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***The Terrorism Lectures: A Comprehensive Collection for Students of Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and National Security.* By Dr. James J.F. Forest. Santa Ana, CA: Nortia Press, 2012. ISBN 978-0-9842252-9-3. Notes. Photographs. Figures. Sources cited. Index. Pp. xiii, 409. \$25.00.**

Dr. James J.F. Forest's *The Terrorism Lectures* is one of those rare books that actually delivers what it promises. The book attempts to mirror a university level terrorism course using each chapter as a lecture that can be taken as part of a larger body or sui generis. Written in an informal, even conversational style, it takes a nuanced, complex topic and makes it less arcane while still maintaining a certain level of intellectual rigor. Each chapter has questions for discussion at the end to help the reader focus on the salient points.

The first lecture undertakes the definitions and historical framework of the topic. By outlining how different entities regard terrorism (e.g. State Department vice Department of Defense vice Department of Justice etc.), the author shows that how we define terrorism depends upon on the prism through which we see it. Terrorists do not abide by what we view as the conventional norms of political and societal values, choosing to target innocent people while causing psychological trauma. He draws the distinction between terrorism and criminal activity in that the former has political change to drive a new status quo as its motive while the latter is motivated by profit. Forest posits that to understand terrorism, we must understand how terrorists view themselves and how they rationalize their behavior.

The second lecture is a brief historical overview covering the evolutionary learning cycle of terrorist groups. In the third lecture, Forest illustrates how terrorists (ethno-nationalists, right wing, left-wing, and religious-oriented) benefit from a healthy information sharing environment—terrorists study each other and their adversaries, adapting and evolving as needed. Peppered with plentiful anecdotal examples, the author demonstrates how knowledge transfer and continuous learning are incorporated under a training and doctrine umbrella to help the terrorists learn from their own successes and failures as well as those of others.

In the fourth lecture, Forest discusses the myriad terrorist grievances and the contexts in which they occur: ethnic, political, racial, legal, religious, social, and economic. He also outlines the various facilitators that enable terrorism: weak governments, freedom of movement, lawlessness. These factors allow for increased operational capability, increased financial aid, acquisition of advanced weaponry, freedom of action, state sponsorship, and more political capital. He cites the following as enabling political triggers that provide new opportunities for terrorism: the invasion of Iraq, Roe vs. Wade, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the "troubles" in Northern Ireland.

Forest describes the radicalization process in the fifth lecture, outlining how interaction between terrorist groups and individuals anchor themselves in issues of trust, legitimacy, power, competency, and mutual benefits. The sixth lecture explores how mass media and the Internet play crucial roles in the influence of public perception and psychological warfare. The seventh lecture undertakes an in-depth exploration of economic grievances, while the eighth discusses the financial and criminal dimensions of the terrorist enterprise. As terrorists need money to recruit and train new talent and also operate on a daily basis, he outlines various fund raising sources such as diaspora communities, charities, criminal activities, and legitimate front companies.

Looking at the various political dimensions that influence the dynamics of terrorism in the ninth lecture, Forest explores how terrorist groups exploit the real or contrived oppression, corruption, and ineptitude of their political adversaries to bolster their own cause from a public perception perspective as well as to justify their own actions. The tenth lecture undertakes a brief look at the multiple ethno-nationalist separatist movements: Chechens, Kurds, Tamils, and Basques as examples of how minorities and larger populations interact in conflict. The eleventh lecture discusses left-wing terrorism (Marxists, Maoists, the Red Army Faction, the Red Brigades, etc.), while the twelfth one does the same for its right-wing counterparts (nationalists, racists, xenophobic groups, neo-Nazis, the KKK, the many Aryan groups, and the Hammerskins). The view that God is on my side takes up the thirteenth lecture, exploring the sacred duty of the terrorist to carry out God's will (however God is defined) with examples of al-Qa'ida, Aum Shinrikyo, Kahane Chai, Hamas, and Hizballah.

Forest dedicates the fourteenth lecture to al-Qa'ida (Part One). He outlines its affiliates as well as the non-affiliates who are inspired by and carry out attacks in the name of the organization. He provides a very solid background on the group's origins based on the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. He also skillfully ties in the role of Ramzi Yusef in the 1993 World Trade Center attack. There is a factual error when he states the *MV Limburg* was attacked in 2001 in the Persian Gulf –the attack actually occurred in 2002 off the coast of Yemen. He also discusses al-Qa'ida attacks in other parts of the world. As he discusses the liquids and gels plot of 2006, he uses that as an example of how al-Qa'ida adapts its tactics to better attack hardened targets. His discussion of Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs) such as Nidal Hassan, Najibullah Zazi, and Faisal Shahzad is credible, and he deftly outlines how al-Qa'ida has evolved from a headquarters-type structure into a franchise with a global presence.

The fifteenth lecture continues the examination of al-Qa'ida, undertaking an analysis of its ideology and targeting strategies. The overview includes the philosophies of Hassan al Banna, Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahab, Sayyid Abul Aala Maududi, Ibn Taymiyyah, Sayyid Qutb, and Abdullah Azzam. Although this list is well outlined, the lack of mention of Jalaladdin al Afghani, who is just as important to jihadist thought and literature as the other names mentioned, makes this list incomplete. His discussion of the al-Qa'ida promotion of global jihad: thinking globally, acting locally, rightly underscores the group's desire to bleed the U.S. economically.

The sixteenth lecture examines suicide bombings as carried out by Hizballah, Hamas, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elaam, al-Qa'ida, the various Palestinian groups, Chechens, and others, with a special look at Iraq and Afghanistan. The seventeenth lecture covers weapons of mass destruction. While a good overview of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism, the author tries to delve too much into the weeds, with the end result being an inch deep and a mile wide. The seventeenth lecture briefly examines the 1995 Tokyo subway attack by Aum Shinrikyo, the 2001 anthrax attacks, and U.S. domestic terrorists' attempts at forging a weapons of mass destruction capability. The final lecture is the author's view on the future of terrorism (it is here to stay) and he offers a broad array of scenarios and possibilities, all of them possible and plausible. It remains to be seen if they are in fact probable.

Forest's book, despite a few flaws, is a credible tome with value to the novice as well as the seasoned analyst. His approach is palatable and informative, with a broad appeal to readers at any level. While the principal flaw is that he tries to cover too much in too little space, the topics at least open up the reader to more sources if they are interested. It is a very strong offering in the body of literature on the topic and has great utility as a college text, a handy reference for the layperson, or a quick memory refresher for the long-time analyst.

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