Global War on Terror: A Critical Study of Post-9/11 Terrorism and US-Led Multilateral Counter-Terrorism Approaches

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Abstract

This article analyses the historical and ideological bases of terrorism, the technological advancements, and its modern manifestations in the terror landscape, focusing primarily on how the 9/11 incidents transformed the nature of terrorism. It also critically examines how the US and the UN approached the subject of terrorism with utmost seriousness after the US mainland was directly attacked during the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 attacks described the evolution of neo-terrorism and its destructive nature in the age of innovation. The article also studies the role of the concerned institutions and stakeholders in determining the successes, failures, controversies and unintended consequences of the operation dubbed as 'War on Terror'. Since the dawn of the 21st century, non-state actors have been the major perpetrators of terrorist activities around the world.

Keywords: Terrorism, Neo-terrorism, UNO, War on Terror, Non-state Actors.

Introduction

The War on Terror was the name given to the US-led counter-terrorism operation after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in the US. It introduced even the ordinary citizens of the USA, in particular, and the whole world in general, to the looming threat of terrorism. At the time, non-state actors, especially the terror organisations, demonstrated their potential to pose a significant threat to the UN and the US-led liberal order. The whole world witnessed the destruction and chaos caused by the terrorist organisation Al-Qaeda against the contemporary superpower. The US was stunned by the breach of its security structure and how its mainland was exposed to a non-state terrorist organisation. It also raised serious questions about the global leadership of the US: if the superpower could not protect itself from terrorism, how could it promote peace and order in the globalised world? Terrorism has become a well-known phenomenon in the USA and other advanced countries since the 9/11 attacks. Since then, policymakers have shaped their strategies around curbing the scourge of terrorism around the world (Monir, 2020). Following the 9/11 attacks, the US had its manifesto approved by the UN, declaring its intention to fight against terrorism until the last terrorist is eliminated. Accordingly, it established a special structure in the state administration to monitor the evolving nature and threats of terrorism. In this regard, it started the 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan, where the alleged perpetrators of 9/11 were based and had planned the attack on the US. The UN approved the operation in Afghanistan after concluding that terrorists based there posed a direct threat both to the US and world peace. Moreover, it emphasised that the US had the right to self-defence and that all UN member countries should support the US

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in its 'War on Terror' (Rashid et al., 2023). The resolution also stressed that the US must conduct the 'War on Terror', keeping in view the charter and agenda of the UN. The subsequent US approach raised serious questions: Has the United States (US) respected human rights and the sovereignty of independent states during its global 'War on Terror'? Why have NATO-led military operations in various countries resulted in the deaths of hundreds of innocent civilians? Why have US-led counter-terrorism operations around the world failed to eliminate the scourge of terrorist organisations and acts of terrorism to this day? These are critical questions that require thorough answers in order to assess the success of multilateral counter-terrorism operations in the post 9/11 epoch. This article will highlight how terrorism has evolved since the 9/11 era and evaluate the extent to which the US-UN counter-terrorism approach has been successful in achieving its objectives and goals.

Literature Review

The 9/11 Commission Report (by the National Commission on terrorist attacks upon the United States; published by W. W. Norton in 2004) delivers a detailed account of the planning, training of terrorists, execution of the attack and aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US and the world. It highlights failures in the policies, capabilities of the agencies, and inter-agency management. In The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction (2013), Walter Laqueur explores how terrorism has evolved into more lethal forms due to technological advancements. In 'The New Threat', Jason Burke explores how terrorism has transformed in the post 9/11 era. He also explains that non-state actors are the primary threat to the peace and stability of the world order. In Carter Malkasian's "The American War in Afghanistan: A History", the author explains that the US started the 'war on terror' in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. During the 'War on Terror', military operations were conducted by the NATO forces around the world, including Afghanistan. In his book International Terrorism Post-9/11: Comparative Dynamics and Responses, Asaf Siniver explains the perspectives of the world's countries on the US-led war on terror. It highlights that, in some cases, it was a blunder by the US that resulted in a massive dent to the UN liberal order. The writer highlights the case study of the Iraq War in 2003, which is still a dark spot on the character of the USA and the UN. Handbook of Terrorism and Counter Terrorism Post 9/11, compiled by Jones, Schulte, Ungerer, and M.L.R. Smith, provides a comprehensive depth on terrorism and counter-terrorism since the start of 'the War on Terror'. It also covers evolving threats from Al-Qaeda and ISIS, given cyber-terrorism, targeted killings and financial mechanisms supporting terrorist activities. Newton Lee's “counterterrorism and cybersecurity: total information awareness” (3rd edition, 2024) explores how cyber-terrorism has become a new domain of terrorist activities across the terrorist landscape.

Analysis of 9/11 Incidents

Religious misinterpretation giving rise to terrorist organisations

In the last few decades of the 20th century, the Iranian Revolution (1979) and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-89) specifically gave rise to the emerging menace of religious terrorism. Eventually, this proved to be really destructive for the UN goal to maintain peace, order and stability in the world. During this time, radical and illogical misinterpretations of Islamic principles gave rise to illicit organisations such as Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda (9/11 Commission Report, 2004). The psychological theory claims that religion is close to the heart of the lower and deprived classes, according to numerous surveys. The terrorist organisations exploit the vulnerability of such groups

through religious misinterpretation. Hence, in this way, the psychology of disgruntled masses is manipulated to use them as tools to spread maximum chaos and terror by terrorist groups.

Planning to attack world power centres to get recognition: Al-Qaeda

In the age of globalisation, Al-Qaeda started to develop a transnational character and deployed radical-minded people from around the world to spread maximum terror and destruction. For this purpose, the leader of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, planned to attack the mainland US and its strategic locations to show the world the real potential of Al-Qaeda in the age of technology and communication. The purpose of the endeavour was to secure maximum leverage and benefits in the contemporary globalised corporate world dominated and ordered by the US and its liberal institutions (Laqueur, 2013).

The 21st century witnessed the evolving nature of terrorism: the 9/11 attacks

The technological theory maintains that technology is there to serve humanity. However, during the process, it should be regulated and monitored to be used in the service of humanity. According to this theory, if technology is misused, it has the potential to damage the sustainable and inclusive nature of peace. With the advent of the 21st century, the world community, international organisations and global media truly observed the evolving nature of terrorism into neo-terrorism in the contemporary age of innovation and technology. In the present age, this has evolved to the present low and extreme levels where the UNO, through its resolution after the 9/11 attacks, dubbed it as the most severe threat to world peace, stability and order in the age of communication and a globalised world (Chomsky, 2001).

9/11 attacks: direct threat to global security

Apart from the idea that it has achieved a global outreach, terrorism is often thought to have become a looming security concern and a sudden disaster for the survival of humanity. In this regard, the September 11, 2001, attacks are usually cited in defence of this view. There is no doubt that the terrorist attacks on the USA in September 2001 were events of utmost significance and a massive threat to the security, stability and sustainable future of the world. It was proved by the fact that if the US can be attacked without any hurdle, one can analyse what would be the status of the other countries that have no sophisticated weapons to defend themselves from such catastrophic threats (Altheide, 2017). The assaults, threats and bomb attacks on the World Trade Centre, the Pentagon and the crash of United Airlines flight 93, which was headed for the White House, culminated in the deaths of around 3,000 people, making this the most costly and transformational terrorist attack in history (Burke, 2012).

Significance of 9/11 attacks: shattering image of the US

Its impact and effects were significant because its targets were, respectively, symbols of global financial and strategic power, global military power and global political power that controls the 21st-century Global World Order. The psycho-emotional effects and security threats of September 11 on the USA have only been matched by Pearl Harbour in 1941 (Borum, 2004). Hence, both incidents had destroyed the myth of US invincibility; terrorism, which can disturb and disrupt the smooth functioning of any Political system.

Nature of Post 9/11 Terrorism

Traditional nature of terrorism

During the Cold War, the primary concern was state-sponsored terrorism. The reason was that, during that time, many proxy wars were fought between the superpowers: the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The basic goal of such ventures was to secure the dominance of their respective ideologies and political systems. Moreover, both sought to enhance their sphere of influence. As a result, both powers exploited terrorism as a tool to undermine each other's strength and capabilities (Lutz, 2004).

Failure of the US state policy in the form of the 9/11 attacks

In the modern era, the failure of the US counter-terrorism policy can be attributed to its exclusive focus on state-sponsored terrorism, particularly from the USSR. During that time, it did not pay enough attention to the activities of non-state terror organisations operating in that era. This miscalculation resulted in the worst terrorist attack in the country's history. Al-Qaeda carried out the 9/11 terrorist attacks on key strategic centres of the US, exposing key strategic policy loopholes. Hence, it served as a cruel lesson: never underestimate the evolving threat of organisations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS to global peace (Siniver, 2010). Since then, the entire US counter-terrorism strategy has revolved around eliminating threats posed by non-state actors, especially after the 9/11 attacks on its mainland.

Evolution of Neo-Terrorism: a direct threat to the UN-led liberal order

Terrorism is a global threat that endangers the safe and sustainable existence of the world, challenging the agenda of the United Nations (UN). Since its establishment, the UNO has committed to preventing any actions that threaten global peace and order. Moreover, it also aims to counter such organisations that spread chaos and destruction in the world to serve the vested interests of some specific groups. This threat peaked when the contemporary global power –the US- was directly attacked on its mainland by the terrorist group Al-Qaeda in 2001. Since then, the USA has assumed the responsibility of eradicating this threat by developing robust counter-terrorism strategies (Jones, 2019).

Destructive nature of neo-terrorism during post 9/11 era

With advancements in communication and technology, the nature of terrorist attacks has reformed. Terrorist groups began using mobile phone technology to plan and execute terrorist attacks. The case study of Daish/ ISIS describes how cell phone technology facilitated the committing of such attacks. Moreover, suicide attacks have also become more prominent during the age of neo-terrorism. Neo-terrorism refers to the new wave of terrorism that has evolved in response to technological developments, including the advancement of the private media, the period of globalisation, and shifts in the political, cultural and social spheres in the epoch of innovation and technology. It encompasses a wide range of strategies, ideologies, beliefs, and policy objectives (Laqueur, 2013).

Emergence of ISIS: brutal transformation in terrorism practices

Sociological theory elaborates that the provision of justice is necessary to maintain peace and order in society. It maintains that in the absence of justice, illicit and terrorist groups find space to exploit the feelings of disgruntled and aggrieved masses. They inculcate the sentiments among the affected masses that society as a whole is responsible for their lower social status and difficulties in life. So

they should get revenge on society. Hence, they provide a recourse to such groups to join terrorist organisations and get revenge on society. In the early 2010s, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) emerged as a prominent terrorist group with an extensive global reach. Moreover, it can spread terror in various parts of the world through its widespread recruitment efforts. Since 2020, ISIS has committed 8381 terrorist attacks in the hotspot regions of Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, where approximately 20663 people lost their lives. Unlike earlier groups, ISIS effectively used social media and advanced technologies for communication and coordination, recruitment, and propaganda (Khan, 2023).

Exploitation of technology for terrorism: case study of ISIS

ISIS adopted calculated strategies to advance its cause. Through its strategic exploitation, the ISIS mobilised its agenda and recruited terrorist personnel all over the world. It used encrypted messaging applications and social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter to mobilise supporters globally. These platforms promoted a sense of purpose, moral and religious responsibility, and a sense of belonging among marginalised youth. By emotionally manipulating vulnerable youth, ISIS recruited them to spread extremism and terrorism (Lee, 2024). It provided an alternative path to disillusioned youth to seek revenge on a global system they perceived as responsible for their suffering (Hoffman, 2017). In this way, technology became a tool for radicalisation, fueling destruction and chaos around the world.

Lone warriors and loose nature of terrorist groups: neo-terrorism

In the age of neo-terrorism, more diffuse and loosely connected terrorist networks have replaced highly structured and organised terrorist organisations. This evolution shows how terrorism has evolved into a new form with changes in time and communication. Additionally, lone-wolf attackers now appear more likely than ever to commit acts of terrorism and inflict significant damage. (Laqueur, 2013) These include xenophobes and racists involved in white supremacist attacks, such as the mosque attack in New Zealand and numerous mass gun shootings in the US. During 2015-21, 267 right-wing white supremacist attacks were made, where 91 people lost their lives. Neo-Nazi violence, violent anti-abortionists aiming to overturn the Roe vs Wade amendment and individuals like Timothy McVeigh and the Unabomber- who are not affiliated with any recognised organisations- also fall in this category. Modernisation theory claims that innovative ways of committing terrorist attacks have come to the surface in the contemporary age. It further maintains that loose networks of terrorism groups have decentralised the organisational structure of terrorism. Therefore, it has turned into a looming threat to world peace and stability.

Online periodicals to display the physical strength of terrorist groups

In this age of information, terrorist groups have used media to disseminate their ideology and demonstrate their physical and military strength through the production and exhibition of revolutionary movies and online periodicals, such as Dabiq. Its basic purpose was to galvanise public support, recruit members and execute destructive terrorist attacks to secure maximum policy attention of the powerful developed countries like the US and the international organisations. (Hoffman, 2017).

Cyberattacks: evolution of terrorism's landscape in the age of technology

In the era of computers and electronic software, ISIS supporters and affiliates have occasionally conducted cyberattacks: website hacking, propaganda and disinformation campaigns to further the

organisation's objectives. These technologies are being used to spread terror globally in the modern world under the umbrella of neo-terrorism. In 2015, Ardit Ferizi, a Kosovo-based hacker affiliated with Junaid Hussain of ISHD, stole personal data of 1350 US military personnel, and it was the case study of cyber espionage. It was a case of neo-terrorism.

In this transformative phase of history, governments and IT firms had to adjust quickly and revise their strategic approaches to monitor and counter terrorist activities online. Otherwise, these threats may significantly undermine world peace and the UN's strategic goal of maintaining a stable, resilient, and peaceful world (Lee, 2024).

State-sponsored cyberterrorism: states' involvement in terrorism

In the modern age, cyberterrorism has become a strategic tool for some state actors seeking to achieve political goals, destabilise adversaries, or promote their national interests by harming rival countries or supporting militant groups. Much like previous eras, states continue to engage in such tactics today. The United States (US) has also been accused of state-sponsored acts of cyberwarfare. In this regard, the case studies of the US attacks on Afghanistan and, more significantly, the Iraq wars serve as case studies to support the point (Burke, 2012). Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UN, labelled some of these actions as state terrorism and violations of international law. A prominent example is North Korea's alleged involvement in several major Cyberattacks: including the WannaCry ransomware attack or assault in 2017 and the Sony Pictures hack in 2014. These cases illustrate the strategic significance of cyberwarfare in the contemporary age of information. For this purpose, numerous strategic measures are adopted to get a satisfactory result (Lee, 2024).

US-led Multilateral Counter-Terrorism Approaches: Global War on Terror

To counter terrorism after the 9/11 attacks, the US started the war against terrorism, and it dubbed the operation' War on Terror'. During the process, the UNO also voted in support of the US as it passed the resolution, pointing out that the US had every right to defend its territory. In this regard, it was allowed to wage a war against terrorism (9/11 Commission Report, 2004).

In a speech at the Washington National Cathedral later on the day of 9/11, Bush announced his strategic decision to "answer these attacks, and save the world from the threat of terrorism." During the period, he announced a state of emergency, providing the vast executive branch with broad authority and powers to combat global terrorism funding (Jones, 2019). Moreover, it tightened the financial system under the provisions of structural adjustment programs through the multilateral lending institutions around the world to curb terror financing (Chomsky, 2001). These proclamations of emergency, which are still in effect today, were renewed annually by Bush and succeeding presidents to counter the threat of neo-terrorism under the slogan of 'war on terror'. At the crucial juncture of US history, Congress also granted exclusive powers to the US president and the defence forces to negotiate the crisis posed by the threats of neo-terrorism after the 9/11 attacks.

Key strategic measures to combat the scourge of terrorism: 'War on Terror'

Patriot Act expanding counterterrorism Powers (Oct 2001)

To manage the operation against the War on Terror, Bush enforced the Patriot Act, a piece of policy legislation intended to strengthen the federal government's ability to combat terrorism in the technology era. The comprehensive and overarching bill contained measures and steps to improve collaboration between law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and to fortify banking regulations in the fight against terrorist financing (Pillar, 2004). Moreover, it aimed to eliminate

terror financing thoroughly, establish new parameters and sanctions for terrorist acts, and significantly increase domestic monitoring to ensure complete scrutiny of the American mainland to save it from future like 9/11 attacks. In this regard, the opponents claim the measure was hurried through and overly broad and exhaustive (Hoffman, 2017).

A new era for airport security- Nov 2001

President Bush signed into law the creation of the federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA), which took over the private companies' airport security responsibilities after the neo-terrorism attacks on the mainland USA. It was an effort to ensure that the state of the USA would not allow any other terrorist attack like the 9/11 over the mainland US or its strategic interests around the world. As part of this process, the TSA introduced a wide range of new passenger safety measures and security protocols at airports, including enhanced passenger screening measures to tackle terrorism. In the following years, the TSA introduced a wide range of new passenger safety measures in response to multiple foiled airline conspiracies and misadventures- beginning with Richard Reid's December 2001 shoe bombing attempt- which could also damage the security image of the USA around the world. Effective baggage screenings, full body scanners, shoe removal procedures to massively check anything ambiguous taken by any person from the foreign incomers, pat-downs, drink restriction and other issues, and deeper inspection of personal electronics. (Altheide, 2017).

Department of Home Security formed in Nov 2002

President Bush appointed lawmakers and policymakers to establish the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), a cabinet-level organisation designed to address terrorism related crises. This statute unified over twenty separate domestic security responsibilities under DHS to ensure better coordination among the different entities to ensure smooth progress on the front of countering neo-terrorism. It represented the most significant federal reorganisation since World War II and scaled the US response to terrorism (LeMay, 2002). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Secret Service, the Coast Guard, the TSA, immigration and border agencies, and various nuclear and cybersecurity bodies were established under the agency of Homeland Security. Its supporters argue that the new structure improved agency coordination and prevented intelligence lapses that resulted in the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 attacks caused massive human and material loss and a dent to the international image of the US (9/11 Commission Report, 2004). Critics claimed it jeopardised civil liberties, fundamental rights, repeated necessary tasks, militarised local police departments, and failed to enhance cooperation between the FBI and CIA, which are the integral intelligence organisations (The White House, 2002).

According to the findings of a bipartisan national committee appointed by Congress to investigate the 9/11 attacks, the real cause of this incident, the plot's success, was caused by several intelligence lapses and strategic shortcomings. Most notably, the lack of communication between domestic law enforcement and intelligence organisations hampered efforts to maintain a safe international system in line with UN resolutions. (The White House, 2002). In order to coordinate the activities of the CIA, NSA, and other intelligence agencies, the establishment of the National Counterterrorism Centre inside the Office of the Director of National Intelligence culminated. (9/11 Commission Report, 2004).

US attacking foreign countries to counter terrorism

US attack on Afghanistan begins

Since the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks were in Afghanistan, the US leadership demanded that the Afghan government hand over the Al-Qaeda leadership, but the latter declined. Hence, with support of the UN and the international community, the US attacked Afghan soil to eliminate terrorist bases and the personnel in the country. After receiving no positive response from the Afghan government regarding-like fearing that Al-Qaeda members would face the consequences of their actions in the form of 9/11- The U.S. and UK military launch airstrikes against primary targets in Afghanistan following the first-ever exploitation of the collective self-defense mechanism by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) inscribed in the Article 1 of the organization constitution (Malkasian, 2021). After the decision, within a few days, ground forces arrived in Afghanistan to begin a comprehensive operation in the country to eliminate the threats of neo-terrorism in future to the US. Operation Enduring Freedom, the invasion led by the United States, was backed by troops from twenty-seven coalition countries as well as local anti-Taliban forces. The scale of the operation against terrorism highlighted the importance of this operation for the international image and the solidarity of the US. During the process, the Taliban regime ended by December 2001, but Usama bin Laden managed to escape capture, which prolonged the operation and war in Afghanistan (Rashid et al., 2023). In 2003, NATO took over leadership of global security operations, and for almost twenty years, it occupied the land. They led counterinsurgency-mandated Afghanistan to ensure the end of terror hotspots and safe havens for the illegal organisation dubbed by the UN. US troops remained in Afghanistan for more than 20 years, but they failed to take complete control of the country. According to the US Department of Defence, 2461 US military personnel lost their lives during the 'War on Terror' operations in Afghanistan from 2001 to 21. Moreover, 3846 civilian contractors also became casualties during the war conflicts in the region. On the economic front, the Afghan war cost $2.3 trillion to the US economy (Defence, 2021). During 2020, US President Donald Trump announced that US forces would withdraw from Afghanistan by September 2021. However, the situation became so catastrophic that US forces and their citizens had to leave the country in a hurry in mid-August. The Afghan Taliban took control of Kabul, and the counter-terrorism operation and the war of the US failed to achieve its desired results. It exposed the fault lines of the UN-US war against terror (Gall, 2014).

Attack over Iraq

President Bush issued an ultimatum to Saddam's administration during a speech before the UN General Assembly, calling Iraq a "grave and gathering danger" to world peace in general and a specific security threat to US interests. The US leadership maintained that Iraq possessed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), although none were found. Bush further argued that despite suspicions from U.S. intelligence and other such institutions, Iraq continued to support terrorist groups, which are a constant source of threats to the global leadership, including al-Qaeda, whose members Bush claims "are known to be in Iraq, and the latter is supposedly given it security protection." Although many United States' allies disputed this claim and declined to join the invasion, Bush warned that Iraq was developing chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons that may be transferred to terrorist organisations (9/11 Commission Report, 2004).

Congress authorisation

President Bush secured congressional authorisation for the use of military force (AUMF), citing Iraq's suspected and alleged WMD stockpiles and materials as well as its alleged sheltering of al-

Qaeda and other terrorist groups (Heshmati, 2023). Critics argue that subsequent administrations, including the Obama administration's 2014 offensive against the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq, the Trump administration's 2020 assassination of Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad, are accused of abusing the 2002 AUMF to carry out unrelated military operations (Altheide, 2017).

Operation Iraqi Freedom begins- March 20, 2003

Despite failing to secure UN approval, the US and UK-led coalition invaded Iraq. It was a vigorous attack on Iraq. Bush announced the end of primary combat operations on May 1 after successfully eliminating the military. Still, occupation, counter-military activities against the state guerrilla forces, and counterinsurgency continued for over ten years (Pillar, 2004). However, history showed that it became a significant blot on the reputations of both the USA and the UK. At its peak in 2008, the US had over 160,000 military personnel in Iraq, reflecting the scale of military engagement. The conflict, which included the invasion, ensuing civil war, and the rise of the Islamic State in the form of ISIS, killed close to 5,000 US service members and around 500,000 Iraqis during the operation. It showed the scale of the blunder later admitted by the UK and the US stakeholders, with a $2 trillion price tag for the US government. According to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the invasion violated international law, and weapons inspectors stopped looking for WMD in 2005. These efforts also undermined the strategic significance of the UN in enforcing a rule-of-law-based international order (Monir, 2020).

Evaluating the successes and failures of US-led multilateral counter-terrorism efforts

Given the controversial Homeland Security Technology Improvement Act of 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was granted the authority to categorise certain acts as domestic or homegrown terrorism through the usage of technology, equipment, materials, objects and information transfers. In this process, six major government departments- Defence, Health and Human Services, Justice, Energy, and State, along with the newly formed Department of Homeland Security, spent up to 95% of the federal budget on counterterrorism efforts. (Jones, 2019). The DHS was expected to provide state, local, and tribal agencies $1.6 billion in funding in 2014, whose prime objective was to award funds for counterterrorism efforts and disaster preparedness. The fact is that a small portion was allocated to border security to effectively control the immigration trend and inflow of people from the border countries (Heshmati, 2023).

Along with it, the US started to intervene in foreign countries post-9/11, which was in direct contradiction of its 19th-century isolationist policy. Furthermore, "US" involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq in the name of counter-terrorism operations resulted in massive failures (The White House, 2002). These misadventures not only tarnished the liberal image of the USA but also destroyed the reputation of the UN.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is safe to say that the 9/11 terrorist attacks are the defining moments in history. It transformed the US and the world's policy towards terrorism. The world as a whole realised the power and threat posed by the emerging form of terrorism. Hence, the neo-terrorism is a manifestation and reflection of how the terrorist landscape is evolving and maneuvering due to changes in global dynamics, structures and technology. To counter and effectively handle the challenge, it is integral and necessary to comprehend some instances of neo-terrorism which facilitate the creation of efficacious counterterrorism tactics, strategies and guidelines to tackle the

issue smoothly. With the full support of the international community, the USA started the 'War on Terror' after the 9/11 attacks under the auspices of the UN. During the process, it directly attacked Afghanistan, which was considered the epicentre of Al-Qaeda activities planning terrorist attacks on the mainland USA. During the operation, the international community fully stood with the US according to the resolutions of the UN.

Along with it, the US started a military operation against Iraq, irrespective of the UN opposition. It shows that there were specific flaws in the US approach to countering terrorism. It is a profound malaise from which the whole international community has suffered indiscriminately. To counter it, the entire global community under the banner of the UNO should fight against the malice to make the world peaceful, stable and well-ordered.

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