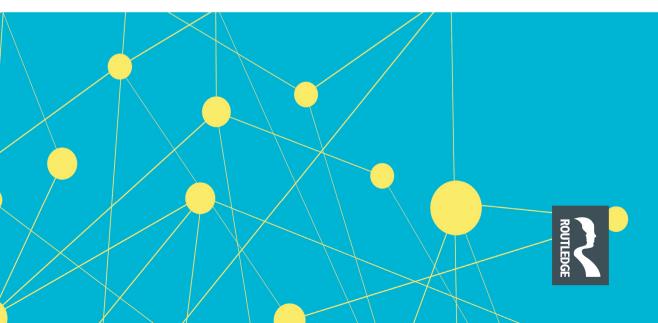


THE LEGACY OF 9/11

TRANSFORMATIONS OF POLICING, INTELLIGENCE, AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

Edited by Ryan Shaffer and Jeffrey Kaplan



The Legacy of 9/11

The Legacy of 9/11 is a retrospective about how policing, intelligence, and counter-terrorism have changed in the more than twenty years since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Bringing together scholars and practitioners, the book takes an interdisciplinary approach with fields including history, international relations, intelligence studies, law, and political science. It highlights how some challenges in policing, intelligence, and counterterrorism brought about by the attacks have been resolved, how some persist, and how others have been transformed. The chapters explore state and non-state actors' actions, reactions, and overreactions that shape contemporary aspects of policing, intelligence, and terrorism. In all three worlds, intelligence, policing, and counter-terrorism, the 9/11 attacks changed how the threat of terrorism is perceived, approached, and effectively countered by learning from the mistakes that led to the success of the attacks and initiating a process on the national and international levels of integrating security structures and implementing changes that have made 9/11 the last large-scale terrorist strike on U.S. soil. To illustrate these accomplishments and to highlight future challenges, the volume examines the inextricably connected elements of policing and intelligence in counter-terrorism as well as how counter-terrorism practitioners and jihadists were transformed by one day of attacks, more than twenty years ago.

The chapters in this book were originally published as a special issue of *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*.

Ryan Shaffer has a PhD in history with expertise in extremism and security. He has published hundreds of articles and reviews in numerous journals. His books include *African Intelligence Services: Early Postcolonial and Contemporary Challenges and The Handbook of African Intelligence Cultures.*

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Transformations of Policing, Intelligence, and Counter-Terrorism

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First published 2024 by Routledge 4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Introduction, Chapters 2-8 © 2024 Taylor & Francis

Chapter 1 $\mbox{\ensuremath{@}}$ 2023 Jeanine de Roy van Zuijdewijn and Edwin Bakker. Originally published as Open Access.

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN13: 978-1-032-63710-5 (hbk) ISBN13: 978-1-032-63712-9 (pbk) ISBN13: 978-1-032-63713-6 (ebk) DOI: 10.4324/9781032637136

Typeset in Myriad Pro by Newgen Publishing UK

Publisher's Note

The publisher accepts responsibility for any inconsistencies that may have arisen during the conversion of this book from journal articles to book chapters, namely the inclusion of journal terminology.

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Citation Information

The chapters in this book were originally published in the *Journal of Policing, Intelligence* and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023). When citing this material, please use the original page numbering for each article, as follows:

Introduction

The legacy of 9/11: a retrospective

Ryan Shaffer and Jeffrey Kaplan

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 413–420

Chapter 1

Twenty years of countering jihadism in Western Europe: from the shock of 9/11 to 'jihadism fatigue'

Jeanine de Roy van Zuijdewijn and Edwin Bakker

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 421–434

Chapter 2

From 9/11 to the POST Act: democratic oversight of police surveillance technologies in New York City

Michael Landon-Murray and Jeffrey Milliman

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 435–450

Chapter 3

How we went from 9/11 to lone actors

Raffaello Pantucci

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 451–465

Chapter 4

9/11's legacy of unintended consequences

John A. Gentry

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 466–475

Chapter 5

The analytic challenges of shifting to domestic terrorism

Chris Quillen

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 476–485

Chapter 6

The expansion of the transnational counterterrorism order after 9/11

Dan E. Stigall

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 486–495

Chapter 7

Homegrown tribalism: would-be al-Qaeda subway bombers and an ISIS defector Christopher P. Costa and Jeffrey Kaplan Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 496–512

Chapter 8

A world remade: 9/11, America and the western world

Jeffrey Kaplan

Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, volume 18, issue 4 (2023), pp. 513–517

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Introduction—The legacy of 9/11: a retrospective

Ryan Shaffer • and Jeffrey Kaplan •

ABSTRACT

This special issue is offered as a retrospective about the impact of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the world community and how policing, intelligence, and counter terrorism have changed since the terrorist attacks. It brings together the perspectives and current research of scholars of policing and internal security, intelligence, and counter terrorism as well as the perspectives of practitioners from all three national security fields. The overall objective of this special issue is to emphasize the importance and unique contributions to both academia and national security that are made possible by bringing scholarly and practitioner perspectives together to better inform each others' work.

Introduction

The impact of the September 11, 2001 (9/11) attacks on global politics, governments and terrorism cannot be overstated. It was a generational event. Like the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963, every American who is of an age to remember recalls what he or she was doing at the moment they received the news. On the national level, al-Qaeda's attacks on symbols of the United States' economic and military power were felt immediately, and the geopolitical and ideological affects have continued for more than twenty years. The attacks were the culmination of grievances expressed by Osama bin Laden in the 'Declaration of Jihad' (1996) and 'Declaration of the World Islamic Front' (1998) that complained about the United States 'occupying' the lands of Islam's most holy sites, the United States' 'aggression' and the United States' relationship with Israel (Atkins, 2011).

On that date, four teams totaling nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners, crashing the airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The attacks left nearly 3,000 people dead and provoked a U.S. military response against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and served as a key plank in the Bush Doctrine for the 2003 United States-led invasion of Iraq. Though the world has changed in the decades since, with the rise of China's economic and global power and Russia's belligerence towards its European neighbors and North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries, 9/11 has continued to shape policing, intelligence and counter terrorism in ways that impact not only terrorist behavior, but also how academics as well as intelligence and counter-terrorism practitioners carry out

their work. In addition, some scholars, such as Scott Poynting and David Whyte have argued that the subsequent 'War on Terror' is a political project that seeks to undermine those who resist state power and agents of the state themselves engage in terror and impunity (Poynting and Whyte, 2012). After more than two decades, it is important to reflect on the changes and transformations and understand how that single day's terrorist attacks in the United States continues to have repercussions for state and non-state actors throughout the world.

This special issue explores policing, intelligence, and counter terrorism by using 9/11 as a nexus for analysis. These contributions by leading scholars and practitioners provide perspectives related to policing, intelligence and counter terrorism after more than twenty years since the attack. The purpose is to offer a discussion about how those subjects are both distant from 9/11 but also still impact citizens daily, for instance, with perpetual fears about terrorism and now routine counter-terrorism measures. After twenty years, some issues have been resolved, others remain unresolved, while others have come full circle. Notably, the Taliban returned to Kabul in 2021 and the United States no longer has a military presence in Afghanistan or even more broadly in Central Asia just as it was on September 11, 2001 (Pannier, 2021). Whereas some individual's trials, such as that of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed for his role in aiding al-Qaeda's attacks, have yet to conclude, while other detainees have been released from the Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba (Hauslohner, 2022; Rosenberg, 2023). There remain continuous challenges in policing, intelligence, and counter terrorism, but also there are numerous advances that have improved capability. Indeed, technological advances, including widespread use of encryption, and social media have been prominent means for terrorists to exchange messages within groups and spread propaganda, but also technology provides governments and non-governmental organizations with information collection opportunities (Atwan, 2019; Zegart, 2022).

The 9/11 attack and its impact on counter terrorism

The 9/11 attacks, the perpetrators, and their direct impact on the United States and world are widely understood. Beyond the U.S. government's 9/11 Commission report, there are a significant number of books and academic studies about 9/11 and al-Qaeda, covering the origins and development of the group, diffusion of the group to other parts of the world and reference texts surrounding the event (Atkins, 2011; Commission Report, 2004; Hegghammer, 2010; Reeve, 1999; Summers & Swan, 2011). Moreover, this body of research has also highlighted how counter terrorism and intelligence practices have changed since 9/11 (Shaffer, 2015a). Notably intelligence cooperation on terrorism and weapons of mass destruction generally increased (Svendsen, 2010). Relations with countries that were declared state sponsors of terrorism shifted, such as Sudan and the United States improving their intelligence relations despite Sudan previously harboring bin Laden during the 1990s (Fitsanakis, 2023). In addition, research on homegrown terrorism and terrorist responses has increased, focusing on issues like al-Qaeda's radicalization processes and implementation of counter-terrorism measures (Gurski, 2016; Johnson, 2013; Shaffer, 2015b).

Against the backdrop of terrorism studies' proliferation, the U.S. government restructured the executive branch. The changes included establishing the Department of

Homeland Security, uniting different aspects of domestic security—aviation, border control and other components— under a secretary-level cabinet official who answers to the president. This approach also influenced the governments and international organizations throughout the world, such as the European Union and Australia, to approach security in similar ways (Kaunert, Léonard, & Pawlak, 2012). Further, with the shift away from international relations and state competition and towards transnational terrorism, government funding was increased for terrorism studies. For example, the Department of Homeland Security funded the establishment of Centers for Excellence which includes the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism and also involved providing financial support for the Global Terrorism Database that is now an important database for scholars (LaFree & Dugan, 2007). Similar programs were funded in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Europe along with community countering violent extremism initiatives (Greater London Authority, 2023).

Despite more government attention and academic research on terrorism, terrorists and terrorist organizations expanded globally in the early 2000s. Notably, the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq spawned al-Qaeda in Iraq, founded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (1966– 2006) with permission from bin Laden, but which transitioned and became the Islamic State (IS) (Shaffer, 2019). This new and hybrid form of terror 'proto state' took international terrorism to new heights of successes and initiated a range of global counter terrorist innovations (Warrick, 2015). Following the 2010 Arab Spring, the brutality of the Islamic State in the 2010s energized public interest and academic research into how terrorist groups operate. As a proto-state, the Islamic State demonstrated elements of governance that al-Qaeda could never implement and had no interest in doing so (Alexander & Alexander, 2015). Due to the attention the Islamic State gained from its territorial control in the Levant as well as its propaganda and online operations, supporters from throughout the world traveled to the Middle East to join the group. Subsequently as Coalition forces, in coordination with Kurdish forces and other Middle Eastern governments, weakened and ultimately defeated the Islamic State as symbolized by the fall of Raqqa in 2017, global attacks continued under the influence, if not the direct control, of the Islamic State (Alkaff & Mahzam, 2018). What emerged were a series of lone actor or homegrown terrorist attacks, with deadly strikes in France in 2015 undertaken by a disparate group of terrorists, some of whom were influenced by al-Qaeda and some by the Islamic State (Kaplan, Kaplan, & Malkki, 2015; Walklate & Mythen, 2016). Those supporters were unwilling or unable to make the journey but committed homegrown terrorist attacks under its banner. This prompted further research into homegrown terrorism, extremism, radicalization, and online terrorist communications, as well as research and practice into counter radicalization and countering violent extremism (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Hughes, & Clifford, 2021).

Beyond focusing on specific terrorists or groups, scholars have also approached terrorism through the framework of epochs, most notably by David Rapoport, and while others have built from theory to study the role of tribalism (Kaplan, 2010; Rapoport, 2004, 2022). Despite this work in academia and government, the field has been criticized – notably in Marc Sageman's, 2014 article, in which he wrote that: 'we have a system of terrorism research in which intelligence analysts know everything but understand nothing, while academics understand everything but know nothing'. There are several examples of efforts to bridge together these groups, including the establishment of Centre for Policing Intelligence and Counter