



Straight Talk

by Muriel Sluyter

Who are the Terrorists & Why?

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Greetings, Gentle Reader,

Terrorists think differently than others. They choose venues like buses packed with women, children and babies to practice their hideous craft. That way they create the highest level of horror.

They are well trained. They have been taught where to stand in a bus to kill and/or maim the largest number of people. Their goal is to cause the greatest physical destruction to the innocents around them, innocents whom they have never seen.

How do you train — indeed, brainwash — a human to behave like a vicious predator? How can you convince a man to blow up a tiny baby or to shred a laughing little girl, in a frilly summer dress?

Do terrorists simply reach a stage where they cease to be human? How can a man kiss his own little girls and boys goodbye, then go out and blow up someone else's little girls and boys?

Have you noticed that the "fearless leaders" who persuade others to sacrifice themselves — indeed, rave about such selfless courage and martyrdom — never blow themselves to bloody shreds? Apparently their wretched hides are more valuable than those of their deluded followers.

Terrorists' defenders insist they kill babies because they have been deprived of something; a country, a job, something. Really? If you hadn't a good enough job, in fact, if someone else landed the job you wanted, would you strap explosives around yourself and annihilate innocent men, women and children? Why not? What is different about you?

When the wrong political party gains power, meaning those other guys — you know, the ones with whom you disagree — would that persuade you to blow up both yourself and large numbers of other people? Why not? Politically, you have been deprived of your country. Aren't you supposed to suffer outrage in those circumstances?

Perhaps it really isn't a matter of being deprived of something. Maybe there is more to it than that. Let's try to

figure it out: Do you value human life? Why? How did you learn that? Who taught it to you? Did your mother tell you not to hit others, because it wasn't nice? Or that you must kiss and make up with your sister before you could have a cookie? Probably. You were rewarded for good behavior, which included being kind to that sister with whom you were furious.

Did your father teach you that boys don't hit girls? That boys don't hit others who are smaller than they? Did he teach you not to be a bully?

Maybe your mother taught you that it is right and proper to kill someone who harmed you. I'll bet she didn't. Few American mothers do.

Maybe your father taught you to hate people of different ethnic, racial or religious groups. Maybe he raised you on stories of how you had been cruelly mistreated by someone else, someone who deserved to die for having done so. He could have done that, but did he? Few American fathers do.

If we grow up in a kind home, learning that compassion and kindness are not only desirable, but required, we will be kind and compassionate. Your mom and dad probably taught you that. Mine did, and neither you nor I are terrorists.

Terrorists do what they learned as children, as do we. If they grew up seeing killing, learning that killing was good and pays off in the end, they will kill.

When the twin towers were struck, future terrorists' parents and leaders danced in the streets and passed out candy, and many future terrorists learned the desirability of blowing up people. Unfortunately, for their victims, it's only a matter of time before they act on that lesson.