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# Domestic Terrorism in the United States

**P**revious chapters focused on defining terrorism, its causes, the motives behind political violence, terrorist environments, and the terrorist trade. Many examples of post–World War II terrorist movements and environments were presented to illustrate theoretical concepts and trends. The discussion in this and subsequent chapters will investigate terrorist threats in the United States, the concept of American homeland security, the homeland security bureaucracy, and emerging issues and trends likely to affect the United States’ response to terrorist threats in the near future.

The quality of post–World War II extremism in the United States reflects the characteristics of the classical ideological continuum. Readers may recall that the classical ideological continuum, discussed earlier, incorporates political tendencies that range from the fringe left to the fringe right, but that many examples of nationalist and religious terrorism do not fit squarely within the continuum categories. However, the United States is an idiosyncratic subject, and most terrorism in the post–World War II era did originate from the left- and right-wing spectrums of the continuum.

The discussion in this chapter will review the following:

- Left-wing extremism in America
- Left-wing terrorism in the United States
- Right-wing extremism in America
- Right-wing terrorism in the United States



❖ **PHOTO 10.1** Anti-Vietnam War Riot. An antiwar demonstrator at the University of California, Berkeley, throws a tear gas canister at police during a student strike to protest the killing of four students at Kent State University in May 1970.

Figure 10.1 shows the number of terrorist incidents in the United States by group class, from 1980 to 2001. Table 10.1 summarizes and contrasts the basic characteristics of contemporary left-wing, right-wing, and international political violence in the United States.<sup>1</sup> This is not an exhaustive profile, but it is instructive for purposes of comparison.

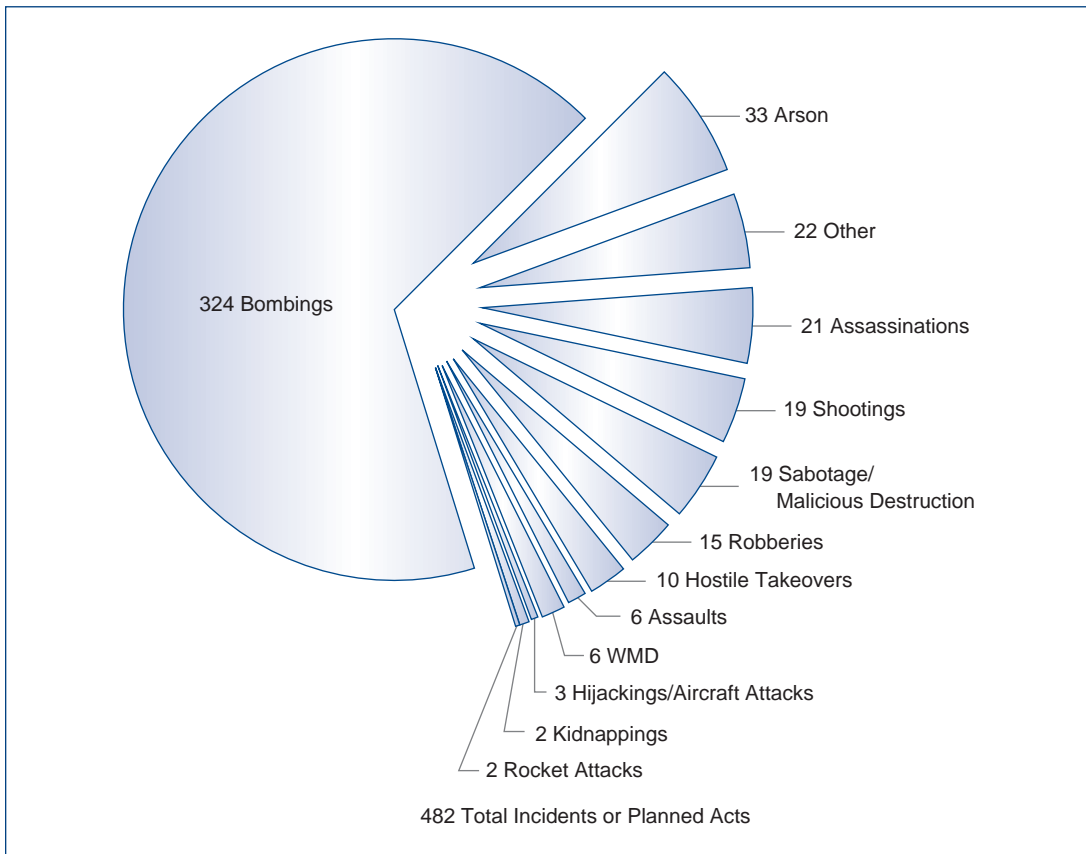
❖ **TABLE 10.1** Attributes of Terrorism in the United States

In the United States, terrorism has typically been conducted by groups and individuals espousing leftist or rightist ideologies or those who engage in international spillover conflicts. These interests are motivated by diverse ideologies, operate from different milieus, possess distinctive organizational profiles, and target a variety of interests.

Environment	Activity profile			
	Ideological profile	Bases of operation	Organizational profile	Typical targets
Leftist	Marxist; left-wing nationalist; environmentalist	Urban areas; suburbs	Clandestine groups; movement-based	Symbolic structures; usually an avoidance of human targets

Environment	Activity profile			
	Ideological profile	Bases of operation	Organizational profile	Typical targets
Rightist	Racial supremacist; antigovernment; religious	Rural areas; small towns	Self-isolated groups; cells; lone wolves	Symbolic structures; human targets
“Old” international terrorism	Ethno-nationalist	Urban areas	Clandestine groups	Symbols of enemy interest
“New” international terrorism	Religious	Urban areas	Cells	Symbolic structures; human targets

❖ **FIGURE 10.1** Types of Terrorist Events in the United States, 1980–2001



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Unlike many terrorist environments elsewhere in the world, where the designations of left and right are not always applicable, most political violence in the United States falls within them. Even nationalist and religious sources of such incidents have tended to reflect the attributes of leftist or rightist movements.

## CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 10.1

### American Cults and Terrorist Violence

Cults are self-isolated mystical communities that claim to have definitive answers for societal and personal problems. They are usually tightly knit groups of people who follow a spiritual belief, often based on extreme interpretations of existing religions, that is a product of some higher mystical insight. Many cults are led by a single charismatic leader. The Tokyo subway terrorist attack by the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyō was discussed in Chapter 6.

Most American cults have not directed violence against nonmembers. However, some—such as the apocalyptic **People’s Temple of the Disciples of Christ**—have committed acts of extreme violence against their own members, as well as nonmembers who challenged their authority. Founded and led by **Jim Jones**, the People’s Temple was originally based in California. In the late 1970s, hundreds of its members migrated to Guyana to establish a compound called Jonestown after Jones and others became obsessed with conspiracy theories about government oppression and the imminence of the Apocalypse (a time of global trial and warfare). In November 1978, during a visit to Jonestown by a delegation led by U.S. Congressman Leo Ryan, a number of cult members decided to leave the People’s Temple. They accompanied Ryan’s party to an airfield, where they were assaulted by heavily armed members of the People’s Temple; Ryan and several others were killed. Jones and hundreds of his followers committed suicide—mostly by drinking flavored sugar water that had been poisoned, although some shot themselves. A number of members were apparently murdered by gunshots or injections of the poison. Jim Jones audiotaped the episode, in which 914 people died, including more than 200 children.

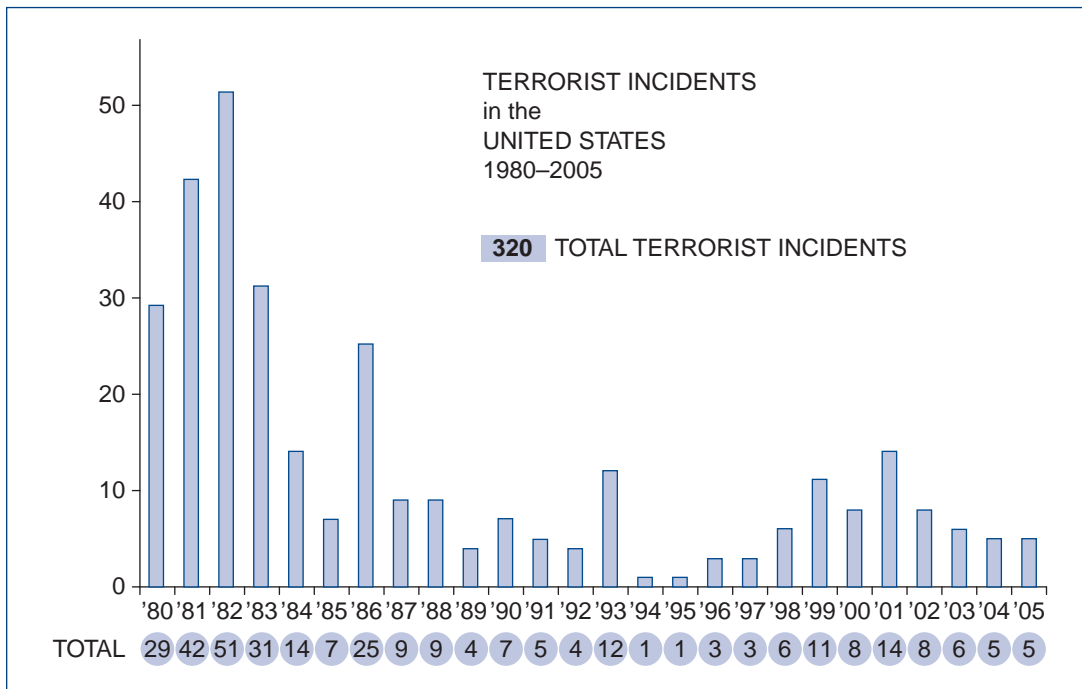
Another cult—the Black Hebrew Israelites—is a counterpart to the neo-Nazi Christian Identity faith, with the distinction that it promotes African racial supremacy. Branches of the cult have called themselves the Tribe of Judah, Nation of Yahweh, and Temple of Love. Black Hebrew Israelites believe that the ancient Hebrews were Africans and that these chosen people migrated to West Africa during the Diaspora (scattering) of the ancient Jewish people. The descendents of these migrants were brought to the western hemisphere as slaves by Europeans during the 400-year African slave trade. Thus, Africans in general—and African Americans in particular—are the true Chosen People of God. This “truth” has been rediscovered by followers of the Black Hebrew Israelite movement. One branch was established in Miami in 1979 by **Hulon Mitchell, Jr.**, who adopted the name of Yahweh Ben Yahweh (God, Son of God). This branch became highly insular, and members followed Mitchell’s authority without question. Disobedience was dealt with harshly, so that when some members tried to leave the group they were assaulted, and some were beheaded. Mitchell also taught that whites are descendants of the devil and worthy of death. Mitchell and some of his followers were eventually prosecuted

and imprisoned after the group dispatched death squads known as the Death Angels to murder whites in the Miami area. The group was linked to at least 14 murders.

In the Pacific Northwest, followers of the **Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh** committed at least one act of biological terrorism. The group occupied a rural area in Oregon where their leader—the Bhagwan—was revered as the source of ultimate spiritual truth and enlightenment. Their mystical belief system was loosely based on Hinduism. Cult members, known as **Rajneeshees**, were expected to renounce their previous lifestyles and totally devote themselves and their livelihoods to their group and the Bhagwan. For example, they expressed great pride in the Bhagwan’s fleet of Rolls Royce sedans. In September 1984, the group poisoned the salad bars of 10 Oregon restaurants with *Salmonella* bacteria. More than 700 people fell ill. The incident had been an experiment to test options for how the group could influence a local election in which the Rajneeshees hoped to elect members of the cult.

Figure 10.2 reports the number of terrorist incidents by domestic extremists in the United States during a 25-year period from 1980 to 2005.

❖ **FIGURE 10.2** Terrorist Incidents by Domestic Extremists in the United States, 1980 to 2005



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

## Left-Wing Extremism in the United States

The modern American left is characterized by several movements that grew out of the political fervor of the 1960s. They were fairly interconnected, so that understanding their origins provides instructive insight into the basic issues of the left. One should bear in mind that none was fundamentally violent and that they were not terrorist movements. However, extremist trends within them led to factions that sometimes espoused violent confrontation, and a few engaged in terrorist violence.

### *The Rise of Black Power<sup>2</sup>*

The modern civil rights movement initially centered on the struggle to win equality for African Americans in the South. During the early 1950s, the movement—at first led by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People—forced an end to segregation on trains and interstate buses by successfully appealing several federal lawsuits to the U.S. Supreme Court. Despite these victories, southern state laws still allowed segregation on intrastate transportation.

In 1955 and 1956 in Birmingham, Alabama, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., led a bus boycott in Birmingham that lasted for 13 months. A Supreme Court decision forced the bus company to capitulate. This was the beginning of the application of civil disobedience using a strategy known as collective nonviolence. The theory was that massive resistance, coupled with moral suasion and peaceful behavior, would lead to fundamental change. Unfortunately, official and unofficial violence was directed against the movement. There were numerous anti-civil rights bombings, shootings, and beatings in the South during this period. For this reason, not every member of the civil rights movement accepted collective nonviolence as a fundamental principle, and the strategy was not particularly effective outside of the southern context.

As a direct result of the violence directed against the nonviolent movement, an emerging ideology of African American empowerment took root among many activists. It began in June 1966, when civil rights activist **James Meredith** planned to walk through Mississippi to demonstrate that African Americans could safely go to polling places to register to vote. When he was ambushed, shot, and wounded early in his walk, Martin Luther King and other national civil rights activists traveled to Mississippi to finish Meredith's symbolic march. One of the leaders was **Stokely Carmichael**, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

Carmichael renounced collective nonviolence. At a rally in Mississippi, he roused the crowd to repeatedly shout “Black power!” and adopted the clenched fist as a symbol of defiance. The slogan caught on, as did the clenched-fist symbol, and the **Black Power** movement began. It is important to note that the movement occurred at a time when the violence in the South was paralleled by urban activism, unrest, and rioting in the impoverished African American ghettos of the North, Midwest, and West. The ideology of Black Power advocated political independence, economic self-sufficiency, and a cultural reawakening. It was expressed in Afrocentric political agendas; experiments in economic development of African American communities; and cultural chauvinism that was expressed in music, art, and dress (the **Black Pride** movement).

### *Growth of the New Left*

The so-called old left was characterized by orthodox Marxist ideologies and political parties dating from the Russian Revolution. However, new issues galvanized a new movement among educated young activists, primarily on the nation's university campuses. The **New Left** arose in the mid-1960s when a new generation of activists rallied around the antiwar movement, the civil rights movement, women's rights, and other political and social causes. New student organizations such as **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)** advocated a philosophy of **direct action** to confront mainstream establishment values. In the fall of 1964, participants in the Free Speech Movement at the University of California in Berkeley seized an administration building on the campus. This was a wakeup call for adopting direct action as a central tactic of the fledgling New Left.

The New Left adapted its ideological motivations to the political and social context of the 1960s. It championed contemporary revolutionaries and movements, such as the Cuban, Palestinian, and Vietnamese revolutionaries. At its core, "the [American] New Left was a mass movement that led, and fed upon, growing public opposition to U.S. involvement in Vietnam."<sup>3</sup> Many young Americans experimented with alternative lifestyles, drugs, and avant-garde music. They also challenged the values of mainstream American society, questioning its fundamental ideological and cultural assumptions. This component of the New Left was commonly called the **counter-culture**. The period was marked by numerous experiments in youth-centered culture.



❖ **PHOTO 10.2** A young woman screams as she kneels over the body of a student during an antiwar demonstration at Kent State University, Ohio, May 4, 1970. Four students were slain when Ohio National Guard troops fired into a crowd of some 600 antiwar demonstrators.

## Left-Wing Terrorism in the United States

As New Left and Black Power movements and organizations became radicalized, many individuals and groups began to advocate active resistance against **the Establishment**—defined as mainstream American political and social institutions. This resistance included explicit calls for civil disobedience and confrontation with the authorities. Many within these movements referred to themselves as revolutionaries, and some advocated the overthrow of the military–industrial complex. Prototypical revolutionary organizations began to form in the late 1960s, and a few groups produced factions that became terrorist organizations. All of this occurred in a generalized environment of activism and direct action. A large number of politically motivated bombings, shootings, and assaults occurred during this period. The Senate Committee on Government Operations reported the following statistics:<sup>4</sup>

- 1969, 298 explosive and 243 incendiary bombings
- January to July 1970, 301 explosive and 210 incendiary bombing incidents
- January 1968 to June 1970, 216 ambushes against law enforcement personnel and headquarters
- January 1968 to June 1970, 359 total assaults against police, causing 23 deaths and 326 injuries

Chapter Perspective 10.2 presents two examples of radicalized organizations—one from the New Left (Students for a Democratic Society) and the other from the Black Power movement (the Black Panthers). The story of both groups illustrates the evolutionary process of left-wing revolutionary cadres and factions that eventually advocated political violence.

### CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 10.2

#### Seeds of Terrorism: Radicals on the American Left

Two militant case studies are discussed here—the Black Panthers and the radicalized Students for a Democratic Society. Within each were groups or cadres who advocated violent revolution.

#### Case: The Black Panthers

The **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense** was organized in 1966 in Oakland, California. The name was selected from an African American organization founded in Alabama called the Lowndes County Freedom Organization. The Lowndes County group had used the symbol of a black panther on voter ballots, ostensibly so that illiterate voters would know who their candidates were.

The Oakland Black Panthers initially imitated a tactic used by the Los Angeles-based Community Alert Patrol, which had been formed after the Watts riot in August 1965.<sup>a</sup> The Community Alert Patrol would dispatch observers to scenes of suspected harassment by the Los Angeles Police Department and observe the police stop. In Oakland, the Black Panthers took this



tactic one step further and arrived on the scene openly carrying law books and shotguns or rifles (legal at the time in California).<sup>b</sup> The symbolism of young African Americans projecting a paramilitary image in poor urban ghettos attracted members to the Black Panthers around the country. More than 40 chapters were formed, with a total of more than 2,000 members. By 1968, the group made worldwide headlines and came to symbolize the Black Power movement. Public demonstrations by the Black Panthers maximized the use of paramilitary symbolism, with members marching and chanting slogans in precision and wearing black berets and black leather jackets.

Ideologically, the Black Panthers were inspired by Malcolm X,<sup>c</sup> Frantz Fanon, and Mao Zedong. They were advocates of Black Nationalism and encouraged economic self-sufficiency and armed self-defense in the black community. Black Panther self-help initiatives included free breakfasts for poor schoolchildren in urban areas. The police, at that time all male and mostly white in most cities, were especially singled out and labeled as a kind of occupation force in African American communities.

The group's militancy attracted the attention of federal and local law enforcement agencies, who considered the organization to be a threat to national security. The revolutionary and anti-police rhetoric of Black Panther leaders and the militant articles in its newspaper *The Black Panther* increased their concern. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover stated that the Black Panthers were the most significant threat to domestic security in the United States. A series of arrests and shootouts at Black Panther offices occurred. The leadership of the organization was decimated by arrests, police raids, and a successful disinformation campaign that sowed distrust among central figures. Internal feuds between leaders Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver also disrupted the group. Although the Black Panther movement continued to be active into the late 1970s—after significantly moderating its militancy by the mid-1970s—its heyday as a paramilitary symbol of Black Nationalism was during the late 1960s and early 1970s. As it declined under relentless internal and external pressures, some of its more radical members joined the revolutionary underground.

### Case: Students for a Democratic Society

In June 1962, a group of liberal and mildly leftist students, many from the University of Michigan, met to draft a document that became known as the **Port Huron Statement**. In it, SDS harshly criticized the values of mainstream American society and called for a New Left movement. The statement was a critique and a call for action directed to middle-class students. At the time, SDS was liberal and leftist but hardly revolutionary. SDS espoused direct action, which originally meant peaceful and nonviolent confrontation.

By 1965, SDS had moved to the radical left, and when the bombing of North Vietnam began, its national membership soared. By 1966, its focal point was the war in Vietnam and support for the Black Power movement (SDS's membership was mostly white students). In 1967, it cast activist American youth as a new working class oppressed by the military-industrial complex. By 1968, SDS leadership was revolutionary. In an SDS-led takeover of Columbia University during the 1968 spring term, students seized five buildings for 5 days. When the police were called in, a riot ensued, more than 700 people were arrested, and nearly 150 were injured. A student strike—again led by SDS—closed Columbia. The group led dozens of other campus disturbances in 1968.

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In June 1968, ideological tensions within the group led SDS to fragment. Some members formed a prototypical Revolutionary Youth Movement, others aligned themselves with developing world revolutionary heroes, and still others (sometimes called Crazies) espoused violent revolution. At its next meeting, in June 1969 in Chicago, SDS split along doctrinal and tactical lines into the Maoist **Progressive Labor Party** (also known as Worker-Student Alliance), the **Revolutionary Youth Movement II**, and the violent revolutionary **Weatherman** group.

### Notes

- a. The toll for the Watts disturbance was high; 34 people were killed, more than 1,000 injured, and nearly 4,000 arrested. Approximately 200 businesses were destroyed and about 700 damaged. For a study of the Watts riot, see Robert Conot, *Rivers of Blood, Years of Darkness* (New York: Bantam Books, 1967).
- b. The armed patrols ended when California passed a law prohibiting the open display of firearms.
- c. For more information about Malcolm X, see Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

The following discussion evaluates four trends on the violent left:

- Generational rebellion: New Left terrorism
- The revolution continues: leftist hard cores
- Civil strife: ethno-nationalist
- Single-issue violence on the left

### Generational Rebellion: New Left Terrorism

The New Left was deeply affected by the war in Vietnam, the civil rights movement, and the turmoil in inner-city African American communities. A number of terrorist groups and cells grew out of this environment. Although the most prominent example was the Weatherman group, other groups such as the Symbionese Liberation Army also engaged in terrorist violence. The United Freedom Front proved to be the most enduring of all terrorist groups of the era.

#### *The Weatherman/Weather Underground Organization*

The Weatherman group—known as the **Weathermen**—jelled at the June 1969 Students for a Democratic Society national convention in Chicago, when SDS splintered into several factions. The Weathermen were mostly young, white, educated members of the middle class. They represented—starkly—the dynamic ideological tendencies of the era, as well as the cultural separation from the older generation. Although they and others were sometimes referred to collectively as the Crazies, they operated within a supportive cultural and political environment.

From the beginning, the Weathermen were violent and confrontational. In October 1969, they distributed leaflets in Chicago announcing what became known as their **Days of Rage** action. The Days of Rage lasted for 4 days and consisted of acts of vandalism and

running street fights with the Chicago police. In December 1969, the Weathermen held what they called a war council in Michigan. Its leadership, calling itself the **Weather Bureau**, advocated bombings, armed resistance, and assassinations. In March 1970, an explosion occurred in a Greenwich Village townhouse in New York City that was being used as a bomb factory. Three Weathermen were killed, several others escaped through the subway system, and hundreds of members went underground to wage war.

By the mid-1970s, the Weathermen—renamed the **Weather Underground Organization**—had committed at least 40 bombings. Aside from these actions, the Weather Underground also freed counterculture guru Timothy Leary from prison,<sup>5</sup> published a manifesto called *Prairie Fire*, and distributed an underground periodical called *Osawatomie*. By the mid-1970s, members of the Weather Underground began to give up their armed struggle and returned to aboveground activism—a process that they called inversion. Those who remained underground (mostly the East Coast wing) committed acts of political violence into the 1980s. Others joined other terrorist organizations.

### *The Symbionese Liberation Army*

The Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) was a violent terrorist cell that gained notoriety for several high-profile incidents in the mid-1970s. The core members were



❖ **PHOTO 10.3** The Symbionese Liberation Army in action. A bank camera captures Patricia Hearst exiting a bank after an SLA robbery. Hearst, who joined the group after being kidnapped by them, possibly suffered from Stockholm syndrome.

led by **Donald DeFreeze**, who took the nom de guerre **Cinque** (named for the leader of a 19th-century rebellion aboard the slave ship *Amistad*). Members trained in the Berkeley hills of California near San Francisco, rented safe houses, and obtained weapons. In November 1973, the Oakland school superintendent was assassinated when he was shot eight times; five of the bullets were cyanide-tipped. In a communiqué, the SLA took credit for the attack, using a rhetorical phrase that became its slogan: “Death to the fascist insect that preys upon the people!”

In February 1974, newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was kidnapped by the cell. She was kept bound and blindfolded in a closet for more than 50 days under constant physical and psychological pressure, including physical abuse and intensive political indoctrination. She broke down under the pressure, and a tape recording was released in which she stated that she had joined the SLA. In April 1974, Hearst participated in a bank robbery in San Francisco. This was a classic case of Stockholm syndrome.

In May 1974, five of the SLA’s core members, including DeFreeze, were killed in a shootout in a house in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Patricia Hearst was a fugitive for approximately a year. She was hidden—probably by the Weather Underground—and traveled across the

country with compatriots. By 1975, the SLA had a rebirth with new recruits and was responsible for several bank robberies and bombings in California. They referred to themselves as the **New World Liberation Front**. Hearst was captured in September 1975 in San Francisco, along with another underground fugitive.

### Civil Strife: Ethno-Nationalist Terrorism on the Left

Ethno-national violence—which is distinguishable from racial supremacist violence—has been rare in the United States. This is primarily because activist environments have not historically supported nationalist terrorism. Exceptions grew out of the political environment of the 1960s, when nationalist political violence originated in African American and Puerto Rican activist movements.

#### *The Black Liberation Movement*

Racial tensions in the United States were extremely high during the 1960s. African Americans in the South directly confronted southern racism through collective nonviolence and the burgeoning Black Power ideology. In the urban areas of the North and West, cities became centers of confrontation between African Americans, the police, and state National Guards. When President Lyndon Johnson and the U.S. Senate organized inquiries into the causes of these disorders, their findings were disturbing. Table 10.2 describes the quality of these findings, which indicate the severity of tensions in urban areas during the mid-1960s.

❖ **TABLE 10.2** Racial Conflict in America: The “Long Hot Summers” of the 1960s

The urban disturbances in the United States during the 1960s caused an unprecedented period of communal discord. Incidents were widespread, violent, and a culmination of many factors. One of these was the deeply rooted racial polarization in American society. The presidentially appointed National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (known as the **Kerner Commission**) reported in 1968 that segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans. What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.<sup>a</sup>

These data are from a Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations inquiry into urban rioting after the serious disturbances in the summer of 1967.<sup>b</sup>

Incident report	Activity profile		
	1965	1966	1967
Number of urban disturbances	5	21	75
Casualties			
Killed	36	11	83
Injured	1,206	520	1,897

Incident report	Activity profile		
	1965	1966	1967
Legal sanctions			
Arrests	10,245	2,298	16,389
Convictions	2,074	1,203	2,157
Costs of damage (in millions of dollars)	\$40.1	\$10.2	\$664.5

- a. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 2.
- b. In 1967, the Senate passed a resolution ordering the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to investigate what had caused the 1967 rioting and to recommend solutions. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, data reported in *Ebony Pictorial History of Black America*, vol. 3 (Chicago: Johnson, 1971), 69.

Within this environment grew cadres of African American revolutionaries dedicated to using political violence to overthrow what they perceived to be a racist and oppressive system.

### *The Black Liberation Army*

The **Black Liberation Army (BLA)** was an underground movement whose membership included Vietnam veterans and former members of the Black Panthers. BLA members were nationalists who were inspired in part by the 1966 film *Battle of Algiers*, a semidocumentary of an urban terrorist uprising in the city of Algiers against the French during their colonial war in Algeria. In the film, Algerian rebels organized themselves into many autonomous cells to wage urban guerrilla warfare against the French. There were at least two cells (or groups of cells) of the BLA—the East Coast and West Coast groups. Although the BLA was likely active in late 1970 and early 1971, both cells became known later, and in similar fashion, to law enforcement agencies and the media.

The BLA is suspected to have committed a number of attacks in New York and California prior to and after these incidents. They are thought to have been responsible for numerous bombings, ambushes of police officers,<sup>6</sup> and bank robberies to “liberate” money to support their cause. Their areas of operation were California and New York City, though some members were apparently trained in the South.

Most members of the BLA were eventually captured or killed. Those who escaped the FBI net re-formed to join other radical organizations. Interestingly, the only known white member of the BLA, Marilyn Buck, was a former member of the radicalized SDS who had disappeared into the revolutionary underground.

### *Puerto Rican Independencistas*

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States, meaning that it is self-governed by a legislature and an executive (a governor) and has a nonvoting delegate to Congress. Those who desire independence are nationalists called independencistas, most of whom use democratic institutions to promote the cause of independence;

they are activists but not prone to violence. The Puerto Rico Independence Party, for example, is a fairly mainstreamed leftist political movement in Puerto Rico.

Some independencistas are revolutionaries, and a few have resorted to violence. Modern violent nationalists pattern themselves after Cuban nationalism and view the United States as an imperial and colonial power. Cuba has, in fact, provided support for violent independencista groups, especially during the 1980s.

### *The FALN*

The Armed Forces for National Liberation (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional, or FALN)<sup>7</sup> was a particularly active terrorist organization that concentrated its activities on the U.S. mainland, primarily in Chicago and New York City. One important fact about the FALN stands out: It was the most prolific terrorist organization in U.S. history. The group became active in 1974, and from 1975 to 1983 approximately 130 bombings were linked to it. Most attacks were symbolic, directed against buildings, but some were deadly. For example, in January 1975 the FALN detonated a bomb at the trendy restaurant Fraunces Tavern in New York, killing four people and wounding more than 50. In another incident in 1983, three New York City police officers were maimed while trying to defuse explosives at the New York police headquarters. FALN was also responsible for armored car and bank robberies.

In 1980, more than a dozen FALN members were convicted of terrorist-related crimes. Sentences were imposed for seditious conspiracy, possession of unregistered firearms, interstate transportation of a stolen vehicle, interference with interstate commerce by violence, and interstate transportation of firearms with intent to commit a crime. None of the charges were linked to homicides. FALN members' sentences ranged from 15 to 90 years, and they considered themselves prisoners of war.

### **The Revolution Continues: Leftist Hard Cores<sup>8</sup>**

The left-wing revolutionary underground re-formed after the decline of groups like the Weather Underground and the BLA. These new groups were made up of die-hard former members of the Weather Underground and BLA, as well as former activists from other organizations such as the radicalized SDS and the Black Panthers. Two cases illustrate the character of the reconstituted revolutionary left in the 1980s.

#### *May 19 Communist Organization*

The **May 19 Communist Organization (M19CO)** derives its name from the birthdays of Malcolm X and Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh. The symbolism of this designation is obvious—it combines domestic and international examples of resistance against self-defined U.S. racism and imperialism. The group was composed of remnants of the **New African Freedom Fighters**, the BLA, the Weather Underground, and the Black Panthers. These cadres included the founders of the **Republic of New Africa** and the most violent members of the Weather Underground. Many of its members were individuals who had disappeared into the revolutionary underground for years.

M19CO was fairly active, engaging in bank and armored car robberies, bombings, and other politically motivated actions. The group adopted several different names when claiming responsibility for its attacks. These aliases included Red Guerrilla Resistance, Revolutionary Fighting Group, and Armed Resistance Unit. M19CO

remained active and engaged in several bombings, but the group was finally broken when its remaining members were arrested in May 1985.

### *The United Freedom Front<sup>9</sup>*

Formed in 1975, the **United Freedom Front (UFF)** was underground and active for approximately 10 years. In 1975, it detonated a bomb at the Boston State House under the name of the **Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit**, named for two politicized inmates. The group was never large but was active, peaking during the early 1980s. The UFF is suspected to have committed at least 25 bombings and robberies in New York and New England. The attacks were primarily intended to exhibit anti-corporate or antimilitary symbolism. A group calling itself the Armed Resistance Unit detonated a bomb to protest the U.S. invasion of Grenada on the Senate side of the U.S. Capitol building on November 6, 1983. It is possible that the Armed Resistance Unit was in fact the UFF operating under another name. The UFF was broken when its members were arrested in late 1984 and early 1985. Few leftist groups had survived by remaining both underground and active for as long as the UFF.

### **Single-Issue Violence on the Left**

The left has produced violent single-issue groups and individuals who focus on one issue to the exclusion of others. To them, their championed issue is the central point—arguably the political crux—for solving many of the world’s problems. For example, Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, protested the danger of technology by sending and placing bombs that killed 3 people and injured 22 others during a 17-year campaign. Kaczynski did not self-identify as a leftist and was critical of moderate leftists, but his antitechnology campaign hearkened back to the 19th-century class-motivated British Luddites, as well as some anarchist tendencies.

Typical of leftist single-issue extremism is the fringe environmental movement. Groups such as the **Animal Liberation Front (ALF)** and the **Earth Liberation Front (ELF)** have committed numerous acts of violence, such as arson and vandalism, which they refer to as “ecotage.” Their activity profiles are summarized as follows:

- The ALF favors direct action to protest animal abuse, with the objective of saving as many animals as possible. There is no hierarchy within the movement, and they have operated in small groups.
- The ELF was founded in England by activists who split from the environmentalist group Earthfirst! because of its decision to abandon criminal activities. It is potentially more radical than the ALF.

The ALF and ELF have coordinated their activities. Several joint claims have been made about property damage and other acts of vandalism, and it is likely that the two groups share the same personnel. For the most part, both the ALF and ELF have been non-violent toward humans, but they have committed many incidents of property destruction.

ALF and ELF targets include laboratories, facilities where animals are kept, and sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Some of these incidents are vandalism sprees. For example, in one spree near Sacramento, California, in late 2004 and early 2005, several arsons were attempted and trucks and SUVs were vandalized and spray-painted with the initials *ELF*. In another operation in 2003, a group of activists apparently affiliated with the ELF went

on a firebombing and vandalism spree in the San Gabriel Valley east of Los Angeles. About 125 SUVs and other vehicles parked at homes and auto dealerships were burned or damaged. The initials *ELF* were also spray-painted. In the latter operation, a doctoral student attending the California Institute of Technology was found guilty of conspiracy and arson. Other ALF/ELF actions have included the following:

- Destruction of a forest station in Oregon
- Poisoning of Mars candy bars
- Destruction of a University of California, Davis, livestock research laboratory
- Tree “spiking,” which involves pounding metal staves into trees in logging areas; the purpose is to destroy or damage logging equipment.
- The “liberation” of minks in Wisconsin
- Arson at the Vail, Colorado, ski resort

The FBI estimates that the ELF alone has engaged in 1,200 criminal acts and caused about \$100 million in property damage since 1996. In 2001, an ELF fire bomb destroyed the University of Washington’s Center for Urban Horticulture, which was rebuilt at a cost of \$7 million. In one particularly destructive incident in August 2003, the group caused \$50 million in damages to a condominium complex under construction in San Diego, California. The ELF has also targeted suburban property developments, as occurred in 2008 when four luxury homes were burned in a suburb north of Seattle, Washington.

## Right-Wing Extremism in the United States

Extremist tendencies within the modern American right are characterized by self-defined value systems. This tendency is rooted in emerging trends such as antigovernment and evangelical religious activism, as well as in historical cultural trends such as racial supremacy. The following discussion surveys the modern characteristics of these trends, which provide a useful background to contemporary terrorism on the right.

### *Religious Politics and the Christian Right*

The movement commonly termed the **Christian Right** is a mostly Protestant fundamentalist movement that links strict Christian values to political agendas. Its modern origins lie in the conservative political environment of the 1980s. It is not an inherently violent movement, and some activists have practiced variations of **collective nonviolence** and direct action by blockading and protesting at the offices of abortion providers. The ultimate goal of the Christian Right is to make Christian religious values (primarily evangelical Christian values) an integral part of the nation’s social and political framework.

Far- and fringe-right members of the Christian Right have adopted a highly aggressive and confrontational style of activism. One significant aspect of the more **reactionary** tendency within the movement is the promotion of a specifically evangelical Christian agenda, thus rejecting agendas that are secular, non-Christian, or nonfundamentalist Christian.

### *Rise of the Antigovernment Patriots*

The Patriot movement came to prominence during the early 1990s. The movement considers that it represents the true heirs of the ideals of the framers of the U.S.



Constitution. For many Patriots, government in general is not to be trusted, the federal government in particular is to be distrusted, and the United Nations is a dangerous and evil institution. The Patriot movement is not ideologically monolithic, and numerous tendencies have developed, such as the Common Law Courts and Constitutionals. Conspiracy theories abound within the Patriot movement. Some have long and murky origins, having been developed over decades. Others appear and disappear during periods of political or social crisis. Patriots cite evidence that non-American interests are threatening to take over—or have already taken over—key governmental centers of authority. This is part of an international plot to create a one-world government called the **New World Order**.

Chapter Perspective 10.3 summarizes several conspiracy theories from the right.

### CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 10.3

#### Conspiracy Theories on the American Right

The modern far and fringe right have produced a number of conspiracy theories and rumors. Although they may seem fantastic to nonmembers of the Patriot (and other) movements, many adherents of these theories live their lives as if the theories were reality.

#### Communist Invaders During the Cold War

- Rumors “confirmed” that Soviet cavalry units were preparing to invade Alaska across the Bering Strait from Siberia.
- Thousands of Chinese soldiers (perhaps an entire division) had massed in tunnels across the southwestern border of the United States in Mexico.
- Thousands of Viet Cong and Mongolian troops had also massed in Mexico across the borders of Texas and California.

#### The New World Order Replaces the Communist Menace

- Hostile un-American interests (which may already be in power) include the United Nations, international Jewish bankers, the Illuminati, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Trilateral Commission.
- Assuming it is Jewish interests who are in power, the U.S. government has secretly become the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG).
- The government has constructed concentration camps that will be used to intern Patriots and other loyal Americans after their weapons have all been seized (possibly by African American street gangs).
- Invasion coordinates for the New World Order have been secretly stuck to the backs of road signs.
- Sinister symbolism and codes have been found in the Universal Product Code (the bar lines on consumer goods), cleaning products, cereal boxes, and dollar bills (such as the pyramid with the eyeball).

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Sinister technologies exist that will be used when ZOG or the New World Order make their move. These include devices that can alter the weather and scanners that read the plastic strips in American paper currency.

With conspiracy theories as an ideological foundation, many within the Patriot movement organized themselves into citizens' **militias**. Scores were organized during the 1990s, and at their peak an estimated 50,000 Americans were members of more than 800 militias, drawn from 5 to 6 million adherents of the Patriot movement.<sup>10</sup> Some joined to train as weekend soldiers, whereas others organized themselves as paramilitary survivalists.

The potential for political violence from some members of the armed, conspiracy-bound Patriot movement has been cited by experts and law enforcement officials as a genuine threat.

### *Racial Supremacy: An Old Problem With New Beginnings*

The history of racial supremacy in the United States began during the period of African chattel slavery and continued with the policy to remove Native Americans from ancestral lands. The racial dimensions of these practices became norms of the early American nation. After the Civil War and prior to World War II, the United States became a highly segregated country. After World War II, though, the tide turned against overt and unquestioned racial supremacy. Supremacist beliefs, however, continued to win adherents.

Modern organized racial supremacist groups include the modern KKK, neo-Nazi movements, racist skinhead youth gangs, and some adherents of the Neo-Confederate movement. New non-Klan groups came into their own during the 1980s, when supremacist groups created their own mythologies and conspiracy theories. For example, many neo-Nazis considered the novel *The Turner Diaries*<sup>11</sup> a blueprint for the Aryan revolution in America. Also on the racist right, the **Fourteen Words** have become a rallying slogan. Originally coined by David Lane, a convicted member of the terrorist group the Order, the Fourteen Words are: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children." The Fourteen Words have been incorporated into the Aryan Nations' "declaration of independence" for the white race, and the slogan is often represented by simply writing or tattooing.

### *Racial Mysticism*

Neofascist movements and political parties in Europe are decidedly secular. They reference religion and the organized Christian church only to support their political agendas; they do not adopt Christian or cult-like mystical doctrines to justify their legitimacy. In the United States, members of far- and fringe-right movements frequently justify their claims of racial supremacy and cultural purity by referencing underlying spiritual values—essentially claiming that they have a racial mandate from God. Racial supremacists in particular have developed mystical foundations for their belief systems, many of which are cult-like. Two of these cultish doctrines follow.

*The Creativity Movement.* **Creativity** is premised on a rejection of the white race's reliance on Christianity, which adherents believe Jews created in a conspiracy to enslave whites. According to movement adherents, the White race itself should be worshipped.

*Ásatrú.* A neopagan movement, **Ásatrú** venerates the pantheon of ancient Norse (Scandinavian) religions. In its most basic form, which is not racial in conviction, **Ásatrú** adherents worship the Norse pantheon of Odin, Thor, Freyr, Loki, and others. A minority of **Ásatrú** believers has adopted an activist and racist belief system, linking variants of Nazi ideology and racial supremacy to the Nordic pantheon.

#### *Race and the Bible: The Christian Identity Creation Myth*

**Christian Identity** is the Americanized strain of an 18th-century quasi-religious doctrine called **Anglo-Israelism** developed by Richard Brothers. Believers hold that whites are descended from Adam and are the true chosen people of God, that Jews are biologically descended from Satan, and that non-whites are soulless beasts, also called the **Mud People**. Christian Identity adherents have developed two cultish creation stories loosely based on the Old Testament. The theories are called **One-Seedline Christian Identity** and **Two-Seedline Christian Identity**.

One-Seedline Identity accepts that all humans regardless of race are descended from Adam. However, only Aryans (defined as northern Europeans) are the true elect of God. Two-Seedline Identity rejects the notion that all humans are descended from Adam. Instead, their focus is on the progeny of Eve. Two-Seedline adherents believe that Eve bore Abel as Adam's son but Cain as the son of the Serpent (that is, the devil). Outside of the Garden of Eden lived non-white, soulless beasts who are a separate species from humans. They are the modern non-white races of the world and are often referred to by Identity believers as Mud People. When Cain slew Abel, he was cast out of the Garden to live among the soulless beasts. Those who became the descendants of Cain are the modern Jews.

Chapter Perspective 10.4 summarizes several examples of racial supremacist activity on the right in the modern era. These examples illustrate how potentially violent members of the right wing can find organizations to provide direction and structure for their underlying animosity toward target groups.

### CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 10.4

#### **Seeds of Terrorism: Reactionaries on the American Right**

Three reactionary case studies are discussed here—**White Aryan Resistance** (WAR), **Aryan Nations**, and the National Alliance. Each group has directly or indirectly influenced activists on the racial supremacist right.

#### **White Aryan Resistance**

White Aryan Resistance is an overtly racist organization founded and led by Tom Metzger. Based in California, WAR publishes neo-Nazi propaganda, manages an active Web site, and has tried to recruit and organize racist skinheads. Implicit in its message is the notion that skinheads should be mobilized as Aryan shock troops in the coming Racial Holy War. WAR has used popular

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culture and music to appeal to potential skinhead recruits, and its Web site is largely marketed to racist youth. In October 1990, WAR lost a \$12.8 million verdict after the Southern Poverty Law Center litigated a case on behalf of the family of an Ethiopian immigrant who was beaten to death by WAR-inspired racist skinheads.

### Aryan Nations

The “Reverend” **Richard Butler** established the Aryan Nations organization as a political counterpart to his Christian Identity sect, called the Church of Jesus Christ Christian. Aryan Nations established its spiritual and political headquarters in a compound at Hayden Lakes, Idaho. Residents of the compound were overtly neo-Nazi. They adopted a rank hierarchy, established an armed security force, trained as survivalists, worshipped as Identity believers, and took to wearing uniforms. A number of people who passed through the Aryan Nations group eventually engaged in political and racial violence, a pattern that included violence by the Order and **Buford Oneal Furrow**. This pattern led to its financial ruin. In a celebrated lawsuit brought by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Aryan Nations lost its title to the Hayden Lakes property in September 2000 when a \$6.3 million verdict was decided. During the trial, the Southern Poverty Law Center successfully linked Aryan Nations security guards to the terrorizing of a family who had driven to the compound’s entrance.

### National Alliance

The **National Alliance** is historically linked to the now-defunct American Nazi Party, which had been founded and led by George Lincoln Rockwell. **William Pierce**, the founder and leader of the National Alliance, was long considered by experts and members of the neo-Nazi movement to be the most prominent propagandist of the movement. Before his death in July 2002, Pierce wrote *The Turner Diaries* (under the nom de plume Andrew MacDonald), published a magazine called the *National Vanguard*, made regular radio broadcasts, and managed an active Web site. The National Alliance’s original headquarters is a compound in rural Hillsboro, West Virginia, where Pierce’s followers try to carry on his tradition. Although some violent neo-Nazis or other reactionaries may have been inspired by the National Alliance’s message (recall that *The Turner Diaries* was found in the possession of Timothy McVeigh), no acts of terrorism or **hate crimes** were directly linked to the original group.

### Postscript: Aryan Nations and National Alliance in Disarray

Two of the most active and influential neo-Nazi organizations were thrown into disarray when their founders and longtime leaders died in the early years of the new millennium. National Alliance’s William Pierce died in July 2002, and Aryan Nations’ Richard Butler died in September 2004. With the deaths of these leaders, both organizations engaged in bitter infighting over who would assume leadership and whose ideology most reflected the ideologies of the founding leaders. The infighting led to splits within the organizations, factions claiming to be the heirs of the original groups formed, and membership declined.

## Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States

Right-wing terrorism in the United States is usually motivated by racial supremacist and antigovernment sentiment. Unlike the violent left, terrorist campaigns by underground rightist organizations and networks have been rare, as have massive bombings such as the Oklahoma City attack. It is more common for the right to be characterized by small-scale, cell-based conspiracies within the Patriot and neo-Nazi movements. In comparison with the left, the violent right has been less organized and less consistent.

The following discussion explores the terrorist right by investigating the following subjects:

• Homegrown racism: the legacy	• Patriot threats of the Ku Klux Klan
• Racial mysticism: neo-Nazi terrorism	• Case: moralist terrorism



❖ **PHOTO 10.4** Communal terrorism in America. The lynchings of Tommy Shipp and Abe Smith in Marion, Indiana, on August 7, 1930. The crowd is in a festive mood, including the young couple holding hands in the foreground.

## Homegrown Racism: The Legacy of the Ku Klux Klan

The Ku Klux Klan is a racist movement with no counterpart among international right-wing movements—it is a purely American phenomenon. Its name comes from the Greek word *kuclos*, or circle. The KKK is best described as an enduring movement that developed the following ideology:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial supremacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violent assertion of Klan racial doctrine</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protestant Christian supremacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritualistic symbolism, greetings, and fraternal behavior</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American cultural nationalism and fraternal behavior (also known as <b>nativism</b>)</li> </ul>	

Klan terminology in many ways is an exercise in racist secret fraternal bonding. Table 10.3 samples the exotic language of the KKK.

There have been several manifestations of the KKK, which most experts divide into five eras.

❖ **TABLE 10.3** The Fraternal Klan

From its inception in 1866, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) has used fraternity-like greetings, symbolism, and rituals. These behaviors promote secrecy and racial bonding within the organization. Examples of Klan language include the following greeting: *Ayak?* (Are you a Klansman?), and *Akia!* (A Klansman I am!). The language used for regional offices is also unique, as indicated in the following examples:

- Invisible Empire—national
- Realm—state
- Klavern—local

Klan official identification	Duties	Scope of authority	Symbolic
Imperial Wizard	National leader	Invisible Empire	Blue stripes or robe
Grand Dragon	State leader	Realm	Green stripes or robe
Exalted Cyclops	County leader	Klaverns within county	Orange stripes or robe
Nighthawk	Local security and administration	Klavern	Black robe
Klonsel	General counsel	Invisible Empire	White robe
Citizen	Member	Klan faction	White robe

### First-Era Klan

The KKK was founded in 1866 in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War. Some sources date its origin to Christmas Eve 1865, whereas others cite 1866. According to most sources, the KKK was first convened in Pulaski, Tennessee, by a group of Southerners who initially formed the group as a fraternal association. Their first Imperial Wizard, or national leader, was former Confederate general and slave trader Nathan Bedford Forrest. Military-style rankings were established, and by 1868 the KKK was a secretive and politically violent underground. Its targets included African Americans, Northerners, and southern collaborators. The KKK was suppressed by the Union Army and the anti-Klan Ku Klux laws passed by Congress. Forrest ordered the KKK to be officially disbanded, and their robes and regalia were ceremoniously burned. It has been estimated that the Klan had about 400,000 members during its first incarnation.

### Second-Era Klan

After the Reconstruction era, that is, after the departure of the Union Army from the South and the end of martial law, the KKK re-formed into new secret societies and fraternal groups. It wielded a great deal of political influence and successfully helped restore racial supremacy and segregation in the South. African Americans lost most political and social rights during this period, beginning a condition of racial subjugation that did not end until the civil rights movement in the mid-20th century. The targets of Klan violence during this period were African Americans, immigrants, Catholics, and Jews.

### Third-Era Klan

During the early part of the 20th century, and continuing into the 1920s, the KKK became a broad-based national movement. In 1915, members gathered at Stone Mountain, Georgia, and formed a movement known as the Invisible Empire. The Klan was glorified in the novel *The Clansman* and in the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, which was shown in the White House during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. During this period, the Invisible Empire had between 3 and 4 million members. In 1925 in Washington, DC, 45,000 Klansmen and Klanswomen paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue. Also during this period, Klan and Klan-inspired violence was widespread. Thousands of people—mostly African Americans—were victimized by the KKK. Many acts of terrorism were ritualistic communal lynchings.

### Fourth-Era Klan

After a decline because of revelations about Third-Era violence and corruption, the Klan was reinvigorated in 1946—once again at Stone Mountain, Georgia. At this gathering, the Invisible Empire disbanded, and new independent Klans were organized at local and regional levels. There was no longer a single national Klan, but rather autonomous Klan factions. During the civil rights movement, some Klan factions became extremely violent. The White Knights of Mississippi and the United Klans of America (mostly in Alabama) committed numerous acts of terrorism to try to halt progress toward racial equality in the American South. This era ended after several successful federal prosecutions on criminal civil rights charges, though the Klan itself endured.

### *Fifth-Era Klan*

Violence during the Fifth Era has been committed by lone wolves rather than as organized Klan action. The modern era of the Ku Klux Klan is characterized by two trends:

*The Moderate Klan.* Some Klansmen and Klanswomen have tried to moderate their image by adopting more mainstream symbolism and rhetoric. Rather than advocating violence or paramilitary activity, they have projected an image of law-abiding activists working on behalf of white civil rights and good moral values. Those who promote this trend have eschewed the prominent display of Klan regalia and symbols.

*The Purist Klan.* A traditional and “pure” Klan has emerged that harkens back to the original traditions and ideology of the KKK. This group has held a number of aggressive and vitriolic rallies—many in public at county government buildings. Its rhetoric is unapologetically racist and confrontational. Some factions of the purist trend prohibit the display of Nazi swastikas or other non-Klan racist symbols at KKK gatherings.

KKK membership has ebbed and flowed in the Fifth Era, in part because of competition from other racial supremacist movements, such as the racist skinhead and neo-Nazi groups. There was also fresh competition beginning in the late 1990s from the neo-Confederate movement.

### **Racial Mysticism: Neo-Nazi Terrorism**

In the modern era, most non-Klan terrorism on the right wing has come from the neo-Nazi movement. Neo-Nazi terrorism is predicated on varying mixes of religious fanaticism, political violence, and racial supremacy. Their worldview is predicated on the superiority of the Aryan race, the inferiority of non-Aryans, and the need to confront an evil global Jewish conspiracy. Another common theme is the belief that a **racial holy war**—called **Rahowa**—is inevitable.

Although most violence emanating from these beliefs has been expressed as lone-wolf terrorism and hate crimes, several groups have embarked on violent sprees. For example, a group calling itself the **Aryan Republican Army (ARA)** operated in the Midwest from 1994 to 1996.<sup>12</sup>

### *The Order*

**The Order** was a covert, underground, and violent group that was inspired by a fictional secret organization depicted in the novel *The Turner Diaries*. In the book, the Order was a heroic inner circle and vanguard for the Aryan revolution in the United States. **Robert Jay Mathews**, a racial supremacist activist, was the founder of the actual Order in 1983.

The Order’s methods for fighting the war against the Zionist Occupation Government were counterfeiting, bank robberies, armored car robberies, and occasional murders.<sup>13</sup> Its area of operation was primarily in the Pacific Northwest. In April 1984, the group bombed a synagogue in Boise, Idaho. In March 1984, members of the Order seized \$500,000 from a parked armored car in Seattle; the



group detonated a bomb at a theater as a diversion. In June 1984, Alan Berg, a Jewish talk-radio host, was murdered in Denver; he had regularly lambasted the neo-Nazi movement. Also in June, a Brinks armored car was robbed near Ukiah, California, with disciplined precision, and the Order made off with \$3.6 million. The end of the Order came when more than 20 of its members were prosecuted and imprisoned in December 1985.



❖ **PHOTO 10.5** Oklahoma City. The rubble of the Murrah federal building in the aftermath of a bomb attack by right-wing members of the Patriot movement. This was the worst terrorist incident on American soil prior to the September 11 homeland attack. It remains the worst incident of domestic terrorism carried out by Americans.

### Patriot Threats

Although the Patriot movement attracted a significant number of adherents during the 1990s, and militias at one point recruited tens of thousands of members, no underground similar to that of the radical left was formed. Few terrorist movements or groups splintered from the Patriot movement. Thus, despite many implicit and explicit threats of armed violence from Patriots, terrorist conspiracies were rarely carried to completion.

In 1992, former KKK member Louis Beam began to publicly advocate **leaderless resistance** against the U.S. government. Leaderless resistance is a cell-based strategy based on forming **phantom cells** to wage war against the government and enemy interests. Dedicated Patriots and neo-Nazis believe that leaderless resistance and the

creation of phantom cells will prevent infiltration from federal agencies. The chief threat of violence came from the armed militias, which peaked in membership immediately before and after the Oklahoma City bombing. In the wake of that incident, federal authorities broke up at least 25 Patriot conspiracies.

The number of militias declined between the April 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the attacks of September 11, 2001.<sup>14</sup> By 2000, the number of Patriot organizations was only one fourth of the 1996 peak,<sup>15</sup> and this decline continued after September 11, 2001.<sup>16</sup> Experts have noted, however, that the most militant and committed Patriot adherents remain within the movement and that these dedicated members constitute a core of potentially violent true believers.

### Case in Point: Moralistic Terrorism

Moralistic terrorism refers to acts of political violence that are motivated by a moralistic worldview. Most moralistic terrorism in the United States is motivated by an underlying religious doctrine, and this is usually a fringe interpretation of Christianity. Abortion clinics and gay bars have been targets of moralistic violence.

Examples of moralistic terrorism and threats against abortion providers include the following incidents:

- June and December 1984: An abortion clinic was bombed twice in Pensacola, Florida.
- March 1993: A physician was shot and killed outside an abortion clinic in Pensacola.
- July 1994: A physician and his bodyguard were killed outside an abortion clinic in Pensacola.
- October 1997: A physician was wounded by shrapnel in Rochester, New York.
- October 1998: A physician was killed in Amherst, New York.
- 1998–2000: Scores of letters with notes claiming to be infected with anthrax bacteria were sent to abortion clinics in at least 16 states.
- Post–September 11, 2001: During the actual anthrax attacks in the period following the homeland attacks, scores of letters were sent to abortion clinics in a number of states claiming to be infected with anthrax.

Examples of violent moralistic movements include the **Army of God** and the **Phineas Priesthood**. They are both shadowy movements that apparently have little or no organizational structure, operate as lone wolves or cells, and answer to the “higher power” of their interpretations of God’s will. They seem to be belief systems in which like-minded activists engage in similar behavior. The Phineas Priesthood is apparently a “calling” (divine revelation) for Christian Identity fundamentalists, and the Army of God membership is perhaps derived from fringe evangelical Christian fundamentalists. These profiles are speculative, and it is possible that they are simply manifestations of terrorist contagion (copycatting). There has also been speculation that both movements are linked. Nevertheless, it is instructive to review their activity profiles.

#### *Army of God*

The Army of God is a cell-based and lone-wolf movement that opposes abortion and homosexuality. Its ideology is apparently a fringe interpretation of fundamentalist

Protestantism, although it has also exhibited racial supremacist tendencies. The methodology of the Army of God has included the use of violence and intimidation—primarily in attacks against abortion providers and gay and lesbian targets. The Army of God posted a Web site with biblical references and grisly pictures of abortions, and the manifesto disseminated by the group included instructions for manufacturing bombs.

The Army of God first appeared in 1982 when an Illinois abortion provider and his wife were kidnapped by members of the group. It has since claimed responsibility for a number of attacks, primarily against abortion providers.

- February 1984: A clinic in Norfolk, Virginia, where abortions were performed was firebombed.
- February 1984: A clinic in Prince George's County, Maryland, where abortions were performed was firebombed.
- July 1994: Paul Hill, an antiabortion activist, shot and killed a physician and his bodyguard, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, in Pensacola, Florida. Hill was executed by lethal injection in September 2003. He was the first person to be executed for antiabortion violence.
- January 1997: A clinic in Atlanta, Georgia, where abortions were performed was bombed.
- February 1997: A nightclub in Atlanta was bombed. Its patrons were largely gays and lesbians.
- January 1998: An abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, killing a police officer and severely wounding a nurse.

One apparent affiliate of the Army of God—**Eric Robert Rudolph**—became a fugitive after he was named as a suspect in the Birmingham bombing and the Atlanta bombings. Rudolph was also wanted for questioning for possible involvement in the July 1996 bombing at Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta during the Summer Olympic Games and was linked to a militia group in North Carolina. He was captured in May 2003 in the mountains of North Carolina. In April 2005, Rudolph pleaded guilty to the Birmingham and Atlanta bombings, as well as the Centennial Olympic Park attack.

### **Phineas Priesthood**

Phineas Priests were first described in the 1990 book *Vigilantes of Christendom: The History of the Phineas Priesthood*.<sup>17</sup> The book is a fundamentalist interpretation of Christian Identity. In the book, the alleged history of the Phineas Priesthood is traced from biblical times to the modern era. The name is taken from the Bible at chapter 25, verse 6 of the Book of Numbers, which tells the story of a Hebrew man named Phineas who killed an Israelite man and his Midianite wife in the temple. According to the Book of Numbers, this act stayed the plague from the people of Israel.

Phineas Priests believe that they are called by God to purify their race and Christianity. They are opposed to abortion, homosexuality, interracial mixing, and whites who “degrade” white racial supremacy. Members also believe that acts of violence—called **Phineas Actions**—will hasten the ascendancy of the Aryan race. It

is important to note that the Phineas Priesthood is a calling for men only, so no women can become Phineas Priests. The calling also requires an absolute and fundamentalist commitment to Christian Identity mysticism. Some acts of political violence have been inspired by this doctrine. These incidents include the following:

- In 1991, Walter Elijah Thody was arrested in Oklahoma after a shootout and chase. Thody claimed to be a Phineas Priest and stated that fellow believers would also commit acts of violence against Jews and others.
- In 1993, Timothy McVeigh apparently “made offhand references to the Phineas Priesthood” to his sister.<sup>18</sup>
- From 1994 to 1996, the Aryan Republican Army robbed 22 banks throughout the Midwest. Members of the ARA had been influenced by *Vigilantes of Christendom* and the concept of the Phineas Priesthood.<sup>19</sup>
- In October 1996, three Phineas Priests were charged with bank robberies and bombings in Washington State. They had left political diatribes in notes at the scenes of two of their robberies. The notes included their symbol, “25:6,” which denotes chapter 25, verse 6 of the Book of Numbers.

Because the Phineas Priesthood has been a lone-wolf and cell-based phenomenon, it is impossible to estimate its size or even whether it has ever been much more than an example of the contagion effect. Nevertheless, the fact is that a few true believers have considered themselves to be members of the Phineas Priesthood, and the concept of Phineas Actions was taken up by some adherents of the moralist and racial supremacist right.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter investigated domestic political violence in the United States, the sources of which were identified as extremist tendencies that grew out of movements and cultural histories.

On the left, modern terrorism originated in the social and political fervor of the 1960s and 1970s. Some members of activist movements became radicalized by their experiences within this environment. A few became dedicated revolutionaries and chose to engage in terrorist violence. Members of New Left and nationalist terrorist groups waged terrorist campaigns until the mid-1980s. Single-issue and nascent anarchist tendencies have replaced the now-defunct Marxist and nationalist movements on the left.

On the right, the long history of racial violence continued into the 21st century. The Ku Klux Klan is a uniquely American racist movement that has progressed through five eras, with terrorist violence occurring in each. Modern Klansmen and -women, neo-Nazis, and moralists have also engaged in terrorist violence. Threats of potential political violence come from antigovernment movements and emerging “heritage” movements. The activity profile of the modern era is primarily either lone wolf or cell based. It has become rare for racial supremacist and moralist terrorists to act as members of established organizations.

**DISCUSSION BOX**

*This chapter's Discussion Box is intended to stimulate critical debate about the idiosyncratic nature of domestic terrorism in the United States.*

**Domestic Terrorism in the American Context**

The subject of domestic terrorism in the United States is arguably a study in idiosyncratic political violence. Indigenous terrorist groups reflected the American political and social environments during historical periods when extremists chose to engage in political violence.

In the modern era, left-wing and right-wing political violence grew from very different circumstances. Leftist violence evolved from a uniquely American social environment that produced the civil rights, Black Power, and New Left movements. Rightist violence grew out of a combination of historical racial and nativist animosity, combined with modern applications of religious and antigovernment ideologies.

In the early years of the new millennium, threats from right-wing antigovernment and racial supremacist extremists continued. Potential violence from leftist extremists remained low in comparison. When the September 11 attacks created a new security environment, the question of terrorism originating from domestic sources remained uncertain; this was especially true after the anthrax attacks on the East Coast.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Assume that a nascent anarchist movement continues in its opposition to globalism. How should the modern leftist movement be described? What is the potential for violence originating from modern extremists on the left?
2. Keeping in mind the many conspiracy and mystical beliefs of the American right, what is the potential for violence from adherents of these theories to the modern American environment?
3. As a matter of policy, how closely should hate and antigovernment groups be monitored? What restrictions should be imposed on their activities? Why?
4. Is the American activity profile truly an idiosyncratic profile, or can it be compared with other nations' environments? If so, how? If not, why not?
5. What is the likelihood that the new millennium will witness a resurgence of a rightist movement on the scale of the 1990s Patriot movement? What trends indicate that it will occur? What trends indicate that it will not occur?

## KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The following topics were discussed in this chapter and can be found in the glossary:

Anglo-Israelism	Establishment, the	<i>Osawatomie</i>
Animal Liberation Front (ALF)	Fourteen Words	People's Temple of the Disciples of Christ
Armed Forces for National Liberation (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional, or FALN)	Furrow, Buford Oneal	Phantom cell
Army of God	Hate crimes	Phineas Actions
Aryan Nations	Jones, Jim	Phineas Priesthood
Aryan Republican Army (ARA)	Kerner Commission	Pierce, William
Ásatrú	Ku Klux Klan (KKK)	Port Huron Statement
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh	Kuclos	<i>Prairie Fire</i>
Black Liberation Army (BLA)	Leaderless resistance	Progressive Labor Party
Black Panther Party for Self-Defense	Long hot summer	Racial holy war (Rahowa)
Black Power	Mathews, Robert Jay	Rajneeshees
Black Pride	May 19 Communist Organization (M19CO) (Revolutionary Fighting Group, Armed Resistance Unit)	Reactionary
Butler, Richard	Meredith, James	Republic of New Africa
Carmichael, Stokely	Militia	Revolutionary Youth Movement II
Christian Identity	Mitchell, Hulon, Jr.	Rudolph, Eric Robert
Christian Right	Mud People	Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit
Cinque	National Alliance	Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)
Collective nonviolence	Nativism	<i>Turner Diaries, The</i>
Counterculture	New African Freedom Fighters	Two-Seedline Christian Identity
Creativity	New Left	United Freedom Front (UFF)
Days of Rage	New World Liberation Front	Weather Bureau
DeFreeze, Donald	New World Order	Weather Underground Organization
Direct action	One-Seedline Christian Identity	Weathermen
Earth Liberation Front (ELF)	Order, the	White Aryan Resistance

## RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

The following Web sites provide information about extremist movements and ideologies in the United States.

Animal Liberation Front: <http://www.animalliberationfront.com/>

Council of Conservative Citizens: <http://cofcc.org/>

Hate Directory: <http://www.hatedirectory.com/>

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee: [www.prairiefire.org](http://www.prairiefire.org)

Revolutionary Communist Party, USA: <http://www.rwor.org/>

White Revolution: [www.whiterevolution.com/](http://www.whiterevolution.com/)

## TERRORISM ON THE WEB

Log on to the Web-based student study site at <http://www.sagepub.com/martinstudy> for additional Web sources and study resources.

## WEB EXERCISE

Using this chapter's recommended Web sites, conduct an online investigation of terrorism in the United States.

1. How would you describe the typologies of groups that predominate in the United States?
2. Conduct a Web search of American monitoring organizations, read their mission statements, and assess their services. Which organizations do you think provide the most useful data? Why?
3. If you were an American dissident extremist (leftist or rightist), how would you design your own Web site?

For an online search of terrorism in the United States, readers should activate the search engine on their Web browsers and enter the following keywords:

“Homeland Security”

“Domestic Terrorism”

**RECOMMENDED READINGS**

The following publications discuss the nature of terrorism in the United States and the root causes of political violence in American society.

- Dunbar, David, and Brad Reagan, eds. *Debunking 9/11 Myths: Why Conspiracy Theories Can't Stand Up to the Facts*. New York: Hearst Books, 2006.
- Emerson, Steven. *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us*. New York: Free Press, 2002.
- George, John, and Laird Wilcox. *American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communists, and Others*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1996.
- German, Mike. *Thinking Like a Terrorist: Insights of a Former FBI Undercover Agent*. Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007.
- MacDonald, Andrew. *The Turner Diaries*. New York: Barricade, 1978.
- McCann, Joseph T. *Terrorism on American Soil: A Concise History of Plots and Perpetrators from the Famous to the Forgotten*. Boulder, CO: Sentient Publications, 2006.
- McCarthy, Timothy Patrick, and John McMillian. *The Radical Reader: A Documentary History of the American Radical Tradition*. New York: New Press, 2003.
- Michel, Lou, and Dan Herbeck. *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh & the Oklahoma City Bombing*. New York: ReganBooks, 2001.
- Ridgeway, James. *Blood in the Face: The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads, and the Rise of a New White Culture*. New York: Thunder's Mouth, 1990.
- Ronczkowski, Michael. *Terrorism and Organized Hate Crime: Intelligence Gathering, Analysis, and Investigations*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2004.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower, ed. *Extremism in America: A Reader*. New York: New York University Press, 1995.
- Smith, Brent L. *Terrorism in America: Pipe Bombs and Pipe Dreams*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- Stern, Kenneth S. *A Force Upon the Plain: The American Militia Movement and the Politics of Hate*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Zakin, Susan. *Coyotes and Town Dogs: Earth First! and the Environmental Movement*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002.