a strategy to destabilize the Middle East by provoking U.S. military action there, are a very old fashioned mode of warfare (Dalby, 2003).

The resultant reaction on the part of the United States was nearly entirely predictable, with one so far important exception. The military reaction has been more muted than the planners presumably expected, although this could change any day soon if US forces launch an attack on Iraq. It may yet happen, destabilizing the political arrangements in the region and leading to a change of regime in Saudi Arabia. If on the other hand the hopes of the September 11th planners were to deliver such a blow to the United States that would convince the population to demand a withdrawal of its troops from Arabia, in a parallel with earlier withdrawals from

Beirut and Mogadishu in the face of violence then they badly miscalculated. Not least because they ignored the simple geography of politics. What happens to troops abroad is rendered very differently from what happens to civilians at home.

But here the dangers may arise if the second Bush administration, in its determination to react in military rather than in intelligence, diplomatic and political manners, provokes opponents. The largest dangers of state sponsored terrorism, Korean or Iraqi based state sponsored terror in North America are likely to come as reaction to U.S. intervention rather than out of the blue without warning. This is also of course the case for national missile defence systems. The "bolt from the blue" surprise attack gets a considerable amount of attention. But neither the Japanese regime of the early 1940s, nor Al Qaeda, at least so far, have exactly lived long or reaped the benefits of surprise attacks on America. Other regimes hostile to the U.S. will have learnt the lesson by now. Deterrence, whatever the discussions of new U.S. security doctrines of preemption might suggest, still works. But the desire to take revenge might lead desperate regimes to plan a "terrorist" response whether by "container bomb" or some other means.

But is there any clear indication that the war on terror is likely to take the form of a number of environmental terrorist acts? Is there an obvious danger of new forms of terror having an obviously environmental vector? How might environmental violence appear in North America rather than in the wild zones of the South? Its far from clear how Al Qaeda would pick an environmental target of greater symbolic importance than the World Trade Center or the Pentagon. Hijacking a plane and flying it into Mount Rushmore or a dam, or the Capitol or the White House isn't environmental terrorism. Violent destruction of innocence is a part of terror; but there is no compelling logic to use environment when direct assaults are so dramatic. Martyrdom comes as a dramatic act, not from poisoning a city water supply system or releasing radioactive wastes into the atmosphere. Few ecoterrorists are likely martyrs.

While Tom Clancy's The Sum of All Fears scenario is perhaps plausible at a stretch, with Arab terrorists using the services of a disgruntled native activist in the U.S. to smuggle a nuclear device into the country and place it next to a sports stadium, he also points out the ideological distance between these groups. Diaspora links and temporary residents are a much more likely connection, hence the issues of racial profiling and the dangers to people with Middle East backgrounds travelling in North America. In that sense the likely political links between ELF and Hamas or Earth First and Hizbollah are difficult to imagine working in a manner to link eco-activists to Palestinian causes never mind Al Qaeda's agenda of removing the infidel troops from the Arabian peninsula. Attacks on American oil company headquarters in Texas are possible although international activists are far more likely to use the courts system. Violent attacks on the headquarters of Talisman oil company in Canada are much less likely than attacks on pipelines with which it is involved in Sudan.

ENVIRONMENT AND TERROR?

But what does this geopolitical analysis suggest about environment, terror and future policy? Consider the following statement from an American publication in mid 2002:

Today, we are facing a new and very different kind of enemy. This is an "invisible" enemy; it is nowhere and everywhere. This is an enemy that is patient, cunning, resourceful, clever, and bent on overturning Western civilization. This is unlike any enemy we have ever faced. To prevail, we must be equally resourceful, clever, and committed to winning the war on terrorism (Eccleston, 2002).

Apart from the fact that this sounds very much like the situation facing many Western European states in the early 1970s, and the bit about overturning civilization is obvious hyperbole, this is not a presidential pronouncement but a recent paper on the American National Environmental Policy Act. Which suggests both the gravity of the new geopolitical circumstances and the role that environmental agencies can play in responding. As with the literature in the larger field of environmental security the rush to link environment to matters of terror follows the inevitable bureaucratic pattern of issue generation, threat proclamation and policy prescription. But as, Daniel Deudney has repeatedly argued in regard to the literature on environmental security, there is no necessary fit between the nature of the matter at hand and the agencies that are lining up to offer policies and practices to address the newly designated issues (Deudney, 1999).

Nonetheless Eccleston's (2002) argument is interesting in that it links environment into the war on terror. The suggestion to add terrorism impact statements into environmental impact statements might be useful if applied to large scale development projects and especially to the highly vulnerable infrastructure. Eccleston's argument would be much more interesting if it connected back to the arguments made a generation ago in the aftermath of the oil crisis that industrial society's vulnerabilities to disruptions of oil supplies were a major security problem (Lovins, 1977). Moving industrial production systems and consumer consumption in Europe, Japan and North America away from oil dependence and onto renewable sources was good policy then; it's still good policy. Building new technologies that are not dependent on distant vulnerable supplies is good national security for most states in current circumstances. It is especially good policy in light of Michael Klare's (2001) analysis of likely resource wars to come as a consequence of struggles over oil supplies.

All this does require rethinking security rather than reaffirming political identities and it requires posing the questions of whose security in particular in the face of repeated invocations of common vulnerabilities. The irony over the "Iraq crisis" has long been that the Iraqi state is the most secular of the Arab states, far more ideologically compatible with the West than the Saudi Arabian kingdom. But the support by successive American administrations of the Royal family has entangled the US in a bizarre relationship shoring up a corrupt oligarchy that has funded precisely the Islamist movements that spawn supporters of Osama bin Laden. Which leads Victor Davis Hanson (2002) to suggest that the American's real enemies are in fact the Saudis. But the pattern of oil wealth and corporate linkages still apparently ensures that this is not how matters are seen in Washington. The Saudi case is only perhaps the most obvious example, but one that has had unique and bizarre ramifications in the emergence of Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, which are presented as anything but a Saudi problem.

This is an old pattern even if the new terrorist threat isn't discussed in terms of the longer history of guerrilla warfare and resistance in the South. But there are lessons there that might also be instructive. In the 1960s, looking then to the future of guerrilla warfare, Robert Taber (1970) in his handbook on the subject The War of the Flea noted that the United States ... by reason of its position of commanding wealth and power is cast – like it or not – in a counter revolutionary role. As the world's greatest economic and military power, greatest banker, financier, investor, mercantilist, industrialist, and principal practitioner and guardian of the system of capitalistic free enterprise (of which liberal democracy and constitutional government are considered to be part and parcel), the United States is naturally and necessarily allied with bankers, landlords and investors everywhere.

He goes on to point out that this frequently puts the United States on the side of those opposed to popular protests. Supporting elites that control resources leads to all sorts of political difficulties in numerous other places where resource wars entangle companies in complex political struggles tied into "development". These are politically complex arrangements but the international economy is part of these political struggles. But this larger geopolitical pattern is rarely considered in thinking about environment and its relationships with security. This is however essential to unraveling the links between environment and violence (Dalby, 2002). But simple links between environment and terror obscure these relationships, never more than in moments of crisis when fear leads to rhetorical imputation at the expense of careful analysis.

CONCLUSION

But the possibilities of rethinking the politics of resource consumption and the supply systems that literally fuel the cities and airplanes that were the victims of September 11th suggest also that the practices of globalization are part of the policy picture. Smuggling weapons across borders, and into the United States is not something that can be completely prevented. The technological vulnerabilities of contemporary urban societies might be minimized by the application of careful vulnerability considerations at the planning stages for many projects. But there are limits to the technological capabilities either of planners or of intelligence agencies in trying to prevent political violence. The answer to terrorism is mainly political, whatever the rhetoric of righteousness invoked in the war on terror might lead one to believe.

In the realm of global politics there is a suspicion of American power and in particular the use of American military might. There is concern that the war on terror will be used as an excuse by many powerful governments to crush popular dissent. The debate over Iraq has been instructive in so far as American fears have not been shared widely. The possibility of building international institutions to deal with terror and rogue states in the form of international criminal courts and related initiatives has suffered a setback by the American unilateral assumption of the right to specify dangers and intervene in many places. Using the 911 episode to act unilaterally rather than cooperatively is not constructive to a more peaceful world order. These are the larger contextual issues that set the context for the more specific focus on the role of terrorism. But they are in the long run the more important issues.

But in the short run a focus on the specifics of terrorist dangers is also unavoidable. At least as far as environment is concerned the news is relatively encouraging. If hijacked airplanes, smuggled nuclear weapons or chemical and biological agents are the real danger then confusing matters by talking about environmental terrorism is doing just that: causing conceptual confusion. If conventional bombs, whether in New York or Oklahoma City, are the threat, and it appears that these relatively simple devices will remain the most likely terrorist weapons, then adding environment into the discussion doesn't help either, even if the targets are hydro dams or nuclear power plants, targets possibly of eco-terrorists carried away with their misguided enthusiasms. While the environment will suffer, as a direct consequence of the enhanced military preparations and activities of the war on terror (Durant, 2002), the crucial question is whether environmental terrorism is now a real danger to North American society. However defined the answer that this paper suggests is no!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Susan Tudin for her usual excellent assistance in finding material, to Mike Gutsell for research assistance and Cara Stewart for her editing.

REFERENCES

- Barnett, Jon, 2000. "Destabilizing the Environment-Conflict Thesis" Review of International Studies 26(2) pp. 271-288.
- Boal, Iain A. 2001. "Damaging Crops: Sabotage, Social Memory, and the New Genetic Enclosures" in Nancy Peluso and Michael Watts (eds) Violent Environments Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 146-154.
- Chalecki, Elizabeth 2002. "A New Vigilance: Identifying and Reducing the Risks of Environmental Terrorism" Global Environmental Politics 2(1) pp. 46-64.
- Dalby, Simon 2002. Environmental Security Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dalby, Simon 2003. "Calling 911: Geopolitics, Security and America's New War" Geopolitics 8(2) forthcoming.
- Deudney, Daniel 1999. "Environmental security: A critique" in Daniel Deudney and Richard Matthew (eds) Contested Grounds: Security and Conflict in the New Environmental Politics Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 187-219.
- Durant, Robert F. 2002. "Whither Environmental Security in the Post-September 11th Era?" Public Administration Review 62. pp. 115-123.
- Eccleston, Charles H. 2002 "NEPA and Terrorism: Is it Time for a Paradigm Shift?" Federal Facilities Environmental Journal Summer pp. 9-17.
- Gedicks, Al 2001. Resource Rebels: Native Challenges to Mining and Oil Corporations Boston: South End,
- Hanson, Victor Davis 2002. "Our Enemies, the Saudis" Commentary Magazine July
- Homer-Dixon, T. 1999. Environment, Scarcity and Violence Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Howard, Michael 2002 "What's in a Name" Foreign Affairs 81(1) (January/February) pp. 8-13
- Kaplan, R. 1994. 'The Coming Anarchy', The Atlantic Monthly 273(2), February, pp. 44-76
- Klare, Michael 2001 Resource Wars New York: Metropolitan.
- Lovins, A.B. 1977 Soft Energy Paths: Toward a Durable Peace Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Lee, Martha F. 1995. "Violence and the Environment: The Case of Earth First!" Terrorism and Political Violence 7(3) pp. 109-127.
- McCarthy, James 2001. "States of Nature and Environmental Enclosures in the American West" in Nancy Peluso and Michael Watts (eds) Violent Environments Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 117-145
- Renner, Michael, 2002 The Anatomy of Resource Wars Washington: Worldwatch Institute Worldwatch Paper 162.
- Schofield, Timothy 1999. "The Environment as an Ideological Weapon: A Proposal to Criminalize Environmental Terrorism" Boston College Environmental Law Review 26. pp. 619-647.
- Swartz, Daniel 1998. "Environmental Terrorism: Analyzing the Concept" Journal of Peace Research 35(4) pp. 483-496.
- Taber, Robert 1970. The War of the Flea: Guerrilla Warfare Theory and Practice St. Albans Paladin.
- Tucker, Jonathon B. and Amy Sands 1999. "An Unlikely Threat" Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 55(4) July/August pp. 46-52.
- Westing, Arthur (ed.) 1997. "Armed Conflict and Environmental Security" Special edition of Environment and Security 1(2).