

Islam-related terrorism in US declines

BY MADELINE WILL
STAFF WRITER

Islam-initiated terrorism in the U.S. decreased in frequency last year, according to a recent study's findings.

The study, conducted by the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, found the number of Muslim-American terrorism suspects and perpetrators dropped from 47 in 2009 to 20 in 2010.

"This study examines the list of Muslim Americans who engaged in plots of terrorism since 9/11," said Charles Kurzman, author of the

study. Kurzman is also a professor of sociology at UNC and a co-director of the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations.

The number of terrorism suspects in the United States in 2009 was an outlier compared to the trend over the past 10 years, he said.

"This drop was surprising given the public attention given to Muslim terrorism," Kurzman said.

"The number of individuals is not nearly as large as we would expect." From 2001 to 2008, there were

94 Muslim-American terrorism suspects and perpetrators, according to the report. Two cases were reported in 2008.

Compared to leading causes of death nationwide, terrorist attacks are not significant.

Since 9/11, there were 33 deaths that resulted from Muslim terrorism, Kurzman said. The low numbers are due to a combination of good luck and good policing, he said.

"We are fortunate that some of the terrorists were very incompetent," Kurzman said.

But most of the terrorist acts

since 9/11 were associated with Islamic extremism, said Jena McNeill, policy analyst on homeland security for The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C.

Terrorism is impossible to predict in the long run, McNeill said.

"Terrorists don't operate on a calendar year," she said.

She said the study will not make a difference to average citizens.

"I don't see that people will necessarily change their views on terrorism," she said.

The highlight of the report is

that U.S. law enforcement has been able to stop many of the attempted terrorist attacks, she said.

The American Muslim community has also played a large role in stopping terrorist plots and conspiracies, said Carl Ernst, UNC professor of Islamic Studies.

"Mosques in Muslim communities are the most important allies in the fight against terrorism," he said.

Ernst said the public has demonized American Muslims, when in reality, the problem is extremists.

"The perception of Islam in the United States is clearly out of pro-

portion to the reality," he said.

Any act of terrorism from the Muslim community comes from the fringe, Kurzman said.

"We're talking about unstable individuals," he said.

The debate on Muslim terrorism needs to be based less on fear and more on the facts, he said.

"Too much of our debate has been driven by suspicion and bias, and I would like to see evidence brought into the debate," he said.

Contact the State and National Editor at state@dailytarheel.com.

Former Clinton aide speaks on war, Obama

BY JESSICA KENNEDY
STAFF WRITER

He carried the "nuclear football," the briefcase containing all the data needed for the United States to launch a nuclear attack.

He tracked the location of Osama bin Laden on a satellite phone.

And for two years, retired Lt. Col. Robert "Buzz" Patterson followed President Bill Clinton across the globe as his senior military aide.

Once, as Patterson told a crowd of students Tuesday in Dey Hall, he even walked in on the president and Monica Lewinsky.

But it wasn't until 1996 that Patterson said he became political. When the administration's job offer first arrived, he thought it was a prank.

"I didn't start out to be a conservative pundit," Patterson said.

After serving 20 years in the U.S. Air Force, including several tours of duty as a combat pilot, Patterson got a call from the White House inviting him to serve as Clinton's senior military aide.

He accepted and moved to Washington, D.C., two weeks later.

Patterson said he voted for Ronald Reagan but didn't vote again until he cast a ballot for George W. Bush in 2000. He said his political views developed during his time in the White House.

Today, Patterson blames the 9/11 attacks on Clinton, who had several opportunities to have bin Laden killed, he said.

"We knew exactly where he was," Patterson said. "We had at least eight to 10 times to pull the trigger on bin Laden — to either capture him or kill him — in my two years in the White House, and every single time, President Clinton chose not to."

Patterson added that Clinton knew of the perceived threats of al-



DTH/DANIEL TURNER

Lt. Col. "Buzz" Patterson, who traveled the globe as senior military aide to President Bill Clinton, spoke about his career in Dey Hall on Monday.

Qaida hijacking airplanes to attack U.S. buildings.

"I personally lay the blame for 9/11 on President Bill Clinton," he said.

Patterson went on to discuss U.S. military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, of which he said he is a strong supporter.

"Whether or not President Bush intended it to be this way, it was a brilliant idea in the grand scheme of things," Patterson said.

Garrett Jacobs, an economics major and a member of the College Republicans, said the stories were reminiscent of what he'd heard from friends.

"I know other people who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, and his stories about when he was there sort of rang true with what they've

said and reminded me exactly why we're over there," he said.

Patterson segued from Iraq to criticize Obama's performance, saying he is an even more poorly equipped leader than Clinton was.

"I really thought I had worked for the worst commander in chief in our nation's history," he said. "I was wrong."

The Committee for a Better Carolina brought Patterson to speak at UNC, saying he brought a new point of view to campus.

"He covers a topic that we had not brought a speaker in to speak on before," said Jason Sutton, a senior political science major and president of the group.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

GAA hosts forum on Egypt

BY KAITLYN KNEPP
STAFF WRITER

Doria El Kerdany has been intently watching the news pour in from Egypt, trying to contact her family and check on their whereabouts.

Along with three other panelists, Kerdany spoke on the current state of Egypt and the entire Middle Eastern world at the General Alumni Association's "Egypt in Crisis" forum on Monday.

Kerdany, a native of Cairo, said she would be in Tahrir Square — the first and largest protest site — if she were in Egypt.

"My daughter is one of the revolution people," she said.

During her past several visits to the country, Kerdany said she noticed changes.

"The light in the eyes that is famous of Egyptian people is not there," she said.

The Egyptian demonstrations against long-serving president Hosni Mubarak began two weeks ago, about a month after the people of neighboring Tunisia overthrew their own dictator of several years.

Nadia Yaqub, another panelist and professor of Asian studies, addressed the conflicting opinions on America's role in shaping a new Egyptian government.

Yaqub said she thinks the two countries should work together.

"Yes, and the reason I say 'yes' is because we already are deeply involved," she said.

Senior Josh Watkins found Yaqub's remarks interesting.

"I particularly liked Nadia's stance on ethics," he said.

Panelist and political science professor Mark Crescenzi discussed his expectations for Egypt's future.

"I expect Mubarak to hold on," he said, adding that he believes Mubarak will make slow steps toward change to try to meet the demands of the protestors.

"I think that he will try out his new cabinet," he said.

Carl Ernst, another panelist and professor of religious studies, said



DTH/DANIEL TURNER

Professor Doria El Kerdany spoke of the protests in Egypt during a Think Fast Forum held by the General Alumni Association on Monday night.

the future is difficult to determine.

"We all would like the ability to predict what happens next, but in revolution it is such a chaotic situation that it is impossible to know what happens next," he said.

"That we will see political change in the next few years as a result of it."

Yaqub said many Middle Eastern people and governments already have positive feelings toward the U.S., providing a chance for America to build public opinion and orchestrate change.

"On the ground, if you spend any time in the Arab world, people are ready to love the U.S. if they just gave them a chance," she said. "But the U.S. doesn't."

Kerdany said the young people

of Egypt just want the Mubarak coup — as she called the government — dissolved.

"I believe and hope that this is what will happen," she said.

Kerdany said that after initially following the demonstrations, she wanted to drum up support locally.

With her map of the world depicting Cairo in the middle, Kerdany stood out side the Franklin Street post office, asking for support from passing pedestrians.

But she was disappointed with what she witnessed.

"The majority of the people passing by me were completely indifferent," she said.

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