

Norgrove Rescue.

A young British woman, Linda Norgrove, who was working in Afghanistan as an aid worker, was kidnapped in September. Her Afghan colleagues taken with her had been released by the Taliban, but she was still being held. An American special operations force tried to rescue her\227but during their attack, there was an explosion and she (and her kidnappers) were killed.

How was this covered in the press? There were headlines saying \223U.S. rescue force may have killed British captive.\224 Suddenly, the blame falls on the Americans, not on the thugs who had kidnapped her. Initially, it was thought that she was killed during the American assault by her captors detonating a bomb. This horror happened in the midst of war. Why is there such glee in accusing the Americans of having killed her? That\222s all people who read headlines will remember.

The British government defended the mission itself, saying that after intense consideration and exchanges between British and American officials, they moved because they considered Norgrove in serious danger of being killed by her captors. How does such an obvious explanation get transformed into a condemnation of America? Would we rather have seen her being decapitated on a video than dying in a rescue attempt?

Suicide Bombers.

From the emergence of this phenomenon first used by Palestinians against Israelis, analysts have tried to understand why young people would volunteer for this horror that not only kills them but is designed to kill and maim others. It is an ugly institution that despite its terror aspects is not accomplishing anything. But who or what is to blame for it?

The latest comment that I heard in a radio interview is that \223all suicide bombers are doing this because their countries are under American (or Israeli) occupation.\224 Unfortunately, the interviewer did not have the sense to question such an idiotic view.

The first suicide bombers in this century were Japanese kamikaze pilots and swimmers wearing explosives like human torpedoes. But today\222s suicide bombers (using a person as a bomb) had its roots in Iran\222s Shiite sect, which is obsessed with martyrdom. In Iran, the martyr was the individual dying in battle against the \223forces of evil.\224 During the Iran/Iraq war, children were pushed into clearing mine fields (killing them, but then permitting soldiers to proceed). They were actually given plastic keys to Paradise, told that their martyrdom would get rewards in heaven. Even the tough Iraqi military were unnerved by this.

Palestinians picked up the idea after their earlier efforts at hijacking aircraft lost its effectiveness after a decade of doing so. They needed something more frightening\227and suicide bombers were the solution. We know why they did it: to terrify civilians. This practice moved from the Palestinians to Iraqis\227and eventually to Afghans, where it was a very foreign idea. Chechnyans used it against Russians too, and it even traveled to non-Muslim Srilanka, where the Tamil Tiger insurgents used it against the majority. Religion was not an issue in this case; ethnicity was.

So what makes young people enlist for this sacrifice? Is it because their country is \223occupied?\224 Or is it because they are members of oppressive societies at all levels\227domestic to government? Or is it because their religious brainwashing has focused on martyrdom and their duty to Islam? Do those who blame the United States think that if we leave the region, this practice will end? I think we should look instead for cynical Muslim leadership and existential misery of young people with no other outlet.

Domestic Terrorism.

There have been many foiled attempts at Islamist terrorism in the United States. But so far, the suicide terror attack that succeeded was on 9/11. The Fort Hood psychiatrist who hoped to die while he murdered and wounded his colleagues did not die. A policewoman managed to shoot him, leaving him paralyzed. He is on trial now, and it doesn\222t look like an insanity plea will get him off. He is evil and, despite his education, stupid.

The United States doesn\222t deserve to be the \223usual suspect.\224

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