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## **Discourse, Knowledge and Ideology: Reformulating Old Questions and Proposing Some New Solutions**

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### **O. Introduction**

In this paper I would like to reformulate a number of old questions and present some new proposals about the relationships between discourse, knowledge and ideology. This is obviously a vast field, so that in a single paper we can only touch upon a few issues. One of these issues is the question whether all our knowledge is ideological, as is often assumed, also in critical discourse analysis. Another issue is how ideology and knowledge are managed in discourse production and comprehension.

The present discussion presupposes my earlier work on ideology (Van Dijk 1998), and takes place within the framework of a new project on the relations between knowledge and discourse (e.g., Van Dijk 2003).

Most approaches to ideology in the social sciences negatively define it in terms of misguided beliefs, false consciousness or similar notions that in my view are too vague for comfort (for historical surveys, see, e.g., Billig 1982, Eagleton 1991, Larraín 1979). In political science or much of social psychology, ideologies are simply taken to be belief systems, but not systematically distinguished from other forms of socially shared mental representations (see, e.g., Freedman 1996). That is, despite thousands of studies, the notion of ideology remains theoretically vague, and it is even less clear how exactly ideologies should be related to discourse.

While integrating some aspects of these earlier approaches, I have proposed to develop a new, multidisciplinary theory of ideology basi-

cally defined in terms of the foundation of the shared social representations of social groups (Van Dijk 1998). For instance, a racist ideology could be the basis of the attitudes people share about immigration, integration or foreigners on the labor market. Such ideologies are not arbitrary collections of social beliefs, but specific group schemata, organized by a number of categories that represent the identity, the social structure and position of the group, such as 'our' appearance, activities, aims, norms, group relations and resources.

Many questions are still unresolved in this tentative theoretical framework, such as the precise relations between social group structures and the mental organization of ideologies: Indeed, what groups typically develop ideologies and which do not?

Another fundamental problem is the relation between ideologies and other social representations shared by groups and their members. Thus, I just suggested that ideologies are typically the basis of social attitudes. We may for instance have progressive, conservative, feminist or anti-feminist opinions about, for instance, abortion, divorce and many gender relations. That is, attitudes are (also) organized in terms of their underlying ideologies. Indeed, it is often through their (expressed) attitudes about social issues that we recognize a racist or an antiracist person when we meet one.

Since socially shared knowledge is also a form of social representation, it follows that if ideologies are the basis of social representations, *also our knowledge is ideologically biased*. This is indeed often the case, and much modern work on ideology assumes just that, namely that our socially shared knowledge cannot possibly 'escape' its ideological boundedness (Fairclough 1995, Laclau 1979, for discussion, see also Žižek 1994).

Although this thesis may well be (roughly) true for some kinds of knowledge and groups, I think it is too strong, too vague and too general, and should be rejected. In other words, in my theoretical framework it would simply be inconsistent to assume that all knowledge is ideological. Rather, I propose that each group or culture has a Common Ground of generally shared, undisputed knowledge that is unideological or pre-ideological *within that epistemic community*.

Such generally shared knowledge may well be found 'ideologically biased' by other groups or cultures, by people of the same epistemic community in another period, or indeed by a critical analyst. The crucial criterion, however, is that *within* the epistemic community itself there is consensus about the fact that their Common Ground of shared knowledge is 'true', and not an ideological fiction, that is, 'mere belief or 'opinion'. This may appear for instance in the fact that such knowledge is generally presupposed in the discourses and interactions of the competent members of such a community, also among different groups that are ideological opponents.

Notice that I do *not* propose to re-establish here the old opposition between knowledge and ideology, where knowledge is simply true belief, or the sociological 'facts', and ideology false belief, as is the case in most classical disputes, both Marxist and anti-Marxist (see, e.g., Mannheim 1936). We shall see that group knowledge may well be ideological, but that there must be knowledge that is generally shared and pre-ideological in an epistemic community.

Therefore, our ultimate aim is to construct an explicit basis on which a new theory can be developed that is able to explicitly distinguish between epistemic and ideological aspects of social representations and their relations to discourse, discourse processing and the use of language and discourse in social contexts.

## **O. Aims and limitations**

Against the general background of these fundamental issues at the border of discourse studies, philosophy, psychology and the social sciences, this paper specifically focuses on only some of the aspects of the mutual delimitation of knowledge and ideology. It does so first of all by briefly reviewing some traditional approaches to knowledge, by proposing an outline of a new, multidisciplinary theory of knowledge, and by relating these results to my earlier work on the theory of ideology. Secondly, this theoretical framework will be applied in an analysis of an Op-Ed article published in the Washington Post on the events of September 11.

It should be emphasized again that the relations between knowledge and ideology is a vast and complex problem, involving many theories and disciplines, and that a single paper can only address some very specific issues of this relationship, such as the cognitive nature of the interface between various kinds of knowledge and ideology and their relations with discourse. Ignored here are many questions of traditional epistemology, discussions in Artificial Intelligence (AI) about formal frameworks and empirical methods of knowledge representation, relevant areas of the sociology of knowledge, as well as current research in the ethnography of knowledge as mental "models", and many other approaches to knowledge and ideology.

This paper is part of an ongoing research project on the relations between discourse and knowledge. That is, many other aspects of this relationship, as well as on the relations between knowledge and ideology will be dealt with in other papers and books.

The relevance of this paper for linguistics and discourse analysis is implied by the fact that much of our knowledge is typically construed and reproduced by discourse, and that in order to be able to produce and understand discourse, people need vast amounts of various kinds of knowledge. So far we only have a vague idea about how exactly these various kinds of knowledge are strategically managed in the processing and uses of discourse. In other words, a theory of discourse is fundamentally incomplete without a detailed theory of its relationships with knowledge. For many types of discourse (some theorists might even maintain for *all* kinds of discourse) the same is true for the relationships between discourse and ideology. We shall show below that our understanding of this relationship between discourse and ideology is premised on our insight into the nature of the relations between discourse and knowledge, in particular, and between discourse and social representations, more in general.

## **1. Knowledge**

The argument about the (non-)ideological nature of knowledge hinges not only on a sound theory of ideology, but also on a theory of knowledge. We here enter a vast area of scholarly investigation, for instance in epistemology, and a host of theory fragments, for instance in cognitive science and the social sciences. Again, I can only highlight a few points of an old debate, ignoring huge areas of knowledge studies.

The classical definition of knowledge in epistemology is 'justified true belief.' (Among many other studies and classical texts, see, e.g., Greco and Sosa 1999, Lehrer 1990, Pojman 1999). In the last decades this definition has met with all kinds of objections (e.g., the well-known Gettier counterexamples), which however do not fundamentally affect the overall approach, but only show its irrelevance for a contemporary theory of knowledge. Indeed, virtually nowhere in current psychology and the social sciences these philosophical approaches to knowledge have much of an impact. In fact, they are largely ignored and virtually never cited.

Instead of engaging in a more detailed argumentation against the classical, epistemological approach to knowledge, I shall simply summarize some of the features of my current approach to knowledge, and refer to other and future papers for details:

- (1) Knowledge is belief that is shared by the members of a social or cultural community, the 'knowledge community' or 'epistemic community'.
- (2) Knowledge is socially accepted and shared by members of the epistemic community on the basis of shared knowledge (evaluation) criteria.
- (3) Knowledge criteria may be different in different epistemic communities (cultures, social groups, professional organizations, etc.) or in different historical phases of a community. Thus, common sense criteria of knowledge may be direct observation, reliable sources and correct inference. Criteria of re-

- ligious, scientific or other communities may be different from these (changing) "common sense" criterion in everyday life.
- (4) Because of the different knowledge criteria of epistemic communities, knowledge is by definition relative.
  - (5) The notion of "truth" (as in "true beliefs") will be reserved for statements or discourse — in specific assertion contexts — rather than for beliefs.
  - (6) Knowledge and beliefs are "intentional", that is, they are *about* things such as real or fictitious events or situations (states of affairs).
  - (7) Beliefs and hence knowledge are cognitively conceptualized in terms of mental representations of states of affairs characterizing situations (or "worlds").
  - (8) In interaction and discourse knowledge is attributed to self and others when it is shared by the speaker(s) or based on his or her knowledge criteria as shared by the recipients.

## 2. The cognitive dimension of knowledge

After these brief and more general remarks on knowledge, we obviously need to spell out the various theory components in some more detail. If knowledge is a kind of belief, and beliefs are mental phenomena of some kind then knowledge also needs to be analyzed in terms of some mental structure, such as representations, networks, etc. In this cognitive approach, I shall ignore the neurological basis of knowledge (see, e.g. Gazzaniga et al. 1998).

Despite much research in cognitive psychology and Artificial Intelligence, and today more generally in cognitive science, about knowledge and its mental structures and processes, it is still not quite clear what actually counts as knowledge in psychology or what not. In the psychology of discourse processing, the vague notion of 'knowledge of the world' is being used, maybe with some remarks on their representation as some kind of script, frame or similar structure, but there is no strict distinction between knowledge and belief (see, e.g., Britton and Graesser 1996, Markman 1999, Schank and Abelson

1977, Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983, Wilkes 1997). Indeed, as we have seen above, knowledge is simply belief that is socially shared or accepted on the basis of social criteria, and in that sense is as much a social or cultural notion as a cognitive notion.

In this perspective, we shall therefore again limit ourselves to a brief summary of some of the cognitive properties of knowledge that are relevant for our further analysis of the relations with ideology and the relations between knowledge and discourse.

- (1) Knowledge is a kind of socially shared belief represented in long term memory and partly used and applied in short term memory.
- (2) A traditional distinction is made between personal knowledge of personal experiences, represented in episodic (long term) memory as mental models of events or situations, and more general, social representations, stored in "semantic" — or rather "social" memory.
- (3) Knowledge is usually assumed to be represented in schematically organized ways, for instance as 'scripts' or similar formats, so as to facilitate its retrieval, activation and application.
- (4) Discourse understanding and production as well as other forms of (inter) action presuppose the partial activation and 'application' of relevant fragments of knowledge. Depending on context (individual differences, aims, tasks, etc.) more or less of such knowledge may be activated and used.
- (5) Activated general knowledge may be 'instantiated' or 'specified' in more specific representations of events or personal experiences, that is, in mental models stored in episodic memory.
- (6) General knowledge may be formed by generalization and abstraction from mental models (traditionally called "learning from experience") or by (re)combining different fragments of general knowledge, e.g., by inference or the reorganization of social representations.
- (7) Discourse understanding generally involves the construction of mental models in episodic memory, in which more or less general knowledge is applied in the construction of the model.

Similarly, discourse production presupposes the existence of such a mental model.

- (8) Only relevant fragments of mental models are actually (or need be) expressed in discourse, depending on context constraints.
- (9) Mental models of communicative events, or context models (or simply: contexts) represent the relevant properties of the social situation of the communicative event.
- (10) Context models, and specifically their specialized knowledge device (K-device), regulate which knowledge of mental models may or must (not) be more or less explicitly expressed in discourse, or be left wholly or partially implicit.

This brief summary leaves many questions unanswered, for instance about the nature of knowledge representations and the ways knowledge is stored, retrieved, activated, used and de-activated in all kinds of cognitive tasks, such as interaction and discourse. We do know some more details of the properties of knowledge described above, but many of the more fundamental issues are still mysterious. Indeed, a truly detailed psychological theory of knowledge is still on the agenda, especially also its cognitive-social interface in social psychology.

### **3. Towards a typology of knowledge**

One of the elements of such a theory that has been neglected both in epistemology and psychology is a first typology of knowledge. Instead of the traditional, vague notion of "knowledge of the world", used in cognitive science, we need a much more detailed and articulated formulation of different sorts of knowledge. This is necessary, among other things, because these different types of knowledge also have different impacts on discourse processing and discourse structures. Different types of knowledge may also be represented differently in memory.

Above we already have summarized a difference between personal, episodic knowledge, as represented in mental models of expe-

rience, and more general, abstract, social knowledge, as represented in social representations, respectively. However, both personal and social knowledge can be further differentiated, e.g., by the following typological criteria:

1. Kind: Knowing *that* (representation) vs. knowing *how* (procedures)
2. Social scope: Personal, interpersonal, social (group), cultural.
3. Level: Specific/particular, general events/states.
4. Ontology: Real, concrete, abstract, fictitious, historical, future, etc. events.
5. Strength: Being absolutely sure vs. being more or less sure.

Combining these criteria allow us to distinguish many different kinds of knowledge. Thus, the traditional distinction between personal mental models or experiences would be personal knowledge about specific events, whereas socially shared knowledge (e.g. of scripts) would be abstract and general. However, we also have general and abstract personal knowledge (e.g., about our friends) that is not represented in mental models of events. And we have socially shared knowledge that is not general or abstract, but represented in — often complex — mental models, such as our social knowledge about important historical events such as assassinations, accidents or wars, among many other events typically reported in the media or represented in history textbooks.

Important is also that knowledge is not simply an all or nothing mental state or representation, as different from "mere beliefs". Rather, it seems, much of what we assume to be knowledge, and socially acquire and use as such, is in fact hardly more than more or less firm belief. Most of our practical knowledge about the world is based on our personal experiences or learned from others, that is, usually through discourse, and much of this knowledge is rather gradual than absolute. We may think we know that Amsterdam is the capital of The Netherlands, but we would barely want to bet our yearly salary on it, if we also know that the government of The Netherlands is in The Hague.

Especially relevant for the relation between discourse and knowledge is the fact that knowledge may be more or less personal, interpersonal, group-based, and hence shared with more or less other people. Indeed, one of the general pragmatic constraints of communication and interaction in discourse is that knowledge that is already believed or known to be known by recipients typically will remain implicit, or signaled as "old" or "probably shared" knowledge. Such a condition is reflected in the well-known appropriateness constraint of the speech act of assertion, for instance. That is, context models regulate such knowledge by temporarily representing (or strategically calculating) what recipients probably know or do not know. Thus, in everyday personal stories, what is not known is a personal experience, or mental model, of a speaker, whereas in textbooks, these are rather general, abstract, social types of knowledge. In this way, each epistemic community is at the same time also a discourse community: What is known in the community need not be explicitly expressed in the discourse of the community, except in didactic discourse, or when the consensus on what is known breaks down.

In sum, the many kinds of knowledge structures we have and make use of in discourse production may control many of the semantic and other properties of discourse. Since such knowledge not only is relevant for the speaker but also for the recipient and the shared knowledge (also about each others' knowledge) of the speech participants, we need a complex mental model of the 'knowledge situation' of the communicative event, that is, and this 'knowledge model' is of course part of the context models of the participants (Van Dijk 1999). In other words, the interface between the various knowledge structures of the mind and the actual processing of semantic and other properties of the discourse must be managed by a special component in our context model of the communicative event, that is, by a K-device of some kind that makes smart, strategic guess about how much recipients share of our knowledge, how much we express, convey and want to share, etc. We have only begun to understand some of the complicated work such a device needs to do so that we can speak, write, read and listen adequately in social situations in which many types of knowledge are strategically (made) relevant.

Thus, instead of having to represent vast amounts of knowledge presumably known by the recipient — a mental task that is of course impossible to carry out — we may have recourse to fast but fallible strategies that simply assume that most of what I know is shared by the members of my epistemic communities, possibly with the exception of some new knowledge about new events or social representations. It is this shared knowledge that is then strategically embodied in the presuppositions of current text and talk. It is this overall strategy that is applied by e.g. journalists when writing news reports, or by professors explaining something to students, and by all of us when telling about recent events in our daily lives.

#### **4. Discourse and ideology**

In the discussion above about different kinds of knowledge, we already have encountered various elements of the debate about the difference between knowledge and ideology. Indeed, the classical distinction between knowledge (epistémé) and belief (doxa) is closely related to that between knowledge and ideology. This debate on the difference between knowledge and ideology has plagued the social sciences for nearly two centuries since Destutt de Tracy invented the notion of 'idéologie' as the science of ideas, for instance in the work of Marx-Engels, Durkheim, Mannheim, Gramsci and many others in the social sciences. Until today, also in Critical Discourse Analysis, we find discussions about whether or not there is 'objective' knowledge, or merely social, intersubjective knowledge, and in what respect such knowledges are merely a social construct or 'true' about the 'facts'.

I shall ignore the long history of this debate here and merely examine the relations between ideology and knowledge more closely in the light of my current conceptions of these notions, as well as in relation to a theory of discourse.

Ideologies are by definition social, and shared by the members of a group. I have earlier assumed that such ideologies are general, abstract and fundamental, and organize other forms or social represen-

tations, such as attitudes. They may involve abstract group categories, such as identity and group relations, but also collective aims, norms and values. For this reason they often define what is good or bad, right or wrong, but ideologies also control our beliefs about the world, as is the case for religious or scientific ideologies. That is, ideologies may also control the evaluation criteria by which members of an epistemic community assess knowledge, for instance in terms of observational, inferential or statistical methods in science, or faith in religion.

In other words, ideologies seem pretty close to what we have called socially shared group knowledge above, such as the specific knowledge shared by students, linguists, feminists, stamp collectors or the citizens of Barcelona.

The next question which we may then ask is whether or not group ideologies and group knowledge are simply one and the same thing, or whether it makes sense, at least in a theory of discourse, to make a clear distinction, for instance because they differently affect discourse structures and processing strategies of production and comprehension.

My response to this question is that it does make sense to distinguish between the ideology of a group, on the one hand, and the other social representations of a group, including their knowledge, on the other. As explained above, ideologies are more fundamental, and at the basis of social group representations such as knowledge and attitudes. This also means that such social representations of a group are necessarily ideologically biased.

This is obvious for such social representations as attitudes, e.g., about immigration, abortion, divorce, the free market, and a host of other attitudes, since these presuppose norms and values that are embodied in different ideologies. But what about (specific) group knowledge? I think that such an ideological bias is indeed the case: What (anti)racists claim to 'know' about immigration, feminists about gender, doctors about illnesses, and so on, is indeed knowledge which in many ways is organized according to the ideological parameters of the group, including its aims, interests, etc. That is, group members tend to interpret and represent reality in accordance with

what is in the best interests of their group. Of course, for personal reasons, and given different personal mental models and context models, individual group members may of course 'deviate' from such a dominant form of social representation. In other words, ideologies only control knowledge at the general, global level of the group, that is, shared knowledge, and not necessarily personal knowledge.

Such biased group knowledge may well be deemed to be mere beliefs or opinions by members of other groups. The criterion we have established for knowledge, however, is whether beliefs are deemed to represent existing states of affairs by the criteria of the epistemic community. In other words, both in their perceptions, interactions or discourses, group members deal with such beliefs as corresponding to the 'facts'. That is, for all practical purposes they typically presuppose such beliefs in intra-group discourse, and deal with them as if they were knowledge.

Note though that this restricted form of the hypothesis about the ideological basis of group knowledge does *not* mean that all knowledge is ideologically biased, as is often assumed. I hold that beyond the group there is knowledge that is not ideological, but widely shared and presupposed in broader epistemic communities, for instance in the whole culture. It is this general, cultural Common Ground that is the basis of the whole culture. Without it, people of different groups and with different ideologies would be unable to cooperate or to communicate. Such knowledge is thus pre-ideological or post-ideological. Of course, this may change historically: What once was consensual knowledge of a culture may become mere belief later (as is the case for instance with many mythical or religious beliefs), and vice versa, for instance when scientific beliefs of a small group of scholars may become accepted as general knowledge later.

People of different ideological communities may have not only different attitudes about many issues, such as immigration, abortion, divorce, euthanasia or nuclear energy, but in a sense may even have different kinds of 'knowledge', that is, beliefs that they hold to be corresponding to the 'facts' as they see them. Thus, feminists will hold male domination as a social 'fact', and ecologists are protesting against the 'facts' of pollution by big companies, 'facts' that may be

disputed by many males and many companies, respectively. However, there are a host of 'facts' that are not disputed at all, and that are part of the accepted knowledge shared by ideological opponents. Racists and anti-racists agree that there is immigration in Europe, that there are countries with borders, that people may have passports, and so on for millions of other items of 'common sense' knowledge. So long as such beliefs are not challenged by an ideological group, they function as the epistemic common ground of the broader epistemic community, such as a culture. Discursively, they function as the pre-supposed knowledge is all discourses of all competent members of that culture. As suggested before, if such knowledge were ideological, no communication and interaction would be possible between members of different ideological communities of a culture.

We conclude that the question about the ideological nature of knowledge should therefore be resolved in this way: Some knowledge, especially of groups, may be ideologically biased, and yet not be called ideological beliefs by the group itself. On the other hand, in a broader context we must assume general knowledge that is not ideologically biased, at least not within the culture itself.

In other words, knowledge is inherently tied to the epistemic community in which it is defined as such. Does this open the way for general relativism? No, this is a definition of what could be called *relative relativism*. That is, a consequent forro of relativism also makes relativism itself relative, as it should be. Thus, although from *the outside*, beliefs of a community may be seen as mere (ideological) beliefs, *within* the epistemic community, such beliefs may be taken as knowledge, so that intragroup interaction and communication are possible. That is, epistemic conflicts about knowledge and belief or opinion typically exist across group and culture boundaries.

Group members usually know which beliefs are shared by members of other groups and which are not. This means that also the very meaning of the word 'knowledge', as shared with members of other groups, is often only applied to knowledge that is shared with others. It therefore often happens that what constitutes knowledge within a group, and is treated as such in intra-group interaction and discourse, may also often be called 'beliefs' when the group members know

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they are not shared outside the group. This is typically the case in religious groups who rather speak of what they 'believe' or 'believe in' than in terms of 'knowledge'. The same is true for the pervasive use of 'we think that' in ideological group discourse.

### **5. Discourse, knowledge and ideology**

Once defined the differences between knowledge and ideology we need to explore in more detail the relations between discourse, knowledge and ideology. We know that knowledge is fundamental for the production and comprehension of discourse. We also have assumed that at least for some aspects of group knowledge such knowledge may be ideologically biased, and this should also be observable in discourse. On the other hand, for the kinds of general, cultural knowledge that is *not* ideological, this should also be observable, for instance in the semantic structures of presuppositions, implications, and other aspects of meaning that are part of the interpretation but not, as such, expressed in discourse.

Let us consider these relationships more carefully by examining a concrete example, namely the Op-Ed article by well-known columnist Charles Krauthammer, published in the *Washington Post* on September 12, 2001, the day after the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon. This article explicitly and openly calls for war. That the beliefs expressed in this article are not mainly the extremist views of a conservative U.S. columnist, but integral part of a dominant ideology that would be transformed into concrete policy, may be obvious from the fact that soon after that the U.S.A. were going to war in Afghanistan, and somewhat later were preparing for war against Iraq.

The aim of my analysis is to disentangle some of the complex relationships between discourse, knowledge and ideology, and to show in some detail how the knowledge structures involved in the production of this text are partly controlled by underlying group ideologies — and that many forms of knowledge are not ideological at all.

Since a full analysis of the relevant semantic and cognitive structures of this text would clearly be beyond the boundaries of a single paper, I shall select some crucial paragraphs for closer analysis (for the full text, see the *Appendix*). The analysis will proceed paragraph by paragraph, so as to maintain the thematic unity of each fragment.

In the analysis, expressions (words, phrases, sentences, etc.) will be printed as italics between double quotes in the running text or in indented cited text fragments in a different type face and without quotes; meanings or concepts are represented as words between single quotes.

**To War, Not to Court**

by *Charles Krauthammer*

Wednesday, September 12, 2001; Page A29

This is not crime. This is war. One of the reasons there are terrorists out there capable and audacious enough to carry out the deadliest attack on the United States in its history is that, while they have declared war on us, we have in the past responded (with the exception of a few useless cruise missile attacks on empty tents in the deserts) by issuing subpoenas.

Op-Ed articles in most of the Western press are by definition personal opinion texts about recent events. So is this article, and so is its overall conclusion expressed in its headline, enacting the global speech act of a recommendation to go to war rather than to go to court. It may be assumed that virtually all readers of the WP that day know and expect that many opinion and news articles on September 12, 2001 will be about the terrorist attacks of the previous day. This is the kind of presupposed knowledge we have called *public knowledge* about specific events. And given the seriousness of the events (defined in terms of their consequences, such as the number of deaths and the ensuing war and fundamental changes both within the USA and worldwide) and the diffusion of the information about them, it is also the kind of event that defines *historical knowledge*. That is, knowledge about the event will be generally presupposed in the discourses of the same culture, and probably across many cultures. More specifically, editorials and opinion articles presuppose at least partly

knowledge about events they are about, and when not, the relevant events will be summarized in the beginning of the opinion article.

In this case, we see that this knowledge is also part of the fragment of the context models shared by the author and the public, as is obvious from the extraordinary use of the deictic expression *this* beginning the first sentence of the text: In this case, not even a definite description (such as 'yesterday's attacks' or a brief summary of the events) is necessary. 'The' events are prominently present in the episodic memory of most readers: on the day after, these events are still prominently "on the mind" of the readers, and hence constitute part of the context, and may hence be referred to with a single deictic expression such as a single demonstrative. Thus, from the very first word onwards, we already see how issues of knowledge shape the structure of this text.

In sum, the type of knowledge we are here dealing with is specific, public, historical, factual and secure, treated as such by the writer, and presupposed to be shared by virtually all readers. Indeed, whatever the ideological differences in the interpretation or evaluation of the events (for instance as a 'terrorist attack' or not), there is no doubt that the events of the Twin Towers of the WTC being destroyed actually took place. That is, the shared mental representation of this event constitutes what might be called 'historical common ground', which for at least a long period may be presupposed by all further discourses of the same culture, as is also the case for the Second World War or the Holocaust.

The semantic negation expressed in the sentence "*This is not crime*" enacts a pragmatic denial presupposing that someone (whose opinion matters and is worth commenting about) has described the 9/11 attacks as a crime. Krauthammer expresses such knowledge, and thus indirectly states — or reminds the knowing readers — that someone has actually made such a statement. Note that in this case, the knowledge about a specific event is knowledge about an opinion (or about a specific previous discourse expressing such an opinion), thus establishing the usual intertextual relationship between opinion and other public discourse. In other words, previous discourse

may become part of the context model controlling the production of ongoing discourse.

Besides these specific knowledge items about specific previous events and previous discourses about such events, the use of the denial also presupposes general, sociocultural knowledge, e.g., about crime, more specifically about mass murder, terrorism, and related crimes.

At this point, we enter the cognitive, social and discursive realm where knowledge, opinion and ideologies overlap. Indeed, is the categorization of an act of (mass) murder as a 'crime' an expression of our *knowledge* of crime, or of our ideologically based *attitudes* about what counts as a crime or not?

As is obvious by the response to his own rhetorical question in the second sentence, for Krauthammer, the denomination of the attacks as a 'mere' crime is inadequate. Choosing the alternative 'mias' as the adequate label, the author presupposes that by his criteria the properties of this act of violence *are* of another order, namely that of warfare. Obviously, given the prominence of these concepts both in the headline and in the first, thematic, sentences, both for the author and the readers, the first knowledge domains activated for this article are those of crime and war.

Readers' communicative knowledge about opinion articles generates in that case the expectation that the author will henceforth argue for his standpoint, as expressed in the second sentence. In other words, general knowledge about (types of) discourse, may be instantiated in the current context model organizing the production and the comprehension of this editorial. Note that the same context model activates the general cultural knowledge that the *Washington Post* is (from a European perspective) a more or less conservative U.S. newspaper (and a more or less liberal one from a more conservative U.S. perspective), and national group knowledge that Charles Krauthammer is one of its columnists. Applied to his actual expressions and opinions, both his denial and his main standpoint can be found to be consistent with the ideological background of the newspaper and its writers.

Thus, by rhetorically emphasizing the seriousness of the event by declaring it an act of war, the author also focuses on the main distinctive feature between crime and war, namely that a war is an act of aggression between states, or an act of aggression against a nation. Indeed, the terrorist attack against the government building in Oklahoma a few years earlier would not have been declared an act of war, although initially some attempts were made to link it to foreign terrorists, in particular Arabs or Muslim fundamentalists. In the case of the WTC attacks, there is no evidence as yet about a foreign attack, so the author is merely speculating, as we shall see in more detail below.

Our point is merely to show that the lexicalization (as "war") of his definition of the situation as represented by his mental model of the attacks is presented as a re-categorization of the attacks, given his own knowledge of the concepts of crime and war. However, that such a re-categorization is not merely knowledge-based but also ideological, may be concluded from the fact that attacks allegedly perpetrated by foreign terrorists are called 'war' and those of domestic terrorists a 'crime'. This means that the attacks are not what they may seem, namely the destruction of buildings like the WTC or the Pentagon, or the assassination of many people, but interpreted as an attack on "America". And it is this definition of the situation that is rooted in nationalist ideology.

Let us consider the next sentence. This sentence provides an explanation ('reasons') of another fact presupposed by the author, namely *that* there are terrorists *out there*, a presupposition undoubtedly shared by most readers of the WP: General knowledge about terrorist attacks (murder of civilians) implies that since the attack on the WTC has the properties of a terrorist attack, the perpetrators must be terrorists — by quite straightforward inference or direct 'political' knowledge. There is probably little controversy about this within the ideological community of the author and most of his readers, but it is worth observing that men who choose to die for a cause are regularly described as heroes by members of their own ideological community. That is, even mere lexicalization is not just an expression of conceptualization based on knowledge, but more profoundly controlled by

the ideologies that underlie such group or national knowledge on the one hand, and the ideologically controlled interpretation of the event, on the other hand. Such lexical 'bias' is one of the best known linguistic effects of underlying ideologies: here these influence general attitudes about terrorism, on the one hand, and the concrete mental models of specific events (like the attack on the WTC), and the ways such models are 'expressed' in discourse, on the other hand.

The rest of the sentence expresses the shared presupposed knowledge about the events (that the terrorists must have been very capable and audacious, that it was the deadliest attack on the USA ever, etc.). Maybe such information has been given before, and in this case this fragment would be intertextual, maybe it is an evaluation of the author that is generally shared while easily deducible from the nature of the attacks. In other words, the widely shared mental model of the attacks undoubtedly features the relevant inferences from general sociocultural knowledge that if several airplanes can be hijacked at the same time, flown to their targets, etc. that this requires planning, organization and audacity. Note that although common sense reasoning is quickly able to make such inferences, spelling it out in explicit terms would require a quite elaborate series of arguments.

Relevant for our discussion is that not only the boundaries between knowledge and ideologies are fuzzy, but also those between presupposed and asserted information. Structurally the author presupposes these properties of the terrorists, but at the same time he seems to indirectly argue his case by giving his own opinion about the capacity and audacity of the terrorists.

Finally, the expression "the deadliest attack on the United States" presupposes (historical) knowledge about previous attacks, and their victims, an item of knowledge that is public, but probably intertextual, having been used by experts (politicians, journalists or historians) before. This is not the kind of sociocultural knowledge that is widely shared in the whole culture or even the nation. In this article, it may thus function as an intertextually based reminder of such historical knowledge, which is a quite common move of news discourse and opinion articles in the press. Note though that such a move may

be abused of when it is suggested that such belief is supposed to be shared, when in fact it is a belief of the author.

Presupposed in this sentence is that the terrorists have declared war on 'lis', a presupposition that might be inferable from the attack, but only under its description as an act of war. Again, we see that what is suggested as being shared knowledge about terrorists and their acts, in fact is an indirect assertion of an ideologically based proposition. This is one of the most pervasive properties of the manipulative use of presuppositions.

It is only then that the author arrives at his main clause and asserted statement, namely that "we" have done no more than issue subpoenas as a reaction to such acts of war — although he inserts a concessive disclaimer about cruise missiles, immediately ruled out as serious, by the derisive addition that the missiles were limited to a few tents — thereby implying that the USA never responded with full scale war. Obviously, just this brief reference to tents presupposes knowledge about tents, about the Middle East, and perhaps some knowledge about previous US attacks on Al Qaeda. Again, such knowledge may be ideologically tainted if it assumes that Arabs usually live in tents. Again, the vast knowledge domains of law and war are applied in order to be able to produce and understand this part of the sentence. The rhetorical euphemism 'subpoenas' as used instead of more deadly weapons is intended to emphasize how little the USA has done to fight terrorism.

Readers who have some more historical knowledge than that presupposed here, even about the last decades, might wonder about the Gulf War, the continued bombing of Iraq, the bomb attack against Libya, ordered by Reagan, the bomb attack against a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan, the attacks on Grenada, Panama, and so on — all U.S. actions hardly targeting mere tents or accomplished by subpoenas. That is, in order to understand this text, readers need vast amounts of different kinds of knowledge, including historical knowledge about U.S. foreign policy. On the other hand, *too much* of such knowledge might be counterproductive, at least from the perspective of the author, while it may produce inferences that are inconsistent with what is stated or implied by the author.

The second paragraph begins with a reference to Colin Powell, whose function would usually be presupposed, but is added here for those who might not know. It *does* help to know though that Colin Powell is generally seen as been 'moderate' in U.S. international affairs, and more open to the opinions of other countries than some of Washington's hardliners, both in the White House, in the government as well as in the media, as is the case for Mr. Krauthammer. This would explain the latter's belligerent critique of Powell, and his emphasis on war instead of justice.

The rest of the sentence again presupposes historical knowledge, namely about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Since this historical reference has been repeatedly used in the comments on S I 1, it should be active in the minds of the readers, so that no reminding seems necessary here. It needs no further explanation that this 'historical knowledge' is itself hardly free of nationalist ideological aspects. Like the present attack, it was an attack on *Us*. The same is true for the historical reference to Roosevelt, which triggers the historical knowledge or the inference that he was the president at that time. The rest of the sentence then allows the argumentative comparison with the current case, in which Powell speaks about bringing to justice, and Roosevelt did not, and instead pledged to go to war. Undoubtedly, Mr. Krauthammer will have been pleased to know that the current U.S. president, Georges W. Bush, did just like his predecessor and also went to war instead of bringing the terrorists to justice or use non-violent means to stop their actions.

The third paragraph continues the main argument, namely that only war can stop foreign combatants, thus denying the status of 'mere criminals' to the attackers. The metaphorical expression "rain destruction" goes beyond conceptualizing the notion of destroying, and knowledge of warfare and airplanes suggests a more specific interpretation in terms of 'bombing' via the conceptual link of "things falling from the sky".

A surprising turn of argument is provided when the author claims that war was already declared on the USA long ago. Even those readers who have some historical knowledge might wonder who did declare war on the USA, so that it is legitimate going to war now. The

next paragraphs make clear that it is terrorism, and especially fundamentalist Islam, that has declared war on the United States, which of course is a hyperbolic manner of speaking — part of the usually rhetorical strategy of emphasizing the opponents' bad things. We here have a nice example of a type of 'knowledge' of a specific event, as represented in a mental model, that is ideologically based — others would hardly agree on this 'fact' of a terrorist declaration of war on the USA, other than in hyperbolic or metaphorical terms.

Note also the well-known topos that 9/11 is or should be a turning point, generally repeated in most political and media discourses, whether pro U.S. or anti U.S. As we have seen in more than a year of warfare in Afghanistan, threats to Iraq, their broad support in the USA, the limitation of many personal freedoms and the dramatic increase in military spending, was indeed a remarkable change brought about and legitimated by 9/11. Just mentioning thousands of (innocent) victims is already enough as an argument. Of course, the whole argument hinges upon the tacit assumption that terrorists can only be efficiently fought by military action and violence, an assumption that might be a piece of knowledge for Krauthammer, but might be a mere personal opinion or social attitude for others — and hence ideologically based for both.

The next paragraph explicitly identifies the post-cold war enemy: foreign terrorists. That is, whereas during the cold war conservative forces in the USA used anticommunism as the dominating ideological framework, Krauthammer now formulates fragments of a militarist antiterrorist ideology. To enhance the description of the enemy as 'formidable' the author merely needs to describe some of the elements of 9/11, as he does in the rest of the paragraph. Since these knowledge elements may be assumed to be known to the readers, this fragment is partly a reminder of the seriousness of the attack, which is an argumentative step in the negative other-presentation of the terrorists. Note though that although the author reminds the readers of the 'facts' of 9/11, this does not mean that the *description* of the facts is devoid of ideological implications, as the lexical selection of *'greatest power on the globe'* suggests. Also, suggesting that the whole nation had to shut down, and the leaders had to hide in shel-

ters, is at most a strongly hyperbolic exaggeration of the 'facts', rhetorically relevant to emphasize the strength of the enemy, an argument that is needed to support the main thesis of the article, namely to wage war on them. Again, we see the dynamic relations between knowledge, facts and mere ideological opinions as part of the usual reasoning by enthymemes. As we may expect from a text that expresses the ideologically controlled representation of the events in the author's mental models, the whole situation is defined in terms that suit his argument, as well as his ideological inclination. At the same time, our theoretical framework offers a much more explicit basis for the explanation of the kind of 'implicit arguments' used in current theories of argumentation.

Let us finally summarize in a more schematic fashion the types of knowledge brought to bear in the next paragraphs of the article, and show how closely they are associated with underlying ideological systems. Obviously, we can only present a selection of the forms of social cognition involved.

<p>1. Nor is the enemy faceless or mysterious. We do not know for sure who gave the final order but we know what movement it comes from. The enemy has identified itself in public and openly. Our delicate sensibilities have prevented us from pronouncing its name.</p>	<p>(Those who attack us) -3 "the enemy"                  Specific knowledge: who gave the order?                  Doubt: "we are not sure"                  Certainty: "We know..."                  K-criteria: They have identified themselves.                  Presuppositions:                  - We have delicate sensibilities (Opinion)                  - We did not pronounce its name</p>
<p>2. Its name is radical Islam. Not Islam as practiced peacefully by millions of the faithful around the world. But a specific fringe political movement, dedicated to imposing its fanatical ideology on its own societies and destroying the society of its enemies, the greatest of which is the United States.</p>	<p>Sociopolitical knowledge: identification of enemy.                  Ideology: anti-radicalism                  Disclaimer (Apparent Denial): Not Islam as practiced...                  Sociopolitical knowledge and ideologically based negative other-description: "fringe movement"                  Implication: "on its own societies" <b>4</b> they are or should not be only <i>our</i> enemy.                  Ideological fact: "the greatest of which is the US".</p>

<p>3. Israel, too, is an affront to radical Islam, and thus of course must be eradicated. But it is the smallest of fish. The heart of the beast -- with its military in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey and the Persian Gulf; with a culture that "corrupts" Islamic youth; with an economy and technology that dominate the world is the United States. That is why we were struck so savagely.</p>	<p>Key: Self-description from their perspective and using their words:  Reminder of historical knowledge:  -"Israel is an affront and must be.."  - "US corrupts Islamic youth"  - "US dominates the world"  Explanation of the attack: "that's why.."</p>
<p>4. How do we know? Who else trains cadres of fanatical suicide murderers who go to their deaths joyfully? And the average terrorist does not coordinate four hijackings within one hour. Nor fly a plane into the tiny silhouette of a single building. For that you need skilled pilots seeking martyrdom. That is not a large pool to draw from.</p>	<p>Explicit knowledge criteria.  Implication: we are not just guessing  Rhetorical question  Political presupposition: Radical islam trains cadres..  Negation: eliminating possible suspects: the average terrorist does not  Implication: the operation must have been carried out by a big organization.  General knowledge on flying planes.  <u>Conclusion on identity.</u></p>
<p>5. These are the shock troops of the enemy. And the enemy has many branches. Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Israel, the Osama bin Laden organization headquartered in Afghanistan, and various Arab "liberation fronts" based in Damascus. And then there are the governments: kan, Iraq, Syria and Libya among them. Which one was responsible? We will find out soon enough.</p>	<p>General sociopolitical beliefs:  Identification:  - "they are shocktroops..."  - "they have many branches"  (Beliefs about terrorist organizations and rogue states).  Lacking event knowledge : "Which one was responsible?"</p>

<p>6. But when we do, there should be no talk of bringing these people to "swift justice," as Karen Hughes dismayingly promised mid-afternoon yesterday. An open act of war demands a military response, not a judicial one.</p>	<p>Personal opinion: "We should not..."          General ideological (militarist) norm:          "Act of war demands military response"</p>
<p>7. Military response against whom? It is absurd to make war on the individuals who send these people. The terrorists cannot exist in a vacuum. They need a territorial base of sovereign protection. For 30 years we have avoided this truth. If bin Laden was behind this, then Afghanistan is our enemy. <i>Any</i> country that harbors and protects him is our enemy. We must carry <i>their</i> war to them.</p>	<p>Presupposition: War is on states, not individuals.          General knowledge about terrorism          Opinion on our previous acts          Inferences:          -"Afghanistan is our enemy"          -"All states who protect terrorists are our enemy"</p>
<p>8. We should seriously consider a congressional declaration of war. That convention seems quaint, unused since World War 11. But there are two virtues to declaring war: It announces our seriousness both to our people and to the enemy, and it gives us certain rights as belligerents (of blockade, for example).</p>	<p>Personal opinion on course of action:          - declare war          Disclaimer (Apparent Concession)          - this may seem strange...          Military knowledge: advantages of declaring war.</p>
<p>9. The "long peace" is over. We sought this war no more than we sought war with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan or Cold War with the Soviet Union. But when war was pressed upon the greatest generation, it rose to the challenge. The question is: Will we?</p>	<p>Belief about current situation.          Historical knowledge, Negation: "We sought...no more..."          Belief/Doubts about whether our generation will similarly defend itself.</p>

Examining these few observations somewhat closer, we are again struck by the many types of beliefs involved here, ranging from the general, social, political and cultural, for instance about what is Islam, and how it differs from 'radical' Islam, about 'fanatics' and rogue states. We also find several presuppositions of historical knowledge, as when the author refers to what the USA has (not) done in previous occasions. These more general, socially shared forms of beliefs are presented as basis and background on more personal beliefs, such as the author's opinion that war should be declared, the main topic of this Op-Ed piece.

Interesting for our discussion is the explicit formulation of knowledge and knowledge criteria, as in paragraph 4. Krauthammer casually admits that he does not know who the authors are of the attack, but stresses that we have at least *some* knowledge (where the authors come from), using at least some criteria, for instance about their (Muslim) identity. Again we see here that knowledge may be gradual and vague.

Plainly in the area of ideological opinion are of course the statements (again in paragraph 1) about 'our' sensibilities and that the USA is the "greatest", as well as the suggested presuppositions that we never pronounced the name of the enemy, a presupposition that seems odd when one knows how widely the dominant politicians and the media have been against Islam, and especially against radical Islam.

The disclaimer in paragraph (2) presupposes that the writer knows that it is not politically correct to blame all Muslims, and that therefore we should distinguish between the good and the bad ones among *Them*, a familiar move of negative other-presentation aimed to avoid face loss (as being racist).

In paragraph 3, the author uses the well-known discursive tactic of speaking by the mouth of the enemy, so as to be able to make inferences about what the enemy believes (that the US corrupts youth, etc.). This also produces the rhetorical effect of ridiculing the Other's opinions or words.

Finally, we find expressions of general norms and values controlled by ideological systems, for instance that one should respond

militarily to any attack. It is this general implication that is being used as the justification of the personal opinion about the current situation — that the US should declare war — and that hence forms part of the militaristic ideology espoused by Krauthammer and other Washington lawks' in politics and the media.

Theoretically most interesting is that there is a vast area of social cognition where the distinctions between specific knowledge and personal opinion, between general knowledge and ideology, are vague or contextually relative — to the author, or to his group.

Summarizing the types of knowledge in this editorial, we find the following instances:

- a. Personal mental event models (personal definitions of the situation): "This is war", "...the greatest massacre in American history...", "shut down the greatest power on the globe..."
- b. Personal opinions: "(Colin Powell's reaction) This is exactly wrong", "This is a formidable enemy".
- c. Specific event knowledge: "...as Karen Hughes ...declared yesterday".
- d. Contextual knowledge: "as Karen Hughes...mid-afternoon yesterday".
- e. General event knowledge: "We have in the past responded...", "People willing to kill...are not cowards".
- f. Knowledge about the future (predictions): "Until we declare war in return..."
- g. Social (group) knowledge: "(The enemy) Its name is radical Islam", "Who else trains cadres of fanatical suicide murderers...", "We know what movement it comes from".
- h. Social attitudes (general beliefs): "You bring criminals to justice; you rain destruction on combatants," "We should seriously consider a congressional declaration of war".
- i. Historical event knowledge: "Franklin Roosevelt...", "Pearl Harbor...", "...Nazi Germany..."
- j. Implicit sociocultural knowledge (general common ground): We live in the post-Cold War era. Islam is a religion. United States is a country, etc. etc.

- k. Ideologies: "(The post cold-war era) It will henceforth be known as the age of terrorism". "An open act of war demands a military response", "Any country that... is our enemy".

As also this summary shows, it is difficult, and sometimes arbitrary to make distinctions between one type of knowledge or opinion and another. Thus, for Krauthammer, that is, in his mental model, the terrorist attack is an act of war, and for him this may be a fact, whereas for others this may be a personal opinion. For him the 9/11 attacks may be the greatest massacre in American history, whereas the native peoples of North America might have another conception of that, and hence declare Krauthammer's "facts" to be ethnocentric opinions. We also have seen that not only the explicit opinions of the author (e.g., about Powell, or that war should be declared) but also the very facts as defined by him are controlled by underlying attitudes and ideologies, for instance about radical Islam, terrorists, etc.

### **Concluding remarks**

An explicit theory of discourse needs an explicit theory of knowledge. Instead of the traditional, epistemological account of knowledge in terms of justified true beliefs', or the current cognitive approaches to a vague 'knowledge of the world', we need a complex, multidisciplinary theory of knowledge in terms of various types of beliefs shared by epistemic communities. And the theory of the knowledge-discourse interface needs to feature a K-device as part of context models that regulate the subtle conditions under which these various kinds of knowledge are activated, used, expressed or presupposed.

We have only begun to understand the bare essentials of such a multidisciplinary account of knowledge and its role in discourse. Yet, such a theory is also necessary in order to be able to develop an explicit theory of ideology and its relations to discourse. We have assumed that whereas ideologies may be the foundation of the shared social cognitions, e.g., the attitudes, of a group, and hence may also

influence typical group beliefs that are 'knowledge' for such groups, we still need to postulate pre-ideological knowledge that each ideological group needs to share with other groups in the same culture. In other words, the basis of a culture is general, shared, common-sense knowledge that allows mutual understanding, interaction and discourse, in the first place. Ideologies, as well as ideological attitudes and 'knowledge' of a group, are also based on such more general common sense knowledge.

The analysis of a specific example, an Op-Ed article in the *Washington Post* by Charles Krauthammer on the events of September 11, showed how complex the interface between knowledge and ideology, and their expression in discourse may be. The example not only showed many types of knowledge, but also that the boundaries between knowledge and ideologies are not sharp, and that what is knowledge (facts) for the author are mere beliefs, or ideological opinions, for others.

We have also seen that at many points also the *structures* and *strategies* of the discourse are closely monitored by the personal and social representations distinguished above, for instance in deictic expressions, biased lexical items, presupposed or (correctly or falsely) reminded clauses, and especially in the structures of argument. Indeed, many of the implicit propositions of the argumentation are derived from general group knowledge that is ideologically based or from ideologically grounded personal mental models of events. Since as we have seen there are many types of such knowledge, also the inferences and the textual structures based on them may be different.

More generally we may conclude that although we do have some theoretical instruments to understand how knowledge and ideology are related and how they influence discourse production and comprehension, the details of the mental and social processes involved are still largely obscure. We have assumed that much of the on-line control of knowledge in discourse is carried out by the knowledge device of context models that ongoingly presuppose and keep track of what beliefs participants share or not.

We may also assume that the same thing is true for the ideological control of the text, in the sense that the contextually represented self-knowledge of the author about her or his (current) ideological identity and alignment, will influence many of the appraisal' properties of the text, from local intonation and lexical selection to global topic selection and general argument structure.

How exactly context models (de)activate or represent current relevant knowledge and ideologies (or fragments thereof), and how exactly they bring them to bear in online text production and understanding, is still largely unknown, and an important task for future work on discourse, knowledge and ideology. Indeed, we may not even have formulated all the relevant questions, let alone that we have all the answers.

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## **Appendix**

### **To War, Not to Court**

*by Charles Krauthammer*

Wednesday, September 12, 2001; Page A29

This is not crime. This is war. One of the reasons there are terrorists out there capable and audacious enough to carry out the deadliest attack on the United States in its history is that, while they have declared war on us, we have in the past responded (with the exception of a few useless cruise missile attacks on empty tents in the desert) by issuing subpoenas.

Secretary of State Colin Powell's first reaction to the day of infamy was to pledge to "bring those responsible to justice." This is exactly wrong. Franklin Roosevelt did not respond to Pearl Harbor by pledging to bring the commander of Japanese naval aviation to justice. He pledged to bring Japan to its knees.

You bring criminals to justice; you rain destruction on combatants. This is a fundamental distinction that can no longer be avoided. The bombings of Sept. 11, 2001, must mark a turning point. War was long ago declared on us. Until we declare war in return, we will have thousands of more innocent victims.

We no longer have to search for a name for the post-Cold War era. It will henceforth be known as the age of terrorism. Organized terror has shown what it can do: execute the single greatest massacre in American history, shut down the greatest power on the globe and send its leaders into underground shelters. All this, without even resorting to chemical, biological or nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

This is a formidable enemy. To dismiss it as a bunch of cowards perpetrating senseless acts of violence is complacent nonsense. People willing to kill thousands of innocents while they kill themselves are not cowards. They are deadly, vicious warriors and need to be treated as such. Nor are their acts of violence senseless. They have a very specific aim: to avenge alleged historical wrongs and to bring the great American satan to its knees.

Nor is the enemy faceless or mysterious. We do not know for sure who gave the final order but we know what movement it comes from. The enemy has identified itself in public and openly. Our delicate sensibilities have prevented us from pronouncing its name.

Its name is radical Islam. Not Islam as practiced peacefully by millions of the faithful around the world. But a specific fringe political movement, dedicated to imposing its fanatical ideology on its own societies and destroying the society of its enemies, the greatest of which is the United States.

Israel, too, is an affront to radical Islam, and thus of course must be eradicated. But it is the smallest of fish. The heart of the beast -- with its military in Saudi Arabia,

Kuwait, Turkey and the Persian Gulf; with a culture that "corrupts" Islamic youth; with an economy and technology that dominate the world — is the United States. That is why we were struck so savagely.

How do we know? Who else trains cadres of fanatical suicide murderers who go to their deaths joyfully? And the average terrorist does not coordinate four hijackings within one hour. Nor fly a plane into the tiny silhouette of a single building. For that you need skilled pilots seeking martyrdom. That is not a large pool to draw from.

These are the shock troops of the enemy. And the enemy has many branches. Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Israel, the Osama bin Laden organization headquartered in Afghanistan, and various Arab "liberation fronts" based in Damascus. And then there are the governments: Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya among them. Which one was responsible? We will find out soon enough.

But when we do, there should be no talk of bringing these people to "swift justice," as Karen Hughes dismayingly promised mid-afternoon yesterday. An open act of war demands a military response, not a judicial one.

Military response against whom? It is absurd to make war on the individuals who send these people. The terrorist cannot exist in a vacuum. They need a territorial base of sovereign protection. For 30 years we have avoided this truth. If bin Laden was behind this, then Afghanistan is our enemy. *Any* country that harbors and protects him is our enemy. We must carry *their* war to them.

We should seriously consider a congressional declaration of war. That convention seems quaint, unused since World War II. But there are two virtues to declaring war: It announces our seriousness both to our people and to the enemy, and it gives us certain rights as belligerents (of blockade, for example).

The "long peace" is over. We sought this war no more than we sought war with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan or Cold War with the Soviet Union. But when war was pressed upon the greatest generation, it rose to the challenge. The question is: Will we?