

Terrorism

1. What is terrorism?
2. Why do terrorists use terror tactics?
3. What caused the September 11th terror attacks on America?

Terrorism is the unlawful or threatened use of force or violence on people or property to compel or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives. However it is difficult to define terrorism because all acts of terrorism are open to interpretation.

One form of terrorism is war terrorism which is violence used indiscriminately against a civilian or non military population, the motive of the people who use this type of terrorism is to win a war. An example of this is, is the first dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. This instantly killed 70-10,000 people and a possible 200,000 dead from radiation sickness in the next five years. The arguments for this was to end the war, to avoid the potentially massive allied losses an invasion would cost, revenge for Pearl Harbour and to justify the money spent on the development of the bomb. The victims for this were civilians and not military so this could be interpreted as an act of terrorism even if it was justified by the government as a necessity of war. This is similar to international terrorism as it has an effect on another country, in this case, the civilians of Japan. This differs as the people carrying out the attack were part of the military.

Another form is of terrorism is government terrorism; this is when a government does not obey the law and doesn't give its people rights like free speech. One of the most extreme forms of this kind of terrorism might be called a "reign of terror." An early form of this was during the French Revolution when from 1793-94 the French revolutionary government sent increasing numbers of people to their death estimated at 30,000 people. Anyone who opposed the government was caught and often executed without a fair trial, by the guillotine. The motive of this was to control the people and to destroy any opposition so that the government would not be overthrown. Another more recent example is Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq which ended in 2003 because of a US led coalition. Under his regime people weren't allowed rights like free speech. The government also crushed any opposition. Some people might say that this isn't terrorism because the government should be able to rule their country how they want however this is normally known as terrorism as it is unlawful use of violence on civilians. This is similar to terrorism which is used against governments as both the civilians and the government is involved but in this case it is the government carrying out the terrorism.

One form of terrorism is urban terrorism which is when terrorist groups fight in cities. They have realized that this is an effective way to achieve their aim because in most countries, most people live in the cities so it is an effective way to gain publicity for their cause. An example of this was the IRA's Dockland Bombings in London on February 6th 1996. The IRA's motive was to free Northern Ireland from British rule. By bombing cities in Britain, the IRA could gain more publicity, made them look bigger than they really were so that they could achieve their political aims. Another example of this was in Uruguay in 1962, a small revolutionary group called the "Tupermaros" was formed. Their aims were to overthrow the government by using terror tactics. This was similar to terrorism being used against the government as the group was trying to overthrow the government by using urban terrorism. This

all considered as terrorism because it was the killing of civilians to achieve a political end but might not be because the people fighting might say that their cause is right.

Terrorism can sometimes be used against governments, when people want to break free from a government, terrorism has been used to achieve their political aim. This is called terrorism in wars of liberation. An example of this was the Rhodesian War which lasted between 1972-1980. Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was an African country controlled by a white minority. There were two groups which used terrorism to fight to free the black community from both Britain and the white minority. Terrorism was used by these groups to frighten any black who worked for or helped white people to make it difficult for the white community to survive. The groups aim was to destabilize the country so that the whites would leave. This is considered terrorism as it is the use of violence to intimidate people but some people might say that it isn't because without using terrorism, the groups wouldn't be able to achieve their political aims.

Another form of terrorism is called international terrorism; this covers a wide range of terrorist actions which in some way have an effect on another country. There are many examples of this type of terrorism as there have been many terrorist attacks recently, mainly in the Middle East. One example is the Israel-Palestine situation. During World War I, Britain had promised the Jews a homeland, after the conflict ended the British received the protectorate of Palestine and many Jews settled in the area. This started to cause friction with the native Arab population. After WW2 and events such as the Holocaust, Jewish immigration became a flood, which led to armed conflict between the Jews and the Arabs. After a war which the Israelis won they declared the state of Israel and many Palestinians left. There have been many wars after this in which Israel won. The Palestinian Liberation Front was formed which aimed to return all occupied land back to the Palestinians. This is why there have been many terrorist attacks against Israel. An example is the Munich Massacre of 1972 which took place during the 1972 Olympics when Palestinian terrorists broke into the Israeli compound killing an athlete and a trainer and demanded that the release of Palestinian prisoners and a safe passage out of Germany. The German authorities eventually agreed to the demands but ordered a rescue plan which went wrong resulting in the deaths of all the Israelis, five of the terrorists and one police man. The motive of the terrorists was publicity for their cause which was to liberate Palestine. Doing this would make the group appear bigger than it really was and direct warfare wouldn't succeed. Many people would say that this is terrorism but the terrorists would say that this is the only way they will achieve their political aims.

The terrorist groups share many similarities. The main one would be the fact that almost all of them carry out these acts for a political purpose, and to do this they would most likely want lots of publicity which is why most attacks are carried out in ways that would gain publicity such as in big cities, events and places where the media is located. The more extreme their act, the more publicity they receive which is why many attacks are becoming bigger and more destructive.

Terrorism can come in many different forms but there will always be debate on whether something really can be classed as terrorism or not. This can be summed up in the saying, "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter", saying that some people would see people like the Palestinian Liberation Front as terrorists and some people would not.

A terror tactic is a method of plan to achieve an end. There are many different reasons why people would resort to terror tactics in order to achieve their aims.

One motive is to gain publicity for their cause or organisation. This is normally a part of many terrorist attacks such as 9/11 where it made Al- Qaeda the most famous terrorist group in the world. This is because it happened in the biggest cities of the most powerful country in the world, so media coverage was huge. In order to gain publicity, attacks are normally in large cities. Another example is the 2004, Madrid Train bombings, there was a lot of publicity for this event because of the large media coverage so many terrorist attack tactics have these similarities. There can be differences however, for example when pro-democracy protestors gathered at Tiananmen Square, Beijing, the Chinese government sent in the army, which opened fire on the protestors resulting in the deaths of many. The Chinese government tried to keep this secret from the rest of the world as the world's media wasn't allowed in China and their own media was state controlled. The reason they didn't want people knowing about this was because it would damage their human rights record and relationships with other countries.

Another reason is to make small groups appear bigger than they really are. There are many groups around the world that use terror tactics to appear bigger than they really are. Recently in the news there are many suicide bomb attacks, car bomb and other attacks carried out in the Middle East by small groups. An example is Al-Jihad which uses car bombs and selective assassinations to attack selective officials. Doing this can make the group look more powerful and so making people scared of the group and give in to their demands.

Indiscriminate bombing has been used with the aim of undermining the will and morale of a community. An example of a group that used this tactic was the IRA which fought against British rule of Northern Ireland. One example of their bombings is the Dockland Bombings in London in 1996. They continued bombing and killing innocent civilians to achieve the political goal of a united Ireland. Doing this could make a government give in to demands and stop the bombings. Other attacks have these similarities such as recent bomb attacks in the Middle East like the Hamas' suicide bombings against Israel. These are similar to the IRA bombing but also different because the people from Hamas are willing to give up their lives for their cause by blowing themselves up. There have also been car bomb attacks in Iraq against the US to try and make it more difficult for the US to operate. These attacks are similar to the Hamas attacks but have larger blasts.

Terrorism can be used as one tactic in a larger war. Terrorism in war is normally the killing of civilians (non military) such as the Atomic Bomb drop on Japanese cities at the end of WWII. The bomb killed over 200,000 civilians, the reason for this was to end the war as Japan wasn't going to surrender and thousands of allied lives would be lost if an invasion of Japan were to take place. However, calling this terrorism is debatable as every other terrorist attack and in war; the US would say that they had good reasons for dropping the bomb but nonetheless this was an attack on civilians. There have been other attacks similar to this such as the British bombing of German cities during WWII which flattened cities and killed thousands. The aim was to destabilise the country, make them give in and to end the war in Europe and revenge for the bombing of the UK. The difference was that the bombs were different as nuclear bombs kill more people and are more destructive. Some might say that even recent events such as the US bombing Iraq during the Iraq war could be seen as terrorism as it killed many civilians.

Kidnapping and assassinating representatives of a state has been a terrorist tactic. One example of this was the 2002 Russian theatre siege where Chechen rebels took control of a theatre in Moscow killing 160 and taking the rest as hostages. Russian Special Forces managed to kill the rebels using nerve gas but that also left 120 people dead. The reason the Chechen gunmen seized theatre was so that it gave publicity to their cause which was to make Chechnya independent from Russia. Another similar event took place in 2004 when Chechen rebels seized a school in Russia which resulted in more than 200 dead. There have also been other kidnappings in Iraq such as Ken Bigley and two other men were held by Iraqi militants. The reason they kidnapped the two people was because they wanted all of Iraq's female prisoners to be freed. The two cases are similar because they both want to achieve aims; however the Iraq kidnapping is different as the terrorists want to achieve short term aims while the Chechens want to achieve a larger and more difficult aim.

Terrorism has been used in the hope of increasing government repression, or an overreaction or retaliation. The tactic is to provoke a reaction that will alienate the population from the government. One example of this was the 9/11 attacks on the US, this provoked the US government to start their "War on Terrorism." This aimed to stop terrorism in the world and things like capturing Osama Bin Laden. Some say that they did not carry this out properly as Osama Bin Laden was never caught, invading Iraq which had no history of terrorism and to this day, not stopped terrorism in the world. This has alienated some people like Michael Moore who even made a documentary about Bush's action's following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It might not have been Al Qaeda's first reason for attacking the US but they did want to damage it. Another example is the Tiananmen Square protests, the protestors did not use terrorism but they did make the government use terrorism which alienated the government from its people.

Terrorism has been used to achieve a short term aim such as the release of terrorists from their group being held as prisoners, perhaps by taking hostages. An example of this was the Munich Massacre when Palestinian militants broke into the Israeli compound at the 1972 Munich Olympics killing an athlete and a trainer. The militants took 9 Israelis hostage. The Palestinians demanded the release of 236 Arab prisoners held in Germany and a safe passage out of Germany. A rescue plan was ordered which resulted in the deaths of all the Israelis, five Palestinians and one policeman. The reason terrorism was used was because it would put great pressure on the German authorities to give in to their demands or face many innocent casualties. Other reasons for doing this would be publicity for their cause and organisation and possibly a cleansing force.

Terrorism has been used in destabilising and to undermine people's confidence in their government and the forces of law and order. This is currently happening over the world such as in Afghanistan where bomb attacks are used to destabilise the country. The reason they do this, is that they do not support the government as it has close relations with the US which invaded the country in 2001 to topple the Taliban government. Using bomb attacks will undermine the people's confidence in their government because they are not doing a good enough job of stopping the bombings. Another example is the Rhodesian war in the 70s, during this time groups used terror tactics to make the lives of the white community difficult, if they could not work in the country, they would be forced to leave.

Terrorism is seen by some as a "cleansing force". Violence is seen as a way of cleaning away the things or people you don't like. This is common amongst some governments to crush the opposition. One example is the Nazi government of

Germany which had opposition which threatened to overthrow the government so to stop that happening; the Nazi secretly murdered the leaders of the opposition. There have also been other examples of governments “cleaning away” the opposition by using terror tactics such as the French Revolutionary party which killed as much as 30,000 people from 1793 -94 and many communist governments have sent millions to their deaths like the Soviet Union, China up to 1987 and other smaller countries like North Korea and Tito's Yugoslavia. This terror tactic can come in other forms as well like ethnic cleansing and simpler forms like the Hamas’ bombs against Israel could be classified as a “cleansing force”.

These are the terrorist tactics used to achieve political aims. More than one tactic can be used in a terrorist attack as publicity, appear bigger, kidnapping, short term aim and a “cleansing force” were all tactics used in the Munich Massacre. However, as long as the aims of the terrorists are different their tactics will be in some ways, different and similar to other terrorist attacks.

On the 11th of September 2001 the largest attack on American soil took place since Pearl Harbour. The targets were the economic and military buildings of the US. Terrorists hijacked 4 American planes and crashed two of them into the World Trade Centre, one into the Pentagon and another into a field. The attacks were caused by Al-Qaeda, which is an Islamic terrorist group. The question is why some Muslims would hate America enough to launch an attack on it.

One factor is economic. The US consumer society with heavy advertising creates western films and consumer goods. Some of the products undermine traditional Arab cultures; this is because some films might contain sexual content and violence offends the Arabs. Even the dress of western women poses a threat to Arab culture. This is a religious factor. Another thing is that US world supremacy relies on an economy driven by Middle Eastern oil supplies, so the US will support any country which allows them to have oil such as Iraq which allowed it access to its oil supplies in return for financial support. This was because after four humiliating defeats to Arab nations including Iraq, the US voted to severely sanction Iraq after the Gulf War. As a result of this, medical and food supplies were severely restricted and 500,000 children died as a result. Another example of war was the Iraq-Iran war in which Iraq attacked Iran using US supplied weapons and the US secretly gave Iran money to fight the Iraqis. Many Arabs see this as American money used to kill Muslims in return for oil.

One key factor to this was the creation of Israel. It was created by giving Palestinian land to the Jews. When the Jewish state was created in 1948, five Arab nations had already created a coalition which was determined to destroy the new state. The UN’s plan was to give 60% of the land to Jews even though they made up only 40% of the population. After this the Israelis started to seize land promised to the Arabs, the rest of the world took no action. In 1948, America recognised Israel as a boundless state so that President Truman would gain votes from American Jews, and the rest of the world soon followed. Israel needed the support of America if it were to survive. 750,000 Palestinians were forced to leave their homeland. Some saw this as the Arabs paying for the guilt for the holocaust which was felt by many in the west. After this, 4 wars were fought, in 1948, 1956 and 1967 which saw Israel fight off its attackers. Another war was fought in 1973 which ended in a cease fire. The reason

this would make some Muslims hate America is that it was America that supported the creation of Israel and supplied weapons to Israel which led to defeats in wars.

Another large factor was America's "violent" past 50 years. In 1953, America overthrew Prime Minister Mossadeq of Iran and installed Shah as dictator. The US gave military, political and economic support to Israel. In the 1980s, the CIA gave \$3 billion to the Mujahideen to fight off the Russians. The US gave Iraq and Iran money to fight each other. In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait using weapons from the US, the US then invaded Iraq. As a result of the UN's severe sanctions on Iraq, 500,000 children died. These are reasons why some Muslims hate America. It is important to know that America might have a good reason to do these things, the information portrayed might be biased but this is how some Muslims see America as.

The aims of Al-Qaeda are to unite all Muslims, overthrow all pro western Muslim governments and remove state boundaries between Muslim countries and to create a Islamic Caliphate. The reasons for hatred towards the Americans is because it is seen as the biggest obstacle to achieve these aims, it is seen as the "infidel" as it is not a Muslim country, it is seen as providing support to other "infidel" governments and it is seen as trying to take over the Middle East. It also opposes the US because it has arrested member of its organization.

This is why the some Muslims hate the US, reasons such as the creation of Israel thanks to US support, the effect America might have on traditional Arab culture and US interest in the Middle East for its oil supplies. This led to attacks such as the 9/11.