

CIA Director Gives 5 Threats to Our Future

Let's start with the good news: The Independence Day weekend ended without a terror attack in the U.S. There was a day when such an announcement would not be news at all. But we live in a different world than we have ever seen before.

Over the weekend, suicide attackers launched three strikes in Saudi Arabia. Families are searching for loved ones after a suicide bomb truck killed more than 200 in Baghdad. As Ramadan closes today, recent jihadist attacks have killed scores of people in Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen and Bangladesh. Closer to home, Americans were charged or indicted last week in three Islamic terror cases.

CIA Director John Brennan spoke recently to the Council on Foreign Relations. He told the Council that he had never witnessed a time with "such a daunting array of challenges to our nation's security."

The director cited uncertainty in Europe following Brexit, escalating terror threats, and global instability that has displaced 65 million people, the highest figure ever recorded. Cybersecurity and risks from evolving biotechnology rounded out his list of threats we face.

While the challenges of our day are unprecedented, the fact that we face challenges is not. On this day in 1776, America's future was uncertain, to say the least. We had declared our independence from the world's greatest superpower and now faced the British Empire's wrath. Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, 12 fought in battle, five were captured and imprisoned, 17 lost property to British raids, and five lost their fortunes. All risked their lives for the sake of their country and the cause of freedom.

Challenges reveal character. C. S. Lewis noted that “courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.” The reason we can be courageous in every circumstance is that our Lord offers “the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe” (Eph. 1:19). Wherever we are, He has been. Whatever we feel, He has faced. And more.

Elie Wiesel died over the weekend at the age of 87. The Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner lost his entire family in the Nazi concentration camps. His first memoir was titled *Night*, one of the most powerfully moving books I have ever read.

In it he tells the story of a young boy who was convicted of sabotage and sentenced to die. The prisoners were made to watch as he was hung. Wiesel describes what happened: “For more than half an hour he stayed there, struggling between life and death, dying in slow agony under our eyes. And we had to look him full in the face. He was still alive when I passed in front of him. His tongue was still red, his eyes were not yet glazed. Behind me, I heard [a] man asking: ‘Where is God now?’ And I heard a voice within me answer him: ‘Where is He? Here He is—He is hanging here on this gallows.’”

Was the Jewish writer was more right than he knew?