

No terrorists on Newsround

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2007/10/01/no-terrorists-on-newsround/

2007-10-1

The BBC children's news programme Newsround has come under [attack](#) from former Spymaster and now Tory politician, Dame Pauline [Neville Jones](#). On their website [Newsround](#) were reluctant to use the word 'terrorist' to describe Al Qeada. They also implied that the attack on New York in 2001 was motivated by US foreign policy in the Middle East. I have some sympathy with Dame Pauline but it is obvious that she is making political hay during the conference season.

The [Newsround](#) website does a good job of explaining complex issues such as Palestine and Israel. It is right to link US actions in places like Iraq with political violence elsewhere. All journalists should think long and hard before using the word 'terrorist'. You know the arguments. Mandela was described as a terrorist at one point in his career, by Tory politicians. But as I said in a discussion about this on Radio 5 last night, Al Qeada and the attack on the Twin Towers was not a military action or part of a liberation struggle. It was the deliberate targetting of civilians in a random way. If that isn't terrorism then I don't know what is. But then, as one of the callers in to the Radio 5 phone-in said, "I don't know who Charlie Beckett is but he's totally out of touch with reality."

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