

Theories on the Efficacy of Terrorism

by
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INTRODUCTION

It would be a very useful task to detail for each alleged purpose or function the actual mechanism of operation of the terror process leading to the supposed result. To our knowledge this has never been attempted.¹

The task is to explain why terrorism works. If it did not produce intended results — at least some of the time — then it would cease to be a political strategy. Terrorism without efficacy would then only be an expression of some destructive pathology.

Terrorism is here defined as the threat of or use of illegal violence to weaken a hated political authority.² The political authority can be a government, party, minority, class, race, religion, region, or any combination of the above. By definition, terrorism works when the target of terrorism acts in such a manner that the target either loses public support for its political position or lessens its own political capabilities. Terrorists cannot weaken the hated political authority by their own actions.

Terrorism is a strategy of the weak.³ If those wanting to weaken a hated political authority were strong, they would not use terrorism as their main strategy because successful terrorism depends entirely upon the actions of the target. The target, in effect, has control of the situation. Therefore, if those wanting to weaken a hated political authority are strong, they *will use strategies for which the outcome is more within their own control*. The outcomes of coups, revolutions, and guerrilla wars are in some measure in the hands of plotters, revolutionaries and guerrillas. Such is not the case with terrorists. Theoretically, every terrorist action can be defeated by the target of terror.⁴

If successful terrorism depends on the target's action, then to explain successful terrorism one should study the behavior of the target and not the behavior of the terrorists. The key question, therefore, is why does a target act in such a way as to weaken itself and thereby make terrorism efficacious?

To attempt to answer this question, one must examine what the terrorists want the target to do to weaken itself and then proceed to analyze why the target responds that way. This paper presents five responses that targets can take that will weaken their political authority:⁵ (1) over-reaction; (2) power deflation; (3) failed repression of moderates; (4) appeasement of moderates; and (5) massive intimidation. For each response, a hypothesis will be offered explaining why the target responds in such a way as to weaken itself. Three key variables seemingly affect each of the five responses, namely: (1) the target's perception of self; (2) the target's perception of the terrorists; and (3) the relative capabilities of both self and terrorists.

The value of this exploratory study is twofold. On the one hand, the findings will help terrorists to be more successful. If terrorists know how a target is predisposed to respond, they they can tailor their terrorism to manipulate the target's perception coercing the target into a response which will weaken it. Knowledge is a basis of power. This knowledge can, on the other hand, also be used by the targets of terrorism to thwart terrorism. If a target understands the perceptions which will lead to the response coinciding with the purpose of the terrorists, then the target can alter its perceptions and respond in a different way. By doing so, the target "wins" because the terrorists have utterly failed to elicit the desired response. The behavior of the terrorists will be seen as irrational violence or a hollow threat and they will have been weakened themselves. The only way to make terrorists "lose" is to understand when, how, and why terrorism works.

THE THEORY OF OVER-REACTION

Over-reaction by a target, whether subject to regime or insurgent terrorism, is a familiar pattern of behavior. The loss of public support is inevitable.

The target's indiscriminate use of force injures the innocent who believe that the injury is unjustified and, whether overtly or not, condemn the target. This condemnation makes the injured innocent receptive to recruitment by the terrorists. In January 1984, the Amal in Lebanon used terrorism to provoke the Christians into shelling Shiite villages in order to politicize the Shiite population further, to delegitimize the Christian regime, and to recruit fighters.

Even those not directly injured will see the target's over-reaction as violating the legitimate rules of politics. The use of force on others will be seen as a threat to oneself. As Carlos Marighela wrote, in over-reacting the target has transformed "a country's political situation to a military one."⁶ The denial of civil rights without cause, another over-reaction, will be interpreted as protecting the target and not the people,⁷ and if the target over-reacts with ostentatious protective measures, the political stature of and the threat from the terrorists is magnified. This sets the stage for a drama where the protective measures become not an effective deterrent, but a challenge for the terrorists to overcome. Symbolically, overcoming even a single challenge confers great prestige.⁸ For instance, Qaddafi's defiance of the U.S. and the Sixth Fleet off the Libyan coast in January and April 1986 made him a folk hero to many Arabs and made the Palestinian cause more salient. If the target can be made to over-react by bringing a repugnant third party into the struggle, then terrorists can reap the public's disaffection. When provoked by the initial insurgent violence encouraged by Tanzania, Idi Amin did not help his legitimacy by bringing in Libyans and Palestinians to form his praetorian guard. Amin was a target who over-reacted. In the eyes of the public, these kinds of over-reactions make the target the enemy and, by contrast, make the terrorists friends.⁹

Over-reactions can also result in a lessening of the target's capabilities. Counter-terrorism can be very expensive in terms of money, attention, equipment, and labor. Over-reaction usually results in even greater costs, possibly turning a target away from the political, economic, and social activities that could produce more popular support.

The reason for a target's over-reaction may be found in the following hypothesis:

When a target perceives itself to be righteous, the terrorists to be the epitome of evil, and the relative capability in terms of force as overwhelmingly favoring itself, then a target is likely to over-react.

The perception of oneself as 'good' and the terrorists as 'evil' may prompt great efforts to crush the terrorists. Stereotyping and dehumanizing an enemy, as Lifton and other psychologists have postulated, permits 'good' to produce a massive counterforce to combat 'evil'.¹⁰ The phrase "the only good gook, is a dead gook," was often heard among American GIs in Vietnam. Such a perception of the enemy sanctioned free-fire zones, the burning of villages, and worse. The Soviets in Afghanistan likewise see their contest as being one between good and evil. The "progressive" and "popular" forces confront those labeled "reactionary," "feudal" and "agents of American imperialism," and thus all-out use of force can be justified. Note, too, how Israelis and Palestinians perceive each other, producing a history of constant over-reaction by both parties.

While self-righteousness and a challenge by the forces of evil provide a motive for indiscriminate strikes at those who dare to use violence against 'good,' it is the perception of great relative capability which permits the target confidently to order the massive use of force. This may seem obvious when the regime is the target, less so when insurgents or potential insurgents are the target. Regimes usually have an overwhelming advantage in force and terrorism, it must be remembered, is the strategy of the weak. Therefore, when insurgents become the target, regime terrorism indicates the relative weakness of the regime. The regime then uses terrorism to provoke the opposition to over-react, pushing the opposition to use its robust capabilities thus reducing its popular support or depleting its force capabilities. For example, growing international support in the 1970s has given the PLO a feeling of great and growing power.¹¹ In response, Israel was able to provoke mainline PLO groups to engage in indiscriminate action in order to discredit the Palestinian cause and to expose PLO forces to "justified" retaliation. Certainly, over-reaction is made more likely when the target sees itself as powerful and able to inflict a lesson upon an unworthy foe.

Another illustration of this point appears in Benedict J. Kerkvliet's excellent study of the Huk rebellion in the Philippines. During the early stages of the rebellion in the 1930s the peasants protested, raided granaries of landlords, and began to organize.

Peasants ... viewed their movement in terms of mutual protection against landlords and government officials.

When they protested alone or in small numbers, peasants were liable to be evicted, be arrested, or suffer other reprisals; when they acted in large numbers, they were less vulnerable.¹²

At this stage the peasants did not want the landlords and government officials to over-react for the peasants themselves would be the victims. However, the situation illustrates that a vast power imbalance induces over-reactions.

The Huk case also illustrates that the perception of good versus evil provides a basis for over-reaction. "A common belief among local and national government officials," Kerkvliet relates, "was that the peasant movement was subversive, communistic, and manipulated by a few clever leaders."¹³ Orders were given more than once to shoot peasants during strikes and to demolish their houses. These over-reactions, though not provoked by a conscious peasant strategy at this point, did result in a loss of political support for government authorities, a quickening of peasant mobilization, and weakening of the legitimacy of the Philippine Constabulary.

THEORY OF POWER DEFLATION

Arguably, a target that is incapable of responding to terrorism will lose public support and lessen its capabilities and confidence to thwart terrorism in the future. The inability of a target to respond is manifested a number of ways. If the target, usually a regime though sometimes an insurgent group, cannot protect its people, then it will lose legitimacy. The same result occurs when terrorists are allowed to choose the timing and the victims of their strikes without hindrance and then successfully collect ransom, release prisoners, have manifestos read by or printed in the media, destroy symbols, and/or injure or kill victims. If they can completely avoid retaliation, particularly if the target is obviously seeking retaliation, the success of the terrorists is even greater and made plain for all to see. What Thornton calls "disorientation" is clearly seen in the behavior of the target. It is bad theatre for the target,¹⁴ and the terrorists, supposedly weak, seem to be in control.

The British had great difficulty in dealing with the Sons of Liberty who perpetrated the Boston Tea Party in the early stages of the American Revolution. The same target exhibited disorientation when faced with the always symbolic and sometimes brutal attacks by the Irgun Zvai Leumi in Palestine. Another example occurred in a spectacular terrorist act in 1978 in Nicaragua. Eden Pastora and a handful of Sandinista fighters seized the National Legislative Palace in Managua, kidnapping almost the entire congress. President Somoza believed he had no choice but to fulfil Pastora's demands. With released prisoners, Pastora and his men made a triumphant exit through the streets to the airport and safe departure. Each of these are examples of successful insurgent terrorism against target regimes. Examples also exist of the reverse situation. Che Guevara, for instance, found himself unable to shake the role of the 'hunted' as the Bolivian military, assisted by the CIA, acted as the

hunter. As the target of regime terror — Bolivian authorities violated the rules of warfare including the murder of Che himself — Che found that he was incapable of protecting his people or fulfilling his task of organizing a revolution.

Since the function of political authorities centers on protecting people and controlling the policy-making process, those authorities who fail in these tasks lose their legitimacy as authorities. The more failures, the more their power deflates.

What makes targets of terrorism incapable of dealing with the terrorists is a question which may be addressed by the following hypothesis:

When a target perceives itself doing its duty while both harassed by its enemies and lacking the public support it thinks it deserves; perceives the terrorists as a clever, formidable foe with some logic, legitimacy, or justice on its side; and perceives the relative capability in terms of force as generally favorable overall to itself but in this particular case weakened by a lack of intelligence or viable police/military options, then a target will likely be unable to act against the terrorists.

Paul Wilkinson sees terrorism as “a strategy most suited to national liberation struggles against foreign rulers used by relatively small conspiratorial movements lacking any power base.”¹⁵ In these cases the target, often relying on civilian and military bureaucrats, sees itself doing a dirty, difficult job without the public support it merits. This alone, makes definite policy difficult to formulate. Bold policy may out-pace fragile public support by incurring huge costs, such as the killing of innocent bystanders. Combine this debilitating plight of the target with a perception that the terrorists are a rather clever, resourceful lot who firmly believe in their cause and tactics, and serious difficulties arise for the target. A further reason for caution exists. The terrorists may well be serious, dedicated fighters who will skillfully match the target’s action with spectacular reaction. To act is to invite embarrassment and danger. Reprisals would be swift and to over-react may further enshrine the terrorists’ cause. Finally, the terrorists create situations where options for action all have greater costs than benefits to the target. The first difficulty may be identifying and finding the terrorists. Usually the intelligence service is hampered by a public who gives the terrorists sanctuary and anonymity. This allows the terrorists to surprise the target, striking where and when the target is the least prepared to respond and where the terrorists enjoy multiple options not available to the target.

These points are illustrated by the British experience in Palestine. Menachem Begin, in his book *The Revolt*, gives one of the most forceful legitimizations for terrorism:¹⁶ Irgun violence would force the British to confront the plight of the Jews, unite the Jews in revolt, provoking Arab violence in order to impose substantial costs upon the British for social control, and so disorient British policy in Palestine that Britain would quit the scene. By February 1947, the British found Palestine “increasingly out of control,” with Arabs and Jews polarized and themselves

without the power either to resolve the dispute or to partition the land.¹⁷ Britain had run out of options, save one: it turned the problem over to the United Nations.

THE THEORY OF FAILED REPRESSION OF MODERATES

Frequently, the terrorists' target may choose to attack not only the terrorists but the moderate, non-violent opposition as well. If the target is a regime, it can ban political parties, institute censorship, increase surveillance, arrest and incarcerate protesters, and even kill moderates as examples of the costs of opposition. If the target is an insurgent group, it can kidnap, bomb, and assassinate the moderates both in the regime and in the non-violent opposition to the regime. The repression does not paralyze the moderates if insufficient or inefficient force is used; instead of moving away from the terrorists, the moderates do the opposite. They conclude that moderation is untenable and to protect themselves from the target they go to the side of the original terrorists, usually seen as the lesser of two evils. The target has converted mild opposition into militant opposition and weakened itself by absorbing the physical and mental costs of repression.

The Shah of Iran, for example, increasingly repressed moderates in the 1970s. It did not work. One reason, among many, for its failure was the Shah's vacillation in carrying through with either reforms or repression. At least in part, this can be attributed to U.S. human rights opposition, to the Shah's personal weakness, and to an inept SAVAK intelligence service. Vacillation made the Shah appear weak and allowed a large coalition to form against him. Eventually the bazaar, the mosque, the modern business sector, and the intellectuals united in militance against the monarchy with the small existing terrorist groups.

Repressing moderates had actually worked for the Shah on earlier occasions. As Barry Rubin described it:

The shah must have remembered his success in riding out the 1962-63 upheaval over the White Revolution and, earlier, in co-opting opposition elements after Mossadegh's fall. On these two occasions, he had cracked down hard and then proceeded to separate moderates from radicals, winning over some of the former, eliminating the latter. That strategy would fail this time, first because the charismatic Khomeini was able to keep the moderates in line and second because the fence sitters gradually became convinced that the shah would fall. On the earlier occasions, the hopelessness of dissent had led the protesters to surrender. This time, the hopelessness of the shah's position caused those in the middle to cast their lot with the revolution.¹⁸

Contemporaneously, the same pattern occurred in Nicaragua with Anastasio Somoza. When the Chamber of Commerce and the Catholic Church, suffering repression, aligned with the FSLN, it was apparent that Somoza's legitimacy had all but vanished.

Examples of insurgent targets repressing moderates include the Tupamaros in Uruguay. Although they succeeded in militarizing the regime after a number of successful power deflation operations, the Tupamaros' own response to regime terror disaffected moderates. Their excesses of violence brought the non-violent, moderate opposition and the military into a strange arrangement that eventually resulted in the restoration of democracy. The Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) of Peru, target of the counter-terrorism of the Guardia Civil, characteristically repressed the moderate peasant opposition and thereby widened support for the regime. A very unusual case involved the Black Panther Party in the United States. Targeted by the FBI and local police authorities, Black Panther violence and militant rhetoric so disaffected moderate blacks that the Panthers found themselves increasingly isolated. In 1971 the Black Panthers disavowed violence, in effect recognizing that repressing moderates divided and weakened the Panthers and the black movement.

Asking why targets attempt to repress moderates, weakening themselves and strengthening the terrorists or counter-terrorists leads one to a third hypothesis:

When the target perceives itself to be absolutely besieged to the point where it must act to preserve its authority; perceives the terrorists or counter-terrorists as threatening all that the target holds dear — with the main source of the threat the duping of moderate elements to ally with the extremist aims of the terrorists; and perceives the relative capability as favorable in terms of force but on the brink of a radical reversal if the moderates are allowed to combine with the terrorists; then the target is likely to repress moderates in order to prevent this coalition.

Repressing moderates is an eleventh hour gamble to preserve authority. The target believes that instituting reforms or buying off the opposition will not suffice. Repression is an act of desperation, and as such, has a high probability of failure. However, at this point there may seem to be no other option. The terrorists or counter-terrorists are on the brink of victory. They have duped the moderates.

Again, the Iranian case can be used to illustrate this point. According to Rubin, in mid-1978 the Shah viewed the protesters as people "who are easily instigated. They hear a few words and immediately they are electrified and stop thinking."¹⁹ Frustrated that neither reforms nor mild repression seemed to work, and bolstered by Zbigniew Brzezinski's personal assurances of U.S. support, the Shah approved a full-scale assault on the moderate opposition. On September 8, 1978, "Black Friday," the military massacred about 1,000 protesters in Tehran's central Jaleh Square. The moderate opposition, led by Shariat-Madari, declared it would no longer cooperate with the reformist officials of the Shah's regime. A revolutionary situation crystallized.²⁰

Whereas target over-reaction may be seen as an act of omnipotence and self-confidence, repressing moderates stems from frustration, anger, and anxiety. These emotions lead to irrational and desperate actions.

THEORY OF APPEASING MODERATES

Vigorous political reforms, which appease moderates, alienate the avid supporters of the old order. These supporters can move into the camp of the irreconcilable opposition. For example, when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau made major reforms on behalf of French Canadians on the issues of language and political appointments, a substantial number of English-speaking Canadians considered these actions as nothing more than a dastardly appeasement of the Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ). Concessions seemed to be a reward for planting bombs and blowing up Canadians. Similarly, allowing the unionization of workers and collective bargaining in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was viewed by doctrinaire capitalists in many industrialized countries as surrendering to the perpetrators of strikes and labor violence.

Reforms also result in political devolution that weakens the old order as power is given up or diffused through sharing it with former opposition elements. Granting self-rule or sovereignty to province or colony, enfranchising the lower class, granting minority rights, establishing welfare programs, and instituting a functioning legislature all reduce the political power of the *ancien regime*. How different the power of the current Spanish government is from that under the rule of Franco; how much hope is placed upon the Anglo-Irish Agreement on Northern Ireland as the start of altering its one-sided political authority? The history of the growth of democracy is the history of reforms induced by violence and the threat of more violence.

There can be valid reasons for appeasing moderates by the use of reforms:

When a target perceives itself as a legitimate political authority but one which has made mistakes in the past; perceives the terrorists as capitalizing on these mistakes and attracting growing popular support for radical solutions that go far beyond remedying past mistakes; and perceives the relative capability as overwhelmingly favorable to itself but liable to deteriorate the longer the struggle continues; then targets are likely to appease moderates.

The target that appeases moderates is usually a regime, although, as the Black Panther case illustrates, insurgents can appease a moderate opposition through reforms as well.

The target institutes reforms partly because it is just, but more particularly because reforms co-opt the potential or actual mass base of the terrorists. Reforms remove the injustices that stimulated the terrorism in the first place. Reforms remove the cause of terrorism but, as Walter

Laqueur points out, this does not end terrorism.²¹ What it may accomplish is the isolation of the radicals and habitual terrorists from the mass of the people who dislike the risk of disorder and violence, especially if such must be borne for no apparent cause. Isolated and desperate, the terrorist leaders can be hunted down, tried, convicted and incarcerated. They lose the sanctuary provided by the moderates and perhaps their conviction that they represent the true interests of the masses.

Perhaps to refer to this process of reform as 'successful terrorism' is to mislabel it. Yet the hated political authority is weakened in line with the professed aims of the terrorists. Terrorism has worked even when the terrorists were dead, in jail, or struggling to stay alive in basements or in the mountains.

Historians may well recognize the skill and determination of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in defusing the terrorism engaged in on behalf of French Canadians. Eventually his policies defused separatism as well. Trudeau was fully aware of the injustices inflicted upon French Canadians, arguing that:

In the matter of education as well as political rights, the safeguards so dear to French Canadians were nearly always disregarded throughout the country, so that they came to believe themselves secure only in Quebec. Worse still, in those areas not specifically covered by the constitution, the English-speaking majority used its size and wealth to impose a set of social rules humiliating to French Canadians.²²

The Prime Minister instituted a classic two-pronged attack on militant separatism. The passage of the Official Languages Act, introduced in October 1968, allowed Canadians to use either English or French in their dealings with the federal government, easing the way for French Canadians to operate politically in all of Canada. Almost as important for appeasing French Canadian moderates were reforms in the area of political recruitment. Trudeau opened up the public service to more French Canadians. By 1976 the percentage of public service officials speaking French as a first language had risen from an insignificant number to over 20%.²³ The best and brightest of French Canadians were appointed to high political positions in Ottawa so that the federal government represented both French and English Canadians.

In conjunction with these reforms was the firm suppression of the FLQ, especially after the 1970 kidnappings of British trade commissioner James Cross and Quebec Labor and Immigration Minister Pierre Laporte who was assassinated while in captivity. Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act and approved arrests, saying "It is more important to maintain law and order than to worry about those whose knees tremble at the sight of the army."²⁴ This firmness induced the moderates to renounce violence, and his reforms helped the moderates to be loyal Canadians. Pursuing the one prong without the other would have been a disaster. Reforms without firmness would have made Ottawa seem

cringing and without authority while firmness without reforms would have made Ottawa appear unjust and brutal. Isolated, many FLQ members abandoned terrorism in favor of continuing the separatist struggle at the electoral level. That, too, failed. The Parti Quebecois won the 1976 Quebec provincial election but it had no mandate for separation.

It must not be forgotten that terrorism and the French Canadian issue created a political climate that helped put Trudeau in office and mobilized support for his reforms. Wise political authorities take terrorism seriously and take it to indicate that a legitimate problem exists that requires immediate attention. Terrorists are not crazy. Terrorists do not risk their lives without an initial cause. Therefore, terrorism can spark needed reform and weaken an over-bearing target.

THEORY OF MASSIVE INTIMIDATION²⁵

Those who are intimidated into inaction or obedience will neither keep nor build public support because having been so intimidated they cannot serve others — cannot protect, provide or promote. Intimidated by Stalin's great purge and terror begun in 1936, fewer and fewer young communists rallied to the side of the old Bolsheviks. The S.A. [Sturmabteilung] under Ernst Rohm ceased being a political force after Hitler's terror of 1934 liquidated its leadership. Insurgent terrorists, too, have used intimidation. When Castro and his 26th July Movement demoralized Batista's police and military forces, compelling them to relinquish the area around their base in the Sierra Maestra in late 1958, Batista's regime lost legitimacy. For those in the immediate area, Castro was the one who determined who got what, when, and how. He had authority. For Cuba generally, Castro appeared to be the force with which to be reckoned in the future.

As Abram de Swaan points out in "Terror as Government Service," the target weakens itself by deciding not to act.²⁶ Unlike power deflation, where the target is unable to respond to terrorism, intimidation comes when the target is able to respond but does not. The target exhibits the absence of any political energy. One might postulate:

When a target sees itself as uncertain in his or her convictions and risking a chance of extreme punishment for political actions in an unpredictable situation; perceives the terrorists as dedicated in their aim and more than willing to use violence in its pursuit; perceives relative capability as favoring reasonable people like themselves under normal conditions but perceives the conditions to be abnormal because the terrorists can kill or outmaneuver at whim; then the target will be intimidated and not act even though it may have great or potentially great capabilities.

De Swaan sees torture by regimes as designed

... [T]o spread an ever-present fear, of arrest, of ill-treatment, of mutilation, of betrayal, of death. The

purpose of all this is that people will ask themselves with every action whether their deeds do not create risks for themselves and for the people around them, that they will not just abstain from what is forbidden, but will avoid whatever has not expressly been allowed. They really must continually try to imagine what the rulers would want them to do, they must become vicarious rulers for themselves. Only then the completion of the terrorist regime has been achieved.²⁷

This analysis is so perceptive that it is worth continuing at some length.

If everyone would know [for certain] what acts would lead to arrest and torture and which would go unpunished, most people would refrain from the first and without worrying, commit the others. But the purpose of an intimidation apparatus is precisely to impose so much fear in that of their own account they will abstain from things that otherwise would be hard for the regime to detect or prevent. Not even a police state can always keep under surveillance all people in all their doings. And because the regime cannot enforce its own commands and prohibitions, fully or even partially, it must create a negative game of chance, which leaves it to the citizens to avoid the risks.²⁸

Intimidation works when the target experiences fear and feels vulnerable. Such results are not enough, however, for they do not explain martyrs or the behavior of those who stand up to overwhelming force even when they are certain they will be punished. Strong convictions, when upheld under public witness, inhibit intimidation. In de Swann's words, those with strong convictions do not "become vicarious rulers for themselves." They are self-ruled.

One of the greatest ironies of history is that Stalin had to kill so many people in his attempt to intimidate opponents or potential opponents. He could induce fear; he could make people feel vulnerable; yet he was dealing with people who were believers in Marx and Lenin. Many had firm convictions. The show trials and false confessions hid the fact that the overwhelming majority of the old, and some new, Bolsheviks went to their deaths defiant and unintimidated. The easily intimidated new generation which filled the shoes of the purged knew enough to take its convictions from Stalin's cues.

CONCLUSIONS

Each hypothesis postulated demonstrates that terrorism is efficacious only if the target makes it so. Terrorism demands that the target perform and induces a test of the target's competence, whether the target is a regime or an insurgent group. The behavior of the target is critical to understanding why terror works because terrorism's purpose is to elicit a particular kind of behavior that weakens the target. The

target's perceptions, as the five hypotheses have illustrated, provide the basis of the target's behavior. Therefore, while the causes of terrorism, those of the terrorist's behavior, are largely sociological, the success or failure of terrorism, determined by the target's behavior, is largely psychological. Terrorists must comprehend or manipulate the target's psychological perceptions inducing the target to act in the way it is predisposed to act. Thus, a powerful, self-righteous target confronting terrorism perpetrated by the forces of absolute evil can best be made to over-react, but not easily made to power deflate, repress moderates, appease moderates, or be intimidated.

Of course, a powerful, self-righteous target confronting terrorism perpetrated by the forces of absolute evil does not have to over-react. Knowledge of one's own perceptions, and how they can be manipulated, makes one aware of the propensity for making particular mistakes. Prudent targets do not behave as automatons.

Successful terrorism leads to a different kind of political struggle because it changes the relative capability of the contestants. The target is weakened and the terrorists are strengthened. Political strategies are always dependent upon relative capabilities. Those who have developed substantial relative capabilities will not continue to rely on a strategy of terrorism. Terrorism is not only a strategy of the weak, it is also a weak strategy. It cannot "finish off" an opponent, cannot overthrow a government, cannot bring national liberation, cannot reform a culture, and cannot do anything by itself except shift the power balance. Having developed relative capabilities, the former terrorists can control other strategies such as negotiation, revolution, *coup d'état*, or electioneering, making them able to produce substantial political results.

Finally, the development of theories on the efficacy of terrorism reveals a strategy which put some targets into impossible dilemmas. A large moderate, non-violent opposition movement in conjunction with a terrorist movement forces the target to deal with the underlying issues which fuel the opposition. The target can ignore a large, moderate, non-violent opposition or grant it meaningless concessions without much fear of retribution. Faced with a terrorist movement alone, the target can crush it. When the two groups operate together, however, the target must either repress the moderates or appease them. Repression drives the moderates toward the terrorists. Ignoring the moderates will be seen as repression because of the difficulty in compartmentalizing anti-terrorist actions, directing the solely at the terrorists. Both terrorists and moderates will feel the 'chill' of repression. Repression radicalizes and militarizes the moderates. The only other option left to the target is to appease the moderates through reforms. As Gandhi and King well knew, the rejection of non-violent mass action by the target is really a preference of the target for a violent struggle, complete with all the costs and risks that struggle entails. Targets which generally avoid using strategies of violence are forced to reform. Targets that prefer violence will not be moved to reform by non-violent protests; they will repress. In 1933 and 1934, the non-violent strategies of Hitler's opponents failed

because Hitler, in control of the government, had few inhibitions against using violence. The British in India, on the other hand, had some major inhibitions. The results of the two cases are patently different.

The literature on terrorism has principally dealt with either its causes or, in the popular press, with its immorality. There has been a reluctance to examine its usefulness as political strategy. This study forms a preliminary effort to analyze its over-all efficacy.

Endnotes

1. Alex P. Schmid, *Political Terrorism* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), p. 96. It is subtitled *A research guide to concepts, theories, data bases and literature* and it has proven invaluable for this study.
2. Nicholas O. Berry, "Dealing with Terrorism," *USA Today*, 113 (July 1984), pp. 40-42. A political authority is one that commands followers. Many authors include in their definition the idea that terrorism has to terrorize, that is, produce a climate of fear and uncertainty. Often it does, but this study will demonstrate that many types of responses are sought by terrorists, including an angry, self-confident violent reaction.
3. See Schmid, p. 41.
4. Schmid and others rightly distinguish between the "target of violence," that is, the victim, and the "target of terror." Quite often a non-political "innocent" party of symbolic object is the target of violence, but that is not the political authority whose weakening is sought. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
5. See Schmid, pp. 97-99 for a listing of twenty purposes and functions of terrorism as defined by theorists and terrorists. Among the twenty, many overlap. In this analysis, the weakening of the target includes its transformation from dictatorship toward democracy.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
7. Grant Wardlaw, *Political Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 58.
8. This was the point of my op-ed piece in *The New York Times*, "Good Fences, Bad Idea," on December 19, 1983, as well as a point of my testimony before a congressional subcommittee. U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, *Hearings, Domestic Security Measures Relating to Terrorism*, 89th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1984, p. 97.
9. Berry, *Hearings*, p. 94.
10. Robert J. Lifton, *Home From the War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973). See Chapter 7, "Gooks and Men."
11. When the PLO realized in 1985 that its international support did not significantly alter the balance of power with Israel, it stopped over-reacting to Israel's provocations and began a tortuous strategy to lay the groundwork for negotiations. Nevertheless, some Palestinian factions still believed in the availability and efficacy of violence and saw Arafat as selling out. Their terrorism continued on the *Achille Lauro*, at the airports in Rome and Vienna, and elsewhere.
12. Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 45.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
14. Cited in Wardlaw, p. 34.
15. Paul Wilkinson, *Political Terrorism* (London: Macmillan, 1974), p. 126.
16. Menachem Begin, *The Revolt* (New York: Nash Publishing Co., 1977).

17. Richard Allen, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Fertile Crescent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 374, 380. Allen makes the point that Zionist violence was not responsible for Britain's departure. Britain, he asserts, would have left anyway. Perhaps so, but high costs and no options got Britain out in 1948, in time for Israel both to provide a home for Jewish refugees before they settled elsewhere and to win the war with the as yet unorganized Arab states.
18. Barry Rubin, *Paved With Good Intentions, The American Experience and Iran* (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 205.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 214, 216.
21. Cited in Schmid, p. 167.
22. George Radwanski, *Trudeau* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1978), p. 314.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 342.
24. Walter Stewart, *Trudeau in Power* (New York: Outerbridge and Dienstfrey, 1971), p. 50.
25. I am grateful to Richard and Sharon Cleghorn, and Janet Berry for helping to conceptualize the difference between power deflation and massive intimidation.
26. Cited in Schmid, p. 167.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*, p. 175.