

ARTIFICIAL ENEMIES: Straussian Lies and the War on Terror

By Richard Curtis*
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On November 7, 2007 Naomi Klein was interviewed on Randi Rhodes' radio show ("Air America" radio network). Klein offered this important observation: "The point of torture is state terror – control." Rhodes replied, "But isn't it self-evident that it backfires; torture just drives moderates into the hands of radicals?" What liberals, like Rhodes, fail to consider is that the official reasons given for a great many activities are lies. They seem aware that this administration in particular has a history of blatant deception, yet they seem unable or unwilling to actually consider that detail when they confront stated policies that are contradicted by the administration's actions as well as being obviously morally indefensible. Yes, of course, it is self-evident that torture makes extremists of moderates. This is precisely why it is done, as I will explain in what follows. Put simply, the administration's political philosophy, largely derived from the teachings of Leo Strauss, is that if you don't have an enemy at hand then you have to create one (or the appearance of one). We know they lie and yet we seem unwilling, as a culture, to simply act as if we know they lie. The biggest problem seems to be that their behavior is so outrageously immoral that it is difficult to believe that they are actually doing what we know they are doing, and so when they lie people are happy to believe them. Believing the lies means one does not have to do something about these moral outrages. But hiding in a cave of their delusions will only bring about ever greater crimes.

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What I will call the reader's attention to in what follows is a pattern in capitalism that can be seen as a meta-narrative of class struggle in the international context, in which fascist forms of government are one expression of how this struggle is conducted. UCLA emeritus Historian Alexander Saxton summed this up brilliantly for me in a recent email exchange. As I cannot improve on Saxton's summary of the point, I quote it here in full (from an email to the author 12/18/07, emphasis original):

Fascism is commonly thought of as an episode between the 1920's and the collapse of the axis powers in 1945, which was really *bad*, but was only a deviation from the ongoing triumphant rise of capitalism. I think it would be better to place fascism not as a deviation, but as one phase in a much longer process that began with the rise of industrial capitalism in western Europe, the establishment of its heartland in North America -- which, thanks to the previously untouched resources and continent-wide market to which only US capitalism had access, soon gave it superiority over West Europe. US capitalism was the leader in resisting welfare capitalism, which it fended off till the Great Depression and immediately used World War II, the Marshall Plan and all that, to set about getting rid of. US capitalism provided the decisive power in resisting the establishment of Socialist societies. What I am getting at is that fascism was only one episode in this much longer *class* struggle of international capitalism, increasingly muscled by US capitalism, that stretches from the Paris Commune, through the quarantining of the Soviet Union, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima/Nagasaki (I interpret this as THE triggering act of the Cold War), the containing wars against the spread of Socialism (Korea, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia right up to – and beyond – the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile). And so on. It was not that Leo Strauss learned from the fascists, but that fascism was just one notch in a longer sequence, which had been applying for many decades all the murderous techniques Strauss later taught his students.

What I will show the reader is this history of class struggle, which since the early 20th Century has been the history of fascist political philosophy, at first in blatant forms and then in more subtle forms. Leo Strauss did not originate these ideas but he did give them an especially clear (which is ironic given the notorious impenetrability of his books) form that we can see operating in many contexts around the world. It is thus useful to use his work as a lens through which to examine our recent history.

To be clear, we know that historically fascism has been associated with crises and inter-capitalist competition. I start with the premise that our near future is likely to be tumultuous on two major fronts – economic and environmental. Capitalism is facing a major economic crisis at present which is beginning to be discussed in critical circles (for example *CounterPunch* has devoted an entire issue in mid-December 2007 to “the coming economic meltdown”), and this will in the end have a great deal to do with something called “Hubbert’s Peak” (the end of cheap oil, a bit more on that below). The other crisis is much more ominous and has to do with environmental collapse as a result of global warming. These crises will predictably strain capitalist relations across nations and lead to more and bloodier competition. That is the future, but my point is more concerned with the present. These crises also strain class relations and exacerbate the class struggle as the capitalist class seeks to maintain its level of profit extraction while at the same time controlling the population. It is how they control the population that I will describe here.

OUR STORY STARTS WITH TORTURE

According to the award winning documentary series, “The Power of Nightmares: The Rise of the Politics of Fear” (BBC, in three - one hour parts, directed by Adam Curtis, no relation to this author, 2005; usefully summarized at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Power_of_Nightmares) the origins of what is called Radical Islam can be, in large measure, traced to the incarceration and torture of a seemingly well intended young Egyptian named Sayyid Qutb. Qutb had been a civil servant in the Egyptian government and in 1950’s came to the United States as a graduate student. Qutb was dismayed by what he saw as rampant promiscuity and self-destructive individualism in the United States. He seemed to believe that it was vital for Islamic societies to

not be corrupted by these sorts of Western influences. Upon his return to Egypt, after some associations with others of like mind, Qutb was arrested, jailed and tortured. If Qutb did not intend to be a threat to the Egyptian state when he returned home, their treatment of him guaranteed that he would become one. Qutb went on to become a leader of the radical Muslim Brotherhood and was later arrested and then executed in 1966.

Before his death Qutb had significant influence with Muslim conservatives and came to be a primary influence on Ayman al-Zawahri, who himself went on to influence other radicals, including mentoring a young Saudi national named Osama bin Laden. Qutb came to articulate an extremist philosophy that justified the killing of fellow Muslims who have abandoned the strict discipline of the faith and were corrupted by Western values. It is vitally important to note here that the murderous turn in Qutb's thinking coincides with his being tortured in Egyptian jails. Torture makes extremists out of moderates.

To be clear here, the point is terrorist murder. Islamic law differentiates between levels of wrongness of a killing. Killing a fellow Muslim is a grievous wrong, but Qutb argued that if a Muslim has done something to separate him or herself from the moral community then the rules that apply to non-Muslims, even infidels will apply instead. Qutb came to the position that Muslims who participated with a corrupted, that is no longer pious, Muslim society may properly be viewed as targets. So this position rationalizes political assassinations of fellow Muslims. In a later spin others – most importantly al-Zawahri – will similarly argue that this argument applies to any population that differs from someone's definitions of a proper society, the turn from murderous to terrorist.

The Muslim Brotherhood and other organizations have remained a threat to the Egyptian state, and were directly involved in the assassination of Anwar Sadat. That death now appears to

be the unintended (but logical) consequence of Gamal Nasser's prisons making a radical out of a well meaning conservative, in fact many as Qutb was not at all the only torture victim in that period.

MEANWHILE IN EUROPE

In 1948 what would become the CIA and Great Britain's MI6 helped to organize a secret NATO operation ostensibly to coordinate domestic resistance in NATO member countries in the event of an Eastern Block invasion of the west. The code name for the most active operation was *Gladio* (from an old Latin word for a double-edged sword). These activities were initially coordinated by the Clandestine Committee of the Western Union, and then starting in 1949 by the Clandestine Planning Committee and eventually (in 1951) by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. According to Daniele Ganser (*NATO's Secret Army: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*, London: Routledge, 2005), a parallel organization called the Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC) was established in 1957 and over time it supervised terrorist operations in a number of European countries, operations carried out by right-wing organizations but blamed on left-wing groups like the Red Brigades. These NATO sponsored terrorist operations were carried out in Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, The Netherlands, Luxemburg, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Greece and Turkey.

In 1990, two Italian judges investigating one of the terrorist bombings in Italy uncovered *Gladio* and its existence was publicly confirmed on October 24, 1990 by then Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti. A subsequent resolution by the European Union denounced *Gladio* and demanded a full investigation (November 22, 1990). According to Ganser what was uncovered was an organized "Strategy of Tension." With the rise of influence of Socialist and

Communist parties in Europe and a subsequent decline in generalized fear among the various populations, the ACC apparently coordinated terrorist attacks by right-wing extremists so as to 1) cause a generalized fear among Europeans; and 2) to discredit left-wing political groups and parties as violent extremists.

Gladio was astoundingly successful given that it was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of innocent civilians, its coordination by the highest level of NATO intelligence, and it being kept secret for four decades. But what must be understood here is that this was a Straussian technique. In the absence of an enemy, an artificial one was constructed and its true nature hidden from the public. There were terrorist attacks in Europe carried out under the auspices of *Gladio* and these attacks killed hundreds of people, they were real terrorist attacks – but the terrorists were not left-wing radicals acting on their own, but right-wing radicals acting at the behest of NATO itself. The terrorist threat in Europe was, it seems, entirely an artificial construction designed for the purposes of this Strategy of Tension – that is Straussian enemies terrifying a painfully naïve public that then seeks shelter and protection from the very people who were murdering them.

More generally these operations are called “False Flag Operations” in that the actual perpetrator is disguised so as to appear to be an enemy force, which then serves to justify some military action. There is a long history of False Flag Operations in military history with notable examples being the Guy Fawkes incident in 16th century England; the sinking of the USS Maine in Havana Harbor in 1898; the burning of the Reichstag in 1933, which was blamed on an inebriated Dutch Communist but was most likely carried out by the Nazi’s themselves; and “Operation Himmler” in 1939, which involved a series of staged attacks, allegedly by Poles, on German soil (the entirely fictional Gulf of Tonkin attack of 1964 is a variation on this theme).

The point here is that the international terrorism that terrified Europe off and on for forty years was in actual fact the work of NATO, not any of the left-wing organizations blamed for these attacks. What I will point out in what follows is that most of what is called International Terrorism, and especially these days Islamic Terrorism is done with the support and coordination of western intelligence services. That is this so-called International Terrorism is in actual fact State Terrorism.

OUR STORY MOVES TO AFGHANISTAN

In 1978 the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan came to power and very soon after found itself being attacked militarily by Islamic militants from the countryside. These militants were aided in their efforts by the CIA and Pakistan's ISI. After the new Afghani government requested Soviet military assistance a full blown proxy war was initiated with the formation of the Mujahadeen. Officially the CIA maintains that it did not begin supporting the Afghan rebels until after the Soviet military arrived in December of 1979, but according to Robert Gates (*From the Shadows*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997) the CIA actually began operations with Jimmy Carter's authorization of a CIA propaganda campaign in July 1979 (that is five months before the Soviet intervention).

What "The Power of Nightmares" makes clear about this period is that there were tensions inside the Mujahadeen movement as Muslim volunteers came from around the Middle East (indeed the world) with a variety of perspectives on what they were doing. One faction came to be directed by Ayman al-Zawahri and financed by his disciple Osama bin Laden, though it is not clear that this faction ever had more than a very small amount of support inside the Mujahadeen generally. Recall here the point about al-Zawahri following Qutb's move away

from traditional Islamic “Just War Theory” to advocate terrorist violence. It seems likely his faction was small because it deviated so dramatically from what the typical Mujahadeen volunteer would have considered moral, and the whole point was that this was, from their point of view, a deeply moral cause. Eventually, February 1989, the Soviet Union determined the war was un-winnable and withdrew their troops (recall the Soviets had been asked to intervene by the Afghani government, then later were asked to leave, which they refused, but eventually were forced to leave). Success was claimed by both the Neo-Conservative architects of the war and the Mujahadeen volunteers. However, both groups then suffered a series of devastating failures to parlay their Afghan victory into wider success. On the one hand, the terrorists led by al-Zawahri were unable to export their brand of Islamic revolution to other parts of the Middle East and central Asia (they were small to begin with and then found an unreceptive audience). And on the other hand, the Neo-Conservatives were kept controlled by the G.H.W. Bush administration and then were out of power during the Clinton administration. But even during those years this Strategy of Tension was motivating the means by which the CIA organized its activities under Clinton (as explained below).

According to Nafeez M. Ahmed, the Director of the Institute for Policy Research and Development in London (in a series of books from *The War on Freedom: How and Why America Was Attacked, September 11*, 2001, Joshua Tree, CA: Progressive Press, 2002 to *The War on Truth: 9/11, Disinformation and the Anatomy of Terrorism*, New York: Olive Branch Press, 2005), the more radical elements – that is the terrorist elements – from the Afghan campaign turned up in the Balkan war that began in 1991. It was in Yugoslavia and Albania that the name “al-Qaeda” began to be used to refer to this group of people. What is not at all clear is that there was ever anything like an actual organization – only disparate individuals working in a vague

association which was at times funded and directed by western intelligence services (either the CIA or local intelligence agencies). But what clearly was happening is that the CIA was selectively recruiting the criminal and terrorist elements from the larger Mujahadeen movement and organizing and training them. More details are available in a profound book called *Dollars for Terror: The United States and Islam* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2000) by a Swiss journalist named Richard Labeviere.

We are told that formal links between the CIA and these terrorist elements were severed, but it appears ties were maintained between other, proxy, intelligence services and these radicals. For example, in Algeria the government is apparently engaged in a civil war against Islamic radicals but Ahmed has uncovered information that indicates that some, if not most, of the attacks attributed to the Armed Islamic Group (GIA is the French acronym) were actually carried out under the direction of the Algeria state intelligence service. A more poignant example closer to home concerns the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. It appears that for many months before hand the FBI had a mole in the group that was responsible, allegedly headed by Omar Abdel Rahman (the so-called Blind Sheik, a Mujahadeen veteran). As the story goes, the FBI's mole secretly recorded conversations with the group as well as with his FBI handlers, and the available evidence indicates that the FBI became aware of the plan to bomb the WTC. A plan was hatched to supply the bombers with a fake bomb and then swoop in and arrest them when they tried to plant it. The plan was deemed unworkable by officials higher up than the NY FBI field office and it was dropped. But astoundingly nothing else was done, so the bombing went off as planned (Ralph Blumenthal, "Tapes Depict Proposal to Thwart Bomb Used in Trade Center Blast", *New York Times*, A1). Ahmed's research indicates that a pattern of these sorts of relationships exist in virtually all cases of so-called Islamic terrorism.

Getting back to the terrorist fringe of the Mujahadeen, both groups – the Neo-Conservatives and the terrorists from Afghanistan – lacked any significant power or influence, but that changed with the 1998 embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya. These bombings were blamed on this new artificial organization called al-Qaeda, now supposedly headed by bin Laden, which allegedly drew personnel from the Balkan war and remnants of the Mujahadeen elsewhere. However, the evidence linking bin Laden to these attacks is, as shown in the documentary, entirely without merit. A former associate of bin Laden's by the name of Jamal al-Fadl was paid to claim that the attacks were the work of bin Laden and this apparently invented organization called al-Qaeda. This claim then became the basis for the FBI's legal case against bin Laden charging him with directing the embassy bombings. What is implied in all this is that even those embassy bombings were probably not at all what they appeared to be, and Ahmed's work points toward western involvement in those bombings as well. Ahmed's work here is incredibly compelling because of his method – he sticks strictly to mainstream press accounts, and what is most shocking is how much of this “black” history has been covered here and there. What he does is to bring these disparate reports together.

Here it is important to keep in mind that the US government has yet to successfully prosecute anyone on charges of terrorism, in spite of a number of high profile cases. All of them have collapsed under scrutiny, even when they appeared to be very compelling at first. And yet we seem to accept every claim made by the government when the words “Islam” or “Muslim” and “Terrorist” are used. The government wants us to believe that there is a gigantic, hidden and powerful international terrorist organization called al-Qaeda, but all of their claims – whenever they have been subjected to court scrutiny – have completely collapsed. In short, al-Qaeda is an artificial not a real organization. In its original use in the Balkans the term merely referred to a

list of Mujahadeen loyal to al-Zawahri's terrorist faction, who were used as a mercenary force in that war. Now, it appears to be a short-hand for anyone or any group that opposes American imperial policy, even when those groups seem in whole or in part linked to western intelligence agencies as part of someone's Strategy of Tension.

WHAT ABOUT 9/11 AND LONDON?

On November 7, 2007 I had the opportunity to meet Cynthia McKinney. McKinney is a former nine-term Congressperson from Georgia. She is currently running for President of the United States as a Green, having left the Democratic Party in disgust after its abandonment of the basic principles of democracy following the elections of 2000 and 2004. McKinney is also known for taking a skeptical position with regard to the administration's claims about what happened on 9/11. I asked her why, why did she doubt that we were told the truth about that day. Her answer was that there was something incredibly suspicious about the president refusing to initiate a full scale investigation of 9/11. She mentioned that at the time there had been a train accident and she was aware that in response to that minor tragedy hordes of investigators had been dispatched to discover what had happened. And yet with this most dramatic of catastrophes the administration refused to investigate at all (the investigation that did finally happen was a year later and is entirely unreliable, see David Ray Griffin, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*, Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2005). She could not believe that this refusal was motivated by anything other than self-interest. They had to be hiding something.

A number of possibilities are worth considering here: the administration could have been reluctant to investigate because an investigation would make them look incompetent. They

could resist investigating because it might make them look negligent. Or an investigation could make them look culpable. How do we determine which motivation was the true motive? We have to investigate.

At this point there has been an investigation and it found problems but not negligence, issues not incompetence, and unusual details but not culpability. Readers may be aware that this issue is highly controversial, but I am convinced that an honest look at the available evidence indicates that what happened that day and what we were told about that day are entirely separate things. My own opinions are most consistent with the work of David Ray Griffin (author of six, soon seven, books on the subject now, the most thorough of which is *Debunking 9/11 Debunking: An Answer to Popular Mechanics and Other Defenders of the Official Conspiracy Theory*, Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2007). The point is not that what happened was unusual, rather it was – if we take the official story at its word – entirely impossible. A few points will serve to illustrate this.

Never before or since has a steel-framed high-rise building collapsed because of fire; yet on 9/11 three did, or so that is what we are told. But how is that possible? High-rise buildings have burned before and since, some quite spectacularly and for hours, even a whole day longer. And yet none of these buildings collapsed either partially or completely. Not only that, but the WTC buildings collapsed at free fall speed. The official story is that the steel framing was weakened by the fire and began to stretch much like licorice and that this stretching caused at first one floor (each floor was composed of prefabricated segments on trusses that were bolted and welded to the inner and outer support columns) and then another to come loose from its structural support and collapse down onto the floor below it, which then broke free and collapsed onto the floor below it and so on. There are two very specific problems with this theory. First,

the dynamic at work in this theory would lead us to expect the collapse to proceed slowly and if it had sped up initially that it would slow over time as the resistance of less and less heat effected floors was encountered. Second, the theory offers no explanation whatsoever for the complete destruction of the inner core of each tower. The inner core of the big towers was composed of 47 steel beams, each of which was 4-inches thick at its base. These beams ran the entire height of each building. If each floor were to come loose from its structural support and fall onto the floor below it, that would have left the inner core intact. The model suggested by the official theory (a conspiracy among 19 mostly Arab men) is similar to the way a stack of records behaved on the spindle of an old record player. The spindle sticks straight up and records could be piled on top of each other so as to play on after the other. As each dropped it would leave the others in place on top of the spindle. When all had dropped the spindle was left standing. How could the floors pancake straight down and not leave the inner core columns largely intact? As regards the speed, the model would suggest that the collapse would have decelerated from its initial start and what we saw was an acceleration of the collapse as it occurred. Both of these details are impossible if once accepts the official conspiracy theory.

Even more telling is the issue of heat at the site. As is well known the rubble pile was very hot. There were some reports, from firefighters and construction workers, of molten metal actually flowing in channels underground. There were thermal images taken from satellites that showed extremely elevated temperatures for at least eight weeks after the event. In an episode of “60 Minutes” the late Ed Bradley spoke with two communications specialists for the clean-up who reported that workers’ boots would literally melt after a few hours working on the rubble pile, and one said the temperature on the rubble pile was 1,100°F (“60 Minutes”, 11/20/2001, Fahrenheit was not stated but was implied). Here it is helpful to keep in mind some basic

science: with maximum efficiency (well mixed with air) jet fuel burns at a maximum of about 1000°C. (1832°F) and steel melts at 1500- 1535°C (2732- 2800°F). Some of these reports of extreme heat and molten metal have been dismissed, but it is impossible to dismiss all of them (the official theory cannot explain how any steel could have melted as the fires were hundreds of degrees too low). And even if one only accepts one of them the implications are profound. As most of us know, 9/11 was a clear and warm day. But what we often do not recall is that the weeks after the event were typical for a New York fall – there was rain – and it is estimated that the fire department sprayed three million gallons of water on the rubble pile and rain provided another million gallons (Semkow, et. Al., “Study of Traces of Tritium at the World Trade Center,” 2002, available from www.doc.gov/bridge). How is it possible that the heat from burning jet fuel (most of which burned up outside the buildings in fire balls) and burning office furniture could possibly keep the rubble pile at any temperature above the ambient air temperature, let alone hot enough to melt construction workers’ boots eight weeks later? There had to be some other, as of yet unidentified, powerful energy source in that physical system as the laws of entropy (and all that water) would lead us to expect that the temperature of the rubble pile would not have been elevated at all let alone hot enough to keep steel molten, to register on thermal satellites, or to melt boots.

There are over a hundred issues to raise, but let me mention just a few more to make the case. In the very limited forensic examination of the site done, a chemical analysis of steel recovered from the site found traces of sulfur. The *New York Times* referred to this as the “deepest mystery” of that day (James Glanz and Eric Lipton, “A Search for Clues In Towers' Collapse; Engineers Volunteer to Examine Steel Debris Taken to Scrapyards,” 2/2/2002). What is not obvious to the casual observer is that the presence of sulfur is impossible to explain within

the official conspiracy theory – thus “deepest mystery” (some claim the sulfur is the result of “acid rain” but that reply is hardly compelling as the amount of sulfur would be much less than that found). But what is most disturbing about its presence is that it intensifies the effect of a highly volatile incendiary called “thermite.” Incendiaries are used to burn things – fast. Thermite melts steel so fast that it can appear explosive (it burns at temperatures in excess of 4000°C). Thermate is sulfur enhanced thermite (the sulfur lowers the melting temperature of the steel). The leading theory to explain how the towers could collapse so fast and so completely is the use of thermite, and the sulfur points towards thermate.

Second, as I was preparing this manuscript a surprising admission came from a former President of Italy, Francesco Cossiga (who coincidentally was one of those responsible for *Gladio*). In their parliamentary system the president has a lesser role than our president, but he is still a powerful figure in Italian society. According to an interview in *Corriere della Sera* (one of Italy’s oldest newspapers,

http://www.corriere.it/politica/07_novembre_30/osama_berlusconi_cossiga_27f4ccee-9f55-11dc-8807-0003ba99c53b.shtml) Cossiga said:

«Da ambienti vicini a Palazzo Chigi, centro nevralgico di direzione dell'intelligence italiana, si fa notare che la non autenticità del video è testimoniata dal fatto che Osama Bin Laden in esso 'confessa' che Al Qaeda sarebbe stato l'autore dell'attentato dell'11 settembre alle due torri in New York, mentre tutti gli ambienti democratici d'America e d'Europa, con in prima linea quelli del centrosinistra italiano, sanno ormai bene che il disastroso attentato è stato pianificato e realizzato dalla Cia americana e dal Mossad con l'aiuto del mondo sionista per mettere sotto accusa i Paesi arabi e per indurre le potenze occidentali ad intervenire sia in Iraq sia in Afghanistan.»

A rough translation is:

“From sources close to Palazzo Chigi, the nerve center of Italian intelligence, note is made of the non-authenticity of the video as witnessed by the fact that Osama Bin Laden in his own confession that Al Qaeda would have been the perpetrators of the September 11th act of violence against the two towers in New York, while

all the democratic sources in America and Europe, together with those of the Italian center left, know well by now that the disastrous act of violence had been planned and realized by the American CIA and Mossad with the aid of the Zionist world in order to place the Arab countries under accusation and to induce the western powers to intervene both in Iraq as well as in Afghanistan.”

While I am troubled by the reference to “Zionist world,” this is an astounding thing for a national political figure in Europe to say. He saying that it is well known in intelligence circles that 9/11 was an inside job.

Lastly, Robert Scheer recently wrote:

When the CIA destroyed those prisoner interrogation videotapes, was it also destroying the truth about 9/11? After all, according to the 9/11 Commission Report, the basic narrative of what happened on that day—and the definition of the enemy in this war on terror that George W. Bush launched in response to the tragedy—comes from the CIA’s account of what those prisoners told their torturers. The commission was never allowed to interview the prisoners, or speak with those who did, and was instead forced to rely on what the CIA was willing to relay.

(http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20071211_scheer_dec_12_waterboarding_our_democracy/)

The significance of this might be easy to miss. The central narrative of the 9/11 Commission, according to them, is founded upon information provided to them by the CIA about what certain prisoners said (the Commission’s only access was to the CIA’s reports not to the prisoners or interrogators, or even the subsequently destroyed videos). We now know that these prisoners were tortured and that video tape of that torture, including what the prisoners actually said, has been destroyed. All independent experts agree that information acquired from torture is unreliable, and in this case we don’t even know what information was acquired all we know is what the CIA told the 9/11 Commission. Accepting the Commission’s story entails believing that the CIA provided them with an accurate account of what the prisoners said; as well as disregarding the fact that tortured confessions are unreliable. To accept the official story one must assume that the CIA and torture are both reliable. This is absurd. It is even more absurd

given that the CIA destroyed the evidence, destroyed the record of what was actually said. Even if the information provided by the CIA was an accurate account of what prisoners told them (which no rational person should assume), it is clear the information itself was unreliable as it was the result of tortured confessions (which is what every rational person should assume).

I could go on and on and on. In fact Griffin lists a hundred and forty problems with the official story when it is compared with the available evidence (<http://www.serendipity.li/wot/571-page-lie.htm>). So it seems to me that 9/11 is completely compatible with the analysis of the phenomenon of international terrorism I have advocated here. 9/11 was an inside job and it was blamed on this artificial organization al-Qaeda. I believe that it is not logically possible for 9/11 not to have been an inside job as only inside actors could have accomplished what happened that day. I will leave this here for the reader to further investigate and come to her or his own conclusions, but even if the reader insists on disagreeing with me about 9/11, the points above about al-Qaeda generally stand independently.

And then there is London. On July 7, 2005 four small bombs went off in the city of London. That morning a former police detective named Peter Power was coordinating a terrorism drill for an unidentified private company in his capacity as Managing Director of Visor Consultants. Because there are reports that Rudolph Giuliani was in London at the time, it is suspected that the private company in question was Giuliani Partners (which at the time was directed by a different man named Peter Powers – with an “s” – a former NY Police Commissioner under Giuliani). In an interview that morning with “Radio 5” Peter Power (the one from London) said that he had been directing a drill that entailed the mock detonation of explosives at the three subway stops involved in the actual bombings, at exactly the times the bombs went off. The interviewer then asked him to confirm, and he does, the locations and

times were exactly the same. Power then repeated this in an evening interview on “IT TV.” The odds of this being a coincidence, it has been estimated, are the same odds as picking two people at random from anywhere on the planet, sending them each out to get three grains of sand, and them each picking the same grains of sand (trillions to one against). It is irrational for anyone to assume that the actual bombs were not in fact part of the drill – or rather that the drill was cover for a state terrorist operation. In the language of the business this is referred to as “flipping it live.” The drill is used as cover and distraction so that the actual operation can succeed.

In a 2006 lecture (“The 9/11 - 7/7 Connection & the Not So Hidden Agenda,” The Manchester Truth Campaign, 3/23/06, video can be found here: [video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7193024010983572797](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7193024010983572797); this video includes the radio and TV interviews with Power mentioned above) British activist, Ian Crane, pointed out that in 25 years of “The Troubles” with Northern Ireland and all the car bombings that entailed, not one actual suspect has been identified. All of those jailed over the years for various bombings have later been released because it turned out they were framed. Yet on 7/7 the British authorities identified the suspects within 24 hours (it took four days to identify the victims). This is the same pattern as on 9/11. And then there are other similarities between 7/7 and 9/11.

In the case of 9/11 it is known that the government was running at least four large scale military drills that confused the FAA and Air Force’s responses to the hijackings (Vigilant Warrior, Vigilant Guardian, Northern Vigilance, Northern Guardian; and FEMA was “conveniently” conducting a bio-hazard drill in New York City called Tripod II). What is not widely known, and I only discovered it from McKinney, is that when she requested details about the drills from the military they provided her with information about the four she knew about and one that was entirely new to her – most astounding was that this was a Justice Department

terrorism drill (the Justice Department runs terrorism drills?). Crane (the British activist) pointed out that law enforcement agencies often run drills like these and often recruit volunteers to play the part of the bad guys. In the case of London, those identified had no connection to radical versions of Islam and every reason to live (every appearance is that they were volunteers for the drill, not terrorists, but then the drill was flipped live and these volunteers were blown up along with 48 other innocent people).

Another common element is the involvement of figures from Afghanistan with connections to western intelligence services. The mastermind is alleged to have been Haroon Aswat, a former Mujahadeen volunteer from the al-Zawahri faction who supposedly died in 2003 in Afghanistan (the London bombing was in 2005). And according to a former U.S. Prosecutor named John Luftos in a “Fox News” interview, Aswat is or was an MI6 asset (<http://infowars.net/Pages/Aug05/020805Aswat.html>). This is reminiscent of the reports of at least four of the alleged 9/11 hijackers being trained at U.S. Army bases (Mohammad Atta, the supposed ring-leader in particular, see Ahmed for details).

So it seems that the best available evidence is logically compelling in the direction of both 9/11 and 7/7 being further examples of False-Flag attacks in the spirit of *Gladio* although on a larger scale, this time terrorist attacks falsely attributed to this artificial radical Islamic organization, which is now our number one enemy in a war that will outlast our lifetimes.

Actually, another veteran of the cold war, Vice President Cheney, takes this particular construction to its logical conclusion. He states that the new war on terror would be very different from previous wars, “in the sense that it may never end. At least not in our lifetime.” (Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005: 150.)

TERRORISM IS ABOUT MASS PSYCHOLOGY

Crane goes on to point out the curious nature of a “failed” terrorist bombing in London on July 21st of that year (14 days later). The bomb in that incident failed to detonate and had been constructed of commonly available materials. The bombs used on 7/7 had been military grade explosives. The effect of all this on the public was to conflate the explosives used and give the impression that the 7/7 bombers had used widely available materials. In the case of the 9/11 attacks we should recall here that they were immediately followed by the anthrax attacks (and the reader will likely recall that the anthrax strain used was one cultivate by a US Army biological weapons lab, not a wild variant of anthrax). Those attacks and the arrest of the so-called “Shoe Bomber” (who seems to have been more insane than malevolent) served to unhinge large segments of American society by showing a supposed vulnerability that, because of its proximity in time to the 9/11 attacks reinforced mass fear.

We all now take off our shoes to have them scanned to get on a plane. The size of shampoo bottles allowed in carry on luggage is limited. And yet one can simply ask for a glass of wine and take the bottle and break it – airline supplied weapons. It is political theater designed to reinforce the public perception that we are threatened by some nebulous enemy hell-bent on our destruction.

Terrorism is not about the ostensible victims. It does not intend to kill anyone in particular. Its purpose is fear, and the manipulation of a population through fear. Because the victims are random people the population identifies with them. It could have been any of us. And this sentiment is true; it could have been any of us. And so the fear is rational, but the object feared or people feared is only rational if the perpetrators have been correctly identified. What we see in this history is a history of the actual perpetrators being hidden and false

perpetrators identified so that the population fears an artificial enemy and turns to the actual terrorists for protection (sacrificing their freedom and democratic societies along the way).

WHY WOULD THEY DO THIS?

According to Michael Ruppert the primary motive is oil (Michael Ruppert, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil*, Gabriola Island, Canada: New Society Publishers, 2004). Ruppert is a former narcotics investigator for the Los Angeles Police Department. He left that job, of twenty years, after discovering connections between LA crack dealers and the Nicaraguan Contras – and subsequent threats and attempts on his life. Ruppert is primarily writing about 9/11 but the point applies more generally. Why would our government be interested in convincing the public that there is this huge and powerful international terrorist organization? Ruppert says because our government wanted justifications to intervene militarily in the Middle East and Central Asia so as to control the Earth's remaining crude oil resources.

Whether or not he is correct (and I think he probably is, at least in part) there is a standard analysis of fascism that should inform our thinking here. Leon Trotsky said, "To a stunned simpleton all these vexations seem a temporary result of war. Actually, they are manifestations of imperialist decline. The decay of capitalism denotes the decay of contemporary society with its right and its morals." And, "The 'synthesis' of imperialist turpitude is fascism directly begotten of the bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy before the problems of the imperialist epoch" ("Their Morals and Ours" <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1938/morals/morals.htm>). It is widely believed that fascism is a capitalist class response to crises growing beyond the bounds of their ability to

control society. In the face of crises, rather than allow any sort of transition in society away from capitalist domination, the ruling class turns to more overt forms of oppression, and fear has long been recognized as the most useful approach. This is what Leo Strauss, the intellectual father of Neo-Conservatism, taught as well; and the reason Shadia Drury refers to him as “a deeply fascistic thinker” (“Progressive Radio,” http://www.progressive.org/radio_drury05).

In the interview just quoted Drury also said Strauss believed that:

You can get these people who are ruled by their unruly appetites to perform acts of great sacrifice for their country if they think their existence is threatened, if they think their very lives are threatened, and they have a common enemy. The concept of a common enemy is very important, and so it is very important to create or invent enemies as much as you can to keep people united. And this is one of the reasons why *catastrophe* is very important. The more *catastrophes* there are the more people will come together, and the more vicious the enemy seems the more the people will think they are all for one and one for all – that their very existence depends upon them coming together to fight a common enemy (“Progressive Radio,” emphasis original).

The importance of Strauss to this discussion cannot be over-emphasized. He had a deep and profound influence on his adoring students. During his career Leo Strauss supervised graduate students like Paul Wolfowitz and Irving Kristol, people who have become very powerful today. Back in their student days, many of Strauss’s students were disillusioned liberals who came to see President Johnson’s “Great Society” program as a failure and turned to a very different analysis of society. In Strauss they found a charismatic teacher and mentor who taught them a different way of seeing society, and in particular the significant implications of the failure of liberal society (in Drury’s view, which I think misses the class nature of Strauss’ thinking, as explained below). As Drury explains (*Leo Strauss and the American Right*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), Strauss believed – very similar to Plato – that society consists of three groups: The Wise, The Gentlemen, and the rest. The Gentlemen are the one’s who believe the myths of society and can effectively articulate them to the masses. The Wise have to guide the

Gentlemen, even though the Wise do not believe these social myths, especially religious ones. The Wise are prepared to handle the nihilism that comes from an accurate understanding of the world, but the masses need the illusions the Gentlemen are prepared to create and defend.

The importance of war and an enemy in their political philosophy can be seen in their successes. For example, decades ago, in order to rally American society around common goals they needed a more significant enemy than the Soviet Union had become. Over the course of the Cold War the Soviets had been a very useful enemy, but after the 1960's many American's were beginning to see the Soviet Union as a competitor rather than a threat. The CIA's own analysts had concluded that there really wasn't a significant Soviet threat; and worse yet were telling people this.

Recall Strauss's advice in this situation, if you don't have an enemy at hand then create one. And so in 1974 "Team B" was created with the support of then CIA director George H. W. Bush, to offer an alternative "analysis." "Team B" was a nickname given to the President's Foreign Policy Advisory Board created by Gerald Ford and consisting of a number of now well known figures, including Paul Wolfowitz, and was directed by Daniel Pipes ("Team A" was the CIA's own analysts who were telling an inconvenient truth, from a certain point of view). In 1975, a different CIA director, William Colby, objected to this line of research and was removed from office. "Team B" went on to create a mass of spurious data to try to convince people that the Soviet Union was, in fact, a military threat, and their work eventually provided the "rationale" for Reagan's absurd claim that the United States suffered from a "missile gap" and needed to greatly expand our military spending.

The work of Team B, in concert with the notorious Committee On the Present Danger (COPD), was the first great success Strauss's disciples had in molding government policy. In

this case they even influenced the positions of the Carter administration through their public relations efforts (especially those of COPD), years before they convinced Reagan there was a “missile gap.” But the Soviet Union was an unhelpful enemy and had the temerity to collapse just when Americans were getting used to the idea of being afraid again.

My point here is that these people have a history of putting Strauss’ ideas into practice. Interestingly some of their plans are public, though not publicly discussed. Other leaders with totalitarian dreams have done the same. When Adolf Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* he seemed to express his ultimate ideals for society, albeit in a form that no one took seriously at the time. Faced with a new form of fascism in America, people seem to act like we do not really need to look to what the people who organized this new fascism said and wrote, let alone understand the views of the teacher who taught them to construct this new form of fascism. Should not the lesson from the Hitler period be that we ought to take seriously the articulated dreams and aspirations of those who rule? That is, it seems we ought to take seriously the work of people like Leo Strauss as well as the policy papers of the “Project for a New American Century” (PNAC, the Neo-Conservative think tank, ten of whose 27 founders went on to work in the Bush Administration) because they have expressed their hopes and dreams for a radical transformation of society, and now we are witnesses to the unfolding of those plans.

It is vitally important to note that this is not a problem of one political party, as both of the major parties have the same foreign policy objectives and imperial commitments. In 1998 Zbigniew Brzezinski (the Democratic Party’s leading foreign policy thinker) put out a book called, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books), in which he argued for essentially the same military policies as PNAC, with the same objectives of occupying Central Asia and controlling oil. Both PNAC and Brzezinski

observed that their plans could not be actualized due to natural public resistance, and the only way to overcome that resistance would be through “a truly massive and directly perceived external threat” (Brzezinski, 211); or “some catastrophic and catalyzing event like a new Pearl Harbor (PNAC, “Rebuilding America’s Defenses,” 51, available on their website www.newamericancentury.org).

On a more abstract note, C. J. Arthur, in his Introduction to *The German Ideology* (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, New York: International Publishers, 1970) offers an illuminating summary of Marx and Engels’ point about contradictions in civil society. Arthur wrote (10):

The major point is that the peculiar way in which the modern state emancipates man by declaring that the real differences between men shall not affect their standing as citizens, and hence leaves these differences intact, not only leaves relations of domination and conflict in civil society untouched, but inevitably these real social relations infect the political sphere as well.

I was recently using this text with students and it occurred to me that there was something informative about artificial enemies and their place in a Strategy of Tension in this reading. Let me summarize my conclusions: civil society reinforces the differences between people and thus undermines cooperation and solidarity. This lack of solidarity becomes a threat to that political society. A truly democratic society would seek to mitigate the differences and encourage a natural solidarity but that option would require capitalist class sacrifices. Instead they turn to this “Strategy of Tension” and other techniques of fascism to manage – not resolve – the inevitable social antagonisms that arise (i.e. class struggle).

So it seems to me that the important turn Shadia Drury, the critic of Strauss mentioned above, does *not* make is to recognize that Strauss’ teachings have a class component. She reads him as having a conflict with liberal society, which may be true at one level, but it seems

patently obvious that his political disciples have used his teachings so as to manage the inevitable social conflicts that arise in capitalist society. So the practical lesson Strauss taught was not really to do with how the masses will fail to manage the nihilism of the post-Enlightenment world, but how capitalist functionaries can stagnate the class struggle through the techniques of fascism that Strauss witnessed working so efficiently for the Nazis.

Finally recall an aphorism attributed to Hitler, the bigger the crime the government commits the less likely it is to be acknowledged as such. With the mind-boggling success of the propaganda around the Iraq War and the complete lack of discussion of the obviousness of its illegality, it seems it is very true, the bigger the crime, the bigger the lie, the less likely the public will realize it is a crime.

CONCLUSION

Islamic terrorism is an artificial enemy used to justify a new form of fascism, typified in this nebulous and never-ending “war on terror,” in order to maintain capitalist class control of the whole world as we face the double crises of environmental collapse and the end of the age of oil.

To be clear, artificial enemies can still be destructive and dangerous. Artificial sweeteners are still sweet and so artificial terrorist enemies are still terrorists. This is the vital difference between now and the Cold War. The Soviet threat was not artificial, it was fictional (the military threat to the nation was a fiction; the practical threat to capitalism itself is a different issue). The purpose of Team B was not to present details that were not otherwise available to show that the CIA was underestimating the Soviet threat, their purpose was to convince the American public that a fictional threat was an actual threat (the CIA had all the details and they showed there was no real threat, Team B cherry picked details and presented

them as if they should be compelling). In the case of international terrorism there really are terrorists, so it is not a fictional threat, but the identity of the terrorists is not what we are told, so it is an artificial threat. The threat is constructed artificially for a specific purpose, domestic control and international occupation, and to make it convincing it has to be real terrorism – real people have to really die in real violence. An artificial enemy cannot be fought as if it were real, that only serves to reinforce the lie. An artificial enemy is fought by exposing its creators as the true threat, the real terrorists.

It has been my purpose here to show that the threat of international terrorism is an artificial threat and to offer the reader some of what is know about how this threat was created. Fear is a powerful tool of social control. The best antidote to fear is information. We cannot be controlled if we know the truth and refuse to accept their lies.