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## Imperial Math: Counting the Dead

By Thomas S. Harrington  
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On Tuesday, immediately following the bloody attacks in Brussels, Michael Morrell, the former number-two at the CIA, proclaimed that ISIS is “winning” its ongoing confrontation with the US and the countries of Europe. “They’re winning, and we’re going to have to find additional approaches to try to undermine them.”

I am no expert on the metrics employed by military strategists to gauge success in armed conflicts. My guess, however, is that it all boils down to some combination of a) the ability to

kill the highest possible number of the enemy's combatants and their presumed supporters and b) the ability to inflict the greatest amount of damage and disruption on the social and physical infrastructure of the societies that the designated enemies are from, or are believed to identify with most strongly.

So let's see how the scorecard between "us" and the societies where "our enemies" live and/or find their sense of cultural direction, plays out. The figures are culled from various sources readily available on the Internet.

Over the last 15 years Islamic militants have carried out five major coordinated attacks on US and western European targets (New York and Washington 2001, Madrid 2004, London 2005, Paris 2015 and Brussels 2016) killing some 3402 people. If we widen the scope of the inquiry to include Israelis under the umbrella of US-Western European culture and civilization (as they so often remind us should be the case) there are some 465 people more people for a total of 3867. If we widen the net further to include attacks that occurred in Russia along with all of the less massive attacks on US and European soil (a total of 693, mainly Russians), the number rises to 4560.

When it comes to the matter of destroyed infrastructure and enduring disruptions of daily life in the US and Western Europe, there's really nothing to report. While the attacks have been psychologically terrifying, and a source of unending pain and grief for the families and loved ones of those whose lives were cruelly extinguished, the attacks have done virtually nothing to alter our ability to live and work as we did before.

It is true we are now constantly spied on by our own government and subject to ritualized rape at airports, but that's it.

Those of us who had food, fuel, shelter, schools and electricity before the attacks, generally still have all those things now. And very few, if any, people in Europe or the US have been driven out of their homes because of these armed attacks on our societies.

Let's look now at the countries whose Islamic "cultures of hate", we are constantly told, generate an unending supply of people willing to kill us for no apparent reason.

How have they done in regard to the attacks carried out on them the US and its allies?

According to Brown University's Costs of War Study 92,00 Afghans have been killed since the US invasion of that country in 2001 and 165,00 Iraqis killed as a result of war in that country since the US invasion of it in 2003. In Pakistan, they estimate 57,000 Pakistanis have been killed since the US began its covert war on that country in 2004-2005. And these are, by the authors' own reckoning, conservative estimates.

In Libya, which was gratuitously destroyed by the US and the Europeans at the urging of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, good statistics are hard to come by. But it appears that some 3,000 people were killed as a direct result of the Allied bombing campaign in 2011, and that several times number have died as a result of the massive sectarian unleashed by the conflict.

How about Syria? There, a Civil War was nearing its conclusion in 2013 with a quite probable Assad victory when, US and its allies (Israel, Turkey and Saudi Arabia) decided to intervene—as Sidney Blumenthal’s recently uncovered emails to Hillary Clinton confirm—in the hope of engineering a bloody and protracted standoff, the long-term goal of which was to insure that Syria not be able to act serve as a regional counterweight to Israel or Turkey for at least the next generation.

According to the UN, over 250,000 have now died in the war, and almost 75% of those deaths have occurred since the US and its allies got more heavily involved in the conflict in late 2013.

In the same 15 year period since 2001, the US’ most important strategic “friend”, Israel, has carried out three assaults (2006, 2008-09 and 2014) on the Palestinian enclave of Gaza, killing a total of some 4000 Palestinians. Total Israeli deaths from those assaults, which our corrupt and prostituted media insist on referring to as “wars”, are 95.

In 2006, Israel also assaulted its neighbor to the north, Lebanon, a country whose lower quarter it had already subjected to military occupation from 1982 to 2000. The result of this attack were 1200 Lebanese dead. The Israeli losses (remember, as was the case with most of the Israelis lost in the Gaza assaults these were troops aggressively invading a sovereign country) were 165.

Over the last few years, Saudi Arabia, the medieval dictatorship that arouses nothing but warm ejaculations of fraternal love in Washington and in European chanceries has carried out a) a bloody assault on Bahrain, which killed 90 and rooted out whatever pro-democratic forces the country might have had and b) a brutal air war with US-made equipment and logistical guidance in Yemen against the Houthis, attacks which resulted in the death of 2800 civilians in 2015 alone.

Then there is the US-backed coup Government of general Al-Sisi in Egypt which, according to Human Rights Watch, carried out the “premeditated” massacre of 817 peaceful protesters on at Rabaa Square in Cairo on August 14th , 2013

There’s also also the ongoing US-led drone and special forces war on Somalia where at the very least 250 Somalis have perished at the hands of these forces.

And then there the big one that absolutely no one talk about, but that is key to truly understanding the current tensions in Francophone Europe: Algeria.

True, most of deaths there occurred before 2001, and are thus, strictly speaking, outside the parameters that have governed our exposition to this point.

But the fact that the government perpetrators of the majority of these deaths have never been brought to justice, and indeed have officially been shielded from any prosecution, means that the wounds generated by this conflict are still very much with us, especially in France, the north African country’s former colonial master, where very large numbers of Algerians and their French-born children live and work

What happened there?

In 1991, Islamists in that country were on their way to an apparent electoral victory in the coming elections when the US and French-backed government staged a coup. Over the next 15 years it brutally hunted down anyone and anything connected with the Islamist politics. Once the conflict got under way, there were, of course atrocities that went in the other direction as well. But let there be no doubt, the war, which generated some 200.000 deaths had its origin in the fact that a social and governmental elite backed by Western powers did not want to allow Algerian democracy to run its course.

How are things washing out for “our enemies” in terms of the second metric for war “success” mentioned above: the destruction of physical infrastructure and the widespread disruption of daily life for the majority of the population?

Well, Iraq, Libya Gaza, Somalia, Pakistan and Syria are now widely viewed as completely failed polities where the daily fight to survive requires almost every ounce of energy that citizens there possess. With the possible exception of its capital city, the same can be said of Afghanistan. While things are perhaps more tolerable there on the level of day- to-day rhythms, Egypt and Algeria and Lebanon are now veritable nests of fear and loathing where people know a few ill-chosen words can earn you a full lifetime or a or a full deathtime of trouble.

But Michael Morrell, who has all these facts and much, much more information at his disposal, says “we” are losing the fight against “them”?

Could it be that Morrell, an economist by training, is that bad at numbers?

No, it’s just that he’s a practitioner of a new and rapidly expanding scientific discipline, “Imperial Math” which, by injecting heaping doses of racism and systematic dehumanization into its calculations and equations, consistently concludes that a four digit numbers like 4560 are always greater than ever-rising six and seven digit figures.