

The terrorist attacks on the world trade centre and the pentagon on the 11 septem...

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



The terrorist attacks on the world trade centre and the pentagon on the 11 September 2001 were a totally new phenomenon that changed the world. Critically evaluate this claim Ever since the attack of 9/11 in which two of America's most famous landmarks (world trade centre and pentagon had been destroyed, the world has been on edge. Till then the terrorism was sought to be phenomenon where little is known . However this event changed the course of the history and the way the western civilization looks at terrorism and security.

Tension which was always present between the western and Islamic nations escalated to a new level of paranoia. The American government generated fear and propaganda with the help of mass media coverage. This in end helped to spread hate and disdain over Islamic countries. This essay will evaluate the post 9/11 syndrome and its impact on the world in terms of security, media and emergence of ' Islamphobia'. Historically terrorism is not a new phenomenon; the world has been experiencing it since the late 1960's.

However terrorist and acts of terrorism rarely had an impact beyond national borders (Baylis, Smith & Owen 2008). So how did it transcend to a global threat? It can be said that act of terrorism and the orchestration of it become more sophisticated than before through access to new and advanced technology thanks to globalisation. Also the expansion of commercial air travel which suited terrorist groups due to little security. However terrorism is nothing without a major political agenda . This serves as terrorist motivation and justification for their attack.

All these factors gave birth to 9/11 phenomena. The September 11 attack or as we today know it 9/11 were a series of coordinated suicide attacks orchestrated by Al-Qaeda up on the united states in an act of vengeance. 19 Al-Qaeda terrorist hijacked four commercial passenger jet airlines (Roger 2009). The hijackers then internationally crashed two of the airlines into the Twin towers of the World trade centre in New York City, killing everyone on board and many other working in the buildings. Both buildings collapsed within two hours, destroying nearby buildings and damaging others.

A third plane was into the pentagon in Arlington, Virginia just outside Washington D. C. The last plane which was directed towards Washington D. C crashed into a rural field. Why was the Pentagon and world trade centre chosen for this attack to be carried out? These terrorist could have crashed their planes into the white house. Is it simply because these buildings “ reek of American hegemonic power and are the symbols of it” (Roger 2009 pg 34. The Pentagon is headquarters of United States defence system. This security sector is the ultimate example of military power around the world.

It is understandable to conclude why this particular building was targeted, if this building was destroyed than the supreme power of America would be defenceless. In order to understand the attack one must fathom the motives behind it. In this sense ‘ the phenomenon of 9/11 was a postmodern act of terrorism which encapsulates the attackers radical religious believes. New terrorism or the global Jihad is seen as a reaction to the perceived “ oppression of Muslims worldwide and spiritual bankruptcy of the west” (Baylis, Smith &Owens pg 377).

Islamic nations sought only two things either to conform or rebel against western values. This concept triggered and espoused new interpretations to religion and served as moral justification for religious fanatics. A link has been established between culture and terror. According to Al-Queda this new act of terrorism is a patriotic duty and must be carried out in the name of Alah (Dywer 1994). In this respect, “ the killers who struck at the New York on September 11 2001 and the regimes that claim absolute moral superiority over them share some common traits” (Nandy 2004 pg 168).

They believe that when it comes to satanic others all terror is justified as long as it is counterterrorism or retributive justice. These terrorist deem themselves as chosen holy warriors and hence, qualified to deliver life and death in the name of righteous causes. The attackers were posthumous children of the twentieth century- a century that installed the rights to hone technologies of terror and capacity to inflict unlimited collateral damage at the centre of public life (Nandy 2004). For more than 1, 300 years there has been a clash between western and Islamic civilizations. Huntington 1993 pg31).

They competed against each other to have a new world order and rule rest of civilizations. The main reason for this divergence is religion thus Islam versus Christianity and also a conflictions of ideologies. Western nations are proud advocates of liberal democracy, human rights and individualism. It is the home to capitalism, free market and private (Huntington 1993). With a firm believe that everyone is entitled to their freedom of speech. Islamic civilisations are quite different they do believe capitalism and free markets.

However the concept of individualism is sorely contested, and instead they are focused on the collective. Human rights are culturally contingent and thus these rights are limited in the name religion. Countries like Saudi Arabia where 12 of the terrorist were from put the Sharia as a fundamental law and everyone must abide by it or suffer the consequences. Bush's government and elements in society have learned to exploit terrorism directed against them, to manipulate terrorism in their favour" (Gal-Or 1991 pg 145). So in another words the American government helped initiated and wage a new type of postmodern terrorism.

This in the end produced an irrational fear of Islam or Muslims. '

Islamophobia' a term which dates back to the late 1980's has become the new label for an ideology. It became common after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States to refer to types of political dialogue that appeared prejudicially resistant to pro-Islamic argument. This idiom has materialized due to the portrayal of Islam and Muslim as the national "Other". Exclusion and discrimination occurs on the basis of their religion and civilisation which differs with national tradition and identity.

Bombardment of hostility and fear towards Muslims ... are closely linked to media portrayals of Islam as barbaric, Irrational, primitive and sexist" (Poole 2004 pg 158). Around the world Islamophobia has been greeted as a new ideology, which is radically practice. For example; American Pastor Terry Jones, a man who staged a Koran burning day in remembrance of 9/11. Australia 3 years ago a protest to build an Islamic school for children, this

was debated and taken to court. Britain has the highest hate crime against Muslims around the world (Roger 2009).

The 9/11 attack became legendary with the support of television and print media around the world. The legend is comforting in its simplicity: bands of religious fanatics from the opposite side of the globe taking advantage of open and liberal American society to fly planes into buildings, killing thousands. US media viewed it, along with most of the public as an attack on the American way of life, and an attack on American values (Dimaggio 2009). Television studios in America fed the public biased and often wrong information about the attack.

Was a medium coverage used as a tool for manipulating and shaping people opinions? Thus introducing a new type of propaganda about Islamic civilisations and the American's promoting their own agenda. In order to generate more fear to the public, public relations which was sponsored by the American government ran ad 24/7 about the implication of 9/11. The effects it had socially, economically, instead of focusing on the thousands of victims and their families after the aftermath of the attack. Mass media coverage helped introduce a wide range of the conspiracy theories about the September 11 attacks.

Racial and cultural barbs were thrown around in establishing these theories. For example, 4000 Jews failed to show up for work at the world trade centre on September 11. Instead of unifying the American nation at such a time, it has helped divide them even more (Dimaggio 2009). These theories establish

a clear dichotomy between good and evil, or guilty and innocent. So In another words America and Islamic nations. After all the good deeds that America has done for Afghanistan (An Islamic nation) where the promotion of liberal democracy was done.

It seems that whenever there is any terrorist attack occurring around the world, the events of 9/11 is quickly drawn to spot light. For example the London bombing or 7/7 where a series of coordinated suicide attacks all was occurring in public transport. These attacks were carried out by Islamic extremist and the media has helped spread their fame (DiMaggio 2009). 7/7 and 9/11 has made western nations rethink their security priorities. The event of 9/11 shed a new light on security not just on America but on an international level. Sovereign states became obsessed with being 'secure' and soon this idea became pandemic phenomena around world.

The notion of security became contested among the American public and this drove the Bush administration to launch " The war on terror". US tropes invaded Afghanistan to dispose of Al-Qaida. Soon the Taliban regime has been terminated and the Al-Qaida movement dispersed, abandoned training camps were destroyed (Rogers 2004). The " War on terror" appeared to be progressing with the enemy eliminated. However the America government sought a new technique to keep their nation terrorised beyond the pervious emphasis on Al-Qaida. Bush embraced a number of new rouge states that constituted an " axis of evil". Those include North Korea, Iran and Iraq.

All in the name of democracy which has become an integral part of US current international security strategy. In order to combat terrorism leaders of the United States, Britain and Australia suggested that all states should cooperate in a global war on terror to deal with the threat and ensure safety of their nations. Due to the adaptive and elusive power of terrorist fanatics, the best way to approach terrorism is pour resources together in a 'collation of the willing'. "Where forces from the global north are seeking to improve specific states in the global south" (Baylis, Smith & Owens pg 383 2008) .

This in the end will develop a global counter-terrorism network (GCTN). So states can detect, track and eliminate threats while non-military efforts address the problem (Baylis, Smith & Owens 2008) America's leadership empowered other western nations to enact dramatic security measures as part of this on-going drama "war on terror". Many other countries also strengthened their anti-terrorism legislation and expanded law enforcement powers. Australia is no exception... "In 2002 the Australian parliament passed legislation which introduced crimes of terrorism for the first time in federal law" (Hocking 2004).

Air port security repercussion after the attack of 9/11 became more intensified. Doors on aircrafts are strengthened and bulletproof to avoid any access without authorization. More money is being financed into airport security (Roger 2009). The checkpoint tightened, installation of security cameras are became more frequent, and no drinks are prohibited. Passengers are patted down and thoroughly checked with a hand -healed metal detectors by a trained personal. 9/11 atrocities left other western

nations paranoid of new threats. This is all because the supreme power (US) has fallen.

New facilities around the world were built to ensure that terrorism was monitored and suspects were interrogated. For example there are nearly 50,000 people with the status of detainees held in the US custody at Guantanamo Bay (Baylis, Smith & Owens 2008). Old techniques such as torture which were forgotten in our civilised society became more apparent and resourceful into obtaining information about forthcoming attacks. Countries around the globe began to finance money into their security out of caution and fear (Hocking 2004). The attack of 9/11 was a new modern terrorism phenomenon in terms of advancement and coordination of terrorist acts.

However it was not the first time terrorist attacks came to surface within American soil. In fact the world trade centre was once bombed before. The bombing which occurred on February 26 1993 has long since overshadowed by the attack that brought the twin towers down on September 11 2001. Yet at the time it occurred, the attack loomed as large on the American landscape as the towers themselves one did on Manhattan skyline (Dywer 1994). The attack killed six people and injured more than a thousand. The perpetrators Ramzi Yousef, Mahmud Abouhalima, Mohammad Salameh, Nidal

Ayyah, Abdu; Rahman Yasin and Ahmed Ajaj were from Islamic countries. Although this event was never justified it was still America's first foreign

terrorist attack. This incident was the baby stone to a much catastrophic and monstrous event which is 9/11. The event of 9/11 changed how the world looks at terrorism and helped introduce a new enemy to the front line. It has made the public more aware of the sophistication and coordination of terrorist groups. Although terrorism is not a new phenomenon, this event changed the course of history of terrorism and helped western nation became more cautious of it.