

case is emblematic of what liberals think is demanded of them as Americans. Penn wasn't even worried he would be unpopular, much less charged with treason. In the war on terrorism, the most Americans could hope for was that no Hollywood actress would have an affair with Saddam Hussein. America is such a wealthy country, now even treason is cheap.

TREASON .

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**MODERN MCGARTHYISM:
THIS IS WHAT IT MEANT
IN THE FIFTIES, TOO**

Bitterly disheartened by the outburst of patriotism across the nation after 9-11, liberals quickly channeled their frustration into claiming that President Bush had advance knowledge of the terrorist attack. Republicans were so dumbstruck by the Democrats' mendacity, they overlooked the most stunning legedmain of the accusation. Suppose Bush had known nineteen Muslim immigrants planned to hijack four planes on a certain day. What could he have done? Throw Arabs out of the country? Put them in preventative detention? Order airport security to take an extra little peek at swarthy men boarding planes? Liberals wouldn't let us do that *after* 9-11. Instead of demanding to know what Bush knew before September 11, the more urgent question was: What did Democrats know *after* September 11?

The left's principal contribution to stopping another terrorist attack was to go into high dudgeon every time anyone in the Bush administration talked to a Muslim. They wailed about "McCarthyism" and claimed to be "very, very concerned"—not about terrorist attacks on America but about "civil liberties."¹ Liberals' idea for fighting domestic terrorism was to hold folk-song rallies with Muslims. In May 2002, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) said that it was "imperative" that Bush tell the Senate "what actions were taken in response" to an FBI report warning of a lot of Arabs in flight school.² Leahy hauled Attorney General John Ashcroft before the Senate Judiciary Committee, saying he was "very" upset with Ashcroft, not because he was failing to do enough to prevent the next terrorist attack, but just the opposite: He was doing too much, thereby threatening the civil liberties of Arabs.³ If the Democrats had shown half as much indignation about Saddam Hussein as they did about Ashcroft, their convictions might rate with real Americans.

In a girly-girl, eye-poking attack, House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) demanded an investigation into "what the White House knew about the events leading up to the attack, when they knew it and, most importantly, what was done about it."⁴ Gephardt's genius plan for assuring air safety after September 11 was to federalize airport security. But he refused to allow airport security to scrutinize passengers who look like the last two dozen terrorists to attack civilian aircraft. That's what he did when he knew about it.

Democrats claimed to be indignant that nothing was done in response to the memo from an FBI agent in Phoenix who had noticed a lot of Arabs enrolled in American flight schools. But as the *New York Times* reported, "F.B.I. officials said there was reluctance at the time to mount such a major review because of a concern that the bureau would be criticized for ethnic profiling of foreigners." Let's see, who might have criticized the FBI for ethnic profiling?

For Ashcroft's evident interest in immigrants of Middle Eastern descent rather than white male currency traders *after* September 11, Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Tex.) railed that the detention of Arabs "smacks

of racial profiling." Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) said the Bush administration was "literally dismantling justice."⁵

Senator Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) said the memo warning of Arabs in flight school was going "to be one of the most important documents in our national debate about whether we did enough to protect America from the attack of September 11th." What's this "we," paleface? After a savage terrorist slaughter by a group of immigrants of Middle Eastern descent, Durbin hysterically denounced people who support ethnic profiling of airline passengers as troglodytes "crawling on [their] bell[ies] in the mud at a right-wing militia training camp in Idaho."⁶

Senator Hillary Clinton—whose very first act in the Senate was to sponsor a bill prohibiting ethnic profiling—also demanded an investigation into what Bush knew and when he knew it. What did she know about her husband's serial philandering and when did she know it?

The *New York Times's* Maureen Dowd said, "I guess nothing short of a copy of Mohammed Atta's Travelocity itinerary would have stirred the F.B.I. from its stupor." But back on November 25, 2001, Dowd was snarling about Ashcroft's questioning of Arab immigrants in the United States: "The first resistance to his edict to interview five thousand Middle Eastern men came from police chiefs objecting to racial profiling."⁷ After Manhattan is nuked by fundamentalist Muslims, then will it be okay for the attorney general to question Middle Eastern men? Liberals are like little children on a car trip, but not as cute, incessantly demanding to know if we're there yet. Bush was deemed an incompetent for every single day he delayed in allowing liberals to attend Broadway plays without anxiety. They complained that Bush was not doing enough, while consistently opposing every domestic security measure he took.

In the midst of their constant carping, liberals refused to attack Bush for the one real black mark on the administration's antiterrorism efforts: Norman Mineta. Bursting with bipartisan bonhomie after he was elected, Bush made Democrat Mineta his secretary of transportation. At the time, Transportation was a relatively unimportant department; it would be difficult even for a Democrat to screw it up. After

nineteen Arabs turned passenger airplanes into cruise missiles, the transportation department was no longer trivial. And Bush had a Clinton-holdover in the job. If the government had hired expensive Harvard-trained consultants to try to figure out a way to make the flying experience even more unpleasant after September 11, the consultants would have thrown their hands up in despair. But chalk one up to liberals: One lone bureaucrat at the Department of Transportation did it on his own!

In classic Democrat fashion, Mineta piled on lots of useless regulations that would inconvenience the maximum number of airline passengers while, at the same time, making the planes no safer. The most important thing, as Mineta saw it, was to prohibit airport screeners from paying any extra attention to anyone who looked like the last several dozen terrorists to attack an American aircraft, embassy, or military installation. Instead, he insisted that the airlines go through the manifestly absurd exercise of strip-searching little old ladies. In some goo-goo-minded attempt to prove they are not profiling, airport security made a big show of harassing precisely those passengers they should have been ignoring. This ought to have warmed the hearts of Saudi Arabians. Too bad they would never read about it, since their newspapers were too busy polishing the theory that Zionists bombed the World Trade Center.

According to the FAA, in November and December of 2001, due solely to security precautions that treated Texas cheerleaders no differently from Saudi men, 30 airport terminals were entirely evacuated, passengers on 434 flights were ordered off their planes for rescreening, 1,180 flights were delayed, 464 flights were canceled, and 15 flights were diverted to alternative destinations.⁸ An elderly white congressman was ordered to strip to his underwear because of a steel hip joint. Women travelers were being asked to remove their bras. At the Los Angeles International Airport, security personnel confiscated a tiny little gun belonging to a G.I. Joe. In June 2002, airport security searched Al Gore. There's a lot not to like about Gore, but he's not a terrorist. Gore said he was glad he was searched.⁹ Why? To spare a

terrorist the trouble? This is a serious national issue; why must liberals lie? Searching Al Gore is a purely religious act. It is the purposeless, fetishistic performance of ritual in accordance with the civic religion of liberalism. Usually the nonsense liberals spout is kind of cute, but in wartime their instinctive idiocy is life-threatening. In response to a Muslim's attempted shoe bombing of an American Airlines jet in December 2001, Norman Mineta sprang to action by ordering the airlines to engage in random shoe checks. According to the *New York Times*, there was no discernible pattern in the airlines' choice of passengers targeted for aggressive footwear examination. At the Atlanta airport, for example, the passengers whose shoes were searched "included a flight attendant, an elderly black man, a white man wearing a cowboy hat and boots, and an Asian woman with two small children."¹⁰

Here, finally, was something Bush should have been pilloried and denounced for, but the Democratic Party was the dog that didn't bark. If law enforcement officers ever dared paw through the belongings of an Egyptian immigrant named Mustaffa with the fascist intensity of airport security patting down little old ladies suspected of flying to Iowa, liberals would have exploded in righteous indignation. But they didn't make a peep.

In early December 2001, *60 Minutes* host Steve Kroft interviewed Mineta about his approach to securing the airlines from terrorist attack. Kroft observed that of twenty-two men currently on the FBI's most-wanted list, "all but one of them has complexion listed as olive. They all have dark hair and brown eyes. And more than half of them have the name Mohammed."¹¹ Thus, he asked Mineta if airport security should give more scrutiny to someone named Mohammed—"just going down a manifest list: Bob, Paul, John, Frank, Steven, Mohammed." The secretary of transportation said, "No." In fact, Mineta was mystified by Kroft's question, asking him, "Why should Mohammed be singled out?" The Federal Aviation Administration had a computer profiling system on passengers, but it actually excluded mention of passengers' race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion. (What does it have?)

Mineta explained that airport security was able to consider other more important factors than race, including asking “things like, ‘Did you pay cash for this ticket or charge it on a credit card? Do you have a one-way ticket or a round-trip?’” Kroft asked the relevant follow-up question: “Did the terrorists who flew into the World Trade Center have one-way tickets?” No, Mineta said, the terrorist hijackers all had round-trip tickets they bought with credit cards. So the factors airport security was allowed to consider would not have stopped the 9-11 attack, and the factors that could have prevented the 9-11 attack were required to be ignored.

Mineta obstinately refused to consider a relevant airport screening procedure on the grounds that fifty years earlier another Democrat had put him in an internment camp. “I remember on the 29th of May, 1942”—note that he remembers the day—“when we boarded the train in San Jose under armed guard, the military guard, I was in my Cub Scout uniform carrying a baseball, baseball glove and a baseball bat. And as I boarded the train, the MPs confiscated the bat on the basis it could be used as a lethal weapon.”¹² A guard took Mineta’s baseball bat as a child, and as a result he was subjecting all of America to the Bataan Death March. Someone should have sent him a baseball bat.

There was no principled basis for opposition to using Arab appearance as a factor in airport screening procedures. The whole country knew that goosing little old ladies boarding planes was not making us any safer. It was so patently absurd that even the *New York Times* allowed a surprisingly sensible opinion piece through the politically correct gauntlet, titled: “Let Them Profile Me.”¹³ The writer described security hassles she had encountered in airports all over the world on account of her Lebanese birth, name, and looks. But she then pointed out that Arab-Americans don’t want to die, either. “Does anyone really want a security official to hesitate before stopping a suspicious passenger out of fear of an accusation of bias?” Yes, in fact. There were precisely two groups of people who desperately wanted airport security to be browbeaten into giving suspicious passengers a pass: terrorists and Democrats.

Even the Supreme Court was never this crazy. To the contrary, in a 1975 case called *United States v. Brignoni-Ponce*, the Court held that the “Mexican appearance” of a car’s occupants could be considered by border police stopping cars near the Mexican border to look for illegal aliens. This was back in the halcyon days when the Court was inventing new and preposterous “rights” every other day. But even that Court didn’t invent a right to have one’s ethnic appearance ignored by law enforcement. Rather, the Court noted, “The government has estimated that 85 percent of the aliens illegally in the country are from Mexico.” Meanwhile, 100 percent of the terrorist attacks on commercial airlines based in America for twenty years have been committed by Muslims. When there is a 100 percent chance, it ceases to be a profile. It’s called a “description of the suspect.” This is not a psychological judgment about an ethnic group—it is an all points bulletin: Warning! The next terrorist to board a commercial flight in the United States will be a Muslim. If ethnic appearance can be used as a factor by the police trying to stem the dire threat of one more Mexican raking leaves in Los Angeles, it is logical to conclude that ethnic appearance can also be used to counter the threat of thousands of Americans being killed in a terrorist attack.

American lives were put at risk in the name of political correctness. Safe on Air Force One, Bush did nothing to stop this menace at the Department of Transportation. And the Democrats didn’t complain. The moment Mineta raised the Japanese internment (a Democrat idea), they were paralyzed. The Democrats had one clear shot at the Bush administration, but they wouldn’t take it. This is what the Democrats did when they knew about it.

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman sniffed that racial profiling was not “civilized.” He blamed twenty years of relentless attacks by Muslim extremists on—I quote—“religious fundamentalists of any stripe.”¹⁴ I don’t know. Amish extremists have been rather quiet lately. If all this carnage and murder had been committed by anti-abortion extremists rather than Muslim extremists, it is unlikely that Friedman would be pussyfooting around the issue by referring to the culprits as

“political extremists of any stripe.” He ruefully concluded that our only choices were to “become less open as a society” or simply “to live with much higher levels of risk.” I have another solution. It’s a little something I like to call “racial profiling.” My logic is this: In twenty years of relentless attacks on America by Muslim extremists, there is a common thread. In every one of these attacks by Muslim extremists there appears to be one or more Muslim extremists involved. This ought to help the airlines engage in more accurate risk assessment.

To review the evidence:

- ▶ On September 11, 2001, more than three thousand Americans were murdered in a savage terrorist attack on U.S. soil by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In October 2000, our warship the USS *Cole* was attacked by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1998, U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1996, a U.S. Air Force housing complex in Saudi Arabia was bombed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1995, five Americans were killed by a car bomb set by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1993, the World Trade Center was bombed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1988, another passenger jet, Pan Am Flight 103, was bombed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1986, a West Berlin discotheque frequented by U.S. servicemen was bombed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1985, an Italian cruise ship, the *Achille Lauro*, was seized and a sixty-nine-year-old American was killed by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1983, the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut were blown up by Muslim extremists.
- ▶ In 1982, the U.S. embassy in Beirut was bombed by Muslim extremists.

▶ In 1979, the U.S. embassy in Iran was stormed and American embassy staff held hostage for 444 days by Muslim extremists.

So naturally, Democrats refuse to allow law enforcement to look for Muslim extremists.

While braying about what Bush knew and when he knew it, liberals had nothing but contempt for Ashcroft, the man in the Bush administration doing the most to ensure another act of domestic terrorism did not occur. Annoyed that they didn’t have enough grist for the anti-war mill, Democrats began complaining about every reasonable national security measure at home. Liberals were angrier at John Ashcroft for questioning Arab visitors to this country than they were about the terrorists. Bill Goodman of the Center for Constitutional Rights called Bush and Ashcroft the Constitution’s “main enemies.”¹⁵ The attorney general was regularly compared to the Taliban—and you aren’t a patriot until some liberal compares you to the Taliban. *Newsweek’s* Eleanor Clift ridiculed Ashcroft for his “pomposity.” She complained incomprehensibly about the terrorism alerts: “Why did Ashcroft insist on issuing the alerts?”¹⁶ (Perhaps to warn of terror threats?) She complained that not enough lawyers were rushing to court to undermine the government’s monitoring of terrorists’ jailhouse conversations.

These alleged civil liberties concerns had only one purpose: to give Muslims a cushion for another attack on America. Frank Rich began a column with this: “Cheney, Rumsfeld, Ridge, Mueller. Is there anyone who has not warned us of Armageddon over the past week? As far as I can tell, the only slacker in this White House game of Wag the Dog is Spot.”¹⁷ Was Rich suggesting that the war on terrorism was a Hollywood invention airlifted to the Oval Office? Did he even think about what he was writing?

Unable to root for al-Qaeda openly, Democrats lodged surly objections to the Bureau of Prisons for listening to the conversations of prison inmates suspected of plotting terrorist attacks. Whenever liberals are losing on substance, they pretend to be upset about process. Senator Leahy complained about Ashcroft’s “disappointing” failure to

run all internal guideline changes past the Senate Judiciary Committee. "Instead," he said, "we're presented with a fait accompli reflecting no congressional input whatsoever."¹⁸ Ashcroft was probably worried Leahy would take as long with procedures for investigating terrorism as he was taking with Bush's judicial nominees. If Speedy Gonzalez Leahy were required to review Justice Department guidelines, America would be an Islamic regime before he got around to holding a vote.

In June 2002, the *New York Times* editorial page was in a snit with the Supreme Court for its first ruling on the Bush administration's wartime security procedures. Despite the clearly stated position of the *Times* editorial board, the Supreme Court ruled for Ashcroft. Deportation hearings of suspected terrorists would not be open to the public. This, the *Times* said, was "troubling." Sadly, the Constitution does not require that national security be compromised.

When Ashcroft announced a plan to fingerprint all visitors from terrorist-producing countries, the *New York Times* said he was going in "the wrong direction." It was a "poorly conceived and inadequate substitute for the serious overhaul of the immigration system."¹⁹ Ashcroft, the editorial continued, "should address basic problems rather than settling for quick but ultimately ineffective solutions."²⁰ Liberals always want some more comprehensive reform—they will never say what exactly. But under no circumstances may we inconvenience the enemy. That would be an "ultimately ineffective" solution. We must address issues with a long, ponderous search for solutions that would perhaps be more effective, but we'll all be dead.

A major political party that won a plurality of the popular vote in the last presidential election wanted to treat terrorists like Martha Stewart facing an insider trading charge. A few months after 9-11, forty congressmen released a letter lambasting Bush for his plan to use military tribunals for enemy combatants. Signing the letter were thirty-nine Democrats, one Vermont Independent, and one lone Republican (who was soon voted out of office). Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) demanded Senate hearings on the tribunals so that "foreign countries like Spain will look at the process better." Representative Jerrold

Nadler (D-N.Y.) said, "These procedures belong in a Soviet state or a dictatorship, not in a free society."²¹

Representative Jose Serrano, Democrat of New York, said Ashcroft's detention of two al-Qaeda terrorists as enemy combatants was "frightening."²² Jose Padilla had been identified by captured al-Qaeda leader Abu Zubaydah as part of a conspiracy to detonate a dirty bomb in an American city.²³ Yaser Esam Hamdi was captured fighting with Taliban forces in Afghanistan. Liberals were appalled by their detentions because both of the accused terrorists were American citizens. Heated descriptions of various Muslim terrorists as "American citizens" were getting a little tiresome. The implication was that librarians in Boise, Idaho, were at risk of being thrown in jail as enemy combatants at any moment. Yes, technically, by law, Yasser Esam Hamdi and Jose Padilla were "American citizens." Talibanist John Walker Lindh was an "American citizen," and shoe bomber Richard Reid was a "British citizen." But then you'd see the AP photo and it was always a picture of some orangutan.

Human rights groups responded to the detention of every suspected terrorist with paranoid accusations of police state tactics. The *New York Times* reported, "International support for the campaign against terrorism is weakening because of human rights abuses by the United States, Human Rights Watch charged in a report published today."²⁴ *The Progressive* magazine said, "Welcome to the New McCarthyism."²⁵ ACLU president Nadine Strossen saw "parallels between what we're going through now and McCarthyism."²⁶ Professional McCarthy hysteric Ellen Schrecker said, "I'm terrified." There were dark rumors that terrorists were being stripped, humiliated, strapped down, and subjected to total sleep deprivation with lights and noise. Then it turned out the hapless victims of such brutal tactics weren't terrorists, but airline passengers since September 11. No one could name one thing Ashcroft had done that would alarm any normal person. Liberals seemed to imagine that the FBI had nothing better to do than to sit around investigating how much time they were spending logged onto panties.com.

Compared to any similar circumstance in U.S. history, Ashcroft was remarkably restrained. In 1924, after the homes of eight government officials were bombed, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer—appointed by Democrat Woodrow Wilson, though still serving under President Calvin Coolidge—rounded up 6,000 people. In 1942, after a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor—committed by a country, not resident aliens—a Democrat president put more than 100,000 Japanese residents and citizens in internment camps. By contrast, in the months following the most devastating terrorist attack in world history, in which 3,000 Americans were killed, John Ashcroft detained 766 non-citizens, many on immigration violations. Eighteen months later, more than 100 of them had been convicted or pleaded guilty to terrorism-related offenses and another 489 had been deported or left the United States willingly.²⁷ Even *Time* magazine had to admit that, despite the wails of civil liberties groups, “it is clear . . . at least some of the detainees are exactly the sort of people Americans would want the FBI to zero in on.”²⁸ But *The Progressive* magazine vowed that Ashcroft’s detention of a relatively small number of lawbreaking aliens “will go down in history as the Ashcroft Raids.”²⁹ Eventually, frustrated with Ashcroft’s moderation, liberals were forced to start staging events, so they could scream about their persecution. Most popular were attacks on the American flag (they really hate that flag) and vicious anti-American T-shirts all calculated to provoke a reaction—which they would then portray as fascist oppression.³⁰ With very little disruption and surprisingly few arrests, Ashcroft immobilized al-Qaeda’s capacity to strike again.

The FBI had been on the Arab community like white on rice with wiretaps, informants, arrests, and interrogations. By the end of 2002, the Department of Justice had disrupted terrorist cells in Buffalo, Portland, and Detroit. The arrest of a former roommate of two 9-11 hijackers led to forty more arrests in a visa fraud scheme. More than two hundred airport workers in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Dallas airports had been arrested for document and immigration fraud.

At the Dallas and Newark airports, scores of workers were charged with alarming schemes to obtain access to high-security areas of the airports.

Preventing terrorism doesn’t receive as much news coverage as the alternative. But from 9-11 through the end of 2002, the Bush administration had thwarted “an estimated 100 or more attacks against the United States and its interests.” That stunning fact appeared in the middle of a small news item on page A-11 of the *New York Times*.³¹ Few other news outlets mentioned it at all. To be sure, the nation would not be safe from terrorist attack until the malarial swamps were completely drained—something else the Democrats opposed. But a year and a half after the attack of September 11, there had been nothing approaching the horror of those attacks. That wasn’t a bet many people would have taken on September 12, 2001.

It’s safe to assume Ashcroft wasn’t getting a lot of help. And yet he calmly persisted in the face of caterwauling idiots. This is a country virtually designed for terrorist attacks. America is a big multicultural society full of densely packed cities with large foreign-born populations—and hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants. Try this with another country: *Hello, Indian Embassy? I would like to emigrate to your country. I have no money, no ambition, and no prospects, but I hear you have a generous welfare program and I want to start a big family and bring my extended family with me, all of whom consider your nation the Great Satan.*

Foreigners were relentlessly staging raids on our border, which was defended by a hapless bunch of incompetents at the Immigration and Naturalization Service. But the only complaints about the INS came from conservatives. Liberals view their own noncompliance with immigration laws as a sort of friendly-neighbor program. They think America is a department store, and that no one can be denied entry. Los Angeles police officers are expressly prohibited from even questioning suspects, witnesses, or crime victims—anyone—about their immigration status. When he was the avenging law and order mayor of

New York City, Rudolph Giuliani bragged about the city's refusal to cooperate with the INS in turning over illegal immigrants. His successor, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, believes the greatest threat to public safety in New York City is passive smoke. Bloomberg would only crack down on illegal immigrants if he caught them smoking.

The nation's political ethos demands that we pretend we don't suspect Egyptian immigrant Hesham Mohamed Hedayet any more than Al Gore. The rights of the accused trump the rights of the law-abiding. Special interest groups defend the right of predators to move freely in the general population. There are bands of lawyers ready to sue in response to any incident of law enforcement—just like back in Syria. The FBI was surely more polite to Middle Eastern immigrants than people in their home countries would be to us under similar circumstances. Indeed, if the government's treatment of terrorism suspects was as brutal as the left claimed, it might remind them of home.

Sensing that screaming about the rights of terrorists was not impressing voters, about a year after 9-11, Democrats switched gears and began assailing Bush for not doing *enough* about domestic security. Leading the way were a host of presidential candidates. Senator John Edwards (D-N.C.) said, "It's time for us, without regard to party, to say what every American knows—Washington is not doing enough to make America safe." Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.) said the Bush administration had failed to make "the preparations necessary to properly deal with an obvious problem of growing terror and the threat at home." Senator Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) said, "This administration has been slow and inadequate in the response to the terrorist threat here at home." Had there been another terrorist attack the nation was unaware of? There was the shooting at the El Al counter at the Los Angeles airport and the sniper attacks. But liberals wouldn't even admit that the perpetrators of those attacks were Muslims, so by their count, there hadn't been a single new act of domestic terrorism since 9-11. How exactly would liberals have done a better job? Have John Edwards sue after every attack? Put Hillary in charge of the Armed Services on the basis of her husband's acknowledged expertise in evading armed service?

If bashing Bush on domestic security was the Democrats' winning idea, one can only imagine what ideas came in second.

The fact that Democrats were rushing to have their warnings duly placed on the record was alarming. On its face, the idea that any Democrat is meaningfully concerned with security was a joke. They consider it a bore. Unfortunately, the Bush administration was obliged to give these knuckleheads parliamentary briefings on national security. Implicit in their complaints was the Democrats' hope that something would happen so they could attack Bush for not having prevented it. Democrats were leering over the prospect of another terrorist attack to use as political fodder against Bush.

Liberals belittled every bust of a terrorist cell as an overhyped publicity stunt from that corpore Ashcroft. They were not impressed, for example, by Ashcroft's arrest of some nice Yemeni gentlemen in Lackawanna, New York. In almost every news account, the reasons for the arrest were murky and immediately buried beneath copious rationalizations from the men's defense attorneys. Interestingly, the most forthright and complete accounts of the government's case came from a noted Muslim journalist, Anwar Iqbal, writing for United Press International.

The facts were alarming, especially after 9-11. In the summer of 2001, eight men of Yemeni descent, most U.S. citizens, flew in three groups to Pakistan. The spiritual leader of the group, Kamal Derwish, left first. The next group arrived in April and the third in May. Excited by the prospect of meeting Osama bin Laden, they crossed the border into Afghanistan and traveled to what was then Taliban-controlled Kandahar. At an al-Qaeda "guesthouse" they watched promotional videos for al-Qaeda, including speeches by Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders. After watching videos denouncing America and Israel and boasting of attacks on the U.S., such as the bombing of the USS *Cole*, the men continued to the next level, an al-Qaeda training camp.³²

At the al-Farooq training camp, they received training in explosives, Kalashnikov assault rifles, and long-range weapons.³³ Derwish,

who had been to the camp before, was enrolled in more advanced military training. Osama bin Laden appeared and gave a fiery speech to the camp. One of the accused, Sahim A. Alwan, stayed for ten days before leaving. The rest stayed for the full five to six weeks of terrorist training. Six of the men then returned to Lackawanna, and two others were believed to have returned to Yemen. Upon their return, the men trimmed their beards. Neighbors found them oddly taciturn about a trip they had begun with great fanfare.

The FBI kept the six men in Lackawanna under surveillance from the moment of their return—months before 9-11. Not so asleep at the wheel after all, these FBI agents. Alwan had a message waiting for him from the FBI when he returned in June 2001. Asked about the trip, Alwan lied to the FBI agent, claiming they had gone for religious training and never left Pakistan. After 9-11, the FBI talked to several of the men about their trip. They all maintained they had never left Pakistan. Despite the fact the men were unemployed or had menial jobs, they never wanted for money. Each had paid \$1,300 in cash for plane tickets to Pakistan. After being fired from his job as a bill collector, Yasein Taher bought a new Mustang convertible and a Ninja motorcycle.³⁴ The unemployed Taher and Shafal A. Mosed, a telemarketer, spent \$89,000 gambling at Casino Niagara.³⁵ A high school classmate said, “They were driving flashy cars and buying up all this stuff.”³⁶

There was more. As the first anniversary of the 9-11 attack approached, one of the men, Mukhtar al Bakri, sent an e-mail titled “The Big Meal” from Bahrain to another of the men. He wrote: “There are people who have been having visions . . . This is a very strong vision. A vision nobody will be able to bear.” The e-mail continued: “The next meal will be very huge. It will be so big that no one will be able to withstand it, except the people with faith.” (Al Bakri’s lawyer would later suggest that the “big meal” referred to a hamburger.)³⁷

Operating on tips from within the community and noticing an increase in “chatter” among the group, the FBI arrested the author of the “big meal” e-mail on September 10 in Bahrain, where he was marrying a Yemeni woman. At first, al Bakri stuck to the story that the men

had never left Pakistan, but after being beaten by the Bahraini police, he was more forthcoming. He admitted the group had attended an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. The five men back in Lackawanna were arrested on September 13, 2002. The FBI found a cache of weapons in one suspect’s home and a brief for “martyrdom operations” in the home of another. Still, the men maintained they had simply gone to Pakistan for religious training and nothing more.

Here were men who trained with Osama bin Laden—the one enemy liberals were willing to acknowledge. It was one year after thousands of Americans were slaughtered by young Muslim men with remarkably similar curricula vitae. The men lied to the FBI about their al-Qaeda training. They had lots of unexplained cash. They had recently exchanged an e-mail about a coming “big meal” that only people of faith would be able to withstand. And this was only what the government was telling us.

Naturally, therefore, the media fanned out across Lackawanna in search of any pogrom-oriented Americans committing hate crimes against Muslims. In fact, the only provable hate crime in Lackawanna was committed by the *New York Times*, which ran a staged photo of a six-year-old boy pointing a toy gun at a sign that said “Arabian Foods.”³⁸ In reaction to an uproar from other journalists who had witnessed the photo’s production, the *Times* eventually ran a correction, admitting it had been staged.

According to the FBI, members of the Muslim community had provided crucial tips about the men. But the *New York Times* ran only lachrymose accounts of Yemeni-Americans trembling in terror and indignation at the FBI, while “staunchly” defending the terrorist trainees.³⁹ It was just like the *Times*’s man-on-the-street interviews on Bush’s tax plan. For the *Times*, an “ordinary American” is a sociology professor in Oregon whose wife teaches tantric sex at the community college. You can imagine what the “ordinary Muslim” is like. Every Muslim the *Times* talked to believed the arrested men were innocent, saying “Mistakes have been made, risks overstated, lives ruined.”⁴⁰ “Many” said the men had been “misinterpreted” and the government was “trying to

find the men guilty by association."⁴¹ One of the al-Qaeda trainees was called "a pillar of the neighborhood"⁴²—also "too fat to be a trained terrorist." (Apparently he could not withstand the "big meal.") The aspiring terrorists were "aimless but essentially harmless American Muslims, all of them United States citizens."⁴³

National Public Radio also interviewed Yemeni incensed at the arrests of the Osama acolytes. One Muslim said she felt her religion was "on trial."⁴⁴ Another said she felt "forced to defend herself." She indignantly cited Timothy McVeigh as if it were manifestly absurd to imagine Muslims were more likely to commit terrorism than anyone else.⁴⁵ In a similarly widespread phenomenon, a few years ago, a man was killed with a crossbow in Brooklyn.⁴⁶ That doesn't mean New York City cops should be focusing on illegal crossbows. Another anonymous member of the Yemeni community said he thought the arrested men were "the victims of wrong assumptions." He admitted to curiosity about what they were doing in an al-Qaeda terror camp, but he evidently overcame his curiosity.⁴⁷

Newsweek quoted people in "the community" who said it should not be a crime to travel to Afghanistan to "learn more about Islam." To this, *Newsweek* remarked, "Maybe not in Lackawanna. In Washington, however, there are plenty of people who believe it's a crime that should get them fifteen years."⁴⁸ Perhaps training with a terrorist organization that slaughtered thousands of Americans is not deserving of the beatings that will be accorded Enron executives, but a short prison sentence might be appropriate. Explaining the genesis of the trip, *Newsweek* reported, "A Muslim evangelical group invited the men to attend a religious gathering in Pakistan."⁴⁹ Evangelism? These aren't Mormons. Al-Qaeda "evangelism" consists of flying planes into skyscrapers and decapitating journalists.

But according to *Newsweek*, Ashcroft was on a crusade. The attorney general had "vowed to root [out] al-Qaeda sleeper cells operating in the U.S., "even if that means stretching the limits of the law."⁵⁰ That's an odd phrase. Ashcroft hadn't plowed any new legal ground in arresting people who trained with a foreign army of terrorists waging

war against America. Why not: "Ashcroft vowed to enforce the law against terrorists"? The *New York Times* suggested that the Lackawanna case put all Americans at risk: "The prosecution's case, at least in part, is that a terrorist can be the kid next door."⁵¹ Yes—if the kid next door trained with al-Qaeda. Mohammed Atta lived next door to somebody, too. Don't all criminals live next door to somebody? What was the *Times*'s point?

In a bizarre attempt to impress the *New York Times*, Eric Boehlert wrote in Salon.com that the Lackawanna case turned "in part" on "whether downloading a document that debates suicide attacks proves terrorist ties." The document found at the home of Yasein Taher, one of the terrorist trainees, did not "debate" suicide attacks: It came out foursquare for them. But according to Boehlert, the jihad document "seems to have questionable relevance to the terrorism allegations."⁵² Maybe, as Who guitarist Pete Townshend said of his child pornography, Taher had downloaded the document for "research." Boehlert insisted that the document be put "in its proper context." The context was this: Eight Middle Eastern men attended an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan, had a lot of unexplained cash, and exchanged an e-mail during an Orange alert warning of a coming "big meal" that only the faithful would be able to survive.

But for Boehlert, the mere fact that the terrorist instruction manual was "widely available" on the Internet proved "the paucity" of the government's case and showed "how the government will take anything they can get their hands on and use it selectively."⁵³ The charming document, titled "The Islamic Ruling on the Permissibility of Martyrdom Operations," is a paean to jihad, with page after page of religious justifications for suicide missions under Islam.⁵⁴ It says, "We have found, through the course of our experience that there is no other technique which strikes as much terror into their hearts, and which shatters their spirit as much." Citing passages from Islamic texts and the words of Mohammed, the document says, "One who kills himself because of his strong faith and out of love for Allah and the Prophet, and in the interests of the religion, is praiseworthy." It complains that

Muslims “have neglected this great duty,” and says every Muslim should be a “self-sacrificer” who embarks on a suicide mission “out of strength of faith and conviction, and to bring victory to Islam, by sacrificing his life for the upliftment of Allah’s word!”

After 9-11, anyone slightly darker than Tony Orlando found with this document should have been arrested. In this case, it was found in the home of an Arab Muslim who recently trained with Osama bin Laden. Two months after the Lackawanna cell was broken, the CIA launched a missile strike against a car carrying Abu Ali, a key al-Qaeda leader in Yemen. With him in the car was Kamal Derwish, the ringleader of the Lackawanna cell.⁵⁵

Liberals took the position that unless Ashcroft told them everything and destroyed the effectiveness of his investigations, they would refuse to believe him. No matter how spectacular the arrest, liberals invariably responded with, *You call that a terrorist?* When the government arrested a suspected dirty bomber, Jose Padilla, in Chicago, *Time* magazine said most people reacted with “equal parts ‘Holy crap!’ and ‘Hey, wait a minute—how do we know these uncorroborated threats are on the level? What’s the source?’”⁵⁶ Columnist Maureen Dowd said of the dirty bomber’s arrest: “Is the Bush crowd hyping things?” Evidently she thought they were: “Ashcroft, Bobby Three Sticks and Paul ‘Bomb Iraq’ Wolfowitz breathlessly told the nation that they had thwarted a scary radiological bombing plot.” Ho, ho, ho. The arrest of Padilla, Dowd said, “was designed both to make our teeth chatter and our gratitude well up. Weren’t we thankful that the Bushies were, finally catching somebody and protecting us?” Dowd was in stitches over the Bush administration claiming “the military has in custody a bona fide al Qaeda operative.”⁵⁷ The war on terrorism was a joke.

Liberals’ main point about the dirty bomber was that Padilla was too stupid to detonate a dirty bomb. In this one case, they had been given dispensation from the *New York Times* to attack the intelligence of a Latino. Padilla thus joined a shortlist of minorities whom liberals were allowed to vent their spleens on, the others being Justice Clarence Thomas and black voters in Florida. Citing anonymous “experts,”

Dowd questioned whether Padilla had “the brains” or “know-how” to construct a nuclear bomb.⁵⁸ Ashcroft, she said, had “built up the dirty bomber into an Atta-like terrorist capable of leveling downtown Washington.”⁵⁹ But of course, as Dowd repeatedly intimated, Padilla was just a dumb Hispanic.

This was as opposed to that Napoleonic genius Mohammed Atta, Master War Strategist. The 9-11 terrorists didn’t design the cruise missile’s targeting system, they sucker punched a sleeping giant. If shoe-bomber Richard Reid hadn’t been caught in the act of putting a match to a fuse on his Paris–Miami flight, liberals would have sniffed that he didn’t have “the brains” to commit a terrorist act either. Until he was sixty seconds away from blowing up an airplane, the only suspicious fact about Reid was that he had once attended an al-Qaeda training camp.

The nation’s various *New York Times* wanna-bes—*All the Crusading Anger with None of the Stature!*—were similarly skeptical of every terrorist the government arrested. The Allentown, Pennsylvania, *Morning Call* said the Bush administration was “reeling in small fry and making a big deal about it.”⁶⁰ Members of a suspected al-Qaeda cell in Portland, Oregon, the paper said, “sound more like countercultural malcontents, not much different from any number of groups that have had grievances with our country in the past.”⁶¹

Only when a Muslim terrorist proved his bona fides by killing people would the media believe it. That in turn would set off a Code Orange alert in the media, requiring total suppression of the information that the perp was a Muslim. Emerging as al-Qaeda’s leading spokesman in America, when Muslim terrorists first attacked the World Trade Center back in 1993, the *New York Times* ran the headline “Jersey City Man Is Charged in Bombing of Trade Center.”⁶² On July 4, 2002, an Egyptian living in California named Hesham Mohamed Hedayet walked into an El Al terminal at the Los Angeles airport and started shooting Jews. (Not that there’s anything unpeaceful about that.) In the past, Hadayet had complained about his neighbors’ flying a U.S. flag, he had a “Read the Koran” sticker on his front door,

and he had expressed virulent hatred for Jews. The *Times* reported straight that his motive for the shooting may have been “some dispute over a fare.”⁶³

The *Times* also blacked out the information that the terrorists who seized a Moscow theater in October 2002 were Muslims. In a prolix front-page article about the “hostage siege” in Russia, the *Times* referred to the Islamic terrorists who stormed the theater exclusively as the “captors,” the “separatists,” and the “guerrillas.” One searches in vain for a clear statement that the Moscow hostage crisis was yet another enterprise of the Religion of Peace. The only hint that the “captors” were Muslims was the *Times*’s derisive reference to Russian president Vladimir V. Putin’s attempt “to cast the rebels as international Islamic terrorists.”⁶⁴ The *Times* knows a cheap political ploy when it sees one.

Most neurotically, the media aggressively censored the terrorists’ Muslim names. When an Arab terrorist becomes an “American citizen,” that legal formality is strictly observed by the press. But when a Muslim terrorist legally changes his name to Mohammed, that legal formality is ignored. Dirty bomber Jose Padilla had his name legally changed to Ibrahim in the mid-nineties.⁶⁵ When he was arrested on terrorism-related charges in mid-2002, the media changed it back—allowing Maureen Dowd to argue that he was a dumb Hispanic incapable of assembling a dirty bomb. California traitor “John Walker Lindh” changed his name to Suleyman Al-Lindh in high school.⁶⁶ When he was captured fighting with the Taliban, he was going by the name Abdul Hameed. He hadn’t used the name Lindh for years. But he was identified in the press exclusively as John Walker Lindh. Thwarted shoe-bomber “Richard Reid” was identified by the French police as Tariq Raja.⁶⁷ The name he answered to at the time he tried to bomb an airplane was his Muslim name, Abdel Rahim. Naturally, therefore, the media called him Richard Reid, the name on his passport. Indeed, the *New York Times* went the extra mile, describing him as Richard Colvin Reid, a British citizen with a “Christian upbringing.”⁶⁸ The *Miami Herald* ran a headline on Reid titled: “Shoe Bomb Suspect’s Motives a Mystery.”⁶⁹

Stubbornly imitating an Alzheimer’s joke, when terrorist snipers in Maryland and Virginia turned out to be Muslims, the media treated it like a random crime. The older of the two Muslims had converted to Islam seventeen years earlier, changed his name to John Muhammad, belonged to Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam, and cheered the 9-11 terrorist attack. Indeed, he was so gung-ho about the 9-11 attack that three of his acquaintances contacted the FBI, believing he could be a terrorist. Inadvertently including relevant facts in an article, the *New York Times* reported that Muhammad registered the getaway vehicle with the DMV on the first anniversary of the 9-11 attack, writing in the time of the registration as “8:52 a.m.”—the precise moment the first plane had hit the World Trade Center.

But what the media saw as the crucial, salient fact about sniper John Muhammad was that he was a Gulf War veteran. CNN valiantly insisted on calling John Muhammad by his Christian name—a name he hadn’t used for seventeen years. The night the snipers’ names were first released, CNN’s Jeanne Meserve repeatedly called him John Allen Williams.

The *New York Times* described the snipers thus: “John Allen Muhammad, 41, a Gulf War Veteran, and John Lee Malvo, 17, a Jamaican.” Inasmuch as the nation was at war with Islamic terrorists, you might think it would be of passing interest that the snipers were Muslims. But you needed a *New York Times* decoder ring to figure out that *GULF WAR VETERAN* John Muhammad was a Muslim. The only clue as to the snipers’ religion was the *Times*’s repeated insistence that Islam had absolutely nothing to do with the shootings. In the three months following the capture of the Muslim snipers terrorizing the capital, the *Times* would run 128 articles about the shootings. Only 9 would so much as mention the word “Muslim.”⁷⁰

The refusal to make a connection between Muslim extremists and unending violence by Muslim extremists borders on psychopathological disturbance. Islamic fanatics were staging random acts of brutality against Americans. When the Maryland snipers turned out to be Muslims who hated America and admired the 9-11 terrorists, someone in

the media might have remembered that. Instead, all news outlets aggressively hid the fact that the snipers were Muslims.

To find out what the enemy was up to, you kept having to turn to obscure little boxes at the bottom of page A9 of the *Newspaper of Record*. In a little-noticed story almost exactly one year after Muslims staged the most horrible terrorist attack the world has ever seen, a Muslim en route from Germany to Kosovo emerged from the airplane bathroom and tried to strangle a stewardess with his shoelaces. (Not that there's anything unpeaceful about that.) That story was squirreled away in a small box at the very bottom of page A9 of the *Times*. In the entire Lexis-Nexis archives, only three newspapers reported the incident. Not one mentioned that the attacker was a Muslim. It was a rather captivating story, too. Earlier in the flight, the Muslim responded to the stewardess's offer of refreshments by saying, "I'd like to drink your blood." (Not that there's anything unpeaceful about that.)

America was at war with Islamic fanatics, but liberals treated every new onslaught like a bolt out of the blue. If the 9-11 terrorists had been fundamentalist Christians, the shoelace strangler a fundamentalist Christian, the shoe-bomber and snipers fundamentalist Christians, the Los Angeles airport killer a fundamentalist Christian, and scores of suicide bombers fundamentalist Christians, you can be sure the media would not censor the terrorists' religion. Liberals bar the most benign expressions of religion by little America. Only a religion that is highly correlated with fascistic attacks on the U.S. commands their respect and protection.

Liberals become indignant when you question their patriotism, but simultaneously laugh at dumb Americans who love their country and hate the enemy. They think real patriotism should consist of redoubled efforts to expand welfare payments. The *New York Times* ran a "Tomorrow" cartoon sneering about Americans who believe with "unwaver- ing faith in an invisible omniscient deity who favors those born in the middle of the North American landmass." This is how liberals conceive of America: an undifferentiated landmass in the middle of North America. The point was simply to convey all the proper prejudices of

elitist liberals against ordinary Americans. While hooting with laughter at patriotic Americans, liberals prattle on and on about the right to dissent as the true mark of patriotism and claim their unrelenting kvetching is a needed corrective to jingoism. (It's not jingoism, and the only people who use that word are fifth columnists.)

Through their enervating dialogues and endless concerns with process, liberals made themselves incapable of feeling hate for the enemy. The president of the ACLU said America's response to terrorism was "exactly the same phenomenon" as McCarthyism.⁷¹ And so it was. Once again, liberals would defend people contriving plots to murder Americans. Liberals simply did not have an implacable desire to kill those who cheered the wanton slaughter of thousands of Americans. But that's the way American people felt. Anyone who could "rise above" that, anyone who had "moved on" from that, wasn't angry in the first place. Liberals are appalled by patriotism with an edge of anger because it might lead America to defend itself.