



What is Terrorism? Who are the Terrorists?

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Handout for use with the article "Whose Terrorism?"

Instructions: Based on the definitions of terrorism that your group came up with, decide 1. which of the situations below are "terrorism;" 2. who are the "terrorists" in the situation; and 3. what additional information you would need to know to be more sure of your answers. All the situations below are true, but the names of countries and peoples have been changed. - It may help your group to make a diagram of some of the situations.

Situations:

1. Soldiers from the country of Marak surround a refugee camp made up of people from the country of Bragan. The refugee camp is crowded and the people there are extremely poor. Most of the Bragan people in the refugee camp hate the army of Marak, believing that Marak has invaded Bragan, has taken all the best land and resources for themselves, and treats people from Bragan very poorly. Young men in the refugee camp sometimes fire guns at the soldiers.

According to an eyewitness, a reporter from *The New York Times*, Marak soldiers use loudspeakers to call insults into the refugee camp - in the Bragan language. Over the loudspeakers, soldiers shout obscenities and things like, "Son of a whore!" They dare young Bragan boys - sometimes as young as ten or eleven - to come out near the electric fence that separates the refugee camp from a wealthy settlement of Marak citizens. When the boys and young men go near the fence to throw stones or yell at the Marak soldiers, the soldiers use silencers and fire on the boys with live ammunition, often killing or maiming them. In an article, *The New York Times* reporter was horrified by what he witnessed. He wrote: "Children have been shot in other conflicts I have covered - death squads gunned them down in El Salvador and Guatemala, mothers with infants were lined up and massacred in Algeria, and Serb snipers put children in their sights and watched them crumple onto the pavement in Sarajevo - but I have never before watched soldiers entice children like mice into a trap and murder them for sport." The government of Marak clearly knows about the behavior of their soldiers and does nothing to stop them. Indeed, Marak soldiers so regularly taunt citizens of Bragan, that this behavior appears to be the policy of the Marak government. One additional fact: Every year, Marak is given enormous amounts of money and military equipment by the country of Bolaire, which is aware of how these are used by Marak.

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2. Farmers from the country of Belveron are angry at their own government and at a corporation from the country of Paradar. The Belveron government has allowed the Paradar corporation to plant "test" crops of genetically-engineered cotton. The genetically-engineered crops produce their own pesticide. Many Belveron farmers worry that the genetically-engineered crops will pollute their crops - as has happened many times in other countries - and will lead to a breed of super-pests that will be immune to chemical pesticides and also to the organic pest control methods many poor farmers use. Without growing and selling cotton, the farmers have no way to feed their families. Belveron farmers also believe that the Paradar corporation does not really care about them, but they instead care only for their own profit. They believe that the corporation wants to get Belveron farmers "addicted" to genetically-engineered cotton seeds - which the corporation has patented - so that the corporation will have a monopoly. Belveron farmers further point out that the corporation has not told farmers that the "tests" on their land may be risky, and could pollute their non-genetically-engineered cotton crops.

Belveron farmers have announced that they will burn to the ground all the genetically-engineered cotton crops. They hope to drive the Paradar corporation out of Belveron. Belveron farmers have also threatened that they may destroy the offices of the Paradar corporation.

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3. The army of Kalimo has invaded the country of Iona, next door. There are a number of refugee camps in Iona with thousands of people living in them. The refugees themselves lost their homes many years before - some in wars with Kalimo, others were forced out of their homes by Kalimo. The area around the refugee camps is controlled by the Kalimo army. The commander of the Kalimo army sealed off the refugee camps and allowed militias from Iona, who are hostile to the refugees, to enter two refugee camps and slaughter hundreds of people. The killing went on for 40 hours. At least 1800 people were murdered, perhaps more. One additional fact: The army of Kalimo receives a great deal of military aid from the country of Terramar. Terramar learned of the massacre of the refugees in Iona, but did not halt military aid to Kalimo.

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4. A corporation based in the country of Menin has a chemical factory located in the much poorer country of Pungor. One night, huge amounts of poisonous gases from the factory begin spewing out into the area around the factory. Nobody outside the factory was warned because someone in the company had turned off the safety siren. Not until the gas was upon residents in their beds, searing their eyes, filling their mouths and lungs, did the communities surrounding the factory know of their danger. According to one report: "Gasping for breath and near blind, people stampeded into narrow alleys. In the mayhem children were torn from the hands of their mothers, never to see them again. Those who still could were screaming. Some were wracked with seizures and fell under trampling feet. Some, stumbling in a sea of gas, their lungs on fire, were drowned in their own bodily fluids." No one knows how many people died, but perhaps as many as 6,000 that night and in the years after, more than 10,000.

The corporation had begun a cost-cutting drive prior to the disaster: lowering training periods for operatives, using low-cost materials, adopting hazardous operating procedures, cutting the number of operatives in half. A confidential company audit prior to the accident had identified 61 hazards. Nothing was done.

After the tragedy, the corporation concentrated on avoiding liability, sending in its legal team days before a medical team. Company officials lied about the poisonous nature of the chemicals at the plant. To this day the corporation refuses to disclose medical information on the leaked gases, maintaining it to be a "trade secret". The company did pay some of the victims' families. On average, victims received less than \$350 from the company - a total loss of 48 cents per share of company stock.

Conditions in this Pungor community are still hazardous: soil and water are still heavily contaminated. Mercury has been found at between 20,000 to six million times the expected levels. In this community, the rate of stillborn infants is three times the national average of Pungor; infant mortality is twice as high as the national average.

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5. The government of Tobian is very unhappy with the government of Ambar, whose leaders came to power in a revolution that threw out the former Ambar dictator. Tobian decides to overthrow the new leaders of Ambar. They begin funding a guerrilla army that will attack Ambar from another country next door. So Tobian builds army bases in the next door country and allows the guerrilla army to use its bases. Almost all of the weapons and supplies of the guerrilla army are supplied by Tobian. The guerrillas generally try to avoid fighting the army of Ambar. Instead they attack clinics, schools,

cooperative farms. Sometimes they mine the roads. Many, many civilians are killed and maimed by the Tobian-supported guerrillas. The guerrillas raid into Ambar and then retreat into the country next door where Tobian has military bases.

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6. Simultaneously, the embassies of the country of Anza in two other countries were bombed. In one country, 213 people were killed and over 1,000 injured; in the other, 11 people were killed and at least 70 injured. In retaliation, about three weeks later, Anza launched missiles at the capital city of Baltus, destroying a pharmaceutical factory and injuring at least ten people, and killing one. Anza claimed that this factory was manufacturing chemicals that could be used to make VX nerve gas - although Anza offered no substantial proof of this claim. Anza also claimed that a prominent individual who they link to the embassy bombings was connected to the pharmaceutical factory, although they provided no evidence of this claim, either - and a great deal of evidence exists to prove that there is no link. Baltus pointed out that two years earlier they expelled the prominent individual, and vigorously denied that the pharmaceutical plant was producing nerve gas agents. They said that this was an important factory, producing 70% of the needed medicines for the people of Baltus - including vital medicines to treat malaria and tuberculosis. They allowed journalists and other diplomats to visit the factory to verify that no chemical weapons were being produced there. Journalists and others who visited the factory agreed that the destroyed factory appeared to be producing only medicines. It is not known how many people may have died in Baltus for lack of the medicines that were being produced in that factory. Anza blocked the United Nations from launching the investigation demanded by Baltus.

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7. At least one million people in the country of Lukin are infected with HIV/AIDS. Between 1991 and 2001, 700,000 people died of AIDS in Lukin. Currently, about 300 people die each day of AIDS-related causes. Largely because of the HIV/AIDS crisis, life expectancy in Lukin is expected to drop from 43 to 33 years, a level last experienced in Europe in medieval times. AIDS could be controlled with a combination of drugs, frequently called a drug "cocktail," including AZT. However, given current drug prices, this could cost as much as \$18,000 a year per patient.

This year, Lukin will pay \$174 million in *interest payments* on its debt - most of which will go to two large international banks. This debt was incurred many years ago, by a different government than the current one. The loans were pushed by banks, who had huge amounts of money to loan because oil producing countries had deposited so much of their revenue. As one observer put it, "The banks were hot to get in. All the banks . . . stepped forward. They showed no foresight. They didn't do any credit analysis. It was wild." Loans benefited mostly bankers and the rich of Lukin. However, most people in Lukin are poor - the gross national product (GNP) per capita is \$350. The \$174 million in interest payments is more than the money Lukin will spend on health care and education *combined*. Money that could go to pay for AIDS prevention and therapies for people with AIDS instead is being sent to banks in so-called developed countries.

The international banks know about the dire health situation in Lukin. They have allowed Lukin to postpone some debts - but only after Lukin agreed to certain conditions set by the banks that gave the banks greater control over Lukin's economy, for example requiring Lukin to sell its national bank to private investors. Still, so long as the banks force Lukin to pay interest on its debts, there is no way Lukin can deal effectively with the AIDS crisis. 300 people a day continue to die.

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8. Led by the country of Lomandia, the United Nations waged a war against the country of Moretta, saying that Moretta illegally invaded another nearby country. After Moretta's army was defeated and removed from the country they'd invaded, Lomandia pushed for "sanctions" against Moretta, until

Moretta proves that it is not engaged in a program to produce "weapons of mass destruction," like nuclear bombs or poison gas. The sanctions meant that Moretta was not allowed to buy or sell almost anything from other countries in the world. Moretta cannot get spare parts to repair water purification plants damaged by bombing during the war. It cannot get medicines and spare parts for medical equipment. Moretta claims that it has allowed inspections from the United Nations, but Lomandia says that it has not. According to the United Nations perhaps a half a million children have died as a result of the sanctions. Documents from Lomandia show that it knew that Moretta civilians were dying as a result of water-borne diseases. When asked in a television interview about the reports of massive numbers of civilian deaths - perhaps as many as a million people over several years - a high government official from Lomandia said: "It's worth it."

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9. Bartavia is considered by many to be one of the most repressive countries in the world, especially if you are not white. Only whites can vote, only whites can travel freely, only whites can live where they like. Most whites live comfortably, even luxuriously. Conditions for people who are not white are some of the worst in the world. Bartavia imprisons people who organize for change. Torture is widespread. Over the years, there have been numerous massacres of non-white Bartavia civilians - sometimes of young children. The main organizations working for change in Bartavia have asked the world not to invest money in Bartavia and not to have economic or cultural relations with the country until it commits itself to change. Nonetheless, many countries continue to do business with Bartavia. One in particular, Sarino, has allowed its corporations to increase their investments in Bartavia from \$150 million to \$2.5 billion - all this during a period of tremendous violence and discrimination. Who knows how many thousands of people have been killed - through guns or poverty - as a result of Sarino's actions.

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10. The Sport-King corporation produces athletic equipment sold all over the world. Although the headquarters of Sport-King is in the country of Morcosas, all of its products are manufactured in other countries. Sport-King contracts with sub-contractors to make its products. Over 500,000 people, mostly women, work for these subcontractors in poor countries.

Sport-King has a "Code of Conduct" which is supposed to ensure that workers are not mis-treated by Sport-King's sub-contractors. For example, no child laborers are supposed to be hired, no prisoners may be used as workers, workers may not be forced to work more than 60 hours a week, etc. Sport-King's "Code of Conduct" specifies that workers must be paid a country's "minimum wage." However, it does not say that this minimum wage needs to be a *living wage*. Even poor country governments admit that the minimum wage is not enough for people to live on. Sport-King says that it pays the legal wage, but it knows that not all its workers can survive on this wage.

Companies like Sport-King locate their factories in countries that don't allow unions, that outlaw strikes, and jail workers who demand higher pay and better conditions. In fact, Sport-King chooses to locate its factories in some of the most repressive countries in the world. Human rights groups argue that companies like Sport-King knowingly locate their factories in very repressive places so that workers can more easily be controlled and exploited. These human rights groups argue that companies like Sport-King could easily afford to pay its workers living wages, but because this would come out of their enormous profits they choose not to.

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Who's who:**Situation 1:**

The country of Marak is Israel, Bragan is Palestine, Bolaire is the United States. This particular example is taken from "A Gaza Diary," by Chris Hedges in the October 2001 *Harpers*.

Situation 2:

The country of Belveron is India, Paradar is the United States. The corporation is Monsanto.

Situation 3:

Kalimo is Israel, Iona is Lebanon, Terramar is the United States, the refugees are Palestinian. The camps were Sabra and Shatila in 1982. The militia was Christian Phalangist.

Situation 4:

The country of Menin is the United States, Pungor is India. The corporation was Union Carbide, in Bhopal, India. The year was 1985.

Situation 5:

The country of Tobian is the United States. Ambar is Nicaragua. The country next door is Honduras. The time is the 1980s during the U.S.-sponsored Contra war.

Situation 6:

The country of Anza is the United States. Baltus is Sudan. The countries where the U.S. embassies were bombed are Kenya and Tanzania. The prominent individual mentioned is Osama bin Laden.

Situation 7:

The country of Lukin is Zambia. The banks are the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Situation 8:

The country of Lomandia is the United States. Moretta is Iraq. The U.S. official quoted was Sec. of State Madeleine Albright on *60 Minutes*, interviewed by Leslie Stahl.

Situation 9

The country of Bartavia is South Africa during apartheid. Sarino is the United States.

Situation 10

Sport-King is Nike, although it could be many transnational corporations. And the country of Morcosas is the United States.

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