

# PERSPECTIVES ON TERRORISM

Volume IV, Issue 6

December 2010

A JOURNAL OF THE

**TRI** TERRORISM RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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Enhancing Security through Collaborative Research

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## Justice or Peace? The Hariri Assassination and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon

by Maria-Rita Kassis

### *Abstract*

*The assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri represented a turning point in the modern history of Lebanon. The death of the tycoon, who reshaped Beirut following years of internal strife, has resulted in a major uprising that changed the face of Lebanon and rewrote its history. To many, his death remains a mystery which is expected to be solved by the UN-sponsored International Tribunal in charge of probing the Feb. 14, 2005, murder. Lebanon, a country overwhelmed by its ongoing political crises, is in tension again in anticipation of the expected indictment. This article explores the main conspiracy theories regarding the background of the assassination. After presenting a number of uncontested facts, the article explores three scenarios which attribute responsibility respectively to Syria, Hezbollah and Israel.*

### *Introduction*

On 14 February 2005, Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated. Lebanon has a history of political murder; powerful figures, either politically savvy or economically influential, have been killed by guns, bombs or in car "accidents." Appealing to foreign powers for help has been a historical given among Lebanese political parties searching to re-balance internal power disparities. To follow religious and ethnic leaders almost blindly is a third constant in Lebanon's turbulent history. What happened in the aftermath of February 14, 2005, was yet another confluence of these traditional patterns of Lebanese political history. Yet the stakes seem even higher this time than in the past - the United Nations Security Council became involved, a Special International Tribunal was established and the spectre of a resurgence of the civil war looms on the horizon. It could have all turned out so differently. Until February 14, 2005, the country offered a semblance of stability. Once more it rose from the ashes to regain its position as the hub for financial services in the Middle East. Once again, it was ready to become a favorite destination for Arab tourism as well as a political safe haven in a turbulent region.

The nation's initial reactions to the murder of Hariri were feelings of shock, anger and vengeance. Most Lebanese directly blamed Syria, its constantly interfering neighbor, for the foul deed. The emotional popular reaction led to a massive peaceful demonstration. For a brief moment Lebanese from all sects, religions and parties joined hands to show unconditional

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support for the nation in what became known as the Cedar Revolution. By this “revolution” of March 14, 2005, and by subsequent political developments, Syrian troops were forced to leave Lebanese territory. Yet after a brief interval, diplomatic relations with Syria were restored. It looked as if the “big brother” relationship between the two countries had finally come to an end. The direct reaction to the assassination had been one of unity. The answer to the question, “Who killed Hariri?” seemed obvious. Yet over time, as investigations progressed, there was a shift in the focus of most accusations and Syria was no longer on top of the list of likely culprits. Since then the search for the conspiracy behind the murder Hariri has made clear that there is a price to be paid to unravel and accept the truth. It is not certain that Lebanon can pay that price without falling back into civil war. The truth could even destabilize the whole Near East. “Let the facts speak for themselves”, is easier said than done. There are a few uncontested facts. Beyond that there are highly contested facts that fit into one of three conspiracy theories of which probably only two can coexist. In the following, we will look at the uncontested facts and the “facts” linked to three conspiracy theories and the possible motives behind them.

### *Uncontested Facts*

Prime Minister Hariri died with 22 others, while more than 200 people were injured in the explosion that shook downtown Beirut on that fateful 14 February, 2005. The destruction on the crime scene was massive with debris and remains of human bodies dispersed along the St. George coast. Cell phones jammed, networks closed, TV stations reported the scene, schools were evacuated, roads closed, the Lebanese stock market tumbled - the whole country came to a halt. It was not the first high-profile murder that the Lebanese witnessed, but it was the first time that it unleashed such widespread dreadful emotions of anger and despair. Rafik Hariri was a powerful politician but also a business man who considered politics a means to an economically prosperous end. He was also the uncontested Sunni leader. This gave him unprecedented power on the Muslim front and made him the object of a personality cult; Sunnis referred to him at all times and he grew in power through them. Lebanon’s political life is famous for sectarian allegiances, clientele networks and foreign alliances. All that came together in Hariri - politics, economics and religion.

The event caused an international reaction; on February 15, 2005, the United Nations Security Council issued a presidential statement condemning the assassination as a “terrorist act” [1] that is, not just a threat to the stability of Lebanon, but a threat to international peace and security, which, according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, falls under the mandate of the Security Council. Following the blast, the United Nations’ Secretary-General dispatched a Fact-Finding Mission to Beirut to investigate who was behind the assassination. It gathered evidence, interviewed witnesses, met with politicians - always in close cooperation with the Lebanese authorities. According to Peter Fitzgerald, Head of the UN Fact-Finding Mission in Lebanon, the

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responsibility for the assassination could only be established by court but the circumstances and means could be investigated right away. His report was divided into three sections covering causes, circumstances and consequences of the murder. It noted that, “it is clear that the assassination took place in a political and security context marked by an acute polarization around the Syrian influence in Lebanon and a failure of the Lebanese State to provide adequate protection for its citizens.”[2] The Fitzgerald report also noted a certain lack of commitment and credibility in the local investigation of the crime. The Lebanese authorities’ failure to take adequate steps and provide security diminished its popular support.

An international tribunal became a ‘must’ for Lebanon, not only to find the culprits behind the assassination but to ensure the kind of transparency and accountability that the Lebanese government itself could not provide. The day after Hariri’s assassination, the UN Security Council had issued a Presidential Statement. It urged all states “in accordance with its resolutions 1566 (2004) and 1373 (2001), to cooperate fully in the fight against terrorism.” On April 7, 2005, the Security Council adopted resolution 1595[3], establishing the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC). Its main task was to assist the Lebanese authorities in their investigations. A bilateral memorandum of understanding involving a contractual obligation between Lebanon and the UN, was signed on June 13, 2005, giving UNIIC the authority to investigate the circumstances of the murder in a completely independent way, free of any interference [4]. UNSC Resolution 1636 (2005) is based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which makes its implementation mandatory for all UN Member States, obliging all UN member states, including Syria, to provide full cooperation to UNIIC.

Realizing the political and technical implications that might emerge from the establishment of a Lebanese tribunal to look into the case, the Lebanese government requested the creation of a tribunal of international character in which Lebanon would take part. As a consequence, UNSC Resolution 1644 (2005)[5] (also passed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter) came as an official acknowledgment of Lebanon’s request that “those eventually charged with involvement in this terrorist attack be tried by a tribunal of an international character.” Dr. Masri, an expert on international law, emphasized in a conversation with the author of this article that a party to the tribunal cannot unilaterally withdraw and that Lebanon has committed itself to accept and obey the relevant UN resolutions. In other words, Lebanon is obliged to observe and implement the UNSC resolutions which are binding. On top of that, the Lebanese constitution contains a provision stating that Lebanon commits itself to implement and obey all UN resolutions, which makes it also a constitutional matter. UNSC Resolution 1757 (2007)[6], also passed under Chapter VII, established the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL). It entered into force on June 10, 2007; thus bringing the investigation and trial regarding the Hariri assassination under international jurisdiction, superseding Lebanese law, both regarding its decisions and the investigation before it. The statute of the court also notes that the Lebanese judicial authorities

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should refrain from undertaking any further investigation of the Hariri assassination on their own, making the international tribunal the sole authority. These facts are uncontested. The facts and what they speak for in the following scenarios are not subscribed to by all parties.

*Scenario # 1: Syria is Responsible for Hariri's Assassination*

In 2002, Lebanon received a considerable sum of money - \$4.4 billion - from the Paris II Conference and other agencies.[7] The allocated funds were meant to support Lebanon's financial recovery after the civil war. By then Lebanon's economy was already showing signs of recovery. Hariri proved to be the economically and politically influential figure with international connections who was able to overrule special religious and, at times, political interests. He was surrounded by great economists, among them Bassel Fleihan who was also killed in the same explosion. The economic expansion plan that Hariri had prepared for Lebanon was, however, not compatible with the continued Syrian presence in Lebanon. This brought the two countries on a collision course. It has been suggested that Hariri might have exerted pressure, through his international connections, to push for UNSC Resolution 1559 which called for an end of the Syrian occupation and the disarmament of Lebanon's militias. While this might be true, it took place behind the scenes. In his declaratory policy, Hariri seemed keen on maintaining a positive relationship with Syria; he continued to consult with Syria on internal affairs as he had always done.

The behind the scenes antagonism between Hariri and Syria made the 'big brother' country with its occupation force the first suspect regarding the assassination. Syria had its intelligence services on the ground and a military presence everywhere. The immediate popular reaction called for the resignation of former Prime Minister Omar Karame's cabinet and the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1559 which had requested for the withdrawal of Syrian troops[8]. Saad Hariri, one of the sons of the slain prime minister, was the first to point the accusing finger towards Syria, right on the crime scene. Further direct accusations were made by various other politicians known to belong to the 14 March political Bloc. In an interview with German news magazine *Der Spiegel* in 2006, Saad Hariri said: "I'm telling you: Assad is responsible. Or let me put it this way: Based on everything I know, he bears at least some of the responsibility." [9] In his report Fitzgerald did not accuse Syria directly. Yet he stated that the atmosphere created by the constant Syrian presence and interference in the country's domestic affairs and governance resulted in a political polarization providing the necessary backdrop for the assassination of Rafik Hariri.

Tensions started to mount the day the UN decided to send a fact-finding mission. Expectations about some denouement rose with the presence of the investigation led by Detlev Mehlis, the Commissioner of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC). Most

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Lebanese assumed that Mehlis was here to piece together a puzzle that would in the end reveal Syria's involvement. Politically speaking, the US had great interest in having the evidence point to Syria, since it would provide Washington with a justification to impose sanctions that were long overdue. The Bush administration was also concerned about terrorists passing through Syria to reach the Iraqi theatre of war.[10] Syrians, in turn, denied such allegations and put the blame on its own enemies who wanted to accelerate the demise of its influence in Lebanon or even push for a 'regime change' inside Syria itself. [11] So much for the first contested scenario.

*Scenario # 2. Hezbollah is Responsible for Hariri's Assassination*

In the midst of waves of accusations fuelling political tensions, proof had to be gathered and a preliminary judicial decision had to be made. The polarization manifest in the political debate divided the country into two Blocs: the March 14 Bloc - a Future Movement-led anti-Syrian Bloc and, opposed to it, a Hezbollah-led, pro-Syrian Bloc. When former Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's cabinet first requested the international tribunal, Hezbollah was first opposed to it. Eventually it accepted its establishment, to show its willingness to find the perpetrators behind the assassination. In most UN resolutions pertaining to the Hariri case, reference was made to the cooperation that the Lebanese Government would provide throughout the investigation and trial. Hezbollah is part of the government and thereby under a constitutional obligation to provide cooperation and support for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL); anything less would constitute an obstruction of justice. However, threats were made by Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah that the country should withdraw the financial budget for the tribunal. Lebanon had committed itself to pay 49% of the tribunal's expenses. However, the UN General Assembly is entitled to collect donations from Member States in order to cover, if necessary, the tribunal's total expenditures, thereby ensuring the continuation of the tribunal irrespective of the Lebanese's government's political will to do so.

Hezbollah's opposition to the tribunal is well known. An escalation of tension by the party began after leaks indicated that some of its members were implicated in the murder and that they might be indicted in a preliminary court decision. This propelled Hezbollah's leader, Sayyed Nasrallah, to accuse UNIIIC of being linked to Israeli intelligence and of basing its investigation on the testimonies of false witnesses. Ever since, Hezbollah has tried to discredit the tribunal, its findings and the future trials. Again, Lebanon was moving towards the brink of civil war as more details about the role of Hezbollah became emerged.

According to the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, new evidence uncovered by the STL pointed to the existence of an operative cell of Hezbollah which had planned and carried out the "diabolical attack." [12] The article by Eric Folath described in detail the intelligence path that

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led to focus suspicion towards Hezbollah. Folath revealed that a special unit of the Lebanese security forces, headed by intelligence expert Captain Wissam Eid, identified eight cell phone numbers that were present on the scene on the day of the explosion as well as days before; they were referred to as “the first circle of hell.” Purchased at the same store and activated six weeks before the assassination, the owners of these cell phones only communicated with each other, thus creating a closed network. The one person who might have been able to identify the buyer of the mobile phones was a store keeper. This witness died in a car “accident” after news about the network of “the first circle of hell” had surfaced. Beyond this circle network, there was a “second circle of hell,” composed of 20 phone numbers. It drew the attention of Captain Eid due to their close geographical proximity to the first eight and their presence on the site of the attack. According to sources in the Lebanese security forces, all of the numbers involved apparently belong to the ‘operational arm’ of Hezbollah. These “hot phones” as Folath refers to them, again formed a closed network. Yet the anonymity of this circle was blown when one of the phone users also made a private call. This one-time breach of security was enough to identify the person as Abd al-Majid Ghamlush, a Hezbollah member. While his whereabouts are unknown, he could be identified as the one who bought the phones. Traces caused by the breach of security led to another Hezbollah member, Hajj Salim. He is the suspected “mastermind of the terrorist attack.” According to Folath, Salim's secret "Special Operational Unit" apparently reported directly to Hezbollah's Secretary General. Captain Eid, who had made these breakthrough discoveries in the investigation, was killed in an explosion on January 25, 2008. There can be little doubt that his murder is directly related to his findings. He had been on a hot trail and had to be silenced before he would find a smoking gun leading directly to the perpetrators and their masters.

Following these events, due to tighter security, little more was leaked to the public. The possible issuance of indictments against members of Hezbollah led to an escalation of tensions, further deepening internal division in Lebanon. In recent speeches, Sayyed Nasrallah repeatedly accused STL of being an Israeli-backed tribunal. In order to shift the blame to Israel, in a speech held in August 2010, Hezbollah's leader released filmed aerial footage of Lebanon, particularly of Beirut, purported to come from intercepted Israeli surveillance. It showed the route, together with alternative back routes, which Hariri habitually used when traveling in the city. The video footage was a manifestation of Hezbollah's capabilities to intercept Israeli intelligence from Israeli unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). However, as Sami Gemayel, an MP from the March 14 Bloc noted, the footage shown was dating back to 1997 while the murder took place in 2005.[13] In the same video, Sayyed Nasrallah claimed, “We have evidence that Ghassan al-Jidd [a retired Lebanese army Brig. Gen.] was present at the Rafik Hariri crime scene.” He went on to assert that this fact and his name were communicated to the authorities. Nevertheless Al-Jidd was able to leave the country for Paris before an arrest warrant could be issued. It was also claimed that the “military intelligence gathered information related to telephone calls that indicated Al-Jidd's involvement in spying for Israel.” The *Al-Akhbar* newspaper, labeling Al-Jidd an “executive spy,” asserted that “he used to plant dead mail in rough and smooth terrains. He used to place

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explosives, cash, and communication devices for other spies to collect. He also used to buy prepaid mobile cards and send them to his Israeli operators. Al-Jidd took part several times in transporting Israeli officers from the seashore into Lebanon; a point that Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah emphasized on during his press conference, reminding that Al-Jidd was in the Saint George area the day before PM Rafik Hariri was assassinated in the same location.”[14] When answering questions to journalists, he justified the presence of a Hezbollah security network around the crime scene by implying that they were tracking down an Israeli spy. Sayyed Nasrallah’s speech was followed by a wave of intelligence investigations that led to two employees working for Alfa, one of the biggest telephone network companies. Both employees were arrested and charged for spying for Israel. His speech was not discredited by the March 14 Bloc. However, the Bloc suggested the investigation should be handled by the STL.[15] Some March 14 Bloc members expressed suspicion, others called for clarification, but they all shared the same view: the evidence needs to be studied and taken into consideration. In this way Israel also became a potential perpetrator.

Events continued to take an unclear turn for Hezbollah. On October 27, 2010 two STL investigators walked in a gynecology clinic in Beirut to get information about 17 women. The clinic, owned by a doctor who treats the wives of high ranking officials in Hezbollah, must have informed the party about the arrival of the STL investigators. Soon after they had arrived some 30 burka-clad ‘women’ came to the scene. According to a soldier guarding the UN investigators who came under attack on the premises of the clinic, the hands of the burka-clad fighters were more those of men than women. The UN investigators were accused of violating the honour of women by going to the clinic. [16] Sayyed Nasrallah used this staged clash to voice further threats to the STL. In a speech on *Al-Manar* television, he said that “from now on, any co-operation with the international investigators will be (considered as) helping them to attack [Hezbollah].”[17] The incident has been hardly noticed by the Western media, but it caused apprehension on the Lebanese political scene, for it was seen as proof that the STL was testing the waters with Hezbollah. So much for facts supporting the second scenario.

### *Scenario # 3: Israel is Responsible for Hariri’s Assassination*

Despite Hezbollah’s contested political strategies, the party had gained wide popularity in 2006, following the Israeli war on Lebanon. The asymmetry of forces in the struggle between Israel and Hezbollah made most Lebanese forget about Hezbollah’s abduction of an Israeli soldier which had triggered the war; in the end Hezbollah looked, in the public perception, more like David successfully standing up to Goliath. Today, Hezbollah is acting on the streets of Beirut with the clear intention to discredit the STL. However, in doing so it is in fact discrediting Sayyed Nasrallah’s claims that Hezbollah had no part in the assassination. Sayyed Nasrallah is famous for his political stance of patience; a statement that he uses again and again in his

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speeches is “let’s wait and see”. However, this time his party is no longer waiting but acting in a pre-emptive way as if in an exercise of damage control. It began by using its governmental powers and by withdrawing from parliamentary sessions whenever it was in opposition on some policy issue. It then escalated by offensive TV appearances and speeches as well as in demonstrations on the streets where Hezbollah supporters were mobilized to voice protest in the name of the party. *Foreign Policy* quoted Lebanese Deputy House Speaker, Farid Makari, as saying that the “increasing use of ‘civilians’ in violent attacks is a ‘Hezbollah trademark’ and a sign of the ‘total war’ launched by Hezbollah and its allies against the STL.”[18] Yet if Hezbollah believes that indictments against some of its members are not based on credible evidence, it should use its right of appeal and should cooperate with the STL to clear their name. Why then such an upheaval? The consequence of having a few members from the party indicted could be seen as proof that they were undisciplined members, not necessarily that the party itself ordered the assassination.

If the claims of Sayyed Nasrallah have merit, then with the evidence that he presented, Al-Jidd’s potential arrest and further investigations by the Information Department, the potential names of accused Hezbollah, could be cleared. Why then are Hezbollah’s actions and threats escalating? If they were truly following Al-Jidd, then their security apparatus had successfully located and tracked down a spy. The latter should be a successful intelligence operation, worth praising right away, not something to be delayed in its public announcement. The above list of ‘facts’ also lead to the question: why did Al-Jidd not flee the country directly after Hariri’s assassination? Why did he departure only at a later stage? Why was he, to begin with, roaming around the area?

After discussing these circumstances with Hussein Abdallah, a media analyst and former journalist at Beirut’s *The Daily Star*, the question has been asked: What if Al-Jidd was not spying but was given orders to simply roam around? This could possibly explain his delay in fleeing the country, the presence of the 20 SIM cards, and the lack of evidence leading to him. In this interpretation, he was not the perpetrator but the prey, placed there to keep Hezbollah busy while other agents carried out the terrorist act. Such a conclusion could point to Israel as the perpetrator, thus uniting all Lebanese around a truth that they could more readily accept. Abdallah’s scenario would explain Sayyed Nasrallah’s delay in exposing the evidence, for it would recognize the failure of the party’s intelligence agents to tell a hoax from a real threat. How likely and how strong this scenario is, only further investigations can tell.

#### *Preliminary Conclusion and Outlook to the Future*

It is obvious that the March 14 Bloc is rallying behind the STL. With Saad Hariri as the Prime Minister, the Bloc has been showing unanimous support for the UN-led investigation. In unison,

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the Bloc has, in the past, accused Syria of Hariri's assassination. Yet more recently, the Bloc's political position has undergone 180 degrees shift. The more the Special Tribunal investigates the matter, the more the limelight has shifted away from Syria. In an interview with the Saudi newspaper *Asharq al-Awsat* [19] Saad Hariri recognized that accusing Syria was a mistake. Walid Jumblatt, "a fierce critic of Syria and Hezbollah following Hariri's murder,"[20] also changed his anti-Syrian position. In a TV interview he apologised for using harsh words about Assad. On September 16, 2010, in *Kalam el Nass*, a political show on LBC [a Lebanese TV station], Jumblatt even went further, warning against accusing Hezbollah for the murder of Hariri and calling for the cancellation of the STL in order to avoid internal strife in Lebanon.

This political U-turn is not unexpected; since 2005 the political scene has changed and so have the expected outcomes of the investigation and the likely findings of the STL. Saudi Arabia and France are on a path of rapprochement with Syria and Washington has embarked upon a hesitant re-engagement with Damascus.[21] The March 14 Bloc is following its allies in these political twists. The Cedar Revolution was a welcome political opportunity to implement an already existing UNSC Resolution to push Syrian troops from Lebanon's land. Karim Makdisi, a political science professor at the American University of Beirut, in an interview with AFP said that "All you have to do is read the history of Lebanon to understand that there are no solutions in Lebanon without Syria. (...) Officials in Lebanon cannot be against Syria. That is just not an option, and Hariri has realized that." [22]

In the beginning all allegations pointed towards Syria, politicians led anti-Syrian campaigns, the US apparently wanted to push Syria even closer into the arms of Iran, thereby creating a justification for a sanction regime. Today, the focus is on Hezbollah; the STL's investigations point to certain Hezbollah members who were present on the crime scene. The third scenario points to Israel, which is being accused by Hezbollah. So far the STL has not provided any accusations in that direction. The instigator behind the Hariri murder might be Syria avenging its political humiliation. It might be Hezbollah trying to stop a growing Sunni community in Lebanon. It might be Syria and Hezbollah working together. It might, as some argue, even be Israel, trying to safeguard its borders by breaking up Lebanon from within. Maybe more conspiracy theories will emerge, involving ever more intricate scenarios.

Although at the moment of this writing (Dec. 2010) the situation seems to be contained by a Saudi-Syrian understanding and by efforts of the Iranian ambassador in Beirut, Lebanon is still under great tensions. This was heightened by a recent development in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi King went to the United States for medical treatment and had temporarily assigned his powers to Crown Prince Sultan, who is known for not being keen on maintaining good relations with Syria. The situation became even more "explosive" when the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) completed a documentary, apparently based on the UN inquiry and STL documents, in which it

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identified the perpetrators as members of Hezbollah. The CBC documentary created a further surge of political tensions. It was countered by a press conference held by the Lebanese communications minister, Charbel Nahhas, who claimed that Israel had penetrated Lebanon's telephone networks. This disclosure might fend off the possible indictment of Hezbollah members and thus offer a semblance of proof for Hezbollah's theory that Israel was, after all, somehow responsible.[23] In all likelihood, the ultimate outcome involves more than one party and quite possibly elements from more than one scenario sketched here.

Will the Hariri assassination be yet another unsolved chapter in Lebanon's long history of slain political figures? The indictment and the STL will undoubtedly provide some answers, but, depending on the outcome, the country might be in turmoil again with a coup d'état by Hezbollah followed by Israeli, Syrian or perhaps even Saudi armed intervention as worst possible outcomes. The outcome of the STL investigation is likely to lead to a result greater than the country can handle, making Lebanon once more dependent on regional and international support for its survival. Will the Special Tribunal for Lebanon bring justice to the country at the price of peace? Or will the main political players opt for peace at the price of justice?

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## **Online De-Radicalization? Countering Violent Extremist Narratives: Message, Messenger and Media Strategy**

by Omar Ashour

### ***Abstract***

*Is “online de-radicalization” possible? Given the two growing phenomena of “online radicalization” and “behavioral/ideological/organizational de-radicalization,” this article outlines a broad strategy for countering the narratives of violent extremists. It argues that an effective counter-narrative should be built on three pillars. The first is an effective comprehensive message that dismantles and counter-argues against every dimension of the extremist narrative, namely the theological, political, historical, instrumental and socio-psychological dimensions. The second pillar is the messengers. The article argues that for the first time in the history of Jihadism a “critical mass” of former militants, who rebelled not only against the current behaviour of their former colleagues but also against the ideology supporting it, has come into existence. This “critical mass” can constitute the core of credible messengers, especially the few de-radicalized individuals and groups that still maintain influence and respect among vulnerable communities. The third pillar is the dissemination and attraction strategy of the counter-narratives(s) which focuses on the role of the media. The author of the article outlines a broad framework, which is a part of a UN-sponsored, comprehensive research project on countering the extremists narrative.*

### ***Introduction***

The impact of violent extremist narratives on the processes of radicalization, recruitment, and “identity-building” has been established by multiple research findings.[1] In the words of Abu Mus‘ab al-Suri, one the famous strategists and ideologues of Jihadism: “the best way to organize is without an organization...an ideological front survives any security arrangements.”[2] In addition, there has been a debate on the role of the Internet, whether primary or secondary, in promoting and publicising extremist narratives, in facilitating radicalisation and recruitment processes, as well as in reaching new audiences.[3] Given the scope and the intensity of the problem, using the Internet and other media outlets to revert that role, and to counter-violent extremist narratives becomes a global imperative. As opposed to its effects on radicalisation, the Internet can play a vital role in promoting a counter-narrative and in facilitating counter-radicalization and de-radicalization efforts.[4]

Building, conveying, and publicising a comprehensive counter-narrative to violent extremism is a crucial, yet challenging task. It requires international cooperation between the United Nations, governmental bodies, and serious experts on the subject matter. It also requires

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comprehensiveness, credibility, and wide accessibility. A comprehensive counter-narrative should be able to cover the major dimensions of the violent extremist ontology in question, namely the political, historical, socio-psychological, theological, and instrumental dimensions. It also has to be conveyed, promoted, and supported by credible messengers. Since the 1960s, empirical data have consistently shown that sophisticated counterarguments to the ideologies of violent extremists without conveyance by credible messengers can have only limited success.[5]

The current moment is unique; for the first time in the history of Jihadism we are provided with a “critical mass” of former militants who rebelled, not only against the current jihadists’ behaviour but also against the ideology that motivates them. Their message to the younger generations of potential sympathizers and recruits is quite powerful: “we were the pioneers of Jihadism and the authors of a large part of its literature. Here are our experiences and here is what went wrong.”[6] In addition, due to the behavior of violent extremists, multiple other independent, credible messengers have emerged to speak out against the violent behavior and the ideologies promoting it. Those messengers include respectable and independent religious clerics, academic scholars, former officials, and civil society organizations.

The challenge for the United Nations and for governments worldwide will be how to capitalize on that unique moment and how to employ the messages, the messengers, and the proper media outlets to create and promote a comprehensive, credible counter-narrative to violent extremism. This article sketches a broad framework for a counter-narrative strategy. The framework is a part of a UN-sponsored, comprehensive research project on countering online extremist narrative. The framework will be presented in the forthcoming conference on *Use of the Internet to Counter the Appeal of Extremist Violence* which will be held in Riyadh in January 2011. The conference is sponsored by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN-CTITF) and the Nanyang University for Security Studies.

#### *Online De-Radicalization and the Strategy for a Counter-Narrative*

A strategy for counter-narrative can be built on three pillars. The first is the comprehensiveness, the depth and multi-layers of the message. The second is the background and the credibility of the messengers. The third is the promotion and the propagation (for the conference purposes, the focus will be on the usage of online media to counter-radicalization and the promotion of a counter-narrative). Finally, any global strategy will need international cooperation for its implementation. The sections below outline the proposed pillars of the strategy.

##### *a. The Message*

Regardless of ideology, narratives of violent extremists, including those of groups like Germany’s Red Army Faction (RAF), Italy’s Red Brigades (BR), Spain’s ETA, the United Kingdom’s Provisional IRA, and Israel’s Irgun, can be subsumed under four categories: political, historical, socio-psychological, and instrumental. Groups that employ religion to legitimate their

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violent actions add a ‘theological’ dimension, with various types of religious symbolism. Stern, Aum Shinrikyo, and Al-Qaeda fall under this category. Brief details of those dimensions are described below:

1. The **political** narrative emphasizes various types of grievances that a particular group claims to suffer from, while clearly identifying the culprit(s) held responsible for the situation. In case of Al-Qaeda, for example, the culprits are primarily the West, led by the United States and Israel, most Arab and Muslim governments, and several other states with Muslim-minorities (including Russia, India, China, Philippines, and others).
2. To root the narrative further, violent extremists select specific **historical** episodes to give the political dimension historical legitimacy.
3. The **socio-psychological** narrative usually empowers the non-mainstream against the mainstream. It tends to focus on the glorification of violent acts, including terrorism, as well as their perpetrators. It also links them directly to grievances.
4. The **instrumental** narrative addresses/promotes the alleged effectiveness of violent methods in achieving social-political goals.
5. Finally, a **theological** narrative emphasises the religiously legitimate reactions/actions to the political grievances and social oppression. In case of Al-Qaeda, those actions/reactions are elevated to become individual religious duties. Ethical and moral issues are addressed within this narrative.

By mixing these dimensions, or some of them, armed groups outline a broad worldview that provides ready-made, swift and easy answers to many complex, real, and valid questions. The mix, match, and interactions between the aforementioned dimensions provide an attractive, subjective narrative, full of cultural and historical symbolism.

To counter that narrative, an attractive and comprehensive message should be outlined. It is crucial to address every dimension as well as to tailor the message to different audiences, especially to young people and their concerns. It is also crucial to understand the specifics of the group(s) in question, the peculiarities of their ideology and ontology, and the nuances of the context(s) in which it operates. A counter-narrative built for the American Ku Klux Klan should look quite different from one built to counter Al-Qaeda’s ideology, despite a few superficial parallels between them. Oversimplification, shallowness, and generic counter-narratives should be avoided, as these invite successful “strike-backs.” The content of the message should also be attractive, admitting the validity of some or all of the grievances (depending on the case), offering alternative ways to address those grievances, in addition to highlighting the legitimacy and effectiveness of non-violent strategies.

b. *The Messengers*

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Contrary to widespread misconceptions about counter-narratives, we are not reinventing the wheel. There should be an appreciation and a realization that some of the dimensions briefly described above were previously addressed. However, the identity of the message-bearers makes a big difference. As one of the former commanders of the Egyptian Islamic Group's (IG) armed wing puts it: "Hearing the [theological/moral/instrumental] arguments directly from the Sheikhs [IG leaders] was different....do you think I did not hear this before?!...we heard those arguments from the Salafis and from al-Azhar...we did not accept them...we accepted them from the Sheikhs because we knew them and we knew their history." [7] In addition to former militant leaders and figures, the "external interaction" between radicals and independent religious figures, civil society actors, and credible academic experts proved to be crucial for the modification of the extremists' worldview, thus cracking the duality of "good" versus "evil." [8] This interaction can be understood as a process of social, political, and religious education and an updating of the worldview.

### *c. The Media*

After building the message and coordinating with the messengers, publicising and propagating both of them becomes crucial. After all, many of the battles won by violent extremists were on media fronts. The media dimension of the counter-narrative strategy will require multiple tasks:

1. The first task is to analyse the counter-narratives available and highlight their sources of strength, appropriateness for the audience in question, and evaluate the potential impact.
2. The second task is to translate (if required), summarize, and sometimes simplify the existing and, hopefully, the forthcoming counter-narrative(s). In addition to texts, multi-media forms (for example online videos and audios) should be utilized as propagating tools.
3. The third task is introducing the messengers, their background, and their experiences.

### *Conclusion*

With the rise of violent incidents related to online radicalization, outlining a global action plan for producing counter-narratives and promoting online de-radicalization becomes an essential task. In-depth research on counter-narratives, covering its multiple dimensions, constitutes an excellent foundation for guiding an action plan. The research on counter-narratives should build on previous findings, specifically in the area of ideological de-radicalization. Lessons learned from online and other interaction models (e.g. in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Yemen, United Kingdom and Netherlands) should be analyzed to guide and inform the process of constructing persuasive counter-narratives. Finally, enhancing international cooperation and exchange of experiences will be crucial for the success of any action plan or building process.

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research is based on intensive fieldworks and interviews with Islamist, jihadist, and former jihadist leaders, grassroots, and sympathizers. Dr. Ashour is a consultant for the United Nations and a court qualified expert on terrorism cases. He is a regular contributor to media outlets. He can be reached at: [O.Ashour@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:O.Ashour@exeter.ac.uk).

The author is grateful to the United Nation's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN-CTITF) and would especially like to thank Mr Richard Barrett, Mr Abdul Majeed Ababtain, Mr Jan Neutze, and Ms Jahyun Han for supporting and contributing to this on-going research project.

### Notes:

- [1]Omar Ashour. "Lions Tamed? An Inquiry into the Causes of De-Radicalization of the Egyptian Islamic Group." *Middle East Journal* Vol. 61, No. 4 (Autumn 2007), pp. 596 – 627; Salman al-Auda. "Ma'an dida Irhab al-Qa'ida (Together Against the Terrorism of Al-Qaeda)." *Al-Asr*, 9 October 2009; Eric Davis. "Ideology, Social Class and Islamic Radicalism" in Said A. Arjomand (ed.), *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam*. Albany: State University of New York, 1984; Jean-Pierre Filiu. *Les neuf vies d'Al-Qaeda*, Paris: Fayard, 2009.
- [2]Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, *Da'wat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya al-'alamiyya* (Call for Global Islamic Resistance). (No Place of Publication: No Publisher), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2004, p. 1323.
- [3]Marc Lynch. "al-Qaeda's Media Strategies," *The National Interest*, 1 March, 2006; Hannah Rogan. "Jihadism Online." Kjeller: FFI Rapport, 2006; Tim Stevens and Peter Neumann. "Countering Online Radicalization." London: ICSR Publication, 2009.
- [4]For definitions of these terms see O.Ashour. *The Deradicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements*. London, New York: Routledge, 2009, p. 4-7.
- [5]O. Ashour, *The Deradicalization of Jihadists*, op. cit., pp. 138-142.
- [6]For detailed analyses of these transformations see O. Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadist*; O. Ashour. "The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda." *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (Spring 2008); O. Ashour. "Islamist De-Radicalization in Algeria: Successes and Failures", *The Middle East Institute, Policy Brief*, no. 21 (November 2008); O. Ashour. " Hamas and the Prospects of De-Radicalization." In: Klejda Mulaj (ed.) *Violent Non-State Actors in Contemporary World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010; O. Ashour. "Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Phenomenon of Jihadist Transformation." *Terrorism and Political Violence* (forthcoming). Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan. (eds.) *Leaving Terrorism Behind*. London: Routledge, 2009; Chris Boucek. "Saudi Arabia's 'Soft' Counterterrorism Strategy,"; John Horgan. *Waking Away from Terrorism*. London: Routledge, 2008; Sidney Jones. "Deradicalization and Indonesian Prisons." *International Crisis Group Report*, 19 November 2007; Jessica Stern. "Mind over Martyr." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 89, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2010),pp. 95-106.
- [7]Mamduh Yusuf. Commander of the Armed Wing of the Egyptian Islamic Group (1988-1990). See parts of the interview in O. Ashour, *The Deradicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements*. London: Routledge, 2009.
- [8]For more on that processes of "external interaction" and their impacts on decisions to abandon and de-legitimate political violence see O. Ashour, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists*; O. Ashour, "The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda," O. Ashour, "Islamist De-Radicalization in Algeria: Successes and Failures,"; Chris Bouceks. "Extremist Re-education and Rehabilitation in Saudi Arabia," in: T. Bjørgo & J. Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Disengagement from Political Violence*. New York: Routledge, 2009; Mohamed bin Mohamed. "The Roles of the Religious Rehabilitation Group in Singapore," in: A. H. Kader, *Fighting Terrorism: The Singapore Perspective*. Singapore: Taman Bacaan, 2009.

## The Lord's Resistance Army: an African Terrorist Group?

by Emma Leonard

### *Abstract*

*The years since 9/11 have been characterised by the increasing threat of terrorist action in the Middle East and South Asia. Yet Sub-Saharan Africa has also become a region of concern. In 1998, it had been the scene of two Al-Qaeda attacks against US embassies; besides Africa is home to large Muslim populations. Since 9/11 African violent non-state groups unrelated to Al-Qaeda or to the wider Islamist movement have been recast as terrorist organisations. These groups primarily operate in conflict zones, an area of research that traditionally has not been the main focus of Terrorism Studies. Protagonists have at various times been called freedom fighters, rebels, warlords, insurgents or simply violent gangs. This article looks at the most notorious of African groups – the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). It argues that some groups like the LRA have been recast as terrorist organisations not because of a change in their activities but due to a change in the geo-strategic environment they found themselves in the post-9/11 period. The LRA's ideology and tactics will be judged against a broad definition of terrorism in order to test whether the group can, in an objective way, be called a terrorist organisation. It is concluded that the LRA is too ambiguous an organisation to be simply labelled in such a way. It is also suggested that the terrorism label has in fact been an obstacle to attempts to end successfully a confrontation that is now going into its 24<sup>th</sup> year.*

### *Introduction*

The years since 9/11 have been characterised by the increasing threat of terrorist action against the United States and her allies. That Al-Qaeda and its affiliations continue to pose a threat is no longer contested; recent high profile attempts are ample illustration.[1] However, other groups unrelated to Al-Qaeda or to the wider Islamist movement have also been recast as terrorist organisations in the wake of 9/11. Here I will focus on one of these groups – the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda – and will argue that rather than a change in its activities it was the change of the geo-strategic context that led to this labelling in the post-9/11 setting and that it has not been helpful in terms of resolving a conflict that has been going on for almost a quarter of a century.

While many articles have been dedicated to the definition of 'terrorism,'[2] it seems as though the field is no closer to finding an universally accepted (legal) definition than it was half a century ago. Many countries, particularly former European colonies, have struggled to find a definition of terrorism that would exclude 'freedom fighters' who rose against their colonial masters. The following quotation highlights this problem:

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Was Nelson Mandela of the early 1960s a terrorist or a legitimate fighter struggling for the liberation of the black majority? Based on the rules that existed at the time, it is plausible to argue that he was a terrorist. He was among those who sought to use violent means to bring an end to the system of government ...in South Africa, albeit a governance system that was universally condemned. However, if one looks at Mandela's role from the point of view of a people's right to self-determination, which is enshrined in international law, he was the legitimate fighter seeking to improve the political, economic and social conditions of his people. [3]

Most of the anti-colonial movements within Africa were, at some point, labelled as 'terrorist organisations' by the colonial governments they were fighting against. The labelling of one's enemies as 'terrorist' continues to this day. This has led some to argue that the terms 'terrorist' and 'terrorism' are simply too politically charged to be useful; they hold that academics should refrain from using them entirely. This is, however, not the position taken here. My starting assumption is that terrorism is a distinct sub-field of political violence with defining characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of political violence. That those in power can and do (mis-) use the term in their own ways and to their own advantage does not by necessity invalidate the concept of terrorism.

As complicated as any use of the term 'terrorism' is, the discussion here regarding the LRA is further complicated by the fact that the LRA is a combatant group within an on-going conflict. Traditionally most terrorism studies have shied away from the study of the use of terrorism within insurgent conflicts, focusing instead on acts of terrorism within otherwise peaceful societies - mainly the liberal democracies of Western Europe and North America. This is in part due to the difficulty of conducting research within conflict zones; in the fog of war it is often difficult to establish whether terrorism, war crimes or more legitimate acts of war are taking place. However, definitions again play a role in the lack of clarity in this area. Sambanis argues that, '[i]f we consider terrorism as a strategy – a means to an end – then the links are obvious: civil wars create opportune environments for terror and terrorists. Indeed...most terrorist events tend to take place in countries affected by civil war.'[4] However, he then goes on to argue that if a group exclusively or 'near-exclusively' uses terrorism as its strategy, it is possible to look at 'terrorism' and 'civil wars' as distinct phenomena and that terrorism can create a 'tipping point' that leads to a civil war.[5] Here I take the view that terrorism is 'a strategy of intimidation,' and as such 'a sub-set of violent strategies that can be used during civil wars.'[6]

In the following I will assess the record of the LRA against the ten key characteristic elements of terrorism as identified by Alex Schmid and detailed below in Table 1. This will allow us to pass judgment on whether the US Department of State was justified in adding the LRA to its Terrorist Exclusion List.

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Table 1: Key Characteristic Elements of Acts of Terrorism, according to Schmid [7]

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1. The demonstrative use of violence against human beings;
2. The threat of (further) violence;
3. The deliberate production of terror/fear/dread/anxiety in a target group;
4. The frequent targeting of civilians, non-combatants, and innocents;
5. The purpose of intimidation, coercion, and/or propaganda;
6. The fact that it is a method, tactic, or strategy of conflict waging;
7. The importance of communicating the act(s) of violence to a larger audience;
8. The illegal, criminal, and immoral nature of the act(s) of violence;
9. The predominantly political character of the act;
10. Its use as a tool of psychological warfare.

### *Background to the Conflict in Northern Uganda*

The Lord's Resistance Army has been active in Northern Uganda since 1987. However, it is not the first armed group from this region to challenge the government of the National Resistance Movement (NRM). After Idi Amin was removed from power in 1979, Uganda descended into a period of civil war. It only ended in 1986 when the NRM (then known as the National Resistance Army or NRA) seized power and its leader, Yoweri Museveni, became President. With the coming to power of the NRM came a period of stability within much of Uganda. Most of the country has seen significant economic growth over the last two decades. Museveni's government has worked hard to promote Uganda as an African success story and has managed to attract foreign investment and development assistance from Western donor countries.

However, the coming to power of the NRM also signalled a shift in power within the country. Museveni and most of the original members of the NRM were from the southwest of Uganda and were ethnically Ankole. This was the first time since independence that the President of Uganda had not been from one of the northern regions and the first time that the Ugandan army had not been made up of substantial numbers of Northerners. As part of their colonial rule in Uganda, the British had instituted a policy of divide-and-rule. Thereby Bugandans, based in the centre and south of Uganda, staffed most of the bureaucracy while the army was predominantly manned by Acholi and Langi from the north. The Ankole, by contrast, suffered from the same divide-and-rule strategy implemented in the other regions of Uganda. They were, however, not strongly associated with any one branch of the colonial government.[8] The Acholi in particular were seen as a 'warrior race' by the British; they continued to be strongly associated with the Ugandan army throughout most of the independence period. The one notable exception to this was during the rule of Idi Amin when he purged the army of Acholi soldiers who in his view were still potentially loyal to the former president Milton Obote. With the fall of Amin and the second Obote presidency in the early 1980s, however, the Acholi once again became well represented in the Ugandan army. Unfortunately for the Acholi this meant that they became increasingly associated with the atrocities carried out by the army during the civil war. As Vinci

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explains, '[m]ost notoriously, the military rounded up, looted, and murdered (almost at a genocidal level) civilians in the so-called Luwero Triangle in central Uganda, which it believed were supporters of the NRM.'[9]

After the NRM victory in the civil war, many of the defeated Ugandan army soldiers fled back to the North and there were concerns that the NRM soldiers would pursue them and exact their revenge. In preparation for this, a number of self-defence groups emerged within Northern Uganda and some of these attempted to pre-empt any violence against the Acholi people by attacking the NRM soldiers. The most famous of these groups was the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM), which was also the most direct precursor to the LRA. The HSM had been led by Alice Auma, also known as Alice Lakwena. It was characterized by a mixture of violence and spiritual rituals similar to the LRA. Both the HSM and the LRA claimed to be defending the Acholi people from the NRM, the leaders of both groups claim to be possessed by a number of spirits from whom they would take guidance and, as violence was directed inward against the Acholi, both groups claimed that the Acholi people could only be redeemed through the cleansing ritual of violence. This has been compared to 'some biblical prophets who were willing to purge sinful people, heaping curse upon curse on them, in order to save a small minority considered to be pure in heart.'[10]

Thus the LRA emerged at a time and in a space where the Acholi people were both fearful of what the NRM had in store for them but were also experiencing feelings of guilt over the atrocities Acholi soldiers had carried out. They were looking to both defend and redeem themselves. This psycho-social background goes some way to explain why these violent but spiritual movements initially gained some support within Acholiland.

#### *The LRA: a Terrorist Organisation?*

Is the LRA a terrorist organisation? Here we will explore the existing evidence to see whether the LRA is or is not in fact a terrorist organisation as the US Department of State has suggested.

The first of Schmid's key characteristic elements is that there has been 'a demonstrative use of violence against human beings,' thus excluding groups that only threaten violence or that carry out violent attacks against property. The LRA certainly matches this criterion, attacking mainly Acholi civilians but making no effort to hold territory. Estimates of how many people have been killed in this conflict are difficult to come by and even more difficult to verify but thousands have been abducted killed or mutilated by the LRA. As an indication of the levels of violence perpetrated by the LRA: the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stated that in 2009 the LRA had killed 1,096 civilians and abducted 1,373 adults and 255 children in the Haut and Bas Uele districts of northern Congo alone.[11] On the basis of this estimate one can roughly extrapolate what the death toll and the number of abductions would amount for nearly 24 years in all the districts affected by the LRA's presence.

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Over more than two decades it is has become clear that the LRA has continuously been able to threaten the use of further violence (the second key characteristic of terrorist incidents). It has again and again made good this threat, which has enabled them to deliberately produce terror/fear/dread/anxiety within the Acholi people (key characteristic three). An interviewee in Tim Allen's book 'Trial Justice' explained the LRA tactic of abductions in the following way:

The point is that the abduction of children has been a deliberate strategy – a weapon of choice. Like rape, it has been used systematically and selectively to terrorise the population. Indoctrinating impressionable young people and making them do terrible things, such as killing their own parents, inverts the moral order and shows the power of the LRA.[12]

The LRA is internationally notorious for attacking civilians (thus fulfilling key characteristic four). This started in earnest in the mid-1990s. Up to that point the LRA mainly engaged with the Ugandan People's Defence Force (or the UPDF, as the Ugandan army is now known), claiming to be protecting the Acholi civilians from the inroads of the army. However, even at that time the LRA enjoyed little support from the Acholi. Violence against the Acholi people from the UPDF had not been as widespread as feared and many people simply wanted peace after so many years of violence (which had starting in earnest with the Amin period – 1971-1979). In 1994, the Acholi set up so-called 'bow-and-arrow' defence groups against the LRA. By many accounts this was the turning point for Josef Kony, the leader of the LRA. From 1994 onwards the LRA engaged less with the UPDF and attacked instead the Acholi people they claimed to be fighting for. It has been reported that Kony could not believe that the Acholi would turn against the LRA; to punish them the LRA began to attack Acholi civilians in earnest. In this way the purpose of violence used by the LRA became to coerce the Acholi into supporting the LRA or to at least intimidate them into not assisting the UPDF (key characteristic five).

Violence in this form is both a strategy and a tactic of the LRA (key characteristic six). The strategy of intimidation is designed to stop the civilians from informing the UPDF about the whereabouts of the LRA. Tactic of cutting off the lips of people believed to have informed the government of LRA activities instils fear among civilian communities. This allowed the LRA to pursue two goals simultaneously: they sought to punish Acholi civilians for refusing to support the group while also continuing to draw the UPDF into the conflict. This goal was achieved as a significant portion of the UPDF was then posted to the North, ostensibly to protect civilians from LRA attacks (although how much the army actually acted to protect the people has been questioned).

One of the key characteristics of many definitions of terrorism (here is key characteristic seven) is that terrorists seek to use violence to communicate a message to an audience larger than the initial victims. The LRA does this, not on the global scale of a group like Al-Qaeda but on a

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(sub-)regional scale. Most of the messages seem to be aimed at the Acholi people. Yet some of the violence is designed to show the Ugandan government that the LRA is still functioning and that the government has not yet succeeded in ending the conflict. Messages to the Acholi normally take the form of punishing suspected informers in such a way as to ensure that other civilians think twice before reporting LRA activities to government officials. An example of this is illustrated in the following interview extract:

People's lips were cut off because it was with the lips that they made alarms when being under attack and they [the LRA] also claim it was the same lips that people use for reporting them to the UPDF, who pursue and attack them. So this is done to discourage others from making an alarm when being pursued.[13]

Similarly, those seen on bicycles would have their legs cut off so they could no longer cycle to raise the nearest alarm. These acts of violence against civilians are clearly illegal under Ugandan law as they are also illegal under the international laws of war (key characteristic eight), which accept that violence is a necessary component of war but seek to limit the kinds of violence that are acceptable even under the extreme conditions of an on-going armed conflict. One of the main tenants of international humanitarian law is that it is not permissible to target civilians under any circumstances; deliberately maiming opponents is also prohibited.[14]

Acts of terrorism must by definition be carried out in order to further the political agenda of the group (key characteristic nine). The LRA initially claimed to be defending the Acholi from the NRM government. A former member of the LRA claims that Kony told him 'to be strong hearted and fight for the freedom of Acholi people. It's our duty to free the Acholi whose land will be taken away by Museveni.'[15] Kony continued this theme in a 2004 interview in a Kenya-based Sudanese magazine called *The Referendum*. There he claimed, 'President Museveni cannot talk peace, he is a killer and he wanted to kill me by all means.'[16] There has also traditionally been a Christian element to the political ideology of the LRA with Kony claiming that the LRA 'is fighting for the application of the Ten Commandments of God.'[17] An LRA spokesman summarised the political agenda of the LRA in 1997 in more secular terms:

(a) To remove dictatorship and stop the oppression of our people, (b) to fight for the immediate restoration of competitive multiparty democracy in Uganda, (c) to see and [sic] end to gross violation of human rights and dignity of Ugandans, (d) to ensure the restoration of peace and security in Uganda, (e) to ensure unity, sovereignty and economic prosperity beneficial to all Ugandans, (f) to bring an end to the repressive policy of deliberate marginalization [of] groups of people who may not agree with the NRA [government] ideology.[18]

It is also clear from the discussion above, but particularly the quotes from Allen's interviewees, that the LRA has used violence as a tool of psychological warfare (key characteristic ten). The

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immediate consequence of LRA activity was that the Ugandan government would move much of the Acholi population into Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps within the North, removing them from their native land and traditional livelihood. The original rationale behind this was that these camps would be protected by the UPDF and thus harder for the LRA to attack. However, the protection at these camps was rarely sufficient and the camps became subject to LRA attacks. The Acholi have attempted at various points to instigate peace negotiations but there has been a general reluctance to attack the LRA by the use of force, in part for fear of retaliation (which, as experience showed, would be brutal) and in part, because many of the foot soldiers within the LRA were (and are) children abducted from Acholi villages.

### *Alternative Explanations of the LRA*

From the discussion above it would seem as though the designation of the LRA as a terrorist organisation is straightforward and unproblematic. However, this section will show that the LRA does not fit the definition of a terrorist organisation quite as neatly as it would seem. This is in particular true with regard to the political ideology and agenda held by the group. From the statements quoted above, it would seem as though the LRA holds a rational political agenda: it claimed to defend the Acholi from the NRM government and hoped eventually to overthrow the NRM government and finally re-construct the government of Uganda as a Christian theocracy, based on the Ten Commandments. Yet many claim that the LRA has no political agenda at all. If this is indeed the case, can the LRA be classified as a terrorist organisation? If a group can be a terrorist organisation without holding some sort of political agenda, what differentiates these groups from ordinary violent armed gangs?

Here I take the view that a political agenda is indeed an essential component for the definition of a terrorist entity. Political concepts are often contested, especially those laden with as much emotive power as 'terrorism'. Yet ultimately the point of such definitions is to assist us in our understanding of the world in which we live. Therefore, the best definitions will remove as much ambiguity as possible. The necessity that a group has a political agenda to be classified as a terrorist group therefore narrows down the universe of possible groups and offers a way to distinguish between those groups who use violence against civilians for political reasons (terrorist groups) and those who use violence against civilians for personal or economic gain (gangs or mafia organisations). The definition of 'terrorism' used by the US Department of State, for example, explicitly states that violence used for simply economic gain cannot be classified as terrorist activity.[19] The following section of the paper will argue that there is not enough evidence of a political agenda to truly categorize the LRA as a terrorist organisation.

To be 'political' in this context a belief system must move beyond the simple survival of the group and beyond the economic enrichment of the group. A group fighting to promote a political belief system is fighting for more than the individual: it is fighting for a political community.[20] This can mean that they are fighting to retain a state's status quo (often a reactionary agenda) or

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fighting to overthrow the status quo (a revolutionary agenda), which would normally include overthrowing the government and setting up a new type of regime in its place. Political agendas can also work on a more regional level: for the protection of a particular community from a predatory government for example, or for that region to secede from the state or at least gain greater autonomy. The key for an agenda to be 'political' though is that the agenda or belief system is designed to promote or sustain the advancement of a particular community in more than simply an economic way.

What then does this mean for the LRA? The LRA claims to have a political agenda but this is dismissed by many observers who ask how can we seriously can we take the claims that they are fighting to protect the Acholi when the Acholi are their main victims? Similarly, how can we take seriously their claims to be a Christian group fighting for a government based on the Ten Commandments when they have broken every single Commandment, often in the most brutal way possible?

One of the main obstacles to ascertaining the political agenda of the LRA is that the group has made few direct statements setting out their political beliefs. The political agenda of the LRA has mainly been put together by external observers, based on a few public statements. Cline, who reported on some statement about the political goals made by an LRA spokesman, even questioned that statement, pointing to the fact that we have nothing beyond this man's word to prove that he actually speaks for the LRA.[21]

In his article, 'The Fifth Wave: The New Tribalism,' Jeffrey Kaplan argues that the LRA can be seen as a new type of terrorism. He argues that instead of focusing on an external enemy, groups in this fifth wave of terrorism, are 'turning inwards,...become particularistic, localistic, and centered on the perfection of a race or tribal group.' [22] Such fifth wave groups are millenarian in their views and often genocidal in their practices as they seek to purify 'their people' as a necessary step towards the new utopia. Kaplan argues that the LRA is the 'paradigmatic exemplar' of this new wave of terror. Indeed for much of the LRA's existence it does appear to fit this description. However, in recent years the LRA has moved away from Northern Uganda. Attacks are now primarily directed against civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Southern Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). In this sense it can no longer be argued that the LRA is directing genocidal violence against the Acholi people in an attempt to usher in a 'new world.'

Vinci and Gettleman both argue that, whatever the motives that the LRA started fighting for, the group no longer fights for anything other than its own survival. Vinci argues that, '[n]ow, the LRA only represents itself. It fights in order to bring security and social, economic, and political benefits to its own members. The means to bring these benefits are to continue fighting. As such, its "political goal" is to continue its existence as a separate unit, which necessitates continual warfare.' [23] Given that the LRA now operates mainly outside of Uganda and, as shown above,

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is clearly not fighting to protect the Acholi people, it is difficult to disagree with this perspective. Attacks in neighbouring countries seem to centre on raiding villages for supplies and for abducting both children and adults to replenish the ranks of the LRA. Gettleman ties this lack of ideology to the intractability of many of the current conflicts in Africa. Indeed, he uses the LRA as '[p]robably the most disturbing example'[24] of these new kinds of conflict, asking

Even if you could coax them out of their jungle lairs and get them to a negotiating table, there is very little to offer them. They don't want ministries or tracts of land to govern. Their armies are often traumatized children, with experience and skills (if you can call them that) totally unsuited for civilian life. All they want is cash, guns, and a license to rampage. And they've already got all three. How do you negotiate with that?[25]

There is considerable evidence to suggest that this analysis of the LRA is correct. During the Juba peace talks (2006-2008) the LRA was prepared to compromise drastically in terms of what they would receive politically after the peace agreement was signed. After first demanding five ministerial positions as well as other government positions (including Ambassadorial positions), they were subsequently willing to accept only that the government would consider LRA members for positions within the government.[26] However, talks fell apart when the NRM government refused to guarantee LRA leaders that they would not face prosecution from the International Criminal Court (a promise that President Museveni did, in reality, not have the power to make), indicating that the LRA negotiators were more interested in ensuring their own survival rather than in achieving political goals for a wider constituency.

### *Consequences*

The consequences of designating groups as 'terrorist organisations' in cases where there is some debate over the appropriateness of such a classification goes beyond the academic debate over the definition of terrorism. While the sincerity of commitment of both the Ugandan government and the LRA to the Juba peace talks has been questioned, it is also clear that the position initially taken by the US government did nothing to encourage the peace talks. The US initially did not support the Juba peace talks, despite the fact that there were widely considered to offer the best opportunity to end the conflict since the failed 1994 peace talks. The main reason behind this was that the US did not want to be seen to be encouraging negotiations with terrorist organisations.[27] Instead the United States tried to encourage the Museveni government to defeat the LRA militarily. Susan Rice, US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, for example, told Congress in July 1998, 'It is frankly difficult to imagine a negotiated settlement with a group like the LRA'. [28] This reluctance was still evident in 2006 when the Bush Administration was criticized for not even mentioning the conflict in discussions with President Museveni. [29]

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Even though the US did eventually send an observer to the Juba peace talks, it was accused of trying to undermine them. In 2007 the International Crisis Group recommended that the US and UK governments ‘desist from threatening military intervention in Congo’ (where the LRA was based at the time).[30] Similarly, Betty Bigombe (an Ugandan national who has done more than almost anyone else to try to bring this war to an end) criticized the US, stating that: ‘If America wanted this war to end, it would have ended.’[31] At that time there was a call for the United States to assert more diplomatic pressure on both negotiating parties to bring this conflict to an end.

### *Conclusion*

I have tried to demonstrate that the designation of the LRA as a terrorist organisation is not as straightforward and uncontested as it would appear at first sight. Care should therefore be taken to ensure that labels are not attached to particular groups in such a way as to lessen the chances that an end to the conflict can be found. The case of the LRA should serve as a warning of both the difficulties of establishing whether a group in a conflict zone is truly a terrorist organisation and of the harm that such a label may cause when it comes to conflict resolution.

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### **Notes:**

[1] For example, the so-called 2009 Christmas Day bomber and the more recent attempts to smuggle explosives into airplanes destined for the US in October 2010.

[2] See, for example, L. Weinberg, A. Pedahzur and S. Hirsch-Hoefler (2004) ‘The challenges of conceptualizing terrorism,’ *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.16, No., 4, pp. 777-794.

[3] S. M. Makinda (2007). ‘History and root causes of terrorism in Africa,’ in W. Okumu and A. Botha (Eds.) *Understanding Terrorism in Africa – In Search for an African Voice*, Cape Town: Institute for Security Studies, p. 16.

[4] N. Sambanis (2008). ‘Terrorism and Civil War,’ in P. Keefer and N. Loayza (Eds.) *Terrorism, Economic Development & Political Openness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 174.

[5] *Idem*, p. 203.

[6] *Idem*, p. 183.

[7] A. P. Schmid (2005). ‘Terrorism as Psychological Warfare,’ *Democracy and Security*, Vol.1, No.2, p. 140.

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- [8] For a more detailed look at the policies of the British colonial government in the Ankole region, see M. R. Doornbos. (1976) 'Ethnicity, Christianity, and the Development of Social Stratification in Colonial Ankole, Uganda,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 555-575.
- [9] A. Vinci (2007). 'Existential Motivations in the Lord's Resistance Army's Continuing Conflict,' *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 30, No.4, p. 338.
- [10] R. Doom and K. Vlassenroot (1999) 'Kony's Message: A New *Koine*? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda,' *African Affairs*, 98, p. 25.
- [11] Human Rights Watch (2010) *Trail of Death: LRA Atrocities in Northeastern Congo*. New York: Human Rights Watch, p. 17.
- [12] T. Allen (2006). *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army* London: Zed Books, p. 64.
- [13] T. Allen (2006). *Trial Justice*; p. 66.
- [14] H. Slim (2007). *Killing Civilians: Method, Madness and Morality in War* .London: Hurst , p. 1.
- [15] T. Allen. (2006) *Trial Justice*, p. 68.
- [16] *BBC News* (2004). 'Uganda LRA Rebel Leader 'Speaks',' *BBC News Online*, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3628737.stm> ; accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010.
- [17] J. Kony quoted in A. Vinci (2007). 'Existential Motivations,' p. 342.
- [18] Cline, L. (2010). 'Spirits and the cross: religiously based violent motivations in Uganda,' *Small Wars & Insurgencies* , Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 120.
- [19] US Department of State (2004). *Terrorist Exclusion List* (US Department of State) <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/other/des/123086.htm>; accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010.
- [20] See B. Anderson (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections in the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso) for further information on nationalism and what he refers to as 'imagined communities.'
- [21] L. Cline. 'Spirits and the Cross,' p. 128.
- [22] J. Kaplan (2007). 'The Fifth Wave: The New Tribalism?' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.19, No. 4, pp. 545-570.
- [23] A. Vinci. (2007) 'Existential Motivations,' p. 348.
- [24] J. Gettleman. (2010) 'Africa's Forever Wars: Why the continent's conflict never seem to end,' *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2010.
- [25] *Ibid*.
- [26] *BBC News* (2008) 'New Breakthrough in Uganda Talks,' *BBC News Online*, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7259636.stm>, accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010.
- [27] D. Smock. (2008) 'Uganda/Lord's Resistance Army Peace Negotiations: Peace Brief,' (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, <http://www.usip.org/publications/ugandalors-resistance-army-peace-negotiations>, accessed 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010.
- [28] D. Westbrook (2000). 'The Torment of Northern Uganda – A Legacy of Missed Opportunities,' *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* (3:2) [www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr](http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr), accessed 30<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
- [29] P.J. Quaranto and M. Poffenberger (2006) '2006 Peace Talks in Juba – A Historic Opportunity,' [www.ugandacan.org/peacetalks.php](http://www.ugandacan.org/peacetalks.php), accessed 30<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
- [30] International Crisis Group (2007) 'Northern Uganda: Seizing the opportunity for peace,' *Africa Report* No. 124 – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007 .Brussels: International Crisis Group, p. ii.
- [31] Center for American Progress (2007) 'Enough is Enough: Prospects for Peace in Northern Uganda,' *Center for American Progress*, [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/03/uganda\\_event.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/03/uganda_event.html), accessed 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010
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## A Critical View of Critical Terrorism Studies

by James M. Lutz

### *Abstract*

*The Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) approach has appeared as a subfield or alternative perspective in the broader field of Terrorism Studies. This approach has given important attention to the role that states and government agencies can play when using violence against their own citizens or against the citizens of foreign countries. While the CTS approach has been important in terms of the drawing attention to the use of terrorism by states, a certain amount of caution is necessary when evaluating some of the basic claims frequently made by those committed to the CTS approach. Key issues that need to be considered in terms of this approach include the argument that state activities have been widely ignored, the failure to make a distinction between state repression and state terrorism, the failure to make the rather fine distinction between terror and terrorism, and finally—related to the above—the fact that not everything that is violent and evil qualifies as terrorism, including the adoption of counterterrorism techniques that involve excessive use of force or violate civil liberties.*

### *Introduction*

Scholars involved in the subfield of Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS), like many others who study terrorism, discuss the issue of definition. In part, they correctly note that many (legal) definitions have been specifically formulated so that they only apply to dissident movements because they only refer to sub-state actors. It is further argued that these types of definitions and others provide criteria that are based on the needs of governments. [1] Of course, definitions created by states need to provide criteria that can be used in a legal system; these definitions are not designed for use by academic analysts. [2] There have been additional definitions of terrorism that rely on similar criteria but which do not automatically exclude actions by governments as is noted below. In any event, it is necessary to provide a basic definition of terrorism that can be used in the discussions to follow. Despite the fact that there are hundreds of such definitions, most analysts agree on something like the following:

Terrorism involves political aims and objectives through the use of violence or the threat of violence. It is intended to generate fear in a target audience that goes beyond the immediate victims. The violence involves an identifiable organization. Finally, the violence is designed to change the balance of power among contestants. The violence is often directed against civilian or non-combatant targets. [3]

This definition does not exclude action by states. It does not even explicitly exclude actions by one state against another during ‘hot’ or cold wars (United States and the Soviet Union, Israel and the Arab countries, India and Pakistan). Such overt or covert conflicts between states might be, and often are, considered special cases or are considered elsewhere within the framework of the study of international relations.

*Are State Activities Ignored?*

One of the most basic complaints present in the CTS literature is the idea that the violent activities used by governments, especially against their own citizens, have largely been ignored by ‘orthodox’ scholars studying terrorism. The critics further argue that terrorism has only been defined by them as dissident violence from below, thus intentionally excluding state activities. [4] The exclusion of state violence from being considered as terrorism is, in their view, a consequence that flows from viewing terrorism from the perspective of the state and has, they claim, encouraged and created an orthodoxy in dealing with terrorism. [5] One element of this orthodoxy is the focus only on dissident violence – in line with the interest of governments to ignore their own questionable actions (or such actions by allied governments). Further, there have been suggestions by CTS scholars that only dissident violence directed against Western interests is considered under the terrorism label. [6] One consequence of this situation is, in the eyes of CTS scholars, that terrorism “has always been a pejorative rather than analytical term.” [7] Is this true? It can be argued that it is mainly in the period after World War II that the term terrorism actually came to have a mainly negative connotation among its practitioners. Members of the Jewish Irgun, for example, called themselves ‘terrorists’ with little concern about negative connotations associated with the term. Yet even though the terms ‘terrorism’ and ‘terrorist’ have come to have a pejorative connotation in today’s political vocabulary, this does not mean that academic analysts are incapable of dealing with the issue in an unbiased fashion.

While this basic claim that government actions are excluded is overstated in some respects, the CTS argument is based on the fact that many of those who study terrorism do focus on dissident terrorism rather than state violence. The analysts who focus on dissident terrorism take what may be termed a Homeland Security Study approach to the subject. It seeks to provide answers to governments on how they can deal with threats from either domestic groups or international terrorist organisations. Of course, when looking at foreign organisations, some attention will be given to supporters of the dissident groups, including, in some cases, to foreign governments. There is also a tendency within this Homeland Security Study approach to look more at the tactics of terrorist groups (and how to counter them) rather than at the underlying causes that drive individuals and organizations to resort to this specific type of violence.

There is little doubt that one of the reasons for the increase in Homeland Security Studies results from the fact that government grants and contracts are more readily available for these types of analysis since terrorist attacks can be a major threat to the security of states and the safety of

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their citizens. The consequent increase in the number of studies that deal with this type of threat obviously does respond to the needs of governments that are attempting to provide better security, even if these studies do not necessarily enhance a more basic understanding of the sources of violence—terrorist and otherwise. Governments, much to the dismay of academics everywhere, are more interested in practical research (often narrowly defined) and not very interested in the pure research that so many academics are particularly fond of. This focus on Homeland Security is therefore a rather natural government response; it does not necessarily constitute proof of any effort to eliminate or prevent any alternative analysis of violence by the state from those interested in Terrorism Studies *even if* it does lead some more researchers to focus on dissident terrorism. Moreover, the claim that a “terrorism industry” has been established that serves the state [8], appears to be something of an overstatement; it appears to be designed to discredit those who are primarily interested in dissident and insurgent terrorism.

The claim that the study of state uses of terrorism has been ignored predates the emergence of the CTS perspective. One earlier search of the literature in 1987 claimed that there have been virtually no discussions of state uses of terrorism in the social science literature [9], a claim that the CTS perspective has widely accepted. Yet, while political scientists may not have referred to the use of violence by governments as terrorism (see the next section), they actually have a long history of looking at violent state activities in domestic arenas. In the past, political scientists regularly divided forms of government into totalitarian, authoritarian, and democratic regimes. The authoritarian category has perhaps been an overly broad one as it was used to encompass everything not fitting easily in the other two categories. In discussions of totalitarian societies, however, inevitably one criterion among others that was applied was the use of terror as a means of social control, especially through secret police agencies. [10] Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, and Mao’s Peoples Republic of China were held up as classic examples of such totalitarian systems. More recent examples would include North Korea and the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, at least before he engaged in a war to ‘liberate’ Kuwait. Many of the authoritarian regimes in a variety of forms also relied on the explicit or implicit use of illegal or illegitimate force against dissenters. Some of the rulers, such as Idi Amin in Uganda or Francois Duvalier in Haiti, were notorious for the level of violence perpetuated by their security forces or (para-) military units. To reiterate the basic point, violence by governments against domestic populations has hardly been ignored by political scientists in academia. The fact that it has not been analyzed under the heading ‘terrorism’ does not mean that it has not been studied. It has, in fact, been studied for long time and in some depth, for instance in the literature on human rights violations.

State reliance on terrorist techniques that is directed against its own citizens, moreover, has also been considered in the ‘orthodox’ terrorist literature. Wilkinson [11] in one of his early works, discussed the differences between revolutionary terrorism and repressive (state) terrorism in a period well before terrorism became a hot topic. Even before him Thornton [12] noted that terrorism could begin with the state and its security forces and not with dissidents. More

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recently, David Claridge [13] provided not only a very good definition of terrorism covering both dissident and regime terrorism, he also provided a rather compelling argument that some governments could and did indeed engage in campaigns of terrorism. These early references in the literature suggest that the field of Terrorism Studies has not ignored terrorism from above or been pre-empted by Homeland Security analysts or ‘the establishment’ in quite the way that CTS scholars claim. While a majority of those interested in the use of terrorism may not focus on such activities by states, it does not mean that they deny the existence state terrorism as such.

Some direct state-inspired or -supported violent activities utilized in international politics, of course, have not been ignored by social scientists or by government themselves. There has been a great deal of interest in practices that would generally be considered ‘terrorist’. Security agencies such as the CIA, KGB, SIS, PIDES, and a multitude of others have been directly responsible for assassinations, bombings, and other types of unlawful behavior – some more than others. Further, they have provided support for existing violent insurgent groups in other countries. That goes back a long way in history. Bulgarian governments supported the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) in the 1920s, the Italian OVRA aided Croatian dissidents in Yugoslavia in the 1930s, the East German Democratic Republic (DDR) supported the West German Red Army Faction in the 1970s, the Czech communist regime provided support for the Italian Red Brigades in the same decade, the US Reagan administration States supported the Nicaraguan Contras in the 1980s while Pakistan has provided various types of support for Islamist groups active in Kashmir and Afghanistan for decades. These and other examples are known well enough to suggest that such government activities in the international arena have not been ignored by academia. In fact, these kinds of covert operations, while different than attacks against one’s own citizens, have been quite well studied, most frequently in the context of international relations rather than terrorism studies. This also explains in part why discussions of these type of war by proxy activities have been under-represented in key terrorism journals. [14]

#### *Terrorism versus Repression*

A second distinction relevant to a consideration of the claims advanced by CTS scholars about certain state actions involves the essential difference between state repression and state terrorism. All countries and their governments can be considered repressive in the sense that they enforce laws with which some citizens will disagree. Ordinary criminals are naturally also concerned with repression by the police. Repression can also occur in institutional contexts where a particular group in society is disadvantaged. These inequalities can take an institutional form and even be considered structural violence (e.g. if woman are legally prohibited from voting or from engaging in certain occupations or are not allowed to own property). Certain religious or ethnic groups may have fewer rights of face special barriers to social mobility. If a day of worship does not fall on the traditional “weekend,” adherents can perceive themselves as suffering disadvantages. It has been suggested that such inequalities and injustices in the system

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have become an underlying cause of terrorism. [15] While all of these situations of discrimination and unequal treatment are clearly deplorable, they are not necessarily examples of terrorism. They may not constitute terrorism even in cases of governments that are truly repressive, regimes that deny or deprive some or all of their citizens of their most basic civil rights and liberties since there are many other forms of political violence and repression.

Distinguishing between repression and terrorism is important. Sproat made a key distinction between the two. [16] Repression involves state uses of violence against specific individuals who have violated the laws of the land, however unfair these laws may be. Any citizen, however, can avoid such negative actions by state authorities by obeying the laws. Individuals who are arrested for violating the laws do serve as an example and a deterrent to others, but the persons who are arrested are chosen because of their individual transgressions. Terrorism by the government, on the other hand, occurs when a member of a group is selected for victimization, usually at random, to provide a negative example for others belonging to the same (sub-) group. The choice of victims does not distinguish between the innocent and the guilty. The key element is the external audience that is being targeted. [17] In such circumstances, it is not possible for any individual to avoid the negative state action by obeying the laws of the land. Such exemplary violence meant to intimidate others qualifies as terrorism and is different from mere repression. It is important to note that not all repression is terrorism, even though state terrorism in most cases probably would qualify as repression.

It is also worth noting that a resort to state terrorism or collective repression is usually a sign of state weakness on the part of government rather than a sign of strength. A strong repressive state is normally able to control its population through crackdowns on individual dissidents based on good intelligence. Even the assassination of a leading opponent involves targeting an individual for his or her specific actions. Weaker states, however, often rely on extra-judicial processes including attacks against members of 'suspicious' groups (ethnic, religious, regional, or ideological) thereby ignoring individual guilt. When, in 1933, Hitler came to power, the first attacks on Jewish citizens in Germany were carried out by the paramilitary SA rather than by the official state security forces. The actions by the paramilitary groups permitted Hitler to at least make the claim to foreign governments that the attacks were spontaneous actions by private citizens. Such actions were, however, state-tolerated (and -promoted) terrorism since Jews were not selected on the basis of their individual behavior but at random. Later, of course, when Hitler was more firmly in power, he was quite willing and able to use the full weight of a repressive state apparatus in Germany to turn all Jews first into second class citizens and then into targets for the 'final solution' - genocide.

This distinction between repression and terrorism is important to bear in mind when charges are made that Western countries have actively supported terrorist regimes. To some extent this claim would appear to result from confusing repression with terrorism. It loses a great deal of its salience when it is recognized that it has been repressive states that have been supported by the

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West, but not necessarily terrorist regimes. The distinction, of course, may not be important for the citizens who suffer in one form or another at the hands of security forces and secret police agencies. Yet for analytic purposes, it is important to distinguish terrorism as a technique of intimidation and group punishment from repression—or from even harsh repression—as a technique for governing against the will of the population or sectors thereof.

*Terrorism versus Terror (Fear)*

In addition to the distinction between terrorism and repression, there is also an important difference between ‘terrorism’ and ‘fear’ (or ‘terror’). In many situations, criminals induce fear in their victims, but the goal of that is to reduce resistance in burglaries or extortions, there is no politics involved. The use of fear for financial gain is most obvious in kidnappings for profit or with demands for ‘protection money’ by organized crime groups. Similarly, governments are usually able to induce some fear in criminals due to the prospect of arrest, conviction and punishment. At some level there is also the political objective of enhanced peace and security for citizens. Yet such fear of punishment generally occurs within the rule of law; it is not arbitrary—or at least not consistently arbitrary, certainly in democracies. If normal, everyday activities become crimes, there is fear, but the situation generally reflects one of repression rather than government terrorism. Thus, the presence of fear cannot by itself be used to define the existence of the use of terrorism by the state.

The failure to distinguish between terror and terrorism also occurs when analysts make comparisons with military actions, which normally involve governments. Most generals prefer to find a way to create overwhelming fear or terror among opposing troops. An army that panics and runs away yields an easy victory. Fear is present in these circumstances, but not terrorism. Aerial or artillery bombardment of villages or urban areas will induce fear and terror among local residents. Often the goals of such bombardments are military objectives only distantly related to the political objectives that are inevitably part of any military conflict. If the bombardment occurs on enemy territory during a war, the resulting action may constitute a wartime atrocity or massacre if there was no military necessity but it is a conceptual stretch to call this terrorism even if it creates great fear. [18] The same may be true in domestic military campaigns in circumstances of rebellion or civil war. Civilian areas can become targets as part of efforts to subdue rebellious regions or territories in turmoil, even though, in point of fact, such bombardments are often counterproductive from a political perspective. [19] Military commanders, however, may be more interested in limiting casualties among their own troops than they are in furthering political objectives of their governments. Many military officers are either not interested or not trained to look at the political consequences of their combat decisions; often they hold political goals in some disdain if these interfere with military objectives. Even in circumstances where heavy casualties result, such as the devastation of large sections of the town of Hama in Syria in February 1982 (which cost up to 40,000 lives at the hands of government forces) or, more recently, relatively indiscriminate attacks by Nigerian military forces against

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communities in the Niger delta, this might not be best described as terrorism. Rather, such massacres could either been described as gross human rights violations or qualify as war crimes under humanitarian law.

*Everything Evil Is Not Terrorism*

It needs to be recognized that not every form of violence that is evil or reprehensible, when performed by governments, constitutes terrorism. Genocide is far worse than terrorism, but genocide does not primarily seek to create fear in a target audience. In fact governments undertaking genocide may even seek to lull the victims into a false sense of security to make the killing easier. This was the case with the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the Jews during the Holocaust and, more recently, according to some reports, also with the Tutsi in Rwanda. Similarly, harsh repression of non-violent dissent is evil, but it is usually not terrorism as long as it is not indiscriminate. Slavery is a pernicious attack on human dignity, but it is not terrorism. Institutional violence in which some citizens have fewer rights or situations where equal rights are not equally protected are to be deplored, but it is not terrorism (unless accompanied by government-tolerated vigilante violence intended to enforce the control of particular groups). It is quite legitimate and desirable to focus public and scholarly attention on these issues, but it is not appropriate to consider them to be examples of terrorism. To fault those who study other forms of terrorism than state terrorism, as CTS scholars do, is unjust since these type of situations are actually frequently analyzed in other academic (sub-)disciplines. Therefore, it cannot be said that ‘orthodox’ analysts “refuse to examine cases of state terrorism” (very broadly defined). [20] If almost every example of government use of force to maintain law and order is labeled state terrorism, then the concept of ‘terrorism’ ceases to have any real meaning and simply becomes a polemic term used to apply a negative and pejorative label to a government or states that an observer dislikes.

Supporters of the CTS perspective also argue that the conventional approach to terrorism noticeably ignores the violence involved in the counterterrorism strategies of governments. They further argue that governments take advantage of the presence of dissident terrorist actions to crack down on opponents to the regime in power. It has even been suggested that the recent wave of attacks by dissident groups has led governments “to manufacture” a new concept of terrorism in order to further the interests of the elite. [21] Governments in many circumstances have indeed long used threats and acts of violent protest from dissidents as often not unwelcome pretexts for crackdowns on dissenters or for other political purposes. Such manipulation of public events, however, does not necessarily qualify as terrorism even when it frequently involves manipulation and repression.

The use of dissident actions as an excuse for government repression or the excesses of counterterrorism have also been cited by CT scholars to allege that the conventional ‘orthodox’ terrorism perspective is flawed in another way. They often suggest that the research focus has

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been on government reactions while discussing terrorism from the perspective of the terrorists is “a taboo stance within Western scholarship.” [22] While much of the conventional literature on terrorism does not directly address the viewpoint of the terrorists directly, the whole issue of the causes of terrorism (e.g. in studies on radicalisation) does address the perspectives of those involved in terrorist actions. For example, arguments that repression or lack of participation lead to political violence, including acts of terrorism, clearly involves looking at events from the perspective of the dissidents. [23] Admittedly, since it is – at least in Western democracies - much easier to get documentary material on the perspectives of governments and their counterterrorism strategies, greater attention has been given to these. Even so, communiqués and statements by leaders of dissident groups to provide insights into the perspectives of the dissident groups, have been used for analyses of the origins and motives of dissident and insurgent groups using tactics of terrorism. Further, considerations of reform and concessions as counterterrorist strategies implicitly view events also from the perspective of the terrorist groups rather than merely that of the government. [24]

#### *In Defense of the Critical Terrorism Studies Perspective*

Notwithstanding the above comments, it is important to recognize that the CTS perspective has something valuable to offer to analysts since it reminds everyone that many governments can and do use terrorism (in a narrowly defined sense of the term). Death squads operating with government tolerance or active support are designed to create terror in target audiences. Such para-military squads also provide the state with a shield, however thin, of plausible deniability. [25] When Black Americans were lynched in the American south (and elsewhere) in the years before World War II, local government officials in Southern States of the United States often tolerated such actions. In effect, a number of local governments supported terrorism against a minority population as a form of social control. The support was especially obvious where perpetrators of the lynchings were rarely charged. Moreover, on the rare occasions that they were even brought to trial, they were generally acquitted. When a Black American was accused of a crime or of violating “appropriate” social norms, ideally the real culprit would be punished for the action. If the actual culprit could not be discovered or caught, then any black person could be killed to serve as a message to the entire community to remember each of its members of his or her place in society. [26] Clearly, this type of action goes beyond repression and institutional violence and reaches the level of terrorism.

Other examples of state terrorism have been documented. In Burundi the periodic pogroms against Hutus by the Tutsi elite qualified as terrorism. The targets of the violence were not able to avoid death by individual lawful behaviour. Pogroms against Jews in Central and Eastern Europe that occurred after the 1970s with the tacit or active consent of governments would qualify as terrorism as well. More recently, the government of Sudan has unleashed Arab *janjaweed* militias against its domestic opponents, first in the southern, mainly Christian, part of the country and then in Darfur (which is mainly populated by African Muslims) as part of efforts

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to terrify dissident groups into submission. The quasi-governmental ruling groups in the Serbian portions of Bosnia and Herzegovina used in the 1990s terror as part of a very conscious policy of ethnic cleansing. Murder and rape became weapons of choice, convincing Muslims to flee the areas that Serb para-militaries were claiming for their own. The actions of some of the supporters of President Mugabe in Zimbabwe also qualify as state terrorism. These state authorities have consistently ignored violence by the government's party para-militaries and veterans of the independence struggles when directed against members of the opposition. One circumstance that makes state terrorism so important to study is that it is much more deadly in terms of number of victims than dissident terrorism. [27]

### *Conclusions*

To conclude this discussion, first it is worth emphasizing that precision is always important when discussing political and social phenomena. The concept of state terrorism cannot be stretched to include all the forms of political violence and repression that non-democratic but also some democratic states perform. Nor can the term terrorism be allowed to become a negative term to apply to capitalist states only—whether democratic or not. It needs to be defined in a way that has a clear and consistent meaning for everyone. Nor should analysts who choose to focus on dissident terrorism be accused of being pawns of the state. Second, while state terrorism has not received the attention that those in favor of the Critical Terrorism Studies perspective think that it should rightfully have, it clearly has not been ignored by academics. Negative state actions and state repression have been frequently studied, sometimes in great detail. Finally, with a more balanced and limited view of how governments can and do use terrorism, it should be possible for scholars embracing the Critical Terrorism Studies perspective to contribute in a much more constructive way to the analysis of the notion of government terrorism and the techniques that such regimes use.

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### **Notes:**

[1] Jeroen Gunning, "A Case for Critical Terrorism Studies," *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (2007), p. 367.

[2] James M. Lutz and Brenda J. Lutz, *Global Terrorism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 13-14.

[3] David Claridge, "State Terrorism? Applying a Definitional Model," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1996), pp. 47-63, and J. Lutz and B. Lutz, *Global Terrorism*, pp. 9-13.

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- [4] Richard Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2008), p. 25. Cf. also Ruth Blakely, "Bringing the State back into Terrorism Studies," *European Political Science*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2007), pp. 228-35, and Alexander George (ed.), *Western State Terrorism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
- [5] Richard Jackson, "The Core Commitments of Critical Terrorism Studies," *European Political Science*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2007), p. 247.
- [6] R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," p. 26.
- [7] R. Jackson, "Core Commitments," p. 246.
- [8] Jonny Burnet and Dave Whyte, "Embedded Expertise and the New Terrorism," *Journal for Crime, Conflict, and the Media*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (2005), p. 8, and Jackson, "The Core Commitments," p. 245.
- [9] Martin Slann, "The States as Terrorist," in Martin Slann and Bernard Schechterman (eds.), *Multidimensional Terrorism* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1987), p. 39.
- [10] Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965) is a classic example. Cf. also Mark N. Hagopian, *Regimes, Movements, and Ideologies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, 1983), and Franz L. Neumann, "Notes on the Theory of Dictatorship," in Roy Macridis and Bernard E. Brown (eds.), *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1986), pp. 178-88.
- [11] Paul Wilkinson, *Political Terrorism* (New York: John Wiley, 1975), pp. 40-44.
- [12] Thomas P. Thornton, "Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation," in Harry Eckstein (ed.), *Internal War* (New York: Free Press, 1964), p. 72.
- [13] David Claridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-63.
- [14] Cf. Jeroen Gunning, "Babies and Bathwaters: Reflecting on the Pitfalls of Critical Terrorism Studies," *European Political Science*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2007), p. 237, and R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," p. 26.
- [15] R. Jackson, "Core Commitments," p. 245.
- [16] Peter A. Sproat, "Can the State be Terrorist?" *Terrorism*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1990), pp. 19-29.
- [17] R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," pp. 27-8. The definition of terrorism noted above for use in this article also includes the idea that there is an external audience for the violence.
- [18] R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," p. 26.
- [19] Israeli reprisals against Palestinians in Gaza or the West Bank have led to fear among the Palestinian population, but the attacks have been ineffective in limiting opposition.
- [20] R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," p. 26.
- [21] J. Burnet and D. Whyte, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
- [22] Cf., for example, P. C. Sederberg, "Global Terrorism: Problems of Challenge and Response," in C. W. Kegley, Jr. (ed.), *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), pp. 267-84.
- [23] R. Jackson, "Core Commitments," p. 249. Cf. also Gunning, "Babies and Bathwater," *op. cit.*, p. 368.
- [24] Cf., for example, Martha Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism: Causes, Processes and Consequences* (London: Routledge, 2011), especially pp. 36-9.
- [25] Bruce D. Campbell, "Death Squads: Definition, Problems, and Historical Context," in Bruce D. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner (eds.), *Death Squads in Global Perspective: Murder with Deniability* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), pp. 1-26.
- [26] J. Dollard, "Caste and Class in a Southern Town," in Roger Lane and John J. Turner, Jr. (eds.), *Riot, Rout, and Tumult: Readings in American Social and Political Violence*, Contributions in American History No. 69 (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 303.
- [27] R. Jackson, "An Argument for Terrorism," p. 27, and J. Lutz and B. Lutz, *Global Terrorism*, p. 242.
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## Book Review

Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman. *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It*.

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010. 349 pp.; price: US \$ 30.-; ISBN: 9-780226645605.

Reviewed by Irm Haleem

In their most recent book, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It*, Robert Pape and James Feldman offer us their new analysis of the causes of suicide terrorism. To this end, the authors present detailed case studies on the causes of suicide terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine, Chechnya, as well as those related to Al-Qaeda. In each of these specific case studies, the authors examine variables such as the nature and number of groups, their goals, the specific trajectory of suicide campaigns, their targets and weapons, local community support and the composition of recruitment. The book is structured around three hypotheses: (i) foreign military occupations are the major factor leading to suicide terrorism; (ii) foreign military occupations also account for transnational suicide terrorism; and (iii) suicide terrorism can only be effectively combated in the long-term through a strategic change in the military policies of the occupying state. Fundamentally, the arguments in this book can be understood in philosophical terms as violence being an existential rejection of oppression; oppression of host population being the inevitable consequence of the foreign occupation. This point is perhaps most directly put forth by Pape in his most recent article “It’s the Occupation, Stupid” (*Foreign Policy*, October 18, 2010) wherein Pape examines the negative consequences of the various cases of occupation.

In many ways, *Cutting the Fuse* can be seen as an extension of Pape’s earlier work entitled *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005). There are perhaps three critical differences. First, while *Dying to Win* is limited to pre-2005 data, *Cutting the Fuse* assembles data from around the world for the period 1980 to 2009. Second, while *Dying to Win* offered nationalism as the cause of suicide terrorism, thereby linking the rise of foreign occupations to the rise of suicide terrorism, it failed to shed light on the causes of *transnational* suicide terrorism. In other words, while nationalism can explain suicide terrorism in terms of a reaction to the foreign occupation of one’s country, what of the cases where individuals voluntarily take part in suicide missions in response to a foreign occupation of another country? An example of the latter would be the many non-Afghan ‘Taliban’ fighters currently fighting alongside the Taliban against the US-NATO contingencies in Afghanistan. *Cutting the Fuse* purports to address this gap in understanding. Pape and Feldman contend that they offer an explanation for transnational suicide terrorism in terms of what they refer to as “dueling loyalties”. The authors explain the notion of ‘dueling loyalties’ in the following manner: “a classic instance of individuals with multiple [ethnic] national loyalties to different stable communities of people associated with a territory, distinctive culture, and common language, one

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loyalty for their kindred community and another for their current country of residence, in which the loyalty of their kindred community wins out” (p.11). Third, *Cutting the Fuse* offers a far more assertive argument for a change in the United States military strategy of occupation (of Iraq and particularly of Afghanistan) and portrayed military aggression.

The merits of *Cutting the Fuse* far outweigh its weakness. As to merits: the book repeatedly points out that “the principle cause of suicide terrorism is resistance to foreign occupation, *not Islamic fundamentalism*” (p. 20 -emphasis added, IH).[1] Throughout the book, the authors point out that an overly aggressive foreign policy (such as one involving military occupations) engenders an equally aggressive rejection (such as suicide terrorism).

Another outstanding merit of this book is in its most detailed case studies. Rarely can one find in a volume such diverse and data-rich case studies.[2] For example, in explaining the almost non-existence of suicide terrorism within Pakistan in the period prior to 2001 but its steady rise since 2002, Pape and Feldman note that the post-2002 US-Pakistani alliance has been based on what they refer to as an “indirect occupation”: “...the indirectly occupied country (Pakistan) gives a higher-priority to the goals of the indirect occupier (the United States) than its national interests alone would warrant” (pp. 139-140). One may also understand the latter dynamic in terms of what I call a ‘dominant-subservient matrix’.[3] It is such subservience that Pape and Feldman argue has led to increased resentments within Pakistan, which has led to an increase in the anti-Pakistani government sentiments of the population, which has in turn benefited the recruitment efforts of Islamist extremist groups. The rise of suicide terrorism in this case, argue the authors, is thus linked directly to a quasi-occupation of the country. Finally, one other merit of the book deserves a mention. The concluding chapter of the book offers an excellent analysis of why the immediate post-2001 ‘us versus them’ narrative that had become popular in the United States not only demonized the Muslims at large—and unfairly so, as the authors argue—but led to ill-suited foreign policies, most notably the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The authors conclude by noting that “over 95% of the suicide attacks are in response to foreign occupation” [329] and that therefore a change in the nature of U.S. foreign policy is imperative for the long term national security of the United States.

Despite its many merits, however, the book surprisingly suffers from three most critical omissions. First, the central thesis of the book, that suicide terrorism is a reaction to foreign occupations, does not address the issue of sectarian suicide terrorism. If foreign occupations explain suicide terrorism directed against the occupiers, what explains the suicide terrorism directed against the sectarian other (Shi’ia vs. Sunni) within the same country? Pakistan, for example, has historically suffered from bouts of sectarian violence and a number of cases of suicide terrorism within Pakistan today are of a sectarian nature (targeting the Shia or the Sunni ‘other’) and are not jihadi in nature (targeting a foreign entity). Second, Pape and Feldman’s assertion that suicide terrorism, in the majority of the cases, is not about Islamic fundamentalism does not explain why much of the discourse is *Islamic* in rhetoric. To be sure, Pape and Feldman do mention that the *Islamic* rhetoric of Islamist extremist groups “functions mainly as a recruiting tool in the context of national resistance” (p. 20). However, they fail to explain the

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critical link between the appearance of religious tenets in radical Islamist rhetoric and the motivations of individuals that voluntarily join Islamist extremist groups. Third—and this is perhaps the most surprising, if not disappointing, omission—Pape and Feldman’s explanation of the causes of transnational suicide terrorism as being a matter of complex nationalism featuring what they refer to as “dueling loyalties” (p. 11) completely omits any mention of the notion of the *ummah* – “a fundamental concept in Islam”, as noted by John Esposito.[4] The *ummah* refers to a belief in the “essential unity...of Muslims from diverse cultural and geographical settings.”[5] While Pape and Feldman’s reference to what they call ‘dueling loyalties’ as an explanation of the motivations for transnational terrorism sounds strikingly similar to the Islamic notion of the *ummah*, no actual reference is made to the notion of the *ummah* in either the text or the index of the book. Such a critical omission tarnishes the otherwise comprehensive nature of the analysis in this book.

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### Notes

[1]Although I have offered only one citation of this point, the authors repeat this point throughout the book.

[2]For those in academe, this makes for a most useful survey of varied cases that students can appreciate given its comparative analysis layout.

[3]I have coined the term ‘dominant-subservient matrix’ here in order to explain the point that I feel the authors are trying to put across. However, it should be noted that this is not a term used by the authors in the book.

[4]See John Esposito’s analysis of the critical and central notion of the *ummah* in Islamic thought in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 327.

[5]Ibid, p. 327.

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## Selected Literature on Terrorism and Organized Crime

*Monographs, Edited Volumes, Non-conventional Literature and Prime Articles published since 2001*, selected by **Eric Price** (Professional Information Specialist, Editorial Assistant TRI)

NB: some of the items listed below are clickable and allow access to the full text: those with an asterix [\*] only have a clickable table of contents.

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PT seeks to provide a unique platform for established scholars as well as academics and professionals entering the field of Terrorism, Political Violence and Conflict Studies. It invites them to:

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## Greetings and Welcome to 'Perspectives on Terrorism'

It is an pleasure to welcome you to one of the newer publications in the field of Terrorism Studies. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our journal and explain in a few words the underlying impetus that motivates us and the intended direction of this online publication and the underlying *Terrorism Research Initiative* (TRI).

*Perspectives on Terrorism* (PT) seeks to provide a unique platform for established and emerging scholars to present their perspectives on the developing field of Terrorism Studies, based on scholarship focusing on political violence and armed conflict; to present original research and analysis and to provide a forum for discourse and commentary on related issues. The journal could be characterized as 'non-traditional' in that it dispenses with some of the traditional rigidities of academic journals in order to allow its editors and authors a higher degree of flexibility in terms of content, style and length of articles while at the same time maintaining professional scholarly standards. Although PT differs from other publications in the field, it is intended to be complementary and non-competitive. Indeed, the establishment of this journal was brought about in consultation with leaders in the field of terrorism and political violence studies, several of whom have also editorial responsibilities for various other scholarly journals.

One of the objectives of *Perspectives on Terrorism* is to allow authors to write on subjects or present thoughts that might precipitate further debates and commentary from the wider community of scholars studying violence and conflict and how to prevent and counter such threats to human security. Since PT is using an electronic platform, it is possible to engage in discourse more promptly than in paper-based publications.

PT is a journal of the *Terrorism Research Initiative* (TRI), an initiative that seeks to support the international community of terrorism researchers and scholars through the facilitation of collaborative projects and cooperative initiatives. TRI was formed in 2007 by scholars from various disciplines in order to provide the global research community with a common tool than can empower them and extend the impact of each participant's research activities. By including promising young scholars working on their PhD theses as Research Assistants in its network, the *Terrorism Research Initiative* also seeks to create opportunities for them to enter the circle of more established scholars and analysts. To enhance the quality of academic research in the field, TRI has facilitated the publication of the *Handbook of Terrorism Research* [London: Routledge, 2011; 736 pp. ISBN: 13: 978-0-415-41157-8 (hbk)], by Prof. Alex P. Schmid, Editor of *Perspectives on Terrorism*.

**TRI Openings (*Winter 2010/11*)**

1. **Editorial Assistant** (PT)
2. **Research Assistants** (TRI)
3. **Technical Assistant** (PT)

TRI is currently accepting applications for Research Assistants, Editorial Assistants as well as Technical Assistants for Information Technology. Responsibilities for these part-time, non-paid positions will include assisting the Editor of *Perspectives on Terrorism* and the Director of TRI with developing collaborative projects, conducting in-depth topical research, and assisting with the daily activities of the Initiative.

The Editorial Assistant position will support the production of TRI's *Perspectives on Terrorism* journal.

Responsibilities of Research Assistants (RA) will include assisting the Editor of *Perspectives on Terrorism* and the Director of TRI with monitoring terrorist organizations and developments, developing collaborative projects, conducting in-depth topical research as well as offering assistance with the daily activities of the Initiative.

The Technical Assistant for Information Technology will be responsible for assisting with the development of existing and future websites, supporting the maintenance of existing IT resources, and supporting the planning and implementation of future IT platforms in collaboration with the Assistant Editor for IT matters.

Interested candidates should send a letter (e-mail) outlining their motivation to apply for a TRI position. In addition, they should attach a CV/Resume to the letter (and, if available, a publication list) as well as the names of two references who are familiar with their work and educational achievements to [info@terrorismanalysts.com](mailto:info@terrorismanalysts.com). Applicants with an interest in integrating emerging web-based technologies and techniques into scholarly activities are especially encouraged to apply.

The workload of TRI positions is flexible and negotiable but averages 5-10 hours per week. RA positions run for six months (renewable) whereby the first month is a trial month.

**Participating Institutions of the Terrorism Research Initiative**

**Athena Intelligence**, Spain. <http://www.athenaintelligence.org/>

**Center on Terrorism**, John Jay College, USA.

**Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC)** at Campus The Hague of Leiden University, Netherlands. <http://www.campusden Haag.nl/ctc>

**Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV)**, University of St. Andrews, Scotland .<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~cstp/>

**Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP)**, University of Wollongong , Australia.

**Consortium for Strategic Communication**, Arizona State University, USA. <http://www.comops.org/>

**Defense & Strategic Studies Department, Quaid-I-Azam University**, Islamabad, Pakistan

**Global Terrorism Research Centre (GTReC)**, Monash University, Australia.

**International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)**, Singapore.

**International Center for the Study of Terrorism**, Pennsylvania State University, USA.

**Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism**, Syracuse University, USA. <http://insct.syr.edu/>

**The Institute of International and European Affairs, (IIEA)**, Dublin, Ireland, with a branch in Brussels.

**Jebsen Center for Counter-Terrorism Studies**, Tufts University, USA. <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/jebsencenter/default.shtml>

**Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)**, Islamabad, Pakistan.

**Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS)**, Athens, Greece. [www.rieas.gr](http://www.rieas.gr)

**Research Unit, Political Violence, Terrorism and Radicalization, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)**, Denmark.

**University of the Pacific, School of International Studies**, USA.

**University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Institute for the Study of Religion, Violence and Memory**, USA.

## Participants of the Terrorism Research Initiative

**Mahan Abedin** is a former editor of the Jamestown Foundation's Terrorism Monitor and currently the Director of research at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism (a London-based organisation studying Islamism, democratization and extremism in the Muslim world), and is editor of Islamism Digest - a monthly academic journal specialising on the in-depth study of Islamic movements.

**Gary Ackerman** is Research Director at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)

**Shaheen Afroze** is Research Director and Head of the Peace and Conflict Studies Division at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS).

**Abdullah Alaskar** is Professor of History at King Saud University, columnist, Riyadh daily newspaper.

**Mustafa Alani** is a Senior Advisor and Program Director in Security and Terrorism Studies at the Gulf Research Center, UAE.

**Rogelio Alonso** is currently a Lecturer in Politics and Terrorism at Rey Juan Carlos University, Madrid, where he holds the position of Ramón y Cajal Fellow in Political Sciences and coordinates the Unit for Documentation and Analysis on Terrorism.

**Ramiro Anzit Guerrero** is a Senior Advisor in the Argentine National Congress and Professor at the University del Salvador and University del Museo Social Argentino.

**Victor Asal** joined the faculty of the Political Science Department of the University at Albany in Fall 2003 and is also the Director of the Public Security Certificate at Rockefeller College, SUNY, Albany.

**Omar Ashour** is the Director of the Middle East Studies Program in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter (UK).

**Scott Atran** is Presidential Scholar at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, Visiting Professor of Psychology and Public Policy at the University of Michigan, and Research Director in Anthropology at the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris.

**Edwin Bakker** is Professor of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism at the Campus The Hague of Leiden University

**Daniel BaracsKay** is a full-time faculty member in the Department of Political Science at Valdosta State University, where he also teaches public administration courses.

**Michael Barkun** is professor of political science in the Maxwell School at Syracuse University.

**Shazadi Beg** is a Barrister in the United Kingdom and an acknowledged expert on Pakistan. Currently, she is involved in working on disengagement from violent extremism in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province.

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**Gabriel Ben-Dor** is Director of the School of Political Sciences and Head of the National Security Graduate Studies Program at the University of Haifa, where he teaches and conducts research in the fields of political violence, civil-military relations and national security.

**Jamal Eddine Benhayoun** is a Professor of Cultural Studies and Director of the Research Group on Culture and Globalisation, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Tetuan, Morocco.

**Andrew Black** is the Managing Director of Black Watch Global, an intelligence and risk management consultancy headquartered in Washington, DC.

**Mia Bloom** is currently an associate professor of women's studies and international studies at the Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA and a fellow at the International Center for the Study of Terrorism[1] at Penn State.

**Randy Borum** is a Professor at the University of South Florida and a behavioral science researcher/consultant on National Security issues.

**Anneli Botha** is a senior researcher on terrorism at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Pretoria, South Africa with a specific interest in the root causes, radicalization, and vulnerability of terrorism in Africa, as well as the implementation of effective counter-terrorism strategies.

**Amel Boubekeur** is a Research Fellow and the leader of the Islam and Europe programme at the Centre for European Policy Studies in Brussels, focusing on Political Islam in Europe and North Africa.

**Christopher Boucek** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Princeton University and a Lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School.

**Jarret Brackman** is an independent al-Qaida analyst. He runs a jihadist monitoring blog at <http://www.jarretbrackman.net>.

**Janna Bray**

**Jean-Charles Brisard** is an international consultant and expert on terrorism and terrorism financing.

**Francesco Cavatorta** is a lecturer in International Relations and Middle East politics at the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland.

**David Charters** is a military historian and senior fellow at the Gregg Center, University of New Brunswick, Canada.

**Erica Chenoweth** is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the International Security Program at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, JFK School of Government, Harvard University.

**David Cook** is an Associate Professor of religious studies (Islam) at Rice University, specializing in apocalyptic literature and movements, radical Islamic thought and West African Islam.

**Victor D. Comras** is an attorney and consultant on terrorism, terrorism-financing, sanctions and international law. He led the State Department's sanctions and export control programs for nearly

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a decade and served as one of five International Monitors appointed by the Security Council to oversee the implementation of measures imposed against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and associated terrorist groups.

**Maura Conway** is the MA Programme Director at the School of Law & Government, Dublin City University.

**Steven R. Corman** is the Director of the Consortium for Strategic Communication at Arizona State University.

**Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen** is the Head of Research Unit, Political Violence, Terrorism and Radicalization at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS).

**Luis de la Corte** is a Professor of social psychology at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, and an investigator at Athena Intelligence.

**James Dingley** is a sociologist and former lecturer on terrorism and political violence at the University of Ulster and now running his own consultancy on terrorism (Cybernos Associates) and chairman of the Northern Ireland think tank Northern Light Review.

**Vera Eccarius-Kelly** is an Assistant Professor of Comparative Politics at Siena College in Albany, NY, specialized in Latin American and Middle East politics, and in particular on revolutionary and social movements in Central America and Muslim Minority activism in Europe.

**Rodney Faraon** is Director of Intelligence and Threat Analysis for the Walt Disney Company's Global Security Division.

**Shabana Fayyaz** is an Assistant Professor with the Defense and Strategic Studies Department at the Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad and is also a Doctoral Candidate at the Political Science Department, The University of Birmingham, UK.

**James Forest** is a Director of the Terrorism Research Initiative. After nine years at West Point, the majority of them at the Combating Terrorism Center, he is teaching terrorism and security studies in the criminal justice and criminology department of the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Joint Special Operations University in Tampa, Florida.

**George Michael** is an Assistant Professor of political science and administration of justice at the University of Virginia's College of Wise.

**Jennifer Giroux** is a CRN Researcher in Terrorism and Political Violence at the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich.

**Sebestyén L. v. Gorka** is the Founding Director of the Institute for Transitional Democracy and International Security (ITDIS) Hungary, and the Director for Policy Studies at the Educational Initiative for Central and Eastern Europe (EICEE), USA.

**Beatrice de Graaf** is Associate Professor for the history of terrorism and national security at the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism at Campus The Hague/Leiden University.

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**Bob de Graaff** is Socrates Foundation Professor for political and cultural reconstruction from a humanist perspective at Utrecht University and was, until recently, Director of the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism at Campus The Hague/Leiden University.

**Stuart Groombridge** holds a Masters of Justice (Strategic Intelligence) from Queensland University of Technology, specialising in Organised Crime and recruitment methodologies utilised by Islamist Terrorist Groups. He is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Wollongong's Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention, researching the "Organisational Structure of Terrorist Groups".

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**Dipak K. Gupta** is the Fred J. Hansen Professor of Peace Studies and Distinguished Professor in Political Science, San Diego State University.

**Abdulhadi Hairan** is a Kabul-based researcher and security, governance and terrorism analyst.

**Irm Haleem** is an Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department at Seton Hall University, currently researching and publishing on Islamist extremism in the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe.

**Muhammad Haniff Hassan** is an Associate Research Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. <http://counterideology.multiply.com/>

**John Horgan** is Director of the International Center for the Study of Terrorism, at The Pennsylvania State University.

**Brian K. Houghton** is an Associate Professor of Public Policy & Management at BYU-Hawaii, and the former Director of Research at the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism.

**Russell Howard** is the Founding Director of the Jebson Center for Counter-Terrorism Studies at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

**Richard Jackson** is Reader in International Politics at Aberystwyth University, UK, and the founding editor of the journal *Critical Studies on Terrorism*.

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**George Joffé** teaches Middle Eastern and North African Affairs at the Centre of International Studies at the University of Cambridge.

**Ranga Kalansooriya** is a journalist from Sri Lanka with wide experience in terrorism and political violence and a PhD Candidate in journalism and political violence.

**Jeffrey Kaplan** is an Associate Professor of Religion and Director of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Institute for the Study of Religion, Violence and Memory.

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**Emmanuel Karagiannis** is an investigator at the START center, University of Maryland and a lecturer at the University of Macedonia, Greece.

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**Brian Kingshott** is a Professor of Criminal Justice at Grand Valley State University, USA.

**Faryal Leghari** a researcher at the Gulf Research Center, UAE.

**Ambassador Melvyn Levitsky** is a retired Career Minister in the U.S. Foreign Service, teaches international relations at the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and is Senior Fellow of the School's International Policy Center.

**Pete Lentini** is Co-founder and Director of the Global Terrorism Research Centre (GTReC), Monash University, Australia, and is currently researching into neo-jihadism; extremism and terrorism in Australia and Russia; the roles of multicultural practices and social cohesion in anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism initiatives; and comparative extremist subcultures.

**Brynjar Lia** is a Research Professor at the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (FFI), where he currently heads FFI's research on international terrorism and radical Islamism. Lia is the author of several books on Middle East, Islamism and terrorism issues. His most recent book is *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri* (Hurst & Columbia University Press, 2007).

**Douglas Macdonald** has taught at Colgate University for twenty years and in 2008-2009 will also assume the directorship of its International Relations Program.

**Lieutenant General Talat Masood** served in the Pakistan Army for nearly 40 years with his last assignment being secretary for Defence Production in Ministry of Defence. Since retirement he is closely associated with think-tanks and universities regionally and globally, working to promote peace and stability in the region.

**William McCants** is the founder of Jihadica and also co-founder of Insight Collaborative, a DC-based company that provides education and expertise on Islamism.

**Andrew McGregor** is the Director of Aberfoyle International Security in Toronto, Canada.

**Mansoor Moaddel** is a Professor of Sociology at Eastern Michigan University, where he teaches sociology of religion, ideology, revolution, Islam and the Middle East.

**Fathali M. Moghaddam** is Professor of Psychology at Georgetown University and author of

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*Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations: Psychological Implications for Democracy in Global Context.*

**Gregory Miller** is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Oklahoma and is one of the Director's of the Summer Workshop on Teaching about Terrorism (SWOTT).

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**Peter Neumann** is Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. Prior to this appointment, he was Director of the Centre for Defence Studies (2005-2007) at King's College London.

**John M. Nomikos** is Director of the Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS).

**Mariya Y. Omelicheva** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Kansas.

**Raffaello Pantucci** is a researcher at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, UK.

**Alison Pargeter** is a Senior Research Associate at the Centre of International Studies at the University of Cambridge and a visiting scholar at Pembroke College.

**Reuven Paz** is a long-time researcher of radical Islam, and the founder and director of the Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) in Herzliya, Israel.

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**Gregory Pemberton** is a graduate of the Royal Military College Duntroon and the University of Sydney and is currently Manager of Postgraduate Programs of the Centre of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism at Macquarie University while completing international research from over 60 countries on the first international law against terrorism.

**Keli Perrin** is the Assistant Director of the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism at Syracuse University.

**James A. Piazza** is Professor at the International Center for the Study of Terrorism, at The Pennsylvania State University.

**Gilbert Ramsay** is completing his PhD in terrorist uses of the Internet at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, University of St. Andrews, Scotland.

**Muhammad Amir Rana** is the Director of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), Islamabad, Pakistan.

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**Fernando Reinares** is a Professor of Political Science and Security Studies, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, and Director of the Program on Global Terrorism, Elcano Royal Institute, Madrid

**Louise Richardson** is Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Prior to her appointment she was executive dean of the Radcliffe Institute of Advances Study at Harvard. She has authored *What Terrorists Want* and editor of *Democracy and Counter-terrorism* and *The Roots of Terrorism*.

**Karl Roberts** is a Forensic Psychologist, Principal Lecturer in Psychology at Sunderland University and a consultant to UK police forces on risk assessment in terrorism and investigative skills for law enforcement.

**Hanna Rogan** is a Research Fellow and Ph.D. Candidate at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment.

**Johnny Ryan** is a Senior Researcher at The Institute of International and European Affairs.

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**Richard J. Schmidt** is an Associate Professor at the University of Nebraska with interests in intelligence analysis, counterterrorism, terrorism and political violence.

**Mark Sedgwick** is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Unit for Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Aarhus, Denmark.

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**Stephen M. Shellman** is a Research Scientist within the Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations at The College of William & Mary and is Director of the Violent Intranational Political Conflict and Terrorism (VIPCAT) Research Laboratory.

**Dmitry Shlapentokh** is an Associate Professor-Indiana University, South Bend and author of several books and many articles.

**Joshua Sinai** is a Program Manager for Counterterrorism Studies at The Analysis Corporation, in McLean, VA.

**Stephen Sloan** is a emeritus Professor and Fellow of the Global Perspectives Office of the University of Central Florida.

**Jeffrey Sluka** is an Associate Professor in the Social Anthropology Programme at Massey University, New Zealand.

**John Solomon** is global head of terrorism research for World-Check.

**Guido Steinberg** is a former advisor on international terrorism in the German Federal Chancellery and is currently serving as senior fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, SWP) in Berlin; specializing in the Middle East and Gulf Affairs.

**Michael Stohl** is Professor of Communication Studies at the University of California-Santa Barbara.

**Nicole Stracke** a Researcher in the Department of Security and Terrorism Studies at the Gulf Research Center, UAE.

**Praveen Swami** is Associate Editor for *The Hindu* and *Frontline* magazine in India.

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**Andrew T. H. Tan** is an Associate Professor in Social Science and International Studies at the University of New South Wales, Australia.

**Manuel R. Torres Soriano** is a professor of political science at the Universidad Pablo de Olavide de Sevilla, Spain.

**Peter Waldmann** is Professor Emeritus of sociology at the University of Augsburg, Germany, and a long time member of the advisory board of the German Ministry of Development.

**Carl Anthony Wege** is a professor of political science at the College of Coastal Georgia.

**Leonard Weinberg** is a Foundation Professor of Political Science at the University of Nevada.

**Clive Williams** MG is an Adjunct Professor at PICT, A Visiting Professor at ADFA, and a Visiting Fellow at the ANU; his specialised field is politically motivated violence.

**Phil Williams** is a Professor at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh. Currently he is a Visiting Research Professor at the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle PA. His research interests include the relationship between organized crime and terrorism, and terrorist finances.

**Mark Woodward** is an anthropologist and Islam specialist who teaches in the Department of Religious Studies at Arizona State University.

**David Wright-Neville** is a former senior intelligence analyst with the Australian government and is now Deputy Director of the Global Terrorism Research Centre and an Associate Professor at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where his research and teaching focuses on the political psychology of terrorism and counter-terrorism, especially in Southeast Asia.

**Sherifa Zuhur** is Research Professor of Islamic and Regional Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute located at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.