

Monopolies on Fanaticism:  
*Constructions of Terrorism in History and Analysis of Post-9/11 Domestic Terrorism in the  
United States*

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All have blood on their hands—communism, liberalism, nationalism, each of the great religions, and even secularism. Nobody has a monopoly on fanaticism; nobody has a monopoly on humane values.

—Amin Maalouf

## Abstract

This thesis explores how terrorism has been socially, politically, and historically constructed since its genesis in Jewish resistance to Roman occupation in 1st century AD. The first chapter provides a brief review of various shifts in terrorism to prove that terror is ever-shifting based on its milieu. The second chapter builds off of these shifts to explore the policy consequences of how U.S. policymakers currently construct and define *terrorism*. Beginning in the 1990s, terrorism became synonymous with Islam and this association was cemented by the events of 9/11. This tendency to link Islam with terrorism has had profound consequences, from a series of wars costing \$5.6 trillion to half a million people dead. But after 17 years, the War on Terror has ushered in a period of endless war for the United States. The U.S.'s policy on terrorism is misdirected and based on fear of the Other costing the country international credibility, money, lives, and the integrity of various domestic institutions. Redirection and clear strategy is needed to address the more pervasive terror threat in this country, far-right and white supremacist groups, who committed 49.2% of the 65 terrorist incidents in 2017 versus the 9.2% attributed to Muslim extremists.

## Introduction

All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible.

—T.E. Lawrence

The beginning of the 21st century was in many instances a miracle. Not once, but twice, the world came close to a nuclear WWIII, during the latter half of the 20th century—first in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis, then again in 1973 during the Ramadan/Yom Kippur War. The 20th century had also borne witness to the two largest and deadliest wars in humanity's history. By the end of the Great War, there were an estimated 37 million casualties between the Entente Powers, the Central Powers, and their civilians. Accounting for combat deaths, indirect deaths due to famine and disease, and the Armenian Genocide, an estimated 16 to 20 million people died (Rank, 2018). But, the War to End All Wars wasn't the last war: less than two decades passed before World War II, the deadliest conflict in humanity's history. The highest estimates place the death toll at 80 million soldiers and civilians killed—about 3% of the world's population (Rank, 2018). Before the war's end, the most destructive weapon yet was created and used twice against civilians—the atomic bomb. The Cold War ushered in a nuclear arms race that we are still grappling with. However, centralized states have simultaneously reduced internal political violence, which has paradoxically made them more prone to terrorism (Harari, 2015).

The 20th century saw the greatest utilization of terrorism ever. It is not a new concept or tool: more actors resorted to terror than ever before in the tool's two-millennia-long history (Hoffman, 2017). Historians agree that the genesis of terrorism was in the first

century as Jewish zealots fought against the oppressive Roman empire, at first killing individuals by dagger before eventually turning to open warfare, with the objective of inciting mass rebellion (Stern, 2003). Since then, groups have used terrorism as a tool of last resort (Roser, Nagdy, & Ritchie, 2018). There were the Muslim Assassins, or Ismailis-Nizari, who terrorized both Muslim and Christian leaders alike beginning in 1090 until the Mongols stopped them in 1275 (Daftary, n.d.). Like Islamic extremists today, their objective was to spread a “pure” version of Islam (Stern, 2003). In the late 18th century, the French Revolution and the infamous Reign of Terror beckoned in the start of modern terrorism (Hoffman, 2017). The use of the term was positive in this instance, however, as the revolutionary government worked to keep momentum going (Hoffman, 2017).

In the 19th century, minority groups and radical political groups begin shifting toward favoring either revolution, reform, or terrorism (Hoffman, 2017). Communists chose revolution. Anarchists shifted to terrorism while socialists opted for electoral reform. The association between terrorism and anarchism remained through the beginning of the 20th century until the Russian Revolution shifted the tool away from sub-groups toward states (Hoffman, 2017). The meaning shifted further with World War I giving rise to violent ethnonationalist movements around Europe. However, World War II created a debate surrounding strategic bombing and whether that should be categorized as state terrorism. Every instance of state terrorism, usually self-proclaimed, before WWII was directed toward a state’s own citizens; however, the strategic bombings in the latter portion of the war were the first time that a state directed terrorism toward the citizens of another state (Hoffman, 2017).

Following the end of WWII, waves of decolonization had newly independent states embracing nationalism and, for some, terrorism (Hoffman, 2017). During this period, the term *freedom fighters* was introduced to describe those fighting colonial oppression (Hoffman, 2017). The debate that raged among subgroups fighting for independence during this period marked the use of terrorism in the second half of the century, with guerrillas like Che Guevara arguing that terrorism was counterproductive as the support of the people in a community was needed above all else.

Beginning in the 1970s, a return to religiously motivated terrorism began as the number of fundamentalist political movements rose (Hoffman, 2017). With internationalized terrorist organizations and globalization forcing its way into many cultures, religious terrorism quickly became a deadly tool against those seen as harmful to traditional ways of life. This trend has persisted to today, dramatically shaping how many U.S. Americans view the world and how our political leaders shape policy. Terrorism and religion have been conflated by this country's own history with religion.

The United States has a long history of religion in its politics, despite what is written in the Constitution. Some scholars, like Walter Russell Mead and George F. Kennan, have argued that even before independence, the countrymen of the New World were concerned with bringing light and salvation to the darker corners of the globe. They say that John Winthrop's *City upon a Hill* sermon has subconsciously, yet effectively, situated itself deeply within this society. This line of thought believes this salvific lens has since determined U.S. action in the international system. However, this argument that it is part of the U.S. American psyche to go out and save does not address the fact that this behavior is not unique to this country.

George W. Bush framed retaliation for the 9/11 terrorist attacks in terms of protecting freedom and the U.S. American way of life (Text of George Bush's Speech, 2001). However, the subsequent invasion turned out to be driven by more than some inclination to protect. If studying the 20th century can teach us anything, it is that violence begets violence. On the eve of the post-9/11 wars Bush explicitly created an *us versus them* dichotomy—the United States versus al Qaeda and all Terror—a mindset that breeds division and conflict and encourages a rigidity in thinking. Nearly two decades later, and this has bled into domestic politics, creating divisions along religious lines—Christianity versus Islam. Further exacerbating this problem is the fact that terrorism is fundamentally misunderstood in the United States. It is viewed as a foreign, Islamic problem. It is viewed only in this one dimension, blinding policy makers and constituents alike to other threats—from far-right violence to the opioid crisis. To successfully address terrorism in this country, we must learn about its history, its mechanisms, and its ever-shifting identity. How we fight terrorism depends on how we think about it. If our counterterrorism policies are essentially misguided, they are fruitless. The question of why terrorism is used and how to address it has been debated by many, and it is time for another voice to enter the Burkean parlor.

# Chapter One

All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence.

—C. Wright Mills

## Constructions of Terrorism

Terrorism is socially, politically and historically constructed. It relies heavily upon context. The milieu of a group dictates what tactics are utilized and when. It is why some terrorist organizations, like Hezbollah, have militant, charity, and political branches. It is why the international community has such a hard time agreeing on a single definition for the concept. It is ever evolving, learning from itself, and, just like the popular world, experiencing trends. What methods were common for the anarchist groups of the early 20th century look nothing like the tactics preferred by jihadi groups in the 1990s.

There is no widely agreed upon contemporary definition of terrorism in the international system. The United States government alone operates with more than twenty. This lack of a definition stems from a near constant changing perception of terrorism since the French Revolution (Hoffman, 2017). There are aspects of terrorism, however, that are understood to be true: It is a political concept concerned with acquiring power to achieve substantial change in a short amount of time (Hoffman, 2017). It is the use of violence, or even the threat of violence, to reach a political aim. Debate surrounds whether states can partake in terrorism, or if the term can only be applied to individuals and subnational groups. For the purpose of this thesis, state terrorism will be briefly considered. But the primary definition of terrorism used when considering post-9/11 terrorism and its policy implications in this work will be that of the Global Terrorism Database. It states that a terrorist attack is “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a

political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation” (START, 2018).

Terrorism has evolved and shifted quickly since the late 18th century, but prior to that it was associated with religion only (Hoffman, 2017). The most recent occurrence in the progression of terrorism is its return to its religious roots. In the United States, there is a general misconception about this ever-shifting tool, which has been utilized by both some of history’s most powerful states and disadvantaged individuals. However, the American public can tend to view terrorism through 9/11-tinted lenses—fearing Muslims, the Middle East—and ignoring other growing sources of terrorism (Byman, 2018; Amr, 2018; Kearns et al, 2017; Hasan, 2018).

A brief review of the last two centuries as they are associated with terrorism will begin to address misconceptions and explore how the definition of terrorism is shaped by whatever the political, social, and historical context of the time calls for. The complexity of its definition has deepened as terrorism’s history has broadened and as the breadth of organizations that rely upon terrorism expands. Each of the following cases reveals how terrorism is sculpted by the society and the period, adding another layer to the method rather than completely erasing the previous trend.

### **Religion and Terrorism**

Terrorism with religious motivation is nothing new. The very first acts of what we label terrorism were committed by “religious fanatics,” and, up until the 19th century, religion was the only justification for terrorism (Crenshaw, 1981). Much of the language we now associate with terrorism finds its roots in Jewish, Hindi, and Muslim terrorist groups beginning in the first century AD with the Jewish Zealots—Sicarii (Stern, 2003). Like the

terrorists of contemporary times the Zealots' spontaneous acts of violence in public were meant to instill fear beyond the immediate victims and send a message to any supporter of Roman occupation (Stern, 2003).

Acknowledging the Judaic roots of religious terrorism helps dispel today's popular misconception that Islam is the only religion with believers who turn to terrorism (Stern, 2003). In the United States, which has a long history with revolutionary violence and Christian terrorism, this fact is either lost or willfully ignored by the vast majority of the public, "All have blood on their hands—communism, liberalism, nationalism, each of the great religions, and even secularism. Nobody has a monopoly on fanaticism; nobody has a monopoly on humane values" (Maalouf, 1998, 52). Religion has not only inspired extremists throughout history, but it also provided the basis for acts of terror as religious empires brutally conquered lands and peoples. Terrorism maintained this religious connotation for over 2,000 years before it experienced its first shift. As people began to doubt the divinity of their royalty, revolution spread across Europe bringing with it "terreur" (Hoffman, 2017).

### **Creating a Better Society and Proving Propaganda of the Deed**

The French Revolution's definition of terrorism contained positive connotations, being "closely associated with the ideals of virtue and democracy" (Hoffman, 2017, 3). In a speech on February 5, 1794, Maximilien Robespierre declared, "Terror is nothing but justice, prompt, severe and inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue" (Robespierre, "On Political Morality"). He argued that the system of state terrorism undertaken by the revolutionary government was simply a tool of republican liberty and used only against enemies of the revolution. Robespierre stated, "Society owes protection only to peaceable citizens; the only citizens in the Republic are the republicans" (Robespierre, "On Political

Morality”). Though technically a rational thought, this line of thinking is incredibly dangerous. If this is the case, terror and violence can be used against any person out of line with a government’s agenda.

The régime de la terreur, like modern terrorism, had the ultimate goal of creating a “new and better society” by whatever means necessary (Hoffman, 2017, 4). Eventually, the revolutionary French government began falling apart, and Robespierre suffered the fate of execution by guillotine just like the estimated 40,000 others he had sentenced to death (Hoffman, 2017). After this, the definition of terrorism shifted, becoming “a term associated with the abuse of office and power—with overt ‘criminal’ implications” after Irish statesman Edmund Burke’s polemic on the events of the previous decade (Hoffman, 2017, 4; Burke, 1790).

The events of the French Revolution ushered in a reformation of identity. Nationalism took hold of Europe, working to take away the power of lineage and exchanging it for a “statehood and citizenship based on the common identity of a people” (Hoffman, 2017, 5). From this period, comes the infamous *propaganda of the deed*—the theory that direct, violent action could bring attention and support to a revolutionary cause better than words alone (Colson, 2017). In the 1850s, Carlo Pisacane abdicated his family name and birthright as duke of San Giovanni, attempting to revolt against Bourbon rule (Hoffman, 2017). Though Pisacane’s efforts failed with his death in 1857, his propaganda of deed doctrine took hold. He argued that violence was not only needed to create an idea that compels its audience into action or sustained support, but also proved irreplaceable.

Propaganda of the deed doctrine has influenced extremist groups for the past century and a half, beginning with the Russian *Narodnaya Volya*, or People’s Will, who organized

against a tyrannical czarist regime (Hoffman, 2017). Unlike the modern terrorist groups that use propaganda of the deed as the basis for their indiscriminate violence toward civilians, the *Narodnaya Volya* displayed extreme restraint in their political violence, a notable shift away from the tactics of the revolutionary French government. Regretting any life taken, the czar, senior officials, and powerful members of the royal family were the selective targets chosen for their clear symbolic value. For this terrorist organization, the principle of “not one drop of superfluous blood” was held so dearly that an attempt on Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich’s life was temporarily abandoned when his children were unexpectedly in his carriage (Hoffman, 2017). When compared to the tactics of terrorist groups today, the *Narodnaya Volya* seem incredibly rational and fair in their efforts to create a better society through the strategic removal of specific targets.

### **Lone Wolves and Atmospheres of Fear**

Anarchy-based terrorism at the turn of the 20th century further strengthened the value of propaganda of the deed, provided precursors to today’s lone wolf phenomenon, and shifted the public’s perception of terrorism from a tool with positive connotations utilized solely by states to something much more insidious and elusive. But while anarchists were responsible for the deaths of multiple heads of state—including McKinley in 1900, King Umberto I of Italy in 1901, and the prime ministers of Spain in 1897 and 1912—their actions did not alter the international system in any considerable way (King of Italy, 1900; Chief Executive, 1901; Hoffman, 2017). Simply, groups like *Narodnaya Volya* were responsible only for setting trends of unwarranted societal fear, Othering, and reactive policy making.

The original members of *Narodnaya Volya* were taken out one by one after the organization assassinated Czar Alexander II on March 1, 1881, in an attack that

contemporary suicide bombers mirror (Narodnaya Volya). Though no longer an organization by 1883, *Narodnaya Volya*'s successful adherence to propaganda of the deed showed budding European anarchist movements that the doctrine was worthwhile (Narodnaya Volya). Just months after the death of the czar, tyrannicide became the widely lauded choice for revolutionary change. During this time, a culture of fear swept civilians and governments alike as anarchists attempted to organize across borders with the establishment of Anarchist International. Though ultimately fruitless, the endeavor successfully created an illusion of hope for global revolution that "stimulate[d] fears and suspicions disproportionate to its actual impact or political achievements" (Hoffman, 2017, 7). Because tracing and apprehending the perpetrators turned out to be difficult, thanks to the nebulous nature of their associations, the turn-of-the-century anarchists acted individually and in small cells, with disparate violent tactics that strengthened the atmosphere of fear (Hoffman, 2017).

Like the Congressional Acts and Presidential Executive Orders of the 20th and 21st centuries in the United States, fear motivated the policies of lawmakers following the assassination of William McKinley in 1901 by anarchy-inspired Leon Czolgosz. Congress barred all "known anarchists or anyone 'who disbelieves in or is opposed to all organized government'" from entering the country in the Immigration Act of 1903, or the Anarchist Exclusion Act (An Act to Regulate the Immigration of Aliens). The infamous private Pinkerton National Detective Agency practiced and promoted the tracking and constant surveillance of anarchists, suspected anarchists, and other known "Reds," a policy that the National Security Agency would be proud of today.

The rise of terrorism used by anarchist movements at the turn of the 20th century served to strengthen propaganda of the deed and to act as a precursor to contemporary lone

wolves and cultures of disproportionate fear. In terms of membership, the next evolution in terrorism also closely parallels how organizations operate today.

### **Utilizing Youthful Zeal**

As World War I loomed, the definition of terrorism shifted. While its revolutionary ties remained, nationalism rather than anarchism acted as the main motivator (Hoffman, 2017). Many organizations were born during the turn of the century with hopes of creating separate, independent countries for their oppressed minority groups. Armenians in eastern Turkey were militant in their nationalist efforts by the 1890s and suffered dreadfully for their attacks against the Ottoman Empire: an estimated one million were killed by the Turks during World War I in what is considered the first state-implemented genocide (Nalbandian, 1963). Macedonians also resorted to terrorism during this time, though they did not suffer the same tragedies as the Armenians nor were they successful in creating an independent Macedonia separate from Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia (Rossos, 2008). One nationalist organization, *Crna Ruka*, arguably triggered the First World War, the Great War, and altered the course of terrorism dramatically.

Bosnian nationalists aimed to unite all southern Slavs- the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs- under a single, sovereign political entity (Hoffman, 2017). The leading group, *Srpska Narodna Odbrana*, or Serbian National Defense, was established in 1908 as a way to promote Serbian cultural activities. However, it was almost immediately more subversive and shadowy than other Serbian organizations as it became involved in anti-Austrian activities, namely terrorism, in nearby Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Srpska Narodna Odbrana* recruited youth from the more harmless nationalist groups, training and arming them before deploying them against the Hapsburgs. The emotion and zeal found among young

nationalists made it easy for the dominant group to manipulate them into committing violence. While *Srpska Narodna Odbrana* was not explicitly a part of the Serbian state, state-controlled, or sponsored by the state, its leadership comprised senior government officials (Hoffman, 2017).

Ties to the government were further confused when a radical splinter group, *Crna Ruka*, broke off from *Srpska Narodna Odbrana*. Known popularly as the Black Hand, this organization was exponentially more militant than its parent entity (Shackelford, 2008). American historian Laurence LaFore (1997) wrote that the Black Hand combined the more unseemly characteristics of the early anarchist cells and the American Reconstruction-era Ku Klux Klan. “There were gory rituals and oaths of loyalty, there were murders of backsliding members, there was identification of members by number, there were distributions of guns and bombs” (LaFore, 1997). Similar to modern terrorist organizations, despite its clandestine efforts, the Black Hand crafted a strong brand for itself including a striking, easily recognizable logo.

Maintaining close ties to *Srpska Narodna Odbrana*, the Black Hand was also led by top Serbian military officials. Lieutenant Colonel Dragutin Dmitrievich served both as the leader of *Crna Ruka* as well as the chief of the Intelligence Department of the Serbian general staff (Hoffman, 2017). Under Dmitrievich’s leadership, the Black Hand assumed responsibility for all subversive Serb-backed operations in Bosnia. Though not in direct control of the group, the Serbian government understood and was aware of the methods that the terrorist group was implementing in pursuit of its goals (Hoffman, 2017).

The plan to assassinate the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was carried out on June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo (Shackelford, 2008). Supposedly the plot was carried out despite

the wishes of the Serbian government as Dmitrievich bowed to their pressure; regardless of this, the complex and intimate connections between the Black Hand and Serbian government prompts the drawing of parallels to contemporary state-sponsored terrorism.

Formed in order to take direct action against a detested regime in the midst of nationalist uprisings, the Black Hand epitomized nationalist terrorism as a direct product of its milieu. Though not the lone group rising up against the tyrannical Hapsburgs in Bosnia, the Black Hand enjoys notoriety as the final straw that provoked the First World War.

### **State Terror to Comply**

On the eve of the Second World War, terrorism regained its association with “governmental abuse of power” (Hoffman, 2017, 14). However, during and after the war, terrorism was closely associated with the violent tactics and campaigns of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Stalinist Russia. Through their terrorism tactics, these governments epitomized the radicalization of war. Hitler and Mussolini both depended on abusive street gangs to support their ascent to power through intimidation. Mussolini denied the tactic had any relation to terrorism, stating, “Terror? Never, simply social hygiene, taking those individuals out of circulation like a doctor would take out a bacillus” (Laqueur, 1987).

This form of terror become entrenched in the regimes of all three countries to ensure “complete and submissive compliance.” However, Stalinist Russia was not experiencing the same societal discord that Italy and Germany were facing, or the chaos of revolutionary France in the 1780s. The “Great Terror” conversely came at a time of relative peace and stability. It was not “launched in the time of crisis, or revolution and war... [but] in the coldest of cold blood, when Russia had at last reached a comparatively calm and even moderately prosperous condition” (Conquest, 1990, 14).

Similar to the reigns of terror throughout Latin America beginning in the 1970s, the state terrorism of World War II and post-war era was internally directed and used to create an incredibly compliant population. Moreover, it cements the idea that citizens were no longer something to be left alone in acts of violence, a regression from the works of Hugo Grotius and *jus in bello* (Reichberg et al., 2013). This trend carries on into the actions of modern terrorist organizations, who specifically target noncombatants, expanding upon the propaganda of the deed doctrine.

### **Semantics and Publicity Value**

Following World War II, revolution reinserted itself into the definition of terrorism. Nationalist and anticolonialist movements broke out all across the world as people under imperial rule recognized that the perceived invincibility of their colonial masters was an illusion. For example, when the British forces in Singapore fell to the Japanese, it stood as a symbolic event more than a strategic loss, “[Singapore’s] easy capture in February 1942 was shattering to British, and European, prestige in Asia... The white man had lost his ascendancy with the disproof of his magic. The realisation of his vulnerability fostered and encouraged the post-war spread of Asiatic revolt against European domination or intrusion” (Hoffman, 2017, 45). Oppressed people of colonies all over the world began fighting for their independence by whatever means necessary. This meant, in more cases than not, that terrorism would be frequently used to achieve these aims either directly or in order to gain public sentiment or awareness.

From this period comes one of the biggest developments in the semantic discourse on terrorism. The term *freedom fighter* was coined by people fighting for self-determination, and international sympathy grew for independence movements (Jenkins, 1977). To many in the

international system, who were not at risk of losing their colonial acquisitions, these *wars of liberation* seemed highly justified. Addressing the United Nations General Assembly in November 1974, Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat explained, “The difference between the revolutionary and the terrorist lies in the reason for which each fights. For whoever stands by a just cause and fights for the freedom and liberation of his land from the invaders, the settlers and the colonialists, cannot possibly be called terrorist” (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001).

The campaigns of Israel, Algeria, Cyprus, and more, demonstrated to the international community that terrorism can be an effective tool of political change. In some instances, terrorist tactics achieved the ultimate goal of sovereignty, or, at least, garnered global awareness and support. This anticolonial terrorism was crucial to the development of contemporary terrorism. These organizations were the first to fully grasp and take advantage of terrorism’s publicity value, which can reach far past their respective localities (Hoffman, 2017). The terrorism of this period transformed the concept from a localized problem to a “security problem of global proportions” as groups realized its full potential (Hoffman, 2017, 64).

### **Internationalizing Terrorism and Its Victims**

Modern terrorism was born on July 22, 1968 (Hoffman, 2017). Three armed members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a group comprising part of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), hijacked an Israeli El Al commercial flight bound for Tel Aviv. Rather than a simple diversion, as previous hijackings had been, this act was specific. The PFLP members wanted to exchange the passengers for Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel. It created a situation that the Israeli government could not ignore; it

forced their hand and demanded direct communication despite official Israeli declarations that this would never happen (Hoffman, 2017). With this event, terrorists also realized that they possessed the power to create a major media event that the entire world would turn to, provoking attention much more effectively than “twenty years of pleading at the United Nations” had (Schmid & Graaf, 1982). Moreover, the actions of the PFLP make clear one of terrorism’s greatest advantages: The phenomenon offers organizations that lack personnel, funds, and systemic legitimacy the opportunity to successfully confront entities that would be undefeatable if confronted conventionally. A leader of PFLP, Wadi Haddad, explained, “This is a particular animal, the IDF; we cannot fight it plane for plane, tank for tank, soldier for soldier” (Byman, 2017). All that was necessary was a group of committed, organized leaders.

The El Al hijacking internationalized terrorism. No longer were terrorists just hoping for international publicity, but now they also began traveling to different countries to carry out their attacks on innocent civilians who had little or nothing to do with their goals or grievances. The PFLP understood the transactional value that could be drawn from widespread outrage over attacks of this nature. Head of the PFLP, George Habash, pointed out that the death of one Jewish civilian far from the battlefield was much more effective than the deaths of a hundred Jewish soldiers on the battlefield (Byman, 2017). It is these two developments that we now so closely associate with terrorism. Ultimately, “Their intent was to shock and, by shocking, to stimulate worldwide fear and alarm” (Hoffman, 2017, 66). Today, this is the climate that the modern world, the United States included, associates with terrorism and fear.

### **Terrorism and Fear in the U.S. Prior to 9/11—Anti-Other, Anti-Government**

Fear has long, strong ties in the United States. From the Salem Witch Trials of the 1690s, the Know-Nothing Party of the late 1840s and early 1850s to the three incarnations of the Ku Klux Klan, in its short history the United States has been riddled with groups and movements that sought to maintain a United States that is white, male-dominated, and Protestant-Christian. In a settler nation composed of many different backgrounds, in times of stress, there seems to be a collective flight from reality and a renewed insistence that the concept of American identity—who is a full citizen, who is to be trusted beyond any doubt—must adhere to the three preceding characteristics.

The most prominent of such groups is the Ku Klux Klan. Created in 1865 by a group of Confederate veterans, the KKK terrorized African-Americans and white Republicans with cross-burnings, property destruction, disappearings, and brutal murders to push back Reconstruction efforts (SPLC, 2011). With hooded faces, the first generation of Klansmen terrorized the South for several before President Grant placed harsh penalties against the terrorist organization with the Third Force Act in 1871, though after just a decade the legislation was declared unconstitutional (“Grant, Reconstruction, and the KKK,” n.d.). The KKK, however, was reborn in the 20th century when racial tensions were agitated once again by the mass immigration of 23 million people from countries like Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Russia. This second iteration of the organization broadened its targets beyond African-Americans to include Catholics, Jews, Asians, bootleggers, and recent immigrants (SPLC, 2011). It was also the largest wave of the KKK, with nationwide membership in the millions of largely middle-class U.S. Americans, “Packaging its noxious ideology as traditional small-town values and wholesome fun, the Klan of the 1920s

encouraged native-born, white U.S. Americans to believe that bigotry, intimidation, harassment, and extralegal violence were all perfectly compatible with, if not central to, patriotic respectability” (Rothman, 2016). A third version of the Klan formed during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, and as it faded away again its remnants were absorbed into Neo-Nazi or right-wing, anti-government forces like those located in the midwestern and western United States (SPLC, 2011).

Beyond the acts and reigns of terror attributed to specific groups, the United States also has a history of lone wolves. Theodore Kaczynski, or the Unabomber, began a series of bombings in 1978, which lasted for nearly two decades, at a Chicago university. Though Kaczynski was never charged with terrorism, the bombings are considered to be a terrorism case, and the FBI director in the 1990s even debated the wisdom of “giving in to terrorists” after Kaczynski mailed in his manifesto (Unabomber, 2016). In April 1995, Army veteran Timothy McVeigh ignited a vehicle bomb outside of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people with hundreds more wounded (Oklahoma City Bombing, 2016). McVeigh’s reason was revealed in a letter he released as he sat on death row; in an anti-government rage, he claimed he was avenging those who died in Waco, Texas, two years earlier, stating that “federal actions grew increasingly militaristic and violent” (McVeigh, 2001).

Terrorism in the United States has experienced its own microtrends separate from global shifts. However, in almost every iteration, terror in this country is about race, religion, or maintaining/regaining a status-quo.

## **Resurgence of Religious Terrorism**

The 1990s brought an incredibly powerful resurgence of religious terrorism that has gained momentum in the 21st century. The question scholars are left to contend with is: why? What about society today has prompted this trend? Is it Sartre's god-shaped hole? Or, is it a clash of civilizations?

Many Islamic extremists openly and repeatedly point to the West, and particularly the United States, as threats to their religion and way of life (bin Laden, 2004; Stern, 2003), while Christian and far-right extremists in the United States cite reciprocal sentiments and worries: "invaders... that kill our people" (Roose, 2018; Stern, 2003). Arguably, regardless of source, the concerns mirror each other; rapid and irreversible globalization spearheaded by Western culture has left many groups feeling that life as they know it will come to an end whether they want it or not (Fukuyama, 2018; Stern, 2003). Amin Maalouf (1998), a Lebanese-born French author, argues that modernization is specifically to blame for the rapidly increasing tension revolving around identity: "Societies that are sure of themselves are mirrored by a religion that is confident, serene, and open; uncertain societies are reflected in a religion that is hypersensitive, sanctimonious and aloof" (Maalouf, 1998, 64).

Religious terrorism expert and Harvard professor Jessica Stern (2003) writes about the religiously radical,

They know they are right, not just politically, but morally. They believe that God is on their side. But God, as is His wont, is silent. Even in the face of unimaginable atrocities, He doesn't answer the militants' call. The world remains contaminated by injustice and corruption. The "enemy" continues to oppress his victims- whether unborn children, helpless Kashmiris, innocent

Palestinians, or redemption-seeking Jews. And this... leads to rage and even more violence. The terrorist begins to mimic his perception of the oppressor:

he turns to violence. His goal is to win at any cost. (2003, 282)

Religious terrorists are the individuals who dare to work toward their dreams. Emboldened by the sense that an Almighty is on their side, the violence directed at the impure leads only to their salvation. This combination has proven to be far deadlier than any other motivating factors (Stern, 2003; START, 2018).

The resurgence of religious terrorism is a product of the ever diversifying and broadening of our societies. The perception that the identities of certain societal groups are threatened has prompted waves of populism and identity-driven politics (Kruglanski, 2018; Fukuyama, 2018). Inarguably, “Demand for recognition of one’s identity is a master concept that unifies much of what is going in world politics today” (Fukuyama, 2018, xv). The solution, however, is not to reject identity politics entirely; rather, the outdated and imperialist ideas of who ought to be accorded recognition and dignity must be broadened, not just to promote inclusivity but also simply to more accurately reflect the diversity of the world.

In the United States, the battle of identity politics has elicited a president who calls himself a nationalist, a sharp increase in white supremacist violence, and anti-immigrant sentiment (Forgey, 2018). Swells of populism and nativism are sweeping through this country and Europe as people fight to maintain antiquated concepts of identity that grant privilege to a select few (Zakaria, 2018). As the world pushes in, there are people fighting to keep it out. Ultimately, “When a society is riddled with suspicion, the last solidarities to survive are the most visceral ones... Religious assemblies become the only places, where

people can gather, talk, and feel united in the face of adversity” (Maalouf, 2001, 147).

Policymakers must address the anxieties of the Christian-majority right in a way that acknowledges their concerns but does not validate the hate and fear those anxieties may produce. Moreover, they must also simultaneously present a vision that demonstrates how an inclusive, broadened national identity can positively transform this country (Zakaria, 2018).

### **The Weight of Words: Defining Terrorism in the United States Government**

The struggle to determine a single definition allows actors, both state and nonstate, to define terrorism in whatever way best suits their needs, concerns, or focuses. The debate over the semantics of terrorism may seem to be inconsequential, but it is one of the leading problems surrounding the topic. What is important to understand is that the term *terrorism* is highly pejorative, especially in the United States. RAND advisor Brian Jenkins explains, “What is called terrorism thus seems to depend on one’s point of view. Use of the term implies a moral judgement; and if one party can successfully attach the label terrorist to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral viewpoint” (Jenkins, 1977). To put it even more simply, “Terrorism is what the bad guys do” (Byman, 2018). The unsourced cliché, “One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter,” denotes this struggle of predetermined morality when applying the word *terrorism*.

The United States government employs more than twenty definitions of the term *terrorism* (Hoffman, 2017). The Department of State alone has adjusted its definition at least seven times between 1982 and 2004 (Schmid, 2011). Today it is, “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents” (U.S. Department of State, 2015). This definition is fairly simple. It

leaves out any standing threat of violence as terrorism; but, the threat or fear of violence is an incredibly powerful psychological component and a crucial aspect of its power.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines the phenomenon as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (Hoffman, 2017, 32). This is an interesting definition as it includes inanimate objects as possible terrorism targets. This means it includes attacks on abortion clinics, Jewish centers, medical research facilities, and more. This is important for a reality in which violent anti-Semitism is increasing and the future of *Roe v. Wade* is at stake thanks to the conservative Christian constituencies of the GOP. While slightly more robust, the FBI also neglects to include the threat of violence in its definition, just like the Department of State does.

The Department of Homeland Security shows its post-9/11 creation story in its definition. The agency currently labels terrorism as

Any act of violence that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources committed by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or its territories without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group. The act is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any state or subdivision of the United States and appears to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping (Hoffman, 2017, 34).

This definition focuses on property that is of national importance whose destruction could have “grave societal consequences” (Hoffman, 2017, 34).

Finally, the Department of Defense labels terrorism as, “The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instill fear and coerce governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are usually political” (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2014). This is the only definition that touches on the threat of violence and not just actual violence. It also includes religious motivation within its scope of possible objectives. While short, the Defense agency’s definition touches on the components of terrorism that many scholars and research institutions like START agree must be present.

Though this is not every definition of terrorism utilized by the American government, the variation and discrepancy between these four departments alone shows the dynamic realm terrorism exists in. Such definitions have shifted with both time and focus as terrorism itself evolves within the international system as the “archetypal shark in the water... [that] must constantly move forward to survive and indeed to succeed” (Hoffman, 2002). As counterterrorism (CT) practices evolve and become more efficient, so too will the strategies of terrorism. It is a never-ending race toward betterment. The understanding of this concept is precisely what is missing in U.S. counterterrorism policy. Direct and confrontational CT efforts tend to encourage growth from terrorist organizations. A shift is needed to properly address this national security threat.

### **Study History to be Liberated from History**

From inspired by religion to inspired by nationalism, terrorism has changed over time, both in practice and definition. For much of its existence, however, the changes were slow and infrequent. Religion served as the only major source of terrorism for the first 1,800

years of its existence. It is not until Europe began moving away from divine, monarchical rule toward self-determined nationalism that terrorism became associated with anything else (Hoffman, 2017). But once this shift occurred, the changes in terrorism are noted in waves every few decades making it incredibly hard to succinctly define the concept.

In the United States, however, the trend has been different. Motivations stem from fear of the Other, and enemies are defined in terms of either race or class. Religion was a component of terrorism in the U.S., but it was not the leading factor for the first 200 years. This has shifted dramatically since 2001. Islamic terrorism has captivated the American public since al Qaeda hijacked four planes and took their fight to the home of the Far Enemy. In response, religion's presence in the public sphere has increased significantly. Foreign and domestic policy are quietly driven by the morals of a Christian voting bloc borne from the Reagan-era Moral Majority. A systemic fear of the Other has grown from post-9/11 policies, effectively teaching U.S. American culture to distrust Muslims.

## Chapter Two

Woe to the statesman whose reasons for entering a war do not appear so plausible at its end as at its beginning.

—Otto von Bismarck

### War on a Religion

In the 1990s, the U.S. government confronted yet another variant of terror: acts committed by Muslims, inspired by a perverted interpretation of Islam and anti-Western, anti-modern ideologies. With this development, terrorism is no longer solely domestic. Gradually, over time, terrorism in the United States comes to be seen entirely as foreign. Trends in the latter half of the 20th century have meant that terrorism is now largely associated with the Other, and feared outgroups. It is with this perception that terrorism has struck fear in the minds of American citizens since 9/11. Islamophobia has influenced foreign policy since that fateful day with ever growing prevalence. Bush's War on Terror appears to be fueled by this trend as well as by American exceptionalism. Armed with John Winthrop's idea that this nation is predestined as a "city upon a hill" that will bring light to the darkest corners of the world, the United States has entered into an era of endless conflict much to the disadvantage of the American public and any country that finds itself in this country's path.

The War on Terror, launched by George W. Bush in late 2001, came after the single deadliest terrorist attack in history (Hoffman, 2017). The attack on 9/11 has since unalterably shifted American foreign policy and domestic politics. Militarism has become further normalized and even more pervasive in our society, while Islamophobia has found its way into our legislation. Al Qaeda spent an estimated \$500,000 on the attacks seventeen years ago (Carter et al., 2011). Since then, the United States has spent over \$5.6 trillion on its War on Terror, amounting to about \$13 million for every dollar al Qaeda spent (Crawford, 2017).

Ultimately, evidence suggests that the United States' policy on terrorism is misdirected and based on fear of the Other, and has cost the country international credibility, money, lives, and the integrity of various domestic institutions. Redirection and clear strategy is needed to better address the standing threat of terrorist organizations abroad as well as to begin addressing the growing, more pervasive terror threat in this country—far-right and white supremacist groups.

## **9/11**

The attack in New York City by al Qaeda completely shifted the United States' foreign policy as well as its domestic politics; worse, the cultural consequences of al Qaeda's multi-pronged attacks may be irreparable if American policy makers and citizens refuse to critically analyze the xenophobia and Islamophobia that has grown out of that day.

In terms of objectives, the 9/11 attacks were incredibly successful. If the point of terrorism is to inspire terror, the legacy of the four hijacked planes continues to do this. The attack on U.S. economic, military, and political power symbols was an attempt to prove a supposed leviathan in the international system was neither untouchable nor omnipotent. The impact immediately following the attacks did this. With a death toll of 2,973, citizens of more than 90 nations died that day (Peek, 2010). To better contextualize this number, in the 20th century, only 34 terrorist attacks killed more than one hundred people; 9/11 was the first time a terrorist organization had killed more than 500 people (Hoffman, 2017). That day, twice the number of U.S. Americans died than all terrorist attacks combined since 1968 (Hoffman, 2017). According to the Pew Research Center, an estimated 20% of U.S. Americans knew someone who was injured or killed in the attacks. The trauma in the weeks following was impressive with about 90% of adults reporting to have experienced at least one

symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder and 44% of adults were found to have substantial symptoms of stress. With the passage of time, “the immediate trauma seemed to settle into a kind of generalized mass anxiety” that arguably lingers to this day (Peek, 2010, 19). This mass anxiety possesses tremendous domestic and foreign policy implications.

In a special State of the Union address ten days after the attack, President George W. Bush declared, “Our war on terror begins with al-Qaida, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated” (Text of George Bush’s Speech, 2001). This language ensured that war would be fought not just against al Qaeda but against any entity that threatened the security of the United States—essentially a crusade against evil (Hoffman, 2017). More importantly, it ushered in an era of endless war. The United States is still involved in the longest war of its history and the American public has largely forgotten that its government is still waging war in Afghanistan (Crawford, 2017; Hussain, 2018). To ask why the United States is in a war that has no clear ending point, one must understand what prompted the attacks on 9/11.

### **Victims or Aggressors**

In a country that abides by its assumed exceptionalism and largely does not encourage critical thinking, it is easy to accept that we were the cruelly targeted victims of 9/11 and that the subsequent invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were justified, as we do not view the attacks on that day in the proper context. Within certain communities, the West, specifically the United States, had slowly developed a reputation throughout the Middle East of conspiring against the region and its predominant religion, Islam (Maalouf, 1998; Benjamin, 2016). When Mohammed Ali, viceroy of Egypt, led a period of booming modernization in the country at the turn of the 19th century, the European powers felt

threatened enough to crush the progress. This prompted outrage throughout the country and “the Arabs concluded then and still conclude now that the West doesn’t want the rest of the world to be like it; it just wants them to obey” (Maalouf, 1998, 77). Contemporary Western interference in the region broadened in the aftermath of World War I with the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration, whose expiration on May 14, 1948, prompted the Arab-Israeli War. The conflict between the Arabs of Palestine and the Jews of Israel is one of the main concerns of Muslim extremists, as it arguably corroborates their assertions that the US is a threat toward Islam (Stern, 2003; bin Laden, 2004; Hasan, 2019). For al Qaeda, it was the events of decades past that prompted their attack on the Far Enemy of Islam in September 2001 (bin Laden, 2004).

By November 2001, Osama bin Laden was already positioning any American retaliation as a “clash of civilizations... a matter of religion and creed” rather than a war on terror (Hoffman, 2011). In a 2004 speech, *Speech to the American People*, bin Laden fully explained the organization’s rationale: “We fight because we are free men who don’t sleep under oppression. We want to restore our freedom to our nation, just as you lay waste to our nation. So we shall lay waste to yours. No one except a dumb thief plays with the security of others and then makes himself believe he will be secure” (bin Laden, 2004). He continued, “Allah knows that it had never occurred to us to strike the tower. But after it became unbearable and we witnessed the oppression and tyranny of the American/Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon, it came to my mind” (bin Laden, 2004). Bin Laden points to 1982 as the beginning of the US-led atrocities that eventually led to 9/11. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, “Operation Peace for Galilee,” killed thousands of civilians. This convinced much of the Muslim population in the world that the United States would not

only stand by their destruction but also enable it, “And that day, it was confirmed to me that oppression and the intentional killing of innocent women and children is a deliberate American policy. Destruction is freedom and democracy, while resistance is terrorism and intolerance” (bin Laden, 2004). This, along with the violence in Iraq under former President George H.W. Bush, further supports the al Qaeda leader’s argument, “the throwing of millions of pounds of bombs and explosives at millions of children... in order to remove an old agent and replace him with a new puppet to assist in the pilfering of Iraq’s oil” (bin Laden, 2004). This speech is a new point of view for many citizens of the United States to consider. If the U.S. is not simply a victim of an unwarranted terrorist attack, then it becomes easier to think deeply and critically about the policies adopted post-9/11.

### **Endless Era of War**

Following 9/11, then-President George W. Bush addressed the American people in a special State of the Union Address that offered his vision of American dominance and retribution in a post-9/11 world that has led to two decades of war, “The only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.” (Text of George Bush’s Speech, 2001). The concept of defeating terrorism, and not a specific terrorist organization, is problematic. A tool that has existed for nearly two millennia will not be eradicated thanks to the efforts of a single government (Hoffman, 2011). Bush initially proclaimed that the War on Terror could be clearly and definitively won, a sentiment at the heart of his re-election campaign (Zenko, 2015). However, in an interview with Matt Lauer in August 2004, Bush conceded that the War on Terror may not know a full conclusion, “I don’t think you can win it. But I think you can create conditions so that those who use terror as a tool are less acceptable in parts of the world—let’s put it that way”

(Zenko, 2015). If Bush truly meant this concession, however, then the policies put forth by his administration would have tackled the social roots of radicalization. Force and invasion was chosen instead.

What is most important to note about the beginning of the War on Terror is the effort on the part of President Bush to avoid anti-Muslim rhetoric. The State of the Union Address immediately following 9/11 noted the losses incurred by the Muslim community as well. Bush spoke of prayers offered by churches, mosques, and synagogues alike. He even made sure to distance Islam from the beliefs of al Qaeda more than once, “The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam” (Text of George Bush’s Speech, 2001).

Arguably, Bush initially did what he could to avoid radicalizing the War on Terror. Nevertheless, this country is now experiencing a strong wave of xenophobia and nationalist tendencies that had its origins at this moment. At some point during the nearly two decade long war, the language and policies used in conjunction with the War on Terror have become markedly more targeted and discriminatory toward the entire Muslim community, no longer directed solely at violent extremists, e.g. see *Trump v. Hawaii* (Muslim Advocates, 2018). This trend of xenophobic law and legislation, coupled with the fact that the United States is unwilling to find a close to the War on Terror, means that now is the time for political leaders to seriously reconsider current policies. This process can begin with addressing the domestic policies that hurt Muslim-Americans without improving national security.

## Anti-Muslim Bias in Legislation

Despite the initial attempts in the early 2000s to not demonize the religion of Islam, U.S. domestic politics has increasingly seen Islamophobic tendencies propagate in its legislation and rulings. The most blatant and well-known court case that is inarguably anti-Muslim was upheld at the Supreme Court in the case *Trump v. Hawaii*. The case upheld the third version of Trump's Executive Order 13769, critically known as the *Muslim Ban*. The law targets nationals of seven countries—Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, North Korea, and Venezuela, five of which have Muslim-majorities—arguably in the name of national security (*Trump v. Hawaii*, 2018). However, the countries targeted, including Iran and Syria, have not produced significant terrorist threats in the United States. *Trump v. Hawaii* used the World War II era case, *Korematsu v. United States*,—another example of racist and fear-based lawmaking that did not improve the nation's safety during wartime—as precedent (*Trump v. Hawaii*, 2018). Omar Jadwat, director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, argued, "This ruling will go down in history as one of the Supreme Court's great failures. It repeats the mistakes of the *Korematsu* decision upholding Japanese-American imprisonment and swallows wholesale government lawyers' flimsy national security excuse for the ban instead of taking seriously the president's own explanation for his action" (Timeline of the Muslim Ban, 2018).

This executive order is not alone in its anti-Muslim bias, however. A recent study found 16 federal measures and 194 state bills that directly target Muslims in 39 states (Elsheikh et al., 2017). In 2002, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) targeted 25 different countries and attempted to track all non-citizen males over the age of 16 through fingerprinting and photographing them. All of the countries, except for

North Korea, had Muslim-majorities and ultimately more than 85,000 males were registered in the system (Elsheikh et al., 2017). In 2009, the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged the Obama administration to review, and potentially halt, NSEERS as a form of racial profiling in immigration policies, but data collection did not cease until 2011 (Elsheikh et al., 2017; Zogby & Suto, n.d.). NSEERS was labelled as a counterterrorism tool, and although the program was active for 14 years, it resulted in zero terrorism convictions (Elsheikh et al., 2017).

Following the widely publicized Paris and San Bernardino attacks in late 2015, a rare bipartisan legislative effort was made to tighten travel restrictions on foreign travellers (Mascaro, 2015). Changes to the visa waiver program (VWP) were made to remove several Muslim-majority countries from the list of countries whose citizens were allowed to remain in the US without a visa for 90 days (Visa Waiver Program Improvement, 2018). Nationals of VWP countries who have travelled to Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, or Yemen since March 2011 are no longer allowed to enter the United States with very limited exceptions (Visa Waiver Program Improvement, 2018). Additionally, any person that shares dual nationality with a VWP country and either Iraq, Syria, Iran, or Sudan is no longer eligible to travel in the United States (Visa Waiver Program Improvement, 2018). While this is purportedly a counterterrorism effort in response to the Islamic jihadist violence in 2015, the changes to the program would not have affected the entry of Tashfeen Malik, one of the San Bernardino shooters, who was Pakistani-born and was admitted to the country under a K-1 fiancée visa (Mascaro, 2015). Her husband was born in Chicago (Jenkins, 2015). Moreover, in the last 25 years, only three people have entered the country via the VWP in a terrorism attempt (Jenkins, 2015). All three incidents were prevented through intelligence efforts, not

visa restrictions, and occurred prior to post-9/11 policy changes. By one terrorism expert's count, in the last 25 years, 86% of those labelled by the government as terrorist conspirators were either U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents (Jenkins, 2015). So, why the insistence on targeting Muslim-majority countries? It comes down to religion and culture, or rather, the refusal to fully accept Islam.

Elsheikh et al. (2017) report that U.S. state legislatures regularly targeted Sharia law specifically, though American courts typically attempt to interpret and apply foreign laws that remain within the bounds of the Constitution (Elsheikh et al., 2017). Specifically, they note, "The push for anti-Sharia legislation by lawmakers in the years prior to midterm and presidential election cycles provides a platform to normalize, legitimize, and proliferate Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment in the American public and in political debates" (Elsheikh et al., 2017). Targeting the moral code of Islam, fuels misguided public fear surrounding the religion. It also prevents Muslims from using Sharia when it is called for in their cultural context such as divorce proceedings (Elsheikh et al., 2017).

It is important to note that the primary source of anti-Sharia bills was overwhelmingly partisan with Republicans comprising 96.8% of the 385 sponsoring lawmakers (Elsheikh et al., 2017). With the politics of 2018 on the record, it has become inarguably clear that Othering in the United States has returned to mainstream politics. In the 2017 and 2018 elections, 83 anti-Muslim candidates were tracked by UC Berkeley's Haas Institute. All candidates, except for two, were Republicans (Muslim Advocates, 2018). The majority of these candidates are not obscure, dark-horse radicals; 64% of the anti-Muslim candidates are credible, meaning that they are already seasoned elected or appointed officials or have a presidential endorsement (Muslim Advocates, 2018).

The election of Donald Trump appears to be the physical manifestation of the xenophobia that has always lurked within the United States; however, these sentiments have not been granted access to the mainstream political arena since the Civil Rights Movement (Elsheikh et al., 2017). Fear of Muslims as a basis for policy making has been steadily formalizing for the better part of the last decade, “By 2010, Islamophobia in the US had evolved from compartmentalized, racist, anti-Muslim sentiments and efforts as experienced by individuals into a well-financed, organized, and strategic nationalist movement with a grassroots and legislative agenda” (Elsheikh et al., 2017). The formerly marginalized rhetoric has been given access to mainstream thought arguably thanks to the Trump administration (King, 2018; Scahill, 2018). To add historical context and weight to these concerning trends, consider how the Jews of Europe were used as scapegoats for all of the economic and societal woes facing Germany after WWI. The current climate of intolerance, fear mongering, and mistrust in the United States mirrors that of 1930s Germany. Muslims are being increasingly used as scapegoats for the issues facing the United States as way to avoid addressing the underlying systemic reasons for “our collective political, social, and economic challenges” (Elsheikh et al., 2017, 51). Fixing these discriminatory post-9/11 domestic policies, however, is only part of what the U.S. needs to do in order as the country approaches the two decade anniversary of the War on Terror. Equally important and needed is the redirection of foreign counterterrorism policy starting with a thorough assessment of the last 17 years.

## **To Recap the Last 17 Years: From a War on Terror to War on the Other**

The United States' plan to defeat all "radical Islamic extremism" groups militarily has remained, ushering in an era of endless war and endless spending with unsustainable financial and societal consequences (Stengel, 2017). In 2001, the Bush administration launched a war of epic proportions—a war on all who terrorize the United States—and al Qaeda was simply the beginning.

The costs (human and financial) have matched the proportions of the misbegotten venture. Brown University estimated that over 500,000 people have been killed in the post-9/11 wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (Crawford, 2018). It is important to note that this number is direct deaths only as an indirect death count would include deaths as a result of loss of food access, potable water, and health facilities. While this number does not include the direct deaths of more than 500,000 people in Syria since 2011, it does include the estimated 6,000 military personnel who have been killed in these three major war zones since October 2001 (Crawford, 2018). For those in the U.S. military who come home from their tours in the Middle East, the conditions of their care have been put under severe pressure. The Veterans Affairs system has grown to include nearly two million veterans from the post-9/11 wars; in FY2016, more than 1 million of those veterans were receiving disability (Crawford, 2017).

For context, the \$5.6 trillion that the United States has spent on the aftermath of the hijackings would rank fifth in terms of GDP in the world behind India (Country Comparison, n.d.). Moreover, the amount of money directed toward the War on Terror has far outpaced what the country can afford, "In simple terms, the U.S. started FY2001 with a budget surplus. The U.S. went into deficit spending in 2002 and has not balanced a budget since then"

(Crawford, 2017). Since 9/11, \$2.8 trillion has been spent on counterterrorism efforts (Nowrasteh, 2018). While it is an interesting struggle to attach a monetary value to human life, doing so helps demonstrate whether or not CT spending is effective and helps policymakers improve the overall safety of the country. For the costs of this CT spending to equal the benefits in terms of the value of lives saved, Nowrasteh estimated that CT spending would have to have saved 188,740 lives, or 11,796 lives per year, since 9/11 (Nowrasteh, 2018). From 2002 through 2017, Cato Institute's latest estimate is that 172 people were murdered on U.S. soil by all terrorists (Islamic, non-Islamic, domestic, U.S. born, foreign-born, white supremacists, and far-right groups) (Nowrasteh, 2018). According to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), an estimated 312 people were killed during that time in terrorist incidents (START, 2018). More importantly, 50 of the 72 fatal attacks the GTD labels as terrorism since 9/11 were committed by groups other than Muslim or jihadi-inspired extremists (START, 2018).

According to Nowrasteh, "All CT spending would have to have saved 1,097 times as many lives as were actually taken by terrorists in attacks on U.S. soil for the costs of CT spending to equal the benefits in terms of lives saved" (Nowrasteh, 2018). Between FY2002 and FY2017, the \$2.8 trillion spent on CT spending accounts for 16% of the overall federal budget. But the nonpartisan Stimson Center found in a recent report that Muslim extremists have only killed 100 people in the United States since 9/11, whereas fentanyl killed more than 20,000 people in 2016 alone (Belasco et al., 2018).

The overly enthusiastic military industrial complex in the United States insists that wars are a monetarily smart decision. However, research regarding the spending of the post-9/11 wars suggests otherwise, "look[ing] at the average job creation potential of healthcare,

education, clean energy, and infrastructure, \$230 billion could have created about 2.8 million jobs instead of the 1.5 million created through war spending, thus the average opportunity cost is about 1.3 million jobs annually” (Crawford, 2017, 29). Moreover, it must be noted that “wars also entail an opportunity cost”—from “how veterans’ and civilians’ lives could have been lived differently” to the federal government’s ability to invest in public education, health, and infrastructure (Crawford, 2017, 4). Unequivocally, redirection and reapportionment in counterterrorism strategy and spending needs to be directed toward new, growing national security issues.

### **Threats that Outweigh Muslim Extremists- “Whites Don’t Kill Whites”**

It is time for the United States government to properly address the growing national security threats that exist outside of Islamic extremism—violence from the far-right in particular. The number of hate crimes and domestic terrorism incidents perpetrated by groups or individuals who fall under the umbrella of far-right and white supremacy has been steadily rising with 6,121 hate crimes cited in 2016 (START, 2018; Barrett et al., 2018; Kearns et al., 2017). All of these were criminal incidents motivated by bias against race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender. Additionally, hate crimes against Jews and Muslims increased from 2015 to 2016 as well as incidents targeting the LGBTQ community (Barrett et al., 2018). Despite the statistics, counterterrorism spending and efforts has not been redirected to threats from the far-right (Nowrasteh, 2018; Crawford, 2017).

Some authors point to the contentious presidential election as reason enough for the growth in hate crime throughout the country; others point to the rhetoric coming from President Donald Trump and his administration (Barrett et al., 2018; Hasan, 2018; Scahill, 2018; King, 2018). The labelling of violent crime in this country helps maintain the illusion

that Islamic radicals provide a greater threat to this country than someone named Robert Bowers, Gregory Bush, Devin Kelley, or Dylann Roof, all of whom have committed acts of terrorism according to GTD's criteria. It allows policy makers to enact policies based in racism and fear rather than actual statistics. On June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof opened fire on an all-black congregation at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, killing nine people (START, 2018). His belief in white supremacy and hate for minorities, specifically African-Americans, drove him to attack. In the days following the murders, news headlines were not riddled with the murmurings of "terrorism." The attack was left labelled as a hate crime by the media and the public because of Roof's race. However, the GTD, with its strict definition and certain criteria that an event must possess in order to be included, considered Roof's attack an act of terrorism. In the United States, there are 37 other incidents in 2015 that GTD considers as terrorism. The perpetrator groups of six of the attacks were either jihadi-inspired or Muslim extremists and eleven of the attacks were white or anti-Muslim extremists (START, 2018). One of the incidents listed in 2015 received very different media coverage than the Charleston shooting. On December 2nd, Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik shot and killed 14 at a holiday party in San Bernardino, California (START, 2018). News headlines were immediately labelling the incident as a terrorist attack (Schmidt and Pérez-Peña, 2015). The difference between the two acts of violence? Race and religion. All three of these people killed with intent and inarguably "for the purposes of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause" (Roser et al., 2018).

The identity of the perpetrators dictated what language was used in the aftermath.

"There's a danger that we only use the word 'terrorism' to refer to a particular racial profile of

perpetrator," said Andrew Mumford with the Center for Conflict, Security and Terrorism. Criss (2017) notes, "Sometimes (the label) terrorism is not used when the nationality of the perpetrator does not fit conventional stereotypes" (Criss, 2017). Research has shown that some terrorist attacks receive much more coverage than others in the United States. When target type, fatalities, and arrests made are controlled for, attacks by Muslims received on average 357% more coverage from 2006 to 2010 (Kearns et al., 2017 ). Of the attacks classified as terrorism by the GTD, during the same period, only 12.5% had Muslim perpetrators yet those attacks received more than half of the news coverage (Kearns et al., 2017). Kearns et al. asserts that this disproportional coverage in the media may be why much of the American public fear the "Muslim terrorist" while ignoring other threats" (Kearns et al., 2017). "This stereotyping reinforces cultural narratives about what and who should be feared... creat[ing] a feedback loop of incorrect information fueling prejudice and discrimination. Moreover, such misperceptions may prevent the acknowledgment and addressing of other pressing security threats" (Kearns et al., 2017). Disproportionate media coverage along with additional anti-Arab representation in popular culture may explain why much of the American public implicitly link terrorism and Islam (Kearns et al., 2017; Saleem & Anderson, 2013).

Attacks classified as terrorism by the GTD provide a much more comprehensive look at what actually falls under the umbrella of terrorism than what the media labels as terrorism (see appendix for GTD criteria). Including Dylann Roof's attacks, which received only 5.1% of total coverage, two other attacks were found to have received less coverage than expected given the number of fatalities and target type. In 2012, Wade Michael Page's attack on a Wisconsin Sikh Temple killed 6 people and only received 2.6% of coverage. In 2014, Frazier

Glenn Miller attacked a synagogue in Kansas killing 3 people and the event only received 2.2% of coverage (START, 2018; Kearns et al., 2017). These three attacks have three common traits that dictate their underrepresentation in the media: “the perpetrator was a white man and the targets were both religious and minority groups” (Kearns et al., 2017).

Though not included in the study, the attack on the October 27, 2018 in Pittsburgh on the Tree of Life synagogue that killed 11 people has followed the same pattern as the three aforementioned attacks. Robert Bowers, a 46-year-old white-male, entered a synagogue on a Saturday morning with the intent to kill Jewish people on account of their support of immigrants through HIAS (Tibon et al., 2018). Following the criterion laid out by the GTD, the attack will be classified as terrorism by the organization. However, media outlets and the FBI have labelled the attack as a hate crime rather than an act of terrorism (Saldivia et al., 2018). Why? Research would point to the fact that Bowers is a white male attacking an outgroup as the reason, “Events are more newsworthy if they can be typified as reflecting current beliefs and social structure, and be scripted in ways that reinforce stereotypes... media in the predominantly white, Christian United States may portray members of this in-group in a more favorable way than people who are not members of the majority race or religion” (Kearns et al., 2017; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Lundman, 2003).

Media coverage in the United States in regards to acts of violence is misleading and xenophobic, whether or not this is the intent. Analysis of terror incidents recorded by the GTD shows that on average, the perpetrator group is more likely to be a far-right extremist group than from a Muslim extremist group (START, 2018). In 2017, 49.2% of the 65 terrorist incidents in the US were perpetrated by far-right, white supremacist, or anti-Muslim groups and individuals compared to 9.2% attributed to Muslim extremists (START, 2018).

Despite these statistics, the current political climate ensures that acts of violence are continuously labelled on the basis of the attacker's race and religion. Few are willing to name white men, such as Dylann Roof, in the United States as terrorists, but Pulitzer winning author, Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, labelled Roof and those like him aptly and truthfully- "A Most American Terrorist" (Ghansah, 2017).

### **Thoughts and Prayers: Guns and the Far-Right Abroad**

Just as the the independence movements that swept across the globe and forced power structures to reckon with who deserved a place at the table in the mid-20th century, the world is now experiencing a noxious trend of white nationalist supremacy that is attempting to reverse those reckonings. As countries are slowly but surely seeing more diversity in leadership, and societies as a whole are becoming less homogeneous, an effort to maintain a white, Christian status quo is growing (Roose, 2018; Myre & Romo, 2019; Cassidy, 2019). Hate crimes against outgroups are growing. Nationalist rhetoric is so pervasive, it is on the verge of being normalized, if it is not so already. The ways governments react to violence and acts of terrorism in the name of white supremacist ideology have been extremely varied and dependent upon whether or not their own rhetoric mirrors the perpetrators.

On March 15, 2019, a man unleashed gunfire at two mosques in New Zealand. Brenton Tarrant, a self-proclaimed white nationalist, live streamed himself as he gunned down praying Muslims (Williams et al., 2019). In a 74-page manifesto that espoused white supremacy, Tarrant wanted "to show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, our homelands are our own and that, as long as a white man still lives, they will NEVER conquer our lands" (Blumberg & Blumenthal, 2019). A familiar narrative? Yes. But, beyond that the Christchurch attacks have ushered in a new and improved response.

The reactions from New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, have veered far from those of many world leaders since 9/11 (Gessen, 2019). First and foremost, Ardern has avoided the war rhetoric that George W. Bush used to shape the U.S.'s response to 9/11. Leaders since Bush, like France's Francois Hollande and Norway's Jens Stoltenberg, have labelled acts of terrorism as declarations of war against the country and promises to bring the terrorists to justice, hunting them down when needed (Gessen, 2019). She has also avoided language that creates a damaging *us versus them* dichotomy and puts the larger Muslim population at risk of prejudice and discrimination (Gessen, 2019). But most importantly, Ardern has worked to remove the tools that allowed Tarrant to kill 50 people in a few minutes—within 24 hours of the attack, Ardern announced a ban on semi-automatics and assault rifles (Sidhu & Regan, 2019).

All of this stands in direct contrast to the typical response in the United States to terrorism attacks, mass shootings, and hate filled rhetoric. The New Zealand terrorist claimed inspiration from Donald Trump, writing that he viewed the president as “a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose” (Sommerfeldt, 2019). In a tweet following the attack, Trump did not directly condemn the attacker's self-proclaimed white supremacist ideology, instead only offering sympathy, similar to his response to the deadly far-right rally in Charlottesville in 2017 (Sommerfeldt, 2019).

A government's response to terrorism is crucial. If a government is able to unequivocally denounce a terrorist's actions while also avoiding adding spectacle to the event, an attack loses its effect. Without an atmosphere of fear and a culture of reaction, terrorism holds little power.

### **Policy Recommendations: Domestic and Foreign**

It can be argued that current United States domestic counterterrorism policy accomplishes little except “convince Muslim Americans all that they are pariahs in their own country” and further strengthen arguments from jihadist groups like ISIS that the country is at war against Islam (Benjamin, 2016). It is necessary to note here that the public’s lack of access to certain intelligence makes thorough critiques of counterterrorism strategy difficult. Nevertheless, it can still be argued that there are a number of adjustments that can be made to U.S. CT policy that could have wide-reaching and positive implications.

After 17 years of Bush’s War on Terror, the war has no clear conclusion. When a country enters a war, its administration must already have an exit strategy with clear, final objectives. No strategy means no tangible plan for extractment. But whether or not the U.S. federal government has the express desire to end the series of conflicts around the world in the name of bringing justice and stability is another debate thanks to this country’s powerfully entrenched military industrial complex.

A comprehensive evaluation of current counterterrorism strategy is needed. Political scientist Micah Zenko rightfully suggests that a national commission would be most successful if its members had no vested interest—personal or financial—in its outcome (Zenko, 2015). A panel of unbiased experts could assess the government’s responses to the 9/11 attacks, and provide insight on where and how resources should be directed nearly two decades later. The most important adjustment to domestic and foreign CT strategy needs to include the understanding that curbing the growth and activity of violent radical groups cannot be done solely with bombings, or raids, but rather by also addressing the root social causes of radicalization—poverty, lack of opportunity, identity-based resentment (Stern,

2003; Zenko, 2015; Fukuyama, 2018; Kruglanski, 2018). Addressing these social ills can be incorporated in foreign and domestic counterterrorism strategy to confront any established foreign radical Islamic threats as well as the growing radicalization of certain communities within the conservative, Christian-right in this country.

In this respect the United States can learn from its partners in the War on Terror, especially Morocco, a major non-NATO ally. The North African country has emphasized deradicalization rather than repression since a major terror attack in 2003 (Tamek, 2014). Since then, the Moroccan government has focused its CT efforts on promoting moderate Maliki Islam as well as fighting poverty through investment in the public sector to address the threat of violent religious radicalism (Tamek, 2014). The Moroccan government understands and recognizes that radicalization often occurs due to a lack of opportunity in a community. By investing in literacy improvement programs, job creation, and social inequality the government seeks to fight domestic terrorism at its roots rather than simply its symptoms. The push for religious reform in the country's mosques acknowledges that religious communities are a place for debate and ideal growth (Tamek, 2014). King Mohammed VI recently reengaged with the idea of moderate Islam as a crucial CT strategy in his 2016 speech, declaring, "those who engage in terrorism, in the name of Islam, are not Muslims. Their only link to Islam is the pretexts they use to justify their crimes and their folly. They have strayed from the right path, and their fate is to dwell forever in hell" (Text of King Mohammed VI's Speech, 2016). These two tactics have been the core of Morocco's CT efforts for the last 15 years and since their implementation the country has only experienced one major and deadly terror attack (Morocco: Extremism, 2018). Considering

the successful CT strategies of other countries, like Morocco, would provide U.S. policy makers with fresh perspectives and insight to bolster and redirect current CT strategies.

The United States must also review its relationships with various regimes in the Middle East. Our alliance with Israel must be examined with a careful and critical scrutiny that currently does not abound in Washington (Hasan, 2019). Jihadi extremists have often pointed to U.S.-Israeli relations as proof of U.S. hostility toward Islam (Hasan, 2019; Stern, 2003; bin-Laden, 2004). The U.S.-Saudi Arabia alliance is also due to be evaluated. Given the fact that 15 of the 19 perpetrators of 9/11 were Saudi along with the recent murder of dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a U.S. resident, in Turkey, the United States has more than enough reason to assess its controversial relationship with the kingdom. Like many global powers, the United States has a bad habit of making excuses for the behavior of its friends while demanding higher standards for countries outside of its inner circle. Both Israel and Saudi Arabia also tend to favor stronghand, and sometimes harsh, policies against opposition, further escalating regional tensions.

Today, Theodore Roosevelt's Big Stick Diplomacy has been long neglected. Diplomacy is often seen as too soft, especially by more conservative forces in the United States, rather than a crucial part to a comprehensive foreign policy apparatus. Instead, the War on Terror has been characterized by force. Act now, think later. Shock and awe is its mantra. "There is a trade-off for policy makers between the need to destroy the adversary that is about to strike and the need to fight the movement over the long term. Our military action becomes the evidence our enemies need to prove the dangers of the New World Order they aim to fight. It creates a sense of urgency for the terrorists seeking to purify the world through murder" (Stern, 2003, 279). U.S. American military action around the world has

repeatedly convinced many that this country has little desire to act in the international system with just intention (e.g. Bin Laden, 2004). For example, in 1998, following U.S. American retaliatory attacks on a supposed chemical weapons factory in Sudan, Fazlur Rahman Khalil, leader of the Pakistani jihadi group Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, announced in a press conference, “Osama’s mission is our mission. It is the mission of the whole Islamic world” (Stern, 2003, 289). Ultimately, “whenever we respond with violence of any kind, we assist the terrorists in mobilizing recruits” (Stern, 2003, 289). That is not to say that violent response in prevention or in retaliation is never warranted or necessary. However, maintaining legality in accordance with the United Nations and ensuring military efforts are multilateral, provides a strong argument against assertions like those made by the Mujahideen and al Qaeda (MacAskill & Borger, 2004).

## Conclusion

I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.

—George W. Bush, 9/20/2001

The current perception of what terrorism is and who perpetrates it has further entrenched Islamophobia in the culture of the United States (Reitman, 2018). It has also failed to fully understand our country's experience with Christian, far-right violence (Reitman, 2018). Whether it is another instance of willful ignorance or a byproduct of cultural bias, policy leaders and citizens alike have not widely considered the apparent contradictions and negative consequences of current policy.

The implications of this trend are far-reaching. Policies that are billed to increase public safety ignore the actual culprits of disruption and violence in this country. The positive feedback loop of anti-Muslim bias in the media and the public's misperception encourages political leadership to be uncritical in their policy making and prevents them from addressing "other pressing security threats that have a factually rooted basis" (Kearns et al., 2017, 28). Critical pieces of U.S. legislation like the *Muslim ban* wrongly target Muslim-majority countries in the name of national security. It is hard to argue that this is not the case once it is noted that Saudi Arabia is not included. If the United States' War on Terror was really still about the threat of Muslim extremists, the close U.S. ties with Saudi Arabia would need to be reconsidered as 15 of the 19 hijackers who carried out the terrorist attacks on 9/11 were Saudi; moreover, some of them were young elites with ties to the royal family (September 11 Hijackers, 2018; Williams, 2018). Despite this, the 70-year alliance with the

Saudi Kingdom has only grown stronger since the hijackings, especially under the Trump administration (U.S.-Saudi Arabia Relations, 2018).

With over \$5.6 trillion spent so far on the War on Terror, the United States has been ravaged by its misguided and poorly planned attempt to take on al Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups. Domestic institutions, like the public education system, have been severely neglected as a consequence of the obsession the United States government has with defeating these entities. The government and its people have become blinded to the threat of anything that does not fall under the umbrella of radical Islam, instead fully embracing the era of the denial of fact heralded by the Trump administration (Kearns et al., 2017).

Regardless of party identification, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore that the United States is becoming more divided. Steps cannot be made to reconcile until this country's polarization is fully acknowledged. U.S. Americans must face the harsh realities of our deep-seated racism and our hatred of immigrants, despite being a settler nation. The public must dramatically shift, or arguably formulate, our foreign policy strategy to include more diplomacy and less direct intervention, which only fuels the recruitment of radical groups like ISIS. But blame cannot be placed entirely on the U.S. government. The problem also lies in the U.S. American public's wide belief that Islam is the only source of violent extremism and terrorism in this country. This country largely refuses to label white, Christian men as terrorists despite their ever-increasing violent attacks on various communities within this country. RAND Advisor Brian Jenkins argues, "What is called terrorism thus seems to depend on one's point of view. Use of the term implies a moral judgement; and if one party can successfully attach the label terrorist to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral view" (Hoffman, 2017, 24). To put it even more simply, "Terrorism

is what the bad guys do” (Byman, 2018). If U.S. Americans are unwilling to allow for the thought that the “bad guys” may be more white than brown, more Christian than Muslim, then little can be done to address the inadequacies of our counterterrorism policy, both internationally and domestically.

If terrorism is what the bad guys do and if debate remains as to who the bad guys can be then the United States government has made clear, once again, what side of the debate it falls on—one cannot be a terrorist if one is neither Muslim nor Arab. An active duty member of the U.S. coast guard was released on drug and weapons charges after having been found with a large arsenal of weapons and a thorough hit list that included Supreme Court Justices and high ranking politicians like Nancy Pelosi and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (Myre & Romo, 2019). As a self described white nationalist with open aims to create a white homeland, Christopher Paul Hasson was labelled as a domestic terrorist by prosecutors in original court documents in February (Myre & Romo, 2019). However, in late April the U.S. magistrate presiding over the case decided that there was not enough reason to continue detaining him before his trial noting that Hasson had not been charged with any terrorism related offenses (Kunzelman, 2019). It can be argued that this is because Hasson does not fit the post-9/11 profile of a terrorist and opposes some of the same people that the current administration does.

On April 30th, President Trump announced his plan to officially designate the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization. The statement came after a visit earlier in the month from Egypt’s authoritarian President el-Sisi and mimics Egypt’s own policy toward the opposition group (Savage et al., 2019). This follows the long established pattern of refusing to label and address white nationalist groups within the United States as terrorist

organizations while quickly applying the label to other entities from domestic “eco-terrorists” to the Iranian National Guard (Brown, 2019; Savage et al., 2019). During the Obama administration, a leaked report from the Department of Homeland Security concluded that “lone wolves and small terrorist cells embracing violent right-wing extremist ideology are the most dangerous domestic terrorism threat in the United States” (Brown, 2019). Backlash was swift and decisive, with statements deriding the report coming from House Minority Leader John Boehner all the way to the American Legion. The report was replaced and the unit responsible for the findings was gutted (Brown, 2019). Now, ten years later attacks from the far-right have grown unchecked. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), 80% of extremist-related murders since 9/11 in the U.S. were carried out by those linked to far-right movements; by this count only 3% of the murders were linked to left-wing ideologies and 17% were linked to Islamic movements (Brown, 2019). Moreover, the ADL found that all 50 extremist-related killed in 2018 stemmed from the far-right (Brown, 2019). As noted previously, the statistics on domestic terrorist incidents and extremist-related violence vary based on the definition used; however, it is would be irresponsible to not give at least some credence to them as other findings consistently demonstrate comparable trends (START, 2018).

The question of what to do with this information remains. No matter what terrorism threat one accepts as pressing and valid, a shift—to rely on reason over reaction—would remove terrorists’ greatest tool of fear. For example, the anarchists of the 20th century, who created very little change in the political systems, succeeded in creating tremendous atmospheres of fear that preoccupied turn-of-the-century society from other pressing issues. In the theater of terrorism, disproportionate “fear is the whole story” (Harari, 2015). National

symbols and civilians are the strategic targets of terrorism. The hope is that “power, fear and confusion will cause the enemy to misuse its strength” (Harari, 2015). A fly cannot wreck a china shop, but a bull can wreck the china shop for the fly. The disastrous post-9/11 wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan did the heavy lifting for terrorist organizations in the Middle East by creating the power vacuums that terrorism thrives in. When faced with spectacle and theater, states have responded in kind. The post-9/11 CT strategies of the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations have all reciprocated of the dramatism of al Qaeda. From Bush’s sermon-like Special State of the Union Address and the shock and awe bombings in Baghdad 16 years ago to the ramping up of drone warfare under Obama, U.S. retaliation has been a counterdrama full of smoke and mirrors rather than effective strategy.

It is up to us to figure out how we, as a country, have collectively strayed so far from the original reminders Bush imparted on the eve of this almost two-decade-long war. A certain set of assumptions about terrorism in the United States has prevented the federal government from viewing domestic terrorism threats, especially those of the far right, as significant as foreign, Islamic threats. Previously entrenched and misguided U.S. policies have changed thanks to citizen involvement and action—the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, withdrawal from Vietnam in the 1970s, and redirection of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2008. It is time for citizens to force policy change once again, to use their voices to trumpet tolerance over fear, and reason over reaction.

Religious terrorism attempts to destroy moral ambiguities. But we should be wary of succumbing to the extreme dualist view that the perpetrator is a manifestation of pure evil, rather than a suffering human beleaguered, as we are, by unmet aspirations, negation, and despair.

—Jessica Stern

It is important for each of us to become aware that our words are not innocent and without consequence: they may help to perpetuate prejudices which history has shown to be perverse and deadly. For it is often the way we look at other people that imprisons them within their own narrowest allegiances.

—Amin Maalouf

As ignorance spreads in the name of religion, Muslims, Christians, and Jews have to close ranks in order to tackle all forms of extremism, hatred and reclusiveness. As attested by the history of mankind, it is impossible to achieve progress in a society which is plagued by radicalism and hatred, for the latter are the main ingredients of insecurity and instability.

—King Mohammed VI of Morocco, 8/20/2016

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## Appendix A

*The Global Terrorism Database's full definition of terrorism and its criterion is presented so the reader understands the gravity of any incident included in the database—this is especially important when contextualizing the statistics in chapter two regarding the frequency of far-right incidents.*

### Defining Terrorism According to the Global Terrorism Database

The definition of terrorism according to the Global Terrorism Database states that a terrorist attack is “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.” (START, 2018).

“To be included in the database the all three of the following criteria must be met:

- The incident must be intentional*** – the result of a conscious calculation on the part of a perpetrator.
- ***The incident must entail some level of violence or immediate threat of violence-*** including property violence, as well as violence against people.
- The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors.*** The database does not include acts of state terrorism” (START, 2018).

Two of the three attributes must also be present in an incident:

**“Criterion 1: The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal.** In terms of economic goals, the exclusive pursuit of profit does not satisfy this criterion. It must involve the pursuit of more profound, systemic economic change.

**Criterion 2: There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims.** It is the act taken as a totality that is considered, irrespective if every individual involved in carrying out the act was aware of this intention. As long as any of the planners or decision-makers behind the attack intended to coerce, intimidate or publicize, the intentionality criterion is met.

**Criterion 3: The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities.** That is, the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law (particularly the prohibition against deliberately targeting civilians or non-combatants)” (START, 2018).

## Appendix B

*The full transcript of former President George W. Bush's Special State of the Union Address on September 20, 2001, is included because the language used in the speech sets the direction of the U.S.-led War on Terror. All emphasis in the text is my own.*

### **George W. Bush's Special State of the Union Address, September 20, 2001**

"Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people. We have seen it in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground—passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me to welcome his wife, Lisa Beamer, here tonight.

We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers, working past exhaustion. We have seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers—in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own. My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our Union—and it is strong.

**Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.**

I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time. All of America was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol, singing "God Bless America." And you did more than sing; you acted, by delivering \$40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our military. Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country.

And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support. America will never forget the sounds of our National Anthem playing at Buckingham Palace,

on the streets of Paris, and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate. We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo. We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

**Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens.** America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause—so honored the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity of purpose with America. Thank you for coming, friend.

On September the 11th, **enemies of freedom** committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars—but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war—but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day—and night fell on a different world, **a world where freedom itself is under attack.**

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda. They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole. **Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world—and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere. The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam.**

The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children. This group and its leader—a person named Osama bin Laden—are linked to many other

organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

The leadership of al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al Qaeda's vision for the world.

Afghanistan's people have been brutalized—many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan—after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid—but we condemn the Taliban regime. It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists. By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder.

And tonight, the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.

**I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.**

**Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.**

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa. These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life.

With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way. We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. **By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to power—they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism.** And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.

Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.

This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, here no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat. Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes.

Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. **Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.**

Our nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security. These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me—the Office of Homeland Security.

And tonight I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend—Pennsylvania's Tom Ridge. He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. **But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.** Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers. And tonight, a few miles from

the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I've called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud.

**This is not, however, just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.**

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded—with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: **An attack on one is an attack on all.**

**The civilized world is rallying to America's side. They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror, unanswered, can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments.**

And you know what - we're not going to allow it. Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat.

**I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.**

I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, [libertyunites.org](http://libertyunites.org), to find the

names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it. I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a long struggle. I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy.

Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and they are our strengths today. And, finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for those in uniform, and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow, and will help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what you will do. And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together.

Tonight, we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights, and take new measures to prevent hijacking. We will come together to promote stability and keep our airlines flying, with direct assistance during this emergency. We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home. We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act, and find them before they strike.

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy, and put our people back to work. Tonight we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New Yorkers: Governor George Pataki, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. As a symbol of America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress, and these two leaders, to show the world that we will rebuild New York City.

**After all that has just passed - all the lives taken, and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them - it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear. Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead, and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them.** As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world.

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom—the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time—now depends on us. Our nation—this generation—will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came - where we were and what we were doing. Some will remember an image of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever.

And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end.

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.

**The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral**

**between them.**

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice - assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.

Thank you.”

## Appendix C

*The full transcript of Osama bin Laden's 2004, Speech to the American People, is included because it offers a valuable perspective that I know many U.S. Americans have not thought about. I also include it with a conversation in mind between a classmate of mine and I—after being required to read the piece for a foreign policy class, this classmate, who was a student veteran, was rattled with the realization that the War on Terror was not as straightforward as it appeared to be and what part she played in a war that was no longer so black and white. All emphasis in the text is my own.*

### Osama bin Laden's Speech to the American People, November 2004

"Praise be to Allah who created the creation for his worship and commanded them to be just and permitted the wronged one to retaliate against the oppressor in kind. To proceed:

Peace be upon he who follows the guidance: People of America this talk of mine is for you and concerns the ideal way to prevent another Manhattan, and deals with the war and its causes and results.

Before I begin, I say to you that security is an indispensable pillar of human life and that free men do not forfeit their security, contrary to Bush's claim that we hate freedom.

If so, then let him explain to us why we don't strike for example - Sweden? And we know that freedom-haters don't possess defiant spirits like those of the 19 - may Allah have mercy on them. **No, we fight because we are free men who don't sleep under oppression. We want to restore freedom to our nation, just as you lay waste to our nation. So shall we lay waste to yours.**

**No one except a dumb thief plays with the security of others and then makes himself believe he will be secure.** Whereas thinking people, when disaster strikes, make it their priority to look for its causes, in order to prevent it happening again. But I am amazed at you. Even though we are in the fourth year after the events of September 11th, Bush is still engaged in distortion, deception and hiding from you the real causes. And thus, the reasons are still there for a repeat of what occurred. So I shall talk to you about the story behind those

events and shall tell you truthfully about the moments in which the decision was taken, for you to consider.

I say to you, Allah knows that it had never occurred to us to strike the towers. But after it became unbearable and we witnessed the oppression and tyranny of the American/Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon, it came to my mind. The events that affected my soul in a direct way started in 1982 when America permitted the Israelis to invade Lebanon and the American Sixth Fleet helped them in that. This bombardment began and many were killed and injured and others were terrorised and displaced.

I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, women and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents, rockets raining down on our home without mercy. **The situation was like a crocodile meeting a helpless child, powerless except for his screams. Does the crocodile understand a conversation that doesn't include a weapon? And the whole world saw and heard but it didn't respond.**

In those difficult moments many hard-to-describe ideas bubbled in my soul, but in the end they produced an intense feeling of rejection of tyranny, and gave birth to a strong resolve to punish the oppressors. **And as I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted and so that they be deterred from killing our women and children.**

**And that day, it was confirmed to me that oppression and the intentional killing of innocent women and children is a deliberate American policy. Destruction is freedom and democracy, while resistance is terrorism and intolerance.**

This means the oppressing and embargoing to death of millions as Bush Sr did in Iraq in the greatest mass slaughter of children mankind has ever known, and it means the throwing of millions of pounds of bombs and explosives at millions of children - also in Iraq - as Bush Jr did, in order to remove an old agent and replace him with a new puppet to assist in the pilfering of Iraq's oil and other outrages.

**So with these images and their like as their background, the events of September 11th came as a reply to those great wrongs, should a man be blamed for defending his sanctuary? Is defending oneself and punishing the aggressor in kind, objectionable terrorism? If it is such, then it is unavoidable for us.**

This is the message which I sought to communicate to you in word and deed, repeatedly, for years before September 11th. And you can read this, if you wish, in my interview with Scott in Time Magazine in 1996, or with Peter Arnett on CNN in 1997, or my meeting with John Weiner in 1998. You can observe it practically, if you wish, in Kenya and Tanzania and in Aden. And you can read it in my interview with Abdul Bari Atwan, as well as my interviews with Robert Fisk.

The latter is one of your compatriots and co-religionists and I consider him to be neutral. So are the pretenders of freedom at the White House and the channels controlled by them able to run an interview with him? So that he may relay to the American people what he has understood from us to be the reasons for our fight against you? If you were to avoid these reasons, you will have taken the correct path that will lead America to the security that it was in before September 11th. This concerned the causes of the war.

As for its results, they have been, by the grace of Allah, positive and enormous, and have, by all standards, exceeded all expectations. This is due to many factors, chief among them, that we have found it difficult to deal with the Bush administration in light of the resemblance it bears to the regimes in our countries, half of which are ruled by the military and the other half which are ruled by the sons of kings and presidents.

Our experience with them is lengthy, and both types are replete with those who are characterised by pride, arrogance, greed and misappropriation of wealth. This resemblance began after the visits of Bush Sr to the region. At a time when some of our compatriots were dazzled by America and hoping that these visits would have an effect on our countries, all of a sudden he was affected by those monarchies and military regimes, and became envious of their remaining decades in their positions, to embezzle the public wealth of the nation without supervision or accounting.

So he took dictatorship and suppression of freedoms to his son and they named it the Patriot Act, under the pretense of fighting terrorism. In addition, Bush sanctioned the installing of sons as state governors, and didn't forget to import expertise in election fraud from the region's presidents to Florida to be made use of in moments of difficulty.

All that we have mentioned has made it easy for us to provoke and bait this administration. All that we have to do is to send two mujahidin to the furthest point east to raise a piece of cloth on which is written al-Qaida, in order to make the generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic, and political losses without their achieving for it anything of note other than some benefits for their private companies.

**This is in addition to our having experience in using guerrilla warfare and the war of attrition to fight tyrannical superpowers, as we, alongside the mujahidin, bled Russia for 10 years, until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat. All Praise is due to Allah.**

**So we are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy. Allah willing, and nothing is too great for Allah.**

That being said, those who say that al-Qaida has won against the administration in the White House or that the administration has lost in this war have not been precise, because when one scrutinizes the results, one cannot say that al-Qaida is the sole factor in achieving those spectacular gains.

**Rather, the policy of the White House that demands the opening of war fronts to keep busy their various corporations - whether they be working in the field of arms or oil or reconstruction - has helped al-Qaida to achieve these enormous results.**

**And so it has appeared to some analysts and diplomats that the White House and us are playing as one team towards the economic goals of the United States, even if the intentions differ.**

And it was to these sorts of notions and their like that the British diplomat and others were referring in their lectures at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. [When they pointed out that] for example, al-Qaida spent \$500,000 on the event, while America, in the incident and its aftermath, lost - according to the lowest estimate - more than \$500 billion. **Meaning that every dollar of al-Qaida defeated a million dollars by the permission of Allah, besides the loss of a huge number of jobs. As for the size of the economic deficit, it has reached record astronomical numbers estimated to total more than a trillion dollars.**

And even more dangerous and bitter for America is that the mujahidin recently forced Bush to resort to emergency funds to continue the fight in Afghanistan and Iraq, which is evidence of the success of the bleed-until-bankruptcy plan - with Allah's permission.

**It is true that this shows that al-Qaida has gained, but on the other hand, it shows that the Bush administration has also gained, something of which anyone who looks at the size of the contracts acquired by the shady Bush administration-linked mega-corporations, like Halliburton and its kind, will be convinced. And it all shows that the real loser is ... you.**

**It is the American people and their economy.**

And for the record, we had agreed with the Commander-General Muhammad Ataa, Allah have mercy on him, that all the operations should be carried out within 20 minutes, before Bush and his administration notice. It never occurred to us that the commander-in-chief of the American armed forces would abandon 50,000 of his citizens in the twin towers to face those great horrors alone, the time when they most needed him.

But because it seemed to him that occupying himself by talking to the little girl about the goat and its butting was more important than occupying himself with the planes and their butting of the skyscrapers, we were given three times the period required to execute the operations - all praise is due to Allah.

And it's no secret to you that the thinkers and perceptive ones from among the Americans warned Bush before the war and told him: "All that you want for securing America and

removing the weapons of mass destruction - assuming they exist - is available to you, and the nations of the world are with you in the inspections, and it is in the interest of America that it not be thrust into an unjustified war with an unknown outcome."

But the darkness of the black gold blurred his vision and insight, and he gave priority to private interests over the public interests of America.

So the war went ahead, the death toll rose, the American economy bled, and Bush became embroiled in the swamps of Iraq that threaten his future. He fits the saying "like the naughty she-goat who used her hoof to dig up a knife from under the earth".

So I say to you, over 15,000 of our people have been killed and tens of thousands injured, while more than a thousand of you have been killed and more than 10,000 injured. And Bush's hands are stained with the blood of all those killed from both sides, all for the sake of oil and keeping their private companies in business.

Be aware that it is the nation who punishes the weak man when he causes the killing of one of its citizens for money, while letting the powerful one get off, when he causes the killing of more than 1000 of its sons, also for money.

**And the same goes for your allies in Palestine. They terrorise the women and children, and kill and capture the men as they lie sleeping with their families on the mattresses, that you may recall that for every action, there is a reaction.**

Finally, it behooves you to reflect on the last wills and testaments of the thousands who left you on the 11th as they gestured in despair. They are important testaments, which should be studied and researched. Among the most important of what I read in them was some prose in their gestures before the collapse, where they say: "How mistaken we were to have allowed the White House to implement its aggressive foreign policies against the weak without supervision."

It is as if they were telling you, the people of America: "Hold to account those who have caused us to be killed, and happy is he who learns from others' mistakes."

And among that which I read in their gestures is a verse of poetry. **"Injustice chases its people, and how unhealthy the bed of tyranny." As has been said: "An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure." And know that: "It is better to return to the truth than persist in error." And that the wise man doesn't squander his security, wealth and children for the sake of the liar in the White House.**

**In conclusion, I tell you in truth, that your security is not in the hands of Kerry, nor Bush, nor al-Qaida. No. Your security is in your own hands.** And every state that doesn't play with our security has automatically guaranteed its own security. And Allah is our Guardian and Helper, while you have no Guardian or Helper. All peace be upon he who follows the Guidance.”