Ten years of GWOT, the failure of democratization and the fallacy of "Ungoverned Spaces"

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Author Biography
Pat Proctor is a U.S. Army field artillery lieutenant colonel with over 16 years' active service. In 2007, he served in Iraq as a member of the Joint Strategic Assessment Team under General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, mapping the future for post-surge Iraq. Pat recently returned from his second tour, in Northern Iraq, as a battalion operations officer in the 1st Infantry Division. He is the author of Task Force Patriot and the End of Combat Operations in Iraq. He holds master's degrees in military arts and sciences for strategy and theater operations from the U.S. Command and General Staff College and the School of Advanced Military Studies, respectively. He is a doctoral student in history at Kansas State University. Pat's recent publications include "Message versus Perception during the Americanization of the Vietnam War," The Historian (Spring 2011); "Fighting to Understand: A Practical Example of Design at the Battalion Level," Military Review (March–April 2011); and "The Mythical Shia Crescent," Parameters (Spring 2008) and Iran International Times, May 23, 2008. Major David Oakley is an FA59 (Strategist) currently attending the Command and General Staff School. Dave recently redeployed from Iraq where he served as a United States Division-South (First Infantry Division) liaison officer to the United States Embassy-Baghdad. Prior to his assignment with 1ID, Dave served as a Staff Operations Officer (SOO) within the CIA's Near East Division and as a contractor within the National Counterterrorism Center's Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning. Dave has a bachelor's degree in political science from Pittsburg State University and an MPA from the University of Oklahoma, and is pursuing a Ph.D. in security studies at Kansas State University. Recent publication: "Taming the Rogue Elephant?" American Intelligence Journal, Winter 2008/2009.

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Abstract
October 7, 2011, marked a decade since the United States invaded Afghanistan and initiated the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). While most ten-year anniversary gifts involve aluminum, tin, or diamonds, the greatest gift U.S. policymakers can present American citizens is a reconsideration of the logic that guides America's counterterrorism strategy. Although the United States has successfully averted large-scale domestic terrorist attacks, its inability to grasp the nature of the enemy has cost it dearly in wasted resources and, more importantly, lost lives. Two of the most consistent and glaring policy flaws revolve around the concepts of filling "ungoverned spaces" and installing democracy by force.

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"Ten Years of GWOT, the Failure of Democratization and the Fallacy of "Ungoverned Spaces"". Journal of Strategic Security. 5 (1). Proctor, Pat (Summer 2012). Proctor, Pat, Task Force Patriot and the End of Combat Operations in Iraq, (Lanham, MD: Government Institutes, 2012), ISBN 978-1-60590-777-2. Proctor, Pat, Containment and Credibility: The Ideology and Deception that Plunged America into the Vietnam War, (New York: Carrel Books, 2016), ISBN 978-1631440564. Proctor, Pat (Winter 2017–18). "Lessons Unlearned: Army Transformation and Low-Intensity Conflict" (PDF). Parameters. 47 (4): 33–45. Following the ‘ungoverned spaces’ approach is thus likely to yield unwelcomed solutions to the crisis. It contains a built-in response to the conundrum it names: to repel terrorists, it suggests, let’s replace the political void they have taken advantage of by the deployment of the legitimate administration! Giving back to Mali the chunk of territory forcibly detached from it by Tuareg separatists, then occupied by allied Islamist groups, without drastically reconsidering the country’s north-south relations would be foolish. In the past years, northern Mali has in fact been a heavily governed space, yet not by the standards of a rational legal system. This system of governance was adverse to development and only benefitted a few, in Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal, but, also, crucially, in Bamako.