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Publication Month: January 2007

Thinking Like a Terrorist *Insights of a Former FBI Undercover Agent*

By Mike German

ISBN-10: 1-59797-025-5 Cloth \$26.95 6 x 9
ISBN-13: 978-1-59797-025-9 256 pages Index

As the fifth full year of America's global war on terrorism continues, statistics concerning terrorist attacks show a disturbing trend: from a twenty-one-year high in 2003, attacks tripled in 2004 and then doubled in 2005. And as the incidence of terrorist attacks increased, so has the number of terrorists. While the primary leaders of the Taliban, al Qaeda, and al Qaeda in Iraq remain at large, a 2006 Department of Defense study reportedly identified thirty new al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups that have been created since September 11, 2001. We may not have metrics that measure our success in the war on terrorism, but these realities certainly illuminate our failures.

In *Thinking Like a Terrorist*, former FBI counterterrorism agent Mike German contends that the overarching problem is a fundamental failure to understand the terrorists—namely, what they want and how they intend to get it. When our counterterrorism policies are driven by misunderstanding and misperception, we shouldn't be surprised at the results. Today's terrorists have a real plan—a blueprint that has brought them victory in the past—that they are executing to perfection. Moreover, their plan is published and available to anyone who bothers to read it. Once the terrorists' plan is understood, we can develop and implement more effective counterterrorism strategies.

A former undercover agent who infiltrated neo-Nazi terrorist groups in the United States, German explains the terrorist's point of view and discusses ways to counter the terrorism threat. Based on his unusual experience in the field, *Thinking Like a Terrorist* provides unique insights

into why terrorism is such a persistent and difficult problem and why the U.S. approach to counterterrorism is not working.

MIKE GERMAN left the FBI after blowing the whistle on the agency's mishandling of a terrorism investigation. A former undercover agent and counterterrorism instructor at the FBI National Academy, he is currently a senior fellow at GlobalSecurity.org. He lives in the Middle Atlantic region.

Please send copies of any reviews or articles referencing this title to Wendy Garner at the letterhead address. For an author interview or any additional information, please contact her at 703.996.1004 or Wendy@booksintl.com.



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About the Author Mike German

Mike German served sixteen years as a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, where he specialized in domestic terrorism and covert operations. His undercover work against white supremacist skinhead groups, and right-wing militias, disrupted planned acts of terrorism and led to multiple criminal convictions. He served as a counterterrorism instructor at the FBI National Academy before leaving the FBI in June of 2004.

German lectures frequently on counterterrorism and intelligence matters, and his commentary has appeared in the *National Law Journal*, *Washington Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Miami Herald*. German is a contributor to the conference report "Law vs. War: Competing Approaches to Fighting Terrorism," published by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College. Now living in the Mid-Atlantic region, he is a private consultant, an adjunct professor at the National Defense University, and a Senior Fellow with Globalsecurity.org.



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Advance Praise for *Thinking Like a Terrorist*

“*Thinking Like a Terrorist* is riveting, informative and insightful. Only someone who ‘was a terrorist’ could achieve this as well as warn of dangers to our way of life. Mike German was one of the FBI’s foremost authorities on terrorism with experience gleaned from years of working undercover with various terrorist groups. This should be required reading for those interested in terrorism and how to combat this twenty-first-century plague.”

— **Steve Salmieri, former chief, FBI Undercover Sensitive Operations Unit**

“Forces of evil—BEWARE—Mike German is on the street again! However, this time not as a deep-cover FBI ‘counterterrorist’ agent. This time he is arming us all with the hard lessons he learned, sharing vital insights, providing a critical analysis, and offering his unique perspective gained from having lived with, and personally defeated, terrorists. German’s brilliant and heroic strategy to overcome terrorism may surprise all but the true patriots among us. *Thinking Like a Terrorist* is a timely and superbly conceived book, written by a champion of justice, that everyone should read and take to heart.”

— **Stephen R. Band, former chief, FBI Behavioral Science Unit**

“*Thinking Like a Terrorist* is a mix of pragmatic insights gained via a stellar law enforcement career coupled with impressive scholarship. Mike German advances reasoned and convincing arguments that because we do not adequately know our enemies and understand their articulated and time-tested strategies, many of our current counterterrorist policies help facilitate the very terrorist gains we work to deny. More than five years after 9/11, this book should serve as a wake-up call for policy makers, national security bureaucracies, and concerned citizens.”

— **John Cassara, former CIA case officer, U.S. Treasury special agent, and author of *Hide and Seek: Intelligence, Law Enforcement, and the Stalled War on Terrorist Finance***



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“By infiltrating them as an FBI agent, Mike German learned firsthand how terrorist groups work, and he brought their members to justice without violating the law or the Constitution. He now lays bare the fundamental errors made by the U.S. government after 9/11, showing how it has exaggerated the nature of the terrorist threat, reduced the effectiveness of the West’s response, undermined our core ethical values, and so increased future vulnerability. Written with the clarity of an airport thriller and the insight conferred by both operational experience and deep study, *Thinking Like a Terrorist* is a brilliant and necessary book that we cannot afford to ignore.”

— **David Rose**, contributing editor, *Vanity Fair*, and author of
Guantanamo: The War on Human Rights



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Interview Questions for Mike German

- How did you learn about what terrorists were thinking?
- Why is what they are thinking important?
- Terrorists do such horrible things. Are they rational people?
- Why is it so important for terrorists to write down their declarations of war?
- How do the terrorists recruit?
- How are terrorist groups organized?
- Are all terrorist groups the same?
- What is fascism and how does fascism relate to terrorism?
- Explain what role the concept of “legitimacy” plays in terrorist behavior.
- Why is it a mistake for a government not to pay attention to what terrorists say?
- What mistakes have different governments made in trying to fight terrorism?
- What mistakes has our government made in the Global War on Terror?
- How do we develop a more effective counterterrorism strategy?
- What role does the international community play in preventing terrorism?