



POLITIHØGSKOLEN

**TERRORISM, DEMOCRACY, AND
THE APOCALYPTIC NARRATIVE**



Kari Milner Strøm

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Abstract

The 'war on terror' that President George W. Bush declared following the attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001 is conducted on many levels, one of which is the debate concerning the need to 'balance' security and human rights. His early announcement that 'you're either with us or against us' reinforces dualistic construction and leaves little room for a diversity of opinions and, consequently, for a comprehensive and clear-headed assessment of the means with which the war is being fought. Indicative of the fundamental human rights principles at stake is the question of whether the terrorist threat justifies the use of torture. Despite recent speculation that the war on terror might have been over with the killing of Osama bin Laden the open-ended process of 'securitizing' societies in order to minimize threat is likely to continue.

The numerous textual and anecdotal glimpses included in this thesis aim to shed some light on how the articulation of threat among politicians and security professionals in particular creates more lay anxiety than necessary, and how everything from the focus on binary opposites to myths surrounding policing, media coverage of terrorist acts, the disciplinary power of the state, the voices of academia, and everyday conversations about surveillance can deeply affect democracy, perceptions of risk, terrorism and 'the Other'.

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*He who fights with monsters should look to it
that he himself does not become a monster.*

Friedrich Nietzsche 1886/Wikiquote 2011

1. Introduction

Examining the evolving strategy of policing George Kelling and Mark Moore relate that the reform era promoted an image of policing in which '[t]he proper role of citizens in crime control was to be relatively passive recipients of professional crime control services' (2005: 95). The metaphor used to describe the police and their relationship to the community – 'the thin blue line' – is more relevant than ever given that '[i]t connotes the existence of dangerous external threats to communities, portrays police as standing between that danger and good citizens, and implies both police heroism and loneliness' (Kelling and Moore 2005: 95).

After the attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001¹ the police have joined forces with other modern day heroes standing between ordinary citizens and chaos. Among these are the military and the world leaders who promote the idea of a 'war' on terror as the only viable solution to the allegedly 'new' form of terrorism. In contrast to 'the thin blue line', 'the thin red line' refers to the armed forces' role as a bulwark against external threats (Wikipedia 2011b). The apocalyptic narrative is the story of an epic battle between the 'new' terrorists and the defenders of democracy.

The military's involvement in fighting what is essentially a crime is counter-intuitive to democratic societies. As initiator of a nineteenth century reform period in Britain the Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, was intensely aware of English hostility to 'any institution that smacked of a military presence or a political surveillance of the population' (Emsley 2003: 67). In order to differentiate the police from the military he engaged in impression management making sure that the uniforms of the new Metropolitan Police 'did not look military' (Emsley 2003: 68). Peel was further concerned that the police should be held accountable, that they should be trustworthy, and that policing should take place in a spirit of co-operation, summarized in the principle that 'the police are the public and the public are the police'.

¹ The attacks of 11 September 2001 will hereinafter largely be referred to as '9/11'.

Along with intelligence and security services the military and the police are the main instruments used to combat terrorism, but the presence of so many actors implies challenges in terms of jurisdiction and how the war should be fought, nationally as well as internationally. In his outline of waves of terror occurring prior to 9/11 David Rapoport notes that '[t]errorist tactics invariably produce rage and frustration, often driving governments to respond in unanticipated, extraordinary, illegal and destructive ways' (2002: 1). The persuasiveness of the Islamist threat narrative has led to rights abuses and to the implementation of ever stricter security measures. Voices expressing concern for the manner in which some of these measures can pose a threat to democracy and the rule of law largely go unheeded.

One of the most potent and potentially destructive weapons in the war has been the compelling use of binary opposites in threat narratives, rhetoric, and propaganda, as witnessed in the distinction between 'good' and 'evil' forces. The US and Europe have admittedly adopted contrasting responses to the threat, wherein the former views terrorism as war and the latter approaches terrorism as a crime, but the linguistic mechanisms employed are largely the same. A telling feature of the discourse is that it seems nearly impossible to speak of terrorism without resorting to military metaphors such as 'war', 'combat', 'arsenal', 'weapon', 'strategy', 'tactics', 'intelligence', 'national security', 'fallout' and so on, a phenomenon which appears supportive of the terrorism-as-war agenda.

With respect to recent developments, media speculation following the killing of Osama bin Laden in early May 2011 revolved around numerous issues chief among which are whether the war on terror is over, whether al-Qaeda has been weakened, whether the world can expect revenge attacks and, if so, will such attacks be large- or small-scale. For now, the conclusion appears to be that the war goes on, at least as far as the United States is concerned. The seemingly muted response to bin Laden's death in Muslim communities and the fact that he was living in Pakistan when he was killed may well pour gasoline on the Islamophobic fires burning in certain sections of liberal democracies. This may in turn strengthen the martial approach to terrorism.

What follows is an exploration of the intersection of threat narratives and counter-terrorism measures adopted during the protracted 'emergency' situation and a closer look at their

implications for liberal democracies. Chapter 2 initiates the examination of the apocalyptic narrative and its influence on liberal democracies. The theoretical framework and tools employed in the thesis are outlined in Chapter 3, while Chapter 4 defines key concepts in use. Chapter 5 presents some of the voices in the terrorism debate. Chapter 6 addresses the politics of terrorism and counter-terrorism. Some of the main actors and problem complexes associated with governing unease will be examined in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 deals with human rights, and the threats to our sense of security will be summarized in Chapter 9. Another important aim is to highlight an element that has largely remained unaddressed by the creators of threat narratives and their critics alike, i.e. the strengths, rather than the weaknesses of democracies. This will be done in Chapter 10, which will be followed by a summary and conclusion in Chapter 11.

2. The apocalyptic narrative

Edward Said writes that certain words are capable of conjuring up a whole body of apparently objectively valid and morally neutral information, information acquiring an 'epistemological status equal to that of historical chronology or geographical location' (1978: 205). In the case of '9/11' the chronology and geographical location are given but the term is also associated with the war triggered by the event.

In light of the importance of rhetoric in politics it comes as no surprise that the war on terror is literally being fought with words, as '[m]astery of a culture's symbolic communication allows one to manipulate the symbolic order – and is a source of great power in modern society' (Kappeler and Kappeler 2004: 181). G. Matthew Bonham, Daniel Heradstveit, Michiko Nakano and Victor M. Sergeev view 'the war on terrorism' as a powerful metaphor. Through the use of affective rhetorical language the metaphor functions as a highly persuasive form of political communication (Bonham et al. 2007: 11) and contains symbolism on several levels.

Dwayne Winseck (2009) identifies the US Information Operations (IO) doctrine as one of the weapons deployed and, based on his examination of the US propaganda campaign, Anders Romarheim states that one of the most important goals of the administration up until 2005

was 'To win the "battle of words", effectively choking counterpropaganda'² (Romarheim 2005: 62). Propaganda, censorship and surveillance are the three pillars of the information power of nation-states, and in the US 'IO encompasses the surveillance, control, and destruction of communications networks, psychological warfare and propaganda, and more routine methods of public affairs and media relations' (Winseck 2009: 151). The apocalyptic narrative is an integral part of the information war.

Sometimes it is not easy for authorities to get their stories straight and the US has supplied the world with different tales of the circumstances surrounding Osama bin Laden's death, for example. If, as has been stated, 'the global war on terrorism' (GWOT) has primarily been about taking him out of the picture it is indeed time we ask ourselves what the ongoing war is about. Though former British prime minister Tony Blair maintains that the war on terrorism is as urgent as ever and Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi still speaks of fighting 'evil', the mere suggestion that the war might have been over with bin Laden's death could be another step in the ongoing process of deconstructing the Islamist threat narrative.

In an exploration of the effects of narrative and language a description of power given by French philosopher and historian of ideas Michel Foucault can be a useful starting point: 'power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted "above" society' (Foucault 1982: 791). Accordingly, '[p]ower acts through the smaller elements: the family, sexual relations, but also: residential relations, neighbourhoods etc.' (1973: 1). For his part, Bruno Latour relates that 'power in society is exercised through a complex mix of not only traditional power-brokers, but also enlisted allies of humans, non-human artifacts, and semiotic structures' (in Taylor 2004: 496).

From conversations around dinner tables in suburbia, to high level political discussions in the United Nations Security Council the words used to describe terrorism affect our sense of threat in ways we cannot ignore. Hence a look at the terrorism discourse as it manifests among politicians, the police, the mass media, academics who research terrorism and surveillance, and in the popular vernacular could possibly increase our understanding of the apocalyptic narrative's impact on liberal democracies.

² At the time the Norwegian government was also accused of attempting to stifle dissent (Bakkeli 2008: 54-55)

Power is closely linked to knowledge and the terrorism debate is to a considerable extent informed by people in possession of 'secret' information they are 'unable' or unwilling to share with the public. Politicians may be privy to some of the secrets but we, the people, are largely left in the dark which makes it difficult to determine if the measures adopted to protect democracies from the terrorist threat are warranted.

In her discussion of how to protect individuals from various types of violent conflict Jennifer Welsh states that '[m]uch depends on one's view of the importance of *words* in international politics' (Welsh 2007: 380 – emphasis added). The impact of words on people's sense of security is quite possibly even more palpable in the terrorism discourse, whether the words emerge from Osama Bin Laden and his followers, or from the leaders of the western world.

Just as terrorists make use of violence to induce fear in their target populations, the verbal responses of leaders of the democratic world consist of fear appeals and threat narratives similarly capable of generating fear, if not terror. Victor Kappeler and Aaron Kappeler do not deny the fact that terrorism requires action, but remain convinced that 'it is necessary to understand its ideological and rhetorical construction as a social and political problem' (2004: 176), a task which other analysts included here have also set themselves. Their contribution is essential in that some of the usual responses to crime were suspended in the case of 9/11.

The title of this thesis implies a single apocalyptic narrative, but the term encompasses sub-narratives and a series of micro-narratives. Stuart Croft and Cerwyn Moore, for instance, have identified several post-9/11 narratives, which they term 'AQ [Al-Qaeda] Central', the 'network threat', the 'home-grown threat', and the 'new terrorism threat' (2010: 824-831), while Richard Jackson lists 'the cult of innocence', 'civilization-versus-barbarism', 'the enemy within' and 'weapons of mass destruction' (WMDs) among the relevant discourses (2007: 401). The term 'apocalyptic' stems from repeated warnings of future attacks assumed to have such 'cataclysmic' effects on the western world that the very survival of 'civilization' and 'the existing world order' is at stake.

Martha Crenshaw views the imagery as a manifestation of policy makers' reliance on 'metaphors, narratives and analogies that make sense of what otherwise might be difficult to understand, if not incomprehensible' (cited in Croft and Moore 2010: 831). From the

perspective of how individuals become terrorists Jonathan Githens-Mazer and Robert Lambert consider the 'radicalization' theory to be an easily understandable account that makes straightforward policy responses easier to implement (2010: 889). Bill Durodie echoes their views and describes the GWOT process as one of '[s]tarting with an answer and then joining up the dots...' (2007: 433).

Early predictions of impending doom came less than a month after 9/11 when the cover of *Newsweek* posed the question 'BIOLOGICAL & CHEMICAL TERROR. How Scared Should You Be?' (2001, 8 October a). The following month, president George W. Bush categorized the attacks as 'so terrible they offend humanity itself... aggressions and ambitions of the wicked must be opposed early, decisively and collectively before they threaten us all' (cited in Kappeler and Kappeler 2004: 176).

Perhaps the most persuasive argument for invading Iraq in 2003 was Saddam Hussein's WMD capability. The following statements by then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and president Bush respectively, are testament to the apocalyptic narratives reigning at the political level in 2002 (cited in Romarheim 2005: 84):

'We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.' (Rice)

'We cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.' (Bush)

It is only later that some of the voices disputing such claims have gained legitimacy, but the above mentioned determination to crush counter-propaganda remains strong. Former US ambassador Joseph C. Wilson was punished early on for claiming that the Bush administration had washed intelligence to exaggerate the threat posed by Iraq. Former head of MI5, Lady Eliza Manningham-Buller, and former British diplomat Carne Ross have in the recent past stated that, prior to the invasion, the UK viewed the threat from Iraq as being low.

The initial willingness to believe the mushroom cloud account meant that in September of 2002 the media were full of worst-case scenarios linked to the invasion plans, as illustrated by the Norwegian daily *Aftenposten*. The prevailing mood is reflected in the words 'attack', 'frightened' and 'threat' (Mathismoen 26 September 2002). Close to nine years later, not only have attacks with the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons not eventuated,

but the confident statements regarding the threat posed by Iraq turned out to be exaggerated or downright lies.

In November of 2010 news of large-scale attacks expected in Europe in the near future again raised Scandinavian fear levels in this otherwise peaceful corner of the world. This time *Aftenposten* cites a survey showing that as many as 44% of those asked fear that terrorists will strike in Norway (Bakken and Strøm-Gundersen 21 November 2010). Since then, a small-scale terrorist attack has occurred in Sweden and another attack has been averted in Denmark. As the prospect of terrorist attacks in Norway appears more and more likely the media continue to thrive on doomsday accounts, while scant attention is being paid to the high price being paid for waging an open-ended war on terrorism. This is not to say that the threat should not be taken seriously, but the threats to our sense of security and to our actual security may emanate as much from those who 'cry wolf' as from those who are identified as being the wolves.

2.1 Human rights in the age of counter-terrorism

At first glance, it may be hard to imagine that 'civilized' nations should resort to undemocratic means of fighting the war on terror, nations that six decades ago were at the forefront of proclaiming that individual human rights were not only 'universal', but also 'inalienable'. Yet the ongoing emphasis on the need for a 'trade-off' between security and human rights involves a regular suspension of human rights at odds with democratic traditions. Lucia Zedner, for one, refers to the British government's incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic rights legislation while at the same time derogating from the Convention's provisions in the name of security. She supplies both a benign and cynical interpretation of this 'Janus-faced' and contradictory conduct. With respect to the sympathetic interpretation she states that

the British government has found itself bound to uphold human rights at precisely the historic moment when world events and public opinion seemed to call for a sacrificing of individual freedoms in the name of collective security. The result is a game of cat and mouse between activist lawyers, judges and the government, as each side seeks to defend what it deems an appropriate balance between security and liberty. (Zedner 2007: 267)

Parties to the debate included Barack Obama during his election campaign and human rights campaigners who have contended that 'American principles' were betrayed when the Bush

administration used torture to glean 'little or nothing of value' (Shane and Savage 3 May 2011).

Zedner's less charitable reading of the situation in the UK, viz. that the government simultaneously gives and takes away human rights, is based on the fact that 'whilst the larger public basks in the warm glow of rights received, it is only a small and unpopular minority that bears the brunt of simultaneous deprivation' (Zedner 2007: 267).

The increased focus on a collective right to security at the expense of individual human rights has in part been brought about by Bush's tautological declaration of 'an extraordinary emergency', an emergency that has been in force since 2001. As Seumas Miller points out, however, '[e]ven under a state of emergency, fundamental moral principles concerning human rights need to be respected' (Miller 2009: 150).

Zygmunt Bauman outlines a de-humanization process analogous to that applied by the counter-terrorism warriors. It is a process whereby people against whom actions are aimed 'are *denied* the capacity to be moral subjects and are "thus disallowed from mounting a moral challenge against the intentions and effects of the action"' (Bauman (1993), in Biesta and Stams 2001: 20 – original emphasis). Through counter-terrorist responses that deny the 'enemy' equal moral value liberal democratic states are compromising some of the key democratic principles on which they are grounded. Moreover, in denying terrorists moral status the counter-terrorism warriors are justified, it seems, to wage the war by any means they deem necessary. Critics of the war may not be denied moral status as such, but are regularly dismissed, de-legitimized or denounced as being supportive of the terrorist cause.

Identifying a somewhat unexplored element in the ongoing debate about the potential conflict between human rights and security concerns Ian Loader points out that the debate is predominantly legal and philosophical, and believes it can benefit from criminological work '...concerned with the social and cultural analysis of lay anxieties towards crime and their political articulation and effects' (Loader 2007: 28). Based on close hermeneutic attention to what people say about rights and security it is possible to see how claims made or disputed are '...intimately and inescapably entangled with people's hopes, fears and fantasies concerning the trajectory of their own lives, and that of the political community which they inhabit' (Loader 2007: 28). Notably, the aforementioned Norwegian terrorism survey shows

that the elderly are more afraid of terrorism than younger people, while as many as 60 % of the supporters of the political party openly opposed to immigration view the threat as realistic (Bakken and Strøm-Gundersen 21 November 2010). The figures appear to support Loader's observations, and are consistent with surveys revealing the effects of more common threat narratives such as the risk of becoming the victim of crime, and in particular of crimes perpetrated by the 'Other'.

The apocalyptic narrative and the accompanying undermining of core democratic values is played out in two main areas, one of which was firmly established long before 9/11, i.e. the area of surveillance. The other area includes the plethora of counter-terrorism measures, many of which parallel and/or build on existing surveillance systems and techniques.

David Lyon highlights two narrative processes linked to surveillance theories (2006a: 36):

One is that the gaze of the many, fixed on the few, may foster some rather specific interpretations of the world. In the case of 9/11, the TV gaze permitted the development of a context-free narrative about American victims of totally unexpected foreign violence. The other is that this narrative, once accepted, becomes the means of legitimizing other kinds of official "watching" (for "terrorists" in this case) of the many by the few.

In a 'viewer society' these two modes of 'watching' – the many gazing at the few and the few monitoring the many – represent discrete and at the same time overlapping aspects of the type of surveillance society so necessary to the idea of eliminating risk.

2.2 World leaders and public opinion post-9/11

Foucault describes a historical process that is similar to developments after 9/11:

The discourse which will now accompany the disciplinary power, will be that which grounds, analyses and specifies the norm in order to make it prescriptive. The discourse of the king can disappear and be replaced by the discourse of him who sets forth the norm, of him who engages in surveillance, who undertakes the distinction into the normal and the anormal [sic]... (1973: 6)

It is conceivable that the type of leader who has set forth the norm and implemented excessive surveillance and counter-terrorism initiatives during the past ten years is in fact 'the man who would be king', implying a return to less democratic times.

Landshut holds that the only legitimate basis for political rule is an 'intact public opinion'. To Jürgen Habermas and postmodern theorists public opinion may well be a fiction, but

Landshut insists that '[t]he modern state presupposes popular sovereignty as a principle for its own truth', which in turn requires that popular sovereignty must be equal to public opinion (Landshut (1953), cited in Habermas 1962/1991: 223 – my translation). Put somewhat differently by Willem de Lint, '[i]n democracies, political action depends upon some quotient of public approval' (2004: 135). Threat narratives serve as useful tools to ensure that citizens are behind the 'emergency' measures taken to combat terrorism, and the apocalyptic narrative has somehow succeeded in creating a semblance of public opinion in liberal democracies.

Based on A. Sauvy's following statement we may ask ourselves why it should be necessary to mould public opinion in the first place, if the terrorist threat is indeed as great as the narrators claim: 'It would seem as though the least uncomfortable coercion – coercion by truth – would be coercion by illumination; that is, control (with the aid of) a fully informed public opinion' (Sauvy (1957), cited in Habermas 1962/1991: 223 – my translation). As witnessed throughout history, however, 'truth' is a malleable concept and is moreover one of the first casualties of war.

3. Theoretical framework and research tools

Through a qualitative and quotes-based approach each voice included here aims to shed some light on the post-9/11 world. The diversity and relatively large number of voices presented is based on the pluralist and social scientific ideal of examining all the parties involved in the social phenomenon or relation under study (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 1994: 265; Wadel 1990: 23). Cato Wadel believes that to make sense of and in order to function in society everyone needs to be an amateur social scientist (1990: 9). The problem with 'conventional wisdom' associated with social phenomena, however, is that more often than not people omit taking their own actions (or inaction) into consideration when attempting to explain the actions of others (Wadel 1990: 23). Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in the rhetoric and actions of politicians promoting the war on terror.

A dialectical approach involves understanding the processes whereby humans become the products of society and society the product of humans (Wadel 1990: 58). Through objectification 'society' is transformed into an entity and the socialization process entails

being 'programmed' by the society in which one lives (Wadel 1990: 20). Applied to GWOT, we have been programmed by the apocalyptic narrative. However, our knowledge about GWOT is limited due to information that is being kept secret, information that could be of huge significance to our attitudes to the war. My main argument is that liberal democracies are in the process of undermining some of the core values which the war on terror allegedly defends. The story about impending apocalypse is a black-and-white story unreflective of the complexities of the world before and after 9/11 and the idea is to introduce some nuance into the story by looking at some of the elements that have been left out of it.

Critical theory is concerned with examining politics and power relations and involves a process in which the researcher critically reflects on the subject matter as well self-reflects on his/her own position (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 1994: 221). Finding contradictions or faults in the narrative can lead to the discovery of faults affecting the narrative as a whole (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 1994: 235). In this case reflection can contribute to the deconstruction of what is, in effect, a political message and not a story about angels and demons. The process of self-reflection has led to a realization that this thesis constitutes a possible threat narrative and is itself an exercise in the use of language and power.

Based on what has been said above, analyzing some of the underlying political agendas and key features of liberal democratic thought may be as vital to understanding terrorism as analyzing terrorists, their background and motivations. James Dingley outlines such an exercise:

By removing the terrorist from the ideological baggage of individualism and free market assumptions of economic man we can get an alternative picture of him as a social agent which may offer far better insights into the why's and where-fore's of terrorism... This implies a critical analysis of our own societies and their values, which does not necessarily mean dropping them but simply recognising their weaknesses and how alien and sometimes offensive and destructive they can seem to others – which is why they attack us. (Dingley 2010: 5-6)

To some, this will no doubt sound like the words of an apologist for terrorism, but Dingley's purpose merely appears to be an attempt to place terrorism within a context lacking in the apocalyptic narrative. The idea that we need to look more closely at our own society is supported by Durodie (2007: 433) and Andrew Silke (2003), and will also be adopted here.

As narratives and notions of social control feature prominently, and because the voices included are so many, the main theoretical framework adopted is postmodernism. At the same time, it is important to understand that postmodernism is not a unitary phenomenon. Apart from exploring the nexus between knowledge/information and power, and revealing the disciplinary and coercive power of language and of the state, postmodernists have contributed to a greater understanding of the construction of 'difference'.

In postmodern terms the human condition can be seen as small pieces comprising a complex jigsaw puzzle wherein differing worldviews need not be contradictory – they simply co-exist. To many, this vision of reality removes some of the certainties that have characterized earlier worldviews, rendering the world a more frightening place to inhabit. One of the most notable features of the apocalyptic narrative is that it exacerbates a general feeling of insecurity, while at the same time offering the 'solution' in the shape of increased 'security'. By simultaneously creating insecurity and promoting security the narrative captures the essence of postmodernism perfectly.

In light of the fact that postmodernism is in part about deconstructing 'truths' or metanarratives it is often thought of as being anarchistic, relativistic and in itself constituting a metanarrative. One of its strengths (as well as a potential weakness) is this co-existence of conflicting ideas and narratives that are equally valid, at least in theory. In this sense postmodernism mirrors the contradictions that are to be found within liberal democratic theories.

The inclusion of Foucault's ideas in a work exploring the link between language and power is highly relevant in that he offers a postmodern perspective, although he himself denied being a 'postmodernist' or 'poststructuralist'. His contribution is essential in light of his exploration of the link between discourse and surveillance, but also because many theorists find it difficult to ignore his contribution to the study of social control.

Postmodernism is critical in the sense that academic study is intended to be, but whereas academic life is categorized by paradigms and research methods from which those who stray are often perceived as heretical, postmodernism can be all about questioning established truths. As social critique, postmodernist thought began by questioning the modernist

framework without there necessarily being a body of thought that could be termed 'postmodern' at the time.

Another relevant area of study, structuralism, holds that societies can be analyzed in a way similar to how we analyze language and its successor, poststructuralism, is closely linked to and/or overlaps with postmodernism. From a poststructural perspective language can be context-dependent and metaphorical which seems particularly fitting with respect to the apocalyptic narrative.

Two of the themes being explored - surveillance and counter-terrorism - can be divided into a modern and postmodern category. As far as surveillance theory is concerned Lyon has created a useful heuristic and overview that can be used to express the role of theory: 'Modern [theories] relate to the nation-state, bureaucracy, techno-logic and political economy, whereas the postmodern ones tend to focus on the ways in which digital technologies "make a difference"' (2006b: 10). In referring to 'modern' and 'postmodern' it is easy to think in terms of temporality and this is often done. To Bauman, postmodernity is moreover 'modernity minus its illusion', allowing us to view modernity from a new perspective (in Biesta and Stams 2001: 28).

Postmodern theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard uses 'the term *modern* to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative' (1984: xxiii – original emphasis). For the sake of argument it is possible to view the narrators of the apocalypse as modernists and their critics as postmodernists. The neo-conservative position held by the Bush administration and many Americans certainly implies a longing for values believed to be lost in a post- or late-modern world.

Adopting Loader's approach to the vernacular the main method used can probably best be described as an exercise in hermeneutics or interpretation:

The things that people say about rights and security, and the sensibilities displayed towards each of them, thus need to be apprehended in terms of their (often deeply affective) intersections with matters of political subjectivity and collective identity, and the lines of affiliation and exclusion, recognition and non- or mis-recognition, responsibility and accountability, that people draw when such matters are up for dispute. (2007: 28)

The approach is also reminiscent of discourse analysis and critical metaphor analysis. The former can be used 'to illustrate and describe the relationship between textual and social processes' (Jackson 2007: 395; see also Holter 1996: 20, and Alvesson and Sköldberg 1994: 279), whereas the latter looks for ideologies and intentions behind the language used (Charteris-Black, in Bonham et al. 2007: 9).

With reference to the qualitative and reflective approach Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg state that social scientific research is always situated in a political and ethical context and that theory and method are linked. The thesis is postmodern, poststructural and hermeneutic in nature, albeit not reflective of those positions wherein narrative has been separated from the narrator or from a reality external to the narrator (Alvesson and Sköldberg 1994: 14-15).

Metanarratives are stories of stories, and my own effort correspondingly an interpretation of the interpretations of others. Through a hermeneutic circle or spiral (Alvesson and Sköldberg 1994: 115 ff.) my prior knowledge (pre-understanding) of the topics raised has been supplemented with more information, resulting in new interpretations and perspectives representing the basis for further inquiry. Each piece of the puzzle plays its part in relation to the whole. The final product is not a 'true' representation of the whole, but a result of interpretive and reflective processes that will always be colored by the views and background of the researcher (Alvesson and Sköldberg 1994: 16-17).

Before concluding, it seems necessary to raise a final, but essential point pertaining to the voices included. Of import to the understanding of counter-terrorism and surveillance is the area of sociology focusing on

the ways in which intellectual predecessors are selected and excluded... and how sociological explanations are produced in the context of intellectual traditions, schools of thought, and scholarly paradigms. Caught up in the rise of postmodernism and poststructuralism throughout the 1980s and 1990s, surveillance studies – exemplified by Lyon's (1994, 2001) work – was essentially set on a path inspired by, but critical of, Foucault's panoptic writings. (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 27-28)

Terrorism and surveillance studies alike appear to suffer from a degree of selectiveness reflected here. A perusal of the literature soon reveals that each body of knowledge seems to be dominated by comparatively few voices, a fact reflected in the bibliography below. The

problem may, of course, lie with the way in which I have consciously or subconsciously included or excluded contributions to the topics under study, and further with the English language dominance in scholarship in general, but it may also rest with the libraries in which the literature is to be found or in the reading lists offered at universities. The two latter deficiencies could presumably be rectified by internet searches, as has been done here, but this is an area in which the power of paradigms can come into play. Surveillance studies may perhaps be pardoned for primarily focusing on the western world and being informed by western perspectives, but studies of terrorism can presumably offer no excuse as far as the dearth of 'other' voices is concerned.

3.1 Ethical concerns

The apocalyptic narrative demonstrates that language is a powerful tool that must be used wisely. Before proceeding I would like to point out that whether the words included here emerge from politicians, police officers, security professionals, academics, journalists, or 'the average Joe', virtually every quote represents an opportunity for creating a misleading and de-contextualized interpretation. This can lead to misrepresentation and misconstruction thus creating a setting that can be almost crippling to a writer. It should be emphasized, therefore, that any misconstruction is not intentional, but merely my way of interpreting what I read, hear or observe.

4. Key concepts in use

The thesis title contains three key terms: terrorism, democracy and the apocalyptic narrative. I will commence with a definition of the last of these based on its relevance to the main theories outlined above.

4.1 The narrative

According to one definition narratives can be 'the popular stories, myths, legends, and the like which bestow LEGITIMACY on social institutions, or accomplish other socially integrative work, by providing positive or negative models of behaviour' (*Collins Dictionary of Sociology* 1991 – original emphasis). Narratives can manifest at all levels of the social, from the personal narrative or story of an individual to the metanarrative of a culture or religion. The latter term, also referred to as grand narrative, universal narrative, or master narrative, has

been used by both critical theorists and postmodernists to describe a higher level story, as in the story of a story. The apocalyptic narrative tells the story of how certain leaders have taken responsibility for defending their nations against the forces of evil intent on destroying, not only as many lives as possible, but the democratic way of life as a whole.

Implying a religious dimension of GWOT paralleling that of which Islamist extremism is accused, is the idea that unless the allegedly 'new' form of terrorism is conquered, liberal democratic nations are heading for the Biblical Armageddon (Bigo and Guild 2007: 108). It is perhaps worth noting that the Book of Revelation in the New Testament is also called the Apocalypse of John and is about unveiling or exposure, as well as about the final stand between the forces of good and evil. The notion of exposure or revelation is curiously apt from the point of view of GWOT critics, but also in the light of postmodern ideas about deconstructing grand narratives.

When appropriated by political leaders the metanarrative can be used to justify existing power structures, an expansion of powers, the suspension of the rule of law, or to initiate wars. A unique feature of this particular narrative is that it purports to explain terrorism from a global perspective, categorizing it as an all-encompassing threat to be fought with any means necessary. The terrorists have been interpreted as precursors of Islamic world domination and the 'irreparable' damage they cause further underscores the seriousness of the threat.

Public debates and discourses can take place at the level of narratives or metanarratives though the weight carried by each voice tends to be reflected in the prevailing power structures, some of which are being upheld by their own grand narratives. Wikipedia states that these narratives 'are not usually told outright, but are reinforced by other more specific narratives told within the culture' (2010).

Foucault's focus in his work *The History of Sexuality* is the historical explosion of discourses on sex, but his ideas, whether they relate to sexuality or disciplinary mechanisms such as the panopticon³, can be applied to virtually any area of the social. Having outlined the number of discourses taking place in the previous centuries Foucault concludes that 'we are dealing less with a discourse on sex than with a multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of

³ See Section 4.6

mechanisms operating in different institutions' (1976/1978: 33 – original emphasis). The same can be said of the apocalyptic narrative which presents a universalizing narrative comprising numerous discourses emanating at the level of individuals, groups, institutions, and nations. Here the 'apocalyptic narrative' is the overarching term encompassing the war on terror, as well as the numerous sub-narratives linked to the process of 'securitizing' states.

4.2 Terrorism

As it has done for a very long time, terrorism continues to encompass numerous terrorist groups with a broad range of targets, using a wide array of methods, and expressing a number of different grievances. In some instances it is no longer possible to speak of terrorist groups as such, but of networks arising and operating in cyber-space and engaged in de-territorialized activities (Arquilla and Ronfeldt 2001).

Since 9/11 terrorism has to a large extent been treated as a one-dimensional, de-contextualized and de-politicized phenomenon, in other words as a novel form of terrorism based on Islamic extremism. The main protagonists in 'hyper-terrorism' may in one way or another be linked to Islam, but sources as diverse as Swedish peace researcher Wilhelm Agrell, terrorism scholar Martha Crenshaw, and Osama bin Laden himself claim that the events that led to 9/11 can be found across time and space (Agrell 2005; Crenshaw 2006a; bin Laden (2004) – in Romarheim 2005; see also Jackson 2007).

Subjectivity, moral judgment, political agendas and conflicting views are part and parcel of national and international attempts to reach agreement on matters that are of importance to us all. In choosing definitions of terrorism the aforementioned possibility of a skewed presentation is all the greater in that most of the literature included originates in the western world and, furthermore, in English speaking liberal democracies.

The efforts of Seumas Miller serve as a good example of how important the choice of words is in defining a social phenomenon. Miller defines terrorism as 'a political or military strategy that

1. consists in deliberately using violence against X and/or deliberately using violence of type M;
2. consists of violent actions that ought to be criminalized;

3. is a means of terrorizing the members of some social or political group in order to achieve political or military purposes;
4. relies on the violence receiving a high degree of publicity, at least to the extent necessary to engender widespread fear in the target political or social group.’ (2009: 53)

His version is similar to other definitions, but Miller differs from many other definers in that he at length explains why he includes or excludes words or items on his list, and furthermore takes into consideration whether or not terrorist acts are morally justifiable. In analyzing the moral, social and political implications of how we speak about terrorism, terrorist acts and terrorists he demonstrates how inadequate some of the more or less accepted definitions are in that they fail to capture the topic’s complexities.

Miller insists that in order to avoiding blurring distinctions between context-appropriate responses the situation in which terrorism takes place is of utmost importance. Among the distinctions made is morally justified one-off actions in extreme situations, such as the use of torture to avoid large-scale loss of life, and laws or legal settings in which torture under no circumstance can be legalized or institutionalized (Miller 2009: 4-6). Of primary interest in the current setting are apparently lawful, but morally dubious institutional practices such as racial profiling and excessive and invasive surveillance and counter-terrorism measures.

The terrorism contexts identified by Miller are ‘(1) a well-ordered, liberal democracy at peace; (2) a liberal democracy under a state of emergency; and (3) a theatre of war’ (Miller 2009: 3). He uses the term ‘liberal-democratic states’ in a broader sense than will be done here and defines those states as ‘representative democracies committed (in theory and to a large extent in practice) to the protection of basic political, civil, and human rights for their citizens’ (Miller 2009: 9). Miller goes so far as to claim that civil and political human rights are so fundamental to liberal democracy that without them ‘a polity in which they are not respected is not a liberal democracy’ (Miller 2009: 97).

Given that the discussions taking place here primarily focus on liberal democratic states found within the geographical misnomer the ‘western world’, i.e. Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, it may at first glance seem obvious that an exploration of responses to terrorism involves contexts (1) and (2) outlined by Miller. At the same time the US ‘war on terror’ and terrorism-as-war approach may imply that the nation views contexts (1), (2) and (3) as equally relevant. Here context (2) refers both to the common

perception that 'our' societies are under threat from 'them', and to the rhetoric that accompanies that state of mind, even if, freed from the political constructions of the apocalyptic narrative, context (1) would be a more accurate description. Examining the context in which terrorism takes place, as well as the factors that cause it, is as important to understanding terrorism as describing the effects of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

From a historical perspective, the infliction of terror has been seen as a useful and effective tool by rulers, their enemies and by their subjects, imbuing the term with numerous meanings. Daniel Heradstveit and David Pugh identify a process whereby definitions of terrorism are made to serve political hegemony (2003). Similarly, to Jackson, the 'Islamic Terrorism' discourse is essentially a political technology in the service of hegemonic power (2007: 421). Focusing on philology, Jonathan Fine considers that '[t]errorism originated as a linguistic, political term in the ancient world, with varying connotations, depending on whether it was being used by a perpetrator or a victim' (2010: 284). Later, political rivalry in the twentieth century 'succeeded in creating a constant shift between the roles of perpetrator and victim' (Fine 2010: 284). Fine identifies another historical shift involving the distinction between 'horror' and 'terror', in which the former denotes 'the feeling of revulsion that occurs *after* something frightening happens, whereas terror refers to feelings of dread and anticipation *before* a horrifying experience occurs' (2010: 279 – original emphasis).

Convinced that terrorism studies suffer from insufficient attention paid to sociological analysis, Dingley aims to supplement the existing terrorism body in politics, international relations and psychology with an exploration of issues at the social level. Like Fine, he believes terrorism to be deeply rooted in history and in particular linked to social change and development. These circumstances explain why terrorism has been associated with traditional societies in which structural change can be experienced as threatening (Dingley 2010: 1), an interpretation that has been challenged by others (e.g. Jackson 2007).

Complicating matters is the fact that non-combatants, combatants, and civilians can be the perpetrators as well as victims of violent actions categorized as terrorism. Bruce Hoffman manages to avoid choosing between the above terms by defining terrorism as 'the

deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change' (2006: 40).

Bearing in mind the innumerable implications of terms included or excluded, it soon becomes apparent that many definitions of terrorism appear simplistic and lacking in nuance. There are presumably several reasons for this, such as the fact that some definitions are the result of compromise and the need for brevity. Also, just as acts of terrorism can be seen as useful and necessary political tools, how one defines terrorism or chooses between existing definitions can serve political purposes such as the maintenance of hegemony.

Unlike most contemporary definitions Miller includes a clause identifying what we term terrorist acts as 'actions that ought to be criminalized' based on 'existing laws against violent actions' (Miller 2009: 58). He bases the inclusion of this clause on the continuing need to revise definitions of terrorism. In light of the numerous types of 'emergency' laws rushed through legislatures following 9/11 Miller's reminder of existing laws capable of dealing with violent actions such as terrorism is both timely and important.

Demonstrating the power of words to create a climate in which we are perceived to be under threat from people with the capacity to strike at anyone, anywhere, at anytime, the terrorism discourse includes neologisms such as 'megaterrorism', 'third type terrorism' (Bigo 2006: 50), 'Islamikaze', 'techno-terrorism' (Jackson 2007: 405, 410), 'catastrophic terrorism' (Dunlap 2005: 794), and 'super-terrorism', which Liora Lazarus and Benjamin J. Goold describe as 'terrorism that has global aims, an "apocalyptic" ideology, "war-like" means and with which political negotiation is impossible' (2007: 3, citing Freeman in Wilson (ed. 2005)). The advent of 'hyper-terrorism' caused the US, UK and Australia – all three classic examples of liberal democracies as defined below – to declare 9/11 a 'turning point' in history, and to claim that the new form of terrorism has necessitated '... the framing of new boundaries between law and politics, between executive and judicial powers, between military and civilian rules, between security and liberty, between surveillance and protection...' (Bigo and Guild 2007: 108). The framing of new boundaries between the roles of the military and the police was raised in the Introduction and will be examined further in Section 7.4, while the declaration of a state of exception grounded in the alleged 'turning point' will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

With reference to linguistic constructions of social reality the 'war' on terror will here not refer to a conventional war but rather to a rhetorical device that allows democratic values and human rights to be compromised due to a polarized conception of the 'innocent' and the 'guilty'. The following quote by James Q. Wilson is emblematic of the kind of distinctions being made: 'Wicked people exist. Nothing avails except to set them apart from innocent people' (Wilson, cited in Garland 2001: 131).

4.3 Liberal democracies

It is now time to define liberal democracy and to briefly outline key elements of liberal democratic theory. The notion of human rights is a crucial part of the picture that will be dealt with in more detail in the following section.

It is worth noting that from the vantage point of postmodern theory nation-states and liberal democracies are arbitrarily and politically constructed ideas of the social but they are nonetheless actors on the world stage capable of initiating and implementing action in a manner reflective of legal entities and in accordance with notions of Realpolitik.

From ancient Greece we have inherited two notions essential to contemporary liberal democracies. They are politics and democracy. It was believed that every person (with some exceptions) ought to participate in political deliberations. As a result, the Greeks believed that the source of authority was located 'in the *polis*, in the community itself, and they decided on policy in open discussion, eventually by voting, by counting heads' (Finley 1981: 22). Unlike modern democracies '[t]here were no natural rights of the individual to inhibit action by the state, no inalienable rights granted or sanctioned by a higher authority' because no such authority existed (Finley 1981: 27). Later, higher authority was to become vested in God and the king who ruled in his place, but there were still no individual rights of the kind familiar to us today. Somewhere along the way ideas of sovereign power deriving from the people (re)-emerged and humans, rather than God, became the authority that could grant or sanction rights. Morality became associated with reason, nature, and science rather than with religion, ignorance and superstition.

John Herman Randall states that although religious and humanitarian ideas co-existed throughout the Enlightenment 'the one point upon which all could agree was the equal worth and dignity of every human being' (Randall 1926: 371). The American *Declaration of*

Independence expresses the new ideal as follows: 'We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights' (the United States 1776). A few years later the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* (France 1789) affirmed the rights of individuals. Article 4 elaborates on the notion of Liberty:

Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else: hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.

Like so many key liberal democratic notions 'liberty' carries a multitude of meanings and so it may be of use to consider how contemporary EU treaties understand the term. According to European Liberty and Security (ELISE) liberty is 'the principle against which any state interference on the basis of security must be limited, justified and open to judicial scrutiny' (ELISE 7 February 2006).

Enlightenment theorists firmly believed it was possible to defeat superstition and fear through the use of reason and that replacing irrational religious beliefs with (the new religion of) science would inevitably lead to progress. Reason is in itself a multi-faceted notion but in the scientifically oriented metanarrative of the Enlightenment the power to think logically and objectively figures prominently. Rationalism can be described as 'a general confidence in the power of knowledge... to describe and explain the world and to solve problems' (*Collins Dictionary of Sociology* 1991). Similarly, rationality is the key feature of capitalism's main actor – the rational economic man – seeking to maximize profit based on all available knowledge. Access to knowledge and information is as essential to economic man as it is to political man.

Herbert Marcuse relates how the struggle between irrational nature ('Unreason') and rational man involves the reification and transformation of 'Reason' into 'a mode of thought and action which is geared to reduce ignorance, destruction, brutality, and oppression' (Marcuse 1964: 142). In the apocalyptic narrative of George W. Bush the forces of 'reason' engage in a war with the forces of 'unreason', a war in which might and the alleged moral high ground allow the ignorance, destruction, brutality and oppression of the forces of 'reason' to be either hidden or ignored.

Foucault explains how a mechanism functions in which the willingness to sacrifice a measure of liberty and accept secrecy become vital ingredients. It may also account for why we prefer to be ignorant about certain 'dirty' aspects of the war on terror:

[P]ower is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms. Would power be accepted if it were entirely cynical? For it, secrecy is not in the nature of an abuse; it is indispensable to its operation. Not only because power imposes secrecy on those whom it dominates, but because it is perhaps just as indispensable to the latter: would they accept it if they did not see it as a mere limit placed on their desire, leaving a measure of freedom – however slight – intact? (1976/1978: 86)

In addition to being closely associated with reason, the early rights of man were inextricably bound to the idea of the autonomous individual, meaning that irrespective of declarations of universality, human rights belong(ed) only to certain segments of society. As women became invested with autonomy and reason they too acquired the same rights as men, but children still lag behind in the rights scheme based on the continued primacy of reason and autonomy (Stroem 1999). Since 9/11, rights have been denied to suspected terrorists as well as 'enemies' of the war on terror.

A body of liberal theory has existed since the eighteenth century encompassing several schools of thought. Two features are of relevance to the discussion at hand. As seen above, individualism is based on the Enlightenment idea of rights belonging to autonomous and rational individuals and, according to one conception of liberalism, 'the function of the state is to protect and safeguard these rights' (Dworkin, in Norton 1991: 105). Moreover, egalitarianism, or notions of equality, posits that all human beings have equal worth.

Liberal democratic theory has had, and continues to have, its fair share of critics. Nietzsche, for one, believed '[t]he rational and rationally justified autonomous moral subject of the eighteenth century [to be] a fiction, an illusion...', foreshadowing, perhaps, postmodern ideas (in MacIntyre 1981: 114). One of the many factors exposing the illusion is the fact that liberal democratic theory is characterized by countless irreconcilable dimensions.

Perhaps one of the most troubling issues confronting conservatives, neoconservatives and even liberals is the very nature of contemporary societies where – in the light of realities – it can be hard to balance irreconcilable ideas, such as the longing for the 'old' order and the inexorable advance of 'progress', the latter being one of the linchpins of liberal democratic

theory. With reference to a political meeting in London Dave Hill, for example, describes how ethnic tensions ‘threw into relief contradictions that Conservatism at large needs to resolve. It wants individual liberty and cultural conformity, decentralisation and control, tradition and modernity’ (28 September 2007).

In the words of Seyla Benhabib ‘cultures, societies and traditions are not monolithic, univocal and homogeneous fields of meaning. However one wishes to characterize the relevant context to which one is appealing... characterizations are themselves “ideal types” in some Weberian sense’ (1992: 225-226). In this thesis the relevant context is the war on terror and the ideal types include the ‘post-9/11’ world, ‘liberal democracies’, ‘liberty’, and ‘universal human rights’.

4.4 Universal human rights

Human rights have been hotly contested during the more than 60 years that have passed since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights entered into force in 1948. The idea of universal human rights has itself been characterized as a grand narrative and political agenda forced upon societies with different conceptions of what it is to be human and how human societies ought to be constituted. A particularly contentious issue has been whether individual rights should have primacy over collective rights. Albeit they are not necessarily absolute rights according to Miller (2009: 97), many view human rights as one of the major achievements of liberal democracies.

Conflicting conceptions of human rights have led to ‘deep controversies as to how they should be realized, under what institutional conditions they should be pursued, and which specific rights may be branded as sufficiently fundamental to trump majoritarian desires’ (Lazarus and Goold 2007: 6). The notion of security has its place within liberal democracies ‘... as the precondition for liberty, and human rights as the constituents of liberty, are thus both inherent parts of the broader liberal democratic project’ (Lazarus and Goold 2007: 2). It is primarily in the area of security that the conflict between individual and collective rights plays out in GWOT. The ‘state of emergency’ brought on by hyper-terrorism amply demonstrates that some human rights, or rather the rights of some human beings, are not necessarily as universal as the UN Declaration would have it.

The construction of 'difference' legitimating stricter social control of individuals and groups who do not conform to the dominant norms has a long history in crime control (Garland 2001). The link drawn between crime, terrorism and the 'other' is particularly evident in the war on terror and this is one of the areas in which majoritarian concerns may conflict with the rights of minority groups. Lately, liberal democracies have to some extent reversed the traditional rights narrative so that individual rights now must take second place to the collective right to security.

4.5 The 'othering' process

In its war on terror the Bush administration used a propaganda device termed 'nuance elimination' which involves generalizing to a degree where a diverse reality is transformed 'into a comprehensible, yet misleading, simplistic frame' (Romarheim 2005: 57). A certain amount of generalizing can be necessary to facilitate communication, but takes on a more sinister dimension when it is used as an exclusion mechanism, whereby 'we/the in-group' are being distinguished from 'them/the out-group'. Name calling, also termed labeling, is a propaganda device that facilitates nuance elimination (Romarheim 2005: 53). Nuance elimination and name-calling may well be two of the most effective weapons deployed in the war on terror and apply to both people and settings exemplified by the deliberate failure to put the war on terror into context and the tendency to lump 'outsider' nations together, as in the so-called 'axis of evil'.

With the specter of increased radicalization and hyper-terrorism looming the age-old mechanism of criminalizing a group as a whole has been extended to the category of 'Muslims' in particular. Of significance to the climate of fear is the moral tenor of arguments emphasizing the difference between 'enlightened', 'rational', 'civilized' and 'innocent' victims merely wanting to live in peace in 'free' societies and the evil intentions of religious fanatics taking advantage of our freedoms by attempting to import or re-establish 'barbaric' religious, legal and social practices, thereby undermining democracies. This seems to be Tony Blair's position (cited in Durodie 2007: 431):

This is not a clash between civilisations. It is a clash about civilisation. It is the age-old battle between progress and reaction, between those who embrace and see opportunity in the modern world and those who reject its existence; between optimism and hope on the one hand; and pessimism and fear on the other.

Feminist theorists have been at the forefront of revealing how 'othering' mechanisms take place, their critique extending to other critics of the politics of difference (Fraser 1987). Encompassing poststructuralists and postmodernists these social critics have argued that within liberal democratic societies relations of power are dominated by binary opposites and the politics of exclusion, above all based on gender. Iris Marion Young is informed by poststructural theories and demonstrates how group differences are constantly made and remade (1990). To Val Plumwood (1993: 47) othering involves dualistic construction wherein

[a] dualism is more than a relation of dichotomy, difference or non-identity, and more than a simple hierarchical relationship. In dualistic construction, as in hierarchy, the qualities (actual or supposed), the culture, the values and the areas of life associated with the dualised other are systematically and pervasively constructed and depicted as inferior.

Miller uses the notion of collective moral identity to characterize how 'the members of some oppressor or enemy group are guilty purely by virtue of membership of that national, racial, ethnic or religious group', e.g. in the sense that some Muslims hold all Americans responsible for American injustices overseas (Miller 2009: 61). This type of logic is generally considered both irrational and unfair by westerners, but works both ways. There is certainly no lack of demagogues and politicians on either side willing to exploit such sentiments. The phenomenon can also be linked to mechanisms whereby the alleged attributes or qualities of individuals or groups are said to explain actions or lack of the same, but in which it is common to ignore the interplay and interaction between those who characterize and those who are being characterized (Wadel 1990: 26).

From the perspective of how 'errors of justice'⁴ arise, Asbjørn Rachlew relates how coming under suspicion by the police, no matter how trivial the grounds, is uncomfortable (2009: 2). For whole communities under suspicion by both the police and the general public for harboring terrorist sympathies the uneasiness must be all the more pressing.

Xenophobia and hostility towards newcomers in the shape of migrants is commonplace. The nationalities or ethnic groups who feel the lack of a warm welcome most acutely sometimes correspond to the size of diaspora communities within each host nation, but there is one 'group' of people who have felt the brunt of western skepticism for a very long time, viz. the

⁴ Rachlew sees 'errors of justice' as a more accurate description than the traditional term 'miscarriage of justice'.

people earlier referred to as 'orientals'. The term 'oriental' and the academic field of Orientalism covers a historic tendency to generalize across ethnicity and geography that persists. Orientalism in its traditional form contains both nuance elimination and name calling, and its contemporary form can be located both in the propaganda devices of the Bush administration and in the rhetoric of political parties hostile to immigration.

Offering a critique of the 'oriental' category akin to that which feminists aim at the category of gender Said characterizes orientalism as 'the distillation of essential ideas about the Orient – its sensuality, its tendency to despotism, its aberrant mentality, its habits of inaccuracy, its backwardness – into a separate and unchallenged coherence' (Said 1978: 205). In the late nineteenth century a highly identifiable form of orientalist bias arose when labor migration from Asia to western countries was termed the 'yellow peril', which from the perspective of the topic at hand was revealingly also labeled the 'yellow terror'.

Of interest here is the very real fear Europeans for centuries carried with them following the widespread Islamic conquests and hegemony in the wake of Mohammed's death:

Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolize terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma. Until the end of the seventeenth century the "Ottoman peril" lurked alongside Europe to represent for the whole of Christian civilization a constant danger. (Said 1978: 59)

The dreaded enemy included the radical Islamic sect, the *Hashshashin* (Assassins), capable of inspiring terror among Christians. Notably, Fine relates that the impact of their acts became associated with 'a growing sense of anxiety about an *anticipated* act of violence' (2010: 274-275 – emphasis added).

Since 9/11, remnants of those early fears have flared up to an extent where Islam is once again believed to pose a significant threat to the west. The idea has led certain sections of the west to interpret the political unrest taking place in the Arab world in 2011 as a process of 'Islamization' rather than welcoming it as a popular movement for democracy.

The inevitable link made between Muslims and terrorism have led to a revival of orientalist language to portray the 'enemy' reminiscent of Lord Cromer's early depictions of British colonial subjects. Cromer extols the European as 'a close reasoner; his statements of fact are devoid of any ambiguity; he is a natural logician, albeit he may not have studied logic...' (in

Said 1978: 38). This conception is reflective of Enlightenment ideals. A statement of fact from an Egyptian, on the other hand, will 'generally be lengthy, and wanting in lucidity' (Cromer, in Said 1978: 38). Further elaborating on the nature of Orientals or Arabs, they are 'shown to be gullible, "devoid of energy and initiative," much given to "fulsome flattery," intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals...' (Cromer, in Said 1978: 38).

In post-9/11 efforts to dehumanize America's enemies, labeling propaganda paints a picture disturbingly similar to that of Cromer's portrayal of the Oriental, only instead of being unkind to animals the enemies are now being compared to animals: 'This is a threat that is out there and that will strike again if we don't take the necessary measures to root it out, to draw them out of their holes' (Condoleeza Rice, cited in Romarheim 2005: 91). In Bush's account the 'evil' ones also 'hide in dark caves', 'slither into cities' and 'dwell in dark corners of earth' (cited in Kappeler and Kappeler 2004: 180). As far as Saddam Hussein is concerned, Bush expressed no desire to meet him following his capture by the Americans on the following grounds: 'No – I've seen him. I've seen enough of him. I saw him getting deloused and after being pulled out a rat hole' (cited in Romarheim 2005: 92).

On the whole, dehumanizing metaphors posit terrorists as animals who need to be 'hunted down' one by one by morally, rationally and technologically superior heroes (Kappeler and Kappeler 2004: 180-181). The wickedness is said to be so profound that the hunt justifies the use of any and all means. To those who might not be prepared to go as far as key members of the Bush administration, there is nevertheless a tendency to conceive of Muslims as lacking an understanding of 'reasonable behavior', not 'getting' what the west is about (Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010: 890-891) and being 'uncivilised people living double lives' (Buch-Andersen 20 April 2009).

However, it is not only terrorists that are being turned into the 'Other'. The founder of the whistleblower organization Wikileaks, Julian Assange, has been labeled a terrorist, an anarchist, an anti-American operative, accused of vandalism, being a threat to national security, and wanting to blow up the 'house of democracy'. The organization itself has been termed a weapon of mass destruction. Some of these accusations are comparable to those brought against terrorists and there has been speculation that if extradited to the US, Assange's fate might be similar to that of terrorists confined to Guantanamo Bay. Sarah Palin

is one of many accusing him of having ‘blood on his hands’ and who are urging the US government to ‘hunt him down’ or to assassinate him, mirroring the language used by the Bush administration in respect of terrorists (Kwek 1 December 2010; Borgen 20 December 2010).

The perceived problem today is not only the prospect of individual radical Islamists arriving from Yemen, Afghanistan or Pakistan, but the terrifying ‘fact’ that the ‘Others’ have already infiltrated our ‘freedom-loving’ democracies and have taken on the status of fifth-columnists waiting to rise up when their numbers have reached critical mass or their influence is sufficiently strong. In Norway and Denmark this discourse is exemplified by the more and more common reference to ‘sneaking Islamization’ used by populist politicians and ordinary citizens alike. In Holland, Geert Wilders is a politician who sticks to the apocalyptic imagery by conjuring up visions of a ‘tsunami of Islamization’ (Cable News Network [CNN] 4 October 2010). As late modern societies become ever more pluralistic, the idea of ‘the enemy within’ can be highly damaging to community relations.

4.6 Surveillance

As stated above, the ‘war’ waged by liberal democracies is fought in an atmosphere of exceptionalism and with warlike means and rhetoric. Counter-terrorism encompasses innumerable ‘weapons’, one of which is surveillance. Lyon relates that surveillance ‘...at its social and etymological core is about watching...’ (2006a: 36). This observation provides an easily understandable starting point from which it is possible to expand the term to more complex notions of surveillance. Surveillance takes place in countless areas of our private and public lives, has been and continues to be the object of study within numerous academic disciplines, is highly topical, and the arguments in favor of introducing new surveillance technologies are often clad in scientific language.

We are all aware that technology has transformed our lives in ways that would have been difficult to imagine two or three generations ago. Kevin Haggerty categorizes surveillance as ‘*the dominant organizing practice of late modernity*’ while emphasizing that ‘the forms of surveillance are markedly different in different contexts, involving diverse motivations, technologies, dynamics, organizational arrangements, and legal regimes, all of which raise unique social and political concerns’ (2009: ix – original emphasis).

It is not surprising that the rapid spread of surveillance technologies appears to have been accompanied by a corresponding growth in the literature on the topic (Huey 2009: 221). Historically, and in surveillance studies in particular, the term 'surveillance' has carried negative connotations but in the context of finding solutions to societal problems such as drug-use and obesity Haggerty demonstrates how speaking of knowledge production or knowledge-generation, rather than surveillance, invests the phenomenon with greater nuance as far as normative stances are concerned (2009: xiv).

Surveillance represents a wider range of technologies, actors and social implications than counter-terrorism, yet frequently overlaps with it, and both areas involve stakeholder politics. Some of the people and groups involved have vested interests in both areas. Private security actors are both stakeholders and shareholders, while politicians represent major stakeholders. The police in general, and certain branches in particular, are obviously among the interested parties and their voices are among the most respected in the surveillance and terrorism debates.

As far as implementation is concerned general surveillance technologies and methods have by and large been introduced gradually in the shape of benign measures such as facilitating bureaucratization, extending the welfare state and assisting the police in maintaining law and order. This gradual and largely unquestioned introduction has allowed the virtual explosive nature of post-9/11 surveillance to ride piggy-back, so to speak, through 'function creep' and via the alleged necessity of some of the more visible counter-terrorism measures. Function creep can be defined as 'the process by which a tool designed for one purpose is applied to a new (usually larger) set of problems' (Magnet 2009: 177). How easily function creep can occur is evidenced by some local councils in the UK who have used the powers of surveillance 'to investigate dog fouling and false claims over school catchment areas', matters that are presumably neither serious crimes nor terrorist acts at present (Casciani 26 January 2011).

Surveillance studies have by and large been informed and dominated by the panoptic paradigm (Hier and Greenberg 2009b; Lyon 2006b; Haggerty 2006), first introduced by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the nineteenth century, further elaborated by Foucault in the twentieth century, and more relevant than ever in the twenty-first century.

The image of the panopticon is instructive in that it offers an insight into how a physical manifestation of disciplinary and social control can form the basis of theoretical analyses of the immaterial dimensions of surveillance and counter-terrorism. One definition of the panopticon describes it as

a new, rational prison design, geared to personal reform as well as confinement and punishment. The idea did not only relate to the structure of the building, it involved a complete philosophy of imprisonment, incorporating ideological and organizational features as well as architectural ones... The physical design was intended to make perpetual observation and control possible. (*Collins Dictionary of Sociology* 1991)

Surveillance implies a traditional hierarchy of visibility in which the panoptic paradigm entails 'the monitoring of people who reside at a lower point in the social hierarchy' (Haggerty 2006: 29). More recently, there has been a reconfiguration of the traditional hierarchy of visibility involving omnipresent surveillance 'with people from all segments of the social hierarchy coming under scrutiny according to their lifestyle habits, consumption patterns, occupations and the institutions with which they are aligned' (Nock (1993), in Haggerty 2006: 29). The earlier distinction between those who watch and those being watched has been undermined 'through a proliferation of criss-crossing, overlapping and intersecting scrutiny' (Haggerty 2006: 29).

One of the main issues arising from the seemingly unchallenged spread of invasive surveillance and counter-terrorism practices is our failure to recognize their moral and ideological bases as well as their basic function as instruments of social control, an omission which has in part been rectified by surveillance and counter-terrorism scholars.

4.7 The police

Various forms of surveillance represent some of 'the most important technologies of governance' (Haggerty 2006: 41) and given that '[s]urveillance becomes a police power (in the broad sense) precisely to the extent that it arrests flows of information' (Bogard 2006a: 101) it is time to take a brief look at the police.

New developments suggest that the terms 'policing' and 'the police' are no longer synonymous. In some countries certain policing responsibilities, especially within the area of security, are to a large extent in the hands of private actors and in others gradually being delegated to the private sector. In the US the armed forces have long been involved in the

'war on drugs' and counter-terrorism and a certain amount of militarization of law enforcement is also taking place in other liberal democracies. Charles Dunlap interprets this as a convergence of police and military interests expected to increase in the war on terror (2005: 788).

Aside from their routine functions the police in 'free' democratic societies have a special mission, in that they 'serve and protect our freedom, property and civil rights', whereas they are said to 'restrict control, and oppress in socialist societies' (Kappeler and Kappeler 2004: 192). Finstad likewise includes the duty of the police to ensure legal protection (2000: 128), while Newburn specifically raises the issue of safeguarding the rights of the vulnerable and the less powerful as far as minorities, diversity and community relations are concerned (2003: 716). To David Bayley, one of the distinguishing features of democratic policing is that the police 'are accountable to multiple audiences through multiple mechanisms' (1997: 5). This is important because although they have a monopoly on the use of violence the police, probably to a greater extent than the military, are expected to exercise considerable restraint in their actions. As seen in the Introduction trust and accountability were vital elements in early attempts to reform the police and they are no less important today.

One of the questions we need to ask ourselves is whether the benefits of the war on terror outweigh the costs of potentially less democratic policing and fewer democratic rights. In his book *The Enemy Within* (2007), Swedish author Jan Guillou paints a satirical picture of how GWOT is conducted in a well-ordered liberal democracy at peace in which fear has led to harsh anti-terrorist legislation and where compromising human rights is accepted as far as the 'Other' is concerned. Equally relevant to the terrorism debate is Guillou's portrayal of police incompetence, unnecessary brutality when dealing with the 'outsider' enemy, legal shortcuts and tunnel vision, a lack of accountability, secrecy surrounding real and fictitious evidence, and the selective nature of the relationship between the police and the media. In short, he shows how a multitude of factors can lead to miscarriages of justice. During a press conference early on in the book the minister of justice declares that with the aid of the police the nation has narrowly averted the most serious threat it has ever faced, while omitting to go into detail due to the inevitable 'need for secrecy'. This allows speculation and suspicion to run rampant. The book is a realistic account of the potentially adverse

consequences of fighting monsters pointed out by Nietzsche, which in this case also involves the creation of enemies where few or none previously existed.

The apocalyptic narrative attempts to persuade us that democracies face imminent and unprecedented attacks of cataclysmic proportions and that we are all equally at risk, which in turn explains why we should allow the 'professionals' to protect us as they and the politicians see fit. The other side of this coin is that the greater the perceived threat to democracy the greater the possible threat to democratic rights and principles from democratic institutions themselves – in other words, from 'the enemy within'.

5. The voices in the terrorism debate

There are as many opinions in the terrorism debate as there are people raising the topic. Most claim to know the 'truth', who the real enemy is, what motivates him, and/or to be in possession of the solution to the problem. Some base their claims on hidden or 'secret' knowledge, others on the basis of knowing or suspecting what those 'in the know' know, as it were. In an effort to dispel some of the secrecy there are also those who go to great lengths to inform the world about the secrets of the counter-terrorism warriors. What follows is a presentation of categories of voices in the terrorism and surveillance debates.

5.1 The language of politicians

Looking back at the political language associated with the war on terror it seems incredible that mere weeks after 9/11, President Bush was hailed as having undergone a dramatic transformation. In this account emanating from different corners of the world, he went from '...the missile-slinging cowboy, a "cartoon oilman belching out carbon fumes"' to being an 'eloquent', 'diplomatic', 'calm', 'responsible', and 'matured' statesman (*Newsweek* 2001 – 15 October a: 5). The characterizations are a far cry from the impression many have of him today, no doubt a product of the deconstruction of parts of the apocalyptic narrative that has taken place. More worrying, perhaps, is that the transition from 'boy president' to 'statesman' appears to have signified a positive change, rather than being interpreted as a return to a political leader of Hobbesian and autocratic stature. By contrast, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi's assertion that the western world is 'superior to Islam' was not as

well received as the 'statesman-like' utterances from Bush, even though the message conveyed may essentially have been the same (*Newsweek* 2001 – 15 October b: 4).

The propaganda devices and scare tactics adopted by members of the Bush administration have been noted earlier. Exemplifying a morally superior and polarizing approach to politics some of his more (in)famous statements identify him as following a divine calling, being on the side of the righteous, and quite capable of making the right decisions for both America and the world as a whole. To him, it is not sufficient to refrain from engaging in the war on terror. The rest of the world, including members of the 'free' world are, not incidentally, perhaps, but paradoxically, threatened with the consequences of inactivity: 'Over time it's going to be important for nations to know they will be held accountable for inactivity. You're either with us or against us in the fight against terror' (cited in de Lint 2004: 138-139). By contrasting this with another statement it is clear that the accountability criterion so important to democracy and Bush's conception of the war on terror does not extend to the president himself, strengthening the impression of hubris and infallibility, and in the process tying him even closer to the autocratic ruler: 'that's the interesting thing about being the President. Maybe somebody needs to explain to me why they say something, but I don't feel like I owe anybody an explanation' (in de Lint 2004: 151).

A blatant disregard for human rights soon became evident in the way the US treated suspected foreign terrorists, but the same disregard was also to affect the nation's own citizens. The US has had a long-standing debate, not only between Republicans and Democrats, but even within the ranks of Democrats, concerning the eavesdropping powers of the National Security Agency (NSA) (Lichtblau October 18 2007). Six years after 9/11, the debate on the interception of communications without court warrant authorized by Bush raged on and the Democrats' support for broad, blanket interception warrants for the NSA rather than individualized warrants, further reflected the Bush Administration's divide and conquer tactics. An academic specializing in terrorism and national security summed up the situation in the following manner: 'Many members continue to fear that if they don't support whatever the president asks for, they'll be perceived as soft on terrorism' (William Banks, cited in Lichtblau and Hulse 9 October 2007). Just as serious, and exemplifying the tendency to exaggerate the threat, was the pressure on US counseling lawyers to stretch the boundaries of the law 'to the extreme limits and beyond' (Smeulers and van Niekerk 2009:

331). In this manner legal opposition to the wiretaps could be dismissed with the following accusation: 'If you rule that way, the blood of the hundred thousand people who die in the next attack will be on your hands' (Smeulers and van Niekerk 2009: 331, citing Dick Cheney's General Counsel Addington).

Bush's 'you're either with us or against us' legacy affects all levels of society. The eavesdropping debate and the moral, legal and practical issues it raises moreover illustrates the complex of potential rights violations and accountability problems that can arise when questions of national security and surveillance powers involving state agencies mix with the role of private actors such as telecommunications operators and the security sector.

Whenever an independent actor leaks classified information or threatens to do so the inevitable response from politicians is emphatic statements about the threat to 'national security'. The means whereby terrorists, whistleblowers, and opponents of the excessive securitization of society become linked in the public consciousness is a powerful de-legitimation device. In the US the image has been created that the latter two groups are unpatriotic and that they jeopardize the lives of soldiers fighting for democracy, ultimately posing a threat to democracy itself.

The diversion tactics employed in the US were much the same in the UK, where analysts stating that the nation's involvement in Iraq has boosted terrorism, has been costly in terms of lives, military expenditure, as well as counter-productive to the counter-terrorism campaign, were accused of being apologists for terror by Jack Straw, the foreign secretary at the time (Wilkinson and Gregory (2005), in Croft and Moore 2010: 828).

Unfortunately, the overreactions and hyperbole associated with the immediate aftermath of 9/11 continue. Even in the face of revelations that have been interpreted as especially damaging to the former and current US administrations world leaders on the whole present a united front against those intent on uncovering that which is hidden from the public eye, and 9/11 remains one of the most emotive and effective images in use. When he learned that Wikileaks had posted thousands of US diplomatic communications on the internet the Italian minister of foreign affairs promptly declared the '9/11 of diplomacy'. Revelations of disagreement and unflattering characterizations of political allies notwithstanding, leaders of the western world tend to be united in their condemnation of critics of the war on terror.

Clearly, revelations about a 'dirty war' taking place within GWOT pose a threat to the moral authority of the counter-terrorism warriors evidenced by the repeated denials and vehement reactions to the exposure of disproportionate responses and allegations of torture. Conscious of the risks and problematics of social critique 'the founding father of deconstruction', Jacques Derrida, acknowledges that 'deconstructive gestures appear to destabilize or cause anxiety or even hurt others' (2011).

Attesting to an element of GWOT deconstruction Gillian Youngs considers the disclosure of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib as constituting 'a major ethical strike that continues to reverberate against the allied forces, especially their justifications for going to war in Iraq in terms of doing good for the Iraqis' (2010: 927). Winseck includes America's loss of international legitimacy and ideological credit among the costs of GWOT (Winseck 2009: 167).

Indicative of the failure to acknowledge responsibility for abuses taking place is the fact that there is no focus on the content of the documents regularly being leaked, no apologies for mistakes are on offer, no redress is taking place, and instead of promises for more openness there are assurances that governments will be forced to be more secretive in the future.

There have been official statements that no serious damage has thus far been done to US interests through e.g. the actions of Wikileaks. Nevertheless, widespread condemnation and predictions of imminent loss of life accompany every exposure. Some observers claim that the 'novelty' of the leaks lies in their extent rather than in their content, given that diplomatic leaks are common. This reinforces the impression of a need to divert attention away from the abuse of power taking place.

The proclaimed necessity of choosing the 'right' side in the war on terror applies not only to nation-states and political parties, but to any individual or group perceived to be 'soft' on terrorism and president Obama appears to have adopted a stance toward opponents of the war that is similar to that of his predecessor.

5.2 The role of the media

When Jonathan Alter shortly after 9/11 analyses the media's role in the terrorism debate he highlights the necessity of striking a balance between rights and responsibilities, exemplified by the difference between 'aggressive reporting of the war effort (essential) and advance

word of specific troop movements or the details of covert operations (dangerous)'. If one appreciates the subtleties involved '[t]here's a big difference between the right to do something – and the right thing to do' (Alter 8 October 2001). Upon discovering the heading 'The media's "balancing" act' so soon after the attacks I was initially relieved that here was finally a voice of 'reason' warning of the dangers of fighting a 'new' enemy by demonizing him. Although the point raised by Alter is undoubtedly important in covering a war, there was, and is, still a case for extending the warning to those who see the war on terror as the perfect opportunity to construct difference on 'legitimate' grounds. The ability to differentiate between the right to do something and the right thing to do is therefore as crucial to political leaders searching for effective counter-terrorism measures as it is to the media.

As long as it is in the interests of politicians to make use of propaganda in order to convince us of the legitimacy of their actions and the sincerity of their cause it is in large part the role of the media to transmit those messages to the rest of the world. Not long after 9/11, for instance, 'the Bush administration sent leading neoconservative Karl Rove and several others to meet media industry power brokers to discuss how they could contribute to the war on terrorism' (Winseck: 2009: 157). It is unrealistic to expect complete media independence from politics, but at the same time it is also the role of the media to report on political lies and mismanagement. Establishing the truth of the matter, however, may not be as easy as transmitting news as such. In the case of 9/11 it is perhaps to be expected that a moral panic and an ongoing drama containing almost every conceivable newsworthy element, apart from sex, made it seem worth toeing the official line.

Through the use of examples from British editorial coverage of the 7 July 2005 (7/7) suicide attacks in London Agnete Løvik notes how freedom of speech may be a guiding principle, yet in practice the '...manner in which the chosen newsworthy events are presented depends on the editorial line of the newspaper in question, which, in turn, may be influenced by ownership, company investments and political allegiance...' (2007: 9). In this case, a comparison between *The Times* and *The Guardian* reveals competing discourses, with evidence of support for the Iraq war in the former and opposition to the war in the latter (Løvik 2007: 58).

In spite of our knowledge of the political affiliations of media outlets, which in some cases is made plain by their names or knowledge of their ownership, many people continue to believe in the myth that the media are committed to reporting the 'truth', yet that may not be entirely true, as it were. Notions of truth, morality and credibility have gradually been hollowed out (Los 2006: 70), and Christopher Lasch writes that

[t]he role of the mass media in the manipulation of public opinion has received a great deal of anguished but misguided attention. Much of this commentary assumes that the problem is to prevent the circulation of obvious untruths; whereas it is evident, as the more penetrating critics of mass culture have pointed out, that the rise of mass media makes the categories of truth and falsehood irrelevant to an evaluation of their influence. Truth has given way to *credibility*, facts to statements that sound authoritative without conveying any authoritative information (1979/1991: 74 – emphasis added).

As seen earlier, the apocalyptic narrative is an attempt to create a credible account of the lines drawn between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Preferring the term 'spin' to 'political communication' Heradstveit and Pugh believe the former more accurately reflects the common element of deceit (2003: 1), an element that has been clearly visible throughout the war on terror. Evidence of efforts to establish credibility through vigorous spin doctoring and the washing of intelligence can be found in Paul Wolfowitz's statement about the rationale given for invading Iraq: 'For bureaucratic reasons we settled on weapons of mass destruction because it was the one issue everyone could agree on' (Wolfowitz, in de Lint 2004: 135). Hence highlighting the WMD threat was not solely about informing the public – although the choice of threat fits neatly into the apocalyptic paradigm – as much as it was about WMDs serving several functions, one of which was the need to reach a consensus on a reason for going to war, and furthermore finding a reason that would be credible in the sense depicted by Lasch. Using Colin Powell as one source, and Tony Blair as another, moreover made the claims sound authoritative to large parts of the global audience. At the time there were quite a few skeptics and, with hindsight, most people have realized that they were misled, yet the reputations of neither media nor politicians seem to have suffered significantly as a result. Other actors with definitional and informational power 'allowed to enter the media from the outside to express their views' are the elites (Mathiesen 1997a: 227; Jackson 2007), as are the (currently) politically correct professionals of the security elite.

Rachlew notes that public debates on criminal law tend to be highly polarized as far as the main participants are concerned, but he also identifies a journalistic penchant for controversial statements and editorial attempts to create headlines that further contribute to polarization (2009: 6). Presenting news in terms of conflict certainly makes for newsworthy headlines and terrorism epitomizes conflict on a grand scale.

It has been claimed that with respect to certain activities (or even non-action) on the part of Norwegian authorities the media and our intelligence services are partners in a truth embargo. Though there has been some debate on GWOT, the role of surveillance, and intrusive security measures the failure of critics to make much headway indicates that the claim may have some merit. One instance in which the mix of terrorism, politics, international diplomacy and media coverage might have provided the impetus for a widespread and serious debate on the nature of international relations and how the war on terror is being fought was the publication of diplomatic communications by Wikileaks. The leaks succeeded in stirring some interest initially, but did not lead to the in-depth debates many have hoped for. Norwegian author and film-maker Erling Borgen (20 December 2010) and Conservative party member and editor Torbjørn Røe Isaksen (20 December 2010) both note the media's tendency to focus on the gossip potential rather than on the foreign policy implications of the diplomatic leaks.

In a televised debate following media revelations of an American-led Surveillance Detection Unit (SDU) on Norwegian soil one of the most vital issues raised was that of the determination of the media to keep up pressure on Norwegian authorities to investigate the matter (Norsk rikskringkasting [NRK] 4 November 2010). However, once the headline grabbing news faded there have been few signs of media follow-up and public policy debates. The SDU case involves illegal surveillance by a foreign power and, whatever the reason, the lack of interest is troubling. Some observers view the contemporary absence of political engagement as disconnection. Among these is Durodie who perceives political disengagement and the lack of interest in public debates as features of a post-political age (2007: 437).

With the help of the media we are probably more cognizant of the devastating effects of **future** terror attacks than we are about how damaging concrete and existing security

measures such as the EU Data Retention Directive (DRD) and the Schengen agreement can be to individual and collective rights. The former involves massive control of electronic communications and the latter functions as an exclusion mechanism as far as 'outsiders' are concerned (Mathiesen 2004; Bigo 2006). Mathiesen (1997b) maintains that there are numerous data protection issues and questions surrounding the quality, extent, and the political purposes of the information collected by Schengen information systems and other legal critics harbor similar doubts about the DRD. The former head of an inquiry into illegal surveillance by the Norwegian security services goes so far as to claim that the DRD represents an unprecedented interest in aggressive surveillance on the part of authorities (Ketil Lund, cited in Gjerde, 9 January 2010).

The media's failure as an accountability mechanism is especially obvious in respect of increased securitization and the war on terror as they tend to focus less on the problematics of surveillance and counter-terrorism than on terrorist acts and the threat of terrorism.

5.2.1 The relationship between terrorists and the media

With regard to messages conveyed by terrorists themselves analyses and definitions of terrorism often emphasize that they rely on publicity to spread their message. Consequently, the media can increase their capacity for causing terror. Brynjar Lia notes a causal relationship in that 'paradigmatic shifts in modern mass media appear to influence patterns of terrorism, by enhancing its agenda-setting function, increasing its lethality and expanding its transnational character'(2005: 15). Hoffman discusses the complex question of if, and to what extent, the relationship can affect 'public opinion and government decision making... in a manner that favors or assists terrorists' (Hoffman 2006: 183).

Fine relates how western media have been influenced by terrorist jargon. He contends that media coverage has turned terrorists and their leaders into celebrities worthy of sympathy: 'For example, while in the six years prior to 9/11 all *New York Times* items on terrorism focused on the victims and their suffering, during the 15 months after the attacks there were six magazine articles about the perpetrator's [sic] personal lives, their motives and their families' (Fine 2010: 283). It is not entirely clear whether Fine believes the post-9/11 focus on terrorists themselves to be a turn for the worse. As excessive focus on the victims of 9/11 and the suffering of the American people continues to this day, it can hardly be argued that an increased focus on terrorists has been at the expense of their victims.

It is not surprising that the cult of celebrity evident elsewhere in society should be reflected in how the media treat what they consider newsworthy terrorists. Rightly or wrongly, intentionally or unintentionally, providing information about terrorist backgrounds and motives contributes to nuancing the picture of terrorism and may even serve to counter the dehumanizing effects of more politically correct media coverage of terrorists and their acts.

In an interesting twist to the dissemination of accurate and truthful information members of the media themselves became victims of inaccurate and skewed reporting in the days following 9/11, as witnessed by the fact that CNN was incorrectly accused of not employing the word 'terrorist' when reporting on the attack, and Reuters was similarly criticized for not wishing to employ 'emotive terms' like terrorist. The latter choice was, perhaps, the result of the balanced reporting Alter might have been calling for in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 (8 October 2001). Repeated critique of the media's choice of words acts as testament to the demands of linguistic and political correctness in the war on terror.

Given the spread of messages from terrorists and governments alike through numerous avenues, starving terrorists of 'the oxygen of publicity on which [they] depend' (Margaret Thatcher, cited in Hoffman 2006: 184) is somewhat unrealistic in information societies. With the advent of the internet, terrorists are not as reliant on media attention as before, and can themselves publish press releases and spectacular and horrifying images of their exploits, but their message of fear quite probably acquires even more potency when transmitted by the media and the leaders of the countries they target.

Looking back over the years that have passed since 9/11 there is probably a case for arguing that had politicians in liberal democracies chosen to deal with terrorism differently – in the public eye, as well as in secret – terrorists may well have been denied some of the oxygen on which they depend. The American trauma caused by 9/11 might have been less had it not been in the interests of both the counter-terrorism warriors and the media to exaggerate and exacerbate its effects. In their own way, the narrators of threat have raised fear levels by buying into the terrorist logic of promising worse attacks in the future. In this they may well have been aided by the increased use and significance of the words 'trauma' and 'vulnerability' in the everyday vernacular (Durodie 2007: 437). In countries unused to terrorism a major attack is likely to cause both material and immaterial devastation. But

even small scale attacks could have a huge impact, in part because this type of news sells, but also because we somehow draw comfort from news that confirm our suspicions about 'outsiders' and 'monsters'.

5.3 The everyday vernacular and life under GWOT and hyper-control

Fear appeals, de-contextualization, demonizing techniques, nuance elimination, and the stifling of critique prevent terrorism from becoming a comprehensible problem, resulting in a failure to appreciate its complexities and underlying causes. A character in a TV series depicting the first few weeks of the American-led invasion of Iraq expresses a point of view that is largely lacking in political, media and popular analyses of terrorism. On finding foreign fighters attempting to prevent the American advancement, Lieutenant Nathaniel Fick asks the highly pertinent question: 'Those Jihadis who attacked us. *Isn't this the exact opposite of what we want to have happen here?* I saw in that [dead] guy's passport. He wasn't a Jihadist until we came to Iraq. Two weeks ago he was still a student in Syria' (HBO/*Generation Kill* 2008 – emphasis added). Albeit fictional, the statement is unusually perceptive in a climate of nuance elimination where 'Jihadis' and terrorists are sometimes referred to as ignorant monsters with nothing but hate and extremist ideas in their hearts.

Surveys conducted during times when the terrorism threat is declared to be imminent show that nearly half the population of Norway believes the threat to be real. In spite of the hype and the fear-mongering surrounding terrorism, however, people in general are probably more afraid of everyday and more immediate threats, such as becoming the victim of random acts of violence or having one's privacy violated by a break-in. As the police and criminologists are well aware even these threats are not as serious as the media would have it.

The small-scale terrorist attacks that have taken place in Scandinavia lately have led to less loss of life and material damage than most of the other crimes that these societies have to contend with on a daily basis. It certainly gives pause for thought that probably more rhetoric, money and resources are devoted to terrorism related crime than to the type of crime that experience and statistics show will continue to affect a great number of lives and properties every year. There is also the widespread and serious threat of cybercrime that affects countless people every year at the global level.

In actual fact, the fear of a large-scale terrorist act is in no way linked to the probability of it actually happening, at least not in the Nordic countries. In a book about the 'terror industry' Joakim Hammerlin writes about the impetus given by 9/11 to surveillance capable of undermining rights and freedoms. He puts things in perspective by juxtaposing the west's disproportional use of counter-terror measures and the actual risk of becoming a victim of terror, estimating the latter at 0,0000938 per cent, meaning one is slightly more likely to be struck by lightning than by terror (in Nilsen, September 2009: 3). Tore Bjørgo is equally convinced that the odds of becoming the victim of terror are microscopic and points out that traffic is a much greater hazard to our personal safety than terrorism (cited in Haugan 2010). He goes on to warn against allowing the fear of terror to govern our lives. Jackson contrasts terrorism with another type of violent crime showing that on average 'terrorism results in up to 7,000 fatalities globally, which is less than half the number of people murdered every year by handguns in the USA alone' (2007: 419, footnote 97). In terms of probability, the contention that we are much more likely to experience traffic accidents, to be burgled, or even to become the victims of random acts of violence than of experiencing a terrorist act can hardly be refuted. To the extent that the majority of citizens in Norway can be labeled potential victims of terror, the threat more likely stems from fear appeals than from terrorists.

Still, ten years after 9/11 it seems as though 'public opinion' remains in favor of 'efficient' anti-terrorism measures rather than expressing wariness of the costs involved and their long-term consequences, the most common rationale being that 'those who have nothing to hide, have nothing to fear', a sentiment that is echoed in everyday policing (Gerlach 2009; Kallerud 2006). It is the argument most frequently forwarded in everyday discussions of the possible drawbacks of the war on terror and the surveillance society, inevitably presented as a closing argument, as in 'I rest my case'.

The sentiment is one of two popular arguments summed up by a former surveillance operative and a journalist and politician who has himself been the victim of illegal surveillance. The second argument holds that the measures taken to prevent terrorism and crime to a certain extent must affect privacy protection, in other words, it is a price we have to pay in order to feel safe (Skjeseth 19-24 March 2008).

A third type of logic can be found in the trust people have invested in the people who 'know' what is going on. Police, surveillance experts and security professionals have considerable faith in their ability to pick out suspicious individuals and groups, as do the people they are set to protect. On being told that the American Embassy in Oslo has been illegally monitoring Norwegians one woman interviewed responded that when surveillance is carried out by people who know what they are talking about they must be right. Her conclusion was 'where there's smoke, there's fire'. In other words, if an expert has singled out a person as a suspect that person must be a terrorist.

With terrorist acts now taking place closer to home fear levels may rise and, with them, the suspicion that terrorists are everywhere increases correspondingly. The examples included here certainly seem to support William Bogard's argument that '[i]t is the model of delinquency, not its "reality"' that drives policing today (2006b: 60). Or as Didier Bigo puts it, '[t]he principle of suspicion subverts the principle of innocence at both the individual and the state levels' (Bigo 2006: 59; see also Husabø 2004).

When entering airports these days one is struck by how perfectly Foucault's ideas of the disciplinary society have meshed with the suspicion, hyper-control and proactive policing that denotes highly securitized space and societies. This is the society 'where everything and nothing is a crime' (Bogard 2006b: 61). Referring to Foucault's technologies of examination Bogard relates how:

One must be in this place at this hour, one must be visible and open to inspection within these prescribed zones, one may not enter or leave this area without the right credentials: different sets of rules governing each territory, and rules that separate one territory from another. The body itself becomes a territory upon which relations of power are exercised. The body is mapped out, its lines of force and resistance carefully recorded. (2006b: 68)

In air travel a failure to adhere to the countless written and unwritten rules of airport security may not only result in the recording of one's transgressions, but also in the right to travel being rescinded.

It seems abundantly clear that many of the security measures linked to air travel have reduced the risk of planes being hijacked and/or being blown up. Still, Hammerlin appears justified in asking whether some current measures and expected future levels of security are

what we really want. He points to the delayed departure of one plane due to the pilot's refusal to remove his shoes in a security control for the umpteenth time (15 May 2009: 1). In light of the fact that a pilot neither needs to smuggle a bomb nor weapons on board in order to destroy the plane and kill its passengers it becomes easier to discern the false narrative and paranoia underlying hyper-control.

With reference to the role of neoconservative politics in the US, Nils Johan Lavik writes that hubris weakens the capacity for rational analysis and can be the Achilles heel of power politics, hubris being a mental state defined by an inflated ego, and a tendency to view other people and social groups as inferior (12 January 2005). A similar sense of superiority vis à vis the 'Other', faith in one's own imperviousness to repressive measures, coupled with complacency and apathy regarding how the war on terror is being fought, is possibly revealing of an analogous weakness in the populations ruled by the counter-terrorism warriors.

As Knut H. Kallerud points out, excessively wide security powers, abuses, and operating outside the law can ultimately result in a loss of methods and legal clauses that **are** necessary to combat crime. He borrows the voice of one of the founders of modern democracy, Benjamin Franklin, to direct our attention to what is at stake: 'They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither' (Franklin (1759), cited in Kallerud 2006: 13).

5.4 Academic voices in the surveillance and security discourse

The following sections present some of the theories that can shed light on counter-terrorism and surveillance from the perspective of crime control, discrimination and 'visibility'.

5.4.1 The panopticon, surveillance and visibility

The panopticon has been mentioned earlier and exemplifies one form of hyper-control. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is a physical manifestation of panoptic surveillance with which the United Kingdom in particular has long been enamored. This form of monitoring serves numerous purposes, including identification, investigation and prevention and can also serve as a promotional tool for the police in that releasing footage from high profile crimes generates support for more CCTV. Hier, Walby and Greenberg relate how the

publication of CCTV images showing the 7/7 bombers had an impact on crime control discourses. From being a traditional preventive measure they contend that CCTV became 'the central means by which criminals/terrorists could be identified, targeted and, if they remained alive, apprehended' (Hier et al. 2006: 230). The stated change in perspective appears at odds with the pre-emptive shift taking place in policing after 9/11, but nonetheless serves to illustrate the 'interrelated changes taking place in the politics and the dynamics of contemporary crime control' (Hier et al. 2006: 230).

The merging of police matters, mass media, and surveillance technologies can 'combine to shape dramatic moments of political crisis into the legitimization of a more authoritarian state' (Doyle and Ericson 2004: 478). When the threat narratives and scare tactics of politicians and the security lobby are added to the mix the message accompanying dramas caught on camera becomes exceedingly powerful.

CCTV and prison-like panoptic visibility are only two manifestations of surveillance, and Gary T. Marx distinguishes between traditional surveillance and new surveillance, the former associated with the kind of exceptional close observation of individuals carried out by the police, and new everyday schemes involving 'technologies designed to systematically extract and collect personal data (e.g., the database that collects, sorts, and creates data profiles of targeted individuals and groups)' (in Huey 2009: 221).

5.4.2 The surveillant assemblage

As illustrated by some of the examples given above, the disciplinary and soul-controlling power of the panopticon has transcended the prison setting, literally as well as metaphorically. The all-seeing Big Brother in George Orwell's novel 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' is another panoptic image. Haggerty and Ericson judge Foucault's panoptic concept to be an improvement on Orwell's metaphor in that Foucault reminds 'us of the degree to which the proles have long been the subject of intense scrutiny' and how 'it was precisely this population... that was singled out for a disproportionate level of disciplinary surveillance' (2000: 606-607; see also Reiner 2000). Mathiesen supplemented the existing framework with the notion of 'synopticism' (the many watching the few), resulting in a two-way viewer society represented by the Panopticon and Synopticon. This added a crucial piece missing in Foucault's panoptic world, i.e. the role of the mass media (Mathiesen 1997a: 219). Through synopticism the mass media are able to monitor the powerful few more closely and can act

as accountability mechanisms. At the same time, hierarchies of visibility are still in force (Haggerty 2006: 29-30). Today, Muslims are as likely, if not more likely, to be the subject of synoptic and panoptic scrutiny as the 'criminal' or 'lower' classes in liberal democracies.

Convinced that existing frameworks were insufficient to adequately account for all aspects of contemporary surveillance Haggerty and Ericson introduced their theory of 'the surveillant assemblage'. They believe 'surveillance is driven by the desire to bring systems together, to combine practices and technologies and integrate them into a larger whole. It is this tendency which allows us to speak of surveillance as an assemblage...' (2000: 610). The assemblage 'operates by abstracting human bodies from their territorial settings and separating them into a series of discrete flows. These flows are then reassembled into distinct "data doubles"⁵ which can be scrutinized and targeted for intervention' (2000: 606). It can perhaps be said that counter-terrorism builds on and intensifies that scrutiny, at times extending it to everyone, not just the 'usual suspects'.

GWOT represents a regime of 'watching' that is both universal and asymmetrical. Data doubles, CCTV and airport security exemplify how we are all being closely monitored and subject to disciplinary control, whereas asymmetrical surveillance is 'significantly influenced by race-, gender-, sex-, age-, and class-based distinctions' (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 26). 'Stop and search' routines, racial/religious profiling, and selective border control attests to the differential application of surveillance that so far appears unproblematic to the majority of citizens in liberal democracies.

In their analysis of the politics of surveillance Sean P. Hier and Josh Greenberg perceive the panoptic paradigm to be overextended and the surveillant assemblage as underextended. Their estimation is that both metaphors involve 'a compromising of the political potential of surveillance theory and research' (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 20-21). The former is compromised in the sense that it dominates surveillance studies to a point whereby it stifles alternative conceptions, and the latter for displaying a different type of restrictive tendency in that its primary focus is on the architecture of surveillance. At the same time, the surveillance assemblage metaphor 'was not formulated to offer a definitive statement on surveillance... [but] to encourage surveillance scholars to think outside the panoptic

⁵ Data doubles are 'bits and flows' of processed information in electronic files roughly equivalent to earlier paper files holding various types of information on us (Los 2006: 74).

principle...’ (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 21). In this, they write, it has succeeded, and a ‘major benefit... is that it better prepares us to analyze context-specific applications of surveillance and stakeholder politics’ (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 28). This aspect of surveillance studies is particularly useful as far as assessment of stakeholder politics and agendas underlying the apocalyptic narrative are concerned.

In the case of post-9/11 public vigilance campaigns linked to terrorism, Mike Larsen and Justin Piche observe a convergence of the panopticon and the surveillant assemblage: ‘Vigilance also denotes a role within the surveillant assemblage and a way in which the disciplinary power of the panoptic is merged with the sovereign powers of state security campaigns’ (2009: 196). They go on to situate the campaigns within neoliberal governance due to the precautionary logic informing them.

Bigo states that ‘[c]ritical security studies and surveillance studies have a lot in common, but they rarely interact with one another’ and attempts to rectify the omission in his paper *Security, exception, ban and surveillance* (2006: 46). Due to its limitations in the context of international relations (IR) he proposes to replace the panoptic model with the ‘ban-opticon’ as part of a deconstruction process:

The ban-opticon deconstructs some of the post-September 11 analysis as a “permanent state of emergency” or as a “generalized state of exception”, which reinstates the question of who decides about the exception in the heart of the IR debate: who is sovereign, and who can legitimately name the public enemy. (Bigo 2006: 47)

Whereas Hier and Greenberg do not suggest that the widespread use of the Big Brother imagery of Orwell implies that most people harbor a corresponding fear of surveillance as a totalitarian instrument of control, they nevertheless appear to interpret its use as an expression of ‘pervasive uneasiness about certain kinds of surveillance in contemporary society’. Furthermore, they view the close association between Big Brother and surveillance as denoting consciousness of surveillance as a potential social or political problem in itself, in addition to its crime and disorder control function (Hier and Greenberg 2009a: 4-5). Along with other scholars, Hier and Greenberg subject surveillance systems and practices to critical scrutiny, highlighting problematic dimensions and calling ‘into question [their] moral and ideological bases’ while acknowledging that the ideal future cannot be surveillance-free (2009a: 5). As part of the process of identifying worrying dimensions of surveillance the

contributors to *Surveillance. Power, Problems, and Politics* 'warn against the dangers of orthodoxy and paradigm building within surveillance studies' (Hier and Greenberg 2009a: 5). It appears as if the danger of paradigm building and orthodoxy is as prevalent in surveillance studies as it is in a political climate dominated by threat narratives – the main difference being that the former look for a way out of the dilemmas associated with surveillance rather than reinforcing them.

5.4.3 The role of counter-terrorism and surveillance studies

There will probably always be a need for critical assessment of 'national security' mechanisms and policies, especially in areas of society that are exempted from academic and public scrutiny by default or deliberately, the latter frequently on somewhat questionable grounds. When the media fail to inform the public of unpleasant aspects of GWOT due to censorship imposed by a government, as has been the case in the United States, because of other restrictions such as possible truth embargos, or simply due to a lack of interest, other actors need to take over.

Encouraging independent critical thought is one of the stated aims of higher education. Academics and professionals who possess knowledge that ought to be made public have a responsibility to speak up and in many cases perform a parallel role to that of the media. Mark Cole draws attention to Foucault's call to engage in *parrhesia* - the duty of speaking truth to power (2006: 219). Oscar Gandy echoes this position by urging 'quixotics' to tilt at the windmills they interpret as discriminatory surveillance practices, such as racial profiling (2006: 333). Whereas surveillance studies can be quite useful to understanding the detrimental effects of surveillance and counter-terrorism, their reliance on concepts and notions largely unfamiliar, not only to the wider public, but also to many academics, means these scholars are unlikely to reach the outside world with their cautionary tales.

The voices of well-informed but critically inclined participants in the debate are obviously not enough to challenge the hyper-control paradigm. Human rights organizations, watchdogs and whistleblowers therefore perform a vital role in filling in the (deliberate) information gaps left by politicians and the media, but the responsibility of 'watching the watchers' (Smith 2009) should perhaps lie with us all. On the question of truth-telling and exposing the wrongdoings of governments former British ambassador Richard Dalton is

convinced that transparency tends to produce just governments (BBC 5 February 2011a) which is presumably exactly what liberal democracies should be about.

5.5 Summing up the voices and the discourse

The apocalyptic narrative contains a number of sub-narratives, many of which have similar aims, i.e. the construction of enemies powerful enough to threaten our societies. The apparent existence of formidable enemies in turn requires the declaration of a war fought with extraordinary means by political leaders who claim to be the right men and women for the job. Some of the dominant voices in the terrorism debate may have conflicting agendas and may adopt the metanarrative to varying degrees, but from the perspective of achieving a unified and more peaceful world the narrative's political and social ramifications are somewhat troubling.

Githens-Mazer and Lambert claim that the discourse on radicalization fails in that it is too focused on stereotyping. Their summary of the agendas and contributions of some of the main interlocutors is equally relevant to the metanarrative (2010: 901; see also Durodie 2007; Guillou 2007):

It justifies a policy-making and media approach to radicalization that promotes emotional or politically driven feelings about who poses a security threat over a scientific, empirically derived form of knowledge and understanding about what this threat actually is or is not. It is, in our opinion, telling that the insistence on a discourse reliant on an undefined "conventional wisdom" on radicalization stems from both policy-makers and the media. Both have much at stake – the one to make the general public feel more secure and therefore re-elect them, the other to sell newspapers and airtime. Together with academics who support the conventional wisdom, they create a feedback-loop: politicians point to media and commentator support for their views, the media point to policy-makers and academics, and academics seek funding and "impact" by toeing the line of conventional wisdom. Deviation from conventional wisdom requires one group of participants to break this cycle – at the tangible risk, variously, of livelihood, of not being re-elected, of losing sales, and of losing research funding.

It is claimed that some experts who forward the 'Islamic Terrorism' narrative enjoy too close ties to the policy-making establishment (Jackson 2007: 398-399), but there are presumably enough academics willing to challenge the 'conventional wisdom'. The problem is, they do not receive much media attention, or their messages are possibly too complicated to be appreciated by the general public, as argued in the previous section. No doubt most people who subscribe to the apocalyptic narrative truly believe the threat to be real, but the years

that have passed since the story was first told belie its continued relevance, albeit small-scale terrorist attacks continue to take place. It may be the continuation of such attacks, together with the persistence of seemingly credible sub-narratives linked to the supposed existential threat posed by Islam that allow stakeholders in the shape of politicians, the police, security professionals, intelligence analysts, and the media to perpetuate the feedback loop, which in turn leads the public to believe that there is substance to the narrative.

6. The politics of terrorism and counter-terrorism

Indicative of the scope of media attention following 9/11 many of us will always remember where we were when we heard about or saw the images of planes crashing into the Twin Towers in New York City. At the same time, it is important to realize how things happening in the rest of the world were completely or partially overshadowed by that signal event, meaning most of us will be hard pushed to recall other world events occurring in the autumn of 2001. As *Newsweek* commented on 8 October that year ‘...it’s been all bin Laden, all the time. He diverted the attention of the world’s most outspoken media and critics, allowing several scandal-ridden politicians around the globe to escape an unwelcome glare’ (2001, 8 October a: 3). Later, as bin Laden faded into the background Saddam Hussein was designated the ‘new’ main foe and over the past few years the world’s attention has been focused on hyper-terrorism in particular, and on the perceived threat posed by Islam in general. In the wake of his death, however, it’s been ‘all bin Laden’ again.

A factor contributing to the success of the apocalyptic narrative may be the sense of exigency generated by the cataclysmic imagery of 9/11, but that would not be sufficient to explain the continued sense of urgency over the years during which none of the expected apocalyptic events have taken place. It is probable that recurring warnings of imminent large-scale attacks and regular reports that such attacks have been thwarted may account for the public’s continued belief in the reality underlying the threat. It is also conceivable that polarity consciousness and the associated construction of ‘difference’ and the ‘enemy within’ have had a huge impact on perceptions of risk.

Crenshaw claims that '[d]espite its significance, little systematic attention has been paid to the politics of the counterterrorism policy process' (2006b: 192, note 1). Iselin Nordenhaug and Jan Oskar Engene similarly hold that a ruling theory explaining how counter-terrorism politics are shaped does not exist. In their own account, it is possible to view the process from several vantage points, one of which is 'strategic rationality' whereby all parties in the relationship conceive of terrorists as rational actors who respond to a government's actions (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 50). This approach conforms with some theories in criminology as well as with a key rationale of liberal democratic theory, while at the same time conflicting with crime statistics and, more importantly, with official and popular conceptions of the irrational nature of the 'new' breed of terrorists. Confusing matters even further are findings that the allegedly 'irrational' hyper-terrorists do adapt to a changing situation by finding ways of circumventing new security measures almost as soon as they are introduced. In addition, Dingley maintains that 'terrorist leaders are often very well educated, even the troops they lead into battle are rarely illiterate: it takes some education and reasoning ability to form and organise a movement, it requires managerial skills to maintain and equip it and it requires strategic skills to lead it' (2010: 6; see also Silke 2003). A case for and against the presence of rational choice and strategic rationality in terrorism may therefore be argued.

A theory that can be used to examine political narratives as well as political action is what Nordenhaug and Engene call 'symbol politics'⁶, politics that can have both a psychological and symbolic aim. This approach differs from an instrumental conception of politics in which decision-making aims to produce concrete results. Symbol politics do not need to be causal or instrumental in the way of expected outcomes (2008: 54-55). Nordenhaug and Engene point out that symbol politics manifest in degrees and that it can be difficult to prove that a decision has been based on this approach. In their own efforts to assess post-9/11 policies they view symbol politics as merely one variable through which it is possible to examine political action.

It is worth noting Nordenhaug and Engenes' observation that the reasoning behind symbol politics can be a need for authorities 'to demonstrate firmness of action, to deter terrorists from committing acts of terror, or to show solidarity with other countries that have been hit

⁶ 'Symbolpolitikk' in Norwegian.

by terrorism' (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 55 – my translation). This might explain why countries unlikely to become major terrorism targets nevertheless have pursued significant symbol politics in the context of GWOT. This account of politics is also relevant to the present context due to the manner in which instrumental politics tend to be subject to criticism based on the extent to which they are effective or have undesirable outcomes (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 55), whereas symbol politics do not generate the same level of scrutiny.

The question of whether we can trust politics informed by GWOT is highly relevant. Arguing the case against Wikileaks in a television debate Carl W. Ford, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (INR) during the Bush era, listed the elaborate procedures set up to oversee the executive, concluding that existing checks and balances are sufficient (BBC 5 February 2011a). Telling a different story, albeit not limited to the post-9/11 era, is the fact that we at regular intervals are informed that governments and politicians are unaware of illegal surveillance activities and counter-terrorism operations taking place on their watch, as it were. The regularity of breaches of public trust therefore points to another conclusion than that drawn by Ford, suggesting instead that existing democratic checks and balances are both insufficient and inefficient.

As far as US policy in the area of terrorism is concerned Crenshaw notes that

American counterterrorism policy is not just a response to the threat of terrorism, whether at home or abroad, but a reflection of the domestic political process. Perceptions of the threat of terrorism and determination and implementation of policy occur in the context of a policy debate involving government institutions, the media, interest groups, and the elite and mass publics. The issue of terrorism tends to appear prominently on the national policy agenda as a result of highly visible and symbolic attacks on Americans or American property. However, the threat is interpreted through a political lens created by the diffused structure of power within the American government. (2006b: 183).

Under Tony Blair the UK eagerly adopted the gung-ho methods of the Americans, abandoning the more nuanced approach to counter-terrorism acquired as a result of mistakes made in the fight against the IRA. This led British counter-terrorism measures after 9/11 to be labeled 'draconian'. In Britain, as in most countries having joined the US in the war on terror, it is becoming more and more difficult to defend the notion that the increased terrorist threat is unrelated to the manner in which that war is fought.

A troubling aspect of counter-terrorism policy after 9/11 is that low-risk countries engage in activities and adopt measures that can be as invasive and undemocratic as those that have been exposed in America. Post-9/11 counter-terrorism is not just a question of might being right, but of might thinking that it represents the only right and the rest of the world buying into that worldview. The US call for globalized security pressures others to collaborate and threatens to 'render national borders obsolete' (Bigo 2006: 47). America's ability to overtly impose its security agenda on the rest of the world is above all evident in the inconveniences and disciplinary regime forced upon the airline industry and its passengers. The nation's ability to fight the war covertly can be found in illegal operations carried out with or among its allies. Instances of clandestine warfare include SDU activities and the practice of 'extraordinary rendition'⁷.

6.1 A state of emergency

Attempts to extend or normalize emergency is interpreted by Bigo as 'a technique of government by unease' (2006: 63). More than two years into the Obama administration it would be tempting to dismiss the exaggerated responses to 9/11 as the panic reactions of a nation shocked to its very core by an enemy attack on American soil. It is nevertheless a situation that seems likely to endure based on a single moment seen as capable of transforming history that gave 'leaders the right to reframe the boundary of the normal and the exception, to reframe what is law and the rule of law and what is outside of the law in any case' (Bigo 2006: 53-54). Promoted and reinforced by key members of the Bush administration and echoed by allied political leaders, the exigent message quickly became a 'truth' legitimating and facilitating the consolidation of executive power and the introduction of extraordinary counter-terrorism measures in liberal democracies, regardless of how great the threat to each individual nation was at the time.

Romarheim identifies rationality as a key feature of communication. To illustrate the relationship between fear and rationality he quotes Rampton and Stauber: 'Fear can make people do other things that they would not do if they were thinking rationally' (Rampton and Stauber (2003), cited in Romarheim 2005: 32). In the case of 9/11 it appears that the mix of

⁷ Extraordinary rendition is the extrajudicial abduction of a terrorist suspect in one country, who is then moved or flown to another country wherein he can be detained indefinitely and subjected to torture. As noted in Wikipedia, critics of the US practice of extraordinary rendition also refer to the practice as 'torture by proxy' (Wikipedia 2011a; see also The New York Times [NYT] 19 March 2005).

fear and rationality led to a somewhat different route than the one outlined by Rampton and Stauber. From a realistic standpoint it would be understandable if the sense of emergency generated by a sophisticated terrorist attack had temporarily suspended rational thinking among US politicians but, years later, the sense of emergency shows few signs of abating. Unless we are to believe that two successive US administrations have completely lost their sense of perspective as a result of 9/11 the decision to uphold the state of emergency suggests that the initial overreactions to the event did not stem from a suspension of rational thought in the face of fear. Instead, they imply that the fear appeals were politically constructed and that influential actors analyzing the situation realized the potential benefits that could be reaped. Put differently, rational choice may have determined that prolonging the emergency could be beneficial to neo-conservative governance and to the realization of a risk-free society.

There are many actors for whom the creation of fear can be beneficial aside from the public institutions associated with security (Torp 10 March 2006). Actors in the private security industry have a vested interest in conflict situations that require their services nationally and internationally and moreover cooperate with government institutions. The scale of their activities has been both unparalleled and explosive since 9/11 as witnessed by the meteoric rise of Blackwater (Scahill 2007). A troubling aspect of their involvement is the absence of accountability.

Many people have become slightly more level-headed since 9/11, as witnessed by more and more prominent figures in Britain criticizing the British government for exacerbating the terror threat, including a Home Office minister and Manningham-Buller of MI5 (Norton-Taylor 20 July 2010; *London Lite* 27 September 2007). The public inquiries that have been held into the Iraq war appear to reflect the concerns that many Britons have had along the way.

Whether it is possible to reverse the securitization trend will in part depend on the persuasiveness of the security lobby and other powerful stakeholders. As to the question of how long the war on terror will last criminology tends to divide the history of policing and criminal justice into crime-fighting paradigms that parallel social and political trends. Thus far, the war on terror has lasted nearly a decade. In his assessment of how the war against

al-Qaeda and the Taliban is proceeding Sir David Richards, head of British forces, has not only stated that it is not possible to achieve a military victory against them, but has estimated that Britain will have to live with Islamic terrorism for at least another thirty years (in Sengupta 15 November 2010). If America continues to successfully sell the apocalyptic narrative and keeps its early promises that it will hunt down every last terrorist, it is likely to last indefinitely given that GWOT has itself generated terrorism and that new causes for resentment among individuals and groups ready to resort to violence will no doubt continue to arise.

6.2 Exceptionalism

Croft and Moore write that 'western security thinking has an interesting history of being "shocked" into change by singular events', each serving as an impetus for evolution (2010: 821). The notion that '...exceptionalism as a policy originating in national security crises will and perhaps must lead to permanent consolidation of executive power' (de Lint 2004: 135⁸) has found a receptive audience in those who believe that 9/11 was an instance of unparalleled significance, requiring exceptional responses. Many of the voices included here issue warnings regarding such responses to terrorism (e.g. Smeulers and van Niekerk 2009; Bigo and Guild 2007; Berry 2004; Kappeler and Kappeler 2004; Heradstveit and Pugh 2003; de Lint 2004). The problem is, opposition to GWOT tends to equal heresy.

According to Heradstveit and Pugh the extension of the concept of terrorism to an increasing number of perceived 'enemies' of the state is part of a process whereby governments aim to equate dissent and opposition with crime. They further interpret the changed concept as part of 'the Neocon doctrine of "preventive" war against all possible future threats' to what they term the 'Hegemon' (2003: 3, 14). Such a development implies the erosion of the democratic right to resistance.

The visual images from 9/11 are capable of generating horror and could conveniently be used by politicians to advocate exaggerated responses that seemed reasonable at the time, but less so as time went by. The apocalyptic narrative's continued hold on the public imagination suggests the presence of additional factors. According to Lazarus and Gould, the fear rhetoric was adopted readily due to a 'complex and contradictory neo-liberal political

⁸ de Lint is referring to the political philosophy of Karl Schmitt

environment' wherein exceptionalism 'has deeper social and political roots than the iconic collapse of the New York World Trade Center towers' (2007: 4-5). Given the history of terror attacks aimed at the US and its interests, however, the event should not have been sufficient cause for the rest of the world to buy into the moral panic experienced by Americans.

Many members of the security lobby tend to describe counter-terrorism and surveillance critics as out of touch with reality, but a world free of terrorism and crime is a myth. Yet both the police and the government rely heavily on that myth for a number of reasons, one of which is to achieve the level of security perceived necessary for a society to function in a reasonably orderly fashion. Another reason is that a state of exception inevitably leads to calls for exceptional measures. Exceptionalism offers opportunities for an extension of powers and, as far as the security sector is concerned, tends to include the allocation of more resources.

6.2.1 How exceptional was 9/11?

In light of the apocalyptic visions conjured by political leaders during the Cold War claims of a new and even more serious threat indicate the tenuousness of the latest threat narratives and their success is all the more remarkable for having occurred in a long-standing climate of fear and risk (Lasch 1979/1991; Agrell 2005).

Alternative conceptions of 9/11 challenge the apocalyptic narrative. One writer referring to the history of terrorism in Europe is Rik Coolhaet, who states clearly that 'Europe did not wake up to terrorism on 9/11' (2010: 857). For their part, Didier Bigo and Elspeth Guild likewise argue that the event did not represent terrorism in a new form, but that the attacks were 'merely an exception in terms of the scale of both the violence and the response of the authorities' (Bigo and Guild 2007: 109). Furthermore,

[t]he idea that terrorism of that kind was radically new could only be sustained in a country that had not recently experienced political violence on its own soil, not to mention war or acts of aggression. The supposed novelty of the situation has been exaggerated by the radicalisation of the ideology and language of war, which essentialises the enemy as 'evil' in order to mobilise the population. The lack of structures at police and judicial levels for dealing with violence of this nature has also provided an opportunity for the development of military-like rules. (Bigo and Guild 2007: 109)

Bigo writes that the categorization of 9/11 as 'hyper-terrorism' on an exceptional scale needs to be rewritten 'as a series of destructive bombings of varying intensity' when viewed from the perspective of terrorist bombings that were to follow, including 3/11 (Madrid) and 7/7 (London) (2006: 49).

Crenshaw (2006a) and Jackson (2007) also contend that the notion of a new form of 'Islamic terrorism' is flawed. Crenshaw is convinced that it 'is a way of defining the threat so as to mobilise both public and elite support for costly responses with long-term and uncertain pay-offs' (cited in Croft and Moore 2010: 831). She refutes contemporary tales by reminding us of earlier terrorist acts, one of which possesses similarities to that of 9/11 in that four planes were hijacked on the same day in 1970 (Crenshaw 2006a: 50).

Fine's outline of twentieth century terrorism also includes a record of Third World terrorism aimed at the western world, in which the involvement of communist countries 'shaped Western conspiracy theories with regard to global terror' (2010: 282). Although it is unclear if he subscribes to the apocalyptic narrative, Fine, unlike the theorists quoted above, contends that religious agenda terrorism is a novel form of terrorism that 'has not been receiving due analytic attention', the unique features of which is not understood in the west (2010: 283). Different tactics and strategies, contrasting theological perceptions of death and notions of holy war are among the special features highlighted by Fine.

As the role of Islam, the concept of Jihad, and suicide attacks have been the object of numerous studies, especially following 9/11, it would be easy to underestimate Fine's contribution to the terrorism debate. In view of the importance of language for understanding social phenomena, the fact that so many terrorist studies have been conducted in the western world, and that these studies tend to focus on familiar terrorist acts, however, his emphasis on the importance of studying religious primary texts in order to fully understand religious agenda terrorism may well be justified. At the very least such research might compensate for the lack of 'an adequate terminology' for describing Jihadi-type terrorism and could conceivably increase our understanding of the phenomenon (Fine 2010: 283).

Bigo and Guild's claim concerning a radicalization of the ideology and language of war encapsulates some of the most salient factors at play in the post-9/11 world. The claim of

'exceptional' circumstances flies in the face of a long history of terrorism aimed at liberal democracies. The US and the UK alike have been terror targets for decades. Similarly, Spain has a history of terrorist attacks by Basque separatists, attacks that continue to this day. Unfortunately, 9/11 entailed that 'counterterrorism policy, broadly expressed, would be framed far more by the American agenda than [sic] it would be by Britain's own experiences in struggles with terrorists' (Croft and Moore 2010: 822).

A possibly unintended consequence of the new liberal democratic security paradigm is that it allows nominally democratic states such as Israel and Russia to legitimately ramp up their repressive measures against 'terrorist' Palestinians and Chechens respectively. Similarly, states that are democracies in name only, or downright authoritarian states, use the new terminology to justify their long-standing use of exceptional measures.

6.3 Executive prerogative and neo-conservatism

As seen above, reversals of democracy can take many forms. The pressure to expand executive powers under the ongoing emergency has been especially evident in the United States and the United Kingdom, but the process has also been witnessed elsewhere. Granted, 'the expansion of sovereign power through the extension of the surveillant gaze of the state' (Larsen and Piche 2009: 201) did not arise with 9/11, but the specter of terrorism appears to be a more compelling threat than that of crime, or even organized crime.

In a state of emergency the rule of law comes under pressure whereby suspension of or derogation from the law is justified by the exigent circumstances. Although the European Union was in some respects divided on how to fight the war on terror, one nation did not seem to harbor doubts about what needed to be done, as noted above:

The situation in the UK, to derogate from the European Convention of Human rights [sic], is unique in Europe, in that all other countries have not chosen this "solution". Also, in the UK, this was not a "suspension of the law", but specific limited derogations from the rule of law, creating a long struggle between the executive power and the judges to define the boundaries of the right to derogate. (Bigo 2006: 48)

Elsewhere, '[s]ome national derogations were enlarged in their scope and in their justifications' (Bigo 2006: 49). In the nation where the war on terror originated 'US courts have condemned the Bush administration for acting beyond the law and at the lowest ebb of presidential authority' (Winseck 2009: 167). In the opinion of Smeulers and van Niekerk the

war on terror allowed policy measures associated with wartime powers to be implemented whereby democratic controls were bypassed or rendered inoperable (2009: 335).

The ongoing struggle between the executive and the judiciary stemming from 9/11 continues to this day and conflicts with the separation of powers, meaning the courts may be interfered with or to a certain extent ruled by politicians. Roach (2007) and Dyzenhaus (2007) both note a judicial timidity or deference to the executive in matters of national security which surely makes it easier for politicians to impose their will on the courts.

Writing during the Bush era Bonnie Berry highlights the use of fear rhetoric as an attempt to garner support for expanded executive power (2004: 161). De Lint contends that the neoconservative movement in America 'differs from religious and political conservatism in that it rejuvenates an ideological consolidation around leadership as a good in itself' (2004: 135). He further asserts that the Bush administration's attempts to re-articulate autocratic rule might in the short term enable America's political ambitions, but are at the same time counter-productive to the war on terror.

An element that could explain the persuasiveness of the security lobby's narratives can possibly be found in remnants of pre-Enlightenment loyalty to the King and the ruling classes and an accompanying faith in their benign intentions. The frequently misplaced trust in these days being extended to the security and intelligence sectors. The early eavesdropping powers of the NSA are closely linked to the Patriot Act which gave the US government wide powers to monitor personal information about its citizens (Berry 2004: 169). Looking back at a nation perceptibly less united and strong than before 9/11, the official title of the Patriot Act is somewhat ironic and has clearly not lived up to its aims: *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism* (United States Department of the Treasury 2001). Perhaps its lack of success is due to the extended use of inappropriate tools.

Bigo interprets reactions to the ostensibly new threat as 'a backlash to archaic visions of exceptionalism as a solution, either by war or by the dream of a global control of all the individuals on the move around the planet' (Bigo 2006: 49). His interpretation encompasses the combined throwback to pre-democratic practices on the part of political leaders and the role played by counter-terrorism and new surveillance technologies, the latter linked to a

strong belief in progress and meliorism, both of which are prominent notions in liberal democratic theory:

The combination of the violence of the clandestine organization, the archaism and will to monitor on a global scale and to control the future of the governments has paved the way for a programme which could be laughable if it did not create local tragedies. But this political programme of the perpetual war on terror, or the perpetual emergency situation itself, masks the continuity of the technologically deterministic belief that technology can fix any political problem. (Bigo 2006: 49)

Eric Hobsbawm links the Bush administration's neo-conservative agenda with 'the Puritan colonists' certainty of being God's instrument on earth and with the American Revolution – which, like all major revolutions, developed world-missionary convictions...' However doomed it is to fail in the long run, 'while it continues, it will go on making the world an intolerable place for those directly exposed to US armed occupation and an unsafe place for the rest of us' (Hobsbawm 25 June 2005). Former advisor to Tony Blair, Robert Cooper, expresses a slightly different view of future international relations: 'even the most civilised "post-modern" state will find itself obliged to revert when necessary to the means of self-defence favoured by Hobbes or Machiavelli: force and guile, pre-emptive attack, or deception' (in Walden 2 November 2003). The question is if Cooper's choice of approach is actually conducive to world peace as the use force and deception tends to backfire in the long run as we have seen in the war on terror.

The society envisioned by the Bush administration resembles a Hobbesian-type polis in that Hobbes' idea of the social contract implies obedience to a strong and sovereign ruler. In the contemporary case the ruler believes himself capable of deciding whether or not 'his' country should go to war. Any damage sustained by subjects under his rule or anyone else, for that matter, is the price to be paid for security. The revival of the torture debate following the death of Osama bin Laden has former Justice Department official John Yoo, among others, defending brutal interrogations and lauding the 'tough decisions taken by the Bush administration' (Shane and Savage 3 May 2011).

With respect to Judge Anna Diggs Taylor's scolding criticism of the Bush administration's authoritarian-type rule Winseck speaks of 'the increasing but uncomfortable tendency for "the rule of men" to replace the "rule of law"' (2009: 167). Instead of an extraordinary emergency 'which reframes the relations of politics... [September 11] is the regression of

some politicians towards habits that reveal the logic of a form of governmentality which informs deeply what is called liberalism and generates illiberal practices' (Bigo 2006: 51, see also Heradstveit and Pugh 2003).

In a move reminiscent of George W. Bush's push for increased NSA eavesdropping powers the current prime minister of Norway, Jens Stoltenberg, has pushed hard for an expansion of the surveillance powers of the police and security services through the EU Data Retention Directive (DRD) in the face of opposition from influential quarters. He is convinced that such powers represent an efficient way of combating terrorism and serious crime.

Along with other critics of the DRD jurist Jon Wessel-Aas disputes these claims, calling for more evidence of the alleged crime-fighting potential of the directive based on a conviction that it is possible to circumvent electronic tracking (2009). His view is supported by other actors in the know given that the European Confederation of Police raised the matter of circumvention in 2005. The ability of terrorists and members of organized crime to bypass crime-fighting measures is by now so well-known that the myth of successful containment or eradication through the use of technology seems naïve at best.

It is perhaps not surprising that leaders of liberal democracies have been tempted to take advantage of the sense of destiny and urgency associated with the war on terror. Bigo and Guild describe the situation as follows (2007: 107):

[E]ach person in charge considers himself or herself as a new Solon, creating new rules for a renewed community. This "royal" position is so "comfortable" that the temptation is strong to maintain the exceptional moment for as long as possible; and a permanent state of emergency is then instituted by encouraging a constant state of fear and unease among the population through "alert codes" and a vocabulary of reassurance by professionals of politics that in fact reactivates and reinforces fears.

Regarding opposition to the DRD in Norway, Stoltenberg ignores dissent from his coalition partners and fails to heed warnings concerning possible privacy violations from other political parties and the Norwegian data protection watchdog, the Data Inspectorate. Wessel-Aas asserts that in addition to ignoring the warnings of the Inspectorate and its EU counterpart, the government disregards the opinions of independent legal professionals who view the directive as potentially damaging to the rule of law (2009).

Some of the arguments forwarded by Stoltenberg and the minister of justice, Knut Storberget, have been equated with emotive statements, fear appeals and characterized as smacking of populism (Holgersen and Braathen 10 October 2009; Korssjøen 13 December 2010). A telling feature of DRD debates is that the security lobby inevitably introduces an emotive component by focusing on how the police have solved individual cases involving the abuse of children, for example, with evidence obtained from electronic communications. This is a successful tactic because there are few people willing to insist that preventing sexual abuse should not be a police priority. The security lobby's counterparts, on the other hand, are more concerned with higher level democratic principles and public policy, which is perhaps the level one would expect authorities to be concerned with in the first place. At any rate, the security lobby's arguments are unlikely to convince the organizations and people who see the DRD as a threat to freedom of communication and privacy, some of whom are likely to be as knowledgeable about the topic of security as Stoltenberg and Storberget.

The Norwegian Labour Party has been in power longer than any other political party and many Norwegians will recall repeated allegations, in some cases based on facts, that the party and the labor movement has a tradition of closely monitoring political opponents and allies alike, and has had much closer ties to the intelligence community than is considered healthy in a democratic state (Johansen, Jørgensen and Sjøe 1992; Lund 1996/Dok.nr. 15).

The emergence of new liberal democratic (states)men of action, so to speak, seems to a large extent to have been facilitated by the 'extraordinary emergency' and the US-initiated war on terror. The American neo-conservative approach to foreign policy is summed up as follows: 'patriotism is good, world government is not, and "statesmen" (sic) should be capable of distinguishing friends from enemies' (de Lint 2004: 134, citing Kristol). To the detriment of the world as a whole it is evident that statesmen have done an excellent job in appreciating the latter distinctions.

With the emergence of the Tea Party grassroots movement proof of the neo-conservative trend in America is probably more readily available today than it was under the Bush administration. In his documentary on the movement journalist Andrew Neil uncovers 'a network which seems to go out of its way to find out what could divide Americans and then

pour salt into the divisions to make sure it really hurts' (5 January 2011). In addition to opposition to 'big government' and federal interference in the lives of ordinary Americans, a recurring theme in the longing for a 'new' America is that of race, with some claiming that President Obama is a closet Muslim and his politics a threat to the American way of life.

British prime minister David Cameron and German chancellor Angela Merkel apparently subscribe to one neo-conservative tenet. In late 2010 Merkel declared that German multiculturalism was defunct and in early 2011 Cameron urged Britain to abandon it, insisting that the 'doctrine of state multiculturalism has failed'. He appears to link radicalization and terrorism with a society that encourages different cultures to lead separate lives. He may be correct in emphasizing the need to confront those who promote Islamic extremism and deny members of their own community rights that are common elsewhere in the UK, but some of his statements could be quite damaging to community relations: 'Frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and much more active, muscular liberalism' (BBC 5 February 2011b). Unfortunately, 'muscular liberalism' sounds alarmingly similar to the confrontational and polarizing agenda the US has pursued lately. Although Cameron is careful to point out the difference between Islamist extremism and Islam, not all his listeners may appreciate the difference.

The emphasis on difference, rather than unity, is growing stronger in liberal democracies in general and politically expressed hostility to diversity can easily create even more polarized societies. When prominent politicians criticize multiculturalism, they appear to join neo-conservatives at odds with earlier trends in international relations wherein notions like openness, moderation, unity, harmony, interconnectedness, interdependence, diversity, reconciliation, compromise, mutual respect and dialogue between peoples are seen as crucial to world peace and stability.

6.4 Secrecy and national security

ELISE's above definition of liberty holds that security measures must be limited and open to judicial scrutiny but de Lint has identified another facet of neo-conservatism that can obstruct judicial scrutiny and moreover be conducive to autocratic rule, i.e. secrecy (de Lint 2004): 'Where the ideal of democracy is personal privacy and open government, Friedrich (1957), defined totalitarianism as that by which private information about individuals is

made open, and that which should be open – government information – is kept secret’ (de Lint 2004: 145).

If we look more closely at the current state of liberal democracies they show signs of moving closer to totalitarian ideals than democratic ones. Through a multitude of surveillance technologies governments know more and more about their citizens. When whistleblowers reveal their dirty secrets democratic leaders’ appeals to honoring governments’ ‘privacy’ needs are accompanied by threats that their dealings will have to become even more closed and more secret. Such threats expose a marked lack of concern for openness and accountability.

Akin to the ‘dark figure’ of crime indicating the number of unreported crimes in a given society de Lint refers to ‘a dark figure of politics’ representing ‘that quantity of political “action” which is taken and removed from public view’ (de Lint 2004: 145). Every country has its fair share of secrets, but as in numerous other areas the US undoubtedly boasts the ‘world’s largest’ community of dark secrets. It seems the era ushered in by 9/11 is exceptional in this respect as well given that ‘the G.W. Bush administration is regarded as the most secretive government of the past 40 years’ (de Lint 2004: 146).

In 2010, the Washington Post published the results of a two-year review of ‘Top Secret America’, the secret world of intelligence created in the wake of 9/11. They fittingly call this enterprise ‘accountability journalism’. The investigation ‘describes and analyzes a defense and intelligence structure that has become so large, so unwieldy, and so secretive that no one know how much money it costs, how many people it employs, or whether it is making the United States safer’ (*The Washington Post* 2010; see also Hess 11 July 2009).

The investigation raises major problem complexes (Verdens Gang [VG] 21 July 2010). In the US alone, the secret communities are spread across 10,000 locations, and comprise around ‘1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies [that] work on Top Secret programs related to counter-terrorism, homeland security, and intelligence’ (*The Washington Post* 2010). To this we might add the number of intelligence and counter-terrorist outfits on foreign soil. The annual number of reports produced is said to be in the region of 50,000, approximately 845,000 people possess the highest security clearance, and

the findings point to an inflated security sector with which authorities have insufficient control (VG 21 July 2010).

The figures certainly support Max Weber's claim in respect of how bureaucracies tend to 'swell', as well as his views regarding the demand for secrecy where issues of power and knowledge are concerned (Weber 1922/1990: 145-146). Add to the above figures Robert Gates' admission that the Ministry of Defense alone does not know how many private actors it has contracted and the whole security industry appears to be out of control. The findings moreover suggest that the aforementioned assurances by Carl W. Ford that the US possesses the oversight necessary to prevent abuses are hardly credible.

As if to prove their obsession with secrecy American heads of intelligence, politicians, and members of the Obama administration were quick to criticize the Washington Post's review, if not all aspects of it (VG 21 July 2010). A revealing and poignant feature of the disclosure is that as more and more official agencies and private actors collect more and more information about private individuals the responsible authorities are incapable of accounting for the information gathering sector itself. Furthermore, any public debate on issues that are so crucial to democratic governance will be hampered by the notion of official secrets and the inevitable silence of some of the main actors. Contrary to predictions that the investigation would spark widespread debate nothing substantial appears to have come out of it.

Weber and Foucault highlight the relationship between knowledge and power, and in the context of education the latter relates that '[t]he way in which all levels of knowledge became measured, calculated and authenticated by the apparatus of the school (and in general by all the educational apparatuses) is an expression of the fact that in our society a piece of knowledge has the right to exercise power' (1973: 4). Knowledge may well have been primarily associated with education historically, but with respect to the war on terror knowledge and information produced by educational institutions and political analysts is frequently challenged and dismissed, thus severing the traditional link. Secrecy is also inextricably linked to power – meaning 'what one knows and does not know determines who has power and how that power can be utilized' (Lowry (1980), cited in de Lint 2004: 146).

The possible reversal of other hierarchies of power is evident. From the secluded domain of security and intelligence professionals invisible power may be exercised over their political masters according to the degree to which they choose to convey secrets necessary for action to be taken. Even in a nation the size of Norway, where these communities are comparatively small and presumably easier to scrutinize and control, the Parliamentary Intelligence Oversight Committee (the EOS Committee) is sometimes confronted with cases of illegal surveillance or intelligence activities revealed by the media, rather than as part of its role as overseer. Irrespective of one's place in the (security) hierarchy the possibly 'best' part of the current relationship between knowledge, power, and secrecy is that information need neither be authenticated nor revealed, merely hinted at through reference to 'interests of national security' as demonstrated in the novel *The Enemy Within*. Whichever level secrets are being kept at, excessive secrecy can be a stumbling block to efficient governance, inter-agency cooperation and transparency.

In the earlier mentioned television debate on Wikileaks former diplomats Richard Dalton and Carne Ross defended the notion that (the organization's faults notwithstanding) the world is better off with Wikileaks on the grounds that they have exposed wrongdoing, because they have revealed that diplomacy is not a very honest business, because truth-telling and accountability are essential to just governance, and because almost no decision is better for being conducted in secret. Perhaps the most compelling argument put forward was the notion that if governments told the truth we would not need Wikileaks (BBC 5 February 2011a). Interestingly, they receive support from a somewhat unexpected source in that Norwegian libraries interpret attempts to silence Wikileaks as a threat to freedom of information (*Norsk telegrambyrå* [NTB] 20 December 2010).

6.5 The temporal factor: *Futur anterieur*

The sense of emergency generated by 9/11, the ensuing consolidation of executive powers, and the vast expansion of the secrecy sector in some parts of the world all bear witness to the age of counter-terrorism. Another sea change occurring after 2001 amply demonstrates the effect of linguistic construction on perceptions of threat. Nordenhaug and Engene point to a 'grammatical change' whereby terrorism went from being characterized in the future tense to being described in the present tense (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 66-67). Put differently, the perceived threat went from being a potential to a stated real threat, a

linguistic device conducive to the atmosphere of imminent danger. Others state that the change of temporality in risk assessments is in itself not new, as '[o]ne of the most important dimensions of post-panoptic theory has involved the use of the French *futur anterieur*, the expression of a future about which one can speak definitely because it is already past' (Genosko and Thompson 2006: 130).

Changes occurring as a result of a *futur anterieur* outlook moreover encompass the political logic of pre-emption, previously a military term that the Bush administration turned into a GWOT doctrine. The doctrine spread into law, where the introduction of a new form of criminal law is entitled 'pre-active' by Erling J. Husabø. Pre-active criminal law is one of three means of combating terrorism, the other two being 'pure' criminal law encompassing specialised legislation, and the terrorism-as-war model (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 38).

Pre-active criminal law contains an element of pre-emption in that terrorist acts are sought uncovered and thwarted before they occur. The principle is damaging to legal protection on several counts: apart from setting aside the presumption of innocence, it can deny suspects access to court, undermines due process, criminalizes preparatory acts, allows convictions on the basis of such factors as subjective intent and motive, in addition to relying on circumstantial evidence rather than being based on a concrete act of terror (Husabø 2004: 180; Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 40). Calling for an international debate on legal problems arising from GWOT Husabø argues that the whole focus of criminal law has shifted, that the pre-active principle implies a lack of legal safeguards and that it raises 'tensions in regard to the principle of legality' (2004: 180).

Bigo succinctly summarizes the current situation and logic:

The belief in the imminent danger of the Apocalypse justifies at the same time "proactive" policing actions, "pre-emptive" military strikes, "administrative and exceptional justice", where anticipations of behaviour are considered as a sufficient element to act... [Decisions] are based on profiles, on assumptions concerning the possible future, or more exactly the belief that the intelligence services have a grammar of "*futur anterieur*", that they can read the future as a form of the past through their technologies of profiling. (2006: 61)

In addition to his emphasis on pre-emption and exceptionalism, a key element of Bigo's statement is the idea that with sufficient technology and parameters it is possible to successfully profile a future terrorist. It is unlikely that anyone would subscribe to the idea

that terrorism can only be combated after the fact, but the legal price being paid for the preemptive approach to terrorism seems excessively high.

6.6 Terrorism and its causes

The need to contextualize GWOT has been highlighted earlier. Crenshaw and Durodie name one of the major causes of terrorism today, the former stating explicitly that: 'The United States has been susceptible to international terrorism primarily because of its engagement on the world scene and its choice of allies' (Crenshaw 2006a: 61; Durodie 2007). Fear appeals may have convinced many of us that every community is equally at risk, but the US will probably continue to be one of the main terrorist targets.

To what extent is the GWOT vision shared by US citizens? From the outset president Bush had considerable support among Americans and although hindsight may have created a more nuanced picture of the situation, recent reactions to Osama bin Laden's death reveal that many Americans are still in favor of the war. Owing to the influence of threat narratives, perhaps, we have not seen anything close to the protests that took place during the Vietnam war.

At a later stage of GWOT the British public's opposition to the war in Iraq was to be much fiercer and more vocal than reactions in the United States. In an apparent state of Solonic insight, however, Tony Blair's determination to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with Bush led him to ignore advice and warnings from within his own country. The decision was so controversial that one commentator has this to say about it: 'If future historians will scratch their heads over why the war was fought at all, many will struggle to understand why Blair sacrificed nearly everything to be at George W. Bush's side in fighting it' (Freedland 12 February 2006).

The tendency to see GWOT as a battle between reason/civilization and fanaticism/barbarism is strong in liberal democracies. The willingness to draw such drastic conclusions attests to a deeply rooted fear of the 'Other' and reveals exactly the type of ignorance and prejudice which led Lord Cromer to separate the 'oriental' from 'us'. In the words of Carl Gustav Jung:

Since it is universally believed that man is merely what his consciousness knows of itself, he regards himself as harmless and so adds stupidity to iniquity. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and still go on happening, but it is always "the others" who do them. (Jung 1958: 67)

Nietzsche's advice to distrust all in whom the impulse to punish is powerful seems oddly appropriate because notions of revenge tend to bring out the worst in people regardless of who their perceived foe is. As revealed by studies of terrorists, witnessing injustices calling for vengeance can serve as a catalyst for joining terrorist groups (Silke 2003). The primacy of revenge over due process is evident in the killing of Osama bin Laden and indications that the US will not hesitate to take out other major terrorists in the same manner. Emblematic of the cycle of revenge the urge to retaliate is undoubtedly mirrored among individuals who see bin Laden's death as both an outrage and as yet another example of the double legal standards applied by the United States.

Jung further holds that a projection of evil

strengthens the opponent's position in the most effective way, because the projection carries the *fear* which we involuntarily and secretly feel for our own evil over to the other side and considerably increases the formidableness of his threat. What is even worse, our lack of insight deprives us of the *capacity to deal with evil*. (Jung 1958: 68 - original emphasis)

The failure to deal successfully with terrorism stems in part from an unwillingness or inability to understand the phenomenon, and from binary oppositions, nuance-elimination and the dehumanizing processes facilitated by our lack of understanding. These are vital points lost in the terrorism discourse leading dissenting views to be interpreted as supportive of terrorism. Githens-Mazer and Lambert cite the refusal to acknowledge 'foreign policy as a causal factor in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq' as an example of how relying on simplistic 'conventional wisdom' leads to a failure to appreciate important factors affecting radicalization and thereby terrorism (2010: 889). To the Bush administration, terrorism could only be conceived in terms of 'evil', and 'speaking of "root causes" implied condoning terrorist acts' (Coolsaet 2010: 860, 867). Tony Blair was similarly disinterested in causal factors (Roach 2007: 245). Conversely, the European Council early on highlighted the need to address terrorism's root causes based on previous experiences with the phenomenon (Coolsaet 2010: 868; Croft and Moore 2010: 823). However, Coolsaet notes that even in Europe there is currently a reluctance to use the term 'root causes', further underscoring the tendency to name social phenomena in accordance with political agendas: 'Nowadays... official EU statements no longer use the expression "root causes". Preference is now given

to the expression “factors which can lead to radicalization and recruitment” or “conditions conducive to terrorism” (Coolsaet 2010: 867, note 26. See also Bonham et al. 2007: 7).

Lia writes that ‘[s]ome theories [on terrorism] are well grounded in theoretical and empirical studies, others admittedly are not and should be seen as working hypotheses’ (2005: 15). The wickedness, evil, barbarism and irrationality of the enemy depicted in the apocalyptic narrative would hardly meet the requirements of either approach, and fail completely to place terrorism in context. The following list is not comprehensive but nonetheless indicates the multi-dimensional nature of terrorism: individual social and psychological variables, ideology, lack of regime legitimacy, relative deprivation and inequality, rapid modernization, discrimination and alienation, lack of integration, notions of revenge, conceptions of injustice, poverty, weak and collapsed states, states in transition, failed societies, insurgency, political hegemony, war, conflict and religion (Zakaria 15 October 2001; Silke 2003; Sageman 2004; Bjørge 2005; Lia 2005; Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010), religion thus representing only one explanatory factor.

The language of the media in the wake of 9/11 was disturbingly similar to the polarizing rhetoric of the Bush administration as shown in one of *Newsweek*’s early comments: ‘Nothing is as it was. The lines are drawn. In *America*’s war on terror, world leaders must choose’ (2001, 8 October b: 28 – emphasis added). The magazine goes on to foreshadow a war on Islam in its characterization of then French president Jaques Chirac’s position: ‘His watchword will be “solidarity” with America, even as he seeks to temper American bellicosity for fear of falling into the trap of *waging general war on Islam*’. (Newsweek 2001, 8 October b: 29 – emphasis added). Less than a month after 9/11 the possibility of a war on Islam was clear and it is therefore not unexpected that some Muslims fear that their own ‘civilization’ is under threat.

Questioning the wrongs taking place in the war on terror is not a call to ignore terrorism or to excuse those responsible for executing and supporting terrorist acts, but at the same time it is impossible to maintain the high moral ground by perceiving ‘them’ as guilty and ourselves as free from blame. Simplistic dichotomies and context-free judgments can neither lead to a genuine understanding of terrorism and its causes, nor lead to effective counter-terrorism strategies.

7. Delegating the task of governing and policing unease

In the terrorism-as-crime framework it is various branches of the police who are given the responsibility for combating terrorism. What would happen if the police in liberal democracies were to play a major part in restricting freedom, invading our privacy and violating our rights? What about secrecy – does an intensification of securitization imply the kind of ‘secret police’ we tend to associate with totalitarian states? What are the implications of the convergence of military and police interests? These questions inevitably arise in a war-like environment where the presence of extraordinary enemies is said to require extraordinary measures.

Miller describes politics as involving ‘competing conceptions of what is morally justifiable and what is not’ (Miller 2009: p. 58). Counter-terrorism involves moral and legal dilemmas, but politics is just as important in that police work is inherently political (Bayley 1997; Reiner 2000), and because the police are said to have become more overtly political (Doyle and Ericson 2004: 472). At the level of national security the term ‘political policing’ is used for security services whose aim it is ‘to secure the integrity of the state itself’ (Sheptycki 2000: 9). In light of the current discussion concerning secrecy and exceptionalism it is worth noting Richard Thurlow’s contention that political policing ‘is a subject which government would prefer academics and others should ignore’ (Thurlow (1994), cited in Sheptycki 2000: 9), which is precisely why it is necessary to look more closely at this area of policing.

Kappeler and Kappeler include ‘a desire to restrict police power’ among the assumptions made about democratic societies (2004: 190). In a debate revolving around the EU Data Retention Directive conservative politician Nikolai Astrup challenges the Norwegian government and police’s story that the directive represents a decisive and absolutely necessary tool to effectively combat serious crime. He does so by arguing that the extent of information access the police might find both useful and necessary may not be in the best interests of the population as a whole (Europabevegelsen 17 February 2011). His position is similar to the important ‘nice-to-know’ and ‘need-to-know’ distinction. In Astrup’s view, it is the duty of politicians to ensure that the police do not overstep their boundaries and, we

might add, in the interest of others to speak up when politicians buy into the police narrative or fail to provide sufficient safeguards.

There is no doubt that tasks associated with security need to be delegated to professionals, whether they be the police, security services, intelligence agencies or the armed forces. At the same time, there are numerous problems associated with uncritical delegation and insufficient oversight, some of which come to light through stories of illegal surveillance, miscarriages of justice, systemic discrimination, and the like. Another cause for concern is the high level of secrecy in the police, security and intelligence communities. The problematics of secrecy is underlined by the fact that politicians tend to deny any knowledge of illegal activities on the part of these actors. Whether or not political leaders possess knowledge of illegal activity, insufficient control with the police and other more secretive arms of power is a serious challenge to democracies. As a result, it is of as much concern that intelligence and security services engage in practices conflicting with democratic principles without the knowledge of their masters as it is when political leaders allow such activities to take place.

7.1 Policing myths and dilemmas

According to the rational deterrence model giving the police more power, manpower and resources will prevent crime. Likewise, the idea that extraordinary powers will be able to prevent terrorism has considerable currency. Aside from the desire to expand executive power, enhancing the power of the police, security and intelligence services is presumably one of the purposes of fear appeals and threat narratives.

On the one hand, the police are tasked with preventing terrorism, but another primary aim is to maintain order and to make the public feel secure. Regretfully, in order to reach their goals the police tend to buy into the idea of exceptionally dangerous enemies, whether these take the form of organized crime or terrorists. This can create an unnecessary climate of fear which in turn increases the public's perception of being under constant threat from several quarters. In Norway, the police have an explicit duty to ensure both objective (real) safety and subjective (experienced) safety (Justis- og politidepartementet 2005: 56-57). Fear appeals are especially incompatible with the latter aim.

In a somewhat ironic twist to the relationship between policing and terrorism crime prevention has traditionally not been a particularly popular or prioritized element in everyday policing compared to 'real' police work (Reiner 2000; Finstad 2000; Gundhus 2005; Guillou 2007). As police paradigms and activities are increasingly geared towards minimizing risk and averting threat, however, models of 'actuarial justice', 'risk-based' and 'intelligence-led' policing are gaining ground.

The language of threat is closely linked to perceptions of risk. Frank Furedi relates how the meaning of the phrase 'at risk' not only changed, but that its appearance in British newspapers increased tenfold in the 1990s (Furedi (2002), cited in Durodie 2007: 436). In another development the rhetorical shift in the terrorism debate creates the idea that we are all equally 'at risk' of becoming targets of terror, regardless of whether we live in remote areas or whether we work and travel in congested urban areas. Four years after 9/11, and not long after 7/7, the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police drove this point home: 'The terrorists seek mass casualties and are entirely indiscriminate: every community is at risk...' (Ian Blair, cited in Croft and Moore 2010: 830).

The new models of policing are manifestations of the idea that given the right tools it is possible for the police to create a more or less crime-free society. Since the 2001 attacks risk-based policing in the US seems to have speeded up and is intimately linked to surveillance technologies and the dream of Total Information Awareness (TIA) (Whitaker 2006). Hyper-control is all about 'the smoothest form of control... [which] is not merely "efficient," it is "prefficient," that is, it eliminates problems *before* they emerge, absolutely, before they even have the chance to *become* problems (Bogard 2006b: 60 – original emphasis).

Through impression management similar to that employed by politicians the wider public has largely been left unaware of the gap between what the police would like to do or are believed to be doing, and what they are in fact capable of delivering. The use of promotional tools such as CCTV and the large number of reality-TV programs showing the police in action (Cederkvist 2007) may contribute to the illusion that the police can cope with everything that is thrown their way, so to speak, but '[t]he media image of policing contrasts starkly with data revealing that police are limited in how much they can control crime, and actually

spend most of their time on other responsibilities' (Doyle and Ericson 2004: 478; see also Newburn 2003).

Bayley focuses on the media as an accountability mechanism for the police (1997), whereas Doyle and Ericson note the traditional role of the police as primary definers of the media discourse on crime (2004: 471). The apparently clashing roles of the police may these days be mitigated by the fact that as knowledge workers, rather than primary definers of crime, they collect and disseminate information about risk. Yet their information gathering and surveillance capabilities are precisely two of the areas in which undemocratic policing can arise, especially as far as asymmetrical surveillance, racial profiling and the question of secrecy is concerned. As regards terrorism, it may be argued that there are specialized units equipped to handle that particular aspect of policing but, occasional successes notwithstanding, it is no more probable that the police can create a terrorism-free society than a crime-free one.

In light of recurring police complaints about too many responsibilities and too few resources it is obvious that the police cannot cope, not only with all that is expected of them, but also with what they themselves want to accomplish. Ericson (2005) and Manning term this the 'impossible' mandate and the latter holds that 'the police have resorted to the manipulation of *appearances*' as a result of their inability to accomplish the mandate they themselves have identified (Manning 2005: 192 – original emphasis). As far as their 'product' is concerned, i.e. crime control, the idea is 'conveniently elastic, carries a virtuous ring, and cannot be easily assailed: who can deny a people's desire for peace and security, or at least for a *feeling* of security' (Ericson 2005: 215 – original emphasis; see also Heradstveit and Pugh 2003).

An added dilemma for the political police is that the regular police force can always refer to statistics to demonstrate their effectiveness, whereas the former have the much more difficult task of demonstrating how much terrorism they have prevented. The mechanisms and rationale in use are the same, however.

In the sense that everyone, including criminals, will benefit from a society where crime can be prevented rather than waiting to be solved, crime prevention seems to be the sensible thing to do. On the other hand, there are aspects of proactive policing that can be

detrimental to the kind of liberty we associate with liberal democracies, as witnessed in the notion of pre-active criminal law. The pre-active focus on averting terrorism involves the police being given extraordinary powers as indicated by the term 'non-traditional investigative methods' allowing police in Norway, for example, to use methods otherwise deemed illegal (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008: 40). Kallerud notes that applying the rhetoric of war to what are in actuality crimes allows authorities to adopt measures allowed only in war-time situations (Kallerud 2006: 12).

Bigo makes a point about surveillance technologies worthy of attention because it is linked to the 'impossible dilemma' faced by the police. Speaking of the war on terror he informs us that

the professionals know that the efficiency of the struggle against clandestine organizations passes by other means, but the large-scale mobilization of money and technology is supposed to convince the people that the government cares about their safety and is doing what needs to be done. (2006: 55)

Delving even further into the core of the issue he includes Graham Allison's assertion that 'for bureaucracies that have a hammer, the world is reframed as a nail; the narratives that the technology of surveillance is efficient against an unknown enemy are framed by the available solutions, not by the real problem' (Bigo 2006: 55-56).

The political aspect of national security policing clashes with a long-lived myth surrounding the police in general, viz. the idea that the police are impartial, unbiased and apolitical in their dealings with all members of society. By now, the myth of even-handedness has presumably been debunked by decades of media reports, official reports and investigations telling the story of corruption, racial discrimination, a selective implementation of 'stop-and-search' procedures, abuse of powers, brutality, intimidating interrogation techniques, coerced confessions, and miscarriages of justice (Reiner 2000; Sanders and Young 2003; Rachlew 2009), but the idea of impartiality lives on along with aspects of police culture that are especially problematic in view of the political, ethnic and religious components of the terrorism now feared by so many citizens of liberal democracies.

On the topic of terrorism after 9/11, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke holds that 'allegations of political partiality that seem to have been made so lightly in recent times' are damaging to the trust that should exist between the British police and the public (2007: 28).

At the same time, if we assume that the post-9/11 war on terror is informed by specific political agendas and that policing terrorism has inescapable political implications it would be wrong not to identify police partiality as a problem.

Yet another myth that can affect counter-terrorism efforts is perhaps best illustrated by the concept of 'know nothings' which is often used by the police to describe everyone outside the police force (Van Maanen (1978), cited in Finstad 2000: 179; Goldsmith 1996; Graner 2004). The earlier noted 'thin blue line' is analogous to GWOT distinctions between 'us' and 'them'. Other expressions of this attitude can be seen in two police postulates/assumptions identified by Manning (2005: 195):

- The legal system is untrustworthy; policemen make the best decisions about guilt or innocence.
- Policemen can most accurately identify crime and criminals.

No doubt police mistrust of outsiders is justified in many instances, simply by virtue of experience, but the idea that few or no 'outsiders' can teach police officers anything about society or how policing ought to be conducted is troubling. The police's attitude to the legal system is particularly worrying in that it suggests that the prospect of bypassing or ignoring the law might be tempting when the crime in question is a particular serious one. The existence and acceptance of a certain amount of rule-bending in police culture in order 'to get the job done' points to the possibility of such an outcome (Reiner 2000: 172; Rachlew 2009).

How certain aspects of police culture can lead to situations in which human rights violations occur is exemplified by the American SDU activities. Former high-ranking police officers were among the Norwegians hired by the Americans to monitor other Norwegians. On the one hand, a US State Department official maintained that the activities of the SDU were taking place in compliance with Norwegian authorities. The Norwegian minister of justice, on the other hand, denied any knowledge of the activities, ordering an investigation into the matter. The investigation revealed that members of different branches of the police were aware of the activities, some of whom expressed their concern that the Americans had 'gone too far'. Although not surprising, it is troubling enough that the US conducts illegal surveillance in allied nations without the consent of the authorities. Of perhaps greater concern to Norwegians and to the principle of legal protection, however, is the knowledge

that several levels of the police hierarchy failed to investigate or address the activities, meaning that the surveillance unit could operate with impunity. With the information now available there is no question that that the culture of secrecy, compartmentalization and the kind of solidarity implied by the 'thin blue line' allowed illegal surveillance of Norwegians to take place over a number of years.

The SDU case serves to underline the fact that we cannot always trust society's 'sentinels' to act in accordance with principles of democratic policing. The authorities' alleged ignorance of the activities, the failure of the media to follow up such an important breach of legal protection, and the failure of the police to immediately investigate the matter once it became known highlights the need for increased transparency, judicial oversight and public scrutiny of the police and counter-terrorism activities.

In-fighting and bureaucratic rivalry between police and security communities can reinforce secrecy and compartmentalization. Jean-Paul Brodeur categorizes the relationship between 'cops' and 'spooks' as uneasy (2005: 797). The differences and uneasiness was apparent prior to 2001, as confirmed by the 9/11 Commission Report, and is still visible.

If we follow the reasoning behind promises of protection from crime and terrorism to its obvious conclusion, the watchers ought ideally to know everything about everyone. However, this level of surveillance and control is associated with totalitarian societies as evidenced by the former head of Stasi's dictum: 'in order to be certain, one needs to know everything' (Erich Mielke, cited in Skjeseth 19-24 March 2008: 6 – my translation). By extension, relevant questions to ask include how much information is 'enough', how far should we allow the police and security services to go in order to successfully fight or end the war on terror, and can there be such a thing as a successful outcome in this type of war?

7.2 Racial/religious profiling

Bigo holds that '[t]he "unanimism" of the professionals of politics after September 11 created a specific period for the enunciation of a discourse of necessity of war against terrorism and suspicion against foreigners, ethnic and religious minorities, but it was rooted in previous practices' (2006: 49). With respect to existing practices he believes it is necessary to examine them as a specific form of governmentality rather than a specific moment, or decision to create a state of exception (Bigo 2006: 50). This seems like a promising approach

that would make it difficult for political leaders to place the blame for excessive security measures and derogation from the rule of law on 9/11 and the Bush administration alone.

Policing in general, and the war on organized crime and counter-terrorism in particular, has long attracted criticism for targeting certain nationalities, people from specific geographical regions or ethnic and religious groups. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain Europol and western Europe has tended to associate organized crime with the former Eastern Bloc (Rawlinson 2003; see also Brodeur 2005 with regard to the US stance), and in the summer of 2010 French authorities deported large numbers of Roma, a move defended by the interior minister based on statistical 'facts' that they are criminal by nature. As might be expected, the UN seems to have followed the lead of the United States and Europe in associating security with certain ethnic or religious groups. In his examination of anti-terrorism laws Kent Roach believes UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1373 with its focus on the financing of terrorism and immigration law to be reflective of the unanimism, ad hoc nature, and speed with which post-9/11 counter-terrorism initiatives and laws were adopted (Roach 2007: 230 ff.).

Based on a large body of literature Reiner informs us that

[a] substantial absolute number of mainly petty offences can be uncovered by stop-and-search methods. However, as the "hit" rate of successful searches is usually small (less than one in ten) the price in alienation of some sections of the public (primarily young males, especially blacks) is very high. (Reiner 2000: 122)

The same price presumably attaches to racial profiling as a counter-terrorism measure.

The cloud of suspicion that 'Muslims' have lived under since 9/11 is not dissimilar to that which 'young black males' have long experienced in many western societies. Larsen and Piche place the long-standing construction of difference within the post-9/11 context in which 'decisions about what constitutes suspicious abnormality are informed by particular narratives that circulate in the public sphere. The dominant themes link the presence of risk with ethnic, racial, and religious characteristics' (2009: 198).

In a terrorism-conscious setting the differentiating process 'is likely to unfold when an individual's behavioural and/or appearance-based cues resonate with contemporary constructions of a terrorist' (Parnaby and Reed 2009: 96). For some, the confluence of

outward appearance, the space in which they move, and 'natural' surveillance practices aimed at identifying people 'out of order, out of place' can have fatal outcomes. This dynamic was obviously in place when a 'foreign-looking' young man was shot and killed by police in a London Underground station shortly after 7/7 (Parnaby and Reed 2009: 96). The following warning posted on a notice board in a tube station soon after shows how risky 'incorrect' appearance and behavior had become: 'Please do not run on platforms or in stairs, especially if you are wearing a rucksack or look a bit foreign.'

Harcourt cites two opposing views on racial profiling appearing in American media following the 2005 London bombings. The first stems from Paul Sperry who claims that in light of who the perpetrators of terrorists attacks have been, it is merely common sense for the police to target young Muslim men on the subways of New York (Sperry, cited in Harcourt 2007: 73). Likewise subscribing to the actuarial model of justice another columnist argued that not to base screenings on race was 'simply nuts' (C. Krauthammer, cited in Harcourt 2007: 73-74).

Against these views the Police Commissioner of New York City, Raymond Kelly, counters that the ability of terrorists to adapt to changing circumstances is precisely why racial profiling, in his view, is both 'ineffective' and 'impracticable' (cited in Harcourt 2007: 74). He uses the ethnic diversity of New York City to point out that in the face of terror organizations' proven record in varying the ethnicity and appearance of terrorists the use of racial profiling merely 'puts the police one step behind the enemy' (in Harcourt 2007: 74). But it is not just in New York that this method is unlikely to succeed, as argued by experts on policing, terrorism and radicalization. On the contrary, it is believed to be one of the measures that do not work and can actually be counter-productive to the war on terror as a whole (Alonso et al. 2008: 11; Youngs 2010).

So far, the main focus of the police has been on young male 'Muslims'. If substitution effects should occur⁹, the gaze of suspicion could extend to women and children, as has happened in the context of war and suicide bombings in some regions. A good illustration of this is the

⁹ The substitution effect involves terrorists' ability to adapt to changing circumstances and the fact that security measures like metal detectors in airports and target hardening of buildings in some instances have led to other types of attacks, such as assassinations, hostage-taking and bombings (Harcourt 2007: 74-75; see also Jackson 2007). An example of a fictional pre-9/11 substitution effect involving a woman can be found in Gordon Steven's book *Kara's Game* (1996).

youngster who in February 2011 carried out a suicide attack in an army training camp in Pakistan dressed in a school uniform.

Given the history of accusations of racial bias leveled at police forces in liberal democracies Commissioner Kelly represents a promising policing point of view¹⁰. In the UK, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Clarke is responsible for the Metropolitan Police's anti-terrorism branch, harbors similar concerns and is intensely aware of the impact the choice of language in GWOT can have on community relations. At the time of 7/7, he encouraged the media 'not to use the phrase "Islamic terrorists"', believing the term to be 'both offensive and misleading' (Campbell and Cowan 29 July 2005; Clarke 2007). In a security conscious climate where powerful stakeholders and large sections of the public believe in the effectiveness of racial profiling Kelly and Clarke display considerable courage in voicing their opposition to this practice.

Sperry and Krauthammer's conviction that 'politically correct [non-racial] screening won't catch Jihadists' (in Harcourt 2007: 73) seems to imply that based on statistics the only realistic screening is the racial/religious one. If this were the case, it would be at odds with knowledge gained from other areas of policing.

Should the police systematically target people who look minutely 'Muslim' one can only begin to imagine the repercussions in cities the size of New York and London. If police are to gain the trust necessary to create a genuine sense of safety not even the war on terror can justify racial profiling given that police-community relations are important to social and political stability. Bearing in mind the substitution effect the future challenges of the police would truly amount to mythical proportions should they adopt a policy of racial profiling.

The war on terror has contributed to rising intolerance in general and Islamophobia in particular. The sense of threat and unease is mutual in that '[d]iaspora communities and their children have expressed that where they had previously felt safe, respected and supported in multicultural societies they now feel increasingly threatened (Wright-Neville and Halafoff 2010: 1). In light of the scare tactics of world leaders it is to be expected that authorities have been accused of being 'too passive in addressing' intolerance (Wright-Neville and Halafoff 2010: 1). At the same time, the situation is showing signs of changing,

¹⁰ For an insight into racism within the police force, see BBC 2008.

and two different terrorism responses from political leaders in Scandinavia during the course of 2010 illustrate contrasting mechanisms at work in the terrorism discourse.

With the arrest of three terrorism suspects in the summer of 2010 prime minister Stoltenberg immediately linked terrorism to the arrival of asylum seekers in Norway. What is especially revealing is that the prime minister took a *futur anterieur* stance in that the link was made in the context of possible **future** attacks. His response is further emblematic of the long-standing propensity for associating the presence of 'outsiders' with serious crime and the issue of immigration and integration with larger security issues (Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010: 891; Bigo 2006: 48).

On 11 December the same year two bombs exploded in the city center of Stockholm. The only person killed was the suicide bomber. Confronted with the reality of a terror attack and opting for a very different approach, Swedish prime minister Fredrik Reinfeldt issued a warning against foregone conclusions. Groundless speculation and premature conclusions, he insisted, create impressions that are difficult to turn around at a later date. He thus took a stance rarely seen in the post-9/11 world. His position is not only unusual in that it takes into account possible future adverse effects of premature conclusions, but even more so because he emphasized the importance of democratic responses: 'We need to stand for openness and to give democracy and the judicial system time to work' (NTB 12 December 2010 – my translation).

David Wright-Neville and Anna Halafoff write that with the election of US president Obama and former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd, 'we are witnessing a shift in post-neoliberal societies, away from intergroup competition to renewed awareness of interconnectedness and the need for greater collaboration among majority and minority groups' (2010: 4). Even in the literal war on terror there are indications of a more conciliatory note given that the US is said to have entered into talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The election victory of David Cameron in the United Kingdom initially appeared to herald a less confrontational approach than that of Tony Blair but, as seen earlier, he has opted to play the divisive card in respect of multiculturalism. With the prospect of possible adjustments or a softening of official counter-terrorism policy it remains to be seen how

strong the security lobby is and how firmly established the apocalyptic narrative is in the public imagination.

Lia terms the influx of asylum-seekers and legal and illegal immigrants with continued ties to conflict areas overseas the 'immigration dilemma'. The dilemma arises from the fact that diaspora communities can be a source of support and financing for terrorist groups (Lia 2005: 148). The term is apt in more ways than one in that any large influx of 'outsiders' inevitably leads to confusion and tension stemming from an inability to distinguish between the 'good' outsiders and those who see the west as a convenient base for criminal activities.

Moving now to the role of technology in racial profiling some surveillance methods are said to be a genuinely socially 'blind' and bias-free form of crime control, the logic being that scientific technologies by their very nature do not target certain segments of the population. Maria Los, on the other hand, is concerned with power issues on the grounds that 'a seeming objectivity of surveillance-based processes of control ultimately results in granting an almost unlimited discretion to the forces behind the scenes' (2006: 89), a view supported by Shoshana Magnet (2009). The social categories under scrutiny may vary, but in selecting 'some bodies for hypervisibility' biometric technologies¹¹, for instance, merely 'make marginalized bodies vulnerable to new, technologized practices of looking' (Magnet 2009: 182-183).

From a different angle, Torin Monahan speaks of how 'surveillance systems evolve through social conflict' into global systems of social control (2006: 515 and 527). Hier and Greenberg acknowledge that '[s]urveillance mechanisms regularly contribute to the deepening or reinforcement of political problems' while insisting that 'they are not fundamental causes' (Hier and Greenberg 2009b: 28). What seems clear is that surveillance technologies are not as impartial as the scientific language surrounding them suggests and neither is the hope that technology is a viable solution to political problems very realistic.

7.3 Transparency, accountability and the rule of law

In terms of accountability Haggerty highlights an important feature of neo-liberal governance whereby societal problems, as well as the responses to them need to be

¹¹ Biometrics can be defined as 'the science of using human biological measurements for purposes of identification, classification and social sorting'; fingerprinting and retinal scanning being two of the methods in use (Magnet 2009: 170).

scrutinized. 'Irrespective of the type of intervention that is used to confront a social problem, there is an increased expectation of ongoing follow-up and evaluative monitoring of the success of those interventions' (Haggerty 2009: xiii). The problem with surveillance in general, and with post-9/11 counter-terrorist efforts in particular, is that there is little or no openness and accountability, little evidence of follow-up and certainly no evaluative monitoring of the success of those interventions on the part of those who advocate and/or implement them.

With the amount of secrecy dominating at the level of government, the activities of watchdog groups, whistleblowers and other independent voices are obviously necessary to confront the abuse of power in liberal democracies. Hier and Greenberg speak of how the Big Brother Awards hosted annually by the British watchdog group Privacy International draw attention to the adverse effects of surveillance technologies, legislation, and the like. In 2007 Stewart Baker received the 'Worst Public Official' award for his role in the NSA's domestic surveillance activities, and the United Kingdom succeeded in beating the United States, China and Tunisia in the 'Most Heinous Government' category. Its status as 'the greatest surveillance society amongst democratic nations' is significant when compared with America's aspirations of Total Information Awareness and 'leading role in changing the way surveillance is carried out by governments around the world' (Hier and Greenberg 2009a: 3-4).

Numerous independent watchdogs are active in the GWOT 'Info War' and the battle over secret knowledge and information seems never-ending. Wikileaks is one organization determined to hold the US to account. Under the heading *Iraq War, 2004-2009* the organization states its aims, i.e. informing the public about issues the US Government would prefer remained secret:

The 391,832 reports ('The Iraq War Logs'), document the war and occupation in Iraq, from 1st January 2004 to 31st December 2009 (except for the months of May 2004 and March 2009) as told by soldiers in the United States Army. Each is a 'SIGACT' or Significant Action in the war. They detail events as seen and heard by the US military troops on the ground in Iraq and are the first real glimpse into the secret history of the war that the United States government has been privy to throughout. (Wikileaks 22 October 2010)

Wikileaks may be a controversial participant in the war of words, but its role has been crucial in exposing rights violations occurring in the war on terror.

Because they tend to operate in gray areas it is unsurprising that it can be difficult for members of the police, intelligence, security and military communities to be able at all times to distinguish right from wrong, or legal from illegal. To the extent that the police and armed forces are involved in some of the same operations the distinctions must be even more difficult to appreciate, especially in the war on terror, in which the United States has set some rather objectionable and undemocratic standards. The culture of secrecy, compartmentalization and bureaucratic rivalry further works against transparency and accountability. In addition, organizational culture and the extent to which security practitioners are able to voice their doubts are likely to affect the extent to which irregular and illegal activities are being reported through internal procedures or come to light through other channels. According to Lyotard 'the growth of power, and its self-legitimation, are now taking the route of data storage and accessibility, and the operativity of information' (1984: 47). The police, with their information gathering, -processing, and -sharing, play an important role in the growth of information power.

7.4 The thick green line

Brodeur identifies a possible blurring of 'the traditional line distinguishing common criminality and national security offenses' based on the 'involvement of the security and intelligence services in crime policing' (2005: 805). He bases his findings on the 'hybridity' of crimes with political dimensions, one of which is terrorism. He also explores ways of resolving the dilemmas arising from the convergence process. At the same time, he is clear about the fact that 'some of these ways could weaken the obligation of fully disclosing the legal evidence against a person charged with criminal offenses. Weakening prosecutorial disclosure may in its turn undermine the transparency of criminal proceedings and violate a suspect's constitutional rights' (2005: 809). The merging of diverse security interests not only affects legal protection, but extends the undermining of transparency to the criminal justice system.

There is one more blurring process taking place that is just as worrying as far as democratic policing is concerned. As mentioned in the Introduction the metaphor 'the thin blue line' represents the police and the 'thin red line' the armed forces. The war on terror includes a

process in which soldiers at times act like police and there is also a trend whereby police sometimes act like soldiers. De lint categorizes this as a 'seamlessness or fluidity between military and police action' (2004: 140), while Dunlap calls it 'the thick green line' (2005: 786). The trend may have advanced further in the US where the armed forces have long been involved in the 'war on drugs', but a certain amount of militarization of law enforcement is also taking place in other liberal democracies.

Though he acknowledges a certain amount of overlap, Dunlap issues an important warning regarding the merging of police and military interests in the US, including the different training, orientation, cultures and philosophies associated with these two forces, and the checks and balances in place to ensure that the police's main responsibility is domestic law enforcement and that the military's primary concern is with foreign threats and enemies. Their contrasting approaches to the use of force is a case in point in that essentially 'military training is aimed at killing people and breaking things', whereas the police 'have to exercise the studied restraint that a judicial process requires... Where the military sees "enemies" of the United States, a police agency, properly oriented, sees "citizens" suspected of crimes but innocent until proven guilty in a court of law' (Dunlap 2005: 791).

The casualties of increasingly unclear demarcation lines between the police, the security services, intelligence agencies, and the military could possibly include transparency and accountability. The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) exemplifies attempts at more openness on the part of security services, but the trend of increased openness could easily be reversed. If all actors involved in counter-terrorism can appeal to 'national security' interests it is possible that the veil of secrecy could become impenetrable within the security sector as a whole. The survival of democratic policing implies a need to address the seeming convergence of the interests and tasks of security institutions.

8. Surveillance, counter-terrorism and human rights

As far as the phenomenon of watching and being watched is concerned Lyon remarks that one of the questions surveillance scholars and civil libertarians have been asking themselves is the following (2006a: 35):

why are surveillance technologies developed and deployed so promiscuously when, for example, people also claim to be concerned about privacy, and when credible evidence exists that these technologies often do not, or cannot, perform the functions required of them (even though they may perform other functions)?

From a panoptic perspective better surveillance 'represents a self-evident increase in the functionality of power' (Haggerty 2006: 34). With the inclusion of a political element 'surveillance developments are now routinely counterpoised to some form of privacy rights and civil liberties discourse' and moreover involve processes 'designed to eliminate or mitigate the perceived excesses of surveillance' (Haggerty 2006: 34).

8.1 The lack of resistance to counter-terrorism and surveillance

Surveillance goes beyond watching people or creating data doubles, and merely represents one area after another in which the power of the state is expanding. As Neil Gerlach expresses it, genetic surveillance 'marks a reduction in the sovereignty of the citizen over his or her body and an empowerment of the state' (2009: 149) a process that is also taking place in other areas.

Lyon points out that the expansion of surveillance schemes has not been the cause of much debate in the US and hypothesizes that 'on a simple calculus citizens accept that loss of privacy is the price to be paid for security...' (2006a: 35). The willingness to sacrifice rights for security is slowly permeating liberal democracies. By contrast, the opposite process is going on in other parts of the world as witnessed by the 'Arab Spring' in which repressive regimes are being challenged by their subjects for not respecting human rights.

The relative absence of public policy debates surrounding counter-terrorism and surveillance technologies and their implications for democracy is not unique to America, nor to the past few years. 9/11 may have been particularly traumatic to individual and collective American psyches, which may account for why the price to be paid in order to avoid a repetition of that event is perceived to be small compared to the ensuing or, rather, continuing loss of privacy. However, possible trauma 'contagion' in other countries cannot account for the lack of debate and concern over the loss of privacy in countries within the same cultural sphere.

The question of how far we are willing to go to minimize risk is no longer rhetorical or hypothetical. Etzioni, for example, promotes blanket screening of all messages sent by civilians as part of the war on terror (2011: 8). At the national level the US is identified as

being the first country to promote globalized surveillance. Europe is pursuing a similar agenda evidenced by the Schengen agreement, the Data Retention Directive, the activities of Europol, and the many databases allowing ‘the profiling of risks associated with certain individuals’ (Bigo 2006: 53). In terms of legal protection the activities of Eurojust have ‘provoked disequilibrium between the level of judges of instruction and judges of accusation that are able to draw on EU resources, and a defence that is confined within a national frame that has no access to this information’ (Bigo 2006: 53).

In addition to the desire to know everything about everyone, the increased complexity of legal defense and the dissolving boundaries between the national and international illustrate the primacy of collective security over individual legal security. Hence, in Europe ‘[t]he rule of law is viewed as less important than the speed of rising suspicion and the accumulation of information and rumours about predefined categories’ (Bigo 2006: 53).

Concerning less legal protection and privacy-limiting measures, Harcourt offers a refreshing approach to the terrorism debate by turning ‘the rhetoric of security back on itself’ in order to reveal some of its inherent bias (in Lazarus and Goold 2007: 10). He uses the adaptability or ‘substitution effect’ occurring in terrorism as an example of how ‘defensive counter-terrorism measures are notoriously tricky’ (Harcourt 2007: 74). Given the history of terrorism he finds it surprising that ‘there is extremely little reliable empirical research on the effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures, and [that] there is no reliable empirical research whatsoever on the use of racial profiling in this context’ (2007: 80). He does not believe that counter-terrorist systems should not exist, but that they need to be evaluated closely.

As part of the process of internationalization the global war on terror and the globalizing of surveillance raises questions regarding the future of human rights, the rule of law, the role of the nation-state, sovereignty and countless related issues. If it is possible for international legal cooperation at the European level to undermine individual rights, similar types of cooperation involving repressive regimes is a worrying prospect.

8.2 Rights skepticism

Liberal democratic states have long taken pride in the fact that, unlike less ‘civilized’ and ‘developed’ nations, the notion of human rights is firmly established and also in the fact that

these rights are continuously being championed at home and abroad. The human rights 'mission' is expressed in the United States' professed role as protector of human rights against tyrants like Saddam Hussein, and through Norway's role in awarding the Nobel peace prize to people who fight for the recognition of basic human rights against overwhelming odds. Norway moreover prides itself on its status as a stable and peaceful nation spreading its message of peace and human rights to the international stage¹². Until recently, and in line with the rhetoric of eighteenth century political declarations and modern international human rights instruments, human rights have been perceived as a collective and unifying accomplishment on the part of the western world.

Presumably due to liberal democracies' success in protecting rights they have become self-evident to a degree where they represent '...rights that I, as a law-abiding citizen, have no pressing need either to use or defend' (Loader 2007: 39). In a parallel development mirroring 'othering' and marginalizing tendencies there is an idea that rights are not necessarily inalienable, having become dubious entitlements for 'rowdy teenagers, criminals or terrorists' (Loader 2007: 39). Lazarus and Goold consider 'the politics of rights scepticism' among the reasons why exceptionalist arguments are so effective. In short, there is resentment that rights extend to those who refuse to conform to democratic values and to those who are thought to have something to hide. In the kind of 'Strict Father' reasoning identified by George Lakoff rights should only be enjoyed by the righteous, as it were. Victor Ramraj shows how this interpretation is expressed at the level of government, whereby in times of crisis there arises

...a tendency to see ordinary legal principles as a hindrance to effective suppression of violence, together with an attempt, which can be traced to John Locke's defence of prerogative power, to justify state responses outside the normal legal constraints on power. (2007: 187)

Rights skeptics, are not a unified group, however, and their arguments

are the product variously of republican criticisms of the constitutional and political legitimacy of judicial review; pragmatic empiricist, post-modern and conservative rejections of the idealist pretensions of enlightenment rationalism; socialist and communitarian objections to the egoistic individualism and atomistic legalism to which rights give rise; left-wing suspicion, particularly in the United Kingdom, of the

¹² Expressed in Norwegian as 'fredsnasjonen Norge'.

elite judiciary; and critical pragmatic arguments regarding the emancipatory potential of human rights discourse. (Lazarus and Goold 2007: 6)

It is not unexpected that the human rights paradigm and discourse has become 'particularly vulnerable to the competing and increasingly powerful discourse of security' (Lazarus and Goold 2007: 6). Having identified numerous suspensions of the rule of law critics of efforts to expand state and police powers under the guise of the war on terror are concerned that the 'self-evident' nature of rights is becoming less so. Lazarus and Goold hold that the tendency to appeal to exceptional circumstances that justify a need for increased collective security has 'exposed and heightened a number of fundamental tensions that are inherent to modern liberal democracies' (2007: 7). Some of those tensions have been mentioned earlier and the rights debate predates 9/11.

In respect of human rights and the role they ought to play Andrew Ashworth rejects three existing approaches, i.e. the absolutist argument, the skeptical approach and what he terms 'a middle way adopted by some judges and politicians' (2007: 224). The absolutist approach holds that human rights are both indivisible and of equal weight, human rights skeptics take a relativist stance, and those promoting the middle ground that rights 'must always be balanced against the public interest' (Ashworth 2007: 224). Ashworth's reasons for rejecting all three positions are as follows:

The absolutist argument goes too far in denying that there can be different levels and strengths of human rights, and also tends to overlook the elements of indeterminacy and negotiation that would be an inevitable part even of an absolutist system. The sceptical approach appears to deny that there is any point to ranking and weighting human rights: scepticism may be healthy in confronting the absolutists, and in confronting those, typically governments, who make empirically based assertions (about the impact on security of curtailing a particular right) without providing the evidence to any scrutineer... (2007: 224)

As an alternative approach to human rights Ashworth proposes that 'progress can be made in structuring arguments about human rights. As for those who claim that it is all a question of balance and/or proportionality, their standpoint is far too crude to do justice to the subject matter' (2007: 224). The recent emphasis on the primacy of collective rights is especially interesting in that it represents a reversal of arguments forwarded by liberal democracies sixty years ago and GWOT has provided a legitimate and nearly universally acknowledged excuse for promoting the collective right to security at the expense of

individual rights. Discrediting and dismissing critics of the war on terror and civil libertarians is one way of eliminating stumbling blocks on the way to achieving perfect security.

8.3 'Balancing' security and rights

The tension between security and liberty claims is as evident in everyday policing as it is in liberal democratic theory. The idea that it is necessary to balance the two claims arises in what Loader refers to as 'the *cultural* lives of security and rights – that is, within quotidian social and political struggles to champion the merits and press the claims of one or other of these competing social goods' (2007: 27 – original emphasis). Through the use of examples of 'illiberal practices' and surveillance in England Loader asserts that 'appeals to security have a pronounced tendency to trump demands for the protection of individual rights' (Loader 2007: 27), a claim supported by many of the voices included in this work. So far, the security lobby seems to have had the upper hand in the terrorism discourse.

At no point is the perceived need for 'trade-offs' between liberty and security more evident than when the topic under discussion is the 'new' form of terrorism. ELISE states that 'balance' is a comforting metaphor suggesting a matter of simple choices and that it is possible to determine when a proper balance has been struck : 'Thus it is a metaphor that disables any understanding of how the relationship between these competing claims is, in practice, structurally one-sided. Some voices are in a much stronger position to be heard than others' (ELISE, cited in Bigo and Guild 2007: 113). The relative power of voices taking part in public debates tends to reflect hierarchies of visibility and influence.

The metaphor of balance seems, in fact, so innocuous that it

discourages people from thinking about the way in which any possible judgement about when a balance has been reached will be made by agents who are very closely connected with security agencies – even though this is, after all, what is meant by a sovereign state having a monopoly over violence in a particular territory. (ELISE, cited in Bigo and Guild 2007: 113)

From a different angle it can possibly be argued that terrorists challenge state monopoly over violence. State monopoly is not limited to coercive force, however, and in the war on terror even close political allies secretly challenge and/or violate state sovereignty and monopoly over surveillance and security, as the US has so firmly demonstrated.

Undemocratic US surveillance occurs in both foreign and domestic settings and the Congressional debate on NSA wiretaps reinforces concerns that defenders of human rights are being presented as 'remote special interest groups willing to play fast and loose with the safety of their co-citizens' (Loader 2007: 27). Smeulers and van Niekerk call this neutralization technique the 'condemnation of condemners' (2008: 335). In a structurally one-sided relationship the voices of individual critics are unlikely to be heard or heeded, especially if they can be written off as belonging to the category of 'know nothings' so commonly discounted by the police. The worry is that in the terrorism debate the dismissal and de-legitimation of alternative knowledge or dissent has been extended to critics with impeccable credentials and possibly even a greater knowledge of the issues under debate than many members of the security lobby. Unlike the influence exerted by expert witnesses in court cases, doubt is sometimes cast on the credibility of security critics. The result is that many of the best informed voices in the crime and terrorism discourses are being trumped by might and definitional power.

The act of naming individuals and organizations calling for more transparency and accountability 'special interest groups' out of touch with reality is a very powerful rhetorical and exclusionary weapon. In the discussions surrounding both the EU Data Retention Directive and the NSA wiretaps one would be hard pressed to prove that the Democratic Party or the International Commission of Jurists are remote special interest groups.

If we could strip away the diversionary tactics of the security lobby it would be easier to gain sight of some of the issues liberal democracies need to address. In recognizing the agendas behind the condemnatory attitudes of US and allied politicians, for instance, we might well find that Wikileaks has on the whole contributed to a greater understanding of how the war on terror is being fought than the official stories being told.

In addition to emphasizing the need to consider the question of exactly who makes security calls Bigo and Guild raise the question of 'whose security' we are talking about and at what levels. Security is diverse and can be both beneficial and dangerous in that '[s]ecurity as individual safety, juridical guarantee, human security or social security can go hand in hand with human rights, but security as coercion, prevention, surveillance and marginalisation/exclusion of some groups infringes human rights' (Bigo and Guild 2007: 112-

113). The last of these approaches is seen as being 'rooted in exceptionalism and the utilitarian right of a collectivity to sacrifice individual rights' (Bigo and Guild 2007: 113). In the critical account, maximum security is an illusion meaning the securitization of one sector can adversely affect another, and similarly, one group may become more protected at the expense of another (Bigo and Guild 2007: 112).

If it is conceivable that the war on terror involves political, social, police, and security practices that could be harmful to democratic principles it is time to summarize the sources of possible damage.

9. Threats to our sense of security

As seen in the previous sections opposition to GWOT remains unwelcome and subject to suspicion in liberal democracies. Had the criticism issued from one quarter only, or from uninformed sources, the defenders of GWOT might well be justified in discounting it as unfair, uninformed and baseless. However, critics include former members of the Bush administration, prominent politicians in the UK, members of the police service, government watchdogs, intelligence analysts, military commanders, academics, journalists, diplomats, terrorism experts, security officials, and legal professionals, many of whom are more well-informed than their detractors.

A great paradox of the war on terror is that the cynicism generally displayed towards politicians is not reflected in the area of counter-terrorism policy implying a curious anomaly. Faith in the security narrative could be based on the idea that terrorism 'experts' advise politicians, but this faith becomes difficult to uphold when other experts on terrorism warn against some of the measures taken.

Though there are signs that the apocalyptic narrative is slowly being deconstructed there are presumably several reasons why liberal democracies remain in favor of excessive security. It could be that the security lobby has been too successful in arguing its case and/or that the security juggernaut has advanced too far to be rolled back. It may also be due to the fact that the question of security is much too complex for the average person to fully understand the long-term implications of excessive security measures. This would explain the success of

easily understandable official accounts in which the need to choose between 'good' and 'evil' seems obvious. The lack of engagement, concern or resistance can perhaps also be attributed to the conviction that as long as the discriminatory elements of counter-terrorism and surveillance are aimed at the 'Other' there is no reason for the rest of 'us' to worry.

The following scenario outlines the risks associated with complacency, however:

What happened here was the gradual habituation of the people, little by little, to being governed by surprise; to receiving decisions deliberated in secret; to believing that the situation was so complicated that the government had to act on information which the people could not understand, or so dangerous that, even if the people could not understand it, it could not be released because of national security. And their sense of identification with [the leader], their trust in him, made it easier to widen this gap and reassured those who would otherwise have worried about it (Milton Mayer (1955/1966), cited in University of Chicago Press).

The words could easily apply to what is happening today but actually describe the situation in Germany under Hitler's rule. This is not to suggest that we are heading for totalitarianism but that we should perhaps be aware that security systems are approaching omniscience and omnipresence. Implicitly trusting government policies and decisions because they are based on the 'interests of national security' can contribute to omnipotence which is contrary to the spirit of democracy. Decades ago Marcuse expressed concern over how 'one-dimensional man' uncritically accepted existing structures (1964) – the situation is not much different today as there appears to be widespread acceptance of the one-dimensional apocalyptic narrative.

How far from the ideals of democracy and human rights have we strayed? Universal human rights have represented one of the most important collective achievements of liberal democracies, but today many view these same rights as an impediment to collective security. An open-ended state of emergency encompassing the use of exceptional measures has put pressure on the rule of law. A perceived threat to Islam and rights violations in the context of the war on terror can lead more individuals to join terrorist groups. The US engages in illegal surveillance amongst its allies with the knowledge, if not complicity, of the local police. Criticism of diversity, coupled with asymmetrical counter-terrorism and surveillance damages relations between ethnic communities and the police, in turn affecting public trust and community relations in general. The convergence of interests between some of the main actors in the security sector could lead to more secrecy, less transparency and,

by extension, less accountability. All the while, a 'dirty war' is taking place in which the difference between the right to do something and the right thing to do is not acknowledged by the counter-terrorism warriors.

Whether or not one believes in the apocalyptic narrative the conclusion that the world is less secure now than before 9/11 seems inescapable. There have been few large-scale attacks, but people's sense of security does not appear to have increased as a result of GWOT.

9.1 Challenges to democracy

De Lint considers the Bush administration's neoconservative approach to be a re-articulation of autocracy expressed in terms of 'endarkened' governance/policy, which is 'the manipulation of national security protocols in the service of an opaque autocracy' (de Lint 2004: 148). He applies three tests in order to ascertain the extent to which this type of policy has succeeded, the first one being 'the Hobbes test', the second the freedom test, and the third the legitimacy test.

Firstly, Hobbes' Leviathan conception of society 'demands that the Leviathan must produce domestic security', a result that has not materialized according to de Lint (2004: 148). It is possible that America could have averted 9/11, meaning his security ambitions had failed even before GWOT. Moreover, later security promises were broken, and measures unevenly distributed in the aftermath of the attack (Berry 2004: 157-160). Among the 'initiates' convinced that Bush did not keep his promises is Rand Beers, a counter-terrorism advisor who resigned his post at the National Security Council in 2003 believing that 'The administration wasn't matching its deeds to its words in the war on terrorism. They're making us less secure, not more secure' (Berry 2004: 158-159, from Blumenfeld (2003)). Like many other observers Harcourt points out that the torture of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib prison may have contributed to undermining counter-terrorism efforts through increasing terrorist recruitment. (2007: 94). Miller states that the kind of Realpolitik pursued by the US has not been successful and that instead the country is experiencing 'blowback' as a consequence of its selective foreign policies (Miller 2009: 28), blowback that also affects its allies.

Berry even goes so far as to claim that

the objective of the Bush administration's "war on terrorism" is not security. Instead, the objectives seem to be to maintain public fear by repeated warnings of attack, to keep terrorism at the forefront of our imaginations, and to actually increase the likelihood of terrorism. (Berry 2004: 160)

The strategy has in fact been so successful that a couple of years into a new US administration the terrorist specter is vigorously kept alive by politicians, security experts and the media.

America's failure to meet the requirements of the second test is based on the idea that inequality prevents the exercise of freedom. In Aristotle's worldview, 'any polis striving after the good cannot be sustained where inequality undermines the knowledge – and the social and economic security – needed to make meaningful exercise of choices' (de Lint 2004: 149, citing Sandel (1996)). De Lint contends that the authorities 'stream public monies into interdiction rather than redistribution' (de Lint 2004: 149), a monetary flow that has been replicated in other liberal democracies.

Zalmay Khalilzad, a former US ambassador to Afghanistan, interprets the US determination to withdraw from the country as a sign that America is no longer willing to pay the price for a continued presence there, a presence that was triggered by the war on terror. The question is if that decision will be followed by less public spending on counter-terrorism at the national level.

Inequality comes in many forms and, as far as surveillance and counter-terrorism is concerned, the tendency of security priorities to override the rights of individuals and groups represents one area in which the war on terror leads to selective scrutiny and unnecessary disciplinary control, in turn resulting in stigmatization, marginalization and alienation.

Liberal democratic conceptions of economics and politics continue to uphold the myth that we are provided with choices and that the choices made are based on the assessment of all the information available. In matters of security we are given neither information nor choices. Indeed, no myth is necessary as the 'national security' mantra ensures that few or no questions are asked and little or no information regarding alternatives is available outside the 'need to know' or 'you're either with us or against us' models.

The third test applied by de Lint, i.e. that of legitimacy, fails among other reasons on the grounds of secrecy and duplicity, factors that seem more prevalent than ever. Secrecy was firmly established in democratic bureaucracies prior to 9/11 and merely appears to have reached new heights during the war on terror. Threats of increased secrecy in the wake of unwanted leaks suggest there may be less openness on the part of authorities in the future. The charge of duplicity is no doubt a motion that political leaders across the world will second following the leak of US diplomatic cables.

Based on his personal experience with security controls at a Swedish airport Göran Rosenberg questions our willingness to pay an increasingly higher price for security (10 July 2010). Moreover, he identifies a critical weakness related to counter-terrorism and surveillance efforts, i.e. the creation of a culture of insecurity: 'The problem is... that our security ultimately rests on trusting other human beings. The more security systems we feel are necessary to protect us against people we do not trust - or believe we have reason to fear - the more insecure our world will seem' (Rosenberg 2010 – my translation). The question of trust between humans is an important component in the notion of 'social capital'. Interestingly, M.D. Gismondi has found a positive correlation between winning a war and the level of social capital in the society fighting it (in Johansen 2011: 29). Although Gismondi is referring to a conventional war fostering suspicion and distrust could conceivably be counter-productive to winning the war on terror as well.

Unfortunately, the adversarial model of human relations is so pervasive that regardless of whether the topic under discussion is health, poverty, drugs or terrorism, it all boils down to 'the war on cancer', the 'war on poverty', the 'war on drugs' and 'the war on terror'. Conceiving of human interaction in terms of conflict may play in favor of neoconservative ideas of giving up freedoms in order to achieve security, but in reality the idea of perfect safety is an illusion.

The matter of trust has far-reaching implications for multicultural societies. In his call to abandon state multiculturalism David Cameron not only makes the mistake of singling out one particular ethnic and religious group for attention, thereby reinforcing existing prejudices about Muslims. By signaling the need for less passive tolerance of groups who 'live separate lives' in the UK he may also create uncertainty and fear in other ethnic

communities. In his version a genuinely liberal society 'believes in certain values and actively promotes them', those values being freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law, and equal rights, regardless of race, sex, or sexuality (BBC 5 February 2011b). What he fails to take into account is that the war on terror can pose a threat to these very values and that a divisive approach is not very conducive to community relations and political stability.

Without sufficient openness, public scrutiny, and satisfactory control mechanisms we cannot know for sure that the GWOT measures adopted are the ones best suited to combat an exceptionally rare form of crime. It would seem as though our lack of knowledge about what is going on makes us willing to trust the wisdom and moral authority of a select and secretive few – some with hidden or not so hidden agendas. In the event that attacks should occur we have the resources to deal with their aftermath, suggesting that their 'catastrophic' effects are more likely to be psychological than physical or material.

Battling fear itself is perhaps one of the most efficient ways of combating terror. This involves taking the means of creating terror away from terrorists. The process also entails stripping politicians and the apocalyptic narrative of their power to instill fear. I would submit that viewing terrorism from a different perspective than vulnerability and disaster is worth exploring. The more light we can shed on our options the easier it will be to choose a course that can preserve the democratic values we claim to be defending in a Real-political setting. Former US ambassador Carol Moseley Braun's unconventional approach to solving the security dilemma and defeating terrorism is probably not going to be welcomed by Real-politicians, but introduces an alternative view of counter-terrorism worth considering: 'I believe women have a contribution to make... we are clever enough to defeat terror without destroying our own liberty... we can provide for long-term security by making peace everybody's business' (in O'Rourke 18 September 2004). Her suggestion is in fact highly relevant in that Jackson has pointed out that threat narratives exclude other approaches than the martial one by 'making non-violent alternatives such as dialogue, compromise and reform appear inconceivable and nonsensical' (Jackson 2007: 421).

10. Can SWOT shed some light on GWOT?

Is it inevitable that large-scale terror attacks will be devastating to democracy? Even though we may not be able to control terrorism as much as GWOT sets out to do it is within our power to control how we respond to terrorism. It is even conceivable that a major terrorist attack could help turn the tide against the security lobby, rather than proving them right. Not only could large-scale attacks expose the illusory nature of a risk-free society, but the price being paid to maintain the idea of a terrorist-free world would perhaps finally be perceived as too high. Regardless of whether future attacks are apocalyptic in nature or very limited in scale it will always be necessary to recover from them. Focusing on how to do that seems more constructive than cultivating fear and dwelling on trauma as the United States has done since 9/11.

A first step in assessing our capacity for coping with threat can be taken through the kind of SWOT analyses used in strategic planning. Working from a policing perspective Ivar Fahsing and Petter Gottschalk use SWOT analysis to gain a better understanding of organized crime (2008: 224ff.). If our aim were to examine the resilience of liberal democracies the analysis would involve assessing their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It will not be possible to give a detailed account of all the factors involved in a SWOT analysis in this chapter and neither is it necessary. Vulnerability and threat assessments took place long before 9/11 and continue to be a priority (e.g. Justis- og politidepartementet 2000; Justis- og politidepartementet 2002; Arnesen, Bjørngo and Mærli 2005; Politiets sikkerhetstjeneste [PST] 2011). However, such analyses are unlikely to include the threats to liberal democracies posed by the war on terror or the weaknesses exposed by it. Some of these have been addressed above.

This leaves the question of strengths and opportunities, factors that to a large extent overlap. They include the rule of law, democratic policing, the separation of powers, human rights, openness, accountability, multiculturalism, human and material resources, and the right to resist unjust governments.

10.1 The rule of law

The rule of law is central to liberal democracies and linked to individual legal protection and security. In fact, democracies are based on the idea that legal protection contributes to security, as expressed in the Norwegian notion of 'legal security'¹³. A strong emphasis on these principles is among the reasons why liberal democratic societies are associated with social and political stability. The term 'legal security' is so frequently invoked in public debates that it begs the question of why most people are willing to compromise individual freedom and legal security in order to achieve the much more elusive 'risk-free society'.

Even if the separation of powers 'has often sat uneasily with democracy' (Powell 2007: 174), revealing yet another dilemma for liberal democratic theory, the role of the judiciary is 'to protect an ongoing process by which those who exercise power are called continually to account for and justify its use' (Powell 2007: 173). As argued by de Lint and others, the US fails the separation of powers test in that GWOT has led the executive to appropriate judicial powers for itself or to exercise undue influence over the judiciary (de Lint 2004: 140). The same tendency has been observed in the UK and other liberal democracies. Affirming and strengthening the separation of powers can perhaps prevent apocalyptic narratives from allowing the executive to expand its power on highly tenuous grounds and thereby interfering with the rule of law.

The democratic principle of accountability requires control mechanisms that function horizontally and vertically (Blæss 2004: 21). Accountability between government institutions and citizens functions vertically. Horizontally, the principle requires that the judiciary, for example, be allowed to perform its tasks without interference from the executive. But accountability is equally necessary at the international level and C.H. Powell explains the mechanism: 'to the extent that a body governs, it must be accountable to those who are governed; conversely, the amount of power that a constitutional arrangement confers on a body is commensurate with the extent of that body's accountability to the community it affects' (2007: 176). Consequently, the principle of accountability is as relevant to the United Nations as it is to individual member states.

¹³ 'Rettsikkerhet' in Norwegian.

Ideally, accountability entails that states think before they act, that they make use of available mechanisms, or at the very least strive to determine whether exceptional measures are/were justified: e.g. in the face of a threat proportionality analysis could be undertaken and human rights impact assessments carried out. To the extent that exceptional legislation and measures are unavoidable, they could be evaluated when the initial sense of threat recedes somewhat. Alternatively, emergency legislation could take the form of ‘sunset provisions’ (i.e. legislation with a date of expiry) that could be re-assessed on a regular basis (Roach 2007: 252). Had the International Criminal Court (ICC) not been used so selectively it could have reminded political leaders in liberal democracies that they too might be held accountable for rights violations which could make the ‘tough decisions’ even harder to make.

10.2 An open society

The judiciary represents a vital accountability device, but the war on terror has demonstrated that this branch of power does not always live up to the ideal embodied in the separation of powers. Therefore, other actors have a responsibility to speak up when both the executive and the judiciary fail to act in accordance with key democratic principles. The media represents one such actor, political opposition another. In addition whistleblowers, non-governmental organizations, national and international watchdogs, and academics can play a part. If none of these succeed, or fail to act, ordinary citizens and grassroots movements will always have an equally important role to play in demanding transparency and accountability. Freedom of speech and freedom of press play a crucial role in maintaining openness.

10.3 Resistance and public engagement

In respect of countering the effects of invasive security systems and the discursive technologies of politics Marx (2009), Jackson (2007), Hier, Walby and Greenberg (2006), and Ogura (2006) remind us that liberal democracies have space for resistance, space that is vital for preserving the democratic principles mentioned above. This space stems from the democratic notion of the right to resist a government that acts against the interests of its citizens. A counter-hegemonic struggle can be both concrete and discursive. With respect to the question of power Marx further states that ‘[n]ew technologies rarely enter passive environments of total inequality’ and that surveillance involves a dynamic process that

inhibits total control (Marx 2009: 295-296; see also Berry 2004: 169). It is essential that avenues of resistance remain open.

Understanding GWOT from a resistance point of view not only furnishes crucial insights into terrorism itself, but also into the war on terror, illustrated by 'the strategic reversibility of power relations' (Foucault (1982) in Simon Kiss 2009: 216). Resistance and power can thus be positively manifested, and strategic reversibility takes place on many different levels and through a wide array of technologies. Kiss shows how the spread of cell phones 'linked to global communications networks also offers opportunities for protesters to turn the spotlight of surveillance back on agents of authority...' (Kiss 2009: 216). The popular revolts taking place across the Arab world in early 2011 are examples of this type of reversibility.

The dissemination of damaging information about the war on terror, be it intentional or unintentional, contributes to openness. Like Kiss, Youngs explains how horizontal information flows represented by the new media (e.g. official and unofficial blogs by members of the military) have contributed to exposing human rights abuses accompanying the introduction of democracy to the 'oppressed' (2010: 927-928). Examples revealing the true face of GWOT include the pictures of tortured inmates in Abu Ghraib, the Danish documentary *Armadillo* covering the war in Afghanistan (Fridthjof Film 2009), and the *Collateral Murder* video from Iraq published by Wikileaks (2010). The distribution of damaging images may in themselves not be intended as criticism of the war effort, but they can generate resistance in those who view them.

Political engagement, public debates on public policy, and grassroots movements are important to democratic governance. More than a decade ago Mike Maguire was convinced that the human rights implications of intelligence-led policing urgently required 'ethical, philosophical, political and policy debates...' (2000: 333). Such debates are not yet common outside the domains of 'special interest groups' and individuals and groups openly opposed to the war on terror and increased securitization are to some extent still ignored or gagged, but their regular input contributes to our knowledge and understanding of illiberal practices. Not readily accepting the 'interests of national security' argument, for example, could spark demands for more information about what exactly these interests are, in whose interests they are, and what the price for security is.

10.4 Democratic policing

It seems obvious that strengthening and maintaining the traditional demarcation lines between actors in the security sector and protecting democratic policing is a way of preventing the 'the thin red line' of the armed forces and 'the thin blue line' of the police force from converging to the detriment of human rights and our sense of security.

Heradstveit and Pugh write that governments can use fear of violence as a means of promoting the idea of 'order' (2003: Abstract). The idea of 'order' can be expanded to include non-violent political opposition. Therefore it is important that the law enforcement and security sectors are not used to monitor and prevent political dissent, especially when each individual may be 'more at risk from the government itself than from its critics' (Heradstveit and Pugh 2003: Abstract). This means that we also need to adhere to the democratic conception of liberty, whereby state interference on the basis of security cannot be arbitrary, but must be limited, justified, and in accordance with the principle of legality.

10.5 Community relations and diversity

Laura Huey holds that 'the systematic collection of data on particular ethnic groups to target their members for increased observation by law enforcement can only be understood as power negatively manifested' (2009: 222). At the individual level, suspicion and discrimination demonstrate how Muslim men's 'own racial identities are shaped by their attempts to deny, rationalize, accommodate, and resist being feared by strangers in public space', to paraphrase Day ((2006), cited in Parnaby and Reed 2009: 95). Excessive monitoring of one or more ethnic groups is not only contrary to the spirit of equality and human rights but is a potential risk to security in that it provides fertile ground for alienation and damaging forms of resistance.

People who deal with migrant communities on a daily basis may have gained an understanding of the problem complexes associated with diversity, but members of the wider public tend to expect that as soon as they have arrived, newcomers should think and act like 'us'. This type of reasoning ignores the fact that it has taken centuries for liberal democracies to arrive at where they are today. Many core liberal democratic values were forged in political revolt and violent upheaval and required a lengthy process of 'enlightenment' before they achieved their 'self-evident' status. Being met by immediate demands, suspicion and discrimination is likely to foster a siege mentality wherein hanging

on to traditional social practices may create a bulwark against the outside world that could prevent integration.

An area of policing that attempts to create dialogue with ethnic groups is community policing (Coolsaet 2010: 870, Croft and Moore 2010: 823). One example is the police precinct of Manglerud which uses community policing to encourage dialogue with and between ethnic communities in Oslo. Youngs emphasizes the importance of community cohesion and community-based approaches to counter-terrorism, as opposed to the culture of suspicion and nuance elimination that has characterized relations in the UK in the aftermath of 7/7 (2010: 933-934; see also Briggs 2010). The Salafi community in Brixton (South London), for instance, has a programme aimed at preventing violent extremism that predates government-sponsored schemes: STREET – Strategy to Re-Empower and Educate Teenagers. One counter-terrorism expert in the Metropolitan Police lauds the community's role, highlighting their 'expertise in understanding and refuting al-Qaida propaganda and recruitment...' (cited in Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2010: 897, 899).

Focusing and building on the spirit of cooperation and dialogue that is taking place in multicultural societies, rather than emphasizing what separates 'us' from 'them', is one way of countering the divisive voices of politicians declaring that multiculturalism has failed. This kind of response to terrorism represents the opportunity dimension in a SWOT analysis.

10.6 Resources and resilience

Unlike most nations who have to deal with terrorist attacks on a daily basis, liberal democracies have strong infrastructures, considerable social capital, and human, economic and political resources that can allow them to recover more easily from terrorist attacks. Instead of adopting or repeating George W. Bush and Tony Blair's knee-jerk, traumatizing and war-like response to terrorism, we can learn from prime minister Reinfeldt's reaction to the recent terrorist attack in Stockholm; i.e. insisting on the need to stand for openness and allowing democratic processes and the judicial system to work.

With reference to the earthquake in New Zealand early in 2011 one commentator chose to focus on the 'ANZAC spirit'¹⁴, which is all about resilience and battling against the odds. The

¹⁴ The ANZAC spirit embodies the spirit of resilience characterizing the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, most notably in the first and second world wars.

devastation suffered by Japan in the aftermath of a powerful earthquake and tsunami far exceeds the apocalyptic scenarios implied by warnings of hyper-terrorism. Instead of taking advantage of the situation to further a political agenda, as politicians in the US did in the aftermath of 9/11, Japanese politicians and outside observers have focused on the country's resources and resilience. In connection with a string of natural disasters in the US lately there has been more emphasis on recovery, rebuilding and moving on than on reinforcing trauma. The very different language associated with man-made and natural disasters suggests that there are political mechanisms at play in responses to the former. As far as bringing a lengthy political conflict to an end we could also learn from the truth and reconciliation process that took place in South Africa after apartheid given that it seems like a more constructive response than focusing on difference and retaliation.

Rather than emphasizing the **T**hreat and **W**eakness dimensions of SWOT and pandering to fear in the expectation of future terrorist attacks we could remind ourselves that liberal democracies are still stable political systems with room for diversity, and that we possess substantial human and material resources, strong infrastructures and resilience that can lessen the effects of man-made disasters. Highlighting **S**trengths and **O**pportunities could be a means of empowerment as we continue our struggle to understand and thus counter terrorism in a less combative and repressive manner. The process of democratization is based on the conviction that the way forward lies in striving for peace, stability, reconciliation and human rights – we must take care not to reverse that process.

11. Summary and conclusion

The number of issues raised in this thesis are too many to be examined in-depth, but as the main argument put forward, the future of liberal democracy 'as we know it' seems to be at stake, but not necessarily for the reasons given in the apocalyptic narrative. On the surface, the narrative may be about the need to combat terrorism, but many of its critics claim it is also a narrative that legitimizes globalized surveillance and political hegemony.

Watching the images and news accompanying the attacks on September 11, 2001 unfold, I was horrified, not so much by the attack itself, as by the comments and reactions issuing from every corner of the world. The ease with which the attacks within a matter of hours

had created a collective sense of fear and moral panic with the help of politicians and the media in particular must have succeeded way beyond the wildest dreams of Osama bin Laden and his followers. The continued persuasiveness of the apocalyptic narrative is one of the best examples of this.

The above chapters have attempted to identify some of the ideas and ideologies underlying the apocalyptic narrative as they relate to counter-terrorism policies and systems of the past decade. The rhetorical devices and political tactics of terrorists and counter-terrorism warriors are more often than not mirror images of each other begging the question of what exactly the purpose of the exercise is.

Whether we are speaking of crime waves or terrorist threats a social and political problem can derive its solutions 'through value-laden appeals to sin, evil, or degeneracy' (Haggerty 2009: x-xi). Or, as Doyle and Ericson put it, '[c]rime is a problem of evil or pathological individuals who are a Them less human than Us' (2004: 474-475). By extension, Islamic extremism has been turned into a collective pathology widely believed to afflict the majority of 'Them'. Even narratives distinguishing between 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims' can act as tools of power, as argued by Jackson (2007), and Githens-Mazer and Lambert (2010). Along with other voices included here the latter two refute the idea that stereotyping is an accurate predictor of terrorism and are instead convinced that it leads to dangerous stigmatization (2010: 901). Similarly, critics of the security and counter-terrorism paradigms warn that endless references to 'national security' and an ongoing 'emergency' lead to practices undermining human rights and political freedoms.

In the terrorism discourse emotional and value-laden appeals regarding the presence of 'evil' forces live side by side with scientific language reassuring us that surveillance technologies are impartial and cannot harm those with nothing to hide. Myths postulating that the police are capable of controlling crime and effectively fighting terrorism may be seen as necessary to making people feel reasonably secure, but they cannot guarantee real safety.

In spite of damaging revelations of how GWOT is being fought political leaders and security professionals have to a large extent succeeded in convincing their liberal democratic audiences – with some exceptions – that the need for security is paramount and that we must all be willing to make sacrifices in order to achieve that aim: 'One tends to forget that

freedom and openness are also security, and that liberal democracies are actually the safest societies to live in' (Nordenhaug og Engene¹⁵ 2008: 42 – my translation). Pandering to fear and encouraging xenophobia is not only antithetical to the Enlightenment project of letting knowledge rather than superstition and fear guide our actions; it is also contrary to key liberal democratic principles.

Though there are attempts by the media to analyze the causes of signal crimes and the contexts in which they occur the overall impression is that in a retributive climate neither political leaders nor the general public genuinely cares about the 'why's'. The senior public officials and populist politicians who declare a generalized state of exception and advocate exceptional responses reflective of it are instead quite likely to interpret terrorist attacks as opportunities to expand their own power and influence.

In the context of the war on terror I have implied that George W. Bush proclaimed himself the infallible sovereign who does not fear the specter of accountability and there is no sign that politicians have become more open and accountable a decade into the war. Some will presumably take issue with this interpretation given that president Obama appears to have taken a somewhat less confrontational and polarizing approach to the war on terror. Yet the legacy of the Bush administration is evident in continued threat narratives, illegal surveillance activities undertaken by the US amongst its allies, and the willingness of the Obama administration to gag and/or prosecute people and organizations that expose illiberal practices and war crimes.

As western democracies appear to be headed in the direction of increasingly repressive security measures and less democracy, people living in repressive societies are moving in the opposite direction, demanding more freedom, openness and accountability. The political unrest currently taking place in the Arab world has seen large crowds taking to the streets with a number of demands. Contrasting with the image of Islamic fundamentalism that has been created in the media and in the western consciousness for decades one of the demands is for democratic principles to be respected. Although it is too soon to draw any firm conclusions, their demands represent another step towards deconstructing the narrative that equates Islam with extremism and a rejection of democracy and modernity.

¹⁵ Based on Schneier (2003)

Kallerud highlights a critical dimension of democracies, i.e. that democracy presupposes the rule of law, yet the existence of a democracy does not mean that the rule of law is necessarily in force (2006: 19). What this means is that we need to take care that our willingness to support the war on terror and acquiesce to ever more invasive counter-terror measures and surveillance does not undermine the liberties and legal protection we take for granted. Kallerud further attempts to direct our attention to a largely forgotten feature of human rights:

Human rights protect citizens from the state, not from each other. Hence it is a misunderstanding – at least from a legal perspective – when it is said that “it is a human right not to be subjected to violence”, “[being allowed] to walk the streets in peace” and so on. The idea of human rights must, historically as well as legally, be viewed from a citizen-state perspective; they are not norms applying amongst humans. It is a different matter that the state can be held responsible lest it fails to protect its citizens from abuse. (2006: 8 – my translation)

The words of a survivor of the German concentration camps remind us of the possible consequences of complacency and continuing to believe that we live in ideal democracies in spite of evidence to the contrary (Martin Niemöller, in Wikiquote 2011):

*When the Nazis came for the communists,
I remained silent;
I was not a communist.*

*When they locked up the social democrats,
I remained silent;
I was not a social democrat.*

*When they came for the trade unionists,
I did not speak out;
I was not a trade unionist.*

*When they came for the Jews,
I remained silent;
I wasn't a Jew.*

*When they came for me,
there was no one left to speak out.*

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