JAMES TURNER JOHNSON

James Turner Johnson (Ph.D., Princeton, 1968) is Professor of Religion and Associate Member of the Graduate Department of Political Science at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, where he has been on the faculty since 1969. His research and teaching have focused principally on the historical development and application of moral traditions related to war, peace, and the practice of statecraft.

Johnson has received Rockefeller, Guggenheim, and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) fellowships, along with various other research grants. He has directed two NEH summer seminars for college teachers. His books include *Ideology, Reason, and the Limitation of War* (Princeton, 1975), *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War* (Princeton, 1981), *Can Modern War Be Just?* (Yale, 1984), *The Quest for Peace: Three Moral Traditions in Western Cultural History* (Princeton, 1987), *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions* (Penn State, 1997), *Morality and Contemporary Warfare* (Yale, 1999), and *Just War and Jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions* (Greenwood, 1991). He also edited with John Kelsay *Cross, Crescent, and Sword: The Justification and Limitation of War in Western and Islamic Tradition* (Greenwood, 1990).

Johnson is Co-Editor of the *Journal of Military Ethics* and a Trustee, a member of the Editorial Board, and former General Editor of *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, as well as a member of professional societies in the fields of religion and political science. He has lectured to academic, military, and general audiences in the United States and abroad.

RESPONSE TO TERRORISM: MORAL CHALLENGES

Welcome from Dr. Albert C. Pierce, Director, Center for the Study of Professional Military Ethics

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Introduction by VADM John R. Ryan, Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy

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Lecture by Professor James Turner Johnson

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Questions and Answers

This is an edited, abridged version of the original lecture transcript.

WELCOME

Dr. Pierce

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this evening's lecture, which is the fourth in a series sponsored by the Center for the Study of Professional Military Ethics. I'm Al Pierce, the Director of the Ethics Center.

One of the Center's major program goals is to enrich the intellectual life of the Naval Academy in the field of ethics, and we hope these lectures do just that, not only for the midshipmen here who are currently enrolled in the Naval Academy's core ethics course NE203, but for all the future officers in the room, indeed for all of the military professionals and for all the rest of us as informed citizens.

The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, were, like their predecessor attacks, an assault on who we are. They were not an assault on this or that U.S. policy, or this or that U.S. institution, or this or that U.S. building. They were, in a deeper sense, an assault on who we are as a people, and a large part of who we are as a people consists of our values and principles, the ethical ideals and standards that we have inherited and we have set for ourselves. If, as we struggle to respond to the threat of terrorism, we loosen our grip on those values and principles, those ethical ideals and standards, then we become like them, and in a profound way, they win.

Our speaker tonight will help us think through the ethical challenges that are inherent in our response to the terrorist threat. To introduce our speaker, I will now turn the podium over to the 56th Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, Vice Admiral John Ryan.

INTRODUCTION

Admiral Ryan

Good evening. One of the purposes of this ethics lecture series has been to bring very distinguished men and women to the Naval Academy to address critical issues in contemporary ethics. I believe over the last three years that we've been very successful at that, and tonight is certainly no exception.

Among those who think, write, and teach about ethics and the use of force, there are very few names as distinguished as that of our speaker tonight, Professor James Turner Johnson. His biography is in your program, and I encourage you to read that. I would just highlight a few aspects of his background. He's a graduate of Brown, Vanderbilt, and Princeton. Professor Johnson has taught for many years at Rutgers University in the departments of religion and political science, artfully bridging those two intellectual disciplines. His resume includes more than a dozen books that have been published by the most prestigious university presses in this country. A scholar's scholar and a teacher's teacher, Professor Johnson's entire career has been remarkable in the sense of both his scholarly work and in his engaging interpersonal work as an instructor in the classroom.

But his reach extends well beyond that of academia. He has throughout his adult life and his career interacted with military professionals in a continuing effort to understand better what they do for a living and to get them to understand better what he does for a living. His crossing over of that line between the scholar and the soldier has benefited both worlds enormously, so tonight, we are honored to have him speak to us. Please join me in a warm Naval Academy welcome for Professor James Turner Johnson.

LECTURE

Professor Johson

Admiral Ryan, Mrs. Ryan, ladies and gentlemen, it's my great pleasure to be here and to have this opportunity to deliver a lecture in this series. My topic is the "Response to Terrorism: Moral Challenges." What I want to do tonight, just so that you know, if you can't figure it out from what I actually do, my plan is to talk about the moral rationale of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, first in terms of the thinking of Osama bin Laden and his people, secondly to talk a little bit about the way that we think in Western culture about the relation of religion and politics and the position that is reflected by bin Laden's thinking, and then thirdly, to turn to this specific issue of the ethics of the response, approaching this from a standpoint in the Just War tradition, which I'm sure because of the work of the Ethics Center you're all intimately familiar with.

Let me start out by reading you something. What I'm going to read from is a 1998 *fatwa* published under the name of Osama bin Laden and several of his lieutenants, including his main lieutenant, Dr. al-Zawahiri.

> The Arabian Peninsula has never, since God made it flat, created its desert, and encircled it with seas, been stormed by any forces like the Crusader armies spreading in it like locusts, eating its riches, and wiping out its plantations. All this is happening at a time in which nations are attacking Moslems like people fighting over a plate of food. In the light of this grave situation and the lack of support, we and you are obliged to discuss current events, and we should agree on how to settle this matter.
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> No one argues today about the facts. We will list them though in order to remind everyone. First, for over seven years, the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Moslem peoples.

"Second," he goes on to say, "despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Crusader Zionist Alliance,"—we're the Crusaders, by the way—"and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded one million, despite all this, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacre as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war and the fragmentation and devastation there."

"All these crimes," he goes on, "and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger, and Moslems. Therefore, on this basis, we issue the following *fatwa* to all Moslems. The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies, civilians and military, is an individual duty for every Moslem who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the El-Aksa Mosque and the holy mosque"—Mecca that is—"from their grip and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Moslem." And there is more.

This is the rationale for the 9/11 attacks. They are rooted in Moslem tradition, but as I will undertake to show you, they represent a clear distortion of that tradition. To understand this, I want to give you a little bit of history of Moslem law and then talk about the developments that led up to this 1998 *fatwa*.

In the eighth century, as we in the West count time, Islamic law began to be systematically codified by a group of theologians and jurists working around the new caliph in Baghdad, the center at that time of the Islamic world. These jurists addressed numerous problems. One of the problems that they dealt with systematically was the question of international relations. International relations for them meant the relations between the territory of Islam, the *Dar al-Islam*, which was the territory ruled by the successor of the prophet, the caliph, and in which the law of Islam, the *Sharia*, was the law of the land.

Other nations were collectively grouped into the territory of war, the *Dar al-Harb*, the territory of war because all of its parts were at war with one another frequently, continuously more or less, and because this territory was the source of hostility against the

Moslem world. So the conception of international relations is much like Hobbes' notion of the war of all against all, but it is a notion of the war of all against Islam, and this is a conception obviously that we find reflected in this statement of bin Laden's of 1998. The world is against Islam, and Americans from the *Dar al-Harb* are engaged in attacking Islam as a religion and as a people.

The early Moslem jurists, in order to talk about the right relationship between this peaceful world of Islam and this chaotic, conflict-filled world of war, took the traditional idea of jihad. "Jihad" literally translates as struggle or striving and usually is connected with a phrase that means in the path of God, so that the term means striving in the path of God. They took the traditional idea of jihad, which in the Koran and in the early tradition consists of three different kinds of striving: the striving of the heart, the striving of the tongue, and the striving of the hand, that is, our actions.

Out of the idea of jihad of the hand, they developed another category of jihad, that of the sword. The jihad of the sword, as they define the relation between the *Dar al-Islam* and the *Dar al-Harb,* the jihad of the sword could be waged offensively by the Islamic community against entities in the *Dar al-Harb* whenever the community was called to do so by its head, the duly appointed successor of the prophet, namely the caliph.

I should say, by the way, that the *Shi'a* tradition as it developed rejected the caliphate as unjust and offered up their own definition of who was the proper successor to the prophet Mohammed. They chose the name "*Imam*" for him, a specifically religious title, and otherwise they didn't change this basic notion of the relation with the outside world or the notion of offensive jihad. So offensive jihad is warfare waged on behalf of the Moslem religion and the Moslem political community simultaneously—same thing—against any entity in the *Dar al-Harb* that the designated head of the community determines is an appropriate object. Obviously, the caliph could decide where and when he is going to wage jihad, this year or that year or whenever.

Now in this notion of warfare by the community, some people are warriors, other people support the warriors, and other people simply go about their business. Alongside this, the early jurists defined another idea, the idea of defensive jihad. Defensive jihad, as they explained it, is warfare which is fought on an individual's authority as an individual duty, and the situation that they envisioned was something like this. Suppose you are out on the frontier of the *Dar al-Islam*. You are herding your herd, or you're farming your land, and suddenly an army from some entity in the *Dar al-Harb* approaches and invades Islamic territory. Are you to wait for the caliph in Baghdad many, many miles away to declare jihad and raise an army and fight them back? No, you are required as an individual duty to go back to your house, pick up your weapon, alert your neighbors, your family, everybody that is able to fight, and resist [the invaders] in place.

If you have studied any international law, you will know that this is very much like the concept of *levée en masse* in the West. Everybody on his own authority and everybody as a result of his personal obligation must fight the invaders. The interesting thing about this is that, in defensive jihad, all of the usual combatant-noncombatant distinctions are done away with.

In offensive jihad, the Moslem jurists defined classes of noncombatants that are very much like the ones that we are familiar with in the Just War tradition and in international law. They also limited certain weapons and explicitly outlawed any weapon having to do with fire, because a tradition associated with the prophet Mohammed says that fire is not to be used by Moslems, because it is the weapon that God will use to purify the world in the last judgment. However, in defensive jihad, everyone who attacks is by definition a combatant. If the attackers use fire against you or any of the other prohibited weapons against you, you may use them back against them, because your primary duty is to defend the faith and to defend the territory of Islam.

You can see, if you reflect back on Osama bin Laden's ruling, that he is building on this notion of defensive jihad, but he is taking it well beyond this original context. It has to be said for him that he is not the first one to do this. This adaptation of defensive jihad first began to appear in the anticolonial wars of

the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By the 1970s and 1980s, this same kind of reasoning was being applied to allow for justifying the deposing and even assassination of rulers who were nominally Moslem but who, in fact, appeared tainted, appeared in the pay of the West, and thus not truly Moslems, in fact, apostates. This is the reasoning of the assassins of Anwar Sadat. This is the reasoning of the people behind the overthrow of the Shah of Iran. So there is this history for almost 125 years of adaptation of the idea of defensive jihad to resist Westernization, and this is the tradition that bin Laden is building upon.

What bin Laden does in his *fatwa*, however, takes this to a new level of stretching the meaning of defensive jihad, and indeed I would argue distorting the meaning of defensive jihad. In the first place, he calls for attacks on Americans anywhere they may be found. The traditional model was to attack those who are attacking you, those who are in your land. You attempt to push them back out again and prevent them from penetrating further. In bin Laden's reasoning, we are all guilty, and so therefore, in the second place, there is no distinction here between combatants and noncombatants or, as he says it here, no distinction between civilians and military. We are all equally guilty. We all deserve to die.

This is not what the traditional doctrine said, and in fact, mainstream Moslems have themselves issued rulings which point this out. The Sheikh al-Azhar, the head of the University of Al-Azhar in Cairo, is one of these. A group of scholars headquartered in Qatar, very respected Islamic jurists, have issued a very long *fatwa* explaining why this is the wrong interpretation of the Islamic law of defensive jihad. But these people are associated with the ruling class, and so for many in the Moslem street, they are tainted themselves, and bin Laden speaks for them. That's what we are up against. We are up against a rationale which draws heavily, and I think in bin Laden's mind, very sincerely upon the religious heritage of Islam, but sincerity does not necessarily mean you're right. Sincerity in this case by no means, even in Islam, even in the terms of the Islamic tradition appealed to, justifies mass murder.

Thinking about this, and I hope you will all think about it more at leisure at some future time, thinking about this leads me to make a couple of comments about the nature of the American assessment of all this. Let me just give you a few anecdotal examples. The first example concerns *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller, who has written on the Middle East. Miller was making the rounds of the talk shows on a regular basis during the week after the 9/11 attacks. Miller's basic point was this terrorism is not really a religious struggle. This is a struggle which is fundamentally political, and we are making a mistake if we associate it with religion. Now, in a certain way, this position dovetailed with the position of many who said, "Well, Islam is a religion of peace. This is not Islam, so this guy is not really a genuine Moslem." I think that the language of the 1998 *fatwa* belies this. I think that bin Laden is very serious about appealing to religion, and he probably believes what he says as the proper interpretation of it, but again, belief does not make it right.

The second example is Andrew Sullivan, who published a piece in the *New York Times Magazine*. He argued that the problem is religious fundamentalism. If we could only get rid of that fundamentalism generally, then we wouldn't have any more violence. Now this goes every bit as far in the other wrong direction as Miller's argument goes in the one direction, because fundamentalism is not a single phenomenon. There are many, many kinds of fundamentalisms.

There are fundamentalisms of varied sorts in Islam as well as in other religions, and not all of them are violent. What we have in bin Laden is not even, as many pundits have been saying in the last few days, simply the Wahhabi tradition, which is the tradition of Saudi Arabia. A friend of mine who knows much more about Islam than I do calls it Wahhabi-plus or Wahhabi on steroids. It is something which goes beyond even this very puritanical sect of Islam, which itself is already very suspect in the mainstream community.

So my argument would be that the reality is, in fact, that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 must be understood as having a religious basis. It is necessary in thinking about a response to cultivate a

response from those who are able to say with authority that this is not, in fact, the right interpretation of Islamic tradition. We're beginning to see some of that in the American Moslem community in the wake of the debates that have been raging ever since those attacks, but much more of it needs to be said. Part of the overall response of America to this ought to be to facilitate this kind of a message in this country and also abroad, where there are similar mainstream Moslems who have up to now been perhaps cowed by the attacks themselves and the kind of attention that it has brought them.

The final thing that I want to say on this matter of the place of religion in all of this has to do with the idea of a clash of cultures or a clash of civilizations. I'm sure you all know Samuel Huntington's thesis about this, that a clash of civilizations is all but inevitable. I don't buy into that, but I do think that in this particular case, there is really a disconnect between the way that we in the West think about the proper relationship between religion and culture and the way that many in the Middle East and perhaps elsewhere in the Moslem world think about it.

Historically, Islamic law regarded the Moslem community as being both a political and a religious entity. The two things were not separated, and the reason for this was that the prophet Mohammed himself was both a religious and a political leader and a leader in war indeed. Nothing ever happened in Islamic history like the experience of the Thirty Years' War in the West to separate religion and politics and make the secular state in which religion could be practiced as a private activity. Nothing in the Moslem world ever happened to make that possible.

In the West, we went through periods of flirtation with the idea of unifying religion and the state, two major periods of holy war, one in the Middle Ages, one in the period right after the Reformation. The second of these led to wars that were so horrible that at the end of the Thirty Years' War, the Peace of Westphalia effectively laid down what was to become the law for the next several hundred years and on up to the present, which is that difference of religion is not to be counted as a just cause for war.

To illustrate the level of disconnect though between the world of bin Laden and the normative understanding of politics in the West, let me tell you something about a class that I teach now. Every fall, I teach a class in war, peace, and statecraft in the Western religious traditions. After a brief introduction to get the categories of Just War tradition down, the first part of the course goes on to a comparison of the jihad and Just War traditions on the issues of authority to resort to force, just cause for the use of force, and right conduct in the use of force.

I just had my mid-semester assignment on this, and the assignment was very straightforward: Write an essay in which you compare these two traditions on these three ideas. I have eight Moslem students in the class. Every single one of them wrote a piece comparing the Crusade idea with the jihad idea. None of the non-Moslems did. I asked them why, although I thought I already knew the answer, and fundamentally, the answer was: this is how religion and politics are genuinely related. Well, here are people who have been born and brought up in New Jersey. If they think this way, then perhaps we can understand why street Moslems in the Middle East can use the word "crusader" for Americans. It is certainly why someone like bin Laden uses this term.

The term is totally unjustified, and I must say I raked them over the coals for doing what they did. It is totally unjustified. This is simply not what Western culture is all about. This is not what the American fight against terrorism is about, and this needs to be understood.

But my second point about the response to the 9/11 events and to terrorism generally is that we need to find a way—we who are in the academic world, people who are in the media, and others—we need to find a way to communicate this perspective much better to those who do not, for reasons of their own background, understand it. As I have discovered to my dismay, it's not so easy to do that, even with people who are, in every way except that particular one, just normal New Jersey college students.

Okay, let me move on now to the question of the response, in terms of the Just War categories. I do this because I work on the Just War tradition an awful lot. I also do it because I know that the ethics course uses these categories so that you should be fairly familiar with them. I want to just briefly run through the categories, and please don't doze off, because my use of them is a little bit different from what we find in some others, and I want to argue that the difference is significant.

In terms of the decision to resort to force, there are four historical and deontological requirements, duty-based requirements: the requirement of sovereign authority, the requirement of just cause, the requirement of right intention, and the requirement of the end of peace. There are three supplementary, prudential requirements for the decision to resort to force. The decision requires judging positively that there will be likely more good than harm done by the resort to force, that there is a reasonable hope of success in achieving the ends to be sought by the use of force, and that the use of force be a last resort, that is, that there is not anything else that is likely to produce the desired result. Last resort does not, as some in the current debate have argued, including the U.S. Catholic bishops, mean trying everything else first. It simply doesn't mean that. It's a logical category. It has to do with the sovereign authorities thinking through what is likely to produce the desired ends and what is likely to succeed at that.

Now I said that this is a little bit different from the way others in the Just War debate use these terms. There are several differences. One of the things up front is that I started with the idea of sovereign authority. If you look at most of the debate of the 20th century, sovereign authority comes second, and just cause comes first. Why is that? If you look back earlier in history, the idea of sovereign authority is always listed first. Why is that? In the contemporary context, the reason why it gets demoted to second place after just cause is the Westphalian conception of sovereignty, whereby sovereignty is simply a kind of *de facto* thing. If you're a state, you have it. If you're not a state, then you don't have it. That simple. Move on to the next question.

So you don't need to start there, but in the classical Just War thinking, it is always that sovereign authority is in first place, because the sovereign, the one who alone has the authority to resort to force on behalf of the political community, is also the one who is morally responsible for the good of that community, to protect it, to defend it, to seek its good in other ways. If you think about sovereign authority in this way, you come to a very different kind of conclusion about the role of government from what many of the critics of the American government and past American governments come to. That is, it is not that government is something outside of the American political good, American communal good. Rather, government is what is responsible for maintaining that political good. From this standpoint, if there were no response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11, it is hard to see how any president or anyone high in the American government who shares in sovereign authority could be said to be doing his or her job.

Well, quickly, just cause, it's hard to imagine what would provide a more just cause for resort to the various means that we have resorted to than the kind of attack that 9/11 was. Attacks out of the blue, literally, against thousands of innocent people, people who had done nothing to deserve what happened to them. Some in the contemporary debate who don't like the use of military force say, "Oh, this was a criminal act. This ought to be pursued by police methods and by judicial methods." Well, it was a criminal act, but it also has all the classic earmarks of an act of war, and that deserves a military response as well. Like Michael Walzer, my position has been from the very first that there should be a whole range of responses, including police work, judicial action, intelligence work, but also military action, to deal with this.

In terms of right intention, bin Laden says this is a war against Moslems. President Bush has rightly and repeatedly insisted this is not a war against Moslems. This is a war against terror. This needs to be said loud and clear and continued to be said loud and clear. Some have begun to make the point that, in recent interventions, the United States has aided the cause of Moslems. It needs to be made much more powerfully, I think, because I even hear some criticism that the United States waited too long in

Bosnia, waited too long in Kosovo, and so forth. So our response needs to include making that message clearer.

I have only about five more minutes that I want to spend lecturing at you before I get a chance for you to talk back to me. Let me turn to the issue of the *jus in bello*, the war-conduct laws, as my good friend Bill O'Brien used to call it, or right conduct. There are two ways in the literature of describing this. What you find if you look at the early materials in the Just War tradition is pretty much what you find if you read the International Law of Armed Conflict. There are noncombatants defined by the listing of categories of people, people who normally are not involved in war-making and therefore ought not to have war made against them. Secondly, there was a list in the classical Just War materials, as there is in arms control treaties today, a list of weapons that are wrong to use in war because of their effects either on the fighters or on the noncombatants.

In moral discourse since the 1960s, since my teacher at Princeton, Paul Ramsey, introduced them in his books, it's very common to talk in terms of the principles of discrimination and proportionality. These don't exactly correspond to the traditional division of noncombatants as defined by classes of people and weapons limits in terms of prohibition of weapons that are not to be used, but there is certainly overlap. Either of these languages leads you to a consideration of war that is not all-out, that is not made against an entire people.

One of the things that I get very upset about in the current debate of the military action in Afghanistan is the assumption by critics that we are once again fire-bombing Dresden or something like that. There is a sense in the criticism I hear, that the United States is intentionally bombing indiscriminately. One of the members of the Rutgers faculty at a teach-in a couple of weeks ago got down on the United States in her remarks because, as she put it, we're bombing women in Afghanistan. She's a member of the women's studies program. Well, I don't know what she says about the Taliban and their treatment of women, but I would defy her to read the rules of engagement or interview some of the people who have been doing the bombing and find anybody who

would say that what they're doing over there is bombing women. That's just not what it's about.

We all know that in war, innocent people suffer, but we also know, if we know anything at all about the United States military, that this is simply not how we fight wars. We do not fight wars by intentionally targeting the innocent. That's how the terrorists fight, and that's one of the things that makes us different from them, and I think better than them.

I don't think that many in the civilian world understand how thoroughly ethics has become institutionalized in the American military in all the services. I don't think they understand in any kind of detail at all the notion of Just War doctrine or the laws of war in the way that you people will by the time you come out of this ethics course and by the time you graduate from the Academy. You'll still have a lot to learn, of course, but you'll be ahead of just about everybody in the civilian world in that respect by the time you graduate.

An illustration of how thorough the institutionalization of Just War thinking is could be offered by looking back at the Weinberger Doctrine, which in a paper I did some years ago, I analyzed as a secular policy language version of the Just War criteria. Another example appeared on my radio this morning as I was driving down. Secretary Rumsfeld was responding to a question about this complaint from some of the pilots that they were not being given clearance to hit certain targets soon enough to decapitate some of the Taliban and the al-Qaeda, and Secretary Rumsfeld's response was that sure, it was necessary to get clearance on these things, because sometimes the sorts of weapons that are available are too indiscriminate to use against a particular target, and you just have to wait and try to get them later on.

I can't imagine a Secretary of Defense prior to 1960 using that language. This is language from the Just War tradition as it has been developed in the last 40 years, which has now worked its way so thoroughly into the language of the U.S. military that the Secretary of Defense can use it without batting an eye and without consciously thinking that he is using Just War language.

I mean, if James Turner Johnson says what Donald Rumsfeld said, I would be consciously thinking it, but the Secretary is thinking in a very different frame, and that's exactly my point. Ethics is thoroughly institutionalized in the U.S. military.

And so the final thing that I want to say about the response to terrorism is that we have to keep in mind that we have to do it in terms of who we are as a people. If we don't do that, then we are losing something that is far more valuable than two towers, a slice of the Pentagon, and the thousands of people who died on 9/11.

Thank you very much, and I will take some questions now.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question

This is an issue that started being important in Vietnam and might become more important in Afghanistan. If one of those women starts throwing rocks at our troops, do we shoot them, or do we just—

Professor Johnson

Well, come on, I think you know the answer to that. Somebody who is throwing a rock at you is not somebody who is the appropriate object of deadly force. If she's firing a Kalashnikov at you, that's a different matter entirely.

The broader question, and this is a very, very good question, the kind of thing that I regularly deal with in the public debate, is the argument that in contemporary war, there really aren't any noncombatants, or it's hard to tell them apart and so on. The truth of the matter is that it's generally not as hard as these people say it is to tell them apart. The other element of truth is that there are genuinely people who are noncombatants, and this has to be kept in mind.

The kinds of discretion that any individual soldier or sailor or Marine has to use, and certainly the kind of discretion that anybody in a command position has to use, requires personal judgment, but that doesn't mean that you're working from a blank slate. You're working from a conception of the difference between somebody who is attempting to take your life and somebody who, even though he or she may not like you very much and may be showing hostility towards you, nonetheless is not worthy of having deadly force directed against them.

Question

Sir, could you explain the intent of those Moslems in Malaysian Tunisia who have been killing Christians and Americans over the last 10 years and talk briefly about how we might react to the hundreds of thousands, considered mainstream, but who support virulently and vehemently bin Laden's actions? How do we react to that as a possible threat, sir?

Professor Johnson

Well, as I suggested before, bin Laden's *fatwa* has enormous resonance in the Moslem street. It is the kind of rationale that many who are inclined to engage in action against the United States or the West generally like to have, because it gives a religious rationale for what they're doing. It's nice to be reminded, for example, that if you die in battle in jihad, you will go directly to heaven. You won't have to wait, as all other Moslems will, for the last day, and then go through the process of sorting that God will do then, including purification of all your sins before he allows you into heaven. So death in jihad is the way to get there fast.

I must say that I have not studied these particular revolts in any kind of intimate way. What I know about them is basically what I've read in the papers, and it strikes me that the kind of argument that they would really have to make in terms of Islamic law requires that there be a person with caliphal authority, that is an authority that generally comes from the prophet Mohammed. There is a precedent in Moslem tradition, however, for another way of getting to such authority. It is the tradition that's associated with the word *"gazi,"* which is a term that's used to designate a person who initiates a holy war and succeeds at it. That's how he proves himself to have the blessing of God. So if you initiate a war and succeed, then that means God has chosen you and has blessed you with victory. If you lose, well, you know, it was your try, [but you didn't have the blessing of God]. We find this *gazi* phenomenon in the tradition of resistance against colonialism.

I don't know that anybody in Southeast Asia has tried to justify what they're doing on these grounds. My suspicion is that the violence there that's directed towards Christians and Hindus is really much more basic and probably has to do more with religious identity than it does with conscious religious reflection. That's my best try.

Question

Once we defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan, what actions do you think would be appropriate on our part to secure our interests in

Afghanistan while ensuring that we don't hurt our relationship with modern nations like Saudi Arabia?

Professor Johnson

Well, you're getting a little beyond my field. That's the business of the guys 50 miles down the road in D.C.

The thing we need to remember about finding bin Laden is that I don't think we will find him alive. I think it's in his interest to die a *mujahid*, a holy warrior. In fact, I am even told that he has instructed his bodyguard to kill him if he is on the edge of being captured.

In any case, the point I was going to make is that simply getting rid of him, getting rid of his lieutenants, however we do it, breaking up the al-Qaeda group in Afghanistan, even breaking up the network so far as we're able to do it in this country and in Europe and elsewhere, is not going to solve the long-term problem. It's a problem that's going to require continued vigilance. It's going to require continued military and other kinds of involvement. It is very likely to be best started by some kind of a long-term civilian presence, an aid presence in Afghanistan that is not simply a patch-over-the-wound kind of presence but a rebuilding presence.

I think we're going to have to be much more serious than we have been in the past about thinking about how we can genuinely help to rebuild societies, not only a war-torn society like Afghanistan but also others, but at the same time, we've got to be realistic. Afghanistan is a very conflict-filled society and has been for a very, very long time. The ability to remold that in the image of the United States does not, to my mind, exist in anything like the lifetime that I have before me or probably the lifetime you have before you. So we have to be realistic about it, but I think we have to be engaged on some level, but the degree of engagement, the type of engagement I will leave to people wiser than I to determine.