

John Mueller

The Delusion of Terrorism

ABSTRACT

It seems increasingly likely that the reaction to the terrorism attacks of September 11, 2001, has been massively disproportionate to the real threat al-Qaeda has ever actually presented either as an international menace or as an inspiration or model to homegrown amateurs. In result, we have been living a decade of delusion as trillions of dollars have been expended and tens of thousands of lives have been snuffed out in a frantic, ill-conceived effort to react to an event that, however tragic and dramatic in the first instance, should have been seen, at least in the fullness of time, to be of only limited significance.

BIO

John Mueller is the Ralph D. Mershon Senior Research Scientist at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies of Ohio State University. He is also adjunct professor of Political Science at Ohio State and a Cato Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington, DC. He is currently working on terrorism and particularly on the reactions (and costly overreactions) it often inspires. His book, *Terrorism, Security, and Money: Balancing the Risks, Benefits, and Costs of Homeland Security*, written in collaboration with engineer and risk analyst Mark Stewart, applies cost-benefit analysis to issues of homeland security and was published in 2011 by Oxford University Press. His 2010 book, *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al Qaeda* (Oxford University Press), suggests that atomic terrorism is highly unlikely and that efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation frequently have damaging results. He has also written *Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them* (Free Press, 2006). The New York Times called the book "important" and "accurate, timely, and necessary."