TERRORISM HAS BEEN USED AS A WEAPON OF THE WEAK AGAINST militarily, politically, and economically stronger rulers and governments for a long time and in many parts of the world. The earliest cases of terrorism had religious and political overtones and date back to biblical times. The Sicariis, a distinct group, were involved in the Zealots’ struggle against the Roman occupiers of Palestine and fellow Jews who collaborated with the Romans. The Sicariis attacked their targets typically on holidays and in the midst of large crowds with a “sica,” a small sword that was hidden beneath their coats until they were close enough to stab their victims. Although fighting in the name of God, whom they considered their only legitimate ruler, they had immediate political motives—most of all the burning desire to remove the secular foreign rulers from power. However, the terror campaign ended in 73 A.D., when hundreds of Zealots committed mass suicide rather than surrender to the victorious Romans.

Far more enduring than the Sicariis were the Assassins (eleventh to thirteenth century), an extremist offshoot of the Ismaili branch of Shi’ite Islam, who were active in Persia (now Iran) and Syria. Hassan-i-Sabbah, the founder of this fiercely anti-Sunni sect, was poised to spread his brand of Ismaili Islam throughout the Middle East and defeat the Sunni rulers. He convinced his fanatically devoted followers that actively fighting for their cause would assure them a place in paradise. Recognizing that their membership was too small to fight their enemies openly, the Assassins operated clandestinely until the assigned member or members attacked a prominent leader—typically in front of large crowds. They assaulted their targets with daggers and made no attempt to escape but seemed content, even eager, to be caught and killed after they had accomplished their lethal missions. Thus, in today’s parlance, the Assassins practiced a form of “suicide terrorism.”

Rumor had it that the Assassins were under the influence of hashish when they envisioned paradise, when they attacked their targets, and when they went eagerly to their death. Indeed, because of the myth of their wide use of hashish, the members of the sect were called hashishin in Arabic; this name turned into “assassin” in the
vocabulary of the Christian Crusaders and eventually came to mean political murder
in many Western languages. The Assassins did not realize their religious and political
goals but were wiped out when the Mongols conquered Iran and Syria in the middle
of the thirteenth century. Nevertheless, as one terrorism expert pointed out, the
Assassins “demonstrated a basic principle of contemporary terrorism: the ability
of small groups to wage effective campaigns of terror against much stronger
opponents.”

The Thugs, who organized in the eleventh century, terrorized India for hundreds
of years before the British destroyed them in the nineteenth century. Group mem-
bers targeted travelers and strangled their victims with a silk tie before robbing them.
According to rumors, the Thugs worshiped the goddess Kali and killed so that they
could nourish her with the blood of their victims. But it is not clear whether the
Thugs practiced religious terrorism or were simply bandits out for material gains.
One way or the other, today the term thug characterizes a hoodlum, crook, thief—in
other words, a criminal.

Beginning in the Middle Ages, Christian sects as well resorted to violence.
Typically following a charismatic leader or prophet, they claimed to fight for the
purification of the Christian religion and Christian life. Their targets were Jews and
whomever they considered Christians in name only. Following the Reformation, for
example, the Anabaptists, a millennial sect, emerged in Germany. Members of the
group considered the city of Muenster as the true Jerusalem and themselves as God’s
chosen instruments in the violent campaign against the anti-Christ—sinful Catholics
and Protestants who stood in the way of the millennium.

No doubt, then, that terrorism originated with religious and pseudoreligious
sects and that the adherents of the major religions, among them the Christians,
Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs, resorted to political violence in the
name of God.

Different Types of Groups

Besides religious terrorism, which will be discussed in Chapter 5, several other major
types of both international and domestic terrorism emerged in more recent times.
The majority of groups that resort to political violence fit the following categories:
nationalist/separatist, left and/or revolutionary, right and/or reactionary, antiglobaliza-
tion, and extreme environmentalist. As the name suggests, nationalists/separatists
strive for statehood or more autonomy; good examples here are Palestinian organi-
zations, such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and the Basque group
Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA). The former demand an independent Palestinian state,
the latter greater autonomy within Spain, if not independence. Left/revolutionary
groups like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) want to establish a
Marxist regime in Colombia and cooperate with other Latin American left-revolu-
tionary groups. In Venezuela, the right-wing United Self-Defense Forces of
Venezuela (AUV) fight to remove the leftist government of Hugo Chavez, are hostile
to Chavez supporters in neighboring countries, and work closely with the right-wing
Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). Antiglobalization groups, such as the
Mexican Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias del Pueblo (FARP), are often also left-leaning
and even Marxist. Others fit both the profile of anarchists and extreme globalization
foes. Thus, the self-proclaimed anarchists, who provoked what came to be known as
“The Battle of Seattle” during the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) summit in 1999, staged violence to express their opposition to globalization and thereby energized the antiglobalization movement for years to come. Militant environmental groups, such as the international organizations Earth First, Earth Liberation Front, and Animal Liberation Front, resort to violent means in North America and in Europe, especially the United Kingdom, in the name of protecting the natural environment that they say is not conserved by governments. In the process, they commit violence or ecoterrorism to help a cause that they have been unable to further in the legitimate political arena. The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society is another militant eco-organization; it operates in international waters and, according to its web site, “uses innovative direct-action tactics to investigate, document, and take action when necessary to expose and confront illegal activities on the high seas. By safeguarding the biodiversity of our delicately-balanced ocean ecosystems, Sea Shepherd works to ensure their survival for future generations.”

To that end, Sea Shepherd ships have particularly targeted whaling vessels. In a story about Paul Watson, the founder and leader of the Sea Shepherd, Raffi Khatchagourian noted, “By Watson’s count, Sea Shepherd has sunk ten whaling vessels in port. By my count, he and his crew have attempted to scuttle two vessels and have successfully sunk two others.” But whether Watson exaggerated or not, another well-known international eco-organization, Greenpeace, which lists “defending our oceans” among its missions, distanced itself from the Sea Shepherd Society and Watson, a former member of Greenpeace. According to Greenpeace’s web site, the organization denied Watson’s request to reveal the location of whalers because, “[i]f we helped Sea Shepherd to find the whaling fleet we’d be responsible for anything they did having got that information, and history shows that they’ve used violence in the past, in the most dangerous seas on Earth. For us, non-violence is a non-negotiable, precious principle. Greenpeace will continue to act to defend the whales, but will never attack or endanger the whalers.”

The Roots of Modern Terrorism

The origins of modern terrorism “from below”—or political violence directed against the forces of power in society, namely, political leaders—go back to the second half of the nineteenth century. In the first stage, radical socialists and anarchists contributed to the theoretical underpinnings of a philosophy of violence as a means to fight and destroy oppressive leaders and governments. In 1849, a journal in Switzerland that was edited by political refugees from Germany published a radical tract under the headline “Der Mord” (Murder), in which its author, Karl Heintzen, laid out the rationale for terrorist action against “reactionaries” and “the mass party of the barbarians.” Accusing the people in power of “mass murder, organized murder, or war, as it is called,” Heintzen concluded,

Even if we have to blow up half a continent or spill a sea of blood, in order to finish off the barbarian party, we should have no scruples about doing it. The man who would not joyfully give up his own life for the satisfaction of putting a million barbarians into their coffins carries no Republican heart within his breast.  

Heintzen advocated murder for political ends, or what soon thereafter was defined as terrorism, even if that meant death for members of what he called “the
party of freedom.” Heintzen anticipated the development of weapons that would make political violence “from below” far more lethal and effective when he wrote, “The greatest benefactor of mankind will be he who makes it possible for a few men to wipe out thousands.” One hundred and fifty years later, Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda organization embraced the same idea when they searched for weapons of mass destruction.

In Russia, Sergey Nechaev, Nikolai Morozov, and Pyotr Kropotkin were among the radical leaders who justified terrorist means in their writings and prescribed rules of conduct for the true revolutionary to follow. The terms revolutionary and terrorist were used interchangeably. Although living for most of his political life in Switzerland, Mikhail Bakunin, who advocated his own brand of anarchism, had devoted followers in Russia. During this era, the most influential terrorist-revolutionary organization in Russia was the Narodnaya Volga (The People’s Will) because it made the step from radical rhetoric to actual terrorist acts, which included the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881.

The anarchist movement was not limited to Russia but was truly international and became associated with political violence during the 1880s and 1890s and, to a lesser extent, in the first decade of the twentieth century. During that period, anarchists and social revolutionaries were responsible for a wave of political assassinations in several countries, among them Russia, France, Spain, and Italy. The United States was not immune either because European immigrants, among them Karl Heintzen and John Most, advocated anarchist ideas and deeds in their new homeland. The anarchists of this era did not strike randomly but targeted high-ranking political figures, among them French President Sadi Carnot, Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Canovas, King Umberto of Italy, Empress Elisabeth of Austria, and U.S. Presidents James Garfield and William McKinley. Sometimes, anarchists aborted their assassination plans because they did not want to harm innocent bystanders. Attempts on the lives of other prominent figures, among them the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck and the German Emperor William II, failed. But, as Laqueur has pointed out, “Inasmuch as the assassins were anarchists—and quite a few were not—they all acted on their own initiative without the knowledge and support of the groups to which they belonged.”

Although left-wing movements occupy a dominant place in the annals of terrorism for the years between about 1850 and World War I, a variety of very different groups resorted to political violence during this period—among them Irish nationalists fighting against the British and Armenians struggling against Turkish oppression. But the leading figures in the anarchist and social reform movements were the ones who provided the theoretical underpinnings for political violence and thereby have influenced terrorists of all ideological colors ever since.

Between World War I and World War II, right-wing movements in particular embraced the “propaganda by the deed” maxim, but it was especially the emerging fascist camps that used political violence in their push for power. Italian dictator Benito Mussolini made no secret of his sympathy for violence, and Joseph Goebbels, Adolf Hitler’s propagandist-in-chief, considered terror and brutality in the streets as sure means for rather obscure groups to become widely known and win the support of the masses. Extremists at the right and left were very similar in that they recognized the efficacy of political violence as a tool to undermine the legitimacy of the political systems they opposed. And although in some instances terrorist theory preceded terrorist actions, as in the case of the anarchists, it was the other way around in at least as many cases. According to Walter Laqueur’s astute observation,
In short, it has been possible since time immemorial to make love and to cook without the help of textbooks; the same applied to terrorism. In some cases the decision to adopt a terrorist strategy was taken on the basis of a detailed political analysis. But usually the mood came first, and ideological rationalization only after. On occasion this led to the emergence of a systematic strategy of terrorism and to bitter debates between proponents and opponents. But terrorism also took place without precise doctrine and systematic strategy.8

The Post–World War II Wave

Terrorism did not disappear with the outbreak of World War II but flared up regularly—from the anti-British bombings in the United Kingdom by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to political violence by both Jews and Arabs in the British mandate of Palestine. For David Rapoport, the “principal stimulus was a major war aim of the victorious allies in both world wars: national self-determination. The ambivalence of colonial powers about their own legitimacy made them ideal targets for a politics of atrocity.”9 But it was the post–World War II era that experienced the most powerful outburst of political violence “from below” in many parts of the world, as people struggled for decolonization and national liberation as well as for revolutionary social change.

Developments like the retreats of the British, French, Dutch, and Americans from Aden, Cyprus, Palestine, Algeria, Indonesia, the Philippines, and other places were often preceded and accompanied by terrorist violence. In Latin America, the revolutionary ferment was directed against American interference on behalf of the ruling class and aimed at a new social order that challenged the capitalist model. In Africa and Asia, European powers were the targets. Frantz Fanon and Regis Debray provided the theoretical justifications for violent actions for the sake of national liberation and fundamental social change. Using the case of Algeria to indict the inhumanity of the Western model in general and colonialism in particular, Fanon endorsed all-out violence not only as a means to an end—national liberation—but also as an end in itself that would free the liberated individuals from their marks of oppression and empower them. In The Wretched of the Earth he wrote,

At the level of the individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect.10

He also called for a new, just, and humane social and political model that was applicable beyond the special cases of Algeria and Africa to the Third World in general and to the struggle of minorities for self-determination in the First World as well. As Fanon put it in the conclusion of his treatise,

Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth.

Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States of America became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness, and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions.

Comrades, have we not other work to do than to create a third Europe?11
In Revolution in the Revolution, Debray provided the rationale for the anti-imperialist, anticapitalist revolutionary uprisings in Latin America in particular. Unlike Fanon, who recognized the usefulness of terrorist action, Debray did not subscribe to the efficacy of terrorism but recommended larger-scale guerrilla warfare.

Fanon (a native of Martinique) and Debray (a Frenchman) were outsider theorists focusing on Africa and Latin America; the Brazilian Communist Carlos Marighella was a homegrown Latin American revolutionary whose “Handbook of Urban Guerrilla Warfare” provided hands-on instructions for violent struggle “from below.” Besides physical fitness and absolute dedication to the cause, Marighella recommended technical expertise, especially with respect to arms, such as machine guns, revolvers, shotguns, mortars, and bazookas. In one passage of his manual, he gave the following advice:

A knowledge of various types of ammunition and explosives is another aspect to consider. Among the explosives, dynamite must be well understood. The use of incendiary bombs, of smoke bombs, and other types is indispensable knowledge.

To know how to make and repair arms, prepare Molotov cocktails, grenades, mines, homemade destructive devices, how to blow up bridges, tear up and put out of service rails and sleepers, these are the requisites in the technical preparation of the urban guerilla that can never be considered unimportant.

In the 1960s and 1970s in particular, Fanon, Debray, and Marighella, for their theoretical contributions, and Ernesto “Che” Guevara, for his influence on and participation in Fidel Castro’s Cuban Revolution, affected radicals far beyond the Third World. In Western Europe and, albeit to a lesser extent, in the United States, breakaway groups from the New Left’s student movements decided to fight the symbols of American imperialism and the ruling establishments in their respective countries. Whether the Red Army Faction (RAF), better known as the Baader-Meinhof group, in Germany; the Red Brigades in Italy; or the Weather Underground in the United States, members of these groups considered themselves Marxist urban guerrillas fighting a class war against the existing order and its capitalist arrangement.

Although providing the theoretical context for their violent deeds in frequent communications, groups like the RAF insisted that it was time for terrorist action, not just terrorist doctrine. In “Stadtguerrilla und Klassenkampf” (“Urban Guerrilla and Class Struggle”), the RAF stated, “In this stage of history nobody can deny that an armed group, however small it may be, has a better chance to grow into a people’s army than a group that limits itself to proclaim revolutionary principles.”

The authors of the RAF’s “Das Konzept Stadtguerrilla” (“The Concept of Urban Guerrilla”) acknowledged that the idea of the urban guerrilla originated in Latin America and that Marighella’s primer on the subject was used as their model.

Although the RAF initially committed violence inside West Germany, the group became part of a “terrorist international” that was responsible for major terrorist acts abroad beginning in the mid-1970s. However, it was not Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, and their German comrades, but the PLO under Yassir Arafat’s leadership that pioneered international cooperation among terrorists by instructing radicals from abroad in training camps in Jordan. Among these early trainees were Baader and Meinhof, who, upon their return to Germany, established the RAF. The German trainees and their Palestinian hosts had parted on a sour note in the late 1960s, but by the mid-1970s members of the RAF and its offshoots teamed with their Palestinian colleagues to carry out terrorist attacks.
German leftists, inspired by Baader and Meinhof, and Palestinian nationalists, motivated by the PLO’s Arafat and Abu Abbas, seemed strange bedfellows at first sight. But there was a meeting of the minds in that the Palestinians shared the RAF’s anti-American sentiments because of the United States’ strong support for Israel.

1968: The Advent of Modern-Day Terrorism

Many students of terrorism consider 1968 as the beginning of modern-day terrorism because this year marked the start of a period of ever more spectacular terrorism dramas both internationally and domestically. According to Jeffrey D. Simon,

The significant breaking point was the launching of a sustained campaign of airline hijackings and sabotage by Palestinian guerrillas that was on a scale of violence and intensity never before seen by the international community. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), under the command of a Palestinian physician named George Habash, dramatically publicized its struggle against Israel by hijacking an El Al plane in June 1968 on a flight from Rome to Tel Aviv and diverting it to Algeria. Then, in December, they attacked an El Al plane at the Athens airport, killing one passenger.14

From then on, the scope of the hijacking coups grew rapidly and soon targeted Americans and U.S. interests abroad. Nothing illustrated this better than the quadruple hijacking of four New York-bound airplanes in September 1970 by members of the PFLP. While security guards aboard the El Al plane overwhelmed this group of hijackers and killed one of them, other terrorists forced a Trans World Airways plane, a Pan American World Airways plane, and a Swissair jet to land in a remote area of Jordan. Hundreds of passengers, most of them Americans, others Europeans, were held hostage. Some of the hostages were released fairly soon, but others were detained for about three weeks. Eventually, when the United Kingdom, West Germany, and Switzerland agreed to release Palestinian prisoners, all hostages were freed. These terrorist spectaculars were designed to get the world to pay attention to the Palestinian cause. Explaining this rationale, one of the Palestinians, Dr. Habash, said, “We force people to ask what is going on.”15 Pointing to the massive publicity in the wake of terrorist strikes, another Palestinian terrorist remarked, “We would throw roses if it would work.”16

What was the cause that motivated these terrorists? Palestinian terrorism was and still is rooted in the fate of more than a million Palestinians who fled or were displaced when the Jewish state of Israel was established and by Israel’s territorial gains in the 1967 Six-Day War. The result of Israel’s victory over the armies of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt was the lasting occupation of the non-Israeli part of Palestine—the West Bank and Gaza—and the Syrian Golan Heights. With the hope for a military victory over Israel crushed, some Palestinians turned to international terrorism in order to force governments and peoples outside the Middle East to take notice of their plight.

By the time the Palestinian “Black September” group attacked and brutally killed members of the Israeli Olympic team during the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, the links between West Germany’s RAF and its Palestinian counterparts were so close that the RAF provided logistical support for the terror attack. In the following years, Germans and Palestinians planned and carried out numerous joint ventures, such as the terrorist attack during the 1975 OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting...
Countries) meeting in Vienna; the 1976 hijacking of an El Al plane to Entebbe, Uganda; and the 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa plane to Mogadishu, Somalia.

Some leftist groups in Europe were more inwardly oriented and less interested in and dependent on international cooperation. One commander of the Italian Red Brigades, for example, revealed in the early 1990s,

Put simply and clearly, at the time [when the Red Brigades were still a factor] our approach excluded any contacts with foreign groups except contacts for materiel or those related to solidarity among revolutionary movements. We had one contact with a Palestinian faction for an arms shipment which we transported to our country and shared with three other Italian armed groups. Besides this, we adhered to the Maoist theory of "counting on one's own strength," both for weapons and for money.17

But, as the same Red Brigades commander pointed out, the RAF considered itself and acted as "the European fifth column of an 'Anti-imperialist Front' " that reached into the Eastern Bloc and revolutionary movements in the Third World.18 Not surprisingly, in the 1980s, German terrorists tried to forge a Euro-terrorist alliance, an attempt that was inspired by the example of their Palestinian friends. According to Bruce Hoffman,

The profound influence exercised by the Palestinians over the Germans was perhaps never clearer than in 1985, when the RAF joined forces with the French left-wing terrorist organization, Direct Action (in French, Action Directe, thus AD), in hopes of creating a PLO-like umbrella "anti-imperialist front of Western European guerrillas" that would include Italy's Red Brigades (RB) and the Belgium Communist Combatant Cells (CCC) as well.19

The ambitious plan did not succeed because many terrorists in various Western European countries were arrested or forced to flee to safe havens in the waning years of the Cold War. It has been argued that the RAF and related organizations could not have survived as long as they did without Palestinian support.20 But this argument ignores or minimizes the significant support that these groups and individuals received from the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain.

In fact, much of the terrorism that plagued the West during the 1970s and 1980s related in one respect or another to the Cold War confrontation between the two superpowers and their respective spheres of influence. And the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, too, was fought in this context. While communist countries were supportive of leftist groups in Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere, some governments with friendly ties to Moscow supported religiously motivated groups as well. For example, the Lebanese Hezbollah, which was created in 1982 and financially sustained by the Islamic Republic of Iran, was tolerated and at times backed by Syria, which shared Hezbollah's anti-Israeli stance.

IRA and ETA: Groups That Transcend the Average Life Span of Terrorist Groups

David C. Rapoport has documented four waves of distinct terrorist movements beginning with the anarchist wave in the late nineteenth century, with an average span of forty to forty-five years for each of these distinct periods. He concluded that
this “pattern suggests a human life cycle pattern, where dreams that inspire fathers lose their attractiveness for the sons.”

Many groups had, in fact, far shorter lives than the waves they were part of. But there have also been some groups that survived the demise of their particular waves and the average life span of these types of groups.

A good example is the IRA, whose roots go back to the end of the eighteenth century. The organization was founded in 1919 to fight for Ireland’s independence from the United Kingdom. In 1921, when moderate nationalists agreed to the establishment of an independent Irish state in the predominantly Catholic south and to continued British control over six counties in the north, radical nationalists opposed this solution. They wanted all of Ireland to be independent. The result was a civil war in which the extreme nationalists were defeated by the newly independent Irish state. Although the majority of the IRA denounced violence in the late 1920s, remnants of the group continued to fight for Northern Ireland’s independence. This was not the end of divisions within the IRA. In 1969, after paramilitary Protestants brutally interfered with a peaceful demonstration by Catholics in Northern Ireland, a militant IRA faction broke away and took the name “Provisional IRA.” In the decades since then, the Provisional IRA (also simply called the “IRA”) was most instrumental and most violent in pushing the nationalist cause in Northern Ireland. At the same time, terrorism was also the weapon of choice of Protestant Loyalist groups, such as the Ulster Defense Association and the Ulster Vanguard Movement. In protest against a peace process that resulted in the Belfast Agreement of 1998 and in the hope of ending the violent conflict over the status of Northern Ireland once and for all, some IRA members formed the Real IRA.

In the following years, members of this group carried out dozens of bombings and other terror attacks in Northern Ireland, Dublin, London, Birmingham, and elsewhere. In July 2005, the Provisional IRA declared an end to its armed struggle and announced that the organization would work within the democratic political process to achieve its goal. In the following three months, the group decommissioned its arms under the supervision of an Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. In May 2007, local government was restored to Northern Ireland when Ian Paisley, the leader of the Democratic Unionists, and Martin McGuinness, the representative of Sinn Fein, were sworn in as leader and deputy leader of the Northern Ireland government in a power-sharing arrangement. And in February 2010, Prime Minister Gordon Brown of Britain and Prime Minister Brian Cowen of Ireland signed the Hillsborough Castle Agreement for handing over control of the six counties’ police and justice system to Northern Ireland’s government.

Another example of an enduring terror organization is the Basque ETA, the separatist movement that was founded in 1959 when the wave of self-determination swept around the globe. Although Basques received a great deal of autonomy in the decades following the end of the Franco regime and the emergence of a democratic system, the organization continued to demand a separate Basque state. While its commandos always operated underground, the political party Batasuna pursued the organization’s separatist goal in the legitimate political process until banned as undemocratic by Spain’s Supreme Court. While not close to a majority party, Batasuna managed to win around 10% and 15% of the Basque vote. More recently, though, a solid majority of Basques rejects ETA outright. According to a November 2009 survey carried out by Euskobarometro of the Universidad del Pais Vasco, 63% of the Basque public rejected ETA totally while merely 1% supported the organization totally with a range of mixed views in between. In spite of this lack in public support...
and the decimation of its leadership during a wave of arrests both in Spain and in neighboring France—especially in 2009 and 2010—the organization continued its lethal violence throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century. Since resorting to terrorism in the late 1960s, ETA attacks killed more than 800 persons and injured many more. In the past, several cease-fire agreements between ETA and the Madrid government did not last long nor did unilateral truce announcements on the part of the group. Thus, following ETA’s cease-fire message in March 2006, group members detonated a powerful bomb in a parking garage at the Madrid airport, killing two persons and causing the collapse of the building. In the summer of 2009, ETA celebrated its fiftieth birthday by detonating several bombs on the popular resort island of Mallorca that is visited each summer by tens of thousands of tourists from abroad. ETA bombs exploded in restaurants, in bars, and on streets killing two policemen and injuring dozens of civilians. The obvious target was Spain’s all-important tourism sector at a time of economically hard times.

Traditionally, Spanish ETA members sought and found safe haven across the border in France in an area that Basque separatists consider part of their homeland. But after French authorities suspected ETA operatives to have had their hands in the killing of a French policeman in March 2010, French President Nicolas Sarkozy promised to do away with all ETA hideouts in France and hunt down ETA terrorists on French soil. The killing of the policeman was in reaction to the arrest of ETA’s military leader Ibon Gogeascoechea in February by French police. By May 2010, his successor Mikel Kabikoitz Carrera Sarobe was in French custody as well. The question was whether the joint Spanish–French move against ETA would result in a crippling blow against the resilient organization.

The Decline of Left-Wing Terrorism

When the Iron Curtain faded and the Cold War ended, many observers expected a dramatic decline in international terrorism. In April 1992, the RAF announced that it was laying down its arms. In a series of communiques, the RAF admitted the failure of its armed struggle up to the fall of the Berlin Wall and of its subsequent efforts to refocus its revolutionary activities in the wake of Germany’s reunification. But even in defeat, the RAF reaffirmed its support for its past actions and for active liberation movements around the world. Except for some groups and cells in Greece, Spain, and Turkey, these last communications were understood as obituaries for the Marxist groups that had terrorized Western Europe since the late 1960s. But even a decade later, when nineteen members of the Greek terrorist organization November 17 were arrested and tried, there were some signs that remnants of the Red Brigades were attempting a comeback in Italy.

In Latin America, many terrorist groups along with similar groups elsewhere disintegrated, but others survived and remained very active. Probably the best-known Latin American movement, the Tupamaros, or National Liberation Movement, in Uruguay, founded in 1962, became the model for urban terrorism or what proponents called “urban guerrilla warfare” across Latin America and elsewhere. While they provided the dominant model for Marxist groups, the Tupamaros also affected the organizational forms and terrorist methods of right-wing organizations. Aiming at overthrowing the existing domestic order and establishing a fairer system, the mostly middle- and upper-class members of the Tupamaros established an effective terror
network across their country that fought foreign diplomats as well as domestic police and military forces. Ultimately, however, the Tupamaros lost their earlier public support and became the targets of an effective counteroffensive by Uruguay’s security forces. By the 1980s, the organization, once the poster child for terrorism, “totally abandoned the armed struggle, preferring instead to re-enter democratic politics.”

Other groups, such as the FARC and the National Liberation Army (ELN) in Colombia, both established in the early 1960s, continued their struggle against foreign influence and their own governments into the twenty-first century. The leftist FARC is believed to be the best-trained, best-organized, and best-financed terror organization in Latin America. In the past, the left-wing ELN, an ecoterrorist group that specializes in sabotaging the pipelines of foreign oil corporations, had priests among its active members.

In sum, then, at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries, Marxist terrorists were no longer the threat they had been in the preceding decades. Instead, a far more dangerous and deadly form of terrorism surfaced during the 1990s.

The Rise of Catastrophic Terrorism

Just as 1968 is considered the beginning of modern terrorism, 1995 can be seen as the advent of catastrophic terrorism. There had been plenty of warnings in advance. During the 1980s, some experts in the field cautioned that the United States and the world should brace for the most violent chapter in the history of terrorism. Robert Kupperman and Jeff Kamen, for example, described eerie scenarios of major acts of terrorism that would cause mass disruption and mass destruction. But other well-regarded experts, Walter Laqueur among them, looked upon the terrorist reality at that time as merely a nuisance for the United States and other Western democracies.

The events of the 1990s, starting with the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, proved the pessimists right. But it was the 1995 nerve gas attack on subway riders in Tokyo, which killed a dozen and wounded more than 5,000 people, that became the definitive turning point. Addressing the fact that members of the Aum Shinrikyo sect, who were responsible for the incident in Japan, had been able to acquire and develop highly toxic materials, U.S. Senator Sam Nunn identified the sarin gas strike as the onset of “a new era” in terrorism with the possibility, if not likelihood, of terrorists deploying weapons of mass destruction and committing catastrophic terror.

Why did terrorism blossom in the post–Cold War era? Four developments in particular are relevant here:

1. The collapse of communism, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the end of the bipolar world dismantled what one might call a mechanism of restraint that had been part of the old balance-of-power arrangement.
2. The dissolution of the Soviet Union into independent republics, the disappearance of Soviet-style communism as an alternative ideology, the changes in what had been the Eastern Bloc, and the new geopolitical realities that cast the United States in the role of the only remaining superpower unleashed ethnic, religious, and pseudoreligious fervor and led to the emergence and strengthening of movements and groups that were willing to resort to catastrophic terrorism for their purposes.
3. The growing opposition to certain aspects of modernity and globalization was at least one factor in the emergence and radicalization of religious and ethnic groups. These sentiments had found expression in the rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan after the retreat of the Russian troops a decade later. To be sure, other root causes existed as well. In the case of Iran, it was the oppressive and U.S.-supported regime of the Shah that the revolution overthrew.

4. The expansion of air traffic and the advances in communication technology allowed terrorist organizations to dispatch their operatives to strike in distant places and to exploit global communication nets and media for intra-group communications and for the dissemination of their propaganda.

Unrestrained Terrorism and Counterterrorism after the Cold War

In the early 1980s, journalist Claire Sterling pointed to state sponsors of anti-American and anti-Western terrorism involving Soviet states in Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Details about the insidious roles of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and other states in the Soviet orbit were only revealed after the collapse of the Soviet Empire. But in a strange way, these relationships between state supporters and terrorist groups provided also a safety valve against catastrophic terrorism: The Soviet Union and its client states did not want unrestrained terrorism that could have risked retaliation and perhaps a superpower confrontation. Similarly, the United States supported organizations that fought against socialist regimes with terrorist tactics, such as the Contras in Nicaragua or the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

This bipolar geopolitical order limited also the likelihood of disproportionate counterterrorist strikes by major Western target states, most of all the United States. During the 444 days of the Iranian hostage crisis, when dozens of American citizens were held hostage in the U.S. embassy in Tehran with the blessing of the Iranian authorities, President Jimmy Carter and his advisors discussed possible punitive military strikes against Iran, if only to demonstrate American power and determination. But once the Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan, even Carter’s hawkish National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, abandoned his push for military actions because of fears that these measures “would simply give additional opportunities to the Soviets in their drive toward the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.” And although Iran was seen in the West as a far more flagrant sponsor of anti-American terrorism than Libya during the 1980s, the Reagan administration chose Libya to demonstrate the United States’ counterterrorist muscle—certainly in recognition that the North African country was far less important in Moscow’s geopolitical design than was Iran. To this end, the Reagan administration launched a massive diplomatic and public relations campaign that branded Libya as the “chief culprit” among the sponsors of anti-American terrorism. In April 1986, Washington was able to blame Libya for the terrorist bombing of a disco in Berlin that was known to Libyan agents as the favorite hangout for American GIs. The Reagan administration retaliated with air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi—but only after tipping off the Soviet government in advance so that it could warn its advisors in Libya.
After the end of the Cold War, no such checks were in place. The expected “New World Order” became more of a “New World Disorder” with respect to terrorism. And counterterrorist considerations were no longer harnessed as they were during the bipolar realities of the Cold War period. This was clear after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, when the United States launched extensive military actions against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and even more so when Iraq was invaded by U.S.-led forces. President George W. Bush and his advisors did not have the balance-of-power/spheres-of-interest concerns of earlier presidents, namely, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

The Old and New Terrorism in the Post–Cold War Era

After the Cold War was over, a number of movements, groups, and individuals that had committed terrorism during the Cold War stayed on course. Besides the already mentioned IRA, offshoots thereof, and the Loyalists in Northern Ireland, the Basque ETA in Spain, the FARC and similar groups in Colombia and other Latin American countries, Palestinian secular groups like the PFLP, and religious organizations like the Hezbollah in Lebanon continued on. But after the Cold War ended, new movements and groups embraced terrorism as their political weapon of choice.

The dissolution of the communist bloc laid bare the deep-seated animosities in the territories it had spanned. The breakup of the Soviet Union into more than a dozen independent countries did not end once and for all the historic ethnic conflicts within and between these states. But it was the rapid rise of Islamic militancy and radical teachings in the overwhelmingly Muslim Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan that destabilized the whole region. Trained by Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, and financially supported by governments and wealthy individuals in the Middle East, Islamic radicals used terrorist methods to fight for the spread and dominance of Islam. As one expert described these developments that came after seven decades of Soviet rule,

The penetration of radical Islamic ideologies from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey; the financing of mosques and Islamic schools (madrassahs) by Iran and Saudi Arabia; and charities that give money to Islamic schools and mosques have contributed to the de-russification and Islamization of Central Asians.

Similar developments took place in the Russian Federation itself, where roughly one of six citizens was not a Russian, and in the ethnically and religiously diverse Balkans. The Russian–Chechen conflict was and still is a case in point. In the Chechen struggle for independence, the weaker party resorted to terrorism against Russians inside and outside the Chechen territory. For many observers, this was in response to the brutality with which the Russian military prosecuted the war against Chechen rebels. By taking over and occupying hospitals and other public facilities, the Chechens staged dramatic hostage situations. Chechen leaders threatened repeatedly that they would target the Moscow subway system and nuclear power plants in Russia. Shortly before he was assassinated in 1996, Andrei Dudayev, a Chechen separatist leader, threatened even Western Europe with terrorism because, as he explained, Europeans supported Russia’s aggression against Chechnya.

With the end of the Cold War, ethnic conflicts broke out in the Balkans as well, most of all in Yugoslavia. And just as Muslim Chechen separatists were supported by
Muslim fighters from abroad, the Muslim regions of the Balkans witnessed an influx of Muslim militants with expertise in terrorism. This was most obvious in Bosnia, where Iranian Revolutionary Guards and equally militant groups from a host of Arab countries fought on the side of Bosnian Muslims during the bloody civil war of the early 1990s. When the Dayton Peace Accord was signed, these Muslim fighters did not leave the region as required by the agreement. Instead, terrorism became an additional threat to American and other NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) soldiers trying to keep peace among the various factions. To be sure, Muslims from abroad were not the first to promote terrorism at the time. In fact, Serbs were the first party to actually perpetrate an act of international terrorism in the Bosnian conflict, when they seized United Nations peacekeepers as hostages in 1995 in order to prevent further NATO strikes. But the bloody clash between Muslims and Serbs and, as Bosnian Muslims felt, the West's indifference to the genocide perpetrated against them stirred anti-Western and anti-American sentiments far beyond the Muslim communities in Bosnia. Sefir Halilovich, then commander of the Bosnian Army, threatened at one point that terrorists would put “European capitals ablaze” unless the West would come to the aid of Bosnian Muslims.29 His anger was shared by fellow Muslims all over Europe as well as in Asia and Africa.

A large number of the fighters who helped their Muslim brethren in Bosnia were veterans of the war in Afghanistan during most of the 1980s, when they had fought side by side with Afghans against the Soviet military after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Financed by oil-rich Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia, the Arab mujahideen had forged a close relationship with representatives of the U.S. government, who supported them with sophisticated weapons. One of these Arab fighters was Osama bin Laden, the offspring of a wealthy Saudi family, who had found his calling in Afghanistan and in the jihad against the Soviet intruders. Once the Soviet forces had withdrawn, Washington had achieved its goal and was no longer interested in Afghanistan and unwilling to contribute to the reconstruction of the country. Realizing that they had been Washington's pawn in the Cold War, the one-time allies—many mujahideens, Osama bin Laden among them—turned their ire against the United States.

Modernization, Globalization, and the Proliferation of Religious Violence

In the fall of 1999, a few hundred self-proclaimed anarchists disrupted a summit meeting of the WTO in Seattle by detonating M-80 firecrackers and vandalizing brand-name stores like Starbucks, Nike, and Old Navy. Subsequent meetings of the WTO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other international organizations were plagued by more serious antiglobalization violence. American and European left-leaning environmentalists and opponents of Western-style industrial modernization, postmodern developments, and U.S.-dominated globalization and consumerism were and are the driving forces in the antiglobalization movement. But the opposition to these developments has proven strongest amongst all kinds of religious fundamentalists.

In his book Jihad vs. McWorld, Benjamin Barber examines the resentment against the reach of mass production, mass consumption, mass entertainment, and mass information that transcends national borders. He characterizes the extreme reactions to
these developments as “jihad.” But jihad (holy war) does not simply stand here for what fundamentalist Muslims say and do to counter the McWorld universe and Hollywood-dominated entertainment. Rather, in this context, jihad is a metaphor for the extreme reactions of distinct groups that see their traditional religious, ethnic, political, and economic values under attack. To be sure, the religious zealots of the Al Qaeda terrorism network would qualify on the jihad side, but so would right-wing Christian or pseudo-Christian groups in the United States. Mark Juergensmeyer, an expert on religious violence, comes to similar conclusions when he writes,

Activists such as bin Laden might be regarded as guerilla antiglobalists. . . . The era of globalization and postmodernity creates a context in which authority is undercut and local forces have been unleashed. I do not mean to imply that only globalization causes religious violence. But it may be one reason why so many instances of religious violence in such diverse places around the world are occurring at the present time.

Furthermore, Juergensmeyer points out that the “perception of an international conspiracy and an oppressive economic ‘new world order’ has been explicitly mentioned by Osama bin Laden, the Aum Shinrikyo, and Christian militia groups [in the United States].”

But while antiglobalization sentiments have fueled the hate of all kinds of religious and ethnic groups, the events of 9/11 and subsequent bombings in India, Indonesia, Morocco, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere have drawn most attention to Muslim extremists who strike in the name of God and their religion. Nobody has justified violence in reaction to U.S. dominance in and exploitation of Arab and Muslim countries as well as U.S. support for oppressive regimes in the Middle East as categorically and frequently as Osama bin Laden, the founder of Al Qaeda. In his 1996 fatwa, he wrote about the predicament of Muslims in general and of Saudi Arabia in particular:

From here, today we begin the work, talking and discussing the ways of correcting what had happened to the Islamic world in general, and the land of the two Holy Places in particular. We wish to study the means that we could follow to return the situation to its normal path. And to return to the people their own rights, particularly after the large damages and the great aggression on the life and the religion of the people. An injustice that had affected every section and group of the people, the civilians, military and security men, government officials and merchants, the young and the old people as well as school and university students. Hundreds of thousands of the unemployed graduates, who became the widest sections of society, were also affected.

Addressing the situation of Saudi Arabians, he complained,

More than three hundred forty billions of Ryal owed by the government to the people in addition to the daily accumulated interest, let alone the foreign debt. People wonder whether we are the largest oil exporting country?! They even believe that this situation is a curse put on them by Allah for not objecting to the oppressive and illegitimate behavior and measures of the ruling regime.

He blamed the “American crusader forces” for a great deal of the catastrophic policies “imposed on the country, especially in the field of oil industry where production is restricted or expanded and prices are fixed to suit the American economy ignoring the economy of the country.”
Years before the terror in New York and Washington, D.C., political scientist Samuel Huntington predicted that the greatest dangers in the post–Cold War era would arise from conflicts between nations and groups of different civilizations, of different cultural backgrounds. Several weeks after the events of 9/11, while rejecting the notion that these attacks signaled such a collision, Huntington was sure that “bin Laden wants it to be a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West.” Bin Laden’s statements validated this conclusion all along. In his 1998 declaration of war against “Jews and Crusaders,” he listed the wrongdoings of the “Crusader–Zionist alliance” and reminded all Muslims that the “jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries” and that “[n]othing is more sacred than belief except repulsing an enemy who is attacking religion and life.” He then called on all Muslims “to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military . . . in any country in which it is possible to do.” In October 2001, when the U.S. military commenced military strikes against Al Qaeda camps and Taliban strongholds in Afghanistan, bin Laden declared,

The events have divided the whole world into two sides. The side of believers and the side of infidels, may God keep you away from them. Every Muslim has to rush to make his religion victorious. The winds of faith have come. The winds of change have come to eradicate oppression from the island of Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Since Muslims did not rise in a massive united front to fight the Christian and Jewish infidels in the holy war that bin Laden had declared, the Al Qaeda leader and his supporters did not realize their most ambitious objective. On the contrary, they lost their safe haven, headquarters, training facilities, and weapon arsenals in Afghanistan. In this respect, bin Laden and his comrades in arms underestimated, perhaps, the resolve of the United States and the willingness of other governments to cooperate with Washington. But one must also doubt that the Al Qaeda leadership expected to provoke the existential clash of civilizations simply as a result of the 9/11 operation and the anticipated military response. It is far more likely that the plan was to move with each additional terror attack closer toward a confrontation between “the side of believers” and “the side of infidels.”

Certainly, the events of 9/11 and subsequent major terrorist attacks in the West increased the tensions between Muslim minorities and Christian majorities in many Western countries—in Europe more so than in the United States. Although it had singled out Muslim immigrants in the past because of their different cultural and religious preferences, the xenophobic right in France, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and elsewhere became far more popular when people feared that Muslims within their borders could commit violence along the lines of 9/11. These fears were fueled by reports that terrorist “sleeper cells,” ready to be awakened any time to commit violent acts, existed in many Western countries. In this atmosphere, populist leaders made Muslims the scapegoats for all kinds of ills in their societies. In capturing this trend, one observer wrote,

In her best-known campaign poster, Pia Kjaersgaard, the leader of Denmark’s People’s Party, showed a pretty little blond child with the caption: “By the time you retire, Denmark will be a majority Muslim-nation.” Yet in Denmark just 1 person in 15 is of foreign origin and most of these are thoroughly assimilated.

As new antiterrorism laws and profiling criteria in Western democracies targeted Muslims and Arabs in particular, the gap between Muslim minorities and non-Muslim
majorities widened. Although far from moving rapidly toward the cataclysmic clash of civilizations that Huntington warned of and bin Laden wished for, there was certainly increased hostility between “infidels” and “believers” in many Western countries and more fertile ground among the Muslim diaspora for bin Laden’s divisive agenda and his final goal.

David Rapoport has suggested that the current wave of religious terrorism got its most important impulses from the Islamic revolution of 1979 in Iran and, a decade later, from the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. His point does not contradict the influence of antiglobalization and clash-of-civilization sentiments on the rise of religious terrorism—especially of the Muslim variety. The Iranian revolution, too, was at least partially a reaction to American and Western influence and support of the regime of the Shah. Moreover, the developments in Iran and later in Afghanistan “gave evidence that religion now provided more hope than the prevailing revolutionary ethos did.”

In both cases, formidable terror organizations emerged that had ties to the fundamentalist Muslim regimes in Iran and Afghanistan: Hezbollah and Al Qaeda.

Founded in 1982 by Lebanese followers of Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini, members of Hezbollah were trained in the Bekaa Valley by Iranian Revolutionary Guards and otherwise supported by the government in Tehran. This relationship was an important step forward for Iran, because, as Adam Shatz concluded, “Hezbollah provided a means” for Iran of “spread[ing] the Islamic revolution to the Arab world” and “gaining a foothold in Middle East politics.” But besides fighting Israel and the foreign military presence and influence in Lebanon, Hezbollah did not have a grander anti-Western and antiglobalization design. Hezbollah’s focus was on Lebanon and the Israeli–Palestinian problem—not on a united Muslim front against the West.

While this was foremost on Al Qaeda’s agenda, bin Laden, his associates, and his supporters were not just opposed to Western-driven and U.S.-dominated globalization; they also despised the regimes in the region that cooperated with the United States and the West. Indeed, bin Laden expressed as much contempt for Saudi Arabia’s rulers as for the U.S. government. When he returned from Afghanistan to Saudi Arabia in 1990, he was offended by the presence and influence of Westerners in his homeland. After the Saudi rulers and other governments in the region supported the U.S.-led military coalition against Iraq in the early 1990s, he was particularly disturbed by the lasting presence of the U.S. military on the Arabian Peninsula. Bin Laden turned so vehemently against Saudi Arabia’s government because of this issue that he lost his citizenship.

While originally serving bin Laden as a vehicle for financing and managing all kinds of pet projects during the Afghanistan war against the Soviet Union, the Al Qaeda organization developed into a management group for the indoctrination, training, and financing of an unprecedented network of global terrorists. After losing his Saudi citizenship, bin Laden and his associates found a new base of operation in Sudan, also an Islamic republic. Here the group established businesses and plotted violent actions against the United States and the Saudi rulers. Under pressure by the United States, the Saudis, and other countries in the region, the Sudanese government asked Al Qaeda to leave the country. In the spring of 1996, accompanied by family members and supporters, bin Laden flew to Afghanistan, where he found agreeable surroundings. According to Simon Reeve,

“He had chosen Afghanistan, where he knew he could rely on the support of his old comrades [with whom he had fought against the Soviet invader of Afghanistan in
the 1980s]. Many of them had now reorganized into the fundamentalist Islamic militia known to the West as the Taliban, which was imposing harsh Sharia law in the country; forcing men into mosques at gunpoint five times a day, banning music and alcohol, and preventing women from working.\textsuperscript{42}

In this environment, cut off from what he considered the evils of Western influence, bin Laden and his associates refined their doctrine and trained “holy warriors” for the envisioned clash with the infidel West. To advance this goal, Al Qaeda, like other terrorist organizations, embraced modernity and globalization by using the latest technological advances.

**Technological Advances and Global Communication**

Terrorists at all times have embraced the newest technologies to serve their purposes. Thus, after Alfred Nobel invented dynamite from a mixture of nitroglycerin in 1866, the anarchists embraced the highly explosive material eagerly as their weapon of choice, as the preferred component of their potent bombs. More recent terrorists (e.g., the Japanese sect Aum Shinrikyo and Al Qaeda) tried to get their hands on nuclear material. Vast advances in the field of aviation in the post–World War II period and declining ticket prices made air travel affordable and allowed terrorists to travel long distances to train with their comrades and strike in faraway places. But nothing was more helpful to terrorists everywhere than the advances in those technologies that were the basis for the establishment of global satellite TV networks such as CNN and Al Jazeera, national and international cellular phone connections, and, most importantly, the Internet. To be sure, a few hate groups in the United States and Europe began to utilize the Internet in the 1980s, but it took several more years before terrorists everywhere were able to exploit the Internet, cell phones, and global TV networks for their purposes.

One example will suffice here: Soon after heavily armed Chechen separatists seized a theater in Moscow in late October 2002, accomplices outside delivered videotaped material to the Moscow bureau of the Arab TV network Al Jazeera in which they proclaimed to have chosen to die on “the path of struggling for the freedom of the Chechen.”\textsuperscript{43} Soon thereafter, the videotape was played by TV networks and stations around the world. As many of the hundreds of hostages inside used their cell phones to communicate with families and friends, some of them conveyed the chilling messages of their captors to the Russian public and especially to President Vladimir V. Putin. The Chechens left no doubt that they would blow up the building and kill themselves and hundreds of innocent people unless the Putin government ordered the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya. At the height of the siege, one of the captors grabbed the cellular phone of one of the hostages, who was speaking to a local radio station, and delivered a tirade against Russia’s war against Chechnya. The hostage-holders got their messages across—not only to Russians but also to governments and the general public around the globe.

In the past, the neat distinction between international and domestic terrorism was a useful tool for examining the complexities of the terrorist phenomenon. But this differentiation is no longer meaningful, if only because the news about indigenous terrorism transcends national borders. Take the Oklahoma City bombing, which at first sight seemed utterly domestic in nature because Americans, Timothy McVeigh and his accomplice Terry Nichols, struck in the American heartland against fellow Americans. Although no formal ties were proven, both men shared the ideas of white
supremacy hate groups in the United States, which are seemingly an indigenous phenomenon. But the leaders of these groups and their followers do embrace international conspiracy theories and cultivate ties to similar hate organizations. Ingo Hasselbach, the founder of a neo-Nazi party in eastern Germany who eventually quit the hate group scene, revealed after the Oklahoma City bombing,

[Virtually all of our propaganda and training manuals came from the right-wing extremist groups in Nebraska and California. . . . We also received illegal materials from our friends in Nebraska . . . like a U.S. Army manual called Explosives and Demolitions, which has since been copied and circulated (still with the top-secret stamp across the title page) to thousands of right-wing extremists all over Europe.]

To sum up, a number of factors favored the proliferation of post–Cold War terrorism, among them the disintegration of the Soviet Empire, the collapse of the bipolar Cold War world order, growing opposition to the effects of modernization and globalization, and advances in global communication and air travel.

But although the boundaries between international and domestic terrorism are blurred, as mentioned earlier, different realities exist in different domestic settings as the following chapter about terrorism in the American context illustrates.

Notes

2. For the Sea Shepherd’s mission statement, see http://www.seashepherd.org/who-we-are/, accessed June 1, 2010.
6. Ibid., 59.
8. Ibid., 77.
10. Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1963), 94.
11. Ibid., 313.
13. For “Stadtguerrilla und Klassenkampf” and other RAF documents, see www.baader-meinhof.com.
14. Simon, 97, 98.
18. Ibid., 323.
20. Ibid., cites David Schiller, a German-Israeli counterterrorism analyst, who argued that “without assistance provided by the Palestinians to their German counterparts the latter could not have survived.”
32. Ibid.
33. Unless otherwise indicated, quotes from and references to bin Laden’s communications are from his 1996 “Ladenese Epistle: Declaration of War” and his 1998 “Jihad against Jews and Crusaders.” The documents are available on a number of web sites, among them www.washingtonpost.com.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.