

Terrorism and International Politics: The XXI Century

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, Islamic terrorist organizations are discussed within a context of how international terrorists undermine world's security, even though the ideology of these organizations has nothing to do with internationalism. In its turn, such blend of ideas creates a certain paradox – despite the fact that terrorist organizations did proclaim their goal to be the “liberation of proletariat in the whole world”, these organizations' activities have traditionally been thought of as the ones representing a threat only to the countries of their origin, rather than to international community. On the other hand, such Islamic terrorist organizations as Al-Qaeda, which had repeatedly proclaimed their operating agenda to be strictly concerned with liberation of Palestine from Israeli's unlawful occupation, are being commonly discussed as the part of “global Jihadist movement”.

DISCUSSION SECTION: TERRORISM

Terrorism can be best described as a barbaric type of warfare, which does not make the latter less operationally effective, though – and this is only the thing that counts. Apparently, the true motivations behind contemporary terrorism can no longer be discussed within a framework of conventional international relation theories. The obvious reason for the impossibility to track the modern terrorism is that the theories concerning terrorism are based on assumption that states remain the legitimate players on geopolitical arena, while in fact – it is only a matter of time before the very notion of “state” would become an anachronism. The next part of this paper will be dedicated to substantiating the validity of this suggestion to even further degree. U.S. State Department defines terrorism as “politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets” (Cirincione, 2002, p. 54); yet, this

definition does not clarify why in the course of recent decades citizens in Western countries started to think of international terrorism as of a clear and constant threat to their lives. After all, law enforcement agencies would not stand great challenge once they start working on an efficient scheme on how to deal with terrorist-minded “fighters for freedom” effectively. Such agencies proved themselves quite capable of discovering and upsetting terrorists’ plans in the past. For example, in seventies, it had only taken three years for the German police to completely eliminate such a notorious terrorist organization as RAF (Rote Armee Fractionen), the members of which had participated in bombing of supermarkets, hijacking planes and killing their political opponents (Healy *et al.*, 2002).

The “globalized” socio-political reality can be explained as: 1) The process of independent countries’ national sovereignty being undermined by promoters of globalization; 2) The process of Western societies’ demographic fabric undergoing a dramatic transformation, due to “multiculturalism”; 3) The fact that political dynamics on international arena is now best described in terms of “communities” vs. “states”, rather than “states” vs. “states”, as it used to be the case before the advent of globalization. What it means is that, nowadays, the process of political governing in Western countries becomes increasingly anonymous – for example, when riot police is being sent to fight protesters (which happens often in Western countries), no politician will ever take a responsibility for it (Huddy *et al.*, 2002). The government (bureaucracy) exercises political violence against citizens, while citizens are unaware of the fact who gives the actual orders. The community, on the other hand, does not consider an “anonymous” form of governing as legitimate, which is why it prefers to live by its own rules, while responding to governmental violence with its own violence (Mishal and Morag, 2002).

The most obvious effect of continuous process of globalization is the fact that such international organizations as UN, WTO, E.U., UNESCO etc., which consist of nonelected and anonymous bureaucrats, are being gradually turned into quasi-states of their own, with the governments of formally independent countries openly proclaiming their intention to act as the puppets of “world’s government” in the future. However, the process of globalization did not reduce the rates of politically motivated violence in the world. On the contrary, nowadays, world media never cease reporting the news about terrorist bombings, which occur almost on daily basis. Thus, it will only be logical to assume that in the near future, world’s military conflicts and the governmental struggle against terrorist activities would be best described in terms of “states/bureaucracy” vs. “communities”. There are many good reasons to think that conceptual transformation of the term “warfare” has already begun (Chanley, 2002).

For example, ever since the time of its creation, the terrorist organization Hamas has been keeping the whole region of Middle East in the state of permanent political crisis. To make the matter worse, in 2006 Hamas was elected the political leader of Palestine. The problem was that the U.S. Department of State put Hamas on its list of terrorists, simultaneously proclaiming Palestinian unwavering adherence to the ideals of democracy. The fact that Hamas enjoys overwhelming support among Palestinians does not whitewash the famous terrorist organization. Such results of the Palestinian elections can mean only one thing – most of the Palestinian population consists of terrorists, which actually explains why the issue of violence in the Middle East cannot be effectively solved without eliminating the actual roots of such violence – the very existence of Palestinians as ethnic community. This is the reason why, during the course of recent years, Israeli army has been indiscriminately hitting civilian targets within Palestine – apparently, the fact that Palestinians act as “innocent civilians” in the daylight does not make them less legitimate targets for

Israeli army, because in the night, these “innocent civilians” turn into terrorists. In other words, the essentially stateless community of Palestinians continues to wage an effective war on the state of Israel. However, it would be wrong to refer to the particularities of “community” vs. “state” war in Israel as a geographically localized phenomenon (Cacioppo and Visser, 2003).

As it has been mentioned earlier, Israeli state officials have repeatedly proclaimed Palestinians being “natural-born terrorists”, implying that all Muslims belong to terrorist organizations. This is why Israel wages war on Palestinians as if they were all representatives of a “terrorist community”. In its turn, this prompts Palestinian/Islamic terrorists to think of Israel and of its allies as of a “terrorist state”. Meanwhile, the practice of conducting traditional warfare implies that combatants do not hate each other personally (during the course of WW2, German pilots would often become best friends with American pilots, downed over Germany and consequently turned into prisoners of war). The community-versus-state type of warfare implies something entirely opposite. It should be marked that the factor of international enmity and racial animosity plays an important role in such type of war. The racial conflict is exactly the reason why Islamic terrorists consider innocent civilians in Western countries perfect targets for their terroristic acts (Brewer and Steenbergen, 2002).

Those who believe that terrorism cannot be considered an act of war, point out that terrorist activities are fully illegal. When caught, terrorists are being treated as spies, since Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 does not apply to them. This is the reason why prisoners of Guantanamo have not even been given any legal reason for their imprisonment. Since hardly anyone regards the prisoners of Guantanamo as “non-combatants”, they can never expect to attain the status of “prisoners of war”. However, since world’s independent states have been largely

deprived of their former national sovereignty, it makes very little sense to apply state-based notions, in regards to principles of warfare, to terrorists. If terrorists capture a U.N. soldier, they would not be obliged to treat him as combatant, because while on duty, he never represented his actual country, but simply an organization (Bar-Tal, 2001).

Muslims constitute the racial and religious minority with the greatest expansion rates in Western countries. For example, the number of mosques in London today equals the number of Christian churches in this city. Some “progressive” British politicians and religious leaders start suggesting that Islamic law of Shariah should be incorporated with the British common law. The reason to consider Islamic terrorism an acute danger to international security is the active promotion of “multicultural” agenda in Western countries. The abovementioned activity has created objective prerequisites for the threat of terrorism to emerge by allowing millions of Muslims to immigrate various countries in order to be able to “celebrate diversity” at the expense of native-born taxpayers (Augsburger, 2002).

Upon their arrival to Western countries, Muslim immigrants instantly realise that they have been put in an advantageous position, as compared to native Westerners, because: 1) They are not burdened by the ideas of Judeo-Christian morality; 2) Unlike Whites, they possess an acute sense of racial and religious solidarity, which allows them to proceed with creation of “societies within society” in the newly acquired “homeland” for the purpose of exploiting it. This is the reason why Muslim terrorist organizations that operate in Western countries often use “Palestinian genocide” as an excuse for perpetrating the acts of violence against the whites – these organizations strive for increasing the political and social weight of Muslim communities in the West (Augsburger, 2002).

Nowadays, in such cities as Paris, London and Berlin, not a single night goes by without at least a few cars being set on fire by Islamic youth. And, as practice shows, this benefits French, British and German Muslim communities in a very practical manner – while yapping away on “dangers of international terrorism”, neo-Liberal governments in European countries actively contribute to flaming these dangers by continuously providing Muslims with special rights and privileges (Augsburger, 2002). The suggestion envisioning the future world filled with Muslims and the Muslim ideas of justice drives to the conclusion that realities of 21st century living will be defined by confrontation between ethnically-based “communities”, on the one hand, and bureaucratic apparatus (“states”) on the other, rather than by geopolitical confrontation between states. In Hawk’s book, *The Next Global Stage*, one of the most famous ideologists of globalization, Kenichi Ohmae, reveals the secret of what represents globalists’ ultimate agenda: “The global economy ignores barriers, but if they are not removed, they cause distortion. The traditional centralized nation-state is another cause of friction. It is ill equipped to play a meaningful role on the global stage” (Ohmae, 2005, p. 15). It appears that even the activities of neo-Marxist terrorists in seventies were clearly marked by a communal rather than by purely ideological spirit – such famous left-wing terrorists as Andreas Baader, Ulrika Mainhof and Gudrun Ensling, who were born in rich families, could not have possibly been concerned about “workers’ cause”. The reason they participated in violent acts against their co-citizens is that they simply wanted to feel “special”, they wanted to “belong” (Augsburger, 2002).

Given the fact that Liberal politicians in Western countries continue to encourage the representatives of racial minorities to think of their ethnic and religious affiliation as of their “uniqueness”, it will only be natural, on the part of “ethnically unique” citizens, to strive towards institutionalization of such their “uniqueness”. And, as

people who possess considerable vitality and recognize the liberal concept of “multicultural tolerance” as merely a myth based on wishful thinking, they will inevitably come to realization that it is only by resorting to violence that they will be able to achieve their goals (Augsburger, 2002).

In a post-industrial world, it is namely the Europeans’ willingness to conform, to suppress their individuality, which accounts for their chances of gaining social prominence. This is why today’s Western politicians resemble each other to such a striking extent – the same grey suits, the same conniving smiles, the same politically correct rhetoric, the same ability to lie in the most convincing manner. However, for the people with strong political and religious beliefs, such as the overwhelming majority of Muslims in Western countries are, politically correct “progressiveness” simply cannot have any effect on their existential mode – these people are simply too realistic. This is why, unlike the decadent whites, they do not conform to various laws and regulations, but actively resist these laws by becoming the members of religiously and racially secluded communities, thus deriving the strength for their determination to win its place under the sun (Augsburger, 2002).

When Palestinians are being told by Israeli state officials not to resist the process of their houses being demolished by bulldozers, Palestinians responded back by proving to these officials that their bodies are not bulletproof. When Canada’s state officials told the newly arrived Muslim immigrants that they cannot go about carrying ceremonial knives in public, the immigrants resorted to the services of shysters who get “biased” officials fired on the account of “racial intolerance”. When French Muslims are asked to consider the probability of becoming employed, instead of continuing to rely on social assistance as the solemn source of their income, they respond back by setting cars on fire in the middle of Paris; as the result, the number of Muslims’ welfare checks is constantly increasing. When police starts paying visits

to the members of community in a particular Chinatown too often, all the residents come out on the street and start throwing rocks at cops (Augsburger, 2002).

CONCLUSION

The issue of terrorism is an act of war. Moreover, it is the matter of comparatively short time for terrorism to attain a semi-legitimate status, as a communally minded citizens' ultimate instrument of depriving governmental bureaucracy ("state") of its monopoly on political violence perpetration, which is how "community" resists "bureaucracy". Thus, as the recent political realities indicate – the Muslims are being rather successful with it, especially while dealing with Western "bureaucracy".

Reference List

- Augsburger, D. W. (2002) *Conflict mediation across cultures: pathways and patterns*. Louisville KY, Westminster/John Knox.
- Bar-Tal, D. (2001) Foreword: meanings of psychology as politics. *Political Psychology*, 22(2), 219-226.
- Brewer, Paul and Steenbergen, Marco (2002) All against all: how beliefs about human nature shape foreign policy opinions. *Political Psychology*, 23(1), 39-58.
- Cacioppo, John and Visser, Penny (2003) Political psychology and social neuroscience: strange bedfellows or comrades in arms? *Political Psychology*, 24(4), 647-656.
- Chanley, V. (2002) Trust in government in the aftermath of 9/11: determinants and consequences. *Political Psychology*, 23(3), 469-483.
- Cirincione, J. (2000) *Repairing the regime: preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction*. New York NY, Routledge.
- Healy, A. F., et al. (2002) Terrorists and democrats: individual reactions to international attacks. *Political Psychology*, 23(3), 439-467.
- Huddy, L., et al. (2002) The consequences of terrorism: disentangling the effects of personal and national threat. *Political Psychology*, 23(3), 485-509.
- Mishal, Shaul and Morag, Navad (2002) Political expectations and cultural perceptions in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. *Political Psychology*, 23(2), 325-353.
- Ohmae, K. (2005) *Next global stage: challenges and opportunities in our borderless world*. Upper Saddle River NJ, Wharton School Publishing.
- Perez, A. G. (2001) Political psychology as discipline and resource. *Political Psychology*, 22(2), 347-356.

Peraino, K. (2006) Extreme victory. *Newsweek*. 147.6(1), 26-30.

Perl, R. F. (2001) Terrorism, the future, and U.S. foreign policy. *Policy*

Papers. September 13. Washington DC, Congressional Research Service.

Rabasa, A. (2006) *Beyond Al-Qaeda: the global Jihadist movement*. Santa Monica

CA: RAND.

Ross, D. (2007) Counterterrorism: a professional's strategy. *World Policy Journal*.

4(1), 19-31.

Weltman, David and Billig, Michael (2001) The political psychology of contemporary

anti-politics: a discursive approach to the end-of-ideology era. *Political*

Psychology, 22(2), 367-382.