

Throwback
Thursday

The Daily Aztec Opinion section is inaugurating a new weekly segment: Throwback Thursday. Every week, it'll explore how it covered 24 previous presidential elections. We start our series with the 1960 elections, where Democratic Senator John F. Kennedy faced off against Republican Vice-President Richard Nixon. During this election, The Daily Aztec chose to not endorse a candidate. It explained its decision in an editorial on Nov. 4, 1960. **'Aztec' Chooses Independent Path**

The newspaper espoused this nonpartisan stance, running a competing editorial on the same issue from Raoul Lowery, a representative from the Young Republicans, and Jeff Fishel, President of San Diego State's Democratic Club.

U.S. Highest Nation, U.S. Demise Shows Says GOP Member In National Defense

The newspaper also addressed the long-standing idea that the two candidates were actually quite similar. In a multi-page editorial history professor Dr. Nelson Norman, detailed the differences between Republicans and Democrats in everything from philosophy of government to agriculture.

Tweedledee-Tweedledum Party Theory Discounted

Most notably, The Daily Aztec ran an article on Edward "Ted" Kennedy's visit to the school in support of his older brother. A survey conducted by the newspaper among students indicated overwhelming support for Nixon — 62 percent against Kennedy's 37 percent. According to the article, "one man polled said he majored in girls and would vote for Charlie Brown for President."

U.S. Needs Kennedy, Young Brother Says, Nixon Is Choice In Campaign Here In Aztec Survey

Four days later, Kennedy defeated Nixon by a margin of 0.16 percent in the popular vote.

White terrorists are the real threat

Terrorism is commonly defined as "the use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims." It's a popular definition with no mention of race, culture or skin color. So why have we created a connotation that makes people uneasy on airplanes if the passenger next to them is sporting a turban or a dark, fluffy beard?

The term "terrorist" was not coined when 9/11 happened. The American idea of how a terrorist is supposed to look and who they're supposed to hate, has become completely skewed since the twin towers fell 11 years ago.

There is a bigger threat to average citizens than stereotypical foreign terrorists ... and that threat is likely right in your backyard.

"In the American imagination, there is a one-dimensional portrait of terrorism — one that adorns turbans, beards and brown skin," Khaled A. Beydoun said in an editorial for Al Jazeera. "While Muslim Americans are policed to the teeth, white supremacist groups have operated with relative freedom and impunity."

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization that tracks and reports hate and extremist groups throughout the country, there are 13 hate groups in San Diego County alone, four of which are white supremacist-oriented groups, and none of which are affiliated with the Taliban or al-Qaida.

White supremacist groups are terrorist organizations. In fact, neo-Nazi hate groups and skinheads are so much more prevalent that they actually pose a larger threat to homeland security than any of the groups alleged to have committed the attacks on our nation's capital.

In August, gunman Wade Michael Page opened fire in a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wis., killing six people. Page was shot in the abdomen by police, but died when he shot himself in the head. Police

ruled it a suicide. Page reportedly had ties to a neo-Nazi group called the Hammerskin Nation. This hate group has been active for 25 years and lives by a mission statement called "The 14 Words," which read: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." The basis of the Hammerskin belief is that all other races are subordinate to the white race, which will become extinct if not protected by whatever means necessary.

Mark Pitcavage, fact-finding director of the Anti-Defamation League, told PBS NewsHour, "Hammerskins are one of the largest and oldest hard-core racist skinhead groups in the United States. They started in Texas in the mid-to-late 1980s and spread out from there."

Today, in the U.S. there are five main submovements of white supremacist groups. They consist of the neo-Nazis, traditional white supremacists (aka trads), racist prison gangs, Christian Identity (an anti-Semitic religious sect) and skinheads. This classification does not count smaller, lesser-known racist groups such as the Peckerwoods.

So, while Americans have terrorism radars set to fear the dark-skinned foreigner, homegrown terrorists are staying off the grid and practically getting away with murder — sometimes literally.

"White supremacy is the true 'homegrown' terrorism, dating back to the 18th century in the United States," Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite of The Washington Post said. "White supremacy is the greatest danger we as Americans face as a source of domestic terrorism, and one of the least recognized."

Two months before the attack on the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, the Southern Poverty Law Center

compiled a special training video outlining the threat white supremacist groups pose in their own communities. The video was issued to tens of thousands of law enforcement officers, but law enforcement agencies didn't urge their officers to watch the video until the day after Page gunned down the temple.

Sadly, the U.S. is a country that likes to focus on finding people to blame after tragedies and certainly doesn't want to blame itself. The attack on the World Trade Center was a tragedy, but so were the

murders at the Sikh temple, yet we have turned a blind eye to that incident. I think it's because we cannot accept having to face reality: Not all bad things are done by foreigners.

White supremacy and other groups driven by hate and superiority are just as dangerous, if not more so, to our communities and our country. So when using the term "terrorist," remember: it's not just the guys who look different. It could just as well be your white, middle-class neighbor.

Heather Rushall
Staff Writer

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