OPENING VIEWPOINT: THE IDEOLOGY OF AL QAEDA

Al Qaeda has come to symbolize the globalization of terrorism in the 21st century. The network is perceived by many to represent a quintessential model for small groups of like-minded revolutionaries who wish to wage transnational insurgencies against strong adversaries. Although Al Qaeda certainly exists as a loose network of relatively independent cells, it has also evolved into an idea—an ideology and a fighting strategy—that has been embraced by sympathetic revolutionaries throughout the world. What is the ideology of Al Qaeda? Why did a network of religious revolutionaries evolve into a potent symbol of global resistance against its enemies? Which underlying commonalities appeal to motivated Islamist activists?

Al Qaeda leaders such as Osama bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri have consistently released public pronouncements of their goals, often by delivering audio and video communiqués to international news agencies such as Al Jazeera in Qatar. Based on these communiqués, the following principles frame the ideology of Al Qaeda:

- The struggle is a clash of civilizations. Holy war is a religious duty and necessary for the salvation of one's soul and the defense of the Muslim nation.
- Only two sides exist, and there is no middle ground in this apocalyptic conflict between Islam and the forces of evil. Western and Muslim nations that do not share Al Qaeda's vision of true Islam are enemies.
- Violence in a defensive war on behalf of Islam is the only course of action. There cannot be peace with the West.
- Because this is a just war, many of the theological and legal restrictions on the use of force by Muslims do not apply.
- Because U.S. and Western power is based on their economies, large-scale mass casualty attacks that focus on economic targets is a primary goal.
- Muslim governments that cooperate with the West and do not adopt strict Islamic law are apostasies and must be violently overthrown.
These principles have become a rallying ideology for Islamist extremists who have few, if any, ties to Al Qaeda. Thus, the war on terrorism is not solely a conflict against an organization but is also a conflict against a belief system.

**Note**


**Terrorism** has been a dark feature of human behavior since the dawn of recorded history. Great leaders have been assassinated, groups and individuals have committed acts of incredible violence, and entire cities and nations have been put to the sword—all in the name of defending a greater good. Terrorism, however defined, has always challenged the stability of societies and the peace of mind of everyday people. In the modern era, the *impact* of terrorism—that is, its ability to terrorize—is not limited to the specific locales or regions where the terrorists strike. In the age of television, the Internet, satellite communications, and global news coverage, graphic images of terrorist incidents are broadcast instantaneously into the homes of hundreds of millions of people. Terrorist groups understand the power of these images, and they manipulate them to their advantage as much as they can. Terrorist states also fully appreciate the power of instantaneous information, and so they try to control the “spin” on reports of their behavior. In many respects, the beginning of the 21st century is an era of globalized terrorism.

Some acts of political violence are clearly acts of terrorism. Most people would agree that politically motivated planting of bombs in marketplaces, massacres of “enemy” civilians, and the routine use of torture by governments are terrorist acts. However, as we begin our study of terrorism it is important to appreciate that we will encounter many definitional “gray areas.” Depending on which side of the ideological, racial, religious, or national fence one sits, political violence can be interpreted either as acts of unmitigated terrorist barbarity or as freedom fighting and national liberation. These gray areas will be explored in the chapters that follow.

**September 11, 2001: The Dawn of a New Era.** The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland were seen by many as a turning point in the history of political violence. In the aftermath of these attacks, journalists, scholars, and national leaders repeatedly described the emergence of a new international terrorist environment. It was argued that within this new environment, terrorists were now quite capable of using—and very willing to use—weapons of mass destruction to inflict unprecedented casualties and destruction on enemy targets. These attacks
seemed to confirm warnings from experts during the 1990s that a New Terrorism,\(^1\) using “asymmetrical” methods, would characterize the terrorist environment in the new millennium.

Several questions about this new environment have arisen:

♦ How has the new terrorist environment affected traditional terrorist profiles?
♦ How has traditional terrorism been affected by the collapse of revolutionary Marxism?
♦ What is the likely impact of “stateless” international terrorism?

Readers will notice that these questions focus on terrorist groups and movements. However, it is very important to understand that terrorist states were responsible for untold millions of deaths during the 20th century. In addition, genocidal fighting between communal groups claimed the lives of many millions more. Our exploration of terrorism therefore requires us to consider every facet of political violence, from low-intensity campaigns by terrorist gangs to high-intensity campaigns by terrorist governments and genocidal paramilitaries.

*Terrorism at First Glance.* The modern era of terrorism is primarily (though not exclusively) a conflict between adversaries who on one side are waging a self-described war on terrorism and on the other side are waging a self-described holy war in defense of their religion. It is an active confrontation, as evidenced by the fact
that the incidence of significant terrorist attacks often spikes to serious levels. For example, the number of significant terrorist attacks more than tripled from 175 in 2003 to 655 in 2004. Although such trends are disturbing, it is critically important for one to keep these facts in perspective, because the modern terrorist environment is in no manner a unique circumstance in human history.

It will become clear in the following pages that the history of terrorist behavior extends into antiquity and that common themes and concepts span the ages. State terrorism, dissident terrorism, and other types of political violence are found in all periods of human civilization. It will also become clear to readers that there are many common justifications—rooted in basic beliefs—that have been used to rationalize terrorist violence throughout history. For example, the following concepts hold true regardless of the contexts of history, culture, or region:

♦ Those who practice revolutionary violence and state repression always claim to champion noble causes and values.
♦ Policies that advocate extreme violence always cite righteous goals to justify their behavior—such as the need to defend a religious faith or defend the human rights of a people.
♦ The perpetrators of violent acts uniformly maintain that they are freedom fighters (in the case of revolutionaries) or the champions of law and order (in the case of governments).

This chapter is a general introduction to the subject of terrorism. It is an overview—a first glance—of basic concepts that will be developed in later discussions. The following themes are introduced here and will be explored in much greater detail in subsequent chapters:

♦ The Past as Prologue: Historical Perspectives on Terrorism
♦ First Considerations: Exploring Definitions, Sources, and Ideologies
♦ The Morality of Terrorist Violence: Four Quotations
♦ Terrorism and Criminal Skill: Three Cases in Point
♦ Terrorist Symbolism: Oklahoma City and September 11, 2001

The Past as Prologue: Historical Perspectives on Terrorism

It is perhaps natural for each generation to view history narrowly, from within its own political context. Contemporary commentators and laypersons tend to interpret modern events as though they have no historical precedent. However, terrorism is by no means a modern phenomenon, and in fact it has a long history. Nor does terrorism arise from a political vacuum. Chapter 3 will explore the causes of terrorism in detail. For now, let us consider a brief summary of several historical periods to illustrate the global and timeless sweep of terrorist behavior.
Antiquity

In the ancient world, cases and stories of state repression and political violence were common. Several ancient writers championed *tyrannicide* (the killing of tyrants) as for the greater good of the citizenry and to delight the gods. Some assassins were honored by the public. For example, when the tyrant Hipparchus was assassinated by Aristogeiton and Harmodius, statues were erected to honor them after their executions. Conquerors often set harsh examples by exterminating entire populations or forcing the conquered into exile. An example of this practice is the Babylonian Exile, which followed the conquest of the kingdom of Judea. Babylon’s victory resulted in the forced removal of the Judean population to Babylon in 598 and 587 B.C.E. Those in authority also repressed the expression of ideas from individuals whom they deemed dangerous, sometimes violently. In ancient Greece, Athenian authorities sentenced the great philosopher Socrates to death in 399 B.C.E. for allegedly corrupting the city-state’s youth and meddling in religious affairs. He drank hemlock and died among his students and followers.

The Roman Age

During the time of the Roman Empire, the political world was rife with many violent demonstrations of power, which were arguably examples of what we would now term state terrorism. These include the brutal suppression of Spartacus’s followers after the Servile War of 73–71 B.C.E., after which the Romans crucified surviving rebels along the Appian Way’s route to Rome. *Crucifixion* was used as a form of public execution by Rome, and involved affixing condemned persons to a cross or other wooden platform. The condemned were either nailed through the wrist or hand or tied on the platform; they died by suffocation as their bodies sagged.

Warfare was waged in an equally hard manner, as evidenced by the final conquest of the North African city-state of Carthage in 146 B.C.E. The city was reportedly allowed to burn for 10 days, the rubble was cursed, and salt was symbolically ploughed into the soil to signify that Carthage would forever remain desolate. During another successful campaign in 106 C.E., the Dacian nation (modern Romania) was eliminated, its population was enslaved, and many Dacians perished in gladiatorial games. In other conquered territories, conquest was often accompanied by similar demonstrations of terror, always with the intent to demonstrate that Roman rule would be wielded without mercy against those who did not submit to the authority of the empire.

*Regicide* (the killing of kings) was also fairly common during the Roman age. Perhaps the best-known political incident in ancient Rome was the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C.E. by rivals in the Senate. Other Roman emperors also met violent fates: Caligula and Galba were killed by the Praetorian Guard in 41 and 68 C.E., respectively; Domitian was stabbed to death in 96 C.E.; a paid gladiator murdered Commodus in 193 C.E.; and Caracalla, Elagabalus, and other emperors either were assassinated or died suspiciously.
The Ancient and Medieval Middle East

Cases exist of movements in the ancient and medieval Middle East that used what modern analysts would consider to be terrorist tactics. For example, in *History of the Jewish War*—a seven-volume account of the first Jewish rebellion against Roman occupation (66–73 C.E.)—the historian Flavius Josephus describes how one faction of the rebels, the *sicarii* (named after their preferred use of *sica*, or short, curved daggers), attacked both Romans and members of the Jewish establishment. They were masters of guerrilla warfare and the destruction of symbolic property and belonged to a group known as the *Zealots* (from the Greek *zelos*, meaning ardor or strong spirit), who opposed the Roman occupation of Palestine. The modern term *zealot*, used to describe uncompromising devotion to radical change, is derived from the name of this group. Assassination was a commonly used tactic. Some *sicarii* zealots were present at the siege of Masada, a hilltop fortress that held out against the Romans for three years before the defenders committed suicide in 74 C.E. rather than surrender.

The French Revolution: Prelude to Modern Terrorism

During the French Revolution, the word *terrorism* was coined in its modern context by British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke. He used the word to describe the *régime de la terreur*, commonly known in English as the *Reign of Terror* (June 1793 to July 1794). The Reign of Terror, led by the radical Jacobin-dominated government, is a good example of state terrorism carried out to further the goals of a revolutionary ideology. During the Terror, thousands of opponents to the Jacobin dictatorship—and others merely perceived to be enemies of the new revolutionary Republic—were arrested and put on trial before a *Revolutionary Tribunal*. Those found to be enemies of the Republic were beheaded by a new instrument of execution—the guillotine. The guillotine had the capability to execute victims one after the other in assembly-line fashion and was regarded by Jacobins and other revolutionaries at the time as an enlightened and civilized tool of revolutionary justice.

The ferocity of the Reign of Terror is reflected in the number of victims: Between 17,000 and 40,000 persons were executed, and perhaps 200,000 political prisoners died in prisons from disease and starvation. Two incidents illustrate the communal nature of this violence: In Lyon 700 people were massacred by cannon fire in the town square, and in Nantes thousands were drowned in the Loire River when the boats they were detained in were sunk.

The Revolutionary Tribunal is a symbol of revolutionary justice and state terrorism that has its modern counterparts in 20th-century social upheavals. Recent examples include the “*struggle meetings*” in revolutionary China (public criticism sessions, involving public humiliation and confession) and revolutionary Iran’s *komitehs* (ad hoc “people’s committees”).
Nineteenth-Century Europe: Two Examples From the Left

Modern left-wing terrorism is not a product of the 20th century. Its ideological ancestry dates to the 19th century, when anarchist and communist philosophers began to advocate the destruction of capitalist and imperial society—what Karl Marx referred to as the “spectre . . . haunting Europe.”12 Some revolutionaries readily encouraged the use of terrorism in the new cause. One theorist, Karl Heinzen in Germany, anticipated the late-20th-century fear that terrorists might obtain weapons of mass destruction when he supported the acquisition of new weapons technologies to utterly destroy the enemies of the people. According to Heinzen, these weapons should include poison gas and new high-yield explosives.13

During the 19th century, several terrorist movements championed the rights of the lower classes. These movements were prototypes for 20th-century groups and grew out of social and political environments that were unique to their countries. To

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CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 1.1

The Gunpowder Plot of Guy Fawkes

The reign of James I, King of England from 1603 to 1625, took place in the aftermath of a religious upheaval. During the previous century, King Henry VIII (1509–1547) wrested from Parliament the authority to proclaim himself the head of religious affairs in England. King Henry had requested permission from Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon when she failed to give birth to a male heir to the throne. His intention was to then marry Anne Boleyn. When the pope refused his request, Henry proclaimed himself the head of the Church of England and separated the new church from papal authority. The English crown confiscated Catholic Church property and shut down Catholic monasteries. English Catholics who failed to swear allegiance to the crown as supreme head of the church were repressed by Henry, and later by Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603).

When James I was proclaimed king, Guy Fawkes and other conspirators plotted to assassinate him. They meticulously smuggled gunpowder into the Palace of Westminster, intending to blow it up along with King James and any other officials in attendance on the opening day of Parliament. Unfortunately for Fawkes, one of his fellow plotters attempted to send a note to warn his brother in law to stay away from Westminster on the appointed day. The note was intercepted, and Fawkes was captured on November 5, 1605, while guarding the store of gunpowder.

Guy Fawkes suffered the English penalty for treason. He was dragged through the streets, hanged until nearly dead, his bowels were drawn from him, and he was cut into quarters—an infamous procedure known as hanging, drawing, and quartering. Fawkes had known that this would be his fate, and so when the noose was placed around his neck he took a running leap, hoping to break his neck. Unfortunately, the rope broke, and the executioner proceeded with the full ordeal.
illustrate this point, the following two cases are drawn from early industrial England and the semifeudal Russia context of the late 19th century.

The **Luddites** were English workers in the early 1800s who objected to the social and economic transformations of the Industrial Revolution. Their principal objection was that industrialization threatened their jobs, and so they targeted the machinery of the new textile factories. Textile mills and weaving machinery were disrupted and sabotaged. For example, they attacked stocking looms that mass-produced stockings at the expense of skilled stocking weavers who made them by hand.

A mythical figure, Ned Ludd, was the supposed founder of the Luddite movement. The movement was active from 1811 to 1816 and was responsible for sabotaging and destroying wool and cotton mills. The British government eventually suppressed the movement by passing anti-Luddite laws, including establishing the crime of “machine breaking,” which was punishable by death. After 17 Luddites were executed in 1813, the movement gradually died out. Modern antitechnology activists and terrorists, such as the Unabomber, **Theodore “Ted” Kaczynski**, in the United States (discussed further in this chapter), are sometimes referred to as neo-Luddites.

**People’s Will** (Narodnaya Volya) in Russia was a direct outgrowth of student dissatisfaction with the czarist regime in the late 19th century. Many young Russian university students, some of whom had studied abroad, became imbued with the ideals of anarchism and Marxism. Many of these students became radical reformists who championed the rights of the people, particularly the peasant class. A populist revolutionary society, Land and Liberty (Zemlya Vоля), was founded in 1876 with the goal of fomenting a mass peasant uprising by settling radical students among them to raise their class consciousness. After a series of arrests and mass public trials, Land and Liberty split into two factions in 1879. One faction, Black Repartition, kept to the goal of a peasant revolution. The other faction was People’s Will, which fashioned itself into a conspiratorial terrorist organization.

People’s Will members believed that they understood the underlying problems of Russia better than the uneducated masses of people did, and they concluded that they were therefore better able to force government change. This was, in fact, one of the first examples of a revolutionary vanguard strategy. They believed that they could both demoralize the czarist government and expose its weaknesses to the peasantry. People’s Will quickly embarked on a terrorist campaign against carefully selected targets. Incidents of terror committed by People’s Will members—and other revolutionaries who emulated them—including shootings, knifings, and bombings against government officials. In one successful attack, Czar Alexander II was assassinated by a terrorist bomb on March 1, 1881. The immediate outcome of the terrorist campaign was the installation of a repressive police state in Russia that, although not as efficient as later police states would be in the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany, succeeded in harassing and imprisoning most members of People’s Will.

**The Modern Era and the War on Terrorism**

From the viewpoint of human history, it is clear that terrorism is deeply woven into the fabric of social and political conflict. This quality has not changed, and in
the modern world states and targeted populations are challenged by the New Terrorism, which is characterized by the following:

♦ Loose, cell-based networks with minimal lines of command and control
♦ Desired acquisition of high-intensity weapons and weapons of mass destruction
♦ Politically vague, religious, or mystical motivations
♦ “Asymmetrical” methods that maximize casualties
♦ Skillful use of the Internet and manipulation of the media

The New Terrorism should be contrasted with “traditional” terrorism, which is typically characterized by the following:

♦ Clearly identifiable organizations or movements
♦ Use of conventional weapons, usually small arms and explosives
♦ Explicit grievances championing specific classes or ethno-national groups
♦ Relatively “surgical” selection of targets

New information technologies and the Internet create unprecedented opportunities for terrorist groups, and violent extremists have become adept at bringing their wars into the homes of literally hundreds of millions of people. Those who specialize in suicide bombings, car bombs, or mass-casualty attacks correctly calculate that carefully selected targets will attract the attention of a global audience. Thus, cycles of violence not only disrupt normal routines, but they also produce long periods of global awareness. Such cycles can be devastating. For example, during the winter and spring of 2005, Iraqi suicide bombings increased markedly in intensity and frequency, from 69 in April 2005 (a record rate) to 90 in May.14 These attacks resulted in many casualties, including hundreds of deaths, and greatly outpaced the previous cycle of car bombings by more than two to one.

All of these threats offer new challenges for policymakers about how to respond to the behavior of terrorist states, groups, and individuals. The war on terrorism launched in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, seemed to herald a new resolve to end terrorism. This has proven to be a difficult task. The war has been fought on many levels, as exemplified by the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the disruption of terrorist cells on several continents. There have been serious terrorist strikes such as those in Madrid, Spain; Bali, Indonesia; London, England; and Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. In addition, differences have arisen within the post-September 11 alliance, creating significant strains. It is clear that the war will be a long-term prospect, likely with many unanticipated events.

First Considerations: Exploring Definitions, Sources, and Ideologies

It is important at the outset for readers to develop a basic understanding of several issues underlying the study of terrorism. These issues are ongoing topics of research
and debate among scholars, officials, the media, and activists, and all of them will be explored in greater detail in later chapters. The discussion here profiles the following:

♦ First Definitions: Extremism and Terrorism
♦ Sources of Terrorism
♦ Ideologies: The Classical Ideological Continuum

First Definitions: Extremism and Terrorism

**Extremism** is a quality that is “radical in opinion, especially in political matters; ultra; advanced.”\(^{15}\) It is characterized by intolerance toward opposing interests and divergent opinions, and it is the primary catalyst and motivation for terrorist behavior. Extremists who cross the line to become terrorists always develop noble arguments to rationalize and justify acts of violence directed against enemy nations, people, religions, or other interests.

It is important to understand that extremism is a radical expression of one’s political values. Both the *content* of one’s beliefs and the *style* in which one expresses those beliefs are basic elements for defining extremism. Laird Wilcox summed up this quality as follows:

Extremism is more an issue of style than of content. . . . Most people can hold radical or unorthodox views and still entertain them in a more or less reasonable, rational, and nondogmatic manner. On the other hand, I have met people whose views are fairly close to the political mainstream but were presented in a shrill, uncompromising, bullying, and distinctly authoritarian manner.\(^{16}\)

Thus, a fundamental definitional issue for extremism is *how* one expresses an idea, in addition to the question of *which* belief one acts upon. Both elements—style and content—are important for our investigation of fringe beliefs and terrorist behavior. We will build on these themes when the extremist foundations of terrorism are explored further in Chapter 2.

**Terrorism** would not, from a layperson’s point of view, seem to be a difficult concept to define. Most people likely hold an instinctive understanding that terrorism is

♦ politically motivated violence,
♦ usually directed against “soft targets” (i.e., civilian and administrative government targets), and
♦ with an intention to affect (terrorize) a target audience.

This instinctive understanding would also hold that terrorism is a criminal, unfair, or otherwise illegitimate use of force. Laypersons might presume that this is an easily understood concept, but defining terrorism is *not* such a simple process. Experts have for some time grappled with designing (and agreeing on) clear definitions of terrorism; the issue has, in fact, been at the center of an ongoing debate. The result of this debate is a remarkable variety of approaches and definitions. Walter
Laqueur noted that “more than a hundred definitions have been offered,” including several of his own. Even within the U.S. government, different agencies apply several definitions. These definitional problems are explored further in the next chapter.

Sources of Terrorism

The underlying causes of terrorism have also been the subject of extensive discussion, debate, and research. This is perhaps because the study of the sources of terrorism spans many disciplines—including sociology, psychology, criminology, and political science. The causes of terrorism will be explored in detail in Chapter 3. For now, a general model will serve as a starting point for developing our understanding of which factors lead to terrorist violence. To begin, we must understand that political violence, including terrorism, has systemic origins that can be ameliorated. Social and economic pressures, frustrated political aspirations, and in a more proximate sense, the personal experiences of terrorists and their relations, all contribute to the terrorist reservoir.

Nehemia Friedland designed “a convenient framework for the analysis of the antecedents of political terrorism,” outlined as follows:

*First,* terrorism is a group phenomenon . . . perpetrated by organized groups whose members have a clear group identity—national, religious or ideological. . . . *Second,* political terrorism has its roots in intergroup conflict. . . . *Third,* “insurgent terrorism,” unlike “state terrorism,” . . . is a “strategy of the weak.” (p. 82, italics added)

One should appreciate that these issues continue to be a source of intensive debate. Nevertheless, working definitions have been adopted as a matter of logical necessity. Let us presume for now that terrorist acts are grounded in extremist beliefs that arise from group identity, intergroup conflict, and a chosen strategy.

Ideologies: The Classical Ideological Continuum

Ideologies are systems of belief. They are derived from theories that explain human social and political conditions. There are literally scores of belief systems that have led to acts of terrorist violence. Because there are so many belief systems, it is difficult to classify them with precision. Nevertheless, a classical ideological continuum rooted in the politics of the French Revolution has endured to the present time. This is instructive for our discussion of politically motivated violence, because the concepts embodied in the continuum will continue to be relevant.

At the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, a parliament-like assembly was convened to represent the interests of the French social classes. Although its name changed during the revolution—from Estates-General, to National Constituent
Assembly, to Legislative Assembly—the basic ideological divisions were symbolically demonstrated by where representatives sat during assembly sessions. On the left side of the assembly sat those who favored radical change, some advocating a complete reordering of French society and culture. On the right side of the assembly sat those who favored either the old order or slow and deliberate change. In the center of the assembly sat those who favored either moderate change or simply could not make up their minds to commit to either the left or right. These symbolic designations—left, center, and right—have become part of our modern political culture.

Table 1.1 illustrates the classical ideological continuum. Again, these designations are classical in the sense that they have become standard and traditionally accepted as ideological descriptors.

It is readily apparent from the case of the French Revolution that the quality of the classical continuum is very much dependent on the political environment of each society. For example, within American ideological culture, mainstream values include free enterprise, freedom of speech, and limited government. Depending on where one falls on the classical continuum, the interpretation of these mainstream values can be very different. In the American example:

- Free enterprise might be viewed with suspicion by the far left but might be considered sacrosanct (untouchable) by the far right.
- Freedom of speech would seem to be a noncontroversial issue, but the right and left also disagree about what kinds of speech should be protected or regulated.
- The role of government is a debate that has its origins from the time of the American Revolution. The right and left disagree about the degree to which government should have a role in regulating private life.

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<th>Legislative Body</th>
<th>Political Orientation</th>
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<tr>
<td>National Constituent Assembly 1789-1791</td>
<td>Left: Patriots (republicans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Assembly 1791-1792</td>
<td>Mountain (republicans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Convention 1792</td>
<td>Mountain (radicals)</td>
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Mainstream American values of past generations—such as Manifest Destiny and racial segregation—were rejected by later generations as unacceptable extremist ideologies. Thus, the concepts of left, center, and right shift during changes in political culture. These concepts will be further developed in Chapter 2 and applied to discussions in later chapters.

The Morality of Terrorist Violence: Four Quotations

The term *terrorism* has acquired a decidedly pejorative (negative) meaning in the modern era, so that few if any states or groups who espouse political violence ever refer to themselves as terrorists. Nevertheless, these same states and groups can be unabashedly extremist in their beliefs or violent in their behavior. They often invoke—and manipulate—images of a malevolent threat or unjust conditions to justify their actions. The question is whether these justifications are morally satisfactory (and thereby validate extremist violence), or whether terrorism is inherently wrong.

Questions of Morality

It is helpful to review two concepts that are used in the study of criminal justice. In criminal law, the terms *mala prohibita* and *mala in se*\(^2\) are applied to behaviors that society defines as deviant acts. They represent concepts that are very useful for the study of terrorism.

- **Mala prohibita** acts are “crimes that are made illegal by legislation.”\(^3\) These acts are illegal because society has declared them to be wrong; they are not inherently immoral, wicked, or evil. Examples include laws prohibiting gambling and prostitution, which are considered to be moral prohibitions against socially unacceptable behaviors rather than prohibitions of fundamental evils.
- **Mala in se** acts are crimes “that are immoral or wrong in themselves.”\(^4\) These acts cannot be justified in civilized society, and they have no acceptable qualities. For example, premeditated murder and forcible rape are *mala in se* crimes. They will never be legalized.

Are terrorist methods fundamentally evil? Perhaps so, because terrorism commonly evokes images of maximum violence against innocent victims carried out in the name of a higher cause. However, is terrorist violence always such a bad thing? Are not some causes worth fighting for? Killing for? Dying for? Is not terrorism simply a matter of one’s point of view? Most would agree that basic values such as freedom and liberty are indeed worth fighting for, and sometimes killing or dying for. If so, perhaps “where you stand depends on where you sit.” Thus, if the bombs are falling on your head, is it not an act of terrorism? If the bombs are falling on an enemy’s head in the name of your freedom, how can it possibly be terrorism?
Morality is not always a relative consideration, for many behaviors are indeed *mala in se*. However, this is not always an easy analysis because violence committed by genuinely oppressed people can arguably raise questions of *mala prohibitum* as a matter of perspective.

Critical evaluation of the following quotations will help to address these difficult moral questions:

- “One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter.”
- “One man willing to throw away his life is enough to terrorize a thousand.”
- “Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice.”
- “It became necessary to destroy the town to save it.”

“One Person’s Terrorist Is Another Person’s Freedom Fighter”

The authorship of this statement is unknown; it most likely originated in one form or another in the remote historical past. The concept embodied in this quotation is, very simply, perspective. It is a concept that will be applied throughout our examination of terrorist groups, movements, and individuals.

As will become abundantly clear, terrorists never consider themselves to be the “bad guys” in their struggle for what they would define as freedom. They might admit that they have been *forced* by a powerful and ruthless opponent to adopt terrorist methods, but they see themselves as freedom fighters. Benefactors of terrorists always live with clean hands, because they present their clients as plucky freedom fighters. Likewise, nations that use the technology of war to attack known civilian targets justify their sacrifice as incidental to the greater good of the cause.

“One Man Willing to Throw Away His Life Is Enough to Terrorize a Thousand”

This quotation was written by the Chinese military philosopher Wu Ch’i, who wrote,

Now suppose there is a desperate bandit lurking in the fields and one thousand men set out in pursuit of him. The reason all look for him as they would a wolf is that each one fears that he will arise and harm him. This is the reason one man willing to throw away his life is enough to terrorize a thousand.

This quotation is the likely source for the better-known statement “*kill one man, terrorize a thousand.*” The authorship of the latter is undetermined but has been attributed to the leader of the Chinese Revolution, Mao Zedong, and to the Chinese military philosopher Sun Tzu. Both Wu Ch’i and Sun Tzu are often discussed in conjunction with each other, but Sun Tzu may be a mythical figure. Sun Tzu’s book *The Art of War* has become a classic study of warfare. Regardless of who originated these phrases, their simplicity explains the value of a motivated individual who is willing
to sacrifice himself or herself when committing an act of violence. They suggest that the selfless application of lethal force—in combination with correct timing, surgical precision, and an unambiguous purpose—is an invaluable weapon of war. It is also an obvious tactic for small, motivated groups that are vastly outnumbered and outgunned by a more powerful adversary.

“Extremism in Defense of Liberty Is No Vice”

Senator Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona made this statement during his bid for the presidency in 1964. His campaign theme was very conservative and anti-Communist. However, because of the nation’s rivalry with the Soviet Union during this period in American political history, every major candidate was overtly anti-Communist. Thus, Goldwater tried to outdo incumbent President Lyndon Johnson, his main rival, on this issue.27

This quotation represents an uncompromising belief in the absolute righteousness of a cause. It defines a clear belief in good versus evil and a belief that the end justifies the means. If one simply substitutes any cause for the word liberty in the quotation, one can fully understand how it lends itself to the legitimization of uncompromising devotion to the cause. Terrorists use this reasoning to justify their belief that they are defending their championed interest (be it ideological, racial, religious, or national) against all perceived enemies—who are, of course, evil. Hence, the practice of ethnic cleansing was begun by Serb militias during the war in Bosnia in 1991–1995 to forcibly remove Muslims and Croats from villages and towns. This was done in the name of Bosnian Serb security and historical claims to land occupied by others.28 Bosnian and Croat paramilitaries later practiced ethnic cleansing to create their own ethnically “pure” enclaves.

“It Became Necessary to Destroy the Town to Save It”

This quotation has been attributed to a statement made by an American officer during the war in Vietnam. When asked why a village thought to be occupied by the enemy had been destroyed, he allegedly replied that American soldiers had destroyed the village to save it.29 The symbolic logic behind this statement is very seductive: If the worst thing that can happen to a village is for it to be occupied by an enemy, then destroying it is a good thing. The village has been denied to the enemy, and it has been saved from the horrors of enemy occupation. The symbolism of the village can be replaced by any number of symbolic values.

Terrorists use this kind of reasoning to justify hardships that they impose not only on a perceived enemy but also on their own championed group. For example, in Chapter 5 readers will be introduced to nihilist dissident terrorists, who are content to wage “revolution for revolution’s sake.” They have no concrete plan for what kind of society will be built upon the rubble of the old one—their goal is simply to destroy an inherently evil system. To them, anything is better than the existing order.
A historical example of this reasoning on an enormous scale is found in the great war between two totalitarian and terrorist states—Germany and the Soviet Union—from July 1941 to May 1945. Both sides used scorched-earth tactics as a matter of policy when their armies retreated, destroying towns, crops, roadways, bridges, factories, and other infrastructure as a way to deny resources to the enemy.

**Terrorism and Criminal Skill:**

Three Cases in Point

Terrorism is condemned internationally as an illegal use of force and an illegitimate expression of political will. Applying this concept of illegality, one can argue that terrorists are criminals and that terrorist attacks require some degree of criminal skill. For example, the radical Islamist network Al Qaeda set up an elaborate financial system to sustain its activities. This financial system included secret bank accounts, front companies, offshore bank accounts, and charities. Al Qaeda is an example of a stateless movement that became a self-sustaining revolutionary network. It is also an example of a sophisticated transnational criminal enterprise.

Terrorist attacks involve different degrees of criminal skill. The following cases are examples of the wide range of sophistication found in incidents of political violence. All three cases are short illustrations of the criminal skill of the following individual extremists:

- Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, who was famous for sending mail bombs to his victims and who eluded capture for 18 years, from 1978 to 1996.
- Ramzi Yousef, an international terrorist who was the mastermind behind the first World Trade Center bombing in February 1993.

**Case 1: Richard Baumhammers**

Many terrorist incidents are the acts of individual gunmen who simply embark on killing sprees, using a low degree of criminal sophistication. For example, the “lone wolf” attacks in the United States have usually been racially motivated killing sprees committed by individual neo-Nazis or other racial supremacists. One of these attacks occurred on April 28, 2000, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, when a racial supremacist murdered five people and wounded one more.

**Richard Baumhammers**, a racist immigration attorney influenced by neo-Nazi ideology, methodically shot his victims during a 20-mile trek. His victims were a Jewish woman, two Indian men, two Asian men, and an African American man. The sequence of Baumhammers’s assault occurred as follows:
Baumhammers went to his Jewish neighbor’s house and fatally shot her. He then set a fire inside her home.

He next shot two Indian men at an Indian grocery store. One man was killed, and the other was paralyzed by a .357 slug that hit his upper spine.

Baumhammers shot at a synagogue, painted two swastikas on the building, and wrote the word Jew on one of the front doors.

He then drove to a second synagogue, where he fired shots at it.

Baumhammers shot two young Asian men at a Chinese restaurant, killing them both.

Finally, Baumhammers went to a karate school, pointed his revolver at a white man inside the school, and then shot to death an African American man who was a student at the school.

The Baumhammers case illustrates how the lone wolf scenario involves an individual who believes in a certain ideology but who is not acting on behalf of an organized group. These individuals tend to exhibit minimal criminal skill and use minimal technology while carrying out their assault. Richard Baumhammers was convicted in May 2001 and received the death penalty.

Case 2: Theodore “Ted” Kaczynski

Using a medium degree of criminal sophistication, many terrorists have been able to remain active for long periods of time without being captured by security agents. Some enter into “retirement” during this time, whereas others remain at least sporadically active. An example of the latter profile is Ted Kaczynski, popularly known as the Unabomber. The term Unabomber was derived from the FBI’s designation of his case as UNABOM during its investigation of his activities.

In May 1978, Kaczynski began constructing and detonating a series of bombs directed against corporations and universities. His usual practice was to send the devices through the mail disguised as business parcels. Examples of his attacks include the following:

A bomb caught fire inside a mail bag aboard a Boeing 727. It had been rigged with a barometric trigger to explode at a certain altitude (these triggers are discussed further in Chapter 10).

A package bomb exploded inside the home of the president of United Airlines, injuring him.

A letter bomb exploded at Vanderbilt University, injuring a secretary. It had been addressed to the chair of the computer science department.

A University of California, Berkeley, professor was severely injured when a pipe bomb he found in the faculty room exploded.
Two University of Michigan scholars were injured when a package bomb exploded at a professor's home. The bomb had been designed to look like a manuscript for a book.

An antipersonnel bomb exploded in the parking lot behind a computer rental store, killing the store’s owner.

During an 18-year period, Ted Kaczynski was responsible for the detonation of more than 15 bombs around the country, killing 3 people and injuring 22 more (some very seriously). He was arrested in his Montana cabin in April 1996. Kaczynski was sentenced in April 1998 to four consecutive life terms plus 30 years.

Case 3: Ramzi Yousef

Involving a high degree of criminal sophistication, some terrorist attacks are the work of individuals who can be described as masters of their criminal enterprise. The following case illustrates this concept.

On February 26, 1993, Ramzi Yousef detonated a bomb in a parking garage beneath Tower One of the World Trade Center in New York City. The bomb was a mobile truck bomb that Yousef and an associate had constructed in New Jersey from a converted Ford Econoline van. It was of a fairly simple design but extremely powerful. The detonation occurred as follows:

Photo 1.2 Ramzi Yousef, master terrorist and mastermind of the first bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City in 1993.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation.
The critical moment came at 12:17 and 37 seconds. One of the fuses burnt to its end and ignited the gunpowder in an Atlas Rockmaster blasting cap. In a split second the cap exploded with a pressure of around 15,000 lbs per square inch, igniting in turn the first nitro-glycerin container of the bomb, which erupted with a pressure of about 150,000 lbs per square inch—the equivalent of about 10,000 atmospheres. In turn, the nitro-glycerin ignited cardboard boxes containing a witches’ brew of urea pellets and sulphuric acid.33

According to investigators and other officials, Yousef’s objective was to topple Tower One onto Tower Two “like a pair of dominoes,”34 release a cloud of toxic gas, and thus achieve a very high death toll.

Ramzi Yousef, apparently born in Kuwait and reared in Pakistan, was an activist educated in the United Kingdom. His education was interrupted during the Soviet war in Afghanistan, when he apparently “spent several months in Peshawar [Pakistan] in training camps funded by Osama bin Laden learning bomb-making skills.”35 After the war, Yousef returned to school in the United Kingdom and received a Higher National Diploma in computer-aided electrical engineering.

In the summer of 1991, Ramzi Yousef returned to the training camps in Peshawar for additional training in electronics and explosives. He arrived in New York City in September 1992 and shortly thereafter began planning to carry out a significant attack, having selected the World Trade Center as his target. Yousef established contacts with former associates already in the New York area and eventually became close to Muhammed Salameh, who assisted in the construction of the bomb. They purchased chemicals and other bomb-making components, stored them in a rented locker, and assembled the bomb in an apartment in Jersey City. They apparently tested considerably scaled-down versions of the bomb several times. After the attack, Yousef boarded a flight at JFK Airport and flew to Pakistan.

This case is a good example of the technical skill and criminal sophistication of some terrorists. Ramzi Yousef had connections with well-funded terrorists, was a sophisticated bomb maker, knew how to obtain the necessary components in a foreign county, was very adept at evasion, and obviously planned his actions in meticulous detail. As a postscript, Ramzi Yousef remained very active among bin Laden’s associates, and his travels within the movement took him far afield, including trips to Thailand and the Philippines. In an example of international law enforcement cooperation, he was eventually captured in Pakistan in February 1995 and sent to the United States to stand trial for the bombing. Yousef was tried, convicted, and sentenced to serve at least 240 years in prison.

Terrorist Symbolism: Oklahoma City and September 11, 2001

Symbolism is a central feature of terrorism. Most terrorist targets at some level symbolize the righteousness of the terrorists’ cause and the evil of the opponent they are fighting. Symbolism can be used to rationalize acts of extreme violence and can be
manipulated to fit any number of targets into the category of an enemy interest. As will be discussed in Chapter 11, terrorists are very mindful of their image and skillfully conduct public relations and propaganda campaigns to “package” themselves. Modern terrorists and their supporters have become quite adept at crafting symbolic meaning from acts of violence.

Symbolism can create abstract ideological linkages between terrorists and their victims. This process was seen during the wave of kidnappings by Latin American leftists during the 1970s, when terrorists seized civilian businessmen and diplomats who the kidnappers said symbolized capitalism and exploitation. Symbolic targets can also represent enemy social or political establishments, as in the Irish Republican Army’s (IRA) assassination of Lord Louis Mountbatten (the uncle of Prince Philip Mountbatten, Queen Elizabeth II’s husband) in 1979 and the IRA’s attempted assassination of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1984. In some cases, entire groups of people can be symbolically labeled and slaughtered, as during the genocides of the Nazi Holocaust (pseudo-racial), in the killing fields of Cambodia (social and political), in Rwanda (ethnic and social), and in the Darfur region of Sudan (racial).

Two examples of deadly domestic terrorism in the United States demonstrate the important role of symbolism in the worldview of terrorists. The first example is an act of terrorism perpetrated by an American terrorist in Oklahoma City. The second example is the series of attacks on September 11, 2001, by international terrorists in New York City, Washington, D.C., and in the skies over rural Pennsylvania.

The Oklahoma City Bombing

On April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh drove a rented Ryder truck to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. He deliberately chose April 19 as a symbolic date for the attack—it was the 220th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord and the second anniversary of the law enforcement disaster in Waco, Texas.

McVeigh was a hard-core devotee of the Patriot movement and a believer in New World Order conspiracy theories. He was almost certainly a racial supremacist, having tried to solicit advice from the neo-Nazi National Alliance and the racial separatist Elohim City group about going underground after the bombing. McVeigh had also visited the Branch Davidian site at Waco, Texas, where about 75 members of the Branch Davidian cult died in a fire that was ignited during a paramilitary raid by federal law enforcement officers.

McVeigh had converted the Ryder truck into a powerful mobile ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO)–based bomb. He used “more than 5,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer mixed with about 1,200 pounds of liquid nitromethane, [and] 350 pounds of Tovex.” When he detonated the truck bomb at 9:02 a.m., it destroyed most of the federal building and killed 168 people, including 19 children. More than 500 others were injured.

McVeigh’s attack was in large part a symbolic act of war against the federal government. He had given careful consideration to achieving a high casualty rate, just as “American bombing raids were designed to take lives, not just destroy buildings.”
The deaths of the 19 children were justified in his mind as the unfortunate “collateral damage” against innocent victims common to modern warfare. Timothy McVeigh was tried and convicted, and he was executed in a federal facility in Terre Haute, Indiana, on June 11, 2001. His execution was the first federal execution since 1963.

September 11, 2001

The worst incident of modern international terrorism occurred in the United States on the morning of September 11, 2001. It was carried out by 19 Al Qaeda terrorists who were on a suicidal “martyrdom mission.” They committed the attack to strike at symbols of American (and Western) interests in response to what they perceived to be a continuing process of domination and exploitation of Muslim countries. They were religious terrorists fighting in the name of a holy cause against perceived evil emanating from the West. Their sentiments were born in the religious, political, and ethno-national ferment that has characterized the politics of the Middle East for much of the modern era.

Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attack. The sequence of events occurred as follows:

7:59 a.m. American Airlines Flight 11, carrying 92 people, leaves Boston’s Logan International Airport for Los Angeles.
8:14 a.m. United Airlines Flight 175, carrying 65 people, leaves Boston for Los Angeles.
8:20 a.m. American Airlines Flight 77, carrying 64 people, takes off from Washington’s Dulles Airport for Los Angeles.
8:42 a.m. United Airlines Flight 93, carrying 44 people, leaves Newark, New Jersey, International Airport for San Francisco.
8:46 a.m. American Flight 11 crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center.
9:03 a.m. United Flight 175 crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center.
9:37 a.m. American Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. Trading on Wall Street is called off.
9:59 a.m. Two World Trade Center—the south tower—collapses.
10:03 a.m. United Flight 93 crashes 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
10:28 a.m. One World Trade Center—the north tower—collapses.

The United States had previously been the target of international terrorism at home and abroad, but the American homeland had never suffered a terrorist strike
on this scale. The most analogous historical event was the Japanese attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. The last time so many people had died from an act of war committed on American soil was during the Civil War in the mid-19th century.

After the Al Qaeda assault and the subsequent anthrax crisis (in October–December 2001, more than 20 people were infected with anthrax in the United States; 5 died), ordinary American culture shifted away from complete openness to a period of high security. The adaptation of the American people and political establishment to this new environment was a new experience for the nation. The symbolism of the attack, combined with its sheer scale, drove the United States to war and dramatically changed the American security environment. Counterterrorism in the United States shifted from a predominantly law enforcement mode to a security mode. Security measures included unprecedented airport and seaport security, border searches, visa scrutiny, and immigration procedures. Hundreds of people were
administratively detained and questioned during a sweep of persons fitting the terrorist profile of the 19 attackers. These detentions set off a debate about the constitutionality of these methods and the fear by many that civil liberties were in jeopardy. In October 2001, the USA PATRIOT Act was passed. The new law granted significant authority to federal law enforcement agencies to engage in surveillance and other investigative work. On November 25, 2002, seventeen federal agencies (later increased to 22 agencies) were consolidated to form a new Department of Homeland Security.

The symbolism of a damaging attack on homeland targets was momentous because it showed that the American superpower was vulnerable to attack by small groups of determined revolutionaries. The Twin Towers had dominated the New York skyline since the completion of Two World Trade Center in 1972. They were a symbol of global trade and prosperity and the pride of the largest city in the United States. The Pentagon, of course, is a unique building that symbolizes American military power, and its location across the river from the nation’s capital showed the vulnerability of the seat of government to attack.

On May 30, 2002, a 30-foot-long steel beam was ceremoniously removed from the “ground zero” site in New York City. It was the final piece of debris to be removed from the September 11 homeland attack.

**CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 1.2**

**Waging War in the Era of the New Terrorism**

A “war on terrorism” was declared in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. This is a new kind of conflict against a new form of enemy. From the outset, policymakers understood that this war would be fought in an unconventional manner, primarily against shadowy terrorist cells and elusive leaders. It is not a war against a nation, but rather against ideas and behavior.

The mobilization of resources in this war necessitated the coordination of law enforcement, intelligence, and military assets in many nations across the globe. Covert operations by special military and intelligence units became the norm rather than the exception. Suspected terrorist cells were identified and dismantled by law enforcement agencies in many countries, and covert operatives worked secretly in other countries. Although many suspects were detained at the U.S. military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, other secret detention facilities were also established.

However, the war has not been fought solely in the shadows. In contrast to the deployment of small law enforcement and covert military or intelligence assets, the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq involved the commitment of large conventional military forces. In Afghanistan, reasons given for the invasion included the need to eliminate state-sponsored safe havens for Al Qaeda and other international mujahideen (holy warriors). In Iraq, reasons given for the invasion included the need to eliminate alleged stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and alleged links between the regime of Saddam Hussein and terrorist networks. The U.S.-led operation in Iraq was symbolically named **Operation Iraqi Freedom**.

One significant challenge for waging war against extremist behavior—in this case, against terrorism—is that victory is not an easily definable condition. For example, on May 1, 2003,
U.S. President George W. Bush landed on the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln to deliver a speech in which he officially declared that the military phase of the Iraq invasion had ended and that the overthrow of the Hussein government was “one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11th, 2001, and still goes on.” Unfortunately, President Bush’s declaration was premature. A widespread insurgency took root in Iraq, with the resistance employing both classic hit-and-run guerrilla tactics and terrorism. Common cause was found between remnants of the Hussein regime and non-Iraqi Islamist fighters. Thousands of Iraqis and occupation troops became casualties during the insurgency. In particular, the insurgents targeted foreign soldiers, government institutions, and Iraqi “collaborators” such as soldiers, police officers, election workers, and interpreters. Sectarian violence also spread, with Sunni and Shi’a religious extremists killing many civilians.

Is the war on terrorism being won? How can victory reasonably be measured? Assuming that the New Terrorism will continue for a period of time, perhaps the best measure for progress in the war is to assess the degree to which terrorist behavior is being successfully managed—in much the same manner that progress against crime is assessed. As the global community continues to be challenged by violent extremists during the new era of terrorism, the definition of victory is likely to continue to be refined and redefined by nations and leaders.

Note

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced readers to some of the historical and modern attributes of terrorism, with a central theme that terrorism is deeply rooted in the human experience. The impact of extremist ideas on human behavior should not be underestimated, because there are historical examples of political violence that in some ways parallel modern terrorism. For example, we noted that state terrorism and antistate dissident movements have existed since ancient times.

The relationship between extremist ideas and terrorist events was discussed as a nexus, whereby terrorism is the violent manifestation of extremist beliefs. Ideologies are the belief systems at the root of political violence. The case of Ramzi Yousef represents not only this nexus but also the high degree of criminal skill that is often associated with terrorist attacks.

Whether terrorist acts are mala in se or mala prohibita is often a relative question. Depending on one’s perspective, there are gray areas that challenge us to be objective about the true nature of political violence. Most, if not all, nations promote an ideological doctrine to legitimize the power of the state and to convince the people
that their systems of belief are worthy of loyalty, sacrifice, and (when necessary) violent defense. Conversely, when a group of people perceives that an alternative ideology or condition should be promoted, revolutionary violence may occur against the defenders of the established rival order. In neither case would those who commit acts of political violence consider themselves to be unjustified in their actions, and they certainly would not label themselves as terrorists.

In Chapter 2, readers will be challenged to probe the nature of terrorism more deeply. The discussion will center on the importance of ideology, perspective, and the question of how to define terrorism.

**Key Terms and Concepts**

The following topics were discussed in this chapter and can be found in the glossary/index:

- Al Qaeda
- ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO) explosives
- Baumhammers, Richard
- Burke, Edmund
- classical ideological continuum
- collateral damage
- crucifixion
- extremism
- “Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice.” ideology
- “It became necessary to destroy the town to save it.”
- Kaczynski, Theodore “Ted” (the Unabomber)
- “Kill one man, terrorize a thousand.”
- Komiteh
- left, center, right
- Luddites
- mala in se
- mala prohibita
- Mao Zedong
- McVeigh, Timothy
- “One man willing to throw away his life is enough to terrorize a thousand.”
- “One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter.”
- Operation Iraqi Freedom
- People’s Will (Narodnaya Volya)
- regicide
- Reign of Terror (régime de la terreur)
- Revolutionary Tribunal
- Sicarii
- soft target
- struggle meetings
- Sun Tzu
- symbolism, role of terrorism
- total war
- tyrannicide
- UNABOM
- Wu Ch’i
- Yousef, Ramzi
- Zealots

**DISCUSSION BOX**

**Total War**

*This chapter’s Discussion Box is intended to stimulate critical debate about the legitimacy of using extreme force against civilian populations.*

Total war is “warfare that uses all possible means of attack, military, scientific, and psychological, against both enemy troops and civilians.” It was the prevailing military doctrine applied by combatant nations during the Second World War.
Allied and Axis military planners specifically targeted civilian populations. In the cases of German and Japanese strategists, the war was fought as much against populations as against opposing armies. The massacres and genocide directed against civilian populations at Auschwitz, Dachau, Warsaw, Lidice, and Nanking and countless other atrocities are a dark legacy of the 20th century.

The estimated number of civilians killed during the war is staggering:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>319,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>391,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>391,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>953,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>7,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important doctrine of the air war on all sides was to bomb civilian populations, so that the cities of Rotterdam, Coventry, London, Berlin, Dresden, and Tokyo were deliberately attacked. It is estimated that the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed, respectively, 70,000 and 35,000 people.

Discussion Questions

♦ Are deliberate attacks against civilians legitimate acts of war?
♦ Were deliberate attacks on civilians during the Second World War acts of terrorism?
♦ If these attacks were acts of terrorism, were some attacks justifiable acts of terrorism?
♦ Is there such a thing as justifiable terrorism? Is terrorism malum in se or malum prohibitum?
♦ Is the practice of total war by individuals or small and poorly armed groups different from its practice by nations and standing armies? How so or how not?

Notes


Recommended Web Sites

The following Web sites provide general information about terrorism:

- Anti-Defamation League: www.adl.org
- RAND: www.rand.org
- Southern Poverty Law Center: www.splcenter.org
- Terrorism Research Center: www.terrorism.com
- U.S. Department of State: www.state.gov/s/ct/

*Note:* To assist you with the Web exercise below, and to enable you to better master the course and book material, be sure to visit the book’s Study Site:
http://www.sagepub.com/Martin2Study

Web Exercise

Using this chapter’s recommended Web sites, conduct an online investigation of organizations that monitor extremist sentiment and terrorist behavior. Compare and contrast these organizations.

1. What are the primary agendas of these organizations?
2. How would you describe the differences between research, government, and social activist organizations?
3. In your opinion, are any of these organizations more comprehensive than other organizations? Less comprehensive?

For an online search of research and monitoring organizations, readers should activate the search engine on their Web browser and enter the following keywords:

“Terrorism Research”
“Human Rights Organizations”

Recommended Readings

The following publications provide an introduction to terrorism.


### Notes


6. Burke, a Whig Member of Parliament, was a progressive in his time. He opposed absolutism, poor treatment of the American colonists, and the slave trade. He expressed his opposition to Jacobin extremism in a series of writings, including *Reflections on the French Revolution* and *Letters on a Regicide Peace*.


8. A French physician, Joseph Ignace Guillotin, invented the guillotine. He was loyal to the revolution and a deputy to the Estates-General. Guillotin encouraged the use of the beheading machine as a painless, humane, and symbolically revolutionary method of execution.


10. Ibid.


17. Laqueur (note 1 above), p. 5.


27. Within the context of the campaign, Lyndon Johnson’s anti-Communist “credentials” were decisively validated during the Gulf of Tonkin crisis in August 1964. The destroyer U.S.S. Maddox was reported to have been attacked by North Vietnamese torpedo boats off the coast of North Vietnam. American air strikes were launched in reprisal, and Congress unanimously passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which supported President Johnson’s use of measures to protect U.S. interests in Vietnam and elsewhere. For a discussion of the incident within the context of the politics at the time, see Kearns, Doris. Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream. New York: Harper & Row, 1976, p. 195ff. For an insider’s discussion, see Miller, Merle. Lyndon: An Oral Biography. New York: Ballantine, 1980, pp. 465–477.


29. Associated Press reporter Peter Arnett attributed the source of the quotation to a U.S. soldier at the city of Ben Tre in South Vietnam during the Tet offensive in 1968. As reported, it was the statement of an officer higher up in the chain of command—a U.S. Army major. Although widely repeated at the time and since the war, only Arnett said he heard the statement at the time, and only Arnett filed the quotation from the Ben Tre visit. The U.S. officer was not identified and has not been identified since the war. See Oberdorfer (note 25 above) and Sheehan (note 25 above). The U.S. Department of Defense launched an investigation to find the source of the quote. No officer or enlisted man was identified. See Oberdorfer (note 25 above).


31. Exceptions to this general profile have occurred in the United States. For example, an Egyptian-born resident of the United States committed a lone wolf attack at Los Angeles
International Airport on July 4, 2002. He shot and stabbed several people at the El Al (Israeli airline) counter before being killed by El Al security officers. The assailant killed two people and injured several others.


35. Reeve (see note 33 above), p. 120.


37. Ibid., p. 164.

38. Ibid., p. 224.

39. Ibid., p. 234.