

# WHEN TERRORISM ISN'T TERRORISM, TO AMERICA

### STRANGER THAN FICTION



TAJ HASHMI

I find my White American students – even the very bright ones – totally confused, the moment I ask them if White police brutality against Black people in America amounts to terrorism. Most White students attribute the killings of black people by White police as undesirable, accidental, or simply due to bad judgment by the proverbial “bad cops”. Mostly Black students impute the killings to racism, and state-sponsored terrorism. Some of them even think White policemen who kill Black people for no genuine reasons or justifications are actually crypto-KKK activists in police uniform.

The truth might be in between the two extreme opinions. Various reports indicate, presently the KKK or Ku Klux Klan has three to six thousand active members in America. Although from any definition of terrorism, the KKK is a terrorist organisation par excellence, there are strong reservations and taboos among White American politicians, intellectuals, government officials, and common people that never allow an open and candid discussion in the US about the prevalence and even growing surge of White extremism in the country. They always try to prove the KKK and discriminations against Black people only happened in the past.

However, historically America has never been a land of the free and brave. Neither the slave owners nor their slaves were ever free; the former was bonded to their greed, hate, and power, the latter to their miserable fate, determined by their White masters. Apparently, the end of slavery in 1865, and the grant of civil rights to the Black people a century later (1964) made every American equal in every sphere of life. This is, however, not true. Ron Paul, a former US presidential candidate in 2008 and 2012, calls his country “the empire of lies”, and affirms:

“Truth is treason in the empire of lies.... There is an alternative to national bankruptcy, a bigger police state, trillion-dollar wars, and a government that draws ever more parasitically on the productive energies of the American people.”

Many White Americans are proud, conceited, and complacent. They think the country of theirs is the best, and is also the “Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave”.

Many of them don't believe Americans ever killed millions of innocent people, from Hiroshima to Hanoi, Baghdad to Benghazi, and Kabul to Waziristan; and ever resorted to state-terrorism in Vietnam, Cambodia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and elsewhere since the end of World War II. They also deny America has ever been an empire.

What's pertinent to understanding the nature of the American Empire is its fundamental difference with major empires in the past, Britain, France, Spain, and the Netherlands. Unlike empires in general,

America's military intervention, which many consider to be state-terrorism at home and abroad is integral to its neo-imperialist design. Having different names and forms, excuses and exigencies, American military intervention starts with unnecessary invasions in resource rich or strategically important countries, with a view to changing or coercing into submission of unfriendly regimes in those countries. Again, the invasions – during the last seven decades – got the stamps of legitimacy (through the compliant UN, and the US Congress) as just wars for democracy,

people, we must re-define racism as terrorism. Then again, thanks to the Civil Rights of 1964, racism has become subtle, but has not disappeared at all.

Many White Americans consider racism to exist only in the past. They believe the ongoing killings of Black people by White police officers are either accidental, or due to bad judgment of the concerned police officers. Despite the denial by White American police, lawmakers, jury, judges, and prosecutors that they have never been racially

Interestingly, after the police had tracked down the original terrorists, American media, analysts, and intellectuals imputed the attack to some mentally disturbed, deranged young men. They, however, never give any Muslim terrorist – from the Shoe Bomber to the Underwear Bomber, from Major Nidal Hassan to the Boston, St. Bernardino, and Orlando killers – the ‘privilege’ of getting branded not as terrorists but as “mentally deranged or disturbed” individuals.

I cite another example of when terrorism is not terrorism in America. The US administration and White Americans in general conveniently denied there had been any terrorist attack on the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) building in Austin, Texas that killed the terrorist and an IRS employee. On February 18, 2010, one Andrew Joseph Stack deliberately crashed his single-engine plane into an IRS building, killing himself and an IRS employee. Only two US lawmakers from Austin considered the incident as an act of domestic terrorism, and a USA Today headline used the expression “a chilling echo of terrorism”. One wonders, how would have White America reacted had Muslims been involved in the Oklahoma City bombing, or the suicide attack on the IRS building in Texas!

Meanwhile, the simmering anger of Black Americans against White police brutality is a disturbing development. Black activists are decrying the lack of any justice and security for Black Americans. The movement called Black Lives Matter (started in 2013) is posing a new challenge to White supremacists. On Thursday, July 7, 2016, Micah Johnson, a Black lone wolf terrorist killed five White police officers in Dallas, apparently in retaliation against the killing of two alleged Black suspects by White policemen in Minnesota and Louisiana, on Tuesday and Wednesday. The police later found explosives and a bomb making manual at the killer's house. Yet, for some strange reasons, neither the Obama Administration nor the American media ever used the “T” word to classify the attack as domestic terrorism.

One isn't sure as to how the selective use of the “T” word will do any good to anybody! One wonders if White America's prejudice against Black Americans, Muslims, and Afro-Asian-Latin American countries will ever disappear, and if America will pay heed to the ideals of freedom and human rights, guaranteed by its own founding fathers in the 18th Century! Unfortunately, America is on the path to a “permanent war”, and has



PHOTO: NPR

which monopolise markets, plunder wealth, and exploit cheap labour of the colonies, the American Empire mainly exploit its own people. What Bernie Sanders is telling today, Reagan's Assistant Treasury Secretary Paul Craig Roberts explained this earlier: “Washington's empire extracts resources from the American people for the benefit of the few powerful interest groups that rule America. The military-security complex, Wall Street, agri-business and the Israel Lobby use the government to extract resources from Americans to serve their profits and power.... That is how the American Empire functions.”

freedom, and human rights.

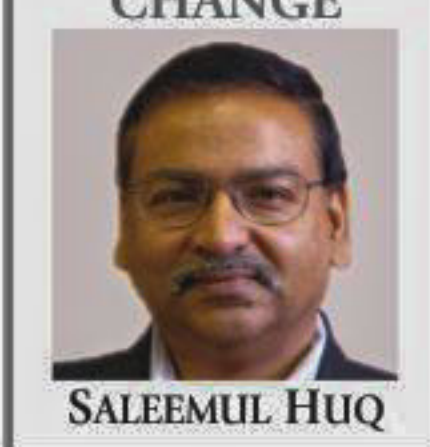
Racism by default or design is the mother of America's state-terrorism. We believe those who resort to racism, or deny its existence, also indulge in terrorism. Racism is pure, unadulterated terrorism. It involves discrimination against certain people only because of racial differences, with a view to subjugating others to plunder their wealth, or making them render cheap/slave labour to the subjugators. Since racism involves coercion, threat, intimidation, and even actual violence or terror against non-White

prejudiced against any Black person, the frequent denial of justice to Black victims of racial attacks, killing, rape, and torture, especially by White police officers, tell altogether different stories.

American bias against Muslims is so well entrenched that even six years before 9/11, on April 19, 1995 when two White Americans – Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols – bombed a government building in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people, American media and analysts jumped to the conclusion that Muslims were behind the terror attack.

## Fifteen years of climate change adaptation planning What have we learned so far

### POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



SALEEMUL HUQ

UNDER the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at its 7th Conference of Parties (COP7) held in Marrakech, Morocco in 2001, adaptation to climate change was recognised for the first time through the mandate to support the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in carrying out National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA). Since then, all 48 LDCs have finished their respective NAPAs and have also started to implement their priority adaptation projects, funded by the LDC Fund (LDCF) and set up to support the NAPAs.

Since then, under the Cancun Adaptation Framework agreed at the 16th Conference of Parties (COP16), countries have moved on from NAPAs to National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), which were meant to be longer term

and more mainstreamed into national development, rather than just a set of standalone adaptation projects that happened under the NAPA process.

Last year, at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris, where the Paris Agreement recognised the need to develop a global adaptation goal with all countries, not just LDCs or even developing countries when preparing NAPs. There is also an annual event called the NAP Expo organised every year in Bonn, Germany, to bring together country NAP teams to share knowledge and experience. The latest NAP Expo was held in Bonn in July this year, where a number of lessons were shared from the last fifteen years of adaptation planning at the national level.

I was invited to give the keynote speech at the closing plenary and am sharing below some of the key lessons that have emerged from the experience so far.

**NEED TO MAINSTREAM ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE:** Perhaps the biggest experience that has been achieved, to greater or lesser extent, in every

country is that adaptation to climate change is too big and important for a country to be assigned to the Ministries of Environment only. It requires the main ministries, such as Planning and Finance, need to be involved. This is happening in different ways in each country.

Bangladesh has already started to mainstream climate change into both ministries of Planning as well as Finance.

**UNIVERSAL REQUIREMENT TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE:** Another new dimension of the adaptation agenda is the realisation that adaptation to climate change impacts is not just for LDCs or even for developing countries, but is also needed in rich countries, as they are now also feeling the adverse impacts of climate change. Thus, even countries in Europe and the United States of America are also preparing their national and local adaptation plans.

Thus, after the Paris Agreement, adaptation as well as mitigation is now a universal need for all countries, both poor as well as rich.

**Learning from doing:** As countries and communities have started

planning as well as implementing adaptation activities, they are gaining considerable amounts of experiential knowledge of what works and doesn't work in practice.

Much of this knowledge is unique to each country, but some of it is generic and transferable from one country to another. Hence, there is much experiential knowledge being gained between countries by learning from each other's experiences.

**NEED TO HAVE SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS:** Perhaps the biggest change from the NAPAs to the NAPs is the need to shift from ad hoc project based approaches to adaptation to a more sustained and systemic process of incorporating adaptation into national, sectoral and local level plans and implement them in every country which requires a national mandate to sustain the process over time.

This is just the beginning for every country. In Bangladesh, the 7th Five Year Plan has done so to some extent and the upcoming Perspective Plan to 2040 will be another opportunity to embed it into national planning.

### POOR COUNTRIES LEADING THE RICH COUNTRIES:

Another aspect of the experience of planning and implementing is the fact that least developed countries were the first to start planning and implementing adaptation programmes, and thus, have been moving up the knowledge ladder faster than others, including the rich nations. As a result, LDCs, including Bangladesh are in a position to share their experiential knowledge on adaptation with the richer countries.

In the last fifteen years, since COP7 in Marrakech, much knowledge has been gained across the world on planning as well as implementation of adaptation to climate change. Coincidentally, the next Conference of Parties (COP22) will again be held in Marrakech in November this year, where the achievement of a global adaptation goal will be on the agenda as part of the Paris Agreement.

The writer is the Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh. Email: Saleemul.huq@iied.org

**QUOTABLE Quote**

**GEORGE R. R. MARTIN**  
American novelist, short-story writer, screenwriter and television producer.

A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. The man who never reads lives only one.

**CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**

- Diving gear
- Diploma holders
- Kitchen gadget
- From the area
- Book of maps
- Tolerate
- Fling
- Mom's mate
- Lessen
- Kitchen appliance
- Playground sight
- Hunger signals
- Pasta topper
- Followed as a result
- Small seabird
- Gave one's word
- Youngster
- Hammer part
- Stun
- Clearly stunned
- Talked at length
- City of Italy

**DOWN**

- Secret lingo
- Velocity
- Massage setting
- Lynx or lion
- Web address
- Trouncing
- Fiery crime
- Spectacles
- Hold up
- Litmus reddener
- Arp's art
- Downhill glider
- Bro's sibling
- Inside info
- Infamous czar
- Store department
- Getting lively
- Takes to court
- Field unit
- Meander
- Eden tempter
- Buck's mate
- Ham and lamb
- Scarlett's home
- Poet Khayyam

**YESTERDAY'S ANSWER**

J	A	D	E	S	C	A	B	O	T
A	V	E	R	T	A	L	O	N	E
G	E	N	I	E	L	E	W	I	S
U	N	I	C	E	F	L	O	T	
A	G	E	L	I	S	T	E	N	S
R	E	D	D	E	T	E	R	S	
Y	O	D	U	D	E	W	E	S	
C	A	R	A	M	E	L	I	N	K
O	W	N	R	W	A	N	D	A	
S	N	A	R	E	O	R	B	I	T
M	E	T	A	L	O	L	I	V	E
O	D	E	T	S	L	O	G	E	S

**BEETLE BAILEY** by Mort Walker

**BABY BLUES** by Kirkman & Scott