

“Homegrown Terrorism” and Terrorism by Association

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How misleading can a “news” article get? Try [this headline](#): “Federal Reserve bombing plot foiled in NYC”. There never was a plot to foil. There never was a plot independent of the FBI to foil. The plot was of the FBI’s own devising and instigation. There never was an ongoing crime for the FBI to detect and stop.

Foil means counteract. To say something is foiled means there has been an action to counter-act. What? Did the FBI counter-act its own action? We should give the FBI credit for devising a plot and then stopping its own plot? We should credit some inept terrorist for threatening to make a touchdown when he couldn’t get beyond the five-yard line without FBI counseling and guidance and without the FBI pointing out the goal line and supplying the football?

The FBI simply terminated a procedure to entrap some naive would-be bomber. The FBI even helped him select his imaginary target. “FBI arrests dupe” is more like it, or “FBI stings dupe”, or “FBI concludes its bombing sting with an arrest”.

A sting operation like this doesn’t foil anything. It SETS UP someone for a fall. It’s an enhanced frame-up done with the FBI-encouraged participation of the person framed. The FBI agents literally become criminals, conspire as criminals, further the planned crime, and create the crime. They should arrest themselves.

The plot makes no sense as a terror plot. It makes sense, however, as both government propaganda and as a smear of those non-violent persons who are pro-free market money and anti-Federal Reserve.

The biggest negative from this plot and publicity is its propaganda value. It keeps alive the myth that America is under constant terrorist threats. It keeps alive the myth that massive resources must be allocated to federal agencies to counter these threats. It keeps alive the myth that the U.S. needs to remake the Muslim world in order to keep America safe. It keeps alive the myth that Americans must abandon the Bill of Rights or their natural rights in order to be secure from these threats.

Another negative from this plot stems from the target being the Federal Reserve. The FBI steered the would-be bomber to that target. This makes the Federal Reserve into a victim, and victims arouse sympathy. Many people will rally behind the Federal Reserve. This makes it harder for critics of the Federal Reserve like Ron Paul to be heard and make their case. They will be associated with terrorism. They will be looked upon as to blame for

motivating or spurring on or influencing such terrorists. The distinction between violent acts and non-violent acts of persuasion will be blurred, to the advantage of the established forces and institutions like the FED. An attack on the FED will be seen as an attack on the republic.

These are the kinds of reasons and ideas why the FBI chose the Federal Reserve as the bomber's target, before pulling the plug on him.

The same kind of guilt by association is occurring on a broader scale in the very concept of "homegrown terrorism". What is the victim of homegrown terrorism? If you guessed the government, you are correct, as I shall show.

The word terror comes from "great fear" or "dread". To terrorize is to fill with fear and frighten. It is to fill with dread. "Terrible" is a related term. The term "terror bombing" came first in 1941 when German air forces attacked Rotterdam. Thereafter, the Allied forces also used terror bombing.

How does one transform the word "terror" into an anti-government act?

Simple. The trick that the government and media use is to define or re-define criminal acts as terror acts, according to the suspected motivations of those who employ the violence. In this way, certain violent acts are defined as terrorist acts, even if they are not acts that cause great dread or fear and even if they are not designed to fill with fear. Which violent acts? The ones that are anti-government. Using this trick, many violent acts that are not meant to instill terror can be defined as terrorism as long as they are violent acts directed against the government. Anti-government violence is made into terrorism.

This definition trick makes government the victim. Homegrown terrorism comes to mean any violence directed at the government, with government being the target and victim of the supposed terrorism.

The proof of this is clear. Congress enshrined the term "homegrown terrorism" in legislation in 2007 in the "[Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007](#)". In that Act, it defined the term as follows:

"The term 'homegrown terrorism' means the use, planned use, or threatened use of force or violence by a group or individual born, raised, or based and operating primarily within the United States or any possession of the United States to intimidate or coerce the United States government, the civilian population of the United States, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."

Notice that the violence is directed first and foremost at "the United States government" and next at the civilian population of that government, and that there is a political or social objective. Homegrown terrorism is, by Congressional definition, anti-government and anti-social.

In creating the crime known as "homegrown terrorism", Congress used the same trick as it did in defining "hate crime". That definition occurs in Section 280003 of the "[Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994](#)":

“DEFINITION. – In this section, ‘hate crime’ means a crime in which the defendant intentionally selects a victim, or in the case of a property crime, the property that is the object of the crime, because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person.”

What this definition does is create a set of victimized groups, each of which then can claim sympathy, can solidify, and can further its political aims. Congress then can claim that it is acting on behalf of these groups and deserves their votes.

A hate crime is not a real crime in and of itself. It is not a crime recently discovered in the pantheon of crimes requiring natural justice. It is a politically-inspired crime in a political game. It piggybacks on a real crime and takes it over as a hate crime, because of its motivation.

In the same way, homegrown terrorism piggybacks on some violent crime and takes it over as involving terror directed at government.

By employing this rhetorical device, the government turns “homegrown terrorism” into a term that the establishment powers and media then use to scare and solidify Americans into being for the government and against any and all anti-government sentiments and movements, even if they are non-violent. By turning homegrown terrorism into an anti-government term, Congress and the media impose rhetorical and conceptual collateral damage on non-violent anti-government groups which are forced to separate themselves from the violent anti-government types. It becomes easier to brand all anti-government ideas as extremist or right-wing or both.

This is the same procedure that the FBI used by making the Federal Reserve a target for their bomber-in-training.

In searching Factiva (which covers 8,000 news and publication sources) for “homegrown terrorism”, I can find only two mentions of this term between 1965 and 1990. The term “homegrown terrorism” appeared first in April of 1986 when the Washington Post used it in regard to domestic anti-government groups in Europe and the Toronto Star used it to describe Basque separatists in Spain. The Europeans were experiencing violent attacks from groups like Red Army Faction, Action Directe and Red Brigades. In 1991, there is another mention regarding separatists in Spain.

Hence, at its birth, the media already chose to apply the term “homegrown terrorism” to violent anti-government groups. Congress later adopted the term. This is not as strange or unusual as it may seem. The media, after all, employ people who are wordsmiths. They promote concepts and spread them, and they often conceive them. But it’s also not at all unusual because the media (by this I mean the mainstream media) are pro-government. The media have a very strong pro-government bias. A huge part of their reporting is about government activity, and government sources provide them with a huge amount of copy. Liberal or conservative biases are at times relevant. But the key continuing phenomenon that needs to be recognized and understood is the media’s pro-government bias.

The early media uses of the term “homegrown terrorism” already associated anti-government groups with violent terrorism, whether they used violence or not. If some person or group use violence, then as “terrorists”, they are branded with an added layer of

guilt. This procedure is analogous to charging a criminal with a “hate crime”. If they do not use violence, they are smeared by association. Someone who is anti-government is placed in the company of violent criminals or said to approve of them or potentially be one of them or said to have inspired them.

The term “homegrown terrorism” achieves guilt by association. More importantly it achieves guilt by definition. Ron Paul becomes a terrorist by association.

In 1992, there is a single mention of homegrown terrorism. The Boston Globe used the term to cover street violence and drive-by shootings in poor neighborhoods.

In 1993, there is a single mention regarding Austria and a series of letter-bomb attacks, thought to be caused by neo-Nazis with anti-foreigner sentiments. It’s consistent with my hypothesis concerning the pro-government press that the tabloid Taeglich Alles wrote of this:

“If there were no foreigners, the terrorists would find other outlets, because their real target is the republic.”

Furthermore, the article also contains a comment supporting my hypothesis that non-violent groups get smeared by the violent acts of others. The article reports

“A leftwing Greens deputy claimed he was punched after telling the Freedom Party: ‘Do not be surprised when the seeds you sow bear fruit’.”

In 1994, Factiva turns up no uses of the term homegrown terrorism.

The Oklahoma City bombing occurred in 1995, and there are 20 articles using the term. The following year, there were 24 mentions, mostly about Oklahoma City. Was this bombing anti-government? Yes. Was it violent? Yes? Was it homegrown terrorism? No, it was not. It was homegrown, but it was not terrorism. It was homegrown terrorism only if one accepts the definition of Congress. Timothy McVeigh did not aim to instill fear. He [aimed](#) to strike a blow against a government that he thought had betrayed the Constitution, that he viewed as treasonous, and that he thought held domestic enemies. He regarded innocent lives lost as collateral damage. He placed himself in the same position as a fighter pilot:

“If there is a hell, then I’ll be in good company with a lot of fighter pilots who also had to bomb innocents to win the war.”

The Atlanta pipe bombing occurred in July of 1996. This was immediately tagged as homegrown terrorism. Again, this was a homegrown, violent, anti-government act, but it was not terrorism. The bomber was Eric Robert Rudolph whose [motivation](#) expressed in his 2005 statement was his anti-abortion position. His goal was not at root to instill terror. It was to make an attempt to end what he viewed as a holocaust arising from government policy. His anti-government stance arose from his anti-abortion position. He wrote

“the purpose of the attack on July 27th was to confound, anger and embarrass the Washington government in the eyes of the word for its abominable

sanctioning of abortion on demand.”

In one article on [strategic bombing](#), there occurs this explanation of terror bombing:

“An aerial attack strategy of deliberately bombing and/or strafing civilian targets in order to break the morale of an enemy, make its civilian population panic, bend the enemy’s political leadership to the attacker’s will, or to ‘punish’ an enemy, while strategic in nature, is more correctly termed terror bombing.”

This definition of aerial terror bombing is equally appropriate for surface terror bombing. Is a bombing deliberately aimed at civilian targets in order to break morale, cause panic, inflict needless casualties, so as to cause the enemy to give in? Or is a bombing aimed directly at a target that is construed as a war target? Or is it both at the same time?

If a bombing or other violent act is to be understood, homegrown or not, domestic or foreign, it should not be instantaneously branded as terrorism or homegrown terrorism. This closes down thought. It prevents thinking about the causes because if terror is thought to be the cause, then what’s the point of any further understanding? Anti-government violence is not automatically terrorism, as Congress and the media have promulgated endlessly. The aims of the people initiating the violence are often very far from the idea of breaking morale and causing panic.

Even as we can find flaws in the thoughts of bombers that led them to their murders or attempted murders, we have to acknowledge that they typically have grievances that give rise to their aims. They are not simply mad, bloodthirsty, or perverted serial killers. People who are violently anti-government may have very good reasons for being anti-government even if they have very poor reasons for launching the attacks they do.

Congress made another definition in the [“Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007.”](#)

“VIOLENT RADICALIZATION. – The term ‘violent radicalization’ means the process of adopting or promoting an extremist belief system for the purpose of facilitating ideologically based violence to advance political, religious, or social change.”

This is a dangerous piece of language. Even though it singles out violence, it at the same time singles out an indefinable and amorphous body of thought known as “radical” thought. And the radical thought is also labeled extremist. The radical thought can be almost anything that advocates political, religious, or social change, and these cover a great deal of ground. A great deal of thought on LRC can easily be labeled as radical or extremist. It is only a short step for some government authority to link such thought to some violent action of someone who may have good reason to be anti-government. Isn’t this possibility going to chill free speech? Won’t this language intimidate? Isn’t this language meant to intimidate?

I realize that Congress has inserted such language as this:

“Any measure taken to prevent violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence and homegrown terrorism in the United States

should not violate the constitutional rights, civil rights, or civil liberties of United States citizens or lawful permanent residents.”

These words may comfort some, but they will also lull many. The record of Congress is so bad on constitutional rights and civil liberties that these words provide no assurance.

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