

CHAPTER
10

TERRORISM

'In our assessment, and in light of the result, we have made one of the best achievements of Palestinian commando action. A bomb in the White House ... could not have echoed through to the consciousness of every man in the world like the operation at Munich. The Olympiad arouses the people's interest and attention more than anything else in the world. The choice of the Olympics, from a purely propagandistic viewpoint, was one hundred per cent successful. It was like painting the name of Palestine on a mountain that can be seen from the four corners of the earth.'

STATEMENT BY THE BLACK SEPTEMBER ORGANISATION

INTRODUCTION

On 5 September 1972, eight terrorists from the Black September Organisation stormed the athletes' village of the Munich Olympic Games and took hostage nine members of the Israeli team. Images of the terrorists in balaclavas peering over the balcony were beamed around the world by the media that had gathered to cover the Olympic Games. An attempted rescue operation ended tragically and the terrorists scored a significant propaganda victory—the Palestinian cause was now at the forefront of the world's attention.

International terrorist acts became a brutal reality during the second half of the twentieth century. As terrorists sought to communicate their grievances and change the status quo, they engaged in increasingly violent and shocking acts in order to attract attention to their cause and to force governments to give in to their demands. Government reactions to terrorism ranged from complying with the terrorists' demands, negotiating with them, and military action. However, none of these responses eliminated the menace of terrorism, and terrorist attacks seem destined to remain a disturbing fact of life in the twenty-first century.



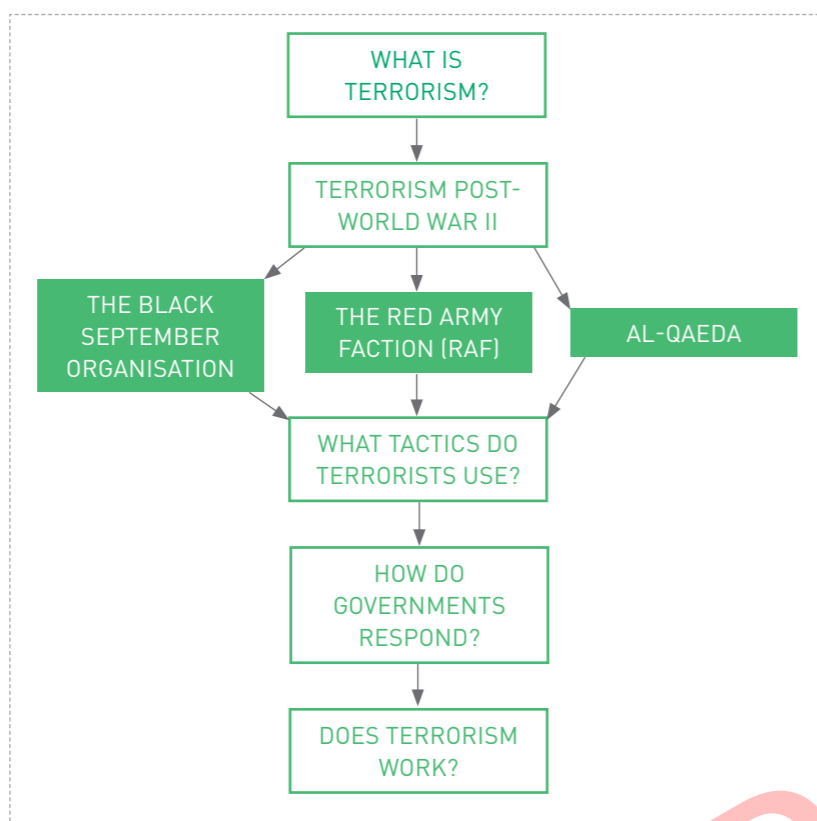
A member of the Black September terrorist group at the Munich Olympics, 1972.

OVERVIEW

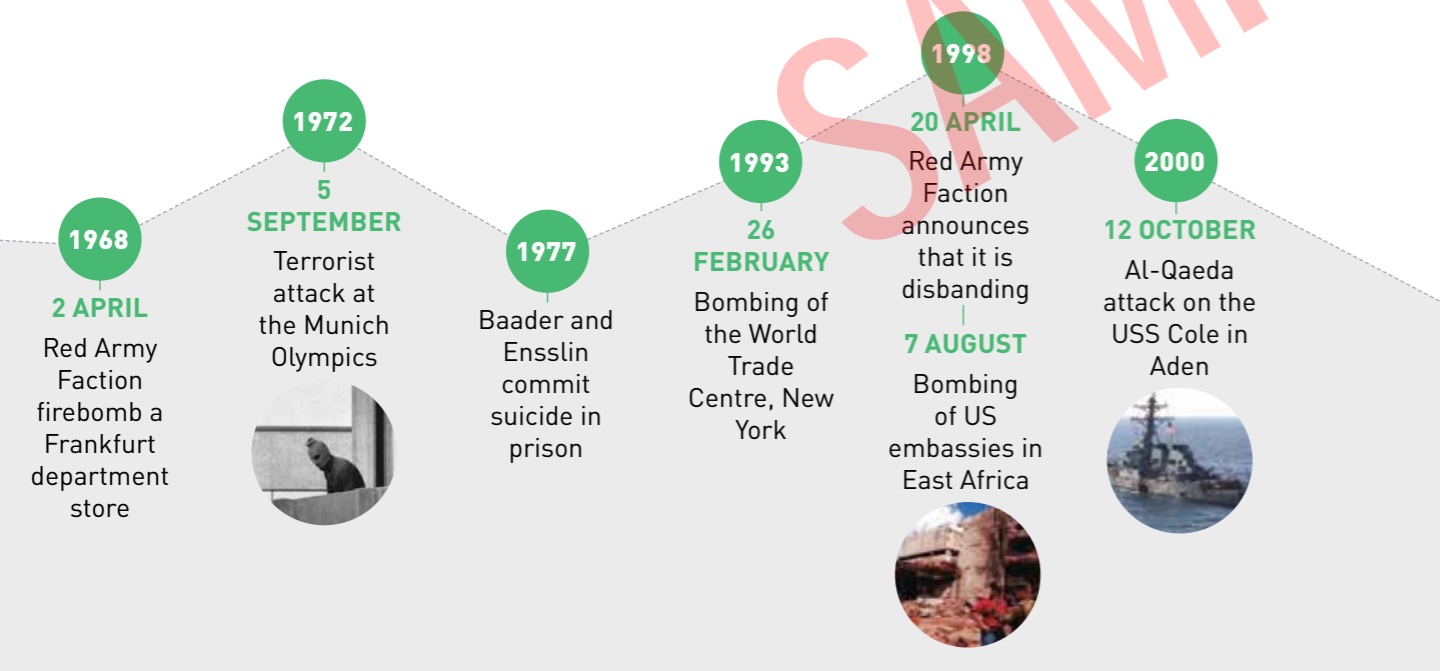
KEY QUESTIONS

- What is terrorism?
- What are the aims and goals of terrorist groups?
- What methods and tactics do terrorists employ?
- How effective are government responses to terrorism?
- Do terrorists achieve their aims?

IN THIS CHAPTER



KEY EVENTS



KEY PLAYERS

ANDREAS BAADER

- Born in Munich in 1943
- One of the founders of the Red Army Faction
- Imprisoned for firebombing two Frankfurt department stores in April 1968 as a protest against the Vietnam War; he later escaped, aided by a journalist named Ulrike Meinhof
- After a spate of bombings, was arrested again in June 1972 and sentenced to life in prison
- After the failure of an aeroplane hijack intended to secure his release, he committed suicide in prison on 18 October 1977.



LUTTIF AFIF

- Born in 1937 in Nazareth (then in the British mandate of Palestine) to a Jewish mother and Arab Christian father
- Leader of the Black September group that took nine Israeli athletes hostage at the Olympic Village in Munich in 1972
- Communicated the group's demands and negotiated with German officials
- After police opened fire while the hostages were being transferred from helicopters to an aircraft, Afif killed the hostages using machine-gun fire and hand-grenades. He was then killed.

OSAMA BIN LADEN

- Born in Saudi Arabia in 1957 to a billionaire construction magnate from Yemen
- Organised resistance in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union's invasion
- During the war in Afghanistan, he set up an organisation called *al-Qaeda* (Arabic for 'the base' or 'the foundation') to carry out *jihad*, or holy war, against the enemies of Islam
- While not always directly commanding or ordering, bin Laden inspired, encouraged and facilitated terrorist attacks on Western targets all over the world
- He was tracked down and killed in Pakistan by US Special Forces on 2 May 2011.



KEY TERMS / CONCEPTS

FATAH

A political and military organisation co-founded by Yasser Arafat; prominent in the Palestinian Liberation Organization

AL-QAEDA

Arabic for 'the base' or 'the foundation'; the loosely organised terrorist organisation founded, guided and financed by Osama bin Laden

BLACK SEPTEMBER

The terrorist group that killed eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games; linked to Fatah and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

PLO

Palestinian Liberation Organization; an umbrella organisation that coordinates the various groups that seek a free and independent Palestinian nation

RAF

Red Army Faction (or *Rote Armee Fraktion* in German); the official name of the Baader-Meinhof Gang

TERRORISM

The use or threatened use of violence to coerce a government or organisation to make specific political changes

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

With a partner, generate eight to ten inquiry questions under the heading 'The causes, nature and consequences of terrorist attacks.' Keep these inquiry questions in mind as you read the information and work through the activities in this chapter. Select one question to explore in detail as part of an inquiry research project. Here are three examples to help you get started:

1. Why do certain individuals choose to become terrorists?
2. Do terrorists achieve their aims and goals?
3. Do counter-terrorist measures do more harm than good?

SKILLS FOCUS



Vladimir Lenin.

WHAT IS TERRORISM?

VLADIMIR LENIN: 'The purpose of terrorism is to terrify.'

TERRORISM: A DEFINITION

Despite reading and hearing about terrorism in the news on a regular basis, it is a difficult concept to define. Lenin's typically blunt definition touches on one of the main elements of terrorism—it is designed to inspire fear in the targeted population. However, terrorism is much more complex than this, as other human activities—such as war and crime—can also create a climate of terror. The US Department of Defense defines terrorism as:

A DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instil fear and coerce governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are usually political.

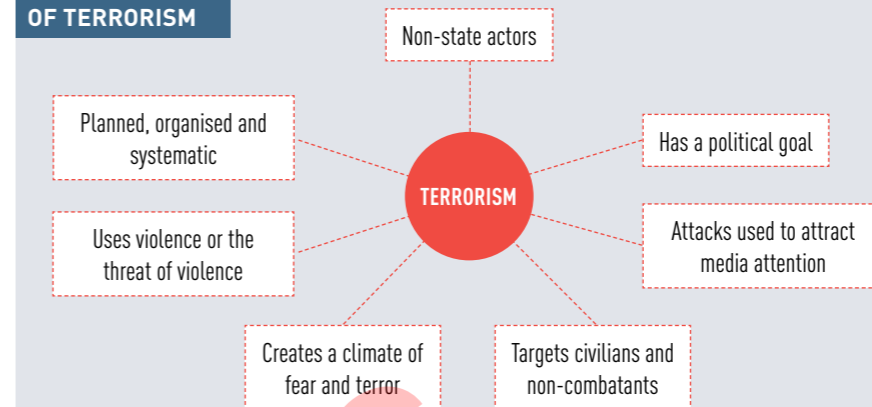
This is a useful starting point for working towards a definition of terrorism, as it covers most of the key elements. The US Department of Defense focuses on the use of violence, or the threat to use violence. All terrorist acts involve destructive attacks, or the realistic threats of such attacks, on people or installations in some way. These acts are considered unlawful as they deliberately target civilians, non-combatants (soldiers not directly engaged in combat) or neutral third parties. According to Bruce Hoffman, traditional military forces are at least theoretically bound by the rules of warfare which protect non-combat forces from deliberate attack.¹ Unlike criminal acts that are purely self-interested, terrorists have specific political goals—based on political, economic, social or religious ideologies—that they seek to realise. Such goals include changing a government's domestic or foreign policy, achieving national liberation and self-determination, or replacing one political-economic system with another.

As terrorist groups are almost always numerically and militarily weaker than their targeted opponent, they rely on surprise, apparent randomness and fear as psychological weapons to bring about the change they desire. Striking at undefended or unprepared targets without warning or a logical pattern creates a feeling that the next attack could come anywhere, at any time and against anyone. The only way to prevent this, in the logic of terrorism, is to give in to the terrorist group's demands.

A key aspect of terrorism that the US Department of Defense does not refer to is that it is committed by non-state or sub-national actors. When perpetrated by state governments, such as the Revolutionary Government of France in the 1790s and Stalin's purges in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, it is usually referred to as 'terror.'³ Al-Qaeda, which has bases, personnel and contacts in a number of countries around the world, exemplifies the typical non-state terrorist group.

ISIS (also called ISIL or Daesh) claims to have established a caliphate, or independent state based upon a fundamentalist interpretation of the Koran, in parts of Iraq and Syria. This is not recognised by other nation-states, however. ISIS claims to have many adherents around the world who wage *jihad* in the name of a free Islamist state.

KEY FEATURES OF TERRORISM



Maximilien de Robespierre, architect of the Terror in the French Revolution.

A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

While terrorism is often thought of as a recent phenomenon, it has a history stretching back centuries. The Zealots were members of a Jewish sect that assassinated Roman soldiers and administrators in the province of Judea in the first century AD. A radical Shia Islamic sect called the Order of Assassins carried out surprise killings in the eleventh century. The French Government under Maximilien Robespierre instigated the 'Reign of Terror' in 1793–4 in order to defend the Republic against internal and external foes. In Russia, a revolutionary group called *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will) sought to end oppression by assassinating Tsar Alexander II in 1881.² In the 1930s, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin unleashed a reign of terror on political opponents, social classes and ethnic minorities that killed and displaced millions of people.

DID YOU KNOW?

The word *assassin* is believed to come from the Arabic word *hashishin*, meaning 'hashish user', as the Order of Assassins reputedly smoked hashish before striking at their targets. However, many scholars dispute this.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lenin's brother, Alexander Ulyanov, was arrested and executed in 1887 for his part in a failed assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander III.



SOURCE 10.02

The assassination of Tsar Alexander II.

Attacks on innocent civilians, such as the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103, attract maximum media coverage. This magnifies the horror of the incident by exposing potentially millions of viewers to the deed and draws attention to the terrorist group, their cause and their political objectives. Attacks on civilians are also designed to make seemingly powerful nations appear helpless, vulnerable and unable to protect their own citizens or interests. In this sense, terrorism can be thought of as ‘propaganda by deed.’⁴ Terrorist groups deliberately select vulnerable targets to maximise media exposure and create terror for the purpose of generating political change. It is in this sense that they can justifiably be called ‘terrorists.’



ACTIVITIES

CREATIVE WRITING

A government agency concerned with national security has asked you to devise a useful definition of terrorism. Using the information in this section, and any other resources you can locate, draft a short definition of terrorism (no more than 200 words) that encompasses all of its key aspects.

POSTER

There have been many terrorist attacks perpetrated since the end of World War II. Select one from the list below, or choose one of your own, and explain why it can be classified as a terrorist act. Present your findings as a poster with images of the attack and the perpetrators.

- The hijacking of El Al flight 462 (1968).
- The hijacking of Air France flight 139 (1976).
- The bombing of the US Marine Corps barracks in Lebanon (1983).
- The Lockerbie bombing (1988).
- The hijacking of Air France flight 8969 (1994).
- The Oklahoma City bombing (1995).

THE RED ARMY FACTION

GUDRUN ENSSLIN: ‘They have weapons and we haven’t any. We must arm ourselves too.’

ORIGINS OF THE RAF

The Red Army Faction (RAF) emerged from the radical student politics that was common in Western society during the 1960s. At that time, the world was in the grip of the Cold War: the ideological struggle between capitalist USA and socialist USSR. In the wake of World War II, Germany symbolised this conflict as it was split in two—the Federal German Republic (West Germany) and the Democratic German Republic (East Germany). Berlin itself was also split between East and West. Some university students and other young people in West Germany and Berlin believed that capitalist societies, particularly the United States, were exploiting and oppressing poor workers in the Western world and people in the developing world for their own profit and gain. People who held such views were often called ‘leftists’ for their left-wing political views. The involvement of the United States in wars in Vietnam and the Middle East were particular focus points for protest against government authorities.⁵

It was during one such protest that the RAF was born. Reza Pahlavi, the Shah (or king) of Iran, was in West Berlin on a state visit. Leftists viewed the Shah as a dictator who had seized total power in a CIA-backed coup and ruthlessly cracked down on political opponents.⁶ On 2 June 1967, the West Berlin police broke up a student protest with batons. One student, Benno Ohnesorg, was beaten by the police and shot to death. A week later, at a block of apartments, a group of students and youths met to discuss the shooting and how they should respond. It was here that Gudrun Ensslin and Andreas Baader met. Ensslin believed that ‘we must organise resistance. Violence can only be answered with violence.’⁷ An accidental fire in a department store in Brussels, Belgium, which killed over 250 people, gave the nascent terrorists the inspiration for their first attack: firebombing two department stores in Frankfurt on 2 April 1968. As the timers were set for midnight the stores were empty and no one was harmed. Ensslin, Baader and two accomplices were arrested two days later on arson charges, but the leftist revolutionary terrorist campaign had only just begun.

IDEAS AND IDEOLOGIES

The four Frankfurt arsonists were sentenced to four years in prison, but they were released after fourteen months as an appeal over the length of their sentences was being heard. The appeal failed but only one of them went back to jail; the others went into hiding. Ensslin and Baader went to France, Switzerland and Italy before returning to Berlin on 12 February 1970. They stayed in a flat rented by



SOURCE 10.04

Gudrun Ensslin, a founding member of the RAF.

DID YOU KNOW?

When told about the shooting of Ohnesorg, the Shah replied, ‘It doesn’t perturb me. That happens every day in Iran.’





left-wing journalist Ulrike Meinhof. Meinhof had interviewed Ensslin in prison and gradually gravitated towards the group and their increasingly radical views. Baader was arrested again by the police on 2 April 1970 after being caught on his way to a hidden RAF weapons cache. He was to serve out the rest of his sentence. However, on 14 May 1970, Ensslin, Meinhof and two accomplices helped Baader escape from a library he had been permitted to visit under the pretence of conducting research for a book.

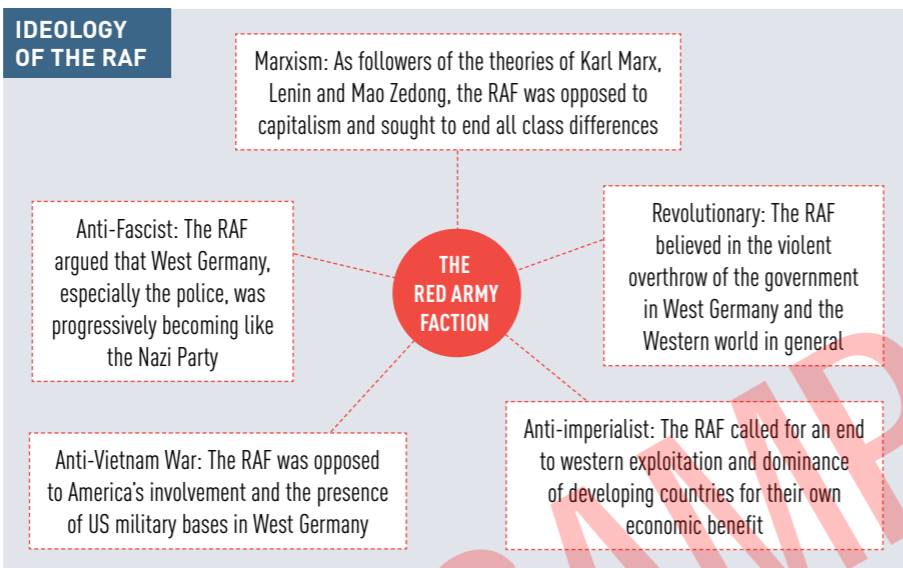
In 1971, Meinhof wrote a long essay called 'The Urban Guerrilla Concept', in which she explained the group's motives and overall aims. It was the first time the name 'Red Army Faction' had been used in the group's messages to the media. In this and other essays, letters and speeches during trials, the members of the RAF revealed their complex ideology.

SOURCE 10.05

Ulrike Meinhof, journalist turned revolutionary.



THE URBAN GUERRILLA CONCEPT



ACTIVITIES

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Name three members of the Red Army Faction.
2. Look up and define the key terms in the mind map of the ideology of the RAF.
3. Explain how the death of Benno Ohnesorg contributed to the founding of the RAF.

CREATIVE WRITING

Write a brief biography of one of the key leaders of the RAF. This could be written up in the style of a newspaper story or a police report.

SKILLS: HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Research and write a report on the role played by West Germany in the Vietnam War, with a particular focus on the use of bases and airfields by the US Air Force.

METHODS AND TACTICS

The RAF used a variety of tactics to draw attention to their cause and attain their goals. In September 1970, the RAF robbed three banks simultaneously to protest against the financial system—and also to secure funds for their living expenses. In May 1972, the group began what could be considered a genuine terrorist campaign when they bombed a US officers' club in Frankfurt. A few days later, three US soldiers were killed and five injured when a car bomb exploded outside a barracks in Heidelberg. Also in May, five policemen were injured by a pipe bomb in Augsburg, and the wife of a judge was badly hurt in another car bomb attack.

In June 1972, Baader, Ensslin, Meinhof and other members of the RAF were arrested on charges of murder and attempted murder. This did not stop the wave of terrorist attacks conducted by other members of the RAF. Meinhof committed suicide in prison on 8 May 1976, and Baader and Ensslin were found guilty of murder a year later and sentenced to life in prison. In an effort to free the original leaders of the group, other members of the RAF kidnapped Hanns Martin Schleyer, a wealthy businessman, on 5 September 1977. The following month, four Palestinians hijacked Lufthansa flight 181 and forced the pilot to land in Somalia. They demanded the release of the imprisoned RAF members but the West German anti-terrorism force, the GSG-9, stormed the plane and killed the hijackers. Upon receiving this news, Baader and Ensslin killed themselves using weapons that had been smuggled into the prison. Realising that the hostage was now useless, the RAF killed Schleyer and dumped his body in a forest.

SOURCE 10.06

Hanns Martin Schleyer as a hostage of the RAF.



DID YOU KNOW?

Meinhof wasn't much of a bank robber. In one heist, she grabbed a box carrying 8155 deutschemarks but missed another box that held 97,000 deutschemarks.

BRANDING THE RED ARMY FACTION

Meinhof chose the name of the terrorist group as a sign of solidarity with the Japanese Red Army, another Marxist-revolutionary group.⁸ It was not well chosen, however, as it reminded Germans of the Soviet Red Army that had brutalised the population at the end of World War II. The initials also reminded them of the Royal Air Force, which had devastated German cities in night bombing raids.⁹

background of photographs they released of Schleyer. The logo contained two other distinct elements: a star, which linked the RAF to other revolutionary groups and communist nations around the world, and a machinegun called the Heckler & Koch MP5. This was a West German-designed weapon used by both the RAF and the police who were trying to catch them.



The Red Army Faction's initials appeared in their logo, which was prominent in the

REACTION AND RESPONSE

The West German police went to great lengths to capture the members of the RAF. Under federal police chief Horst Herold, the number of police dedicated to hunting down the terrorists rose from 1113 to 3536 over ten years. Herold also instituted an information revolution by entering the details of nearly five million Germans onto computer databases so that information could be retrieved and cross-checked easily.¹⁰ After the series of bombings in May 1972, the West German police launched 'Operation Punch in the Water'. This involved using temporary road-blocks and every helicopter in Germany to force the RAF terrorists into the open. Tens of thousands of 'Wanted' posters were printed and displayed all over Germany so that the faces of the group members were well known.¹¹ By early 1992, when the RAF was into its third generation of terrorists, the German Government announced that it was prepared to release imprisoned members in return for a promise to renounce violence. The RAF accepted the government's offer.

SOURCE 10.07

A wanted poster for the Baader-Meinhof Gang, from 1970–72.

TRANSLATION OF AN RAF 'WANTED' POSTER

ACTIVITY

SOURCE ANALYSIS

1. Read the translation of the poster provided in the link on this page. Make a list of the words and phrases that signify the danger posed by the RAF terrorists.
2. Select one member of the RAF from this poster who hasn't been referred to in this chapter. Research and write a paragraph on their background and activities with the RAF.
3. Explain how this poster could help the West German police capture RAF members.
4. Evaluate the usefulness of this poster in understanding how the government dealt with the Red Army Faction. Refer to other tactics and responses in your answer.



SOURCE 10.08

A mourner shows his fist at the funeral of RAF terrorists Gudrun Ensslin, Andreas Baader and Jan Carl Raspe on 27 October 1977. On the left is Priest Helmut Ensslin, the father of Gudrun Ensslin. Raspe was tried with Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, and Gudrun Ensslin in a trial held on the grounds of Stuttgart's Stammheim prison. After the longest trial in German history, Raspe was convicted along with Baader and Ensslin (Meinhof committed suicide in 1976) of murder and other counts, and sentenced to life. In the morning of 18 October 1977 Baader, Raspe and Ensslin were found dead in their prison cells.

THE RAF: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

Ultimately, the RAF was a failure; they never came even remotely close to achieving their goal of a Marxist revolution. Arrest, imprisonment and deaths after shoot-outs with the police took a steady toll on the group's numbers. The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc from 1989 also meant that the RAF's ideology seemed out of touch. On 20 April 1998, German media outlets received a letter from the RAF announcing that the group was disbanding.

THE FINAL MESSAGE FROM THE RAF

Almost 28 years ago, on May 14, 1970, the RAF was born from an act of liberation: Today we are ending this project. The urban guerrilla in the form of the RAF is now history. We, that is all of us who were organised in the RAF until the end, are taking this step jointly. From now on, we, like all others from this association, are former RAF militants. We stand by our history. The RAF was the revolutionary attempt by a minority of people to resist the tendencies in this society and contribute to the overthrow of capitalist conditions. We are proud to have been part of this attempt. The end of this project shows that we were not able to succeed on this path.

Horst Herold called this statement 'the tombstone erected by the RAF itself'.¹² The RAF wasn't quite finished yet, however. On 20 July 1999 an armoured truck was robbed by a handful of RAF members. Over one million deutschmarks was stolen from the truck, which was ferrying money from one bank to another. Since then, the police and media have heard nothing more of the group that terrorised Germany for three decades.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. List three terrorist attacks perpetrated by the RAF.
2. What measures did the West German police take to bring down the RAF?
3. Explain why the RAF announced its own dissolution in 1998.

SOURCE 10.09

'The Urban Guerrilla Is History,' German Guerrilla, <http://germanguerrilla.com/1998/03/01/the-urban-guerrilla-is-history/>

ACTIVITY

DISCUSSION

In 1992 the German Government decided to negotiate with the RAF. It agreed to release RAF prisoners in return for a promise from the RAF to renounce violence. With a partner, discuss the morality of making deals with terrorists. Share your ideas and opinions with the rest of the class.

ACTIVITY

DID YOU KNOW?

The Palestinians referred to their flight from the Israeli armies in 1948–9 as *al-Nakhba*—‘the catastrophe’.

BLACK SEPTEMBER

FUAD AL-SHAMALI: ‘We have to kill some of their most important and most famous people.’

THE ORIGINS OF BLACK SEPTEMBER

In the early hours of 5 September 1972, eight men crept into the Olympic athletes’ village and took nine Israeli athletes hostage. The eight men were part of a terrorist group called the Black September Organisation (BSO). The militant wing of al-Fatah, the BSO emerged from the complex political situation in the Middle East. In 1947, one of the first items on the agenda of the United Nations was the creation of a Jewish homeland. At the end of World War II, Jewish survivors of the Holocaust called upon the United Nations to create a Jewish state. The land they chose was the British protectorate of Palestine, which the Jewish people called *Eretz Yisrael*, meaning ‘the land of Israel’.¹

Until 1947, Palestine had been under British mandate. But in November 1947 the UN voted to partition Palestine into two states—with 60 per cent allocated for the Jewish population and 40 per cent for the Arab Palestinians.² However, during the 1948–9 Arab–Israeli War, Israel seized most of the Palestinian territories. Jordan intervened and captured the West Bank (which it formally

annexed in 1950). More than 725 000 Palestinians fled to neighbouring countries, particularly Jordan. They lived in refugee camps, many of which had no electricity, sanitation or running water.³

Almost immediately, the displaced Palestinians formed guerrilla groups to take back their homeland. The soldiers were called *fedayeen*, meaning ‘those who sacrifice themselves’ or ‘freedom fighters’. One group that emerged in the 1950s was called *al-Fatah* or *Fatah*. Founded by Yasser Arafat, Fatah guerrillas launched raids into Israel from Egypt, Syria and Jordan. In 1964 the Arab League created the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in order to fight for a Palestinian state. In 1969 Fatah became the dominant group in the PLO. The King of Jordan, Hussein bin Talal, was deeply concerned about the Israeli response to Fatah raids launched from Jordanian soil, as well as the political instability the PLO was creating within Jordan. In September 1970, the Jordanian army attacked the Palestinian camps and forced the survivors to flee to Lebanon. Taking

its name from the conflict with Jordan, al-Fatah formed a new group, the Black September Organisation (BSO), to carry out revenge attacks on the Jordanian government and to draw attention to the plight of the Palestinian people.⁴

IDEAS AND IDEOLOGIES

Essentially, the BSO, al-Fatah and the PLO held the same broad ideology and were striving for the same goals: the destruction of Israel and the creation of a free and independent Palestinian state. This was outlined in a document issued by the PLO that was first issued in June 1964 and issued in a revised version in 1968.

PALESTINIAN CHARTER OF 1964 (AND 1968)

1. Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people ...
2. Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit.
3. The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland ...
9. Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine.
10. Commando action constitutes the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war.
15. The liberation of Palestine ... is a national duty and it attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggressions against the Arab homeland, and aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine.
19. The Partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal ... because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people.

ACTIVITY

SOURCE ANALYSIS

1. Look up and define the term ‘Zionist’. Explain why Palestinians might object to the ideology of Zionism.
2. What might the phrase ‘commando action’ mean in Clause 10?
3. Why might ‘armed struggle’ be the only available option for achieving their goals, according to the PLO?
4. Explain how Jewish people in Israel might respond to the Palestinian Charter.
5. Evaluate the usefulness of this document in understanding the grievances of the Palestinian people from 1945–1968. Refer to a range of potential factors in your response.

Perhaps the most urgent concern for the PLO and al-Fatah was to make an international issue out of the plight of the Palestinian people living in refugee camps. George Habash, founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)—an organisation similar to Fatah, founded in 1967—claimed that, ‘For decades world opinion has been neither for nor against the Palestinians. It simply ignored us.’⁵ In order to increase international awareness of the Palestinian struggle, and draw sympathy and assistance for their cause, the BSO needed to do something dramatic.

DID YOU KNOW?

The name *Fatah* comes from the initials of the Palestinian Liberation Movement in Arabic—*Harakat al-Tahrir al-Filastin*. It takes the first letter from each word and reverses the order.

SOURCE 10.10

ISRAEL AND ITS ARAB NEIGHBOURS, 1970



SOURCE 10.11

‘The Palestinian National Charter,’ Yale Law School, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/plocov.asp

Yasser Arafat, founder of al-Fatah.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Who founded Fatah?
2. What are two of the aims of the PLO?
3. How had the world responded to the plight of the Palestinians up to 1968?

WORKING WITH MAPS

The history of the Arab–Israeli dispute is a very complicated one. It can be better understood, however, by working with maps that show the changing political borders in the region over time. Locate and print maps of the Middle East for the following years and annotate them to explain why these changes occurred, and their significance: 1914, 1920, 1947, 1949, 1967.

SKILLS: BELIEFS AND VALUES

The Palestinians outlined their grievances, desires and demands in the 1968 Palestinian Charter. As a creative task, write a speech that a member of the PLO might have delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in 1968, expanding upon the ideas of the Charter and explaining why the Palestinian people hold these beliefs and values.

DID YOU KNOW?

Not all Palestinians are Muslims. About 6 per cent, like Fuad al-Shamali (who was quoted earlier), are Christians. While there were a few Palestinian Jews, like Luttfif Afif—who led the BSO raid on the Munich Olympic village—almost all Jewish people living in the Middle East today identify as Israeli.

DID YOU KNOW?

The BSO called the attack on the 1972 Munich Olympics 'Operation Ikrut and Birim' after two Palestinian villages that were destroyed by the Israeli army in 1948.

METHODS AND TACTICS

The Black September Organization employed a wide range of terrorist tactics in its efforts to gain greater recognition for the plight of the Palestinians. These included assassination, hijacking, bombings, capturing embassies and posting letter bombs. The first act that the BSO claimed was the assassination of the Jordanian Prime Minister, Wasfi al-Tal, in Cairo on 28 November 1971. Other terrorist acts included the following:

- February 1972: bombing of oil storage tanks in the Netherlands
- May 1972: hijacking of a Sabena flight from Brussels to Tel Aviv
- September–October 1972: dozens of letter bombs sent to Israeli officials and diplomats
- October 1972: hijacking of a Lufthansa flight
- December 1972: storming the Israeli embassy in Bangkok
- January and March 1973: failed plots to kill Golda Meir, the Prime Minister of Israel
- March 1973: storming the Saudi embassy in Sudan
- September 1973: two gunmen open fire on a crowd at Athens airport

THE MUNICH MASSACRE

By far the most infamous terrorist action undertaken by the Black September Organisation was the kidnapping and murder of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, Germany. The Olympic Games was a natural target for the terrorists—it would ensure maximum media exposure and serve as propaganda for the cause of Palestinian liberation. The athletes were also seen as an 'easy' target. As Fuad al-Shamali, one of the al-Fatah organisers of the attack, claimed: 'Since we cannot come close to their [Israeli] statesmen, we have to kill artists and sportsmen.'⁶

Seeking to eradicate the memory of the 1936 Berlin Games, which Hitler had turned into a propaganda spectacle for the Third Reich, the 1972 Munich Olympics were called *Die Heiteren Spiele*, or 'The Cheerful Games'. As a result, security was minimal.⁷ At about 4:30am on 5 September 1972, eight BSO terrorists, dressed in tracksuits and carrying weapons in sports bags, jumped the wire fence surrounding the athletes' village and burst into the rooms occupied by the Israeli team. Two athletes were killed while trying to repel the terrorists and another nine were taken hostage. By 5:00am the Munich police had been notified and the hostage crisis had begun.

The leader of the attack, Luttfif Afif, presented the BSO's demands: the release of over 200 PLO prisoners held in Israeli prisons, as well as Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof of the RAF. The BSO also demanded an aircraft to fly the terrorists and their hostages to either Egypt or Morocco. If their demands weren't met, the BSO terrorists would start executing their hostages.⁸

REACTION AND RESPONSE

There were two separate responses to the Munich Olympics massacre: the West German police during the hostage crisis, and the Israeli government and its security forces in the aftermath. West German officials agreed to the BSO's demands and two helicopters were flown to the Olympic Village to transport the terrorists and their hostages to nearby Fürstenfeldbruck military airfield, where a plane was waiting to take them to Cairo. As the terrorists were inspecting the plane, snipers from the West German police opened fire. The result was a catastrophe. Five terrorists were killed and the other three captured, but all nine hostages died when the terrorists turned their machine guns on them. A police officer was also killed.⁹ In response to this disaster, several western European nations set up dedicated counter-terrorism teams, such as the GSG-9 in West Germany and GIGN in France, which engaged in several successful counter-terrorism operations over the next few decades.

The Israeli government was determined to get revenge for the deaths of their athletes and launched Operation Wrath of God. Members of the PLO around the world, whether they had a connection with the Munich Massacre or not, were targeted by agents of Mossad, the Israeli secret service, and assassinated. Mossad used letter bombs, explosives and guns to eliminate their targets. The Israeli army also sent commandos to southern Lebanon to kill senior members of the PLO and al-Fatah in Operation Spring of Youth.¹⁰ Realising that terrorism had not helped bring about the goal of Palestinian liberation, Arafat disbanded the BSO at the end of 1973.



SOURCE 10.12

The world's media was on hand to cover the hostage crisis.



THE MUNICH MASSACRE

DID YOU KNOW?

The Black September terrorists initially captured thirteen members of the Israeli Olympic team in the early hours of 5 September 1972. In the confusion, however, two members of the team were killed and another two managed to escape—one fleeing through an open window.

SOURCE 10.13

The twisted wreckage of one of the West German police helicopters.



ACTIVITY

SOURCE ANALYSIS

1. How many terrorists entered the Olympic village, and how many hostages did they take?
2. What were the demands made by the BSO during the hostage crisis?
3. By referring to Source 10.13, and using your own knowledge, explain the errors made by the West German security forces during the hostage crisis.
4. Evaluate how useful this image is in offering an explanation of the range of government responses to the hostage crisis during the 1972 Munich Olympic Games.

ACTIVITY

SKILLS: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

Write a brief report of 300–450 words on the extent to which the BSO and the 1972 Munich Olympic Games massacre generated significant change for the people of Palestinian people, and how governments dealt with the threat posed by terrorists.

BLACK SEPTEMBER: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

Tactically, the terrorist attack at the Munich Olympics was a complete failure for the BSO. None of the Palestinian prisoners were released, and all the members of the squad were either killed or captured. In addition, the massacre failed to elicit sympathy for the Palestinian cause. In fact, the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause had been irreparably damaged by the carnage and bloodshed on the airfield in Munich.¹¹

In a broader sense, however, the attack had been a spectacular success. The world could not ignore the grievances of the Palestinian people and their desire for freedom any longer. At least 900 million people around the world watched the hostage crisis unfold on their television screens.¹² Thousands of Palestinians rushed to join al-Fatah and similar groups. Eighteen months after the Munich Games, Arafat was invited to address the United Nations General Assembly and the PLO was granted observer status. While the operation itself might have failed, it gained the Palestinian people the international recognition they so desperately demanded.

AL-QAEDA

OSAMA BIN LADEN: 'To kill the Americans and their allies ... is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it.'

THE ORIGINS OF AL-QAEDA

Al-Qaeda was founded in mid-1988 by Osama bin Laden. The son of a wealthy Yemeni construction magnate, bin Laden spent his early years in Saudi Arabia. He enjoyed a privileged childhood with holidays to Europe and Beirut. He spent one summer learning English in a London language school. However, Bin Laden started giving up this lifestyle from the mid-1970s. The Lebanese civil war, the Arab defeat in the 1973 Arab–Israeli War, the Arab oil embargo and the assassination of King Faisal, the ruler of Saudi Arabia, all had a profound effect upon bin Laden. The capture of the Grand Mosque of Mecca in November 1979 by 1500 armed radical Islamists impressed bin Laden greatly.¹³ He started to believe that armed violence was the only way to protect his fundamentalist interpretation of Islam.

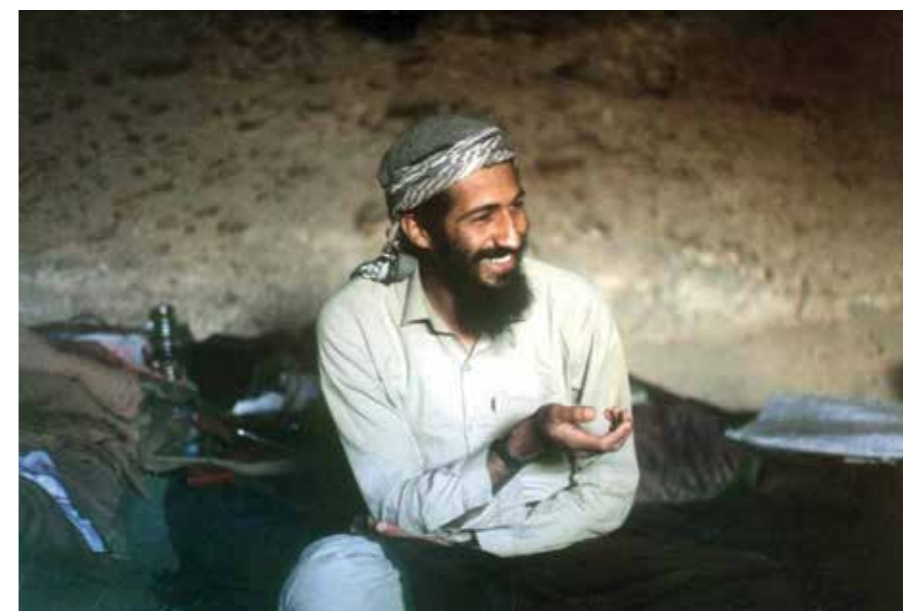
Bin Laden found a cause worthy of his religious fervour in December 1979. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in support of the Afghani communist government that was facing a widespread Islamist revolt. Two weeks after the Soviet invasion, bin Laden left Saudi Arabia for Pakistan to assist the *mujahideen* ('holy warriors') who were fighting the Soviets. Bin Laden raised funds and recruited volunteers from the Arabic nations. In 1984 he established a base called *Beit al-Ansar* ('the House of Supporters') in Pakistan where new recruits would come before being sent to training camps in Afghanistan. About 20 000 Arabs answered bin Laden's call for *jihad* ('holy war') against the Soviet Union.¹⁴ From the flow of recruits, bin Laden would select individuals who had highly sought-after skills, such as computing, engineering or surgery, to join a new group called al-Qaeda for special training and operations against the Soviets. Its members came from Muslim countries all over the world and formed the nucleus of what would become a global, Islamist terrorist organisation.

DID YOU KNOW?

There is no consistent spelling in the transliteration of Arabic to English, so bin Laden's name has also been written as Usama bin Ladin. Al-Qaeda has been variously spelled as al Qaida and al Qa'ida.



AL-QAEDA



SOURCE 10.14

Saudi-born billionaire Osama bin Laden smiles as he sits in a cave in the Jalalabad region of Afghanistan, 1988.



Saddam Hussein.



THE IRAQI INVASION OF KUWAIT

IDEAS AND IDEOLOGIES

The Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in 1989. The war in Afghanistan had a profound impact on the Muslims who fought in it. They believed that the mujahideen had defeated one of the world's great superpowers. With no reason to stay in Afghanistan, bin Laden returned to Saudi Arabia in late 1989. When Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq, invaded Kuwait in August 1990, bin Laden offered to raise an Islamic army of 100 000 followers to protect Saudi Arabia and fight Hussein. When this was rejected by the Saudi government—which invited American troops into the country instead—bin Laden was incensed. According to bin Laden, it was an affront to all Muslims to have American troops on the same soil as the two holiest places in the Islamic religion: Mecca and Medina. His primary focus was now to defend all Muslims from the military might and cultural influence of the United States.¹⁵ Another of al-Qaeda's goals was the destruction of Israel and the restoration of an Arabic–Palestinian state. Finally, bin Laden desired to create a single state encompassing all Muslims who would live under strict *Sharia* law—that is, a society governed by the strictest, most literal interpretation of the Koran.¹⁶

Bin Laden issued two *fatwas* (or religious rulings) in 1996 and 1998 which outlined his criticisms of the United States and their allies. He also called upon Muslims all over the world to do everything they could to destroy them. His second fatwa issued a call for jihad to expel their enemies from all countries with significant Muslim majorities.

SOURCE 10.15

Osama bin Laden, 'Bin Laden's second fatwa,' in *Terrorism: A Documentary and Reference Guide*, Vincent Burns and Kate Dempsey Peterson (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005), 923.



BIN LADEN'S FIRST FATWA

'BIN LADEN'S SECOND FATWA'

For over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorising its neighbours, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighbouring Muslim people ... All of these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on Allah, his messenger [Muhammad] and Muslims ... On that basis, and in compliance with Allah's orders, we issue the following *fatwa* to all Muslims: The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it ... in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim ... We—with Allah's help—call on every Muslim who believes in Allah and wishes to be rewarded to comply with Allah's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it.

ACTIVITY

SOURCE ANALYSIS

1. According to bin Laden, what had the US done to the lands of Islam?
2. In this fatwa, what does bin Laden order all Muslims to do?
3. By quoting from the source and using your own knowledge, explain the objectives of bin Laden and al-Qaeda.
4. Evaluate the usefulness of this document in helping us understand why Osama bin Laden and other fundamentalist Muslims are so opposed to US policy and culture.

METHODS AND TACTICS

In order to realise their ambitions, al-Qaeda inspired, funded or directly participated in a number of terrorist attacks during the 1990s, aimed at US targets around the world. The attacks typically involved extremely powerful, highly sophisticated explosive devices, many of which were delivered by suicide bombers.

WORLD TRADE CENTER BOMBING

In the early afternoon of 26 February 1993, a huge bomb exploded in the basement car park underneath the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. Six people were killed in the blast and more than 1000 people injured. While not directly perpetrated by al-Qaeda, the chief bomb-maker, Ramzi Yousef, had been through an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. He received funds from bin Laden and hid in an al-Qaeda base in Pakistan prior to his arrest.¹⁷ Osama bin Laden personally praised the terrorists, claiming that they were 'role models' for being determined to 'take the fight to America.'¹⁸



DID YOU KNOW?

Fortunately, the terrorists failed to realise their ultimate goal in their 1993 attack on the World Trade Center. They had hoped that the explosion would topple one tower into the other and kill over 250 000 people.

SOURCE 10.16

First Responders evacuate workers, through snow and falling ice, after the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993.

THE BOMBING OF US EMBASSIES IN KENYA AND TANZANIA

A much deadlier attack was carried out by al-Qaeda agents on 7 August 1998. Bin Laden activated an African cell of al-Qaeda, which targeted the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, where security was minimal. The truck bomb that exploded at the embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, contained 2000 pounds (almost 1000 kg) of TNT and killed over two hundred people. More than 4500 people were wounded, mainly by shards of broken glass. Less than ten minutes later, another truck bomb exploded at the US embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. This second attack killed another eleven people and wounded eighty-five.¹⁹ The drivers of the two trucks were killed in the blasts while another terrorist, Mohamed Sadeek Odeh, was arrested by Kenyan police at the airport.

SOURCE 10.17

The US embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, after the 1998 bombing.



THE BOMBING OF THE USS COLE

Suicide bombers were employed again by al-Qaeda in an attack on a US navy destroyer, the *USS Cole*, on 12 October 2000. The *Cole* had docked in the Yemeni port of Aden to refuel. While this four-hour procedure was taking place, two al-Qaeda operatives, Hassan al Khamri and Ibrahim al Thawar, steered a small boat packed with explosives into the side of the *Cole*. In the resulting explosion, seventeen US sailors were killed and thirty-nine injured. Unlike the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 1993 and the US embassies in 1998, the suicide bombing of the *Cole* was ordered, planned and supervised by bin Laden himself. He considered the attack a great success and ordered a reconstruction of the event be filmed for use in a propaganda and recruitment video to attract young Muslims to al-Qaeda.²⁰

SOURCE 10.18

The *USS Cole* after the 1998 suicide attack.



ACTIVITIES

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. List the dates and places of three al-Qaeda terrorist attacks.
2. How many people were killed and wounded in the bombings?
3. Explain how al-Qaeda was involved, directly or indirectly, in these attacks.

REPORT WRITING

4. Using three or four points, explain the ideology and ultimate goals of al-Qaeda. Explain your ideas in 300–400 words.

SKILLS: HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Explain the importance of the war in Afghanistan in the radicalisation of Osama bin Laden and the formation of al-Qaeda as an international terrorist group. Present your ideas in a brief speech to your class.

REACTION AND RESPONSE

The US response to the various terrorist acts perpetrated by al-Qaeda varied in terms of scope, technique and effectiveness. Ramzi Yousef, the bomb-maker in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, was arrested by the FBI shortly afterwards when he tried to claim his \$400 deposit on the truck he rented to transport the bomb. When sifting through the rubble, FBI agents discovered a piece of the truck with the serial number. They traced the truck to a specific rental company, sent an undercover agent to work at the company and waited.²¹ The response to the US embassy bombings was much more dramatic. President Bill Clinton ordered US naval vessels to fire long-range missiles at suspected al-Qaeda targets in Sudan and Afghanistan. Bin Laden had spent several years in Sudan (1992–1996) where, alongside construction and agricultural projects, he had also established terrorist training camps. In 1998, the US targeted the al Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, which they suspected of manufacturing chemicals used in bombs. These strikes, codenamed Operation Infinite Reach, were a failure. Bin Laden was warned hours before the missile strikes and the camps were evacuated; only six al-Qaeda terrorists were killed. The factory in Khartoum was no longer owned by al-Qaeda—it manufactured medicines used in nearby hospitals.²² The al-Qaeda organisation proved to be too well-informed, too flexible and too resilient for the United States to destroy with a few missiles. This might explain why the US did not respond with military force after the bombing of the *USS Cole*.

AL-QAEDA: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

By the year 2000, al-Qaeda had achieved some spectacular successes in individual terrorist operations; however, it had not attained its stated goals of creating a unified, fundamentalist Islamic state free from the political, military and cultural influence of the United States and the western world. Nevertheless, al-Qaeda was playing the long game. Its operatives, bin Laden included, did not expect to realise their grand scheme within a few years—it would take generations.²³ Simply by surviving as it waged war against one of the most powerful nations in history meant that al-Qaeda was winning—and while they survived, they could plan and execute further terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies.

WORKING WITH MAPS

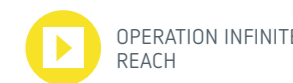
1. In this section on al-Qaeda, various places around the world are mentioned. Download a blank map of the world (see icon in margin above) and mark all of the places referred to. For each point, write relevant information on the map such as the date of a significant event that occurred there and whether the place was the location of a terrorist attack, an al-Qaeda base or a US military strike.
2. Use your map, and knowledge gained from wider reading, to respond to the following question: 'In what sense was al-Qaeda a truly international terrorist organisation?' Your response should be 400–600 words in length.

CREATIVE WRITING

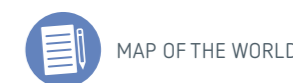
You are a press secretary working for the US Government in 1998. After it has been revealed that the pharmaceuticals factory in Khartoum was making medicine rather than bombs, President Clinton has asked you to write a brief report for him to read to the media. Write a 200–300 word statement that explains why the United States bombed the factory.



President Bill Clinton.



OPERATION INFINITE REACH



MAP OF THE WORLD

ACTIVITIES

CONCLUSION

The conflict between terrorist groups and counter-terrorist forces is like a stalemate at the end of a game of chess: the terrorist groups can't realise their ultimate objectives but counter-terrorist forces can never completely nullify the threat terrorism poses to society. The result is a seemingly never-ending clash between state and non-state actors that has no foreseeable conclusion. When perceived injustices and imbalances in society reach a critical point, there will always be individuals who seek to undermine, challenge and change the status quo through the use of—or threat to use—deadly violence. Using stealth and secrecy, terrorist groups can achieve stunningly successful strikes. That the attacks can take place anywhere and anytime increases the sense of fear in the target population and can convince governments to accede to the terrorists' demands. The structure of terrorist

groups—usually small and close-knit—and their preference for hiding among civilians or in remote parts of the world makes them difficult targets for counter-terrorist operations. Responses to terrorist groups can actually play into their hands by apparently 'proving' the oppressive nature of the regime. Poorly aimed strikes can also be counter-productive as they often increase recruitment numbers for terrorist groups. In the twenty-first century, the challenge for nation-states is to discover an effective means of dealing with those who use violence in the pursuit of political ends. This must be done without alienating or endangering non-aligned sections of the population. However, as the ISIS attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015—which killed 130 people and injured 350—demonstrated, a solution to the challenge of terrorism appears to be a long way off.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Using the information presented in this chapter, create a series of mind-maps or flow charts that visually demonstrate the origins, tactics and counter-terrorist operations employed by the RAF, the BSO and al-Qaeda. Include primary source quotes or images for each event.

EXAM PRACTICE

Using three or four points:

1. explain how terrorism took on an international aspect in the second half of the twentieth century.
2. explain how terrorist groups use acts of violence to communicate their cause.
3. explain the measures employed by states in their attempts to deal with and defeat terrorist organisations.

ESSAY

Write an essay on one of the topics below, using evidence.

- Terrorist groups chiefly arise because of the existence of injustice and inequalities in the world. To what extent do you agree with this statement? Use evidence to support your response.
- Terrorist groups rarely, if ever, achieve their ultimate goals. To what extent do you agree with this statement? Use evidence to support your response.
- Counter-terrorist operations are not only futile, they are counter-productive. We might as well just learn to live with terrorism. To what extent do you agree with this statement? Use evidence to support your response.

EXTENSION



FILM TASK

TEST



QUIZ – CHAPTER 7

TEST YOUR
LEARNING

FURTHER READING

Stefan Aust, *The Baader-Meinhof Complex*, trans. Anthea Bell, London, 2008.

This comprehensive book covers the formation, development and decline of the Red Army Faction. The author worked with Ulrike Meinhof as a journalist for *konkret* magazine in the 1960s so he brings a uniquely informed perspective. Aust focuses particularly on the widespread popularity that the terrorists enjoyed in West Germany during the 1970s due to their 'rock star' appeal. The book served as the basis for the 2008 film of the same name.

Michael Burleigh, *Blood and Rage*, London, 2008.

Burleigh takes the interesting approach of looking at terrorism and terrorist acts as a series of choices made by individuals in order to bring about 'transformative chaos.' He also analyses terrorism as a career, a culture and a way of life

adopted by outsiders. Burleigh seeks to deglamourise terrorists by portraying them as criminals who are both deadly and deeply flawed characters.

Cindy Combs, *Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century*, New Jersey, 2003.

This book explores the political aspects of the demands of terrorists. It then looks at a variety of case studies as it examines the origins and tactics of terrorist organisations, as well as the methods used by states as they struggle to nullify or destroy them. A particular focus is given to role played by the media as a tool to both propagandise and criticise terrorists and their actions.


Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, New York, 2006.

Hoffman's rather academic but highly useful book on terrorism explores the difficulties associated with

defining the term. He also explains the development of the use of terror against states and governments over the centuries. Hoffman's discussions on the Palestinian issue and the motives behind religious terror and suicide bombers are particularly insightful and informative.

Simon Reeve, *One Day in September*, New York, 2006.

This is a gripping and detailed account of the terrorist attack on the Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics and the Israeli Government's determination to exact revenge. The author interviewed many of the surviving participants and quotes them extensively throughout his book. The ease with which the Black September terrorists entered the Olympic village is chillingly narrated in this book.

 Smoke billows from the World Trade Center towers during the September 11 (2001) terrorist attack in New York.