

# Will the Real Terrorist please Stand Up

by Bill Dawson

---

I've read and heard so much recently about terrorists. This is mainly by the spokespersons of the rulers of Britain, America and Israel - and dutifully taken up by the British press, radio and television. In fact, the word has been repeated ad nauseam.

So what exactly is a terrorist? I looked the word up in my dictionary. It said: *Terrorists - persons who use or favour violent and intimidating methods of coercing a government or community.*

That's funny, I thought, it doesn't mention anything about the number of persons or the size of the terrorist group, yet it's mainly individuals or small groups who are labelled as terrorists. It seems to me that *any* persons who use these methods must be *terrorists*.

Who, then, are the real terrorists, if the size or strength of the group does not enter into it? Could it be, as we are being conditioned to believe, that in order to be terrorists they have to be regarded as *the enemy*? Do they have to be small minorities, the underdog, small groups of rabble, political agitators? Surely not! Surely terrorists are individuals or groups that use the tactics of striking terror into the minds of their victims.

It starts then with the playground bully, or gang of bullies. They certainly use violent and intimidating methods on the community of children to establish their own power. Half a century ago, without doubt many teachers were terrorists - violence and intimidation, physical and mental, was definitely the favoured method of coercion - coercing the child community into accepting, memorising and parroting whatever they were told.

Go back a century, or less. Consider the old-fashioned bible-thumpers in their pulpits. The openly declared aim of this group of men was to put the fear of god into their community, who were taught that it was right and proper to be *god-fearing*. In fact, the community themselves accepted this ideal and people often boasted that they were god-fearing men and women, as if it were something to be proud of. Congregations were given graphic pictures and stories of their god's torture chambers - a place called Hell. These priests and their established collaborators were certainly using the ultimate methods of intimidation for the purposes of coercing the community into bowing down before them and obeying their rules. Just look at the church-approved paintings of Hieronymous Bosch, and the colourful details of the divine torments. Difficult to find any group more

worthy of being called terrorists: terror was their stock-in-trade.

The next category includes the Catholic and Protestant extremists in northern Ireland - the IRA and Orangemen. Violence and intimidation is their favoured method of coercing the community and the government into doing as they want. Both sides have made an unholy shambles of it so far, but failure does not mean they are not terrorists - according to the definition in my dictionary

Then we come to the more serious boys - also religious fanatics - quite unlike the cowardly terrorists of Northern Ireland who operate out of hiding, in darkness and secrecy, attempting to kill or maim individuals, then running back into hiding. These others are of a religious persuasion that incites them to be willing to die for their cause. I refer to the Muslim suicide bombers - terrorists indeed, for there is no-one who can strike more terror into the minds of their potential victims than those who have no fear of the personal consequences of their evil actions - whether homicidal maniacs or religious fanatics who are ready, willing and eager to die to achieve their objectives.

But who are the worst terrorists of all, the most destructive, the most intimidating, the most coercive, the most murderous, the most formidable and the most numerous? These are the massive well-established armies of the world, with the deadliest weapons of mass destruction and the most sophisticated means of killing and maiming. Of course, if the controllers of those armies do not use their power to intimidate or perpetrate violence upon the peoples of other lands as a means of coercion, then they can hardly come under the definition of terrorists. But if they bomb, blast and invade other lands, then the controllers and the killers they employ are beyond doubt engaging in terrorism - no matter what the reasons given - and they are clearly terrorists. No amount of smart uniforms, masses of weapons of destruction, rows of shiny medals, prestige, public approval or smart, self-righteous oratory by their controllers can alter this fact. Their one and only purpose is to use violence and intimidation to coerce their victims into doing what they, the terrorists, want. The fact that a small portion of the victims may happen to be terrorists themselves may be used as a means of justification for the larger terrorism, but the massive army is still just a band of terrorists - according to my dictionary.

Another dictionary definition of terrorism is *the use of organised intimidation*. It seems to me, therefore, that the greater the organisation, the greater the intimidation - and the greater the terrorism.

However, it's no use laying the blame for those definitions at my door - I merely quote them. Nor for the logical conclusions we must draw from them. I would not presume to judge who is terrorist and who is a freedom fighter, who is an occupying force and who is a liberator. I do know, however, that the rulers of one

powerful nation cleverly created the Commie-under-the-bed paranoia.

Are we in the process of changing that to a Terrie-under-the-bed scare mongering?

You never know, perhaps soon the powers that be will ban all dictionaries, so that they can just change the meanings of words at will, for their own convenience - or maybe for their own sinister, private agendas.

Me? I'll just believe anything I'm told - especially if I'm subjected to organised intimidation.

Bill Dawson

June 2003

---