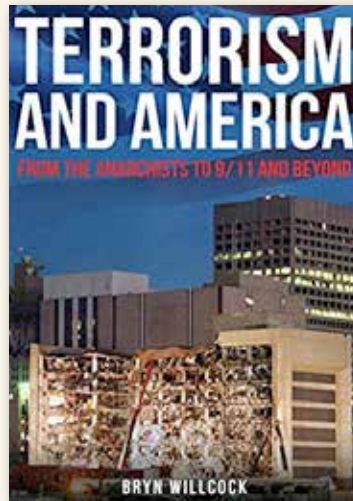




التحالف الإسلامي العسكري لمحاربة الإرهاب

**ISLAMIC MILITARY COUNTER TERRORISM COALITION**

General Directorate of Planning and Coordination



## **TERRORISM & AMERICA**

### **From The Anarchists to 11/9 and Beyond**

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**Book Review**

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## **TERRORISM & AMERICA**

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Terrorism has not been away from America ever since it was established, against a backdrop of terrorist activity that has been escalating dramatically since 1865, reaching a towering peak between 1910 and 1920. Terrorist threats rose to surface in the 1950s and 1960s, with kidnappings and bomb attacks growing glaringly very common, making terrorism at its climax in the 1970s, in which the United States witnessed terrorist attacks almost every day. Since the 1970s, the United States has linked terrorism to what it called “rogue states”, such as: North Korea, Iraq, Iran and Cuba. Then, the terrorist incidents in the United States significantly decreased in the early 1990s. However, it witnessed brutal violent attacks, such as the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, the Oklahoma bombing in 1995 and the attack on the American “Cole”, a Navy Destroyer, in 2000.

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

"Terror and America" examines the historical links of terrorism to place the 9/11 Attacks 2001 in historical context, while highlighting the impact of those events on the United States and the world. Perhaps the rationale for writing on the subject is the prevailing belief that the United States did not know terrorism until the contemporary terrorist attacks took place, especially the 9/11 Attacks, even though terrorism had in fact a flavor of the history of the American statehood even before the establishment of the "United States of America" in 1776, as if people wiped out their memories of all terrorism. The Book includes nine chapters, a conclusion and an appendix. Chapter One provides definitions and introductory ideas. In the chapters 2-8, the author chronologically examines the history of terrorism, associated incidents and repercussions on the United States. Chapter Nine is devoted to discuss Hollywood movies that address terrorism, and a fitting conclusion is provided at the end.

### 1) Terrorism: Definitions, Strategies and Motives

Chapter One discusses the difficulty of defining "terrorism. It offers some definitions provided by US government agencies as shall be explained in the following subsequent subsections:

- ▶ The American "FBI" distinguishes between international and domestic terrorism.

International terrorism is "terrorist operations committed by individuals or groups with links to external terrorist organizations." Domestic terrorism is "terrorist operations committed by individuals or local groups espousing extremist political, religious, social, sectarian or environmental ideologies."

- ▶ As for the CIA, terrorism is defined as "violence triggered by political motives, committed by minority groups or secret agents against safe civilian targets."
- ▶ The US Department of Defense (DOD) defines it as "the unlawful use or threat of violence for religious, political or ideological reasons to instill fear and to force governments and societies to translate agendas that often lead to political ends."

In the same vein, two issues arise. Can violence to achieve non-political ends be considered not terrorism, such as shooting in schools or public places? The political difference makes each party see the use of force by the opponent as a manifestation of terrorism. America regards countries like North Korea as rogue states, that is, outlaws. While these countries consider America a rogue state. Chomsky sees that America is the first rogue state in the world. The definitions of terrorism differ, while its accidents persisted everywhere; it is violence triggered by various reasons, and the innocent are often the ones to pay the price!

## 2) Springboard of American Terrorism (1776-1886)

Chapter Two highlights the fact that terrorism in the United States started before the “American Revolution” which led to the establishment of the United States in 1776. Such terrorism emerged with the expulsion of the indigenous population from their homelands, with the adoption of “slavery”. It explains that many of the political differences and incidents of terrorism after independence were related to slavery and apartheid, in addition to sectarian sentiments against Catholics. It also provides information pertinent to terrorism in the United States, associated incidents, organizations and methods. The most notorious and infamous ones are summarized in the following:

- ▶ “Slavery” was a major cause of the American Civil War (1861-1865), as President “Abraham Lincoln” abolished slavery; however, the southern states opposed the abolition, and declared secession. The war between the north, represented by the central government, and the separated south, erupted, and the north won and the United States remained “united”.
- ▶ In 1835, the United States witnessed an attempt to assassinate President Andrew Jackson, and then witnessed the assassination of President Lincoln in 1865 after the end of the Civil War, then the assassination of President James Garfield in 1881.
- ▶ After the end of the Civil War (1865-1871) a racist organization called “Ku-Klux-Klan (KKK)” rose to notoriety in the southern states, and carried out many terrorist attacks against the people of the “black race.” Historians detected two active periods of the KKK in the twentieth century; it continues to be active in the twenty-first century. The KKK believes in the superiority of the “white race”, calls for “white patriotism” and hostility to other races, especially the black race, Muslims and Catholics and it is anti-Semitic.

- ▶ In 1867, the world witnessed the invention of dynamite. This was at the hands of Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel, who later founded the Nobel Prize. Dynamite by time has passed into the hands of many in the United States and other countries of the world for terrorist attacks, causing traumatic human tragedies.

## 3) Era of Anarchism

The term “Anarchism” appeared in 1840 to present the idea that there is no need for authority or government, in the sense that people can manage their own affairs. Chapter Three explains that such ideology aimed for peace to enable society to exclude government authorities and achieve what it desires. However, many exponents of such ideology turned towards violence as a method to translate their aspirations! Chapter Three cites some historians observing that notwithstanding the ideological differences between people adopting Marxism, on the one hand, and those adopting Anarchism, on the other hand, they share a tendency to use violence.

The growth of the ideologies of Marxism and Anarchism coincided with the emergence of industrial capitalists between 1880 and 1900, and many of these were described as “thieving nobles”; they were nobles because they became rich as the feudal lords of vast lands, and they were thieves because they exploited workers to increase their wealth. The author believes that the problems of workers were among the causes of the economic division of society, as well as its ethnic division, which fueled violence and terrorist acts, which can be manifested in the following:

- ▶ In 1877, Virginia witnessed labor strikes and violence, ballooning and snowballing to other states. The emergence of dynamite has had an effect on fueling violence and increasing the negative effects. The years of such agitation and tumult were nicknamed “decade of bombings.”
- ▶ The first anarchist association, known as the Revolutionary Social Club, appeared in

New York in 1880. Its orientations towards violence emerged early in its celebration of the assassination of the Russian Tsar “Alexander II” in 1881 at the hands of the leftist “Party of the People”.

- ▶ Anarchists and leftists carried out many violent and terrorist acts between 1886 and 1920, and the events of this period drew the attention of a few historians only.

#### 4) From War to Difficult Peace (1916-1968)

Chapter Four further explains the events of violence and terrorism that the United States witnessed from 1916 up to 1968, including the assassination of influential American figures along with the following critical events:

- ▶ In 1916, the United States witnessed a German attack on the Statue of Liberty to keep America away from the First World War. Later, people were prevented from accessing it for security reasons.
- ▶ Violence in the United States began to decline after 1920. However, as of September 1920, a major attack was carried out on Al-Sahafa Street in the financial district of Manhattan in New York City. It resulted in a large number of casualties. Anarchists and leftist parties were accused of carrying it out, but the American judiciary did not pass a verdict on who the culprit was.
- ▶ The post-1920 era was marked by the decline of the anarchist influence on the one hand, and the growth of the racist “KKK” on the other hand. It is noted that there were more people called “lone terrorist wolves”, who commit violent terrorist acts alone. The 1920-1950 period was relatively calm, although acts of violence and terrorism took place, including explosions, hijackings and kidnappings and assaults on presidents.
- ▶ One of the most notorious incidents of terrorism in the United States at the time was the bombing of the “Bath School”, located in the

city of Bath, Michigan, in 1927. Behind it was not an organization with political or racial motives; rather, it was the result of an individual rush of a person named “Andrew Philip Kehoe” who killed his wife and blew up the school, fueled by insane desire for revenge.

- ▶ 1958 witnessed the first hijacking of an American aircraft by the supporters of “Fidel Castro” who was on the verge of victory and assumption of power in Cuba. This hijacking made the aircraft crash into the sea. This accident was the beginning of a series of aircraft hijackings over a decade.
- ▶ One of the most notorious incidents of violence in the twentieth century that shook America, and perhaps the entire world as well, was the assassination of US President “John Kennedy” on November 22, 1963. This was followed two days later by the murder of his murderer, Lee Harvey Oswald. Well, Oswald was an American soldier, who was accused of having visited Russia earlier and of being a Marxist.
- ▶ 1968 was notorious and America witnessed a spate of assassinations. On April 4 of 1968, Martin Luther King, who was an American black priest and the most famous civil rights advocate in America was assassinated for racial reasons. On June 5 of 1968, for political reasons, “Robert Kennedy”, the most prominent candidate for American politics at the time, was assassinated. The brother of President John Kennedy, was previously assassinated.

#### 5) From Left to Right: The Rise and Fall of American Terrorism (1969-1980)

Chapter Five discusses incidents of terrorism after 1968, and indicates that the 1970s were marked by subversive activity for American domestic terrorism, and provides telling statistics and observations, summarized in the following points:

- ▶ The number of terrorist incidents reported in America in 1970 was 450, and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) stated that the

number of terrorist bombings in America in 18 months from 1971 to 1972 was 2500: approximately five explosions per day!

- ▶ Among the most notorious causes of terrorism in that era were the Vietnam War, across Laos and Cambodia, the constant and massive activity of the Hawks of the Civil Rights Movement, led by Martin Luther King, in addition to the emergence of the “Black Tigers Movement” that arose in 1966 to uphold the rights of the black. Edgar Hoover, chief of the FBI at the time, considered the Black Tigers Movement the most dangerous on American security along with the national movements linked to Cuba, Croatia and Puerto Rico.
- ▶ Two attempts of assassination of President Gerald Ford in California in 1975 bungled. One female member of the Hippies, who rejected the values of society, and which was led by “Charles Manson” was accused of carrying out the attempt. As for the second attempt, a woman “Sarah Moore” was accused of it and thus received a life sentence, then she was released from prison after she spent 32 years.
- ▶ This chapter discusses the “Armed Forces for National Liberation” movement that had a clear impact on terrorist incidents in America. This movement is a Marxist movement calling for the independence of Puerto Rico. It was established in 1974, until 1983, carrying out 120 terrorist attacks.

## 6) America and Global Terrorism (1968-1989)

Chapter Six highlights the global aspect of terrorism that the United States of America was exposed to in the 1968-1989 period. It emphasizes that America’s influential presence and power began after the Second World War in 1945. Given such increasingly growing hegemony of the US, the number of global terrorist acts targeting America multiplied; the American glaring interference or involvement in Vietnam in particular is a case in point. Other key foci highlighted by Chapter Six include the following:

- ▶ In 1968, there were twenty-two hijackings of passenger planes heading for Cuba, while they increased to up to 40 in 1969. The pilots took maps of Cuba’s airport with them, so that they would be ready to land safely there when there was any hijacking! One writer advised travelers to take what they needed to spend days in Cuba in the event of a kidnapping. Most of the passenger planes hijacked in the world between 1969 and 1972 took place on flights departing from the United States. However, most of the kidnappings were not for political reasons.
- ▶ One of the incidents of the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 was the Israelis striking the American spy ship, “Liberty”, which was in the Mediterranean Sea near the battlefield. The strike killed thirty-four American soldiers. Despite this tragic incident for the United States, generous American support for Israel continued, infuriating the Arabs and fueling their discontent, which was translated into the assassination of American presidential candidate “Robert Kennedy” by a Palestinian youth “Saharon Bishara Sarhan” in 1968.
- ▶ A number of Jordanian aircrafts were hijacked in September 1970, including planes that were heading to New York in America. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was responsible for the kidnapping, to demand the release of a number of Palestinian detainees.
- ▶ The mass hijacking of aircraft is an event that has been repeated many times, with different causes of hijacking. The event of the three Czechoslovakia pilots hijacking their aircraft and seeking refuge in West Germany is a case in point.
- ▶ The Palestinian Black September Attack on the Israeli Olympic Team in Munich, Germany in 1972, was also highlighted; the kidnapping of some Israeli players with the aim of exchanging them with 236 Palestinian prisoners held in an Israeli detention center. The Olympic Games being live at the time helped the incident to spread widely.

- ▶ Strict security measures were first implemented at airports in 1973. As a result of these security measures, the number of hijacking attempts decreased from 31 in 1972 to only three in 1974.
- ▶ In 1978, US President Jimmy Carter warned the Libyan Colonel Muammar Gaddafi not to receive hijacked aircrafts in Libya to reduce kidnappings, otherwise flights to Libya would be banned.
- ▶ The American embassy in Tehran was seized in 1979 due to the differences between America and Iran, where 52 American employees were held as hostages for 444 days.
- ▶ The US President "Ronald Reagan" faced an attempt of assassination by an insane man just 69 days after he took office. The man who made the attempt was considered insane and admitted to a mental health facility.
- ▶ US President Reagan saw in his foreign policy that the USSR is the evil empire in the world, and that it is responsible for organizing terrorist operations across the globe. Accordingly, the Afghan Mujahideen were supported in their war on the Soviet Union in Afghanistan on a larger scale than it was before the support of President Carter.
- ▶ US President "Reagan" sought to interfere in Lebanon and sent American forces in 1983. Therefore, these forces were targeted, and were exposed to explosions and many lost their lives, and consequently the US forces withdrew.
- ▶ On 14 June, 1985, TWA 847 Flight was hijacked, on its destination from Cairo to America, passing through Athens and Rome. The plane was hijacked to Beirut after its departure from Athens Airport, and among its passengers were 135 American citizens. Her hijackers have demanded the release of a large number of detainees in America.
- ▶ The Achille Lauro cruise-ship was hijacked at the Mediterranean Sea by Palestinians to demanded the release of Palestinian detainees

in Israeli prisons. Consequently, one of the ship's passengers was killed on October 7, 1985.

- ▶ On 11 December, 1988, the "Pan Am 103" aircraft, while flying to America exploded over the village of Lockerbie, Scotland, claiming all passengers on board. President of Libya, Colonel "Muammar Gaddafi", was accused of the incident, and the United Nations took harsh sanctions against Libya. In 2003, Libya admitted responsibility and paid of \$ 2.7 billion.
- ▶ Chapter Six draws a fitting conclusion, revisiting the 1989-1991 period, which witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the independence of Eastern European countries.

## 7) The Big Bang: American Terrorism in the 1990s

Five major incidents related to terrorism and America marked the 1990s. Chapter Seven provides an overview of the key events as follows:

- ▶ The first deal took place in 1990, whereby all Western hostages, including American hostages, were released in exchange for the release of prisoners in Israel, and the United States of America paid Iran \$ 278 million in compensation for weapons it had previously seized.
- ▶ The second incident was Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Iraq also seized some Western hostages, who were then released. The United States of America, spearheaded by "George Bush" in 1991 along with many countries launched an attack to oust Iraq from Kuwait without the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq.
- ▶ The third incident took place on February 26, 1993, almost six weeks after President Bill Clinton took office. The accident was a horrific attack by a large truck filled with explosives on the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York, home to 50,000 employees, receiving approximately



2,00,000 visitors per day. A number of people were accused of the terrorist act, led by the Pakistani "Ramzi Yusef", who had previously been trained in Afghanistan, and was affiliated with "Osama bin Laden".

- ▶ In Oklahoma, 19 April 1995, 27-year-old Timothy McVeigh, who participated in the 1991 Gulf War, blew up a truck carrying many explosives, in front of the Alfred Mora Federal Building, killing 168 people and injuring 684 others. "McVeigh" was sentenced to death in June 2011.
- ▶ On October 12, 2000, when the US Navy Destroyer "Cole" was being provided with fuel in the port of Aden, a boat loaded with explosives berthed nearby and two suicide bombers detonated it. The losses were the death of 17 American sailors and the injury of 39 others. Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the incident, but the American judiciary charged the government of Sudan with responsibility, and ordered that compensation be paid to the families of the victims from Sudan's frozen funds in America.

## 8) The Aftermath of the 9/11 Attacks

Chapter Eight discusses the notoriously unprecedented 9/11 Attacks 2001, highlighting the repercussions and the aftermath, including:

- ▶ Four American passenger aircrafts were first hijacked: "Flight AA 11 and Flight US 175" destroyed the WTC towers in New York; "Flight AA 77" destroyed part of the Pentagon Headquarters. However, the hijackers of the fourth aircraft attempted to direct it to Washington, but it was destroyed in a field following a frantic conflict between the hijackers and the passengers on board.
- ▶ The accident caused a profound impact, as nearly 3,000 people were killed and nearly 25,000 were injured, in addition to the enormous material losses. Al-Qaeda headed by "Osama bin

Laden", was accused of the horrendous attack. All the 19 hijackers were killed.

- ▶ The accident occurred a few months after US President George W. Bush took office. Nearly ten years into the incident, on May 2, 2011, the US forces killed Osama bin Laden in a military operation carried out in his stronghold in Pakistan, as US President Barack Obama announced the success of the operation.
- ▶ This event had political and legal ramifications in the US. Politically, the war on terror was declared, spearheaded by invading Iraq, the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, and increasing military activities in Afghanistan. As for the legal repercussions, the "USA PATRIOT" Law was passed and adopted, which is the law that unifies and strengthens America by finding appropriate means to counter and combat terrorism.

## 9) Representation of Terrorism

Chapter Nine remarks that the American culture is fed by Hollywood, the city of mass cinematography, and that Hollywood has produced many films about terrorism, causes and consequences. Such films describe terrorists as being insane. It also discusses films that places a special focus on terrorism for many years, that go back to 1936.

## Conclusion

The conclusion highlights the need to understand the facts of history presented in the Book. These facts emphasize that the 9/11 Attacks 2001 was not the spark of terrorism in America; rather, it has a long history that dates back to the time prior to the establishment of the United States of America, with new manifestations and triggers. The fitting conclusion advises and recommends that these facts, which warn us that the threat of terrorism is still rampant and ubiquitous and has formidable potential, should not slide into oblivion overshadowed by other concerns.

## Appendix

With the curtain falling on the review for **TERRORISM AND AMERICA**, it may be seminal to bring to focus and cite some telling a chunk excerpted from the report made by the US National Congress Committee on Terrorism issued in June 2000:

“Many terrorists act from political, ideological, or religious convictions. Others become terrorists because of perceived oppression or economic deprivation. An astute American foreign policy must

take into account the reasons people turn to terror and, where appropriate and feasible, address them. No cause, however, justifies terrorism.

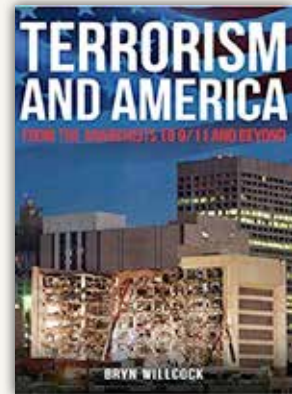
This paragraph reveals that the war on terrorism must not only be confined to using force and punishment of terrorists; it should also include research into the causes of terrorism, while also eliminating or at least reducing these causes to prevent terrorism, dry up its sources and realize peace and safety for communities.

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# BOOK REVIEW 11



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