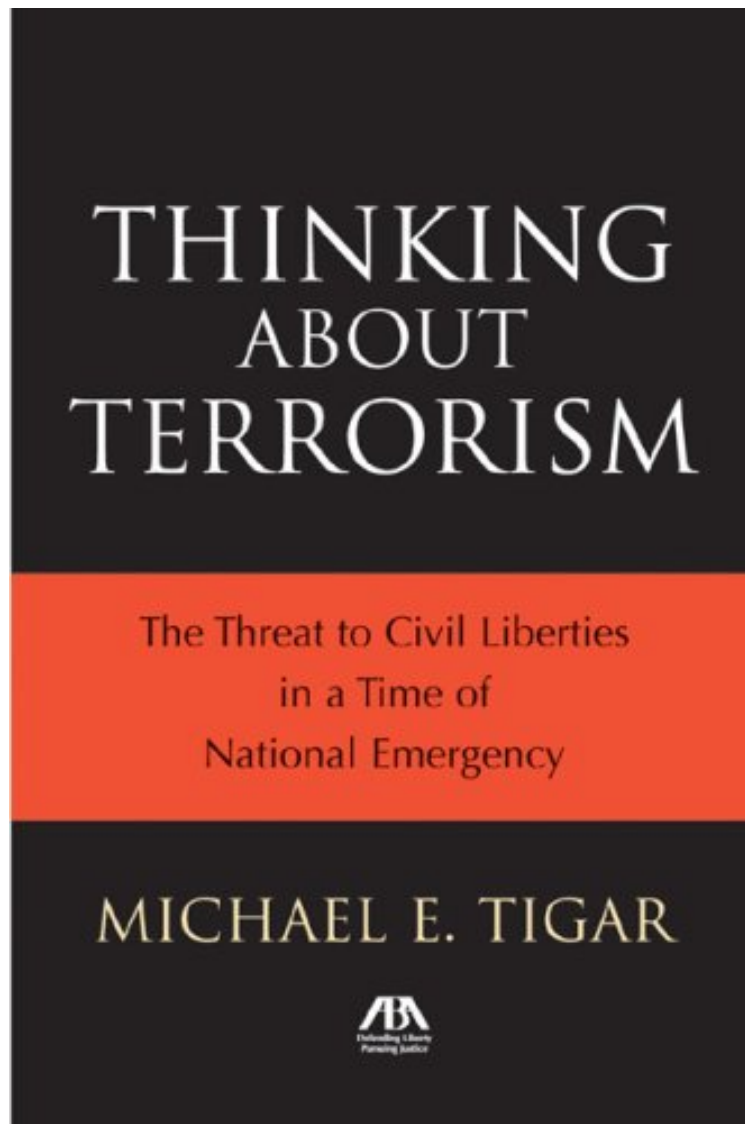


(Download ebook) Thinking About Terrorism: The Threat to Civil Liberties in a Time of National Emergency

Thinking About Terrorism: The Threat to Civil Liberties in a Time of National Emergency

Michael E. Tigar

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Michael E. Tigar : Thinking About Terrorism: The Threat to Civil Liberties in a Time of National Emergency before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thinking About Terrorism: The Threat to Civil Liberties in a Time of National Emergency:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Straight Talk About TerrorismBy The Peripatetic ReaderThis is a

book that should be read by everyone. As the title demonstrates, this is a cold, hard, mature examination of the motivations and origins of what is commonly called "terrorism." Tigar examines the history of terrorism from the French Revolution to the modern day. The terrorist movements in Ireland, Kenya, South Africa, Peru, Afghanistan, and Iran are discussed. Tigar spends upwards to one half of the book arriving at a workable definition for terrorism, which he describes as the systematic use of violence on noncombatants, in violation of international and domestic legal norms to influence a political result. This definition is important because in the course of this discussion, Tigar distinguishes state-sponsored and individual acts of terrorism. Early in the book he quotes the now-well-known passage from Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, in which Twain discusses the French Revolution. In that passage, Twain observed of the Reign of Terror that, yes, this was a short period in which terror dominated. But there were two reigns of terror. The first was the Reign of Terror, but the second consisted of the centuries of oppression by the French ruling class, subjugating the rest of the populace. The first had a duration of a few years; the second lasted centuries. So was the proletariat Reign of Terror justified to release the floodgates of terror for all the centuries of repression by the French bourgeois ruling class? Tigar goes on to analyze the merits of the post-revolutionary events of the French Revolution. He concludes that the terror was not justified because not only were the proponents of the terrorism acting in violation of the Revolution's own ideals, but acting contrary to the nascent laws of universal jurisprudence according to natural laws. The French Revolution is significant, because it provides the framework to evaluate all other forms of State-sponsored terrorism mentioned in his book, Nazi Germany, Vichy France, or Pinochet's Chile. It is significant also because Tigar distinguishes "terrorism," which is illegitimate, from other forms of legitimate struggle against oppressive governments or empires, such as post-colonial armed conflicts, armed civil conflicts, armed conflict in defense of an invading army, armed struggles of liberation. The French Revolution also provides the framework to distinguish illegitimate terrorism from homicide, or simple criminal acts. We must be clear what is illegitimate terrorism. Tigar's definition -- or any workable definition, really -- is important because since 9/11 the words "terrorism" or "terrorist" have become highly emotionally charged words, used much the same way, Tigar explains, as the words "Communist" or "commie" were used in the 50s or 60s. Those words are uttered by politicians to produce their own effect, according to the particular political agenda the politicians were furthering at the time, whether to push a military appropriations bill or to influence public opinion to further erode and restrict Constitutional rights. This is what most concerns Tigar; this is the principal purpose of the book. His book was published by the American Bar Association, so his primary audience is fairly conservative lawyers. This book deserves and can be appreciated by a wider audience. He is attempting to raise the awareness of the reader and to make the reader aware of the dynamics of how current actions which are called "terroristic" are, in reality, not terroristic at all. The most common examples, of course, are the current events from the Middle East. Judged by the emotionally charged language of politics the insurgents are "terrorists;" evaluated from the prism of history, Tigar identifies these same insurgent movements are armed opposition to post-colonial efforts to obtain the region's natural resources. More significantly, as a lawyer Tigar is writing to raise the awareness to the danger of constitutional rights and guarantees when the word terrorist or terrorism is used in a cavalier manner. Tigar concludes his book as he began. He does not arrive at any particular conclusion or discusses terrorism with any particular political agenda. Agree or disagree it is refreshing to read a dispassionate treatment of a sensitive topic.

Written by one of the top trial lawyers alive today, this is Michael Tigar's look at how government through history has responded to terrorism, with an analysis of our own government's response to the attacks of 9/11, particularly in regard to our own civil liberties. When does safety at any cost undermine the very basis for our republic? This book is a must-read for anyone concerned with the state of our civil liberties today.