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New Zealand's Response To The Threat Of Terrorism Since “9-11” 2001

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Abstract

This thesis discusses New Zealand (NZ) government responses to the threat of terrorism since the terrorist attacks on icons of power within the United States of America (USA) on 11 September 2001. The thesis describes the preventative methods and practices adopted by NZ government agencies towards protecting NZ borders against terrorists and surreptitious attempts to violate border rules and regulations. Methods of border control reflect the government's assessment of the risks of "international terrorism" against New Zealanders' well-being and environment. The study is based on qualitative research drawing on a range of sources including newspaper articles, journals, submissions to the NZ Terrorism (Bombings and Financing) Bill, interviews with defence and security experts, ministerial reports, Hansard, and relevant texts on terrorism. Findings highlight the challenging perceptions of new-age terrorism, the wide-ranging terrorist targets vital to the well-being of nations, the silent and merciless lethality of biological terrorism, the growing NZ involvement in counterterrorism, and issues surrounding state security versus human rights.

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Acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ANZUS	Australia New Zealand United States Alliance
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Committee
ATIU	Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Unit
AVSec	Aviation Security Services
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CCL	Council for Civil Liberties
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNN	Cable News Network
CTTF	Counter Terrorism Task Force
DGSE	Director Generale de la Surveillance Exterieur
DOC	Department of Conservation
EAB	External Assessment Bureau
EDRC	Exotic Disease Response Centre
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FIDA	<i>Front Islamique du Djihad Arme</i>
FIS	<i>Front Islamique du Salut</i>
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FORT	Field Operations Response Team
GCSB	Government Communications Security Bureau
GDP	Government Domestic Product
GIA	<i>Group Islamique Arme</i>
HIV-AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HMNAS	Her Majesty's Navy Australian Service
HMNS	Her Majesty's Navy Service
IAFLOHP	The Islamic Army for the liberation of Holy Places
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISAF	International Security Air Force
JI	<i>Jamaah Islamiyah</i>
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MOF	Ministry of Fisheries
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOT	Ministry of Transport
MWU	Meat Worker's Union
NBC	National Broadcasting Corporation
NBR	National Business Review
NFP	Nuclear-Free Pacific
NIF	National Islamic Front
NRC	National Response Centre

NSATS	National Student Administration and Teaching Support
NZ	New Zealand
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
NZEZ	New Zealand Economic Zone
NZFIA	New Zealand Federation of Islamic Associations
NZGDP	New Zealand Gross Domestic Product
NZIS	New Zealand Immigration Service
NZSAS	New Zealand Special Air Service
NZSIS	New Zealand Special Investigation Service
NZUN	New Zealand United Nations
NZVC	New Zealand Victoria Cross
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
PM	Prime Minister
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
RSAA	Refugee Status Appeal Authority
SIS	Special Investigation Service
SRC	Security Risk Certificate
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN	United Nations
UNICO	United Nations International Crisis Organisation
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring Verification and Inspection Commission
UNWHO	United Nations World Health Organisation
US	United States
USINDO	United States Indonesia Organisation
US Navy	United States Navy
USOSAC	United States Overseas Security Advisory Council
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Borrowing from the United States (US) Army definition of *terrorism*, Chomsky defines this activity as “the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to attain political or religious ideological goals through intimidation, coercion or instilling fear”.¹ Therefore, *terrorism* refers to the actions of a highly motivated group of people, infrequently at governmental level, well-organized and clandestine in nature, which aims to threaten or use random acts of violence in order to shock, distress and hopefully paralyze the group’s *enemy*. The enemy is usually a state or government which has acted or is acting in a way that the group abhors. Halliday perceives terrorism as *conceptually* deriving from the 1794 French Revolution where terrorist tactics were largely adopted by governments against their own populous.² Although the use of terror in different forms has existed as a political tool throughout history, the twentieth century brought great changes in its application. While terrorism is not a widespread philosophy amongst all politically-active groups or movements, it remains a minority philosophy or tactic.

Unfortunately, terrorism has indeed become a deadly weapon in the arsenal of political movements stretching from the extreme right to the extreme left. Technological advances such as air transportation and travel, small but highly-lethal weapons, compact electrically-detonated explosives and weapons like the “SA-7 surface-to-air missile used”

¹ Noam Chomsky, *9/11*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001, p. 16.

² Fred Halliday, *Two Hours That Shook The World. September 11, 2001: Causes And Consequences*, London: Saqi Books, 2002, p. 72.

in November 2002 in Kenya,³ have provided terrorists with a mobility and lethality that their predecessors could never have foreseen. Advanced communications, based on telephone networks, satellites, and the internet, have permitted individuals, widely spread across the globe, to co-ordinate their activities whilst still enjoying a high degree of anonymity and autonomy.⁴

Terrorism is used by individuals or groups attempting to destabilize or overthrow existing political institutions. The word was popularized by commentators during the period following World War Two when Jewish Zionist “freedom-fighters” used terrorist attacks against British forces as a means of forcing the British to withdraw from their mandated territory Palestine.⁵ Naturally, these Zionists did not see themselves as terrorists, merely as warriors trying to claim sovereignty over their land. Ironically, today Israelis label Palestinians who use the same methods in their own desperate struggle for freedom, as terrorists. This present study shows how perceptions of terrorism are subjectively applied, *especially* after the events of 9/11.

The anti-colonial movements of the 1930s and particularly the 1940s and 1950s saw Third World peoples using the philosophy and methods of terrorism in their attempts to escape the shackles of colonial oppression. These conflicts, particularly between Ireland

³ Michael A. Jakub, ‘National Combating Terrorism Research And Development Program’. US Department Of State. Office Of The Coordinator For Counterterrorism. 29 September 2003. Retrieved 30 May 2007 from <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2003/24658.htm>.

⁴ Marshall S. Billingslea, ‘Military Matters: Combating Terrorism Through Technology’, *Nato Review*, Autumn 2004. Retrieved 30 May 2007 from <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2004/Issue3/english/military.html>.

⁵ Harvey W. Kushner, *Encyclopedia Of Terrorism*, London: Sage Publications, 2003, p. 180.

and the United Kingdom (UK); Algeria and France; and Vietnam and France/US, caused, and continue to cause, great suffering among combatants, civilians and survivors.⁶

Groups opposing other groups in an intrastate conflict, e.g. a civil-war scenario, have also used terrorism. Revolutionary forces have proven themselves willing to threaten or use shock violence against their own, established governments, as can be observed in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Iran, Nicaragua, El Salvador,⁷ and Argentina.⁸ Terrorists know that any threat or act of violence is certain to attract mass-media coverage, bringing fear and tension through terrorist demands, grievances, actions and political-goal explanations to a vast audience in millions of homes.

Today, the victims of terrorism are frequently uninvolved civilians. However, many terrorists do not consider civilian victims innocent because these victims, probably, support the hated regime. These innocents fall prey to random attacks or, when they merely stumble into terrorist attacks against governments, or in the case of the US, federal institutions or important locations. The present international terrorism trend is driven by passion and described by Harmon as “the rise of the religiously motivated gunman”.⁹

Western attitudes towards terrorism changed dramatically, at least in the minds of politicians and decision-makers, after 11 September 2001 (9/11). During the eastern seaboard breakfast rush-hour two hijacked airliners, American Airlines Flight 11 and

⁶ Halliday, *Two Hours That Shook The World*, 2002, p. 84.

⁷ Noam Chomsky, *Pirates And Emperors, Old And New: International Terrorism In The Real World*, London: Pluto Press, 2002, p. 129.

⁸ Halliday, *Two Hours That Shook The World*, 2002, p. 83.

⁹ Christopher C. Harmon, *Terrorism Today*, London: Frank Cass, 2000, p. 27.

United Airlines Flight 175, both flying from Boston, crashed into the Trade Centre twin towers buildings in New York. Even before the towers collapsed in a horrifying scene of devastation, broadcasted live to over a billion people worldwide, President George W. Bush, speaking in Sarasota, Florida, reported that the US had suffered an “apparent terrorist attack”. Fifteen minutes later a third hijacked aircraft, American Airlines Flight 77, crashed into the Pentagon, the seat of US military power, destroying a large section of the building. However, the attacks did not end there. Within half-an-hour of the Pentagon strike United Airlines Flight 93, also hijacked, crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh.

On 9/11, President Bush made public statements of gravity and significance that he may not have understood. He declared that the US was “at war” and that, wherever in the world the attackers were, they would be caught and punished. Sovereign borders would not protect them. Further, any government or state authority that had sponsored, or was now supporting or harbouring these terrorists would be an enemy of the US and would suffer the direst consequences. Polarising the world in a single sentence paraphrased clumsily from the *Bible*,¹⁰ Bush then stated emphatically that any nation “not with us” in the fight against terrorism “is against us”. The US, he concluded in a statement no less resonant than Roosevelt’s Day of “Infamy” speech on 7 December 1941,¹¹ “was now at war”, not a war against a particular nation, culture or people, but an unspecified but

¹⁰ Alexander Jones, ed. *The Jerusalem Bible With Abridged Introductions And Notes*, Mark 9:40, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1968.

¹¹ Richard Hofstadter, ed. *Great Issues In American History: From Reconstruction To The Present Day, 1864-1969*, New York: Vintage Books, 1969, p. 409.

clearly deadly serious *War on Terrorism*.¹² Bush repeatedly appealed to the international community for support. Despite the overwhelming global condemnation of the terrorist attacks from almost all member states of the United Nations (UN), Bush wanted unambiguous statements of support from nations as he prepared to prosecute his global war on terrorism.

Traditional allies of the US, including the UK and Australia, responded immediately in joining the war. Other nations, including NZ, which strongly condemns terrorism, wanted to form a clear picture and weigh up all issues of international law, ethics and morality, before making the decision to join with, or remain outside the conflict. The NZ government and people have remained neither apathetic nor unconcerned about the terror attacks of 9/11. But that does not mean that NZ has accepted Bush's clarion call-to-arms with uniform enthusiasm.

The present study reflects, firstly, on the pre-September 11, 2001, situation and acts of internal and international terrorism within New Zealand (NZ) to demonstrate, with examples, the reaction of the NZ government to terrorist threats including border control, and increased security changes made as an attempt to directly respond to the 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorist attack on the US.¹³ This study attempts to make sense of the NZ response to the US declared *War on Terrorism*. It describes and explains how the

¹² Ronald F. Levant, Laura Barbannel & Patrick H. DeLeon, 'Psychology's Response To Terrorism'. In *Understanding Terrorism: Psychosocial Roots, Consequences And Interventions*, Fathali M. Moghadam & Anthony J. Marsella, eds. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2004, p. 265.

¹³ NZ Ministry Of Foreign Affairs & Trade. 'Security: NZ And The Campaign Against Terrorism: The International Dimension – Operation Enduring Freedom'. Retrieved 4 April 2007 from <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Foreign-Relations/1-Global-Issues/Security/Campaign-against-Ter>.

events of 9/11 have shaped or influenced NZ political and public attitudes and responses to the so-called *New Age of Terrorism* the world is purportedly experiencing. To do this, the study traces the course of the Labour-led NZ government's enforcement of existing defence and security legislation, as well as moves to strengthen relevant sections of legislation and introduce new and seemingly more powerful acts giving security agencies more freedom, authority and power to protect NZ citizens against terrorism. Public submissions on such moves, media, public attitudes and government mindsets reflected in terrorism policies, are examined to create a context explaining what government has done and to provide reference points for any subsequent effectiveness of its actions.

The study rests on a foundation of sources ranging from newspaper articles; public submissions to the relevant select committees on the Terrorism (Bombings and Financing) Bill; interviews with key defence personnel and security experts; communication with members of Foreign Affairs and Trade Commissioners; other primary and secondary sources; Hansard reports on the terrorism debate in Parliament; and NZ domestic and global security concerns, particularly in the area of biosecurity. The study is presented in six parts: 1. Introduction, 2. New Zealand and Terrorism before 9/11, 3. New Zealand Confronts Security Issues after 9/11, 4. The 2002 Bali Bombings, 5. Immigration, National Security and Human Rights, 6. Biological Terrorism and Biological Security, and 7. Conclusion.