

Terror, Violence, Conflict, & the Law

Week 3: A Review Thus Far

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Week 1 – Theme of “What is Terrorism?”



Defining “Terrorism”

“A synthesis of war and theater; a dramatization of the most proscribed kind of violence – that which is perpetrated on innocent victims – played before an audience in the hope of creating a mood of fear, for political purposes.” (Cindy Combs p. 10)

Defining “War”

The Social Science literature defines “war” as having these conditions:

- Armed conflict between gov’t OR between a gov’t & an organized, domestic armed group;
- Where at least 1000 people are killed; or are killed yearly (think “civil war” for these last two key qualifiers);
- Deaths must be directly linked to violence of conflict;
- Relaxation recently on “armed, uniformed combatants” in this literature.
- Only two currently using this definition: Iraq, Sudan
- What about Afghanistan, Nepal, Israel, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Kashmir, or Nigeria?
- What’s happened since the end of the Cold War?

Main Components of Any Terrorism Definition

1. Act of violence
2. Political motive or goal
3. Perpetrated against innocent persons
4. Staged before an audience with goal of striking fear; emotive context.

Nature of This Definition:

- Difficult to define. Where does crime or war end and terrorism begin?
- Broad coverage of many different types of violent acts with different political objectives.
- Innocent victims are targeted to produce fear, and eventually pressure to change policy. This is the drama, the fear of arbitrary and sudden death and trauma.
- Terrorist acts are particularly a tool used by the politically and militarily weak, whether it is countries or groups.

Terrorism Data, Week II: Towards a Typology of Terror: (Hoffman, et al.)

- State Sponsored: Which states have sponsored terrorism?
 - Internal: Mass Terror as Repression
 - External: Against other states or foreign groups
- Objectives:
 - Internal: Terror of citizens prevents resistance or crush resistance
 - External: Undermine other states or alternative to conventional war for weak states.



Typology of Terror, cont'd

- Revolutionary/insurgency movements
 - Dynastic assassination
 - Tactical Terror against government
 - May be related to cultural or religious conflict
 - Secular vs. religion or religion vs. religion
- Objectives
 - Change policy or remove current leaders
 - Destroy morale and will to fight resulting in more autonomy, freedom, or control of government

Typology of Terror, cont'd

- Transnational Networks
 - “Focused” Random Terror (*Cole* Bombing, Beirut '83, US embassies)
 - Random Terror or a “New Wave?:” (9/11)
- Objectives (related)
 - Change policy (fight imperialism)
 - Cultural-Religious revenge or war
 - Spread fear to reduce morale and confidence

Proportion of death from terrorism in total death in the United States

Average death per year	From terrorism	From all causes	Proportion (%)
1990s	27	2534203	0.001
2001	2893	2404624	0.12

Risk of Dying

Smoking 10 cigarettes a day	One in 200
All natural causes age 40	One in 850
Road accident	One in 8,000
Playing soccer	One in 25,000
Homicide	One in 100,000
Terrorism attack in 2001	One in 100,000
Hit by lightning	One in 10,000,000
Terrorism attack in 1990's	One in 50,000,000

From Penguin Books, 1987; 2002

Death Rate of Various Causes in 2000 USA & Deaths From Terror

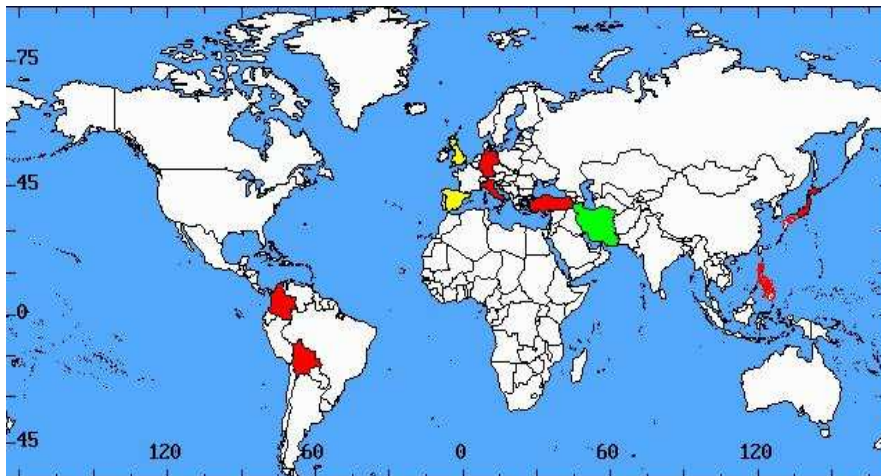
Heart disease*	One in 400
Cancer *	One in 500
Cerebrovascular diseases*	One in 2,000
Accidents *	One in 3,000
Diabetes*	One in 4,000
Suicide*	One in 10,000
Homicide*	One in 20,000
Terrorism in 2001	One in 100,000
Terrorism in 1990s	One in 50,000,000

The History of Int'l Terrorism in the Second Half of the 20th Century – A “New Wave?”

- The second half of the twentieth century was marked by the development of the number of international terrorist organizations. This development could be divided into several periods.
- How can we / do we characterize this wave?
- Are there successive waves that have led to this rise?
- Are we in an anomalous period of terrorism & politically violent activities?
- How can we “explain” the current period?

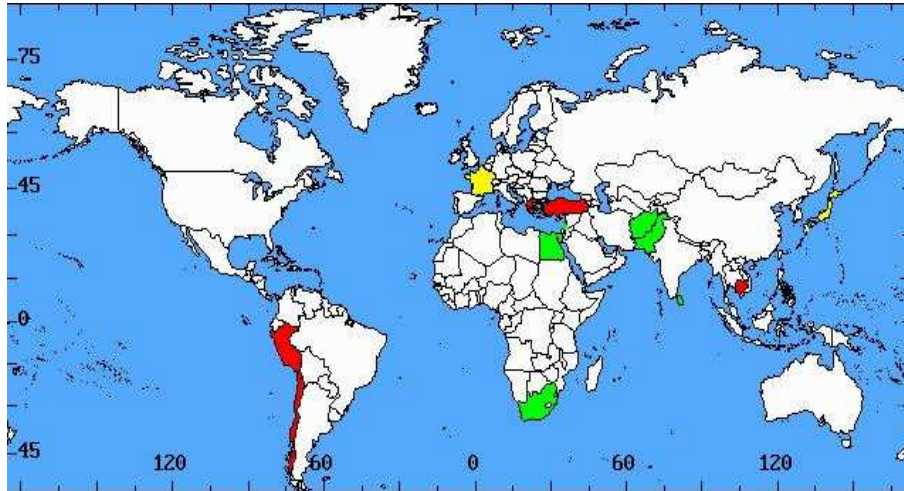
The First Period (50-60 years)

Most international terrorist organizations, that were developed in this period are left-radical or Marxist



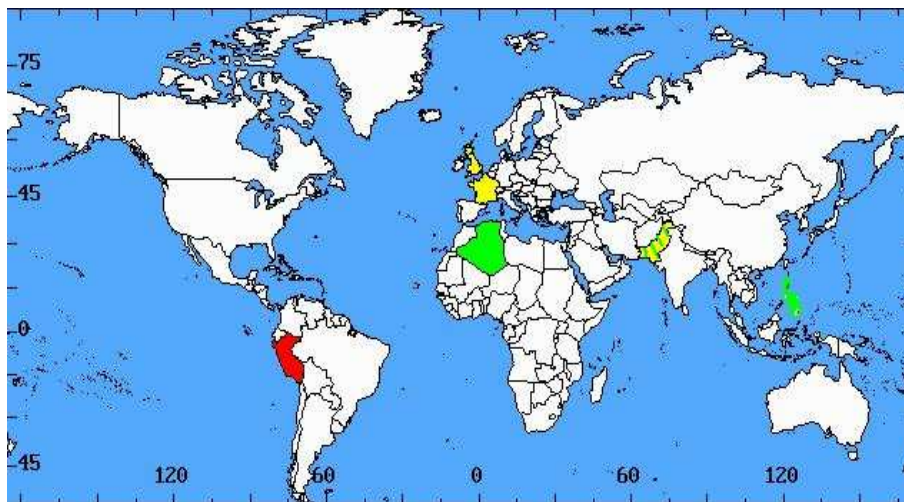
The Second Period (70-80 years)

Most of arising organizations were Islamic (more than a half)



The Third Period (90th years)

At that time the number of arising nationalistic organizations is more then ever.



Work of Al Qaeda before 9/11



US Embassy bombing in Kenya

(CNN/FILE)



US Embassy in Tanzania



What are the “Roots of Terrorism?”

- Oppression or perception thereof
- Limited ability to fight back using conventional and/or peaceful methods
- Conflict seen as moral and necessary, even at the expense of so-called innocent victims
- Religious or ideological motivation

Who Becomes a “Crusading” Terrorist?

- Professional and systematic
- Daring, dedicated, and brave
- Acts without remorse or pity
- Education, gender, and age?
- Religious or ideological
- Background of poverty, hardship, or violence
- Usually from an oppressed land
- Socialized into violence (group dynamics)

Group dynamics is particularly important. Almost all crusading terrorists work in groups.

Groups provide:

1. A world view (ideology);
2. Recruitment of members;
3. Leadership and planning;
4. Resources (weapons, money);
5. Socialization and training.

Today, in general, the most intelligent, educated, or experienced members (usually older) lead the organization and enlist younger more daring and less questioning members to do the dirty work of carrying out attacks. Yet, even this model is suspect.

Problems to Overcome

- Most transnational sophisticated terrorists work in networks that do not operate based on the same rules of international relations:
 1. Countries are encumbered by issues of sovereignty that make cooperation difficult to sustain.
 2. Countries do not trust each other well enough to reveal intelligence if it provides hints about how the CIA or other agencies typically operate.
 3. Terrorist Networks benefit from increased travel and economic flows around the world.
 4. Terrorist Networks often *do* fund their activities through illicit activities (drugs, guns, sex) and charities.

Problems to Overcome, cont'd

- Terrorists Networks often lack a concrete hierarchy, which makes them difficult to eliminate.
- Fighting terrorism may thus be similar to other 'open-ended' fights like the 'war on drugs' or 'war on poverty.'

Problems to Overcome, cont'd

- Networks funnel large sums of money, organization, and procurement of weapons.
- Cultural conflict: Is jihad growing as a threat?
- Threat, even the preoccupation (obsession?) that is WMD terror.

Assessing the Threat

- Transnational terrorism on a global scale is easier today and thus harder to stamp out.
- Real threat that makes it more than a nuisance is WMD:
 - Nukes? Not easy to do but Dirty bomb real easy!!
 - Chem? Not good if you are a victim but not as dangerous as some. Also, no shortage globally.
 - Bio: Very dangerous unless well-prepared.

Assessing the Threat

- The Iraq Diversion[?]
 - The only WMD Iraq may have had would have been Chem Weapons, which are by no means rare.
 - Iraq is not innocent but a less severe offender on most wanted Terrorist nations list.
 - Why wouldn't deterrence work with Iraq?
 - Risk of civil war, already begun, claiming thousands of Iraqi lives.

Options to Combat Terrorism

- Need high-quality intelligence to thwart plans and attacks: Requires allies and spies able to penetrate terror cells.
- Domestic security: transportation, food, etc.
- Working against the proliferation of WMD
- Military option: Occupation and defeat of terrorist states, etc.
- Settling or reducing issues or conflicts that incite terrorism. Try to win the hearts or at least not radicalize your enemies, making recruitment more difficult.

Deeper Questions

- Why has terrorism become more violent and indiscriminate?
- How much liberty should be given-up to reduce threat of terrorism?
- Is terrorism (without WMD) really a strong threat?
- What could be done to dispel the notion that the USA or other western states are threats? Would this be enough?

Our Views About Terrorism?

- Winning hearts and minds of people is key. Why?
- Terrorism can't be "defeated."
- Don't provide terrorists with good propaganda in Iraq, Middle Eastern regimes, unflinching support of Israel no matter the issue.
- Without winning hearts and minds, we have no allies and thus are crippling ourselves.
- Dependence on oil from the region means we are more involved than is desirable.
- Resource Constraints + Energy politics = Terrorism Interaction / Entanglements