

A new generation grew since 9/11, yet we still can't defeat terrorism. Why?



by Lev Tsitrin

"To a hammer everything is a nail." This saying nails on the head the reason why, decades after the 9/11 attack, we are still unable to defeat Islamist terrorism. Politicians tasked with the response to 9/11 delegated the solution to the military, and so for twenty-one years now, we've been trying to solve by political and military means what is not a military or political problem, but is a basic problem of cognition.

Just think about it. To the perpetrators of the 9/11, their attack on America simply fulfilled the will of God; it was a

godly, good, and praiseworthy deed. That's all there is to it; it is not at all complicated.

Naturally, one asks "but how did they know that God wanted to attack America?", their instant answer being, "it is in the Koran that is God's word."

It is easy enough to drill further down: "but what makes you think that Koran is God's word?" their reply being, "we know it because God dictated Koran to Mohammed." Which brings us to the key question of: "but how can you know that it was God who dictated the Koran?"

This is where it gets really interesting, because there actually is no way for them to know. Yes, Mohammed was sure that it was God who talked to him – but it is impossible for anyone else to be equally sure. Mohammed had every right in the world to insist that he heard directly from God – but no one else has the right to insist that Mohammed was a messenger of God.

The reason for that seeming paradox is extremely simple – it is something I called "the problem of the third party": in a two-step communication involving three parties (the first party conveying information to the second party, and that second party relaying it to the third party), the third party can never know whether the second party is lying or not. The thing is simply impossible – as impossible as squaring the circle, or exceeding the speed of light – because such a mode of transferring information is inherently unreliable. Insofar as the third party is concerned, the second party merely may (or equivalently, may *not*) have spoken the truth. The information transfer that underpins Islam, God-speaks-to-Mohammed-who-speaks-to-others is of exactly that, unreliable two-step type; as a result, for all protestations by Mohammed about his "clear signs," no third party can go beyond knowing that the Koran merely may – or may not – be the word of God. (Incidentally, the same can be said about anything and

everything that anyone ever said – since “a word or not a word of God” is an all-encompassing category that by definition includes both what God said, and what He did not say – in other words, everything).

The effect of replacing the legitimate, non-committal “may or may not” with the unwarranted, firm, unquestioned “is,” is dramatic. In secular terms replacement of mere possibility with certainty is an error; in religious ones, it results in an unpardonable sin of idolatry, of worshiping as God a figment of one’s own imagination. What those overly-assured people to whom Koran is unquestionably God’s word worship, is an illegitimate product of their own mind – in other words, an idol. Terrorists are idolaters – religiously speaking, they are the worst thing that, according to their own doctrine, a human may become.

Now, figuring this out is one thing; saying it aloud, for all – terrorists including – to hear is something entirely different. Try to put it into a book and ask the mainstream corporate publishers to publish it, and you will get a cold shoulder: they are leery of publishing books that may get them in trouble, and refuse to publish it. And if you try to publish yourself, the government will step in to block you from the mainstream marketplace of ideas that are our libraries and bookstores: by the brazen act of crony capitalism, and in flagrant violation of the free speech clause of the First amendment of the Constitution it reserves that marketplace for the corporate publishers, so only corporations could get the moneys spent by libraries and in bookstores. (I elaborated in detail on this elegant scheme – or rather, scam – elsewhere <https://www.newenglishreview.org/articles/43131-2/>).

There being no “liberty for all” in book publishing, you try to use “justice for all” to restore the “liberty for all” – and you discover that “justice for all” is just as fictional as “liberty for all.” What you argue in court does not matter,

because cases are adjudicated based on the argument concocted by judges, not on the one presented by parties – in violation of any and all interpretations of “due process of the law” according to which judges cannot act as parties to the case argued before them. And to protect themselves against charges of fraud, judges legalized it: sue judges for their sleight of hand and you will learn that in *Pierson v Ray* judges gave themselves the right to act from the bench “maliciously and corruptly.” Got it?

So here we have it: if we are to defeat terrorism, we need free speech to figure out its root causes. And since, courtesy of the government, free speech does not exist, we are stuck: what needs to be said, cannot be said.

Which means that, if we are to ever defeat Islamist terrorism, our first task has to be reclaiming free speech. We need to turn the oft-repeated, but presently-empty mantra of free speech from the myth it is now, into practical reality of public-square speech unhindered by the considerations of political correctness or self-censorship caused by the need to avoid the howls of “Islamophobia.” And this can only be done by annulling the censorship structure imposed by our political and corporate oligarchy, and buttressed by our officially “corrupt and malicious” judiciary.

Free speech was among the victims of the 9/11 attack, stifling, or at best relegating to the margins the rational discourse on the nature of Islam and Islamism, and replacing it by the officialdom’s bizarre, slobbering declaration that terrorists pervert the otherwise peaceful religion – a piece of inane political piety that convinces no one, least of all terrorists themselves.

Why wonder that terrorism is still undefeated? To defeat it, we need to have the adequate understanding of the terrorist mindset – but we are afraid of developing it since our culture of political correctness militates against honest reverse-

engineering of what goes on in terrorists' mind. We'd rather kill them and endure their killing us, than point out to the error in their thinking, since their thinking is steeped in religion – and religion is too tender a subject for critical analysis, it forming part of what is untouchable and sacred in our political discourse, "heritage," "culture," "identity" – of everything covered by our holy doctrine of "multiculturalism."

But can the currently-offered "solutions" that are unrelated to the root cause of terrorism, eliminate it? Can drone-fired missiles kill ideas? No; the adequate response to terrorism is neither military nor political, but intellectual. Granted, the government largely managed to treat violent symptoms of Islamism and to keep them more-or-less in check, but it does nothing to eradicate its root cause that is Islamist idol-worship. To cure the world of Islamist terrorism, we need to trim Islam down from "the truth" to a mere religion – a religion that is hopefully not worse, and is certainly not better than any other one that humans came up with so far. But to be able do that we need to reclaim out long-lost free speech. And this is a tough battle indeed; given the formidable forces that are arrayed to thwart the "freedom for all" that is necessary for the defeat of terrorism. There being no free speech, it is no wonder that terrorism remains a powerful threat – a full generation after the attack of 9/11.

Lev Tsitrin is the author of "[The Pitfall of Truth: Holy War, its Rationale and Folly](#)"