



ROGER HAYES

DUALITY OF TERRORISM

BY MICHAEL PAUL McCUSKER

"Because God had chosen America as the construction site of the earthly paradise, America's cause was always just and nothing was ever America's fault."

~LEWIS LAPHAM

Once upon a time in a fairy tale past the United States of America thought it was safe from the strifes of the world, isolated by oceans it fatuously believed would protect it; even after half a century of a nuclear arms race and the development of intercontinental missiles the USA assumed a Buck Rogers space shield would defend it from harm.

And from its inviolable fortress it exported a highly sophisticated form of terror, attacking countries all over the world for one purpose or another, generally from the air with bombs and missiles. The USA pioneered many of the methods of war from the air and stratosphere and used bombs more than any other nation, especially on cities and small villages of other nations.

The morning of September 11, 2001 dramatically ended the nation's illusory immunity. The USA was finally attacked in its own homeland by suicidal commandos who made guided missiles out of American airliners in a brilliant scheme of calculated devastation aimed at the cosmic cathedrals of American civilization and its ambitions for global supremacy: the aptly named World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The perspective of those who elaborately planned and executed the attacks regarded those employed in these two centers of American omnipotence not as innocent civilians but as directly responsible for America's warlike actions around the world just as are American soldiers, diplomats and multinational corporations based in the USA.

The United States has been dealt a grievous blow and might be dealt worse. We who inhabit this country now live in uncertainty and justifiable paranoia. Contrary to incessant pleas for healing it is not a time to heal but to instead discover why we have been attacked and join the rest of the world in finding out how to justifiably put an end to it. If all we do is retaliate that is all we will be able to do, endless retaliation and retribution until nukes or bio/chemical weapons are slipped onto our shores in enough quantities to kill millions of us.

Now we know for certain that none of us are safe from the world, nor should any of us expect to be. We must realize, as the President and his administration of corporate Tories seem not to, that safety on this planet is a debilitating illusion (if not a joke), that we are all vulnerable despite heroic efforts by public officials to comfort as well as make richer the already affluent in this crisis while scaring the hell out of the rest of us to justify the collateral theft of public money — the same persons and corporations who have benefited immensely from tax cuts are also enriched by the tremendous upscale in Pentagon budgets.

We might for a moment think we are united in a single great national tragedy and subsequent righteous "crusade" (a politically incorrect term) against international terrorism, but it is transparent and soon enough the familiar old war between rich and poor will unravel the flimsy rapport in our society as well as the rest of the world — the ancient antipathy that is the true *leit-motif* of this new war (and human relations in general).

The war we have been thrust into should arguably be a police action without past euphemisms of the term. It must not be a unilateral effort — as it somehow appears to have been conducted in Afghanistan despite a few token presences of other nation's forces — why are we solely in charge of prisoners? — and it must be conducted at several levels which must include enormous efforts by the United Nations to eradicate despotism, hunger and poverty because these are especially causes for violence and terrorism, the courts of last resort for the hopeless and desperate.

Yet the self-proclaimed Warriors of God who suicided on 9/11 defied the usual profile of terrorists except for their religious fanaticism: they were not poor or uneducated but rather sophisticated worldly persons (all male) who moved effortlessly through Western society on both sides of the Atlantic, using credit cards and transferable banking accounts to learn to fly airplanes (though not necessarily how to land them) among other things.

They were inspired not by poverty but by obstinate religious nationalism, a militant ambition for theological world supremacy to eventually supplant what they hypersensitively perceive as Judeo/Christian domination.

September 11 transcends the secularly political and moves dangerously into the demagogic metaphysical, an archaic and mythological abstraction of people certain they are the instruments of God, whether Judeo/Christian or Islamic — bloody minded retribution against innocents to revenge the deaths of innocents; they hijacked our airplanes; we have hijacked the high moral ground as rationale to strike back.

A major rhetorical elevation of our vengeance against the terrorists is the President's appellation of them as evil and their accused leader Osama bin Laden as "The Evil One" (a virtual mimicry of George Bush Sr.'s earlier comparison of Saddam Hussein, whose name he pronounced in a way that sounded like 'Satan', to Adolf Hitler). Osama bin Laden seems

to desire a return to 7th century Mecca; to early Islam which paradoxically harbored the world's most literate and scholastic civilization — a return to basics, so to speak, in a manner similar to ecumenical Christians who wish a revival of a piety that never existed except in imagination and myth.

Rather than demonize Osama bin Laden we ought to remember Gamel Nasser and his dream of a Pan Arabia. That dream is not dead and is reflected in Osama bin Laden's hopes for a Caliphate of Arabian Nights times, and to a much lesser extent Bush Sr.'s nemesis Saddam Hussein, the old fashioned tyrant/sheik of Iraq.

It might be more helpful to consider Osama bin Laden, not as an Islamic John Brown, but as a rogue billionaire who thinks his wealth puts him above the law and entitles him to impose his brand of Pan Arabic Islam onto whomever and in whatever form he desires, just as our own arrogant billionaires who assume they have the right to rule the world for their personal pleasures. They are, after all, accused of stealing the Presidency for their own use.

We are cynical about the motives of terrorist leaders — Yet it is imperative we question not only the motives of our own leaders but their methods as well. The essential question is if we are being misled: Do our leaders reflect our true feelings and principles? Do our global policies and actions reflect the foundations of our purpose as a nation (which we ardently proclaim as the best ever conceived) — or are they ordinary power hungry imperial wannabes grabbing for history's golden ring of world supremacy?

Charles Krauthammer elucidated the "Bush Doctrine" in one of his newspaper columns:

"In the liberal internationalist view the U.S. is merely one among many — a stronger country, yes, but one that has to adapt itself to the will and needs of the 'international community' ... This is folly. America is no mere international citizen. It is the most dominant power in the world, more dominant than since

