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The ROOTS of Terrorism

Edited by **Louise Richardson**

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Foreword

When the Club de Madrid hosted the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism, and Security in Madrid in March 2005, the aim was to bring together the most important stakeholders in the debate about how democracies should confront the threat of terrorism. We believed that the debate among political leaders, policymakers, and expert practitioners had been incomplete at best and that it was important to provide a global forum in which all those who had something to contribute could sit around the table and talk to each other.

A first result of this process of dialogue was what we called the Madrid Agenda, released on the last day of the conference. Drawing on the various contributions made by the summit's participants, the document outlined the principles and ideas around which a pragmatic consensus in the fight against terrorism could be built. I was heartened by the fact that even the most hard-nosed antiterrorism practitioners—senior members of the intelligence services, army generals, and police chiefs—agreed that maintaining the rule of law, respecting human rights, and promoting democracy were all essential in making the struggle against terrorism effective in the long run.

Another point that came across very clearly was the need for our response against terrorism to be comprehensive. Even though law enforcement agencies have to be given the powers required to prevent terrorist attacks and to protect the lives of innocents, the summit participants were unanimous in their view that we must go further. As the Madrid Agenda states, "International institutions, governments and civil society should also address the underlying risk factors that provide terrorists with support and recruits."

Looking at the root causes of terrorism, however, is not as uncontroversial as it seems. Some dismiss it as simplistic; others even believe it is an effort to justify terrorism. I could not disagree more strongly. As the various contributions in this volume show, those who research the roots of terrorism are conscious that no single cause exists; instead, we are dealing with a complex, multifaceted problem that requires an

equally sophisticated response. Indeed, if our attempts at addressing the roots of terrorism have been simplistic, it is probably because we have not done enough to understand them.

Furthermore, finding out why people become terrorists has nothing to do with excusing their crimes. On the contrary, to better appreciate the roots of terrorism strikes me as the most obvious starting point for how to construct our range of responses. It is about mapping what Louise Richardson once described as the "enabling environment" in which terrorism thrives. Doing so will allow us to draw on a much wider range of resources and will enable us to employ these in a more targeted way. In other words, rather than undermining it, such work will help to make the fight against terrorism more effective.

The Madrid Summit was held on the first anniversary of the train bombings in Madrid in 2004, and it was the memory of those terrible attacks that spurred our efforts. Even back then, I was convinced that the process of global engagement, dialogue and action that was begun in Madrid must continue. Following the recent bombings in London, Sharm-el-Sheikh and Bali, it is more necessary than ever. This book is an important part of that effort. I strongly commend it to every serious student of the topic.

Mary Robinson
Vice President of the Club de Madrid
Former President of Ireland

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The Roots of Terrorism: An Overview

Louise Richardson

In June 2005 White House advisor Karl Rove criticized what he described as the effort of liberals after the attacks of September 11, 2001, to understand the terrorists.[1] In so saying, Rove was reflecting a common predilection to equate understanding terrorism with sympathy for terrorists. Like the sixty-five academics who deliberated together on the underlying causes of terrorism for several months and who convened in Madrid on the first anniversary of the Atocha train bombings, I reject this view. We believe that only by understanding the forces leading to the emergence of terrorism—the root causes, in other words—can we hope to devise a successful long-term counterterrorist strategy.

As the contributions to this volume demonstrate, the search for the underlying causes of terrorism is a complicated endeavor. The difficulty of the task must serve as an inducement to sustained and rigorous research on the subject—not as invitation to throw in the towel and deal simply with the symptoms that present themselves. Policy makers, faced with pressures for immediate action to deal with a formidable threat, can be forgiven for seeking a rapid reaction plan. The role of academics, on the other hand, is to ensure that the plans they reach for are based on a deep-seated understanding of the nature of the threat they face.

The search for the cause of terrorism, like the search for a cure for cancer, is not going to yield a single definitive solution. But as with any disease, an effective cure will be dependent on the accurate diagnosis of the multiplicity of risk factors as well as their interactions with one another. The cure is likely to be almost as complicated as the disease, entailing a combination of alleviating the risk factors, blocking

the interactions between them, and building the body's resilience to exposure. Above all, it will focus first and foremost on preventing the spread of the disease.

The working definition of *terrorism* employed by this group—in the absence of an agreed international definition—is contained in the U.S. Code: "Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."[2] Terrorism, in fact, is a complex and multivariate phenomenon. It appears in many different forms in many parts of the world in pursuit of many different objectives. It occurs in democracies, autocracies, and transitional states and in developed, underdeveloped, and developing economies. It is practiced by adherents of many religions and by adherents of none. What all terrorist groups have in common is that they are weaker than their enemies and that they are prepared deliberately to murder noncombatants in furtherance of their objectives. The adoption of terrorism as a tactic to effect political change is, therefore, a deliberate choice.

Terrorist groups differ from one another in important ways. They differ in the nature of their ideology and in the specificity of their political objectives. They differ in their relationship to religion and to the communities from which they derive support. They also differ in the trajectory of their violence. Historically, for example, most terrorist groups were domestic, and others started locally and went global; recently, however, global conflicts seem to inspire local groups to terrorism.

One of the most obvious difficulties in identifying a cause or causes of terrorism is that terrorism is a microphenomenon. Metaexplanations cannot be used successfully to explain microphenomena. Take the case of social revolutionary movements in Europe in the 1970s for example. Their behavior was attributed to the alienation of the young whose postwar idealism was thwarted by capitalist materialism. But if this alienation was the cause, then why were there not many more terrorists? Alienation was widespread, but terrorism, fortunately, had relatively few adherents. Alienation alone, therefore, cannot stand as the cause of their terrorism.

Nationalist terrorism, on the other hand, has been more broadly based. Ethnonationalist groups have resorted to terrorism all over the world from Northern Ireland, Spain, and Corsica to Turkey, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, India, and the Middle East. But if nationalism were the cause of their terrorism, then why have other ethnic and nationalist groups—who do not occupy a territory consistent with their sense of identity—not also resorted to terrorism? Nationalism can provide

a sense of grievance and a unifying and legitimizing aspiration, but it cannot alone explain why a group seeks to realize their nationalist goal through terrorist violence as opposed to other forms of political action.

The contributors to this volume reflect a range of academic disciplines from psychologist to sociologist, from economist to political scientist and historian. None claim for their fields a monopoly on insight into the root causes of terrorism. On the contrary, each concedes the need for several approaches to the problem. Different fields, however, tend to focus on particular levels of analysis. These have been broadly divided into individual, political, economic, and cultural factors. I first review the arguments made by the contributors and then extrapolate the policy prescriptions from their analysis before spelling out a research agenda that would advance our understanding of the crucial question of the roots of terrorism.

Underlying Causes of Terrorism

At the level of the individual, psychologists have long argued that there is no particular terrorist personality and that the notion of terrorists as crazed fanatics is not consistent with the plentiful empirical evidence available. Jerrold Post points out that terrorists are psychologically normal in the sense of not being clinically psychotic; they are neither depressed nor severely emotionally disturbed. Instead, he advocates an analysis of the crucial concept of collective identity where group, organizational, and social psychology provide more analytical power than individual psychology. He argues that the sociocultural context determines the balance between collective and individual identity and in particular the manner in which terrorist recruits subordinate their individual identity to that of the collective. He points to the importance of distinguishing leaders from followers and of understanding the crucial role of the leader in providing a sense-making message to the followers. Post also stresses the importance of group dynamics and the manner in which groups may make riskier decisions than individuals. He points out that if the path to leadership in an organization is through violence, then the group will be pushed inexorably toward greater and greater levels of violence irrespective of what individuals may think.

Nasra Hassan also focuses on individuals and in particular on individual suicide jihadis. She interviewed the families and friends of 250 suicide bombers from a variety of conflicts and compares the appeal and the implementation of the tactic among the different religious and secular groups who employ it. Like other contributors to this volume she challenges the view that madrassa and mosque schools are the chief generator of suicide jihadis, suggesting instead

the broader environment and the volunteers selected for the special training camps. Though she cites certain essential elements like loyalty to a charismatic figure and preexisting grievances against an outgroup, by examining the many differences among the various suicide terrorist campaigns, the mixture of religious and political motive and rhetoric, and the style of training and method of deployment Hassan implicitly challenges the notion that there is any one simple cause of even this particular terrorist tactic or even a shared profile of the suicide jihadist.

Where psychologists and writers seek explanation at the individual and group level, political scientists bring the tools of their trade to bear in attempting to establish lines first of correlation and then causation between the outbreak of terrorism and the nature of the political environment in which the violence takes place. Recognizing the myriad different types of terrorism, Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca focuses his analysis on revolutionary movements. These were the movements that bedeviled several wealthy western democracies in the mid-1970s and early 1980s. They include the Red Brigades and Prima Linea in Italy, the Red Army Faction in Germany, First of October Antifascist Resistance Group (GRAPO) in Spain, the Revolutionary Organization 17 November in Greece, FP 25 Abril in Portugal, and Action Directe in France. In a multivariate analysis with twenty-one countries, Sánchez-Cuenca finds that by far the most powerful predictor of the lethality of violence is past political instability. He uses what he terms a *political selection model* to demonstrate why revolutionary violent groups emerged in many developed countries in the '70s and '80s but only evolved into terrorist groups in a handful of cases. He found that terrorist groups emerged in states that had experienced past political instability and had powerful social movements in the '60s, had engaged in counterproductive repression, and had also seen an emergence of fascist terrorism. While Sánchez-Cuenca believes this model could probably also explain the emergence of ethnonationalist terrorism in Spain and Northern Ireland, he has no illusions that it could be employed convincingly in cases of international terrorism in which the unit of observation is not a clearly defined state. His analysis speaks to the wisdom of disaggregating the very broad concept of terrorism and focusing instead on particular types of terrorist groups.

Leonard Weinberg also chooses to narrow his analysis. He examines the political sources of terrorism in democracies. In thinking about the domestic political causes he retains political scientist Martha Crenshaw's distinction between *permissive* and *instigating* factors.[3] The weakness of analyzing along the lines of permissive causes

is demonstrated implicitly by Sánchez-Cuenca: The same permissive factors can exist in several states but only produce terrorism in some. Another weakness correctly identified by Weinberg is that, thanks to new forms of technology, behavior can be quickly diffused and terrorist campaigns can spread from one country to another in spite of differences in the political conditions of those countries.

Weinberg subjects to empirical testing several arguments found in the literature on the relationship between terrorism and democracy. He finds that outbreaks of terrorism are not the exclusive preserve of transitional democracies. He points out that in fact, although terrorism can be present at the creation of democracy, the failure of democracies to respond forcibly also has brought about their demise, as in Uruguay, Argentina, and Turkey. He also demonstrates that longevity in no way insulates democracies from outbreaks of domestic terrorism.

After exploring the explanatory power of temporal permissive explanations Weinberg turns to structural ones. He refers to data analysis—again limited to western democracies—indicating that the greater the degree of ethnic diversity and the greater the degree of political fragmentation in the polity, the higher the incidence of terrorism. Conversely, the more evenly distributed the income and the better the record in protecting civil rights, the lower the incidence of terrorism. He recognizes the problems of causality here, of course, as states that have had fewer threats from terrorists may have better protections for civil liberties as a consequence, not a cause. He concludes that instigating factors like radicalization and their interaction with the behavior of the state are more likely to be helpful in understanding outbreaks of terrorism.

The relative recency of transnational terrorism means that data collection is at a much more rudimentary stage. Nevertheless, Weinberg believes that broad-based explanations such as the structure of the international system or globalization are not consistent with the evidence. The unipolar system as an explanatory variable is undermined by the presence of terrorism under multipolar as well as unipolar international distributions of power. He also uses empirical analysis to challenge the explanatory power of globalization, arguing that an examination of terrorist incidents suggests that more incidents take place among those at the bottom of the globalization scale, secondly among those at the top and the least between those at opposite ends. That is, most terrorist attacks are committed by citiens of countries a the bottom of the globalization index against citizens of countries also at the bottom of the index. When citizens of highly globalized countries are victims their attackers tend to come from other highly globalized societies. Attacks by citizens of

countries at the bottom of the index against citizens of countries at the top are less common. These findings, however, again speak to the need to disaggregate among different types of groups because the incidence of Islamist terrorism suggests a different result, as seen in the contribution of Atanas Gotchev.

Gotchev, an economist, explores the downside effects of globalization as a cause of terrorism. He shows how the inequitable distribution of the positive effectives of globalization across countries provides both incentives and opportunities to organize, finance, and carry out terrorist acts. He does not argue that globalization causes terrorism but rather that it too can creative a permissive environment for its occurrence. He points out that globalization has increased inequalities and social polarization both within and between states and that this in turn leads to demands for political change. Moreover, the spread of western culture and the need to adapt to take advantage of the benefits of globalization provoke political and cultural resistance and an emphasis on differences. Gotchev argues that globalization also fosters the development of new minorities by facilitating the movement of labor. These in turn may provide both logistical and financial support as well as human capital for the terrorist groups. He goes on to argue that globalization diminishes the power of the nation state by constraining the state's ability to control its economy and by enabling a proliferation of nongovernmental organizations. Finally, he argues that globalization provides both new methods and new easily accessible targets for terrorists.

Gotchev does not argue, contra Weinberg, that globalization causes terrorism but rather that it facilitates its emergence. Globalization then falls into Crenshaw's category of a permissive cause of terrorism. Gabi Sheffer takes this argument a step further by examining this *other* that is produced by globalization. He explores the diaspora and offers a classification of the various components of the *other*. He explores the many behavioral and organizational differences among different elements of the diaspora and assesses the degree of intensity of their violence both in their adoptive and originating countries. The link between diasporas and terrorism is not hard to find. He argues that twenty-seven of the fifty most active contemporary terrorist organizations are either part of a diaspora or are supported by one—though he would not, of course, challenge the view that most members of diaspora communities utterly reject the use of terrorism to redress their grievances.

Sociologist Ted Gurr also explores some of the many complex linkages between economic factors and terrorism. Arguing that terrorism is a choice made by groups waging conflict rather than an

automatic response to deprivation, he points out that the perpetrators of the September 11, 2001, atrocity in the United States were middle class and well educated. They were also products of societies undergoing profound socioeconomic changes in which opportunities for political expression were sharply curtailed. In addition, they were all recruited by Islamists committed to jihad against the West.

Gurr contends that objective poverty is not a direct cause of terrorism, though it can contribute indirectly to the outbreak of terrorism in many ways. He argues quite convincingly that inequalities, or relative deprivation, are more important than poverty as a source of terrorism. This also helps to account for the common observation that leaders of terrorist movements, like leaders of organizations, generally tend to be more highly educated and of a higher socioeconomic status than their followers and those in their communities. Ethnonationalist terrorism in particular can be linked to discrimination on the basis of ethnic identity, though not all instances of ethnic discrimination lead to terrorism. Rapid socioeconomic change also serves as a risk factor for terrorism. This is because of the instability it generates and the associated dislocations produced.

His argument then is that, rather than poverty, structured inequalities within countries facilitate the emergence of terrorism and that rapid socioeconomic change feeds this process. When these factors interact with the restrictions on political rights, disadvantaged groups are what Gurr calls "ripe for recruitment." As Weinberg and Michael Stohl also notice, semirepressive state reactions often contribute to the evolution from political mobilization to terrorism because of their inconsistent mix of repression and reform. Finally, like Sheffer, Gurr explores the relationship between terrorism and conventional crime as the need to finance the former often draws the terrorist toward the latter.

Turning away from an examination of economic and political to explore cultural and religious causes, our authors focus on Islam and jihad. John Esposito provides a historical analysis of the emergence of what he calls *political Islam*, more often referred to as Islamism or Islamic fundamentalism, and in so doing makes the crucial distinction between mainstream and extremist movements. He concludes that terrorists like Osama bin Laden are driven not by religion but by political and economic grievances; however, they draw on a tradition of religious extremism to legitimize their actions. They ignore classical Islam's criteria for a just war, recognizing no limits but their own. They also reject classical Islam's regulations regarding a valid jihad with its insistence on the protection of noncombatants and the proportionate use of violence. Esposito argues that the primary causes—

which are socioeconomic and political to varying degrees in different contexts—are obscured by the religious language and extremism used by extremists.

Olivier Roy explores the explanatory issue of *deculturation* as a cause of Islamic terrorism. An empirical examination of the perpetrators of Islamic violence in Western Europe, he argues, suggests they are part of a broad supranational network operating in the West that is disconnected from any discrete territorial base. Contrary to popular opinion Roy points out that their backgrounds have little to do with traditional religious education or even particular conflicts in the Middle East: They became born-again Muslims in the West—not in radical mosques but rather in the framework of a group of similarly uprooted local friends. They have very little connection to the real Muslim world or to the world of their parents. They were in effect rebels in search of a cause when Islamism presented itself. He concludes that their radicalization has nothing whatever to do with Islam as a culture and everything to do with "deculturation and individualization." He sees them, in essence, as another example of religious revivalism with a global perception of the state of the *ummah,* that is, the global community of Islam. If Roy is correct, then the task of governments is to accept Islam as a Western religion among many others and not as the expression of an ethnocultural community. It means working to undermine foreign connections and instead integrating Muslims and community leaders on a pluralist basis.

Mark Juergensmeyer looks more broadly at all religions and their relationship to terrorism. He agrees with Esposito that underlying economic social and political grievances—rather than religion—are the initial problem but points out that these secular concerns are now being expressed through rebellious religious ideologies, which makes then more intractable. These grievances provide a sense of alienation, marginalization, and social frustration but they are being articulated in religious terms, are being seen through religious images, and are being organized by religious leaders through religious institutions. Religion then brings new aspects to the conflict. It provides personal rewards, vehicles for social mobilization, organizational networks, and, more importantly, a justification for violence. Juergensmeyer argues that religion does not cause terrorism but problematizes it because it absolutizes the conflict, thereby making its resolution enormously more difficult.

The contributors to this volume do not produce a set of causes to be fixed so as to end terrorism. Rather, through an analysis of specific cases, concepts, and raw data they indicate a set of risk factors for the emergence of terrorism. The risk factors alone will not cause terrorism; they need to be ignited by particular events, policies, or leaders that mobilize the disaffection they generate into violent action. Ameliorating these risk factors is not a short-term process and so is unlikely to have immediate results in the campaign against terrorism, but over the longer term this action is likely to have significant benefits throughout these societies and indirectly to reduce support for a resort to terrorist action.

Policy Recommendations

Effective counterterrorist policies likely will address both the underlying and the proximate causes of the violence and will combine long-term developmental strategies with short-term and often coercive responses. It is imperative, however, that in their haste to secure short-term success against terrorists, governments should not lose sight of the longer-term goals—that the implementation of the short-term measures does not undermine the achievement of the long-term objectives.

The long-term goal is to delegitimize the resort to terrorism as a means of effecting political change and to reduce the opportunities and incentives for doing so. It is to channel the effort to redress grievances into conventional politics. Action in furtherance of this aim is unlikely to appeal to currently practicing terrorists but over the long term is likely to undermine their ability to win recruits for their cause. A more immediate and closely related goal is to separate terrorists from the communities from which they derive support, to deny them means of recruiting new members, and to prevent the appeal of their ideology and their actions from spreading

An essential goal of long-term counterterrorism policy must be to reduce the reservoir of resentment that breeds support for the resort to terrorism. In working toward this goal, it is crucial to remember that the majority of the populations, and even the majority of political activists in societies that produce terrorism, are among the most powerful forces for securing stable and safe societies. Punitive policies, therefore, must be focused on the perpetrators of the violence. Esposito points out, for example, that a zero-tolerance approach to mainstream political Islamic movements not only will undermine civil society and the credibility of the West's commitment to democracy but also will produce the alienation that feeds the growth of terrorism. Mainstream movements, he argues, require engagement, whereas zero tolerance should be reserved for extremists. Stohl also reminds us how repressive action and denial of human rights on the part of the state can precipitate outbreaks of terrorist violence and that counterterrorist action, taken without regard for democratic principles and the rule of law, can serve to generate more terrorism.

Among the longer-term economic responses to terrorism are mitigating the impact of globalization or rapid socioeconomic change on vulnerable segments of the population in developing countries. Aid and investment, therefore, should be targeted to those most directly affected to enable them to influence the nature and pace of development. Those attempting to counter terrorism should be prepared to help finance socioeconomic policies that promote the growth of a middle class and women's literacy and education. A burgeoning middle class and the political and economic participation of women can serves as breaks on the development of extremism. Governments must be encouraged to reduce gross inequalities and group discrimination and to integrate marginalized groups into political and economic activity. Educational opportunities must be enhanced, but this must go hand in hand with economic development to ensure that employment opportunities are available for those so educated. The West should be prepared to provide alternatives to traditional Islamic education that fails to provide the tools for participation in modernizing societies. The need to integrate marginalized groups is not, however, limited to developing countries. On the contrary, the alienation of diaspora communities in the wealthiest countries in the world remains a real vulnerability and must be addressed.

Finally, those of us in the U.S. must engage in a war of ideas with the extremist ideologies. We should be able to mobilize local moderates to our side in this campaign, but we will only be able to do so successfully if our rhetoric at home is matched by our action on the ground. In this effort we should be prepared to support moderate Islamic scholarship and political parties even when they are critical of our actions. We need to engage in a vigorous campaign of public diplomacy to make our case to the populations that produce terrorists. We are only likely to be successful in the effort if we can demonstrate that our commitment to liberal ideals and the rule of law is consistently applied and that we hold ourselves and our allies to the same standards as we hold others. We need to exploit new media technologies to engage in what Post calls a strategic communications program to address systematically the arguments against us and to counter the avenues through which extremists win recruits.

We should not have any illusions that success will come quickly. Many terrorist groups have ended their campaigns fairly quickly, but these were small isolated movements like the Red Army Faction (RAF), or movements effectively destroyed by police action like Revolutionary Organization 17 November or by ruthless suppression by the state, as in several Latin American countries. Other movements—especially those with close ties to their communities—have

lasted a very long time. In societies in which, in Post's words, "hatred has been bred in the bone" and in which socialization begins at an early age and is reinforced and consolidated into an essential element of collective identity, no short-term solution exists. The goal, however, is not to turn the world into American cheerleaders. The only threshold the U.S. needs to reach will come from people not employing terrorism as a means to voice their frustrations, their objections to American policies or American influence on their societies.

Of course, more immediate steps can be and are being taken. These entail reducing the financial, material, and political resources of terrorist organizations and inhibiting their ability to move freely through enhanced border and customs controls. Several contributors speak to the need to investigate fraudulent charities and to otherwise disrupt the flow of money to terrorist groups. To these suggestions I add the need to review the foreign policies of governments with global influence with a view of how they advance a broader definition of the state's national interest. Westerners should be prepared to incorporate into the evaluation of our policies how they are perceived on the ground and whether, in the eyes of the populations whose confidence we are trying to acquire, our policies appear to be more consistent with our ideals than with the motives attributed to us by the extremists.

A concerted effort on our part to redress political conflicts that have been exploited by extremists will again undermine their efforts to win recruits. A resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian dispute or the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir will not satisfy the extremists, but it will reduce the reservoir of resentment on which they feed. One of the big advantages of following these policy recommendations is that they have a myriad of benefits. Even if generous and strategically distributed development aid and a resolution of political conflicts did not undercut terrorism, as I have argued they would,[4] they have many other quite tangible benefits in the improvement to the quality of life of those affected.

Research Agenda

This book is far from being the last word on understanding the root causes of terrorism. As each of the contributors makes clear, there remains a great deal that we do not know and yet we need to know if we care to understand the terrorist threat. This book provides a detailed account of the permissive factors facilitating the emergence of terrorism. The proximate causes of terrorism are more obvious and are regularly stated publicly by the perpetrators of the violence. We know much less about the way the proximate and the permissive

causes interact with one another. We know they interact through the leaders and their followers, but we have a lot to learn about how this happens. In this sense, a great deal of research needs to be done on the terrorist life cycle. In order to disrupt the path into terrorism and to devise policies that inhibit potential recruits from joining, encourage experienced recruits to leave, produce dissent within the group, and undermine the internal authority of the leaders, we need to gather a great deal more information about how the groups operate internally. There is no substitute for primary research in this endeavor.

The proliferation of terrorist attacks and growing lethality of terrorist violence inclines others to see terrorism as an ideology and terrorists as a uniform mass of evildoers. They cannot usefully be understood in this way. Each terrorist group must be understood in its own context; the most successful counterterrorist strategy is likely to be particularly geared to that group. That said, we need to have a keener understanding of how groups are similar and how they are not. Detailed, structured, focused comparisons based on intensive analysis of a range of movements are likely to enhance our understanding both of individual groups and of the phenomenon more generally.

In this book we demonstrate that terrorism is not caused by religion, globalization, political structures, or psychopaths. We do argue, however, that political and economic inequalities and social alienation are risk factors for the emergence of terrorism. Religion can exacerbate the problem, as it can be used to legitimize the use of violence to redress these political and socioeconomic grievances. Once grievances are expressed in religious terms the conflict becomes altogether more difficult to resolve. There is a lot we do not know about the underlying causes of terrorism, but everything we do know points to the importance of developing a long-term coordinated strategy that is consistent with our democratic principles and in which short-term objectives are integrated with long-term goals. It is both unwise and unnecessary to sacrifice liberal democratic values to secure short-term security. On the contrary, the strongest weapons in our arsenal against terrorism are precisely the facets of our society that appeal to the potential recruits for terrorists. And these potential recruits—who come from the communities from which terrorists derive their support—should become the focus of counterterrorist policies. If we can help to redress the rampant economic inequities and sociopolitical marginalization in these communities we will reduce both the opportunities and the incentives for the resort to terrorism, thereby constraining the growth and increasing the isolation of terrorist groups. We can then focus our coercive policies on these perpetrators of violence. These directed policies are far more likely

to be successful if they are based on a thorough understanding of the nature of the group being faced. A plan of action that involves mobilizing the moderates while integrating the marginalized and isolating the extremists is entirely consistent with the principles of democracy our governments were designed to defend in the first place.

Endnotes

1. Karl Rove (speech, Conservative Party of New York State, June 22, 2005).
2. U.S. Code, title 22, sec. 2656f(d).
3. Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism" *Comparative Politics*, Volume 13, No. 4, (July 1981) pp 379-400.
4. Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Terrorist Threat*, John Murray, London, 2006.