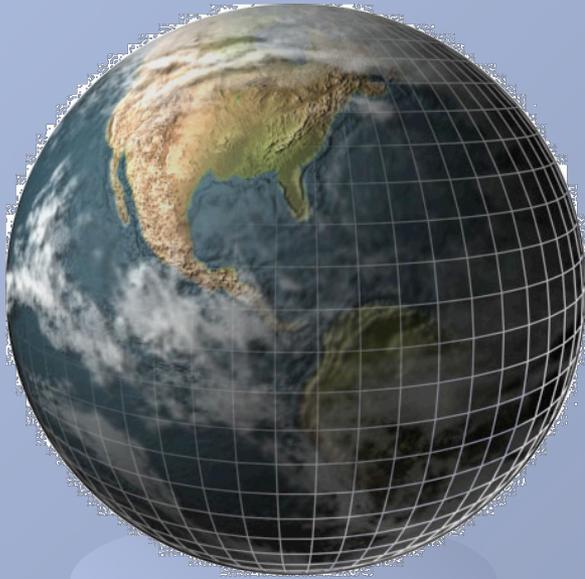


Terrorism & its responses



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Doctrine of holy war: Muslim & Jewish origin?

When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, ...

And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee;

thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: ...

For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God:

the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

*The injunction of Moses to occupy the land of Canaan from **Deuteronomy**, VII, verses 1, 2 & 6*

Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;

To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; ...

Psalm 149



Terrorism - introduction

- politically-motivated violence
- predominantly state-sponsored
 - governments believe they have a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence
 - authorised by the state?
 - used to demonise, stigmatise & delegitimise political opponents
 - 'we are good, they are evil'
 - the West is always the innocent victim of terrorism, never its perpetrator
 - Western state terrorism - a non term? (Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Palestine, etc)
 - Mandela, Arafat, Mugabe, Gusmao, Gaddafi - revolving door
- did not begin on 11 September, 2001
 - has always been with us
 - first of a series of major strikes on Western soil
 - did the world 'change forever'?



Islamist terror - key issues

- a threat to individuals not states
 - doesn't alter the balance of global strategic or economic power
 - statistical threat to individuals is grossly exaggerated
- violence which is unpredictable, unconstrained (no respect for rules of war, targeting civilians) and indefensible (morally & tactically)
- legitimate grievances (Palestine, Iraq, corrupt Arab regimes) or irrational hatred?
 - no root causes, just extremism (contest of values - humanity & civilization v barbarians)
 - self defence, revenge & retaliation (persecution of Muslims, occupation of holy sites)
 - primarily a struggle within Islam between fundamentalists and reformers
 - responsibility of the West (Blowback, US backing for Arab tyrants, Iraq occupation)
- a cultural revolt against the West (fear of secularism & modernity, denial of role of religion)
 - a battle for survival, an existential threat
- autonomous cells & groups (Al Qaeda, JI)
 - no overall co-ordination, no mastermind, no coherent or clear objectives, no compromise, no prospect of victory
 - Al Qaeda is more a franchise & methodology than an organisation



Islamist terror - the West responds

- 9/11 'changed everything' (Howard)
 - they hate our 'innate goodness, our freedom and democracy'
 - a question of values?
 - an attack on US foreign policy?
 - we have done nothing to incite these attacks
- 9/11 provides US & allies with a 'window of opportunity' to attack political opponents as "terrorists"
 - Israel, Algeria, Russia, China, Turkey
- the 'war on terror' conflates a number of separate and distinct conflicts
 - Israel v Palestinians, Israel v Syria, Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, coalition occupation of Iraq, NATO's war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, JI in Indonesia & Malaysia, etc, etc
- curtailing civil liberties in the West
 - draconian domestic laws
 - revising international law (pre-emption)



Theoretical approach	Realism	English School	Marxism/ Critical	Liberalism	Neo-conservatism
Nature & cause of Islamist threat	<p>A response to the unipolarity (US military preponderance)</p> <p>Challenge for governments not states</p>	<p>Latest chapter in longstanding 'revolt against the West'</p> <p>Private international violence</p>	<p>Residual barbarianism</p> <p>Reaction against Western imperialism & anti-Islamism</p> <p>(Israel, corrupt Arab govts)</p>	<p>Anti-modernist & anti-progressive</p>	<p>Rationally inexplicable</p> <p>Challenge to Western values & way of life by depraved extremists</p>
Significance of threat	<p>Nuisance value</p> <p>Doesn't alter the distribution of global power in US favour</p> <p>No threat to security or social fabric</p>	<p>A revolt against the cultural & economic dominance of the West, secularism & modernity</p> <p>Grievances</p>	<p>'Blowback' - unintended consequence of promiscuous US intervention (Iran & Afghanistan)</p>	<p>Will inhibit spread of liberal democracy & economic globalisation</p> <p>Transnational threat</p>	<p>Zeitgeist - world has changed forever</p> <p>Life & death struggle between good & evil (no middle ground - binary)</p>
Consequence & response	<p>Temporary multilateralism</p> <p>Enhance US power, reach & unilateralism</p> <p>Encourage WMD proliferation</p>	<p>Challenge to order</p> <p>More inclusive international society</p> <p>Negotiation & compromise?</p>	<p>Ask why?</p> <p>US state terrorism</p> <p>Violence will escalate</p> <p>Limits of US power</p>	<p>Expansion of powers & reach of the state - domestically & internationally</p> <p>(setback)</p>	<p>Threat must be confronted, no compromise, no dialogue</p> <p>Pre-emption (window of opportunity)</p> <p>Temporary coalitions if not allies</p>

Selected sources

On Western state terrorism see: Alexander George (ed), *Western State Terrorism* (Polity 1991) & Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (South End 2002).

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On US foreign policy see: Gabriel Kolko, *The Age of War: The United States Confronts The World* (Lynne Rienner 2006) & Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony Or Survival: America's Quest For Global Dominance* (rev ed Allen & Unwin 2004).

On terrorism as a tactic see: Robert Pape, *Dying To Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (Scribe 2005) & Mike Davis, *Buda's Wagon: A Brief History of the Car Bomb* (Verso 2007).

