Fundamentalism and Terrorism[*]
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Under what circumstances and with what rationale do people kill and maim one another and, in particular, innocent people and children, in the name of a higher cause? This occurred in Oklahoma City, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, former Yugoslavia and, of course, New York and Washington. If we cast our net more widely we can add Rwanda (where about a million died) and Iraq, and if we broaden our scope again we can include world wars, civil wars and dictatorships, for example in Uganda, Chile, Argentina and the history of pogroms, the Spanish Inquisition, slavery in the Americas, the genocide of the native Americans.

In Oklahoma City the higher cause was the Militia movement in America, seeking to preserve a special reading of individual rights in the face of the federal government, Jews and the United Nations. In Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and probably in New York and Washington it was Moslem fundamentalism under the sponsorship of Osama Bin Laden, while in the Balkans it was ethnic cleansing.

The killings in each of these settings had the keynote of purification, the elimination of enemies who were considered evil. Extreme terrorists seek to wash the impure world clean with the blood of innocent victims. The broader examples I mentioned have that theme, too, whether in tribal terms in Africa, anti-communism in South America, the persecution of Jews as infidel non-Christians, the rooting out of heresy from Catholicism, the mastery of blacks and the conquering of Indians in the name of European and putatively higher civilization. In each case the rights and consideration normally accorded to other humans is denied or is revoked, and it is alleged that they or their ancestors have acted so as to merit the loss of the status of full human being.

Dark-skinned Africans were candidates for enslavement, so goes the rationale, because they were descendants of Ham, the son of Noah. According to the *Bible,* Ham looked upon his father naked and had failed to cover the old man, though his brothers had done so. Ham's punishment was that his son Chus (or Canaan) and all his descendants would be black and would be banished from his sight. The crime of Ham — as the Hebraic and early Christian commentators understood perfectly well — was not merely disrespect. It was the castration of the father — the violent rejection of

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[*] I wrote an earlier version of this set of reflections in 2001 in the immediate wake of the 9/11 New York bombings and re-read them a few days after the election of Trump but before he took office. It occurred to me that it might be food for thought in these very uncertain times. This is its first publication.

paternal authority and the acquisition of the father's sexual choice. The blackening and banishing of Ham's progeny are the retaliatory castration by the higher Father, God. The transgression that is used to rationalise racism was putatively an Oedipal one.

What is black and banished cannot be seen. The long-term consequence of this was, that in Europe, that is to say, in every civilised and civilising country, the Negro is the symbol of sin. Whatever is forbidden and horrifying in human nature gets designated as black and projected onto a man whose dark skin and oppressed past fit him to receive the symbols. The id becomes the referent of blackness within the personality, and the various trends within the id make themselves realised in the world as the forms of blackness embodied in the fantasies of race (Kovel, 1970, pp. 63-66).

The Bible, other sacred texts and religious traditions more generally are often appealed to for authority for behaving abominably. All of the perpetrators of otherwise heinous and sometimes unimaginable atrocities believed themselves to be acting righteously. During the American Civil War, the Supreme Court dismissed the applications of pacifists with the statement, 'A country which contemplates war as well as peace as an instrument of national policy must proceed under the assumption that its policies are not inconsistent with the will of God.'

It is, of course, against the tenets of Christianity to take another's life, as it is against the tenets of Islam, as the President of Lebanon pointed out on 12 September 2001. However, holy people, Ayatollahs, for example, say to a person who is being asked to blow himself up with dynamite, or in a flying bomb as two dozen Arabs did, that they will go straight to heaven. Christian righteousness can be used to rationalize the most appalling behaviour. In Argentina, under the anti-left and officially Christian dictatorship, after highly technical and agonising torture had achieved all it could, prisoners were taken out over the sea in helicopters, their abdomens were cut open, and they were thrown into the sea bleeding to attract sharks. Their children were adopted untraceably by their parents' torturers, guards and other friends of the ruling group.

Some dynamic features are becoming apparent. The perpetrator is altogether right, sanctioned by God. The victim is altogether wrong, beyond humanity, quite literally dehumanised – monkeys, as the Japanese were called in the Second World War, beasts or brutes as the Germans were, gooks, as the Viet Cong were. The African slaves' lament was. 'Am I not a Man and a Brother'? Apparently not, according to the slave trader and slave owner, though, quite paradoxically, the slave man would often be entrusted with the owner's child, the slave woman would often bear him children, and the slave mammy would often be the confidant of the daughter of the house and carer of the small white children. This pattern persisted in post-slavery America and was common in Apartheid South Africa, both places of extreme Christian fundamentalist religion. Even so, the 'place' of the denigrated person was officially sub- or non-human or, at best, as my mother used to say, 'They are like children, and it is God's will that we should take care of them'. At the same time my sister and I were raised and cared for throughout our childhood by 'black mammies' at home and in

Sunday School. This was common in suburban Dallas and throughout the American South and Southwest.

Contradictions abounded. In psychoanalytic terms we have here splitting. Blacks, Third World peasants and enemies are not like us. They are not even rather like us. They are unspeakably awful – dirty, unprincipled, rapacious, thieving, whatever comes to mind. We stereotype them, denigrate them, split them off from the human community and sever the bond of sympathetic imagination that constitutes the fellow-feeling that makes behaving badly unacceptable. Then we can exploit, enslave, rape, harm, kill them. In fact, we have every right to, and it is good in God's light that we should do so. When the Conquistadores set about slaughtering and otherwise causing the deaths of over 12 million inhabitants of the West Indies in the first forty years after Columbus sailed there (Las Casas, 1552), learned Catholic theologians decreed in 1503, that the permission of Queen Isabella should be given for slavery in the New World. A degraded view of the natives was a prerequisite to this trade, as was a promise of salvation. Here is the curious decree she signed: 'Being as they are hardened in their hard habits of idolatry and cannibalism, it was agreed that I should issue this decree... I hereby give licence and permission... to capture them... paying us the share that belongs to us, and to sell them and utilise their services, without incurring any penalty thereby, because if the Christians bring them to these lands and make use of their service, they will be more easily converted and attracted to our Holy Faith' (Carew, 1988, pp. 38, 48).

The charges against the Native Americans – mistakenly called 'Indians' – were caricatures. These people were being degraded. They were stereotyped. They were split off – everything 'we' are not. We have the true faith, as claimed so many of the waves of immigrants who went to the New World as that they could be pure, as the Puritans, including my own ancestors, did in 1609. These waves of immigrants were the same people who made and broke treaty after treaty with the native Americans, took their land, and when the Indians defended themselves and their territories, they were called savages. Then they were called 'redskins', since it was easier to bring in the bloody skin for the bounty being paid for killing them than to heft a whole corpse. They also were deemed pagans, and the religions they had and the cults they practiced were deemed devilish, as are deemed the positions taken up by third world people whose immiseration leads them to join fundamentalist Muslim sects.

It is so striking to read and hear about dreadful terrorists who are accused of attacking the highest values – democracy and freedom and civilization itself – without its being asked how they reached the point of feeling the need to reject all of first world values. We are appalled by female circumcision, fatwas, bombings – all deplorable in themselves – without asking how people got to the point of adopting them.

Fundamentalism
What all the groups I am discussing here have in common is fundamentalism. Fundamentalists have no time for democracy, pluralism, religious toleration,

peacekeeping, free speech or the separation of church and state. Fundamentalisms all follow a certain pattern. They are embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis. They are engaged in a conflict with enemies whose secularist policies and beliefs seem inimical to religion itself. Fundamentalists do not regard this battle as a conventional political struggle, but experience it as a cosmic war between the forces of good and evil. They fear annihilation, and try to fortify their beleaguered identity by means of a selective retrieval of certain doctrines and practices of the past. To avoid contamination, they often withdraw from mainstream society to create a counterculture. Yet fundamentalists are not impractical dreamers. They have absorbed the pragmatic rationalism of modernity, and, under the guidance of their charismatic leaders, they refine these 'fundamentals' so as to create an ideology that provides the faithful with a plan of action. Eventually they fight back and attempt to resacralize an increasingly sceptical world.

There are, of course, various forms of fundamentalism around, but they have certain common features.– common fears, anxieties and desires, they share a reaction against scientific and secular culture. This is certainly true of the Protestant fundamentalism with which I am familiar in America and the Muslim fundamentalism implicated in the Twin Tower bombings in Manhattan.

Thinking about the dynamics of this way of thinking intrapsychically, why do people become fundamentalists? People or peoples or groups somehow come to feel deeply threatened. Poor people, disenfranchised people, displaced people, embattled people, refugees. In a reduced state people cannot bear uncertainty. What people do when they feel under threat is to simplify. To simplify in psychoanalytic terms is to regress, to eliminate the middle ground, to split, dividing the world into safe and threat, good and evil, life and death. To be a fundamentalist is to see the world perpetually in these terms, to cling to certainties drawn from sacred texts or the pronouncements of charismatic leaders.

The baby whose needs are not met blames the provider who has not provided or who has removed what one needs and is experienced as abandoning or withholding. One feels attacked, as it were – attacked by lack – hunger, and one wants to retaliate. It is so tempting to defend oneself from feeling so abject by becoming, in phantasy. the opposite and attain a position of complete self-sufficiency or certainty. Bin Laden's father died when he was 10; the young Hitler was a failed painter. 'I am nobody and am sure of nothing' becomes 'I am powerful and sure about everything: it is in the book.'

If fundamentalists were really sure they would not have to be so intolerant. People who feel threatened in this way see others in very partial terms – as part-objects. They suffer from unconscious phantasies of annihilation and defend themselves against these psychotic anxieties with rigid views. They lose the ability to imagine the inner world, the humanity, of others. Sympathy, compassion and concern for the object evaporate, and brittle feelings of blaming and destructiveness predominate. They act out. Where acting out is, thought cannot be. It is not seemly

that Vice President Cheney said over the weekend of the Manhattan attack that he wants to have the head of Osama Bin Laden on a platter.

Terrorism is the institutional violence of the fundamentalist. It has been used throughout history [1]. Some will recall the Spartacist slave rebellion in 73-71 BC, which at one time numbered 90,000. It was defeated by the Roman legions led by Crassus, who crucified over 6000 Spartacists and placed them all along both sides of the Appian Way to frighten others from rebellion. Blacks were terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan. Israelis are terrorized by suicide bombers[2], as are the Spaniards by Basque bombs. Of course there are differences of merit among different terrorists. One person's freedom fighter is another's terrorist. Black South Africans blew up oil depots under apartheid. Zapastista rebels in Mexico wreak havoc, as do other subversives in many Third World countries.

This is also true of Israel, where Zionists fought against the British mandate. Menachem Begin was the leader of one terrorist gang, Irgun, during the period 1938-47. He went on to become Prime Minister of the country and to share the Nobel Peace Prize with Anwar Sadat (who was murdered by Muslim fundamentalists for trying to make peace in the region). Irgun blew up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem on 22 July 1946, killing 91 soldiers and civilians – British, Arab and Jewish I should add that the hotel housed, among others, the British military command and the British Criminal Investigation Division and that warning was given to evacuate. The same organization raided an Arab village on 9 April 1947 and killed all 254 of its inhabitants. (On Zionist terrorism, see Koestler, 1949, pp. 137). Yitzhak Shamir was a leading member of another terrorist group, the Stern Gang, fighting for the creation of Israel. He went on to be Prime Minister on two occasions. A later Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, was the chief architect of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and was criticized for allowing Lebanese Christian forces into Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut and held responsible for the subsequent massacre of civilians.

The fundamentalist terrorist lies at the extreme end of people killing in a higher cause. What they do from hatred is to act out unconscious phantasies – they tear, maim, torture, disembowel, put victims' genitals in their mouths, eviscerate – horrible things (I am thinking of accounts of Argentinian, African, French, Algerian and British torturers). When the Taliban overthrew the head of state of the previous regime they hung him in public and stuffed his genitals into his mouth.

It is very common to see and hear rhetoric about pure evil, Satan. Seeking the origins of the concept of Satan, we find them in the origins of Christianity. The proto-Christian group, the Essenes, introduced it to characterize the 'other' – other tribes, threatening strangers. Things go full circle: this occurred in the turmoil of first century Palestine (Pagels, p. xviii). Satan defines negatively what we think of as human (*ibid.*). By characterizing our enemies as satanic, we can justify hatred, even mass slaughter (p. xix). Elaine Pagels says Satan mirrors our own confrontations with otherness, *i.e.,* that he is a projection. He expresses quality of going beyond lust and anger and onto brutality (p. xvii). This is familiar territory.

If we put this concept of projection together with the extreme splitting I described above, we find that history and theology have given us a fair account of projective identification in its most virulent forms as found in racism, sectarianism, holy wars – all with fundamentalism at their base. Do not forget, however, that the fundamentalism itself is for many adherents an effect of deprivation. For example, one quarter of the population of Afghanistan once depend entirely on international aid, a situation not unfamiliar to a number of countries in the Third World, *e.g.,* in the Horn of Africa. Similarly, the gap between rich and poor both within and between countries is growing, not shrinking. It is especially ironic that those who make the trainers and fast foods cannot afford the lifestyle of which they are a part and often work in health-threatening settings.

I now want to look at fundamentalism in three settings: the ultra-right militias in the US, the extreme racism of the lynch mob and Osama Bin Laden's group, al-Qaeda. I will discuss them in that order. My reason is, once again, to drive home the point that fundamentalism and terrorism are in no way foreign to America's past or present: motes and beams.

US Militias
When the Oklahoma City bombing occurred in 1995, it was at first thought to be perpetrated by foreigners, Muslim fundamentalists, but it turned out to be done by two home-grown American fundamentalists, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. Various right-wing armed groups exist in the US – militias, Patriots, Freemen or Christian Identity – that are located in rural areas, principally in the Pacific Northwest states of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, but they are also present in the Old South as well as in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan, the home of the notorious Michigan Militia. They are fighting a perceived conspiracy, behind which is a New World Order including the Council of Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, the United Nations, Jews and blacks who are alleged to have somehow duped the US Government at the expense of Christianity, the Constitution and the common people. It is from this loose grouping of paranoid organizations that Two men came to blow up the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing over 168 people, including women and children. You may recall that their motive was retribution for the Federal Government's siege of the Branch Davidian cult lead by David Koresh in Waco, Texas, in which 80 highly-armed Christian fundamentalists perished by fire caused by Federal agents after a prolonged siege. The Oklahoma City bombing occurred on the anniversary of the fire. McVeigh was a hard-core follower of the militia movement.

These cultists advocate, in various combinations, a reactionary revolution 'which will bring about a great national rebirth, ending years of encroaching moral and political decadence wrought by a gigantic world conspiracy of probably Satanic origins' (Neiwert, 1999, p. 4). These groups are lineal descendants of the Aryan Nation and the Ku Klux Klan, which controlled the elected governments of several southern and Midwestern states in the 1920s.

David Neiwert has written a highly-textured study of some these movements

and has moved among them and met their adherents. Many of them seek purification by separating themselves from mainstream society and live in communities deep in the woods of the less populated states. Here is his characterization of the Patriots, a group that particularly abhors homosexuals and abortion providers: 'The Patriot movement appears to operate in the mainstream world, but truthfully it does not. Rather, its believers reside in a different universe – one dominated by an evil government and a conspiracy to destroy America. Agents of the dark side lurk at every corner; every disbeliever is a pawn. Proof of this hidden reality can be found in everyday news stories and ordinary documents, if only seen with the right eyes:

> The alternative reality that is the essence of the Patriot movement is like a big quilt, a patchwork of factual items – United Nations reports, government documents, news stories – that are pieced together with other less credible information – black helicopter sightings, suggestions of troop movements, and the like. The thread that weaves them all together is the paranoid belief is the existence of a vast conspiracy; even if elements of the patchwork don't appear to fit together, the irrational fear driving the movement will overlook inconsistencies. Everyone is free to make a contribution: a military vehicle sighting here, an obscure document there. Believers are free to ignore some elements of the patchwork if they happen to disagree, so long as the quilt itself hangs together as an all-encompassing blanket.

> The dwellers in this other world can be found not just among the most radical believers residing in the wilds of Montana, like the Freemen. They can be found seemingly everywhere in the Northwest: in suburban conference centres, in rural town halls, in Bible study groups.

> Step into one of the militias' organising meetings – typically held in small community halls in rural areas and in towns outlying urban centers – and you will have walked into this world'. (Niewert, p. 22)

The people who are drawn to these movements are for the most part losers, as are many fundamentalists. Their businesses have failed, their lives have not worked out, they have a grievance against local, state or national government. That's not quite the whole story, since most fundamentalisms have leaders who come from the elites of their respective societies. Sometimes their role is to be at the head of a populist movement, making a bargain with the people they want to rule and exploit. Sometimes, as with reactionary fat cats, they want to protect their winnings. (I am reminded of the election of Donald Trump to the US Presidency.)

I say again that you don't have to be economically oppressed to be a fundamentalist. I grew up in what was then the richest community on earth – the Park Cities suburb of Dallas. Dallas then boasted the largest fundamentalist Baptist and the largest fundamentalist Methodist churches in America. I attended the First Presbyterian Church – the fifth generation in my family to do so. I went to church up

to three times on Sunday – Sunday school, 'big' church and vespers and often attended sing-songs during the week. We were taught the literal truth of every word in the Bible and other tenets of what came to be called fundamentalism in the 1920s (see Appendix). The people attending these churches were far from immiserated, at least economically. But they did live in a place which had the histories of being defeated in the Civil War, of then being ruled and humiliated by oppressive carpetbaggers (so named because the opportunists who flooded into the South where the defeated electorate could not stand for office could not afford suitcases, so they created valises from old carpets) and then, in the twentieth century, gaining great wealth in seemingly magical and precarious ways – oil and finance. This was the city which so hated liberalism that Democratic Presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson was spat upon there, and, of course, Texas' own governor and one of its senators were shot, and the President murdered in 1963.

My parents, along with many other local dignitaries, were waiting to have lunch with President Kennedy in a large hall on the edge of town. On the way home my mother saw an American flag being flown upside down by a retired ultraconservative army general in protest at the President's visit. She, a frail old lady, got out of her car and took it down. When his bodyguards appeared, she stood her ground and said they had no right to fly the flag and took it away.

I have the impression that if one believes that one's prosperity is not merited, one supports this uncertainty with an ideology of total certainty. In any case I well remember the owner of a local company manufacturing cotton gins (the mechanical basis for post-Civil War Southern prosperity. my father worked for another manufacturer of cotton gins) who taught my Sunday school class, going on week after week about his relationship with his close personal friend – indeed, his very best friend – Jesus. The beliefs of the political power structure of Dallas were congruent with its simplistic religious beliefs. The person who was at the time the world's richest man, H. L. Hunt, lived in Dallas. He had won his first oil property in a poker game. He wrote a book arguing that the more money one has, the more votes one should have. Young people of good family were invited by him to join an organization called Facts Forum in which they were schooled in ultra-conservative politics and religion.

I was for a time a member. This was the period when wealthy Dallas ultra-conservatives bankrolled Senator Joseph McCarthy, the senator who put fear into all liberals and leftists with his witch-hunting in the 1950s. The mother of one of my girlfriends had large number of match books printed with the slogan 'I like McCarthy and His Methods', and every match had printed on it 'Strike a Light for Freedom!'. His methods were intimidation, slander and innuendo; for years no one, not even the President, dared oppose him, which is why the witch-hunting Nixon was chosen as Eisenhower's running mate. McCarthy destroyed many lives and sullied the culture industries, especially film, with his brand of fundamentalist anti-communism. Civil rights were trampled during his reign of paranoia and persecution. Wealthy contemporaries of mine who have remained in Dallas continue to hold similarly unenlightened views. (They voted for Trump.)

You can imagine what a shock it was for me to go East to university (1749 miles from home) and be told in a course on religion that the Gospels contained innumerable inconsistencies. I took the trouble to go up after the first lecture when this was said and patiently explained to the professor that he was mistaken, since every word in the Bible was true. He was unshaken and gentle, and I spent a difficult period reconstituting my world-view to make allowance for uncertainty and mixed opinions.

Lynching

I want now to turn to an extreme manifestation of fundamentalism, of which racism is so often an important part, as it is in the militia movement. Lynching is to racism as terrorism is to fundamentalism – its most virulent expression. It is a painful topic, but it dramatically drives home some of what I want to convey about the primitiveness of what we do when we hate. I quote from the introduction to a photo album I have a copy of: 'In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century two or three black southerners were hanged, burned at the stake or quietly murdered every week. In the 1890s lynchings claimed an average of 139 lives each year, 75 per cent of them black. The numbers declined in the following decades, but the percentage of black victims rose to 90 per cent. Between 1882 and 1968 an estimated 4742 blacks met their deaths at the hands of lynch mobs' (Allen *et al.*, 2000, unp). The frequency declined after 1930, but 21 civil rights workers were murdered between 1961 and 1965. Needless to say, the perpetrators of these crimes were almost never arraigned, much less convicted. Rape and murder were the most common charges, but note well, the very act of lynching means that the event pre-empted the judicial process, so the charge had not yet been tested in a court of law.

Lynching was a public event openly attended by numerous, often hundreds, of locals. The duly constituted authorities could not or certainly did not prevent them. The rationale, often stated, was that an occasional lynching was a good preventative, because it 'kept the niggers in their place'. The crowds gathered up as souvenirs teeth, toes, fingers, nails, kneecaps, bits of charred skin and bones, as well as penises, testicles and scrotums (Buckser, 1992, pp. 18, 22, 23). Sometimes whole bodies were hacked to bits and shared out. These mementoes were often sold and later found on the watch fobs or on prominent display by local citizens. They, along with pieces of rope or chain used in the lynching, were thought to have magical or ritual significance. Photographs of the event were common, and professionals often developed, reproduced and sold the pictures on the spot. An exhibition of them was published.

Lynchings occurred almost exclusively in the parts of the country where poor white people felt threatened by the newly freed blacks. The only thing standing between a white sharecropper, often called 'redneck' because of the sunburn on his neck from constantly bending over to hoe cotton – between him and the bottom.– was the black person being kept down by so-called 'Jim Crow' discriminatory laws and customs which were not finally set aside until the 1960s. Blacks had poor housing, facilities and schools and were prevented from voting. They were terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan, an organization founded on the principles of white supremacy and

fundamentalist Christianity. The Klansmen wore white robes, pointed hoods and masks to hide their identities. The symbol of their terror was a burning cross – a fitting representation of perverted religiousity.

The Klan continued to attract members well into the second half of the twentieth century. I worked among them in a Ford assembly plant in the mid-1950s where I was ostracized for being seen conversing with a black janitor. The clansmen I encountered were sharecroppers trying desperately to hold onto their farms by going off to town to work in a factory. Cotton had become uneconomical for the smallholders due to the introduction of the mechanical picker which was driving the blacks off the land and North to Chicago and elsewhere to seek work (and find drugs and street gangs) in the cities while the white sharecroppers clung to the Old South and the consolations of the degradation of blacks. As recently as the late 1990s in East Texas a black man was dragged by a chain attached to a pickup truck driven by white racists until he literally fell apart.

Muslim Fundamentalism
The Americans were going to bomb Viet Nam 'back into the Stone Age'; the very same threat was later applied to Afghanistan, because the Taliban have given hospitality and protection to Osama Bin Laden. An Afghan commentator subsequently reflected on this phrase and the situation in Afghanistan: 'Some say, why don't the Afghans rise up and overthrow the Taliban? The answer is, they're starved, exhausted, hurt, incapacitated, suffering.

A few years ago, the United Nations estimated that there are 500,000 disabled orphans in Afghanistan – a country with no economy, no food. There are millions of widows. And the Taliban has been burying these widows alive in mass graves. The soil is littered with land mines, the farms were all destroyed by the Soviets. These are a few of the reasons why the Afghan people have not overthrown the Taliban. We come now to the question of bombing Afghanistan back to the Stone Age. Trouble is, that's been done. The Soviets took care of it already. Make the Afghans suffer? They're already suffering. Level their houses? Done. Turn their schools into piles of rubble? Done. Eradicate their hospitals? Done. Destroy their infrastructure? Cut them off from medicine and health care? Too late. Someone already did all that (Tamin Ansary, quoted in PHML forum by Dan Cash, 14.09.01) So much for the Desert Storm approach to the problem.

Let's now dwell on Bin Laden and his followers. So much of the rhetoric about him has been somewhat bewildered. America is the home of freedom, democracy and opportunity. How, then, could anyone but a madman want to attack America? Yet one Palestinian quoted on the radio said he felt sadness at the loss of life last Tuesday but had gladness in his heart. This gave grave offence. An American commentator was furious at the charge that America deserved it, pointing out that no other nation has been as generous in sending aid, planes and supplies all over the world. He called the comment that the attack was deserved 'total nonsense'.
It turns out that America supported the Taliban and worked constructively with

Bin Laden as part of their support for the *mujahideen* in the closing years of the Soviet regime, since it suited them to have lots of Soviet soldiers tied down in a bitter war on its southern flank. In doing this, however, they brought together Muslim fundamentalists from fifty countries, trained and armed them and gave them military experience in the field that they would have been unlikely to get elsewhere. Then they dispersed, and lo and behold there are people associated with Bin Laden's group, called al-Qaeda or The Base, in 30 or 40 countries. One account says 44.

Bin Laden himself grew up in Saudi Arabia, where his father grew fabulously rich from beginning as an immigrant Yemeni dock labourer by getting contracts to rebuild the holiest places in Mecca and Medina. The boy was the seventeenth of the more than fifty children of this construction magnate and had a very strictly orthodox Muslim upbringing. He has never been anywhere outside Muslim countries. He moved back and forth between Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan and was in exile for a time in Sudan (1992-96). The defining event of his thinking was Desert Storm in 1990. He warned the Saudi Royal Family that Iraq was about to invade Kuwait and expected the Arabs to build up a force to prevent this. Instead, they brought in the Americans and British. This was, to him, an outrageous sacrilege: no infidel should be in Muslim Holy Places. It was from this point that he set out to destroy the American empire. For example, the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, in which 224 people died, occurred on the anniversary of the day American troops landed in Saudi Arabia. It has been suggested that the atrocities in New York and Washington occurred when they did, because September 11 is the anniversary of the date when 'the conquering armies of Islam were met, held and thrown back at the gates of Vienna' in 1683 (Hitchens, 2001).

You might think this a particularly fastidious origin of the recent atrocities, but you have to put it together with the disaffection of millions of Arabs in the Middle East, whose grievances extend from hating to see their natural resources and much of their wealth go to the metropolitan countries, to seeing their culture sullied by the world wide influence of American cinema, music, fashion and so on. Interviews with Bin Laden make it clear that these are felt as profound insults by Muslims. Americans just don't 'get it'. As I heard on the radio, 'These are desperate, angry men'. They are not mad, and plenty of them are willing to undertake any attack on America, Britain and Israel, including suicide bombing, of which seventy per cent of Palestinians approve. Americans brag about being the cradle of democracy while they support less than democratic regimes in the Middle East, not the least of which is Saudi Arabia, where the kind of puritanic literalism, the Wahhabi sect, followed by the terrorists in the Middle East and Afghanistan originated in the eighteenth century.

The sect was founded in Arabia by Ibn Abdul Wahhib (1703-92) in opposition to the spiritual decadence of the Ottoman Empire. This was, of course, long before the grievances of today's terrorists, but, as they see it, the critique of decadence fits both periods. From the beginning his cult was associated with the mass murder of all who opposed it. Bin Laden is a Wahhabi, as are the perpetrators of all of the recent terrorist attacks in the region. We know that the US CIA supported the fighters in

Afghanistan who became Bin Laden's followers. It is less well known that the British supported the Wahhabis in their revolt against the Ottomans, leading to the establishment of the present country of Saudi Arabia by the founder of the present dynasty, King Ibn Saud (c 1880-1953). The sect was very weak at the end of the nineteenth century. *His family, with its regular seat at Riyadh in the Nejd, were the traditional leaders of the Wahhabi movement in Islam.* During Ibn Saud's youth the Saud family was in exile in Kuwait. In 1902 he and a small party of relatives and servants recaptured Riyadh.

By 1912 he had completed the conquest of the Nejd and organized a well-trained army. During World War I the British made slight efforts to cultivate Ibn Saud's friendship but favoured his rival, Husayn ibn Ali of the Hejaz. In 1924-25, Ibn Saud defeated Husayn and proclaimed himself king of Hejaz and Nejd. After consolidating his power over most of the Arabian peninsula, he changed the name of his kingdom to Saudi Arabia (1932). It was he who granted oil concessions to American companies in 1936 and 1939. *The rulers of Saudi Arabia have consistently followed and exported Wahhabism.* In 1979 when the *mujahideen* asked the Saudis to provide a prince to take a leading part in their anti-Soviet resistance in Afghanistan, they nominated the young scion of a merchant prince, Muhammad Bin Laden, who was very close to the royal family. Osama was his youngest son *and had been tutored by exiled Egyptian Wahhabi fundamentalists.*

In addition to al-Qaeda, the organization he leads, there are a number of groupings, *e.g.*, Fatah, Hamas, Hizbollah, Islamic Jihad, dedicated in varying degrees to the destruction of Israel, which, after all, was created by simply taking land from Palestine[3]. The Jews claim it as their historic homeland, and many Zionists bought land and lived there before the creation of Israel, but most of the Arab inhabitants and the refugees, as well as many Arabs in other countries, consider the action of the United Nations to be theft. It is the height of naiveté and false consciousness for Americans to say, as many have, 'The forces of evil have chosen to destroy us, because we are good' (CNN 13.9.01). There were many references to 'attacks on freedom and democracy', something which few people in the Middle East have experienced much of, for example the Palestinian refugees who have had no home for over fifty years. I also heard the phrase 'attacks on civilization', which reminded me of a quip by Gandhi. Someone once asked him what he thought of Western civilization. He replied that he thought 'it would be a jolly good idea'.

I think we have to ask why so many are willing to volunteer to be suicide bombers or to go to certain death as hijackers, having, as apparently some did, waited as sleepers in America for some years to be called to action. In addition to the 19 on the planes, there were another 25 or so abetting them, and the mind boggles to think who is waiting for their chance to serve in this or related ways. A warning for those who think they can 'root out' Muslim fundamentalist terrorism: Wahhabi imams control over eighty per cent of mosques in the US, where Islam is the fastest-growing religion (Schwartz, 2001).

During the troubles in Northern Ireland there have been repeated references to

'mad bombers', psychopaths and murderers, as if that province had some genetic defect running rampant in the biology of its citizens rather than seeing it as a political and cultural conflict which leads ordinary people to the extremes of violence which have been enacted in recent decades, for example, the Omagh bombing. There, too, are poverty, injustice, oppression, lack of opportunity, inferiority. The problem in Ulster, as in the Middle East, as in all places of ongoing and extreme inequality, is what happened *in other cultures from which fundamentalism and terrorism have sprung* and may still spring. How can a person find it possible to say that he deeply regrets the loss of life in New York and Washington but also feels happiness in his heart unless he is coming from deep (not necessarily economic) deprivation nurturing hatred alongside his civilized humanitarianism? Referring to 'evil on this scale' averts one's eyes from the equivalent suffering on this scale that has evoked such destructiveness. There are two sides to every structure of projective identification, though they are not always symmetrical in intensity.

One commentator in *The Guardian* wrote, 'It is this record of unabashed national egotism and arrogance that drives anti-Americanism among swaths of the world's population, for whom there is little democracy in the current distribution of the world's wealth and power. If it turns out that the New York attacks were the work of Osama Bin Laden's supporters, the sense that the Americans are once again reaping a dragon's teeth harvest they themselves sowed will be overwhelming' ('They Can't see Why They Are Hated' by Seumas Milne. *Guardian* 13.9.01, p. 24). The founder of the Hamas movement wrote, 'This is the outcome of the injustice that the United States exercises against the oppressed people in the world… It is the United States that sows injustices and racial discrimination. It sows hatred in the hearts of the oppressed' (*Guardian* The Editor, 15.09.01, p. 9). Although it elicits outrage from Americans, an oft-repeated phrase is 'It served them right' or 'It serves the bastards right'.

Americans simply cannot take in that many people in the world hate them and their country. I saw a message on the net from a psychotherapist in Britain who had heard this phrase from three patients on the day after the attack on the Twin Towers. On the other side, I had a Zionist patient, whose life is going nowhere, manic with delight, since, as he sees it, the Israelis will now have *carte blanche* to deal with the Palestinian terrorists. He finds all these murders exciting. I also heard a Muslim woman on the radio who said that neither Americans nor other people from the first world have any idea 'how it feels to live outside this privileged world' and to be on the wrong side of globalization. The hatred and envy, the anger and resentment, are intense and evoke those people's most destructive impulses.

This will go on as long as the underlying causes are not addressed and the structures of inequality mitigated. This means reducing the structures of power and the gap in standards of living. It means eliminating the cultural hegemony. I may be wrong, but I think the Taliban would not be in a position to lay down their utterly rigid rules in a less polarised world. Girls are forbidden to go to school; women cannot go outdoors without being completely covered with shroud-like burkas. These restrictions would perhaps be less likely to prevail if the example of Western women was not so

undermining of Islam's own cultural values.

Bin Laden was not the head of a disciplined hierarchical organization like the Real IRA. Rather, it was a loose affiliation of like-minded people who agree with his views and, it appears, act relatively autonomously. But they act under a chilling injunction of his: that it is the 'individual duty for every Muslim who can do it… to kill the Americans and their allies – civilian and military – in any country in which it is possible to do it'. What he says he does is to 'instigate'. Others act. His logic is simple: 'The Americans should expect reactions from the Muslim world that are proportionate to the injustice they inflict' (*Time Magazine* interview, 1999). To escape this Americans and their lackeys must remove themselves from the chief shrines of Islam, elect governments that do not persecute Muslims and, ultimately, they must convert to the Muslim faith. Of course, activities of Prime Minister Sharon made the list of provocations longer, especially the assassination of Palestinian dissidents and other extreme acts that occurred under the cloud of the Manhattan atrocity. And then, as I said above, there is Sharon's past, especially his allowing the massacre of Palestinians in South Lebanon. And there is the ongoing starvation of innumerable Iraqis resulting from the Anglo-American blockade.

There is no end to the list of justifications for hating the Americans. They do not justify what was done to civilians in Manhattan, but they certainly help to explain it and to make it clear that military acts against terrorist and those who support them will not make the problem go away. For that to happen, to adapt a phrase from Mr Blair, we will have to be tough on terrorism and tough on *the causes of terrorism*, and that means addressing a huge world-wide problem about global capitalism, corrupt governments and inequality. Needless to say, the likely reactionary edicts of President Trump are extremely likely to exacerbate the sense of grievances felt by people like Bin Laden, not to mention Mexicans, innumerable other US immigrants, as well as other peoples with grievances against Americans.

Conclusion

I wonder if it is as obvious as I intend it to be that I am engaged here in a study in applied psychoanalysis. I hope it is. I am tracing the roots in the world situation of the splitting and projective identification – the virulent, malignant projective identification – that motivates fundamentalism and terrorism. As I said, I have myself been socialized into some of the lesser manifestations of this in fundamentalist Protestantism and the intolerance for other denominations and faiths this entails. I have also been near to some of its worst manifestations, i.e., the Ku Klux Klan.

I have not been directly sundered by murder itself, but I have been profoundly moved by some examples of inhumanity, especially in the American South, in Latin America and the Middle East and, of course, in New York and Washington. I was speaking to my eldest son about our shared distress. After the conversation he rang me back and said he'd recalled a moment in the first *Star Wars* movie when Alec Guinness spoke of 'a disturbance in the force' which he felt as if 'a million souls cried out in anguish'.

That is how these events affect me. In order to commit those atrocities, the humanity of those fundamentalists would have to have undergone a long process of caricaturing, degrading and dehumanising Americans, learning to treat them as part-objects, creating a huge split between themselves and those people in the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and their other target, perhaps the White House, perhaps Camp David. (Here I wish to pay my respects to the man named Todd Beamer who led the fight to overpower the hijackers and crash that plane headed for Washington.) Those people were scapegoated, thereby making them victims of religion's most challenging and heart-rending phenomenon, unmerited suffering. I here want to express my heartfelt sympathy for those who died and those loved ones who have survived them. Those people should not have died that way.

I am going to close by advocating the political equivalent of moving from the paranoid-schizoid to the depressive position. The difference between the two fundamental psychological stances, the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position, is supremely relevant here. In Kleinian psychoanalysis, the depressive position is as good as it gets. This may seem a bleak prospect, but one of my purposes is to try to persuade you that it's not a bad deal, as life in the real world goes and as we compare it with the alternative of the paranoid-schizoid position. Moving from the paranoid-schizoid to the depressive position, according to Irma Brenman Pick (1985), is the goal of every analytic interpretation. Getting people to 'take back the projections', *i.e.*, dwell more of the time in the depressive position, is one way of describing the goal of therapy. These two positions are considered by Kleinians to be the basic psychological modes of all of unconscious life. Indeed, Bion thought we oscillate so often and so quickly between the two basic positions in everyday life that he put a double-headed arrow between them: ps↔d

The depressive position is not just a lacuna in the arcane vocabulary of Kleinianism. Winnicott wrote of it as follows in his assessment of 'The Kleinian Contribution' two years after Melanie Klein died:

> Working along Kleinian lines one came to an understanding of the complex stage of development that Klein called the 'depressive position'. I think this is a bad name, but it is true that clinically, in psycho-analytic treatments, arrival at this position involves the patient in being depressed. Here being depressed is an achievement, and implies a high degree of personal integration, and an acceptance of responsibility for all the destructiveness that is bound up with living, with the instinctual life, and with anger and frustration.
>
> Klein was able to make it clear to me from the material my patients presented, how the capacity for concern and to feel guilty is an achievement, and it is this rather than depression that characterizes arrival at the depressive position in the case of the growing baby and child.

Arrival at this stage is associated with ideas of restitution and reparation, and indeed the human individual cannot accept the destructive and aggressive ideas in his or her own nature without experience of reparation, and for this reason the continued presence of the love object is necessary at this stage since only in this way is there an opportunity for reparation.

He continues with high praise: 'This is Klein's most important contribution, in my opinion, and I think it ranks with Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex' (Winnicott, 1965, p. 176).

I believe that we admire our leaders and heroes because they managed to attain and sustain that species of integrity that is the external world, role-playing expression of the depressive position – to behave well in spite of everything, including especially dreadful political and social problems and personal vicissitudes in the midst of pursuing admirable goals, doing one's duty, bearing heavy responsibilities and making unwelcome sacrifices.

Turning now to definitions, I offer you John Steiner's characterisations of the two positions which have come to be seen as the basic modes of feeling between which people oscillate:

As a brief summary: in the paranoid-schizoid position anxieties of a primitive nature threaten the immature ego and lead to a mobilisation of primitive defences. Splitting, idealisation and projective identification operate to create rudimentary structures made up of idealised good objects kept far apart from persecuting bad ones. The individual's own impulses are similarly split and he directs all his love towards the good object and all his hatred against the bad one. As a consequence of the projection, the leading anxiety is paranoid, and the preoccupation is with survival of the self. Thinking is concrete because of the confusion between self and object which is one of the consequences of projective identification (Segal, 1957).

The depressive position represents an important developmental advance in which whole objects begin to be recognised and ambivalent impulses become directed towards the primary object. These changes result from an increased capacity to integrate experiences and lead to a shift in primary concern from the survival of the self to a concern for the object upon which the individual depends. Destructive impulses lead to feelings of loss and guilt which can be more fully experienced and which consequently enable mourning to take place. The consequences include a development of symbolic function and the emergence of reparative capacities which become possible when thinking no longer has to remain concrete (Steiner, 1987, pp. 69-70; see also Steiner, 1993, pp. 26-34).

A lot hangs on attaining the depressive position. In 1946 Klein described a fundamental mechanism, involved in all communication but in its virulent forms lying

at the heart of hatred, racism, and idealization. It is, you might say, the fundamental particle of all the baleful phenomena of which fundamentalism and terrorism are among the most extreme manifestation. She called it 'a particular form of identification which establishes the prototype an aggressive object relation'. She added a couple of years later, 'I suggest for these processes the term 'projective identification'' (Klein, 1946, p. 8). This lies at the heart of human nature, and I will close by suggesting that finding ways of moving from part-object to whole object relations in international affairs is the key to peace. But the psychological move cannot be made independently of the material changes in wealth and power which will be required unless we are to crate in the coming period innumerable young Bin Ladens, American militiamen, racists and other fundamentalists to plague our world for the foreseeable future.

Indeed, we are faced with the prospect of a horrifying stand-off between two sorts of projecting and reprojecting fundamentalists in the wake of the 2016 US presidential election and the politics of the Trump regime.

We need constructive guilt and reparation, not self-righteousness and retaliation. At the moment I see two sets of projections, mutual caricatures, mutual incomprehension and underlying fundamentalisms on both sides. Where is the capacity for concern, the ability to see things in mixed, pluralistic, tolerant terms? If we cannot transcend the brittle stances I have been describing, we cannot have a liveable world. There will be no havens, no places of respite and safety and certainly no 'land of the free', 'Britons never shall be slaves' or 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'.

Afterthought
I have been thinking about President Bush's speech to Congress after the Manhattan bombings. Although I have lived abroad for 42 years, I count myself an American and was moved by some of it, though I was at times dubious about some of those feelings. What struck me most was that not a word of explanation was offered about why the terrorists do what they do. Don't get me wrong. I am not in any way attempting to justify what they do. Rather, I am saying that unless we come to understand – to be able to explain – what they do, I think that no amount of 'stamping out terrorists' will end the problem.

Once again, I think people become terrorists because of their fundamentalism and they become fundamentalists because their people are immiserated in ways they attribute to America as the leading country in the First World. People must have extreme experiences to take up extreme positions and do extreme things.

On the evidence of this and other examples of extreme armed actions (*e.g.*, Cuba, Russia, Vietnam, Cambodia), the people who take leading roles are often members of the middle or upper class, and they inspire and lead the cadres, though they often fight alongside them. I say this in the light of the fact that the terrorists seem to be largely educated people. I don't think that this makes their actions mysterious.

Any of us could make a useful list of why Americans are hated by some Muslims, but few have seemed willing to connect this to the bombings. I understand that 'to understand' can be thought of as too close to 'to forgive'. That is not my aim. My aim is to be hard on terrorism and hard on the causes of terrorism, so that no matter how successful the coming actions may be (and I have considerable doubts that they will come anywhere near 'stamping out terrorism'), we want sufficiently to correct the economic, cultural and geopolitical conditions which have evoked these species of fundamentalism and terrorism, so that people will no longer hate America, Britain, Israel and so on. Our aim should be that the next generation of Muslims is not so disaffected and feel that they have so little to lose that some of them sign up for terrorist activities.

I think that every terrorist killed by Bush & Co. will create others, rather like Mickey Mouse's broom splinters in 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' in *Fantasia* grew into new brooms. By the way, we are talking about a few thousand followers of Bin Laden out of a billion Muslims. Of course, two thousand may be enough to plunge the world into sectarian conflagration.

I am not optimistic that Americans will warm to this project of seeking to cure or considerably reduce the conditions which give rise to terrorism, because – judging, for example, from their reneging on the Kyoto agreement to reduce carbon dioxide.– they are very reluctant to do anything which will damage the American economy or limit their consumption of 25% of the world's resources, though they have 5% of the world's population. We are talking about cheap oil, coffee, trainers, cheap clothes from Wallmart and Matalan, cheap labour in free trade zones, Jewish hegemony in the Middle East, and many other commodities, products, forms of power and availability of labour. Once again, in the end I am talking about mitigating inequality to a very considerable extent. I don't think this project appeals« to many Americans, Britishers or Europeans, but I feel sure that nothing short of this will solve the problem of the conditions which give rise to that much hate and desire for what is felt to be justified revenge.

One or two people commenting on my talk on 'Fundamentalism' (above) have suggested that I should have said more about envy. I can't think straight about this. To be sure, much in the US is envied, but there is also the problem of wanting things that glitter but divert you from deeper values in your own traditional culture. I cannot therefore point to envy in any straightforward sense without feeling that I am trampling on other cultural values than the American ones.

I saw on the news that theme parks, resorts, convention centres and Broadway shows and all sorts of other ways of getting money are hugely down in bookings. It may dawn on people that it might even be cheaper to do something about inequality.

And then there is the moral argument. Greed is not appropriate to a Christian community any more than terrorism is to a Muslim one.

*This text is based on a twice revised talk delivered to distance learning students in Psychoanalytic Studies, Centre for Psychotherapeutic Studies, University of Sheffield a week after the New York and related terrorist bombings. The psychoanalytic portions draw on others writings of mine.

Notes

1. Here is a passage from the CD-ROM of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1999) on terrorism:

> **terrorism**, the systematic use of terror or unpredictable violence against governments, publics, or individuals to attain a political objective. Terrorism has been used by political organizations with both rightist and leftist objectives, by nationalistic and ethnic groups, by revolutionaries, and by the armies and secret police of governments themselves.
>
> Terrorism has been practiced throughout history and throughout the world. The ancient Greek historian Xenophon (c. 431-c. 350 BC) wrote of the effectiveness of psychological warfare against enemy populations. Roman emperors such as Tiberius (reigned AD 14-37) and Caligula (reigned AD 37-41) used banishment, expropriation of property, and execution as means to discourage opposition to their rule. The Spanish Inquisition used arbitrary arrest, torture, and execution to punish what it viewed as religious heresy. The use of terror was openly advocated by Robespierre as a means of encouraging revolutionary virtue during the French Revolution, leading to the period of his political dominance called the Reign of Terror (1793-94). After the American Civil War (1861-65) defiant Southerners formed a terrorist organization called the Ku Klux Klan to intimidate supporters of Reconstruction. In the latter half of the 19th century, terrorism was adopted by adherents of anarchism in Western Europe, Russia, and the United States. They believed that the best way to effect revolutionary political and social change was to assassinate persons in positions of power. From 1865 to 1905 a number of kings, presidents, prime ministers, and other government officials were killed by anarchists' guns or bombs.
>
> The 20th century witnessed great changes in the use and practice of terrorism. Terrorism became the hallmark of a number of political movements stretching from the extreme right to the extreme left of the political spectrum. Technological advances such as automatic weapons and compact, electrically detonated explosives gave terrorists a new mobility and lethality. Terrorism was adopted as virtually a state policy, though an unacknowledged one, by such totalitarian regimes as those of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler and the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin. In these states arrest, imprisonment, torture, and execution were applied without legal guidance or restraints to create a climate of fear and to encourage adherence to the national ideology and the declared economic, social, and political goals of the state (see totalitarianism).
>
> Terrorism has most commonly become identified, however, with individuals or groups attempting to destabilize or overthrow existing political institutions. Terrorism has been used by one or both sides in anticolonial conflicts (Ireland and the United Kingdom, Algeria and France, Vietnam and France/United States), in disputes between different national groups over possession of a contested homeland (Palestinians and Israel), in conflicts between different religious denominations (Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland), and in internal conflicts between revolutionary forces and established governments (Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Iran, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Argentina). (see also Index: revolutionary group)

Terrorism's public impact has been greatly magnified by the use of modern communications media. Any act of violence is certain to attract television coverage, which brings the event directly into millions of homes and exposes viewers to the terrorists' demands, grievances, or political goals. Modern terrorism differs from that of the past because its victims are frequently innocent civilians who are picked at random or who merely happen into terrorist situations. Many groups of terrorists in Europe hark back to the anarchists of the 19th century in their isolation from the political mainstream and the unrealistic nature of their goals. Lacking a base of popular support, extremists substitute violent acts for legitimate political activities. Such acts include kidnappings, assassinations, skyjackings, bombings, and hijackings. (see also Index: mass media)

The Baader-Meinhof gang of West Germany, the Japanese Red Army, Italy's Red Brigades, the Puerto Rican FALN, al-Fatah and other Palestinian organizations, the Shining Path of Peru, and France's Direct Action were among the most prominent terrorist groups of the later 20th century.

2. By no means are all suicides by fundamentalists aimed at taking revenge on oppressing groups. Think of the people of Jonestown in Central America, where nearly a thousand of Rev. Jones' followers took cyanide on his instruction and administered it to their children. The same can be said of the members of the Heaven's Gate cult in Canada and Switzerland, all of whom committed suicide on the command of their guru.

3. A Zionist friend and colleague objected strenuously to this phrase that, on reflection, I stand by. He pointed out that much of the land had already been bought by Zionist settlers; most of the so-called 'Palestinians' were not native to the region but had immigrated there as labourers during the 1920s and 30s; Jerusalem had been the capital of Israel for millennia but never the capital of a Muslim people; Muslim culture had been in decline for centuries, especially as a result of Turkish hegemony and decadence, and the Jews and the West were blamed for this. The Arab countries have deliberately not resettled and assimilated the Palestinian refugees in order to keep up moral, economic and military pressure and to keep the region unstable in the hope of destroying Israel. He also sent me a list of 15 reasons why the Palestinians' claims were illegitimate. The sensitivity of this matter was driven home the next day when Prime Minister Sharon cancelled a meeting with the British Foreign Secretary for using the word 'Palestine' in a article, thereby lending legitimacy to the claim that there is or should be such a state and implying that the Palestinians had a case. (The meeting was later reinstated.)

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