

Why is terrorism difficult to define

Law



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Why Is Terrorism Difficult To Define 'Terrorism' is one of those few words that Google gets the most number of searches on. After the September 11 attacks on the world trade center, this term has taken a whole new understanding and its recognition has led it to become a brand name used interchangeably with the terrorist organization, Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaida is considered one of those actors that spread the political act of terror through its political channel of terrorism. These three terms, terror, terrorism and terrorist are used synonymously to describe the people and their acts that politically create upheaval against the government in power. More often, the word is 'terror' is used to describe the looming global security threat crisis. Identifying terror and removing it from its roots is not only hard, it is being considered impossible. To find out why this term is so challenging even for greatest super power in the world, US, we need to divulge ourselves into in to its context and meanings.

Terrorism, as Oxford dictionary describes, is (1) " government by intimidation as directed and carried out by the party in power in France during the Revolution of 1789-94 . . . " and (2) " policy intended to strike with terror those against whom it is adopted." It is interesting to see that both definitions hold a common viewpoint for those people who resort to threats and violence that is outside the normal oppositional struggle against their enemies.

Although this definition is easy to understand, if we look deeper we can find that this definition is vague. The question that this definition fails to answer is 'How do we measure what extent of violence is considered "outside the normal oppositional struggle" As we begin to understand this problem, we find that there is no objective criterion available to us to gauge what extent

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of violence and threat can be called as an act of 'terrorism'.

This difficulty to find what qualifies as an act of terrorism is even more difficult since 'terror' is used to describe a strategy rather than an act. The strategy is to send a message to the higher ups in the government that they and their policies are vulnerable, that there is common voice in the public that are against government's policies and that public has the capacity to attack the government in case those policies aren't removed.

The most common type of terrorism in the world is religion related. Multitude organizations all over the globe fight to uphold their religion. Islamic fundamentalists have distorted the message of Islam and try to extort western nations to submit themselves to their demands of leaving alone the eastern side of the world into the hands of the Muslims.

At this point another interesting notion is arrived at. In the terrorist organization, not all the factions act violently and kill their enemies. Terrorist militias or zealots are the main people who commit direct acts of violence, but what about autonomists and conspirators who define the plans and visions for terror These strategists act to destabilize the nations and governments from the inside to lead to in-fights and civil wars. Even if we find a way to identify and measure the direct acts of violence related to terrorists, these indirect involvements may never be found. It is because of these very reasons why terrorism is considered difficult to define!

Work Cited

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