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'How can they justify it to themselves?' Theories of justification and political violence

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Submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
Ph.D. in Political Science
University of Dublin, Trinity College

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university. I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work. Parts of Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been published in Garrett O'Boyle, "Theories of justification and political violence: examples from four groups", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2002) and part of Chapter 4 has been published in G. O'Boyle, "Red Army Faction", *Europe Since 1914: the Age of War and Reconstruction* (Charles Scribner's Sons/Thomson Gale; 2006). I agree that the library may lend or copy the thesis upon request.

Garrett O'Boyle

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Summary

This research is a systematic and rigorous analysis of the types of normative justifications used by various groups that employ, threaten, or advocate the use of terrorism or political violence. It examines the internal logic of these justificatory positions as exemplified in various groups' literature, publications, and pronouncements, by analysing and interpreting these texts. It represents a comparative analysis of the justifications for violence actually used by a broad range of politically violent groups – national liberation movements, revolutionary left groups, Islamic extremists, the anti-abortion Christian right, and fascist and hate groups.

The thesis begins by attempting to clarify the meaning of the term *terrorism* and analyse its position in the continuum of broader political violence, and investigates various approaches to conceptualising the term. It then turns to an explanation and examination of two of the main competing approaches to the issue of justifying actions in ethical theory – *consequentialism* and *deontology* – and sets out an exploratory eightfold typology of group types that might, *a priori*, be expected to exemplify one or other of these justificatory forms.

Next, the thesis proceeds with a systematic analysis of four terrorist groups' justificatory literature. It focuses first on Christian anti-abortion militants in the USA and Islamic radicalism as represented by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda. It concludes that these groups tend to use justifications based on a deontological or non-consequentialist approach and suggests that groups that use this justificatory form might be more difficult to deal with in conflict resolution scenarios based on traditional negotiation.

It then focuses in detail on the justificatory literature of the Red Army Faction and the Provisional IRA, respectively, concluding that the justificatory bases of these groups tends more towards the consequentialist, suggesting that such groups may tend not only to be easier to negotiate with in a conflict resolution process, but also that they may be more likely than non-consequentialist groups to voluntarily moderate their demands and the means they use.

The thesis concludes that the different types of groups analysed do indeed gravitate towards one or other of the typical approaches to justification, and that this is likely to be significant in assessing a group's likelihood to moderate its demands and its use of violence and its willingness to engage in a process of negotiated settlement. The thesis ends by suggesting specific related avenues for future research.

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Introduction

We quite often encounter two distinct, powerful and antithetical ways of looking at the world, human action, and the issue of how we should or should not act. For now – and very simplistically – they may be labelled perspectives based on some sort of moral principle and perspectives based on the more pragmatic assessment of desired end results. Of course, one can make pragmatism into one's principle, or make adherence to principle appear pragmatic. But there *are* distinct perceptions.

Throughout history and the history of political ideas, themes related to these distinct ways of looking at the world and the rightness or wrongness of human actions have repeatedly recurred. We see these themes in, among others, Plato, Augustine, Machiavelli, Hobbes, in modern international relations theory, in just war theory, in ethics, and in debates over rational choice theory and the methodology of the social sciences.

We also frequently see them in contemporary popular culture: in *Star Trek*'s juxtaposition of human emotion, Klingon honour and glory, and Vulcan logic. We see them in the clichéd Hollywood film device of the President's dilemma over whether to shoot down a hijacked civilian airliner that may or may not have a nuclear bomb on board or the dilemma of a police investigator over the mistreatment of a "terrorist suspect". And we also see them in the real-world justifications for politically violent actions used by those people and groups that engage in them: do they do what they do in order to achieve concrete consequences in the real world, or as part of some sort of moral duty or

imperative, or a combination of the two? What are the ethical bases for such groups' own justifications for their actions?

1. Understanding the inner logic

Even the most reviled of politically violent groups use some sort of ethical justification for their actions: at the very least, they need to justify such actions to themselves and to their supporters before they ever take the decision to use violent tactics. And very many groups publish their justifications for action and their analyses of their perceived causes of whatever conflict they are engaged in, in order to publicise their grievances or to attract sympathy or potential recruits and supporters. Moreover, differences can be seen between groups in terms of the ethical bases of their justifications, differences that are significant in terms of assessing how they see the world. Briefly put, some groups exemplify a *consequentialist* ethical basis, others a *non-consequentialist* (or deontological) basis.

It seems *prima facie* evident that examining these justifications and explanations of motivation will be of use in interpreting the inner logic of politically violent groups and thus further our understanding of why they act in the way they do, what they may or may not be capable of or willing to do in the furtherance of their aims, and perhaps coming to conclusions as to what type of conflict resolution approach is most suitable for any given group. Basically, we need to know what groups say about themselves and their beliefs to really understand them: "Anyone who wants to gain some understanding of these terrorists should listen carefully to what the terrorists themselves say about their actions and motivations, no matter how criminal or absurd these seem."[1]

This thesis is a systematic analysis of the types of normative justifications used by various groups that employ, threaten, or advocate the use of violence in order to advance their political or social agendas. It examines the internal logic of these justificatory philosophical positions as exemplified in various groups' literature, publications, and pronouncements. It is a systematic, comparative analysis of a number of different groups, each chosen as an exemplar of a particular type of group: national liberation movements, revolutionary left groups, Islamic groups, and the anti-abortion Christian right. For the illustrative purposes of this thesis, I engage in a critical textual analysis of these groups' justifications in order to philosophically parse them and assess them in terms of their ethical basis.

It also addresses a gap in the literature on political violence – there is little or no systematic philosophical analysis of what those who engage in political violence actually say about themselves and why they say they do what they do, nor am I aware of any systematic, comparative philosophical analysis of the various ethical bases of such groups' justifications.

2. Structure

The chosen exemplar groups have all been classified as "terrorist" organisations – indeed, it is hard to think of a politically violent sub-state group that has not at some time been termed "terrorist". But there is much – some might say too much and too abstract – debate in the literature about the definition of terrorism, about what makes it different from other forms of political violence, and whether terrorism is a morally distinctive type of political violence. Chapter 1 is a survey of this discussion and represents an attempt to clarify some of the terminology of

the debate and to consider whether the term "terrorism" is inevitably morally loaded and whether a more morally neutral term would be preferable in academic discourse. It begins by analysing what "violence" should be taken to mean, and goes on to consider the "political" in political violence, various forms of political violence and various approaches to the definition of "terrorism", including the issue of "state terrorism". It ends with the suggestion that perhaps Wittgenstein's notion of "family resemblance" might, in the future, be useful in terms of conceptualising terrorism.

Central to the thesis as a whole is the analysis of two of the primary competing approaches to the issue of justification within ethical theory (consequentialism and deontology). In order to proceed systematically with the descriptive analysis of politically violent groups, it is necessary to clarify what, in essence, distinguishes these two approaches as characteristics of moral systems, and what the relationship between them is. This is the subject matter of Chapter 2. The chapter discusses issues related to a consistent application of these distinct ethical approaches and how this is relevant to potential justifications for the use of political violence. It also outlines the aims of the study and introduces a possible group typology that might be useful as an analytic framework for any future analysis of the distinctive ethical bases of the justifications employed by politically violent groups.

Chapter 3 is the first of the substantive descriptive analyses of actual groups, dealing with justifications for violent action put forward by several Christian anti-abortion activists and by al-Qaeda's Osama bin Laden. The anti-abortion activists whose justifications are discussed have all been convicted of killing abortion providers and associated support staff, and the justifications were

raised at their trials and perpetuated on anti-abortion websites supportive of these convicted activists. Bin Laden is the reputed leader of the radical Islamist group al-Qaeda, the organisation infamous for being behind the 11th September 2001 attacks on New York and the Pentagon, and is the author of many justificatory tracts for radical Islamist political violence. The chapter opens with a consideration of the by now standard distinction between religiously inspired violence and secular political violence, arguing that, although there is an obvious parallel between groups that use a deontological/non-consequentialist form of justification and religiously inspired and motivated groups, the distinction between "religious" and "secular" violence is too crude and that a focus on the consequentialist or non-consequentialist character of a group might highlight hitherto concealed shades of nuance in a group's nature. The chapter then goes on to discuss the amorphous group structure known as "leaderless resistance", first promulgated by a theorist of the white supremacist right, arguing that the principle of leaderless resistance is also applicable to Christian anti-abortionists and contemporary radical Islamist violence.

The justifications analysed in Chapter 3 represent a sample of the available material from the respective groups, and the chapter deals with two different types of groups. Chapters 4 and 5 are structured differently: each chapter focuses on just one group and is not limited to a focus on a sample of the available justificatory material. The reason for this is that both the groups in these chapters have voluntarily disbanded or ceased politically violent activity, and thus we have access to the complete "life cycle" of justificatory material, from the groups' early days to their voluntary end. It provides a unique opportunity to analyse the

changing nature and tone of the justifications used over the life cycle of each respective group.

Chapter 4, which deals with the literature of the Red Army Faction (RAF), begins with a consideration of the consequences of a group's eventual realisation that either their real-world goals are actually unattainable or that non-violent political action may be more efficacious than the continued use of political violence. The next section deals with the main ideological themes and organisational characteristics of what have been termed "fighting communist organisations".[2] The next section is a potted history of the RAF, situating the group as having its origins in late 1960s student radicalism and emphasising the multi-generational nature of its membership. Successive sections look at the RAF's justifications from their very first ideological statement right through to the statement announcing the group's voluntary dissolution.

The final substantive chapter deals with the Provisional Irish Republican Movement, looking at a combination of statements released by both the IRA and Sinn Fein. After a brief discussion of the nature of nationalism – including an indication of the elements that we might expect to be constitutive of a national liberation movement's ideology – and a discussion on the potentially critical role of secondary ideologies in the overall ideology cluster of a national liberation movement and how it might affect the overall character of such a movement's justifications, the traditional nationalist position of the republican Movement is outlined and analysed (including an instructive comparison with the liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). Next, the role of the Republican Movement's apparent or professed secondary ideology is examined, followed by successive sections detailing the changing rhetorical nature of the movement's justifications since its

increasing politicisation during and after the prison protests over the policy of criminalisation, again right up to the IRA's formal "ending of the armed campaign" in 2005 and the movement's apparent embracing of peaceful political activity as the appropriate means to pursue its objectives.

The conclusion sums up the themes of the thesis and any general conclusions and suggests certain avenues for future research and how the preliminary work of this thesis could be extended.

To return to the rather grandiose sentiments of the opening paragraphs of this introduction, what difference does it make whether a group justifies its actions in terms of moral principle or in terms of the pragmatic achievement of real-world consequences? One answer to this, borne out by the research in this thesis, is that dealing with or negotiating with a group that bases its violent actions on a perceived moral duty might be significantly more difficult than dealing with a group that justifies its actions in terms of the actual attainability of concrete real-world objectives.

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[1] Kellen, Konrad, "Ideology and Rebellion: Terrorism in West Germany", chapter 3 in Walter Reich (ed.), *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[2] Alexander, Yonah and Dennis Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1992).

Chapter 1
Violence, political violence, and terrorism: Conceptual and definitional issues

The groups examined in this thesis have all been classified as "terrorist" organisations by various governments and according to those governments' legal standards. They also can be classified as "terrorist" in terms of many of the definitions promulgated in some of academic literature on political violence. But there is still much debate in the literature about the definition of terrorism, about what makes it different from other forms of political violence, and whether terrorism is a morally distinctive type of political violence. This chapter is a survey of this discussion and represents an attempt to clarify some of the terminology of the debate.

It is usually appropriate – and is certainly useful – when attempting to engage in political and social analysis, to be clear as to what the phenomena or concepts to which one refers actually mean or should be taken to mean. There has been considerable debate on the issue of the definition of violence, *political* violence, and "terrorism". Indeed, it could be said that more time and effort has been expended in negatively discussing why various approaches to defining these terms are invalid or inadequate than has been expended in positively attempting to construct actual definitions. These two endeavours are, of course, related: one way to construct or refine a definition is to build upon and critique another. This is how this chapter will proceed, and will attempt, however unsuccessfully, to examine the concepts of violence, political violence, and terrorism in morally neutral or non-morally-evaluative terms.

1. Defining violence: some approaches

A common, if somewhat clichéd, approach to the discussion of meaning is to examine the lexicographical definition. As dictionaries often vary, an exhaustive categorisation of various definitions would not be that helpful. However, the definitions contained in two dictionaries from two different decades provide an instructive starting point. The Collins Concise[1] defines violence as, first, "the exercise or an instance of physical force, usually effecting or intended to effect injuries, destruction, etc" and, secondly, as "an unjust, unwarranted, or unlawful display of force". The Oxford Pocket[2] describes violence as "the illegal use of force". The latter description restricts the use of the term *violence* to situations that happen in the context of human societies, as opposed to the "violence", say, of a volcanic eruption.[3]

These definitions raise a number of issues. Firstly, they emphasise the use, display, or threat of (physical) force. Secondly, they tend to imply illegality, unlawfulness, and illegitimacy as constituent parts of the definition. In turn, this raises questions about the notion of legitimacy and legality. Thirdly, the definitions all seem to refer to the unlawful activities of sub-state actors. This raises the question of whether a state, having a monopoly on the *legitimate* use of *force*, can, by these definitions, engage in violence.[4] Alternatively, do states' uses of force only become violence when the state breaks its own laws in the employment of that force?[5]

Miller[6] calls this interpretation of violence the "liberal" view, which emphasises "the *illegal* use of force, or the *threat* of such force, against person or property" (emphasis added). Miller argues that the term "violence" is necessarily morally loaded: it always has evaluative connotations. Moreover, "any concept

which collects together social and political phenomena and appraises them morally is likely to be, in a culture such as ours, essentially contestable. It will … be impossible to offer logically compelling reasons for preferring one interpretation of that concept to another. Instead, the conception one chooses will depend on one's overall political outlook, and defending it will involve substantive political argument".[7]

Miller's contention is borne out by alternative approaches to the definition of violence. In contrast to "liberal" perspectives that emphasise the *illegitimate* use of *physical* force, interpretations that are more radical sometimes seek to extend the concept of violence to very broad categories of social structural, and even psychological, phenomena. This can lead to some very wide, very inclusive definitions of violence.

Take, for example, Mertens.[8] He argues that much of what we see and deplore as violence is usually abstracted or taken out of the political or social context in which it occurs. Understanding the context of this violence is essential: it is the "home-made violence of 'amateur' retaliation against the 'professional' violence practised by a regime which, by its abuses of power, has shown itself to be oppressive". Thus, when "reactive" violence is abstracted from its context, we tend to hear little about the institutionalised, systemic, or state violence against which this sub-state violence represents retaliation or defence. Mertens' interpretation of structural violence is extensive, encompassing:

- *Political* (emergency powers and the abuse thereof; the repression inherent in the penal system and the ideological and representational effects that this has in the wider community; bureaucratisation and the centralisation of data collection, which often results in invasions of privacy; and the

marginalisation of groups and subcultures by the definition of "normality". Judicial and constitutional guarantees are seen as too abstract and theoretical to be relevant on the individual level as protection from this type of "violence"),

- *Economic* (the idea that capitalism and its institutions are inevitably based on violence to the proletariat; the dehumanising, institutional class violence of the labour market; capitalist exploitation on a global scale, encompassing neo-colonialism by transnational corporations, the arms trade, de-industrialisation and dependent industrialization, economic wars, sanctions and blockades; credit traps, burdens of debt and money lending),
- *Intellectual and cultural* (the pervasive effect of state ideology on people's minds; cultural imperialism; ethnocentric policies; the manner in which bourgeois culture drives out folk culture and replaces it with "mass culture" or "candy-floss culture", the commercial culture of mass media/press/entertainment; state control of or influence on the mass information media; information starvation – "both misinformation and failure to inform do violence to the reader"[9]; social discrimination in education, class socialization and reproduction, and inequality of opportunity),
- *Legal/judicial* (the Thrasymachean notion that the law serves the interests of the ruling class, that it is not politically neutral, and that equality before the law is a fiction: "people are not tried as individuals but as representatives of a class; certain trials are treated as non-political even where the charge involved is by no means free of political motivation"[10]),

- *Extra-legal* (the state's unlawful use of force for repression, including torture and inhuman and degrading treatment).

In addition to Mertens – who seems to have attributed the term "violence" to almost every facet of the capitalist state – some socialists have argued that the daily process of capitalist production exposes workers to disease, injury, and death purely in the pursuit of private profit and that capitalism condemns millions to poverty, starvation, suffering, and death: "No system based on the exploitation of the overwhelming majority by a tiny minority can maintain itself without violence [...] no system based on the competitive struggle for profits, one firm against another, one country's firms against another, can avoid war".[11]

One issue that must be addressed in relation to these interpretations is the question of whether or not the phenomena described actually constitute *violence.* When we speak of institutional, or structural or systemic violence, what are we really speaking of? With regard to extra-legal uses of force by the state, or even in relation to legal capital punishment, it is probably uncontentious to assert that such actions constitute violence. But what are we to make of the assertions about, for example, intellectual and cultural violence or economic violence? My belief is that we already have perfectly good words that can be used in relation to the phenomena outlined by Mertens, without attempting to drag them under the blanket concept of violence. The words I have in mind are those such as "injustice", "oppression", "inequality", "inhumanity" and so on. If we define the concept of violence as broadly as Mertens appears to prescribe, we merely devalue that concept: we render it next to meaningless. Defining such systemic

phenomena as violence may indeed make polemical or rhetorical sense from certain perspectives, especially when attempting to provide a reactive, "self-defence" argument for political violence. Hence, it is not "political violence in the fight against inequality and repression", and so on, it is "violence in self-defence". This can be a useful polemical tool, but it is conceptually sloppy and it devalues the concept of violence. Characterising all institutional domination as violence is neither necessary nor useful.

Miller also believes that, in the liberal view, the harm caused by such structural and systemic factors is qualitatively different from more traditional interpretations of what we call violence.[12] Specifically, there is a distinction between harmful action and harmful inaction – he argues that the former is, in general, worse than the latter. The distinction resides in the intentionality of the agent and the awareness of the effects of the action or inaction. Harmful acts are usually intentional, but harmful inaction is more likely to be unintentional: "the person concerned will either be unaware of the effects of his inaction, or at least will not deliberately intend the harmful results".[13] Moreover, the responsibility for the outcome of a harmful action usually resides in one person or a small number of people, whereas in the case of inaction (that is, failures to act) the responsibility is likely to be widely dispersed. Refraining from a harmful act will typically cost the individual little, whereas acting to prevent the occurrence of harm is often quite costly. This brings us to the distinction between "killing" and "letting die": in the liberal view, the former represents violence whereas the latter is inhumanity or callousness. However, Honderich[14] has argued persuasively that there is little moral distinction between positive acts and omissions, particularly those

omissions that occur in the context of adequate knowledge: "how did I not turn off the radio at noon? By *staying my hand*"). In a parallel to Miller's discussion of the difference between harmful acts and harmful inactions, Honderich also says there is a visible contrast between people's ordinary perceptions of the results of violent acts as opposed to their perceptions of the results of inequality. Typically, people feel more repugnance for acts of violence than they do for omissions or for the facts or results of inequality, even if each leads to a comparable amount of suffering or death.[15] Like Miller, Honderich explicitly deals with the visibility of the action, the cause or the perpetrator: "One notable difference between our awareness of the two orders of fact is that the agents of violence are inevitably in the foreground and the agents of inequality are not immediately to be seen".[16]

Another perspective is offered by Robert Paul Wolff. Wolff argues that the entire concept of violence is inherently confused, as is the distinction with non-violence.[17] If violence, as in the liberal view, is the "illegitimate or unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desire of others"[18], then the concept depends on what we mean by illegitimate or unauthorized. The liberal interpretation depends on the concept of *de jure* (as opposed to *de facto*) legitimate authority. "If there is no such thing as legitimate political authority", Wolff argues, "then it is impossible to distinguish between legitimate or illegitimate uses of force", although we can still, in moral philosophy, speak of right, wrong, justified or unjustified uses of force.[19] He further states that "it is mere superstition to describe a policeman's beating of a helpless suspect as 'an excessive use of force' while characterizing an attack by a crowd on the policeman as 'a resort to violence'".[20]

From the foregoing discussion, it appears that we have at least three competing perspectives on the concept of violence.[21] Each of them has some merit, though some have more merit than others. To go beyond the potentially irresolvable competition between the three approaches, we need to make some decisions about what we will take the term *violence* to mean, and how the term will be used throughout the rest of this work.

What might be called the "radical" interpretation of violence, as in Mertens, involves a very wide definition of violence in structural, systemic and institutional terms. This interpretation should, I think, be broadly rejected, for reasons that we have already discussed. It has value in drawing attention to causes of harm that may derive from other sources than the traditional, liberal conception of violence, but essentially it would render the concept of violence devoid of meaning. The liberal interpretation is a bit closer to what we should take the term to mean. As outlined by Miller, this perspective emphasises the legitimate versus the illegitimate use of force – the latter is violence. However, it requires some augmentation: Wolff's points are well made, and he usefully focuses our attention on the concept of legitimacy and the nature of legitimate authority in the consideration of violence. His persuasive argument implies that to describe the same activities and events as either "the use of force" or "acts of violence", depending upon whether they were carried out by or on behalf of a legitimate authority or an illegitimate one respectively, is little more than a linguistic designation that serves to justify and continually legitimise that *de facto* authority. Miller, indeed, recognised that the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate uses of force would be the most controversial feature of the liberal definition. His defence of its continued inclusion rests on what he calls "the value inherent in the

idea of legality".[22] Thus, a state or its agents may use legitimate force, if it is necessary for the performance of their duties. But if a state uses force in an arbitrary, unconstitutional manner – in effect, if it or its agents break its own laws – then we may speak of violence.

This is a valid perspective, but it appears to me that a lot of time, effort, and theory have gone into the attempt to avoid the perceived negative connotations associated with the term *violence*, when simply attaching the descriptor "legal" or "illegal" would serve the same purpose. I think that Wolff has identified a genuine issue in relation to the liberal approach; that is, the contestable distinction between "legitimate force" and "illegitimate violence". We should, I believe, recognise that both of these represent violence and that, to a certain extent, legitimacy in the use of coercive force is a matter of the perspective of the perpetrators. However, we may take it that Miller's "legitimate force" equates to my "lawful violence" and that Miller's "violence" equates to my "illegal violence". To a certain degree, it is pure semantics. Does this mean that we merely need to delete all reference to unlawfulness, illegality, and illegitimacy from the liberal approach to proceed? At this stage, it probably does not matter, as in most cases these writers (Miller, Wolff, and Honderich) have been explicitly or implicitly thinking about *political* violence rather than violence *per se*, and we will be returning to these issues of legitimacy and legality in our discussion of the definition of *terrorism*, below.

2. What is "political" about political violence?

Various approaches to the definition of what *politics* and *the political* are exist. Common definitions from introductory courses and texts include interpretations of

politics as relating to power relationships in human society, as the means of determining "who gets what, when and how", and as the seizure, consolidation, and redistribution of the power to determine "who gets what, when and how".

In order to determine what is specifically *political* about political violence, it is instructive to examine two distinct acts of violence that both occurred in October 2002: the activities of the so-called "Washington sniper" and the Bali bombings of October 12. Our intuitions tell us that one represents political violence and the other does not, being criminal rather than political (although we need to use this distinction advisedly insofar as both represented the breaking of established law). To tease out the bases of our intuitions, let us examine some similarities and differences between the two cases. Both were indisputably "violent"; both were aimed at what, by and large, an impartial observer would term innocent targets; both were intended to and in fact did cause terror – they were "terroristic".[23]

In terms of differences, the bombings involved the deliberate, planned choice of targets, whereas the sniper selected targets in a randomly and opportunistic manner. And one represented a political act and the other did not: political violence is violence that has a political purpose, a political goal. It represents an attempt to change (or indeed preserve) the political status quo, with violence being used in support of that attempt. Political violence is intended to, for example, cause changes in or otherwise influence the policies of a state or states, or to in some way influence public opinion in those states. It may also be symbolic: but, crucially, *politically* symbolic, such as a symbolic act of retribution or punishment for state actions, inactions, or policies.

Thus we can make the distinction between violence that has as its purpose the pursuit of a political agenda – although the term *political* may often be very widely construed, incorporating philosophical, ideological and theological dimensions that many ordinary people would not immediately see as being political in a narrow sense – and violence that does not have such a purpose. So there is a distinction between the bombings and the sniper attacks, even though both were violent and both were terroristic. The bombings were an expression of a particular set of political attitudes. Entirely speculatively, these attitudes may variously incorporate, for example:

- The expression of the perpetrators' disapproval of allowing, encouraging, and facilitating "decadent" Western tourism in an overwhelmingly Muslim country;
- The tactical desire to engage in generalised targeting of Westerners in an attempt to influence public opinion and/or government policy in Western countries;
- The attempt to embarrass the Indonesian government or to influence its policy towards the West;
- An attempt to kick-start a civil war in Indonesia in the course of which Islamic militants might hope to gain influence or power;
- A symbolic retaliation (in a "violence in self-defence" mould) against a perceived Western-led "war on Islam";
- Alternatively, it may have been to do with ethnic tensions within Indonesia itself: the island of Bali is predominantly Hindu in a Muslim-dominated country.

The sniper's activities, by contrast, were not expressive of political views or purpose. Instead, they seem to have related to personal and psychological issues.

The very use of the term *political* with reference to violence implies a number of things: It is carried out for a particular political purpose (incorporating broader ideological or religious dimensions); it is motivated by a particular political analysis of a situation or a political ideology; it is justified by the perpetrators with reference to a particular political ideology or agenda; and its perpetrators are representatives of a particular political perspective.

So, the very definition of "political violence" may imply that analysing, judging or explaining it necessarily involves different ideological perspectives. Some we may basically agree with; others we will not.

3. Forms of political violence

In a phrase that has been quoted with varying degrees of accuracy, Clausewitz famously wrote that war is a continuation of politics by other means.[24] Indeed, it may well have been argued that this aphorism could equally apply if it was reversed to read politics is a continuation of war. War – "a forcible contention between states with the purpose of overpowering each other by armed force, in order to secure certain demands or claims"[25] – is undoubtedly violent. It is also, as it relates to conflicts between or within states and state structures and policies, undoubtedly political. So, is war a form of political violence? I think it must be considered so, even though when we talk loosely of political violence we tend to think first of sub-state, terroristic groups.[26] Can we give a good reason for leaving

war out of the conception of "political violence"? Only, I think, if we are using or desire to use the term "political violence" in a morally evaluative way.

In any regard, we can distinguish between "traditional" or regular warfare and irregular warfare. Regular war is usually officially declared, usually takes place between the legal entities that are states, and tends to be – or is formally supposed to be – conducted under the auspices of treaties and international legal obligations concerning the treatment of prisoners, the protection of human and civil rights, the status of non-combatants, and so on. *Ir*regular warfare may variously include guerrilla warfare (either rural or urban, usually involving a large, organised, often uniformed force; traditional-style military engagements, sometimes on the brigade scale; and the at least temporary capture and defence of territory), *coups d'état*, terrorism, assassination, and economic or property damage. Outside the dichotomy between regular and irregular war, we still have to deal with the status of politically violent phenomena such as sabotage and riot.

If we collapse the distinction between regular and irregular war, we can begin to construct a continuum of political violence. One version of such a scale might look like this:

- War (international, civil, national, regional, nuclear, conventional, etc.)
- Guerrilla war
- Terrorism, by both sub-state and state actors[27]
- *Coups d'état*
- Assassination
- Economic/property damage
- Sabotage
- Riot

This scale, and the placing of the different types of political violence upon it, is rather arbitrary. This is because some forms of political violence are generally considered to be more "serious" than others. The first six points on the scale, representing "regular" war through to economic/property damage, are placed according to the typical scale of the conflict involved and the level of damage, human or otherwise, they might reasonably be expected to result in. However, in many cases, large-scale rioting has led to more destruction than a relatively bloodless coup. Using a different criterion of seriousness, a successful coup, resulting as it does in a regime change or change of political leadership, may be said to be more serious than a long-running, destructive, but ultimately ineffectual guerrilla war or campaign of terrorism. A similar point could be made about assassination. However, in this case the scale serves merely an illustrative purpose, an indication of what such a scale might include. It is not my purpose here to produce and defend a scale of political violence based on a quantitative assessment of lives lost, damage caused, or any other possible criterion of "seriousness".

I do, however, believe it that it makes sense to talk of there being a continuum of political violence, as a means of elucidating the relationships that exist between the various forms, or modes, of political violence. Each of the more-or-less distinct modes of violence on this scale can be political in the sense we discussed earlier: that is, they are carried out for particular political purposes with distinctively political goals in mind. So, we can, I think, describe them as modes, forms, or instances of political violence with good justification.[28] So we have the phenomenon of political violence; that is, the use of violence in the

pursuit of political objectives. Within this, we have subcategories: war is one; terrorism is another; and so forth right down to urban riots or peasant uprisings.

4. The meaning(s) of *terrorism*

Much of what we perceive in the news and in everyday life as "political violence", however, we tend to equate with terrorism. Honderich, indeed, in constructing the definition of what he takes to be terrorism, says that "we can speak of one thing as either *terrorism* or *political violence*, making no difference between the two terms".[29] Honderich's reason for this is based on his belief that we need to engage in what he calls "muscular decision-making" to "bring this necessary fussing about terms to an end".[30] He certainly has a point: more time and paper has been spent on discussing why nobody has come up with an adequate definition than there has been spent on actually constructing or defending a definition. A pertinent example, offered by Hoffman[31], is the debate at the United Nations in the 1970s concerning the adoption of a common definition: many less-developed countries whose independence movements and leaders had employed tactics that might in retrospect have been classified as terrorism argued vehemently against a US/European-led definition of the term. Their argument was that, in certain circumstances, such tactics might be the only ones available to the oppressed, the colonized, and the occupied.[32] This seems to reinforce the fact that approaches to the definition and use of the term *terrorism* are inextricably linked to particularistic political perspectives.

That said, it is still useful to examine a number of official definitions and some academics' attempts to address the issue of the term's meaning. The approaches of Bruce Hoffman, Jenny Teichman and Igor Primoratz[33] are

instructive, even though they all tend to follow a broadly similar approach, first distinguishing the historical uses of the term, and then turning to lexicographical definitions, common-sense usages, and contemporary definitions.

In terms of official definitions, there are also a number of broadly similar approaches. A former CIA counter-terrorist analyst notes four key elements that make up "terrorism".[34] Firstly, there is premeditation. "Terrorist" acts tend to be planned in advance, rather than being impulsive acts of rage. Secondly, they are politically motivated; they are designed to change the existing political order. The third element is that "terrorism" is aimed at civilians, not military targets or combat-ready troops. And fourthly, it is perpetrated by sub-state, sub-national groups, not by state forces. This directly mirrors the U.S. State Department definition: "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience".

Definitions of this sort always raise questions, though some of those questions are likely to be relatively more trivial than others. A non-trivial example relates to what the term "non-combatant targets" should be taken to mean. On one level, it seems clear: it refers to those that are usually called civilians, non-military personnel. But the very term itself can be interpreted in an ambiguous manner: what about civilian logistical support staff for the military; what about civilian, though possibly armed, law enforcement agents, and so on? Particularly in the eyes of the perpetrators of politically violent acts and their sympathisers, the use of the term "non-combatant" by state agencies may be taken to involve multiple grey areas, and to constitute a scale in itself, running the gamut from off-duty soldiers through pro-state paramilitaries, civilian law enforcement agents,

informers, civil servants and other government employees, "collaborators" such as direct service providers, providers of indirect economic support, and so right down to innocent civilians. Even the term *innocent* civilians may beg questions. In seminar discussions, I have heard devil's-advocate-style arguments that ordinary taxpayers might lose their innocent status by contributing to the maintenance of the state, or that all citizens in a state that has compulsory military service are potential soldiers and hence may be held to be potential combatants.

Leaving aside the tenuousness of some of those arguments and moving to perhaps more trivial issues, the U.S. State Department definition also refers to terrorism as being conducted by "sub-national" actors, rather than sub-state actors. Members of a nationalist organisation or a national liberation movement might plausibly argue that such movements are not "sub-national" groups, representing – as they claim to do – a particular national or ethnic identity in opposition to the state that has legal jurisdiction. And this particular example of a definition also includes a reference to "clandestine agents" as opposed to sub-national groups. This might be taken to refer either to the innately clandestine nature of much political violence, in terms of the organisational structures and planning of operations, or it could be taken to refer to the clandestine agents of another state. Which in turn leads us to the issue of so-called "state terrorism".

5. "State terrorism"

Most definitions of terrorism explicitly or implicitly exclude the idea of "state terrorism", but the literature on political violence, which has traditionally focused primarily on sub-state anti-state violence perpetrated by non-governmental agents, has recently begun to address the question of whether a state can be terrorist. It

seems to me that there are at least three distinct issues tied up in the idea of "state terrorism".

The first relates to state-*sponsored* political violence, sometimes called "cat's paw terrorism". This is where a state funds, perhaps trains, provides logistical support, and perhaps allows bases of operations on its territory or provides a safe haven for a politically violent group that is engaged in armed struggle against another country or countries. Libya and Iran, in particular, have been accused of playing such a role, as indeed has the United States.

The second relates to a state itself using its own clandestine special units or irregular paramilitary forces to wage a terroristic or guerrilla campaign against the organs or population of another state. Iraq, Libya, and the United States have also, among others, been accused of engaging in this type of activity. This could be said to be a covert form of unconventional warfare rather than "terrorism" *per se*.

The third issue has two components, both relating to a state's use of force against its own population or a section thereof. The first component relates to a state using its own clandestine special units or irregular paramilitary forces to wage a terroristic or guerrilla campaign against a section of its own population, perhaps an ethnic or national minority that is seeking some form of autonomy or seeks to secede. The activities of so-called right-wing death squads in many Central and South American countries might be an example. The second component relates to the state's wholesale use of its monopoly on legitimate force to violently repress its own population. Burma might be a contemporary example, or Chile under Pinochet.

These three issues are logically distinct. State-sponsored terrorism is distinct from "terrorism" *per se*. It is not the state itself that is perpetrating the violent actions, though it makes them possible, in much the same way that financial donations from sections of an ethnic minority's diaspora may assist the activities of a violent nationalist movement. Yet we do not call the donating members of such a diaspora "terrorists", rather we call them sympathisers or supporters. Thus, following this analogy, it seems fairly clear that state-sponsored terrorism is something distinct from "state terrorism".

The second issue, where a state uses its own clandestine special units or irregular paramilitary forces to wage a terroristic or guerrilla campaign against the organs or population of another state, is a little more ambiguous. Clandestine commando-style troops have routinely been used in conventional wars, and civilians have routinely been targeted in those wars. I think that, intuitively, we can see a qualitative distinction between the terroristic activities of a state that is engaged in unconventional warfare and the terroristic activities of a sub-state oppositional movement. Articulating precisely where the distinction lies, however, is a little more difficult. It will come down, I think, to a matter of preferred definition. It may be argued that a state's use of unconventional, terroristic means in a dispute with another state, even if war has not formally been declared, does not equate to "state terrorism", though it may equate to war crimes, precisely because the use of those terroristic means is in the context of a dispute between states.

The third issue, relating to a state's use of force against its own population or a section of it, may also be determined in accordance with definitional preference. It might be argued that a state can behave *terroristically* towards its

own population – that is, use force to intimidate and coerce that population – without being "terrorist" itself. Those who disagree with this view often raise arguments along the lines of: "how, if we are to be consistent, can we call the Unabomber or the Symbionese Liberation Army 'terrorists', yet fail to apply that epithet to the likes of Hitler or Stalin?"[35] Certainly these dictators caused more human suffering and misery, were directly responsible for the deaths of vastly more people, and certainly caused more fear and terror than either the Unabomber or the S.L.A., but it might also be the case that the argument for labelling such regimes "terrorist" lies less in a desire for conceptual clarity and consistency than it does in the desire to extend the pejorative connotations of the term to regimes that are morally disapproved of. There are many words with which to express moral disapproval of the activities of a state towards its own people: repression, brutality, inhuman and degrading treatment, human rights abuse, and so forth. Perhaps, we should not spread the already thin concept of terrorism more thinly still.

Though some would disagree, it might be argued that although states can and do behave *terroristically*, we should not label this activity "state terrorism". State-*sponsored* terrorism is distinct from the use of unconventional means against another state, and both are distinct from the repression and brutality – which, incidentally, may be referred to by a state as counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency activities – that a state might visit upon its own population. And perhaps we should call none of them "state terrorism". Scheffler, indeed, refers to a state's use of internal repressive terroristic measures as "state terror" rather than "state terrorism": he argues that "governments may use terror as an instrument of policy without this amounting to terrorism at all".[36] Although he also argues that

states can be terrorist when they use tactics of terrorism against other states, he says that there is an important contrast between state terror and terrorism. The distinction he is concerned to express through his choice of terminology is the idea that "terrorism ... standardly involves the use of violence to generate fear with the aim of destabilizing or degrading an existing social order", whereas "state terror ... standardly involves the use or threat of violence to generate fear with the aim of *stabilizing or preserving* an existing social order" (emphasis added).[37] He admits, of course, that others may wish to use different terminology for this and related phenomena, but asserts the need to make a similar sort of distinction about the purposes of the violence used. To briefly presage an analogy used below, the distinction between a state's use of terror and "terrorism" per se might be similar to the difference between an orange and a grapefruit: both are round, juicy, edible fruit, with a tough skin and internal segments. However, they look different and, crucially, *taste* different.

6. A pragmatic approach

Bruce Hoffman's book, *Inside Terrorism*,[38] is fairly representative of the non-philosophically oriented literature on political violence. After the typical descriptive exegesis on the historical usage of the term, he focuses directly on the political nature of terrorism, and the fact that it is about power – achieving power and using it for political change. His initial, deliberately broad and imprecise definition is that "terrorism is thus violence – or, equally important, the threat of violence – used and directed in pursuit of, or in service of, a political aim".[39] This broad approach leaves little room for distinguishing between terrorism and other forms of political violence, widely construed. In doing so, of course, we lose some

definitional subtlety. The broad-brush approach deflects us from identifying, if this is possible, the core features of what is distinct about *terrorism* as opposed to other forms of political violence.

However, this seems not to be Hoffman's initial concern. He states that there is no one widely accepted or agreed definition, and that the term is notoriously difficult to define. In one sense, there is a pragmatic value to the argument that if we want to know what anti-state terrorism is, we should look at the legal definitions that states themselves employ. However, Hoffman notes that there is little exact consensus between governments or even between different agencies of the same government.[40] As illustration, Hoffman examines three different definitions from U.S. government bodies, noting that each definition reflects the priorities and interests of each agency. The first is the State Department definition already discussed. The second is the F.B.I.'s: terrorism is "the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives".

Hoffman argues that the third official definition, that of the U.S. defence department, is the most complete. Here, terrorism is "the unlawful use of – or threatened use of – force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives". This definition is superior because it emphasises the notion of *threat*, as well as actual acts of violence; it focuses on the targeting of society as a whole as well as governments; and it cites religious and ideological objectives alongside the political.

That said, Hoffman returns to the theme regarding the difficulty of defining terrorism. He refers to Walter Laqueur's belief that defining the term adequately is neither possible nor worth the effort and Alex Schmid's admission that it is "fruitless to cobble a truly comprehensive definition".[41] However, he contends that, whether or not a broadly acceptable definition of terrorism can be constructed, we can still identify some of its characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of political violence. Most of the characteristics that Hoffman outlines are relatively uncontentious[42]: it is ineluctably political in aims and motives; it is violent, or violence threatening; and it aims to produce far-reaching psychological repercussions, beyond the immediate victim or target. However, some debate about the final two characteristics is necessary. The stipulation that terrorism is perpetrated only by sub-state actors or non-state entities has already been dealt with. But Hoffman also says that terrorism is conducted by an organisation with an identifiable chain of command or a conspiratorial cell structure, whose members wear no uniforms or insignia. This is problematic, but only by omission, as this stipulation rules out of the definition violent "organisations" (used in a loose sense to convey a broad unity of ideological purpose) which neither have an identifiable chain of command nor a conspiratorial cell structure. Loose affiliations of violent activists are often found on the extreme fringes of single-issue pressure groups, such as anti-abortion militants or animal rights activists. Such loose affiliations often adhere to the doctrine of "leaderless resistance", promulgated by Louis Beam as an explicit alternative to what he regarded as the inadequate organisational structures of the typical cell structure or traditional pyramidal hierarchy. Thus, the extent to which "composite"[43] networks and lone individuals motivated by similar ideologies – such as violent anti-abortionists –

could be covered by Hoffman's set of characteristics depends on whether we can count the non-centralised and relatively disorganised dissemination of information, tactical and logistical data, lists of targets, techniques, justificatory arguments and so on as an "organisation".

Hoffman's final definition would in fact apply to such movements. He defines terrorism as "the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change".[44] This is a return to the broad-brush definitional approach. He continues:

> All terrorist acts involve violence or the threat of violence. Terrorism is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects ... it is meant to instil fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider 'target audience' that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party, or public opinion in general. Terrorism is designed to create power where there is none or to consolidate power where there is very little. Through the publicity generated by their violence, terrorists seek to obtain the leverage, influence and power they otherwise lack to effect political change on either a local or an international scale.[45]

The focus here is primarily on the creation of fear in order to intimidate an audience into political or social change. Moreover, the political nature of the act seems to be also extendable to incorporate religious, ethnic, or ideological goals. Reference is also made to the fact that terrorism is a tool employed by the relatively powerless. Certainly, a good and persuasive case can be made for "the use or threat of violence to create fear for the purposes of political intimidation"

being a key element in what we think terrorism to be. But there seems to be more to it than that – is it just "the use or threat of violence to create fear for the purposes of political intimidation" that sets terrorism apart in our minds from other forms of political violence? Not all acts by those that have been called "terrorists" have caused widespread fear: the actions of the Unabomber, for example, or the property damage of radical environmentalists. And does the dedicated targeting of only military and state targets create the same amount or *quality* of fear within the general population as the seemingly random and indiscriminate targeting of civilians in an urban bombing campaign? The issue of the deliberate targeting of the innocent is just one such element that many think to be another crucial aspect of what we think "terrorism" to be. It seems we must move beyond Hoffman's approach.

7. More sophisticated analyses (1)

The foregoing discussions showed just how many questions, both important and trivial, can be begged by a succinct and apparently straightforward definition. However, some more ambitious and sophisticated approaches have been made in relation to the question of definition.

Jenny Teichman[46] begins her account by noting that moral judgements can only be made when the question of definition is adequately answered.[47] She states that there are three different approaches to the attempt to reach an agreed or useful definition. Firstly, there is what she calls "ordinary language definition". This is simply how the word is used in everyday life. Secondly, there is what she calls the "wide stipulative definition". This is based partly on etymology, partly on past and present usage, and partly on stipulation. The third approach is termed the

"narrow stipulative definition". This is also based on history and etymology, but aims to produce a narrower definition.

Teichman immediately rejects the use of an ordinary-language definition, quoting C.A.J. Coady with approval: "The definitional question is essentially irresolvable by appeal to ordinary language alone, since terrorism as a concept is not 'ordinary' in even the way intention, guilt and dishonesty are … its natural home is in polemical, ideological and propagandist contexts".[48] She expands on this, arguing that the ordinary, current use of the word *terrorism* is far too wide. Notwithstanding the prevalence of the notion that "although I don't know how to define it, I can recognise it when I see it", Teichman notes that if we were to list all the events and acts that are commonly termed "terrorist" in ordinary conversation, in the media and in political rhetoric, we would end up with a big bundle of not-very-similar items, including attacks on army and police, on random targets, on selected but not military targets, assassinations, activities of a state's secret services, kidnappings, hostage taking, and so on.

Teichman argues that although we should not rely on ordinary usage, it can help to inform our understanding. Essentially, we need to look at the history of the word, its origins and etymology, informed by current usage. Then we should stipulate what we take the word to mean. Originally, the term *terrorism* was used primarily to refer to the actions of governments, specifically the policies of post-revolutionary France. Now, however, the term is taken to refer to actions directed primarily against states. In explaining the change in usage, Teichman points to the increased prevalence in the mid-19th century of anti-state activists who used violent methods. Another salient issue was the increased availability

and consequent use by such groups of relatively indiscriminate weapons such as dynamite.[49]

Teichman also considers a variety of official definitions as part of the analysis of the historical usage of the word. In the 1960s, the U.S. departments of state, defence, justice, and the F.B.I. defined terrorism as "a variety of criminal activity involving the unlawful use of force".[50] The vagueness and ambiguity of this interpretation reminds us of our previous discussion of official definitions. This 1960s definition is notable, however, insofar as it fails to mention either the concept of terror or political motivation – both of these are routine aspects of contemporary official definitions. Instead, it emphasises criminal violence, devoid of political context or effect on an audience or population. By that definition, Al Capone would be a terrorist.

That problem does not occur with the next definition that Teichman looks at, contained in the British government's 1974 *Prevention of Terrorism Act*. There, terrorism is said to be "the use of violence for political ends, including the use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear". Although this is closer to many modern definitions, Teichman argues that it is too wide, too all-encompassing, noting that it could be taken to refer to rioting and street violence, as well as state punishment or deterrence of criminals.

The next definition to be considered is a 1983 version by the U.S. defence department. Here, terrorism is "the use of force by revolutionary organizations".[51] As is usual, this also begs several questions, mainly related to the issue of what we should take the word *revolutionary* to mean. It does, however, imply a political motivation, but it is arguable whether the word extends to apply to pro-state paramilitaries or reactionary violence.

The last official definition that Teichman considers is very close to those that are employed by many contemporary analysts and scholars, and well complements the contemporary U.S. state department definition discussed above. The 1986 vice-president's task force on combating terrorism stated that terrorism is "the unlawful use or threat of violence against persons or property to further political or social objectives; usually intended to coerce a government, individuals or groups to modify their behaviour or politics".[52] With this definition, we are getting into territory that is slightly more satisfactory. Many people would be able to accept this as a relatively accurate account of the phenomenon of terrorism. Some might argue, however, that this definition could be taken to refer to most forms of political violence – were it not for the inclusion of the descriptor "unlawful" it could well be applied to conventional war. For those that wish to equate terrorism with political violence, such as Honderich suggested, this would not be a problem. Nevertheless, the fact that there are numerous continuing attempts to construct a better definition seems to point to the fact that many definitions, this one included, fail to address some essential aspect of the phenomenon of terrorism. Critics of this 1986 definition are more likely to have problems with what has been left out of it, rather than what has been incorporated. It emphasises illegality, violence or the threat of violence, political motivation, and the attempt to change policy or opinion. What it excludes, some might argue, are important elements of the meaning of *terrorism*. For example, it refers to attacks on "persons or property". No distinction is made between innocent civilians randomly targeted in a car bombing and fully combat-ready troops targeted during an engagement with insurgent guerrilla forces in the jungle. This is a problem for those who wish to maintain a distinction between terrorism *per se*

and other forms of political violence such as guerrilla warfare. The 1986 definition also fails to mention the creation of fear and terror in an audience as an essential part of the phenomenon. Wilkinson, for example, sees the creation and exploitation of a climate of fear among a target audience wider than the immediate victims of the violence as being an integral part of the concept of terrorism.[53] So we can take the 1986 definition in either of two ways: as a succinct, broadly encompassing approach that can be used as the basis for a more precise categorisation, or as a conceptual blunt instrument that makes its point without addressing the real essence of the phenomenon of terrorism.

Returning to Teichman, she argues that there are three species of terrorism, which correspond to the three main phases in the historical usage of the word. The first species is "state terrorism" or reigns of terror. The second is terrorism that consists solely in the assassination of carefully selected individuals – this includes killings by organized crime for profit. However, "the murders and attempted murders of political leaders perpetrated by lunatics are borderline cases".[54] The third species is "modern terrorism". This is "usually but not invariably a kind of violent nationalistic rebellion carried out in a variety of ways".[55]

This doesn't seem to be very helpful. We will still have definitional problems with the concept of "modern terrorism". She also defines the term by its ends rather than its means. Moreover, the explanation of what it is that constitutes modern terrorism seems to consist in exactly the same sort of "rag-bag of not very similar items" that Teichman earlier saw as the undesirable consequence of using ordinary-language usage as a basis for a definition. Now apparently embracing the

"I know it when I see it" approach, her list of "things which seem to be true about modern terrorism" incorporates the following:[56]

- It often involves attacks on innocent or neutral parties, attacks on random targets or commercial targets, hijackings, kidnappings, and mutilation of the dead.
- It is not necessarily always arbitrary or random in its choice of victims – it sometimes targets carefully chosen specific victims.
- Having a "bad purpose", such as overthrowing a democratic regime, is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition of terrorism. "A rebellion can be carried out for a right or a wrong reason and conducted in a just or an unjust way, just like war proper". So "modern terrorism" should encompass rebellion that is conducted for a good aim but in a bad way.
- It should not rely on the concept of "causing terror": many things cause terror, including war proper. However, "we will look pretty silly if we do not mention terror in our account of terrorism". So the definition must include the idea that causing terror is a usual, but not invariable, feature of core cases of terrorism. "Merely inspiring terror is not terroristic … a terrorist inspires terror by carrying out, or making serious verbal or demonstrative threats to carry out terrible deeds".

So, Teichman's concept of "modern terrorism" incorporates the ideas that it often targets innocents and non-combatants, but not always; it may involve the inspiring of terror, but not always; and it may have a morally good aim or a morally bad one.

8. More sophisticated analyses (2)

Igor Primoratz makes what is perhaps a more interesting and potentially useful case. Initially similar in approach to that of Teichman – in rejecting ordinary language definition on the same basis and referring to the historical origins of the term and its etymology – Primoratz's point is to identify the traits and features of terrorism that lead "most of us to view it with moral repugnance".[57]

He holds that terrorism is meant to cause terror – "in terrorism proper, the causing of fear and coercion through fear is *the* objective" – but the mere causing of terror without having a particular purpose is not sufficient. Causing terror simply for fun does not qualify as a particular purpose in this regard. Moreover, terrorism represents purposeful *coercive intimidation*. And Primoratz also rejects the very interesting idea of "non-violent" terrorism.

This concept was propounded by Carl Wellman,[58] who incorporated in it examples of legal execution used as a deterrent to criminal activity, and the case of blackmail, where fear of exposure is used to coercively intimidate its victim. With regard to the first, Primoratz sensibly notes that it is surely inconsistent to say that execution as a deterrent represents "non-violent" fear causation. Execution, he says, is "one of the more violent things we can do to a person".[59] With regard to the case of blackmail, he says that before determining how we characterise it, we need to assess just how serious the consequences of exposure would be for the victim. "If the harm threatened were great, and if violent actions characteristically inflict great harm in a striking manner, then to blackmail would indeed be to threaten violence", hence it could not represent non-violent terrorism.[60] Here, I disagree: the extension of the concept of violence to cover multiple forms of harm is unhelpful, and, as argued above, devalues the concept.

Blackmail may cause great harm, but it typically is not violent. Yet I also disagree with Wellman that it can be characterised as terrorism. If we are to attempt to determine the essential meaning of the term, we need to keep our focus on what its central features are. Not everything that causes terror is terrorism, or terroristic. The causing of terror may or may not be a necessary condition of terrorism, but it is certainly not a sufficient condition.

Turning to what he regards as the key features of terrorism, Primoratz focuses on its apparent indiscriminateness and unpredictability. The latter is rather more straightforward than the former, although the two features are interlinked. The "unpredictability of terrorism" is taken to mean that individuals cannot be certain of avoiding the unwelcome attentions of the terrorist by behaving in certain ways or avoiding certain occupations – "One can never count on keeping clear of the terrorist by not doing the things the terrorist objects to: for example, by not joining the army or the police, or by avoiding political office".[61]

With regard to the former feature, terrorism is not indiscriminate in a wide sense, "for the terrorist does not strike blindly and pointlessly … but rather plans his actions carefully".[62] However, Primoratz regards indiscriminateness in a narrower sense as an essential feature of terrorism, specifically the failure to discriminate between the guilty and the innocent and to respect the latter's immunity. This leads, of course, to more questions. One of the first we encounter is once again the issue of the definition of innocence, discussed above. Primoratz explicitly addresses this issue:

> What is the sense in which the direct victims of the terrorist are 'innocent'? They have not *done* anything the terrorist could adduce as a justification of what he does to them. They are not attacking him, and thus he cannot justify his action as

> one of self-defence. They are not engaged in a war against him, and therefore he cannot say that he is merely fighting in a war himself. They are not responsible, *in any plausible sense of the word* [emphasis added] for the (real or alleged) injustice, suffering, deprivation, which is inflicted on him or on those whose cause he has embraced, and which is so enormous that it could justify a violent response. Or, if they are, he is not in a position to know that.[63]

This is a useful clarification of what he takes the term *innocent* to mean, and the inclusion of the emphasised words deflects the sorts of arguments that arise in undergraduate seminar discussions. Primoratz considers that the immediate, direct targets of terrorist violence – those who are maimed or die – are in fact secondary targets, and are of secondary importance to the perpetrator. The primary targets are affected indirectly. These are the people or institutions that the perpetrator is trying to coercively intimidate into doing something that they would not otherwise do. Crucially, Primoratz states that these indirect targets may or may not be innocent themselves; what is the essential characteristic is that those who are directly targeted *are* innocent. Moreover, they are "innocent from *the terrorist's own point of view*."[64] That is, from the point of view of the perpetrator, these victims are innocent in the sense that they are not held responsible for an alleged grievance. This is where Primoratz draws the distinction between *terrorism* and political assassination. However much we might disagree with their judgement of the policies of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro, Primoratz argues that, from the perspective of his Red Brigade kidnappers and killers, he was not innocent. So "being responsible for a merely alleged injustice – an injustice that is alleged by the terrorist, but not recognised as such by anyone else – will be enough for losing one's immunity". He goes on to clarify his position:

> I am not implying that as soon as an opponent of a certain regime has satisfied himself that the regime is utterly and intolerably unjust, he has a moral *carte blanche* to kill and maim its officials, but only that if he does so, his actions will not be terrorism, but political assassination. But nothing stands in the way of our condemning him, if we reject his judgement of the moral standing of the regime. To show that an action is not terrorism but political assassination is neither to justify nor excuse it.[65]

Thus for Primoratz, the innocent victims of terrorism are innocent in the sense that even the terrorist regards them as being non-guilty, or at least cannot think of a plausible reason as to why they should be seen as guilty.[66]

One issue that Primoratz does not address, but which is surely pertinent, is the issue of the perpetrators' intent with regard to innocents. Specifically, is the failure to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty an *intentional* failure to discriminate or a side effect of a targeted attack on those perceived as guilty? Or should it make a difference? For instance, does Primoratz's distinction between terrorism *per se* and political assassination imply that if a civilian happened to be killed in the course of a lethal attack on soldiers or officials of the state, then – in that same attack – the civilian was an innocent victim of terrorism whereas the state officials were targets of political assassination? The case of such a civilian caught in the crossfire or killed as a side effect of an action that was intended to be an instance of pure political assassination is ambiguous in Primoratz's schema. Similarly, while many perpetrators of political violence do not issue warnings about the location and timing of, for example, car bombs in urban areas, many others do issue such warnings, albeit with variable degrees of reliability. Now, I

do not think that it can plausibly be argued that the mere issuing of a warning can absolve the perpetrators of responsibility for any innocent deaths. However, the fact that a warning was issued does clearly signal – at least in cases where the warning was not deliberately misleading – that the intent of the perpetrators was to clearly discriminate between the innocent and the guilty, or at least between innocent civilians and the real intended target, such as a commercial or economic target. Such cases are also ambiguous in Primoratz's distinction, and points perhaps to the need to look at these possible grey areas between "terrorism proper" and pure political assassination.

And the inadequacy of the label "political assassination" becomes clear with another point that Primoratz makes. He notes that, while the Red Brigades were terrorists insofar as they committed many terrorist acts, when they killed Aldo Moro, that was political assassination.[67] To that extent, the label seems applicable, because it refers to an action that most people would recognise as a classic, dictionary-definition assassination. But he goes on to say that "a similar confusion was conspicuous in the Israeli media a couple of years ago, when suicide attacks on the Israeli Army carried out by Shiite terrorists were uniformly described as 'terrorist attacks'.[68] If, as Primoratz says, the essential trait of terrorism, both conceptually and morally, is the targeting of the innocent, and if the Israeli troops were not innocent in the relevant sense, then how are we to characterise that attack? It was not "terrorism proper", and the label of "political assassination" does not seem to be adequate when referring to a quasi-military attack. So what was it – unconventional warfare or armed struggle? A paramilitary attack? An attack by "militants"? An actual example is the 9th of September 2003 Hamas attacks in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: under Primoratz's criteria, the Tel Aviv

attack, which killed at least seven soldiers at a bus stop outside a military base, would *not* constitute terrorism, whereas the Jerusalem attack by the same organisation approximately six hours later, killing at least six civilians, would.[69] One of the drawbacks, it seems, of the rigorous attempt to clarify what the essential traits of the concept of terrorism are, is that it leaves other aspects of political violence – which had previously been subsumed in the catch-all usage of the term – without a conceptual pigeon-hole to call home. We will come back to this issue below, during the perhaps futile attempt to incorporate various elements of political violence into an illustrative scale. However, Primoratz's central point is succinct and relevant: "[The] targeting of the innocent is the essential trait of terrorism, both conceptually and morally".[70]

9. Towards a comprehensive definition?

C. A. J. Coady[71] defines terrorism as "a political act, ordinarily committed by an organised group, which involves the intentional killing or other severe harming of non-combatants or the threat of the same or intentional severe damage to the property of non-combatants or the threat of the same". This is quite a good, relatively comprehensive definition. Firstly, like Primoratz, the epithet is confined to the intentional targeting of civilian non-combatants, rather than military targets. And like Primoratz, another term must be applied to political violence that primarily targets the military. Secondly, the definition stresses the *political* nature of the act. Although there is no direct indication, we can probably assume that the term *political* can be taken to incorporate religious aims as well. Thirdly, it is *ordinarily* perpetrated by an organised group, thus leaving open its applicability to unorganised individuals and "composite groups". It emphasises *intentionality*;

lethality or severe harming; *threat* and the concomitant provoking of psychological fear; and includes damage to *property*, not just damage to individuals' persons. It also avoids the conceptual minefield of defining violence and leaves it open for a state to engage in it, for those who wish to make that extension.

It seems to me that there are at least three main approaches to the issue of the meaning of the term *terrorism* and the attempt to employ it in a value-neutral sense. Of the three that I have in mind, the first approach is simply to reject the attempt at defining or interpreting the word in terms of value-neutrality and relegate the word in perpetuity to a role as a pejorative epithet in political polemics. This is to reject the use of the term *terrorism* in serious academic discourse. That said, this does have certain advantages: if we were to make such a decision, when we hear the term, we would know that it carries no more informative value than the descriptor "left-wing pinkos". It would be definitely non-informative, except as an indication of the political perspectives and preferences of the speaker, and we would know that it was definitely used in a morally evaluative sense. It seems that some media outlets have decided that an attempt at value-neutrality, insofar as the use of the word *terrorism* is avoided, might be appropriate: as an example, in a report on attacks against both civilians and military in Palestine/Israel, no mention of the word *terrorist* occurred – instead, the journalist referred to suicide bombers and "the military wing of Hamas"[72]. This approach is frequent, depending on the journalist, publication, conflict, and targets.

The second and third approaches are to stipulate a meaning for the term. The first stipulative approach would identify a core feature, such as Primoratz's emphasis on the feature of terrorism that leads "most of us to view it with moral repugnance": that is, the deliberative targeting of civilians, innocents, and non-combatants. Terrorism would thus be an activity, tactic, or method. Perpetrators of political violence would only qualify for the label terrorist when they deliberately target non-combatants: perpetrators of political violence are only "terrorists" when they commit "terrorist acts". Thus we could attempt to comprehensively define terrorism as:

> A tactic of armed struggle, that is lesser in impact than and more or less distinct from war, civil war and guerrilla war and is greater in impact than and more or less distinct from riot and sabotage, that involves the use of violence (in the sense of physical force) or the threat of violence directly or indirectly against non-combatants and/or property, in an attempt to antagonize, coerce, or intimidate (through the use of or the threat of that violence) a government, population (or section thereof), society, or alliance of states in the furtherance of a particular ideology or system of ideas (either political, religious or otherwise).

This definition attempts to make clear the scalar distinction between terrorism *per se* and both greater and lesser forms of political violence. It explicitly identifies one core element of what terrorism is often taken to be (the targeting of non-combatants) and also alludes to another central element, the use of a threat of violence to intimidate. It also explicitly identifies motivations and aims for that violence that go beyond the narrowly construed political. Can we do better than this? The attempt can be made, I think, not least because, although Primoratz

made a strong case for restricting the application of the term *terrorism* to the deliberate targeting of innocents and non-combatants, many groups that are routinely called "terrorist" primarily target only combatants. The solution might lie in the attempt to distinguish between different types of terrorist based on whom they primarily target.

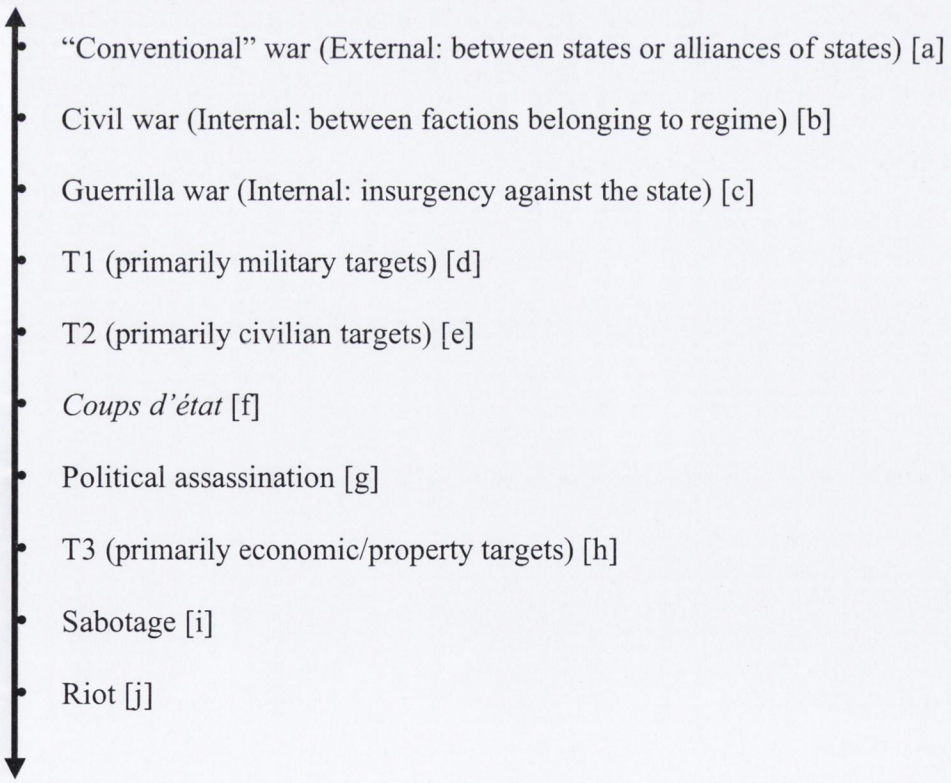
Thus our second stipulative approach seeks to define the term in an all-encompassing sense, as an evaluatively neutral descriptor of certain forms of political violence that are not war, guerrilla war, civil war, political assassination, *coups d'état*, riot, or sabotage:

> A tactic of armed struggle, that is lesser in impact than and more or less distinct from war, civil war and guerrilla war and is greater in impact than and more or less distinct from riot and sabotage, that involves the use of violence (in the sense of physical force) or the threat of violence directly or indirectly against either primarily military, paramilitary, or state security combatants (T1); against primarily non-combatant civilians (T2); or primarily against property (T3) in an attempt to antagonize, coerce, or intimidate (through the use of or the threat of that violence) a government, population (or section thereof), society, or alliance of states in the furtherance of a particular ideology or system of ideas (either political, religious or otherwise).

This definition has the advantages of the comprehensiveness of the previous definition, while allowing us to distinguish between at least three "types" of terrorism based on the primary targets. "Terrorism type 1" (T1) allows us to call the van bombers who blow up a military base "terrorists", avoiding the awkwardness of calling this "political assassination", as in Primoratz. T2 can be

taken to refer to those militants who fly planes into buildings. T3 can be taken to refer to those who firebomb empty abortion clinics or research labs.

However, this is a cumbersome definition, and does not answer many of the questions that it inevitably raises. One such question is, of course, the meaning of the non-combatant versus combatant distinction that was discussed, but not resolved, in section 4. Another question is raised by the apparent need, if we are to distinguish "terrorist" political violence from other forms of political violence, to adequately define *war*, *civil war*, *guerrilla war*, *sabotage*, and *riot*. That would take another few chapters. Without engaging in such a venture, the most we can say, I think, is that there is a continuum of different types of political violence, many of which blur into gray areas at their edges and overlap. If we were to revise our earlier illustration, it might look something like this:



The caveats of section 3 regarding the rather arbitrary, non-exhaustive, and certainly contestable placing of the different types of political violence on this scale still stand. The different points on this scale may overlap in various ways. Indeed, a linear representation may not be the most appropriate one: civil war may overlap with *coups d'état*, or conventional war with guerrilla war. Certainly, in many instances, T1, T2, and T3 overlap, both with each other and with guerrilla and civil war, and war proper. And T3 and sabotage may be said to differ only in matter of scale. Others may wish to incorporate different types of terrorism, having a T4 for single-issue campaigns such as animal rights or anti-abortion activism, or designating sabotage as T5 in distinction to T3. Still others might want to place a state's violent repression of its own people on that scale, and appropriately so. Be that as it may, and bearing in mind the simply illustrative nature of this scale, it still makes sense to speak of a continuum of political violence, whether or not we wish to label the scale as a whole a continuum of conflict, armed conflict, armed struggle, or political violence. And there will of course be disagreements about what to label this continuum. For example, Honderich equated *terrorism* with what is normally called political violence[73], so we might conjecture that he would call items *a* to *c* on the scale species of *war*; items *d*, *e* and *h* either *terrorism* or *political violence*; and the other items by their given designations, with all items being subspecies of *violent conflict*. The point is, whether we call it a continuum of conflict, a continuum of political violence, a continuum of armed struggle, and so on, it always comes down to a personal designational preference. What we *do* need to keep in mind is that there *is* a continuum, and we need to consider not just the ordinal placing of different types

of political violence upon it, but the interrelationship between them, as well as the many grey areas between them.

We may have come full circle to the repetition that all of these concepts are contested. In that case, we must fall back on our stipulative definitions or avoid the use of the contested terms. This is why almost every theoretical article or book on terrorism and political violence begins with the author setting out the stall of what s/he means by those terms, and this work is no exception. However, following Primoratz, we can avoid using the contested concept of *terrorism* except insofar as it refers to premeditated violence directed against civilians or noncombatants (T2), and use the terms armed struggle and/or political violence for those points on the scale designated T1 and T3. Or we can, in the succeeding considerations of various types of groups that use various forms of violence for political and ideological purposes, simply refer to "political violence" and "users of political violence".

10. The idea of family resemblance

Is there any way out of the definitional quagmire besides abandoning the use of the word "terrorism", notwithstanding the idea that such abandonment might be the simplest thing to do? One approach that might have the potential to achieve some more conceptual clarity in the area is to try to use Wittgenstein's idea of "family resemblance" in relation to conceptualising political violence and terrorism.[74] Although there are different interpretations about what Wittgenstein's notion should be really taken to mean,[75] the most common interpretation seems to be the claim that "there are linguistic rules stating that an object falls under a

concept if it bears family resemblances with other objects falling under this concept".[76]

The classic example that Wittgenstein uses is the idea of a game. He notes that we use the word "game" in relation to many activities that are widely diverse and often seem to have little in common, for example "board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on".[77] They are all forms of activity that give pleasure, but they differ in terms of the level of amusement derived, whether there need necessarily be a winner, whether there is competition between players, even whether or not there are rules:

> What is common to them all? Don't say: 'There *must* be something common, or they would not be called "games"' ... *look and see* whether there is anything common to all. For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that ... we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear. And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing; sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail.

The idea is that one word or concept – especially in relation to complex concepts – can simultaneously refer to multifarious and disparate phenomena that, although different in character and appearance, nevertheless have certain overlapping similarities. Wittgenstein says: "I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances'; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament,

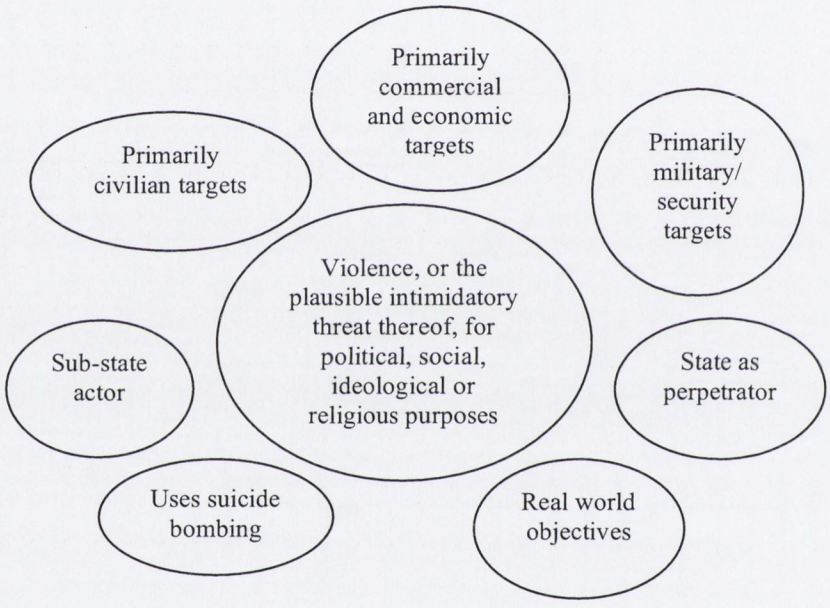
etc. etc., overlap and criss-cross in the same way – and I shall say: 'games form a family'."[78]

Perhaps political violence and/or "terrorism(s)" also form a family. To return to the "orange/grapefruit" analogy mentioned at the end of section 5, another way of illustrating the issue of different, but similar, forms of political violence might be to consider them in terms of oranges. There are several similar but distinct types of orange. All of them are round, edible, juicy citrus fruit, with a tough skin and segmented innards. All of that goes for the grapefruit of state terrorism, too, though that looks and tastes different. But the orange has many different members to its family, all of which are orange in colour and all of which taste similar, but which might differ in terms of size or scale: we have the standard dessert orange, the tangerine, the mandarin, the Satsuma, even – appropriately in terms of political violence – the blood orange. So, to return to our revised scale of political violence presented in section 9 (p. 48), the standard jaffa might be terrorism type 1 (primarily military targets), the tangerine might be type 2 (primarily civilian targets), the mandarin might be type 3, and so on. The point is not to say which fruit approximates which form of political violence – an engaging diversion though it be; the point is to illustrate that there may be similar yet distinct forms of terrorism.

The idea is that there may not be any single feature that is common to all forms of political violence (apart from violence or the threat thereof, of course), but there might well be complex networks of overlapping similarities between them. This would imply that a way to conceptualise terrorism/political violence in a satisfactory manner would be to try to identify, in a set of specific archetypal cases, the relevant central elements of different particular instances of political

violence and analyse them in terms of a sufficient overlap of relevant similarities. Though that endeavour is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be a valuable and interesting area for future research.

That said, a graphical representation of these different instances might look like this (and this is no more than an illustrative sample of possible different central elements of such instances). The centre oval represents the necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for an accurate characterisation of a particular instance of political violence:[79]



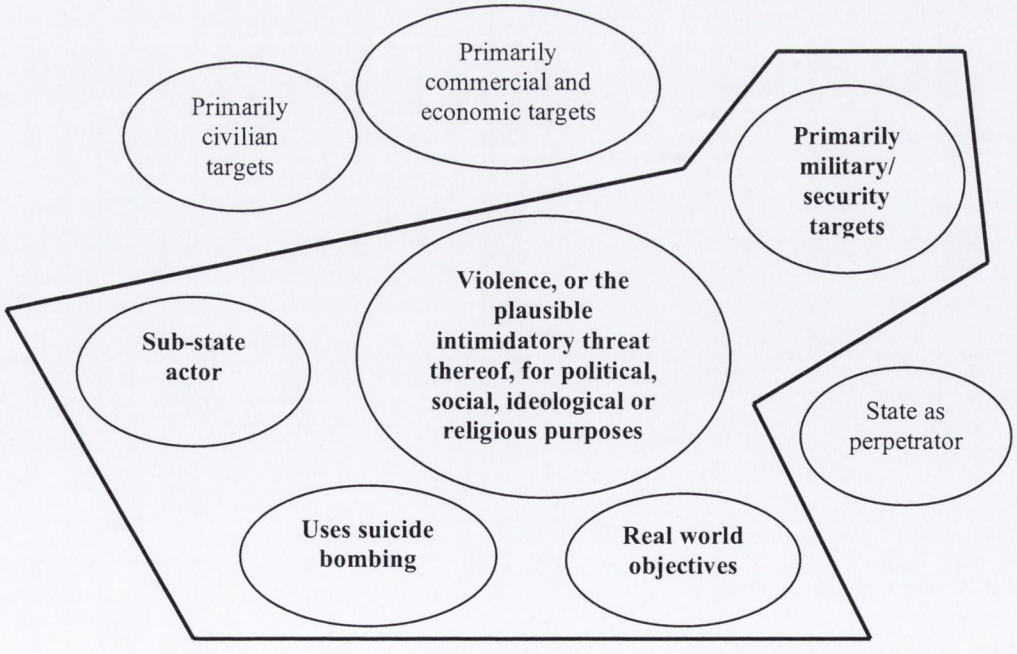
Again, this is little more than a purely illustrative "lucky bag" of various elements that might be characteristic of a particular instance of terrorism/political violence, incorporating elements related to the identity of the perpetrator, its primary targets, its tactics and objectives.

And in the next illustrative schema, terrorism type 1 in our revised scale might include the following elements (bound together by the black line in order to indicate which of these illustrative elements are exemplified in a particular

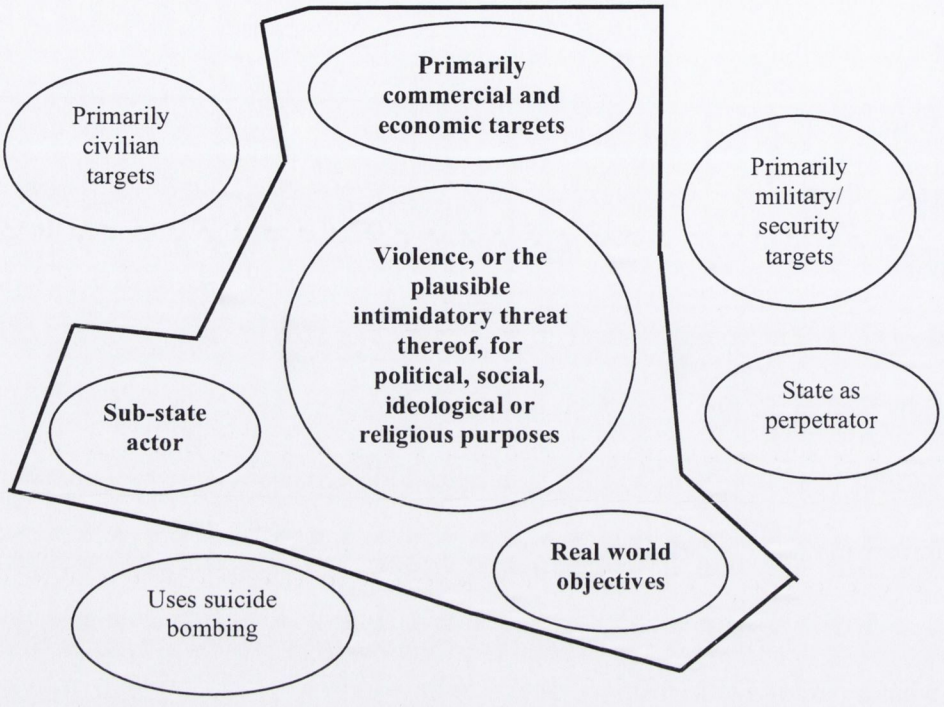
instance of terrorism/political violence). Arguably, this might be an accurate representation of common elements that make up typical Tamil Tiger actions.

It would, of course, take a much more systematic analysis of the central elements that may or may not be common in the actions undertaken by different sorts of groups to be able to extend these graphical representations beyond the merely illustrative. Jenny Teichman's paper (already discussed) and Alex Schmid's *Political Terrorism* would be good places to start for such a systematic analysis.[80] What would be needed is the systematic elaboration of what distinct and distinctive elements were typically present in various definitions of terrorism or various instances of it, and the subsequent identification of paradigmatic cases of terrorism that share certain of these common, but distinct, elements.

Anyway, to return to what a putative illustrative graphical representation of what a paradigmatic instance of terrorism type 1 might look like, and keeping what might be readily identified as elements common to instances of terrorism/political violence perpetrated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (bounded by the black line) in mind:



Whereas a group engaged in terrorism type 3 in the revised scale (for example, the Animal Liberation Front or the Earth Liberation Front) might look like this:



Be all that as it may, there are unresolved problems relating to family resemblance theories of concepts. For a start, many concepts are not complex and have clearly accepted and explicitly stated definitions, and are, as such, not "family resemblance concepts". Wittgenstein recognised this, and used the example of the aroma of coffee. How can we actually describe the smell of coffee without using the tautology "it smells like coffee"?[81] The smell of coffee is a universal that cannot be classified in terms of the family resemblance model, and colours are similar: "there can be no family resemblance account of why we call various things red".[82] So, how do we determine which concepts are family resemblance concepts and which are not?[83] What is needed for a family resemblance account of a thing is that it has "distinguishable, discrete features … on the basis of which

classification is made".[84] And it would seem clear that the concept of terrorism fits these criteria.

However, issues remain. What is meant by the notion of similarity? What is sufficient for two things to be regarded as similar?[85] A cat and a bus are both objects that share the property that we can observe and touch them in the real world, but that is pretty much their only point of similarity. What are the criteria for similarity? A related point is that any thing is in some way similar to some other thing, whether that be that they are both composed of atoms and molecules or that they relate in some way to the idea of "the political" because they are both ideas. So, are only some similarities relevant, or are similarities only a necessary – but not sufficient – condition for inclusion within what constitutes a concept?[86]

Wittgenstein had an answer: "... these phenomena have no one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all – but that they are *related* to one another in many different ways. And it is because of this relationship, or these relationships, that we call them all 'language'".[87] That is, the question of which similarities between concepts are relevant is ultimately indeterminate, and people can be members of the same linguistic community only if, by and large, they "agree in their judgments"[88] (that is, there is *de facto* agreement) about, for example, what words we use to designate the colours red and green. There may, of course, be debate about whether an instance of magenta is properly a shade of red or whether it is closer to some other colour, but at least we would be able to rationally discuss its categorisation in terms of relevant differences that we all understand and agree on as being differences that *are* relevant. Human beings "agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of

life": "If language is to be a means of communication, there must be agreement not only in definitions, but also … in judgments".[89]

A more relevant example for our purposes might be this. Imagine two people are sitting watching the news on the day of the 11th September 2001 attacks on New York and the Pentagon. As the first plane hits the World Trade Centre, both agree that the attack is an act of terrorism. But as the second plane hits, one of them denies that *that* attack is an act of terrorism, and seemed to be sincerely convinced of this and stuck rigidly to this belief. The reason for his disagreement? The second plane was a different colour. We would not be able to understand this person's assertion that the colour of the plane was a relevant difference in terms of classifying the act as terrorism or not, nor would a rational debate about relevant similarities in determining whether a given act was an act of terrorism be possible.

Now consider an alternative scenario. Two people are watching the news on 11th September 2001. As the two planes hit the World Trade Centre, both agree that the attack was an act of terrorism. But when news of the attack on the Pentagon comes through, one of them denies that *that* attack constituted an act of terrorism, for it was a military/security target. At least in this example we could see a logical and relevant reason for the disagreement, and rational debate would be possible on the basis of relevant similarities and differences for categorising an act as "terrorism".

That is why, it might be argued, that, in the core elements in the centre circle of the illustrative graphs above, the inclusion of the idea of intimidation is important. For in the debate between the second two people about why the attack on New York constituted terrorism, but the attack on the Pentagon did not, the

notion of the essentially intimidatory nature of the attacks, including the Pentagon attack, could be stressed. It might be argued in our hypothetical debate between these two people that the central feature of an act of terrorism is the second-order psychological intimidation – or terror – caused by such acts, not just the fact that it was civilians who were indiscriminately killed without warning rather than military/security personnel. So it might be argued that, even if the Pentagon alone was attacked in such a manner that day (leaving aside the fact that there were civilian non-combatants on the plane) – or, indeed, if the Pentagon alone was attacked in some other manner that did not lead to the death of civilian non-combatants – then that attack still constituted an act of terrorism because of its essentially intimidatory effect on the civilian population as a whole.

The point in terms of the idea of family resemblance is that there might well be a generally held consensus, in terms of our agreed judgements, on what sort of acts paradigmatically constitute an act of terrorism. That is, there is probably a generally clear agreement about what might be seen as paradigmatic instances of terrorism: the New York attacks, for example, or the beheading of a hostage on videotape. What these agreed judgments about such paradigmatic instances have in common might be held to be – probably uncontentiously – the fact that they seek to induce a form of psychological intimidation in third parties. So, in applying a family resemblance conceptualisation of terrorism and seeking to extend the applicability of the concept of terrorism to other instances of political violence, one of the essential core elements of terrorism might be taken to be such intimidation. Thus, starting from this agreement on the essential core element of an act of terrorism, we could extend the usage of the word terrorism to other instances of political violence that have an essentially intimidatory purpose

(with regard to third party observers), and refuse to extend it to instances of political violence that do not have the essential core element of intimidating third parties – for example, conventional warfare.

In short, the family resemblance approach might allow us to coherently and rationally extend the concept of terrorism to newly identified and described instances of political violence, as long as they shared some essential overlapping similarity – and not necessarily just the essentially intimidatory core – with instances of political violence that had been previously identified as terrorism. And all of these potential essential overlapping similarities are likely to be scalar, or on a continuum, including such issues as the distinction between combatant, potential combatant and non-combatant; the distinction between innocent and not innocent; and the distinction between intimidation based on the credible possibility of force being used, and the actual use of force.

The concept of terrorism is on a scale, and that scale is multidimensional. The point is that there might be no *a priori* weighting of these dimensions: the dimensions themselves may be scalar (think, for example, of the scale of "innocence" between combat-ready soldier and new-born baby discussed above). What this implies is that the significance of similarities and differences between actual concrete examples of "terrorism" is a matter of non-determinate judgement. So the best way to understand how the term *terrorism* should be used without total incoherence, but in the absence of readily specifiable necessary and sufficient conditions, might be to take a set of paradigmatic specific cases, identify their central operative elements, and see possible extensions of the usage of the term as justifiable in cases of a sufficient overlap of similarities.

Wittgenstein asked: "Why do we call something a 'number'?" And answered: "... perhaps because it has a – direct – relationship with several things that have hitherto been called number; and this can be said to give it an indirect relationship to other things we call the same name".[90] What is the relationship between 9 and 3? They are both numbers, and 9 is a multiple of 3, but also 9 comes after 8, which in turn comes after 7, which comes after 6, which is also a multiple of 3 but also comes after 5, and so on. Perhaps we should be looking at conceptualising different instances of terrorism/political violence in a similar manner.

11. How long is a piece of string?

Wittgenstein explains the notion of extending a word's usage to refer to different instances of the concept implied by that word as being similar to a length of thread: "... we extend our concept of number as in, spinning a thread, we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibre."

It seems likely that fruitful and productive research could be undertaken in the area of attempting to systematically apply Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblance to the various definitions and concepts of terrorism/political violence that abound in the literature. We cannot pursue the matter further here, however.

But – given that the term "terrorism" is, *de facto* and currently ineluctably, morally loaded – how should we proceed and what terminology should we use? There are three main considerations relevant to the purposes of this work that have led to the conclusion that we should avoid the use of the terms *terrorism* and

terrorist and instead use the terminology of "political violence" and "users of political violence".

. Firstly, the literature explored in this work is the justificatory literature of organisations/people that are both conventionally accepted as and officially (governmentally) designated as "terrorist" organisations. Thus it is necessary to analyse the nature of, and the internal coherence of, the contemporary academic and government discourse on terrorism. That is what this chapter has sought to do.

Secondly, in part of that academic and government discourse, terrorism is implicitly or explicitly defined as unjustified (and often unjustifiable), and this poses problems for the endeavour to analyse "justification" and the justifications actually employed. One solution is that, although there might be confusion, indeterminacy and even essential contestability in how the concept of terrorism is to be understood, an approach using alternative terminology (although admittedly still indeterminate terminology) that is, crucially, free of the inevitably morally loaded implications of the term *terrorism* and is independent of the existing *de facto* normative frameworks can create or secure conceptual space for the central research question. That is, how, and in what ways, and with what ethical bases, is terrorism/political violence justified by its perpetrators?

Thirdly, although the term *terrorism* is inevitably morally loaded and conveys unequivocally negative connotations to a popular audience, and it might be wise for an academic seeking objectivity to avoid its use, we are still talking about what is popularly termed terrorism, and the groups we are to look at have all earned that label because (at least some of the) violence used has been seen as egregious and unjustified.

Although we might avoid the emotive language of the term *terrorism*, our central purpose in this work is to understand why even instances of extreme, indiscriminate, intimidatory violence are perceived as justified by their perpetrators and to try to understand why that is so.

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[1] *Collins Concise Dictionary*, 2nd edition (London: Collins, 1988)

[2] *Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, 4th edition (revised) (London: Oxford University Press, 1946)

[3] And in the context of this discussion, that is, of course, entirely appropriate. We can proceed without any further mention of violent natural events. It will be assumed that we are referring to violence within a human social context.

[4] A 1972 survey on the use of violence for social control and social change (conducted by R. L. Kahn and discussed in Otto Klineberg, "The causes of violence: a social-psychological approach", in Jean-Marie Domenach (ed.) *Violence and its Causes*, (UNESCO, 1981) p. 119, found that about two-thirds of Americans surveyed believed that the police should shoot, but not to kill, when dealing with armed hoods. Almost the same proportion believed that this procedure should also be used with regard to ghetto riots. However, slightly less than half thought this was appropriate with regard to disturbances caused by white students. In relation to "violence for social change", a great majority thought that change of some sort was necessary, but that it could be brought about fast enough without property damage or personal injury. About 10% thought that protest involving extensive damage and some death would be necessary.

[5] An interesting and perhaps related perspective on this issue was contained in the legal arguments presented by General Pinochet's representatives at the inquiry into the nature and status of the 1973 Chilean coup. In an interesting retrospective justification based on the success of the plotters, it was argued that "the military cabal ... was immune from prosecution for its actions from the moment it agreed to launch its successful 1973 coup" and that "for an insurrectionary movement, the doctrine of state immunity applies from the time the rebellion is agreed to – provided it succeeds in seizing power", *Irish Times*, 20th January 1999.

[6] David Miller, "The use and abuse of political violence", *Political Studies*, vol. 32 (1984), pp. 401-19, p. 403

[7] Ibid.

[8] P. Mertens, "Institutional violence, democratic violence and repression" in Domenach (ed.) op. cit., p. 215.

[9] Ibid, p. 227.

[10] Ibid, p. 228.

[11] J. Molyneux, *Arguments for Revolutionary Socialism*, (London: Bookmarks, 1987), p. 21

[12] Op. cit., pp. 405-6.

[13] Ibid, p. 405.

[14] Ted Honderich, *Violence for Equality* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 68. We will be returning briefly to this issue in the next chapter.

[15] Even though it could be argued that more people throughout history have died, lived truncated lives, or suffered harm from the results of economic inequality than from the effects of violence.

[16] Op. cit., p. 12. Honderich further elaborates that the class of people who acquiesce in the facts of inequality and who could, through taking action, change it is immense and anonymous. Moreover, the relation of these agents to the facts of inequality is unlike the relation of agents to the facts of violence: "No-one with his own hands sets a fuse which secures an immense loss of living time for American blacks or a part of the British population". Negative feelings about violence relate to the agents of that violence, whereas negative feelings about inequality do not: "... the agents of inequality are pretty well out of sight, or, if they are in sight they are ourselves, they are many and impersonal, and they are distant from their work" (p. 14).

[17] R. P. Wolff, "On violence", *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 66, no, 19 (1969), pp. 601-616.

[18] Ibid, p. 606.

[19] Ibid, p. 607.

[20] Ibid, pp. 608-9.

[21] There are, of course, many others. Every individual who has considered the subject utilises a slightly different conceptual approach. But the considerations of the writers discussed seem to provide examples of what might be said to be the main themes or perspectives on the issue.

[22] Op. cit., p. 404. Briefly, the notion of legality "must encompass all those elements traditionally contained in the idea of the rule of law. This means, at the very least, that laws are general rules addressed to classes of persons; that they are promulgated in advance of the behaviour that they are meant to control; that they do not discriminate between persons on grounds irrelevant to their purpose; and that the penalties for breaking them are standardized, known and applied impartially. When a legal system displays these features in large measure there are grounds for drawing a distinction between the *violence* that law-breakers may employ and the ***force*** that may later be applied to them in the course of arrest and punishment".

[23] As opposed to "terrorist". As we shall discuss below, the main definitions of terrorism employed by both academic researchers and state agencies incorporate a necessarily political component.

[24] "War is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means". "It is of course well known that the only source of war is politics – the intercourse of governments and peoples ... We maintain ... that war is simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means". From Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton University Press, 1989). Quotations

sourced from http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/Quotations.html, accessed 8th August 2003.

[25] Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 489.

[26] A relevant issue is the prevalence of unconventional means when groups, be they ethnic or political, find themselves in conflict – real or perceived – with states. That is, because states have a monopoly on the "legitimate use of force", only "illegitimate" violence is available to groups who feel that the use of force is a necessary option. Sub-state groups rarely declare war in an official, legal manner, but they quite often do so informally, using quasi-legal terminology – these declarations are rarely accepted as valid by the states against which they are made. Relevant examples include declarations of war made by national liberation movements against an occupying power and the August 1996 *Declaration of war against the Americans occupying the land of the two holy places (expel the infidels from the Arab peninsula)* issued by Osama bin Laden (the so-called "First Fatwa", available at http://www.geocities.com/dcjarviks//Idler/vIIIn165.html and http://efreedomnews.com/News%20Archive/Terrorists/Fatwah1_BinLaden.htm, accessed August 12th, 2002). Sub-state politically violent groups may sometimes also claim to abide by the recognised rules of warfare, but they rarely adhere to these. Of course, states involved in regular warfare also frequently break these conventions.

In terms of explaining the apparently growing prevalence of unconventional violent oppositional movements, an answer might lie in the notion of asymmetry. Certain states' supreme military dominance cannot be challenged, even by other states, in a traditional military manner. Hence, it has been argued, sub-state political violence, state-sponsored terrorism, and asymmetrical warfare – what has been called "the war of the flea" (Robert Taber, *The War of the Flea: a Study of Guerrilla Warfare, Theory and Practice* (St. Albans: Paladin, 1970) – have grown.

[27] The issue of what terrorism and, indeed, state terrorism should be taken to mean will be addressed in section 5.

[28] We could also describe them as tactics. War itself may be a tactic adopted in pursuit of a political agenda, and guerrilla warfare, assassination and terrorism have all been used tactically in conventional war.

[29] Ted Honderich, *After the Terror* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p. 98.

[30] Ibid. "What is also true, despite calm and orderly philosophers, is that the term 'terrorism' has been put to use to cover all of what we have so far conceived as political violence. 'Terrorism' is used for more than terrorism strictly or carefully understood. That is now ordinary usage or an implication of ordinary usage. One reason for this general use of the term 'terrorism' … is that it has more condemnation in it than 'political violence'."

[31] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Indigo, 1999), p. 26.

[32] Yassir Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly in 1974 with these words: "The difference between the revolutionary and the terrorist lies in the reason for which each fights. For whoever

stands by a just cause and fights for the freedom and liberation of his land from the invaders, the settlers and the colonialists, cannot possibly be called terrorist". Quoted in Hoffman, op. cit., p. 26.

[33] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Indigo, 1999), chapter 1; Jenny Teichman, "How to define terrorism", *Philosophy*, vol. 64 (1989), pp. 505-17; Igor Primoratz, "What is terrorism?", *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 7 (1990), pp. 129-138.

[34] Paul Pillar, former deputy chief of the CIA's counter-terrorist centre, quoted at http://www.terrorismanswers.com/terrorism/introduction, accessed September 10th, 2002.

[35] Jenny Teichman, for example, argues that "state terrorism" should be considered as one of the three "species" of terrorism: "... we have to acknowledge that governments often do things, both to their own people, and against enemies in peace and war, which share the features of the worst types of revolutionary terrorism. State terrorism is characterized by such actions as the kidnapping and assassination of political opponents of the government by the police or the secret service or the army; imprisonment without trial; torture; massacres of racial or religious minorities or of certain social classes; incarceration of citizens in concentration camps; and generally speaking government by fear", op. cit, pp. 509-510.

[36] Scheffler, Samuel, "Is terrorism morally distinctive?", *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 1-17, p. 11.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Hoffman, op. cit.

[39] Ibid, p. 15.

[40] Ibid, pp. 37-40.

[41] "In the first edition of his magisterial survey, *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide*, Alex Schmid devoted more than a hundred pages to examining more than a hundred different definitions of terrorism in an effort to discover a broadly acceptable, reasonably comprehensive explication of the word. Four years and a second edition later, Schmid was no closer to the goal of his quest, conceding in the first sentence of the revised volume that the 'search for an adequate definition is still on'". Ibid, p. 39.

[42] Ibid, p. 43.

[43] The term was coined by Fred Schulz of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St. Andrew's.

[44] Hoffman, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Teichman, op. cit.

[47] "The philosophical interest of terrorism is due partly to the fact that the term is notoriously difficult to define, and partly to the fact that there is some disagreement about whether and when terrorism so-called can be justified". Ibid, p. 505.

[48] Ibid. Coady's quote comes from his entry on "terrorism" in the *Encyclopedia of Ethics* (New York: Garland, 1992; forthcoming at the time), notwithstanding the fact that in a 1985

Philosophy article ("The morality of terrorism", vol. 60, p. 52) Coady provides a definition himself; see section 9. Teichman says that "the disadvantages of trying to construct an ordinary language definition based on current usage can be seen … in the plethora of conflicting definitions occurring in philosophical and political literature. Thus philosophers … disagree about whether or not terrorism is wrong by definition or wrong just as a matter of fact; they disagree about whether terrorism should be defined in terms of its aims, or its methods, or both, or neither; they disagree about whether or not states can perpetrate terrorism; they even disagree about the importance or otherwise of *terror* for a definition of *terrorism*", p. 506.

[49] Ibid, pp. 507-508.

[50] Ibid, p. 509.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy: the Liberal State Response* (London: Frank Cass, 2001), p. 12.

[54] Teichman, op. cit., p. 510.

[55] Ibid, p. 509.

[56] Ibid, p. 510-511.

[57] Primoratz, op. cit., p. 129.

[58] Quoted in Primoratz, op. cit., p. 130.

[59] Ibid. He continues, as per our earlier discussion, "…except … if one accepts the definition of violence as 'the illegitimate use of force', which I find most unhelpful".

[60] Similar to the case of blackmail, Wellman also claims to have himself engaged in "non-violent terrorism" against his students by threatening to fail them, causing panic and terror: "Anyone who doubts that my acts are genuine instances of terrorism is invited to observe the unwillingness of my students to hand in assigned papers on time in the absence of any such threat and the panic in my classroom when I issue my ultimatum" (quoted in Primoratz, op. cit., p. 130).

[61] Ibid, p. 132.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid, p. 131.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid. pp. 131-132.

[66] Primoratz notes this also: "I have also said that the terrorist's immediate victims are not responsible 'in any plausible sense of the word' for the injustice and suffering to which the terrorist objects. Some terrorists are not at all bothered by that. Others are; they sometimes attempt to deny that their victims are innocent. But there arguments are based on a conception of responsibility so wide *and* undifferentiated that it enables them to say – as Emile Henry, a French anarchist who planted a bomb in a Paris café in 1894, did – 'there are no innocents!'.

Such arguments may carry conviction with the terrorists who advance them, but are rightly found preposterous by almost everyone else". Ibid, p. 132.

[67] Not every act of a terrorist is a terrorist act.

[68] Ibid, p. 133.

[69] *The Irish Times*, 10th September 2003, p. 1.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Quoted in Primoratz, op. cit., p. 133.

[72] *The Irish Times*, 10th September 2003, p. 1

[73] Ted Honderich, *After the Terror* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p. 98. See also note 30.

[74] Thanks to Eddie Hyland for suggesting this possibility.

[75] See, for example, Bernd Prien, "Family resemblances: a thesis about the change of meaning over time", *Kriterion*, no. 18 (2004), pp. 15-24.

[76] Ibid, p. 15.

[77] Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations*, translated by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), pp. 31-32 (*PI* 66 and 67).

[78] Ibid, p. 32 (*PI* 67).

[79] The idea of such a graphical representation was inspired by a similar treatment of interrelated concepts in a paper on "partnering" in the construction industry by Johan Nystrom, "A note on partnering and Wittgenstein's family-resemblance concept", Working Paper No. 45, real Estate Economics Department, Swedish Royal Institute of Technology (Stockholm 2003).

[80] Teichman, op. cit.; Alex Schmid, *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983).

[81] Wittgenstein, op. cit., p. 159 (*PI* 610).

[82] Bogen, James, *Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Language* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 234.

[83] Prien, op. cit., p. 16.

[84] Bogen, op. cit., p. 234.

[85] Prien, op. cit., p. 16.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Wittgenstein, op. cit., p. 31 (*PI* 65).

[88] Ibid, p. 226.

[89] Ibid., p. 88 (*PI* 241, 242).

[90] Ibid, p. 32 (*PI* 67).

Chapter 2
Approaches to justification

In what way do politically violent groups justify their actions to themselves and to external observers? All politically violent groups use some sort of justification for their actions. At the very least, they need to justify such actions implicitly or explicitly to themselves and to their supporters before they ever take the decision to use violent tactics. So what are the ethical bases for such groups' own justifications for their actions? Do they do what they do in order to achieve concrete consequences in the real world, or as part of some sort of moral duty or imperative, or a combination of the two? Differences can be seen between groups in terms of the ethical bases of their justifications, differences that are significant in terms of assessing how they see the world. Briefly put, some groups seem to exemplify a primarily *consequentialist* ethical basis, others a primarily *non-consequentialist* (or *deontological*) basis.

These are the two classic approaches to the justification of actions. They involve either the instrumental consideration of the means to achieve an ultimate desired goal, or they invoke the concepts of moral obligation and duty. Teleological or *consequentialist* approaches to justification may be contrasted with duty-based, or *deontological*, approaches. These two approaches represent, in a real sense, different "moral cultures", and they can both, in certain situations, seem to either accord with or transgress what might be called the ordinary individual's commonly held moral assumptions. And both these approaches can be seen to have been employed by groups or individuals to justify violence that they use to further their ideological, political or religious ends.[1]

This chapter will not take a position on whether consequentialism or deontology is right, or is a morally preferable approach to judging and justifying actions. Rather, it will serve merely to define and distinguish them, as general justificatory approaches, from each other. Moreover, the term *deontology* will be construed in the wide sense, as any moral code that prioritises duty, obligation, adherence to certain principles rather than concrete outcomes. There are several subspecies of ethical thought that might be termed deontological in the broad sense. These include divine command theories (where the duty or obligation to be adhered to or the action sanctioned or commanded derives from the code of rules established by God or by holy scriptures that are assumed to represent the word of God), rights theories, and Kantian morality (which tells each person to do only what that person could rationally will everyone else to do[2]). In broad terms, *deontology* will be considered to mean the belief that an action is right if it conforms to a particular moral code, whether that rule is derived from a divine command or from Kantian universalisability. The fundamental issue is the *non-consequentialist* nature of the judgement: that is, that the criterion of goodness or right action is the adherence to the moral rule, and that consideration of the consequences of an action is at best of secondary importance. Similarly, the term *consequentialism* will be taken broadly to refer to any code of ethics or guide to action that prioritises the actual outcomes and consequences of those actions rather than adherence to *a priori* principles alone.

Some politically violent groups seem to tend more towards a generally consequentialist approach than others, and some tend more towards a non-consequentialist or deontological approach. In practice, however, it can be difficult to disentangle the strands of the two approaches. In part, this is because

the vast majority of consciously directed violent activity is seen, or can be seen, as instrumental to the attainment of some concrete real-world end state. One reason for this is, of course, the fact that instrumental rationality itself may be bounded by wider non-instrumentally rational constraints: crudely, one can act consequentialistically while remaining within the boundaries of a broader deontological imperative. And there may well be complex relations between the two in practice: any individual or group might be normatively motivated by both consequentialist and deontological considerations, each acting as a side-constraint on the other. Thus, there is a difficulty, when looking at actual human behaviour, in disentangling the necessarily complex network of motivations and justifications for actions that exist within the mind and emotions of each individual actor. These issues will be addressed and explored in the context of the real-world justifications actually used by different politically violent groups, which are analysed in the succeeding chapters.

1. Consequentialism, deontology, and the moral status of the agent

Both consequentialism and deontology are ethical approaches that often seem to accord well with our commonly held moral assumptions. Yet they also often seem to conflict with these moral intuitions and assumptions with regard to the particular courses of action that should be pursued by individuals in particular contexts. For example, deontological ethical theories tell us that the most important aspects of how we ought to live our lives are governed by moral rules that ought not to be broken. They involve the acceptance of certain specific behavioural constraints that place certain limits on the pursuit of the individual's own interests. This may be taken to mean that there are certain morally

unacceptable means to a given end, even morally admirable or morally obligatory ends.[3] Certain codes or rules of behaviour are intrinsically good, and should not be broken, even when breaking them might have, from the perspective of an impartial observer, objectively "better" consequences. It is absolutist positions such as these that sometimes give rise to a sense of uneasiness and disparity with our "common-sense" moral intuitions. A typical example would be a situation where the deliberate and premeditated killing of one innocent person would inevitably save the lives of many other innocent people. Strict deontological prohibitions of murder would rule out this course of action. But, as Scheffler notes, "how can it be rational to forbid the performance of a morally objectionable action that would have the effect of minimizing the total number of comparably objectionable actions that were performed and would have no other morally relevant consequences? How can the minimization of morally objectionable conduct be morally unacceptable?"[4] And, of course, the meaning of the phrase "no other morally relevant consequences" then becomes an issue. To begin to make a habit of routinely sacrificing innocent lives for the benefit of a majority in circumstances that are not *in extremis*, but are merely expedient, would be such a morally relevant consequence.

In responses to paradoxes such as that noted by Scheffler, approaches such as making a distinction between positive acts and omissions (for example *killing* versus *letting die*) and the concepts such as intentionality and the principle of double-effect have typically been introduced by deontologists. However, these approaches are often somewhat unconvincing (see Chapter 1, page 13).[5]

Moreover, absolutist deontological positions can be very hard to maintain when difficult cases arise. A strict deontology-based pacifism, for example, would

seem difficult to sustain when it comes to the level of individual self-defence, although pacifism based on Christian beliefs can plausibly commend that we turn the other cheek. It becomes less plausibly sustainable when it commends the failure to physically defend another, otherwise defenceless person from some act of extreme violence. If one opposes violence on deontological grounds one seems to paint oneself into a corner, albeit a principled one. The well-worn example of a pacifist being faced with the choice of killing one individual himself, or, as a result of his refusal, ensuring that a hundred others are put to death is such a case.[6] Strict deontology is not based on the impartial consideration of the welfare or interests of others,[7] and thus can be argued to be quite as ruthless and cold as consequentialism is often portrayed. But once it goes beyond the strict observance of prescribed rules, deontology runs into problems. Once transgression of the rule can be justified in certain circumstances for certain rules, deontology begins to break down. It begins to come down to the subjective evaluation of the consequences of breaking or not breaking the rule. It may well be granted that there are exceptions to every rule, and that in certain circumstances, where the blind adherence to the rule would lead to a considerably worse outcome in terms of the sort of good that the rule was supposed to uphold, the rule may be relaxed. However, once the consideration of consequences enters into the evaluative equation, we are no longer talking about deontology *per se*, rather something akin to rule utilitarianism. Any deontological view that falls short of strict unyielding observance of the prescribed rule in effect begins a collapse into consequentialism.

Consequentialism – the doctrine that says that the right act in any given situation is the one that will produce the best overall outcome in terms of the

identified end – is often regarded by its critics as a reformulation of the crude concept of the end justifying the means. From this perspective, consequentialism can also be said in certain circumstances to apparently violate our central moral intuitions. For example, it is often said that consequentialism would lead an agent to commit horrific acts as long as those acts promised to (probably) produce the best results in terms of the relevant end. Not only would it allow this, it is said, but it would also allow or encourage the general habit or attitude of contemplating or evaluating such deeds, rendering nothing unthinkable.[8]

There is a certain degree of accuracy to these accusations, as the acts prescribed by a resolutely consequentialist approach can seem to violate deeply held beliefs about how we should treat other people.[9] However, in a fundamental way, the conception of rationality that is at the core of consequentialism is the conception that people tend to use operationally in everyday decisions and interactions, and in a very wide range of contexts.[10] Scheffler argues that the persuasiveness of consequentialist accounts derives from the fact that they appear to embody a conception of rationality that we recognize from many diverse contexts, "and whose power we have good independent reason to respect". This form of rationality Scheffler calls a *maximizing rationality*, which has at its core the idea that, "if one accepts the desirability of a certain goal being achieved, and if one has a choice between two alternatives, one of which is certain to accomplish the goal better than the other, then it is *ceteris paribus*, rational to chose the former [option] over the latter".[11] The notion of a maximizing rationality is also central to rational choice theory.

It is this that gives consequentialist approaches their force, even among those who do not accept them. Consequentialism can thus be seen to be the

operationalisation of an instrumental goal-directed rationality. This is why the dictates of deontological constraints can seem irrational: they may direct agents to act in ways that will not maximise the incidence of the good.

The problem, if it should be called such, of the radically indeterminate nature of moral evaluation surrounds all ethical considerations. That is clear. And consequentialists would never deny that the determination of a good end state of affairs involves problems of moral evaluation. To quote Scheffler again, consequentialism "starts from a conception of what is desirable … and then tells us always to promote as much of it as we can".[12]

Consequentialism should perhaps be seen less as a holistic theory of ethics than as a deliberative tool. It should perhaps be more readily interpreted as a mode of rational thinking, one that is common to all decision-making processes. In this view, what is called consequentialism merely represents a systematic, logical exposition of the character of choice – and all choice is in some sense goal-directed: people choose things, courses of action, and states of affairs. Consequentialism, as a mode of deliberative decision-making, has thus perhaps suffered from its explicit identification with utilitarianism, with many critics of consequentialism using the term interchangeably with utilitarianism. Utilitarianism, of course, employs a consequentialist method in the service of a very particular conception of the good. But the conception of the good that utilitarianism promotes is only one conception of the good among many that the consequentialist mode of deliberation can serve. Utilitarianism is one species of consequentialism, as divine command is one species of deontology – but so is acting in a manner so as to maximise any perceived good, whether that be derived from religious or secular systems of belief.

2. Reductionism?

It is, of course, possible to argue that deontology as a whole can be construed in consequentialist terms, insofar as the observance of a deontological moral rule is a good, and represents an end-state of affairs to be valued that is analogous to the various goods and values that consequentialists seek to attain through their actions. However, Bernard Williams has argued that if we are going to attempt to demonstrate that deontology (he actually uses the term "Kantianism") can be reduced to consequentialism, "it should be the product of a long and unobvious argument, and not just happen at the drop of a definition".[13] He also argues that the term "state of affairs" – as might be used, for example, in an argument that the deontologist's conformity to a moral rule is consequentially instrumental to producing a state of affairs consisting in a sense of fulfilment due to conformity to the rule – is "altogether too permissive to exclude anything: may not the obtaining of absolutely anything be represented formally as a state of affairs?".[14] His basic point is that the consequentialist slant on deontology ("the act is right *because* the state of affairs that consists in its being done is better than any other state of affairs accessible to the agent") is essentially different from the non-consequentialist view that, sometimes at least, a state of affairs which is better than the alternatives is so because it consists in the right act being done.[15] Williams does admit that this distinction is somewhat vague, however.

A crude attempt to recast deontology within an apparently consequentialist framework might proceed somewhat like this. It might be argued that, to the deontologist, living a moral life in accordance with a particular set of moral duties or rules, or acting in accordance with the will of God, is in itself an end state – it is a good in itself, a state of affairs to be valued. Therefore, the way to attain or

maintain this good (which might manifest itself within the agent as a deep sense of moral worth, virtue or integrity) is by acting in certain ways, notably by actively observing the moral rules as laid down. The consequence of so acting is the attainment of the end state, the living of the moral life. Therefore, deontological constraints are consequentially necessary for the attainment of this end. Put another way – although it is highly unlikely that any serious deontologist would suggest this as a good – if it makes me virtuous or makes me *feel* virtuous by acting in accordance with my perceived moral duty, and if being virtuous or feeling virtuous is a good thing, then I should act in such a way as to promote or maintain that good; that is, by continuing to abide by my moral duties. Given the choice of this end – and it should of course be remembered that consequentialism *per se* has nothing to say about the choice of ends to be pursued – it is consequentially, instrumentally rational for a deontologist to act in accordance with her perceived moral duties.

Of course, much could probably be made of the distinction between *being* virtuous and *feeling* virtuous. And this argument certainly falls foul of the too permissive use of the term "states of affairs" identified by Williams and also noted by the utilitarian philosopher Smart: "we shall have to be careful here not to construe 'state of affairs' so widely that any ethical doctrine becomes utilitarian. For if we did so we would not be saying anything at all in advocating utilitarianism".[16]

It would be foolish to argue that deontologists consciously think this way or articulate their beliefs this way. Manifestly, they do not. But it should be noted that most people do not articulate motivations in any precise manner, and even a thoroughgoing consequentialist will not sit down and try to work out all the

logical consequences, or possible consequences, of her actions *ad infinitum*. Rather, they will often tend to operate by instinct and by using certain rules of thumb that have proven their usefulness.

And, of course, any reduction of deontology to consequentialism can proceed in the opposite direction as well. If consequentialism is a characteristic of a *moral* system, at its core might lie an unconditional duty to do that which brings about the best consequences. Even with both these possible reductions, we still appear to be faced with two different types of moral approach, and the differences between them cannot be resolved by any semantic redefining of the nature of end states. Perhaps the distinction lies in the deontologist's concern for the moral status of the agent rather than with any "external" state of the world. So a deontological approach emphasises the moral status of the agent and prioritises agent-internal goods, such as duty, honour, virtue, integrity, acting in accordance with the will of God, and so on. Consequentialism, on the other hand, prioritises agent-external conceptions of the good. The activity is conducive to the attainment or preservation of some internal state versus the action being instrumental in the attainment of some external end. But this avenue of discussion will not be further pursued here.

3. Moral dilemmas

If the debate between consequentialists and deontologists could ever be accurately characterised as essentially relating to a dispute over the difference between agent-internal goods and agent-external goods, what would this tell us about the nature of moral dilemmas? Apart from ground clearing, perhaps not very much. With regard to two authors, Mackie, at least, has said that he has difficulty

distinguishing between elements of deontology and consequentialism,[17] whereas Griffin argues that no form of consequentialism can yield any judgement of moral right without the assistance of some conception of equal respect – but such a conception is in fact an abstract moral view, "a high-level principle of right".[18] Griffin's concluding remarks are that to reject consequentialism should not inevitably take one towards deontology: "the firm ground … lies in neither position".[19] The firm ground, and one that we generally see in real life. Most people, consciously or unconsciously, employ a cross-cutting, entangled mix of deontological and consequentialist considerations when judging actions, and we will see this clearly in practice when we come to examine the actual justifications used by politically violent groups in the following chapters.

Scheffler makes the point that clear and unambiguous solutions to complex moral dilemmas may never be found.[20] There is rarely an unambiguously right course of action in many circumstances. Similarly, Nagel warns that the world can present us with situations in which there is no honourable or moral course for a person to take, "no course free of guilt and responsibility for evil". Moreover, he says, "the idea of a moral blind alley is a perfectly intelligible one".[21] This refers to situations in which to act and not to act would both be wrong. Does it then come down to a consideration of which would be least wrong in terms of consequences? Or least wrong in terms of personal moral integrity?

Foot discusses the indeterminate status of moral evaluation in her discussion of the relationship between deontology and consequentialism. She argues that "we should not take it for granted that we even know what we are talking about if we enter into a discussion with the consequentialist about whether it can ever be right to produce something other than 'the best state of affairs'". In

examining what should be taken as the meaning or implication of the phrase "the best state of affairs" from "the impersonal point of view" or "the moral point of view", she concludes that in consequentialist argument, construed one way, with no special reference to morality, talk of good states of affairs seems to be speaker relative. However, if the qualification "from the moral point of view" is added, the resulting expression may be meaningless "and it may lack a reference when a special consequentialist theory has given it a sense".[22]

However, this is true of all forms of moral evaluation, of deontologically derived perspectives no less than consequentialist.

4. Issues of application

Consequentialism, as Griffin argued (see note 18), will always require some abstract moral principle to derive or ground its conception of the good. So, for example, some consequentialists might well derive ideas about their particular desired end-state of affairs with regard to the organisation of state and society from the writings of a Kantian-based moralist such as Rawls. In principle, this should pose no problem for consequentialists. But on the level of specifics, one issue is of particular importance in such an example: the relationship between ends and means. More specifically, would the use of certain means be detrimental to the value of the good one hopes to achieve? Would the achievement of a consequentialist end-state based on, for example, Rawlsian principles of justice be incompatible with infringements of peoples' rights and transgressions of considerations of justice when used as means?

With regard to the justifiability of political violence that might be used by our hypothetical consequentialists to try to attain such an end-state, for how long

and at what intensity would such violence be justified? One needs to recognise that societies are sets of dynamic interrelationships, rather than simple, two-stage, cause-and-effect processes. For example, in the face of political violence or civil disobedience, reforms might be granted that represent a considerable advance on the previous situation, but which fall short of the most radical interpretation of the Rawlsian principle. Assuming that the initial violence could be justified, can we unequivocally say that continued violence is justified so as to attain the full effect of the radically interpreted Rawlsian principle, if such an achievement was even possible? At what point should violent means yield to reasoned political (non-violent) action? Again, the issue of "justifiable to whom" – the perpetrators, the supporters, or to some impartial observer – arises. Some of these issues are addressed in practice in the discussion in Chapter 4.

This brings us to the consideration of "satisficing" consequentialism, as discussed by Michael Slote: "could not someone who held that rightness depended solely on how good an act's consequences were also want to hold that less than the best was sometimes good enough, hold, in other words, that an act might qualify as morally right through having good enough consequences, even though better consequences could have been produced in the circumstances?".[23] This is interesting in a number of ways. Importantly, it recognises the process of goal attainment as dynamic, and it seeks to apply the common-sense, and indeed rational, consideration of the increasing marginal cost and/or diminishing marginal utility to this process. At some point, it seems to plausibly suggest, continued expenditure of time and effort at some given level of commitment is not worth it, as what has been achieved is good enough. It does not rule out continued efforts at a lower and less intense level of commitment.

However, it raises many questions, particularly to do with the interpretation of "the best that can be achieved". Can we ever know what "the best that can be achieved" really is, and how do we know when "good enough" *is* good enough relative to "the best"? Is there even a final "best" endpoint, rather than just the continued incremental additions of extra achievement? Perhaps we can never know until after the fact, as in the *post hoc* justifications of actual consequence utilitarianism.[24] Satisficing consequentialism, applied to the issue of the justifiability of political violence may, for example, dictate the earliest possible abandonment of revolutionary violence, and even revolutionary intent, in favour of reformism. But then, which sorts of reforms are "good enough" to warrant this? In response to Slote, Pettit[25] argues that unless there are good, if non-conclusive, reasons for any one of which a wide-scope consequentialist might prefer a satisficing to a maximising policy, satisficing is an irrational policy to pursue. This is to say that, in the absence of a determinate relationship between "the best" and "good enough", it is not rational to seek less rather than more. However, the issue of what can be said to constitute "the best" in a dynamic process of attainment is still problematic.

5. Justifications for political violence

The relevance of these considerations to the issue of the justification of political violence lies in the definition of the good that guides the justificatory argument. First, I will clarify some of the issues of the preceding sections with reference to a previous example (from section 1). In simple terms, deontology refers to a moral system in which states of affairs or actions are judged only, or primarily, by their accordance with a preordained set of moral rules and codes. Religiously based

morality is an example. Deontological approaches to justification argue that certain acts are morally prohibited or morally prescribed, regardless of any beneficial or maleficent consequences that may be attached to them. Thus, a deontologist may argue that the killing of an innocent person would be prohibited even if it could be demonstrated with certainty that such an action would save the lives of a thousand other equally innocent persons. The act in itself would simply be wrong. A consequentialist, on the other hand, judges states of affairs and actions solely or primarily by their consequences. In the above example, the consequentialist might argue that it is illogical and morally inconsistent to decline to kill one such innocent on the basis of a belief in the right to life or the illegitimacy of transgressing an individual's autonomy, when to so decline inevitably leads to other deaths that are equally to be deplored. The deontologist could then retort, even in this relatively simple example, that the intentions of the agent, the location of actual causality, and the moral status of the agent in performing or not performing the prohibited act are morally relevant issues.

The primary purpose of this sort of theoretical analysis, however, is to identify "ideal types" of these justificatory positions, against which the sorts of justifications actually employed by groups that engage in or advocate violence can be assessed. My suggestion is that the sorts of justifications employed by different sorts of violent groups will tend to approach one or other of the typical ethical positions outlined above, or perhaps maintain a tension between them. For example, one might expect a revolutionary left-wing group to employ a consequentialist justification. Crudely stated, it might proceed as such: "Our use of political violence and/or terrorism is justified either (a) because we can

overthrow the state and institute an egalitarian society in which all people will prosper and equally develop their distinctive human potentialities or (b) violence will provoke the state into revealing its coercive and oppressive nature as a tool of the capitalist class, whereupon the masses will attain revolutionary consciousness and rise up in revolution that will lead to the institution of a society in which all people will prosper and equally develop their distinctive human potentialities".

A group with a religiously based ideology – for example those who firebomb abortion clinics and assassinate doctors – might justify its actions deontologically in terms of divine justice: "These abortionists are murderers, and the punishment for murder is death. We are acting in accordance with the will of God, which is to remove the stain that such abominable practices leave on his Creation". However, they may also employ a second-order consequentialist justification, that by committing such acts they will not only remove a guilty abortion provider, but will also deter others from providing, and thus will save innocent lives in the long run.

Another issue entangled in all of this is that of the moral relevance of the victims to the perpetrators of violence. It is possible that there are differences between groups with regard to the moral perceptions of the actors concerning the acts that they perform. A left-wing revolutionary group or, possibly to a lesser extent, a national-liberation movement, may admit that killing and bombing are not good things *per se* and even that they are wrong in certain specific contexts and thus that they should be avoided in those contexts. However, they might argue that it is necessary to perform some evil in order to do good. Conversely, fascist or hate groups may not see their acts as necessarily wrong in themselves, in the

sense that they see their targets as morally irrelevant or morally reprehensible, whether they be black, Jewish, communist, or an abortion doctor.

To clarify further, the first such group might admit that all human life has value and that taking it is, in a perfect world, to be deplored. However, they might argue that certain contexts require the necessary and regrettable use of violence that results in death in order to achieve a situation that is of great benefit to the majority. The second set of groups might deny that all human life has equal value: Some categories or races are subhuman, and thus morally irrelevant. This may also apply to those who defy the will of God by refusing to convert or by persisting in apostasy.

To refer to a potential third category, animal liberationists have used the slogan "if we are trespassing, so were the soldiers who broke down the gates of Hitler's death camps; if we are thieves, so were the members of the underground railroad who freed the slaves of the South; and if we are vandals, so were those who destroyed forever the gas chambers of Buchanwald and Auschwitz".[26] This indicates a clear willingness to extend the criteria of moral relevance beyond the human species.

An important point of contrast between consequentialism and deontology – particularly in the context of justifying the use of violence, and we see this explicitly in Chapters 4 and 5 – is that consequentialism is explicitly concerned with the comparative assessment of different consequences, and so positively invites some sort of cost/benefit calculation about the relationship between ends and means and consideration of the type of means used. It is, of course, possible to believe that the real-world goal to be achieved is so important that *anything* is justified in its pursuit, but that is a difficult position to maintain and defend,

especially if the real-world goal is something like liberating people from suffering and oppression. If something like that is the real-world goal, a consequentialist may be hard pressed to defend and plausibly justify actions that cause comparable levels of human suffering in its pursuit. So the cliché might become, not "the ends justify the means", but "the ends justify the means, but not *all* means".

6. Aims of the study

For the illustrative purposes of this thesis, I will attempt a critical textual analysis of certain publications and statements, released by various sub-state groups that engage in political violence, in order to philosophically parse them and assess them in terms of their ethical basis. There is a wealth of different violent groups and associated justificatory documentation available, so, because of space and time constraints, only a small fraction of the total possible literature will be examined and only half of the different sorts of groups listed in the typology in section 7 will be looked at (specifically, the first four of the eight). It is hoped that the typology might constitute a useful analytic framework for the future further comparison of different groups' justifications.

This research aims to be a systematic and rigorous analysis of some of the types of normative justifications used by various groups that employ, threaten, or advocate the use of political violence. In particular, it examines the internal logic of these justificatory philosophical positions as exemplified in various groups' literature, publications, and pronouncements, and it is a systematic, comparative analysis of a broad range of groups.

It is also hoped to address a gap in the literature on political violence – there is much philosophical analysis of the meaning of "terrorism", but little or

none in the way of systematic philosophical analysis of what those who engage in political violence actually say about themselves and why they say they do what they do. Crenshaw argues that "terrorist ideology, no matter how unrealistic, must be taken seriously as a guide to intentions".[27] But rarely is what the perpetrators of political violence say taken at face value. Thus, there is an underdeveloped focus on actors' self-proclaimed motivations and their justificatory ideology. Much of the literature that does attempt such a focus is descriptive, historical and anecdotal. And there is little or no systematic, comparative philosophical analysis of the various ethical bases of such groups' justifications.

It is also hoped that the results of such a systematic focus might provide insights into issues such as the amenability of a particular group or type of group to various types of conflict resolution, the possibility of negotiation and compromise, and the likely longevity of their campaign of violence. For example, it could be the case that, if a broadly consequentialist group eventually realises or is persuaded that the actual concrete outcomes it desires are impossible to attain, it will cease violent activity and either embrace other avenues of political action or disband. Conversely, the amenability of a deontological group to such persuasion might be unlikely because, rather than the attainment of concrete real-world objectives, the primary motive is the expression of adherence to some sort of eternal moral rule.

The type of analysis attempted in this study might also form the basis for further research. It can be seen as representing a preliminary, exploratory and ground-clearing definitional framework for coding in a future content analysis of politically violent groups' justificatory literature. As well as confirming whether groups that exemplify a particular mode of justification are likely to be more

amenable to different forms of conflict resolution, such a content analysis could address issues such as whether groups with one justificatory form are more likely to engage in large-scale attacks, attacks primarily on civilians and indiscriminate attacks, and whether groups that exemplify one particular primary mode of justification kill and injure more people than groups that primarily exemplify the other mode. The question of whether most contemporary political violence is carried out by groups whose mode of justification implies that they are not amenable to negotiated settlements or compromise is also important to both the theory and practice of conflict resolution.

7. Group types and justificatory forms

The focus in this study is explicitly on sub-state groups. The issue of "state terrorism" was discussed in Chapter 1, and I remain relatively agnostic on the merits or demerits of extending the concept of terrorism to include state actions. However, *a priori*, it is possible to identify at least eight different sorts of violent sub-state groups that might be expected to exemplify one or other particular primary mode of justification. Only the first four such groups are explicitly dealt with in this study:

1. Religious Christian right
2. Radical Islamist
3. Revolutionary leftist
4. National liberation
5. Secular right (fascist and race-hate groups)
6. Radical environmental/animal liberationist

7. Reactionary or pro-state groups

8. Millenarian groups.

The group types are classified according to their apparent goals, aims and ideologies. There are, of course, other ways to categorise such groups – the "religious versus secular" distinction, discussed at the start of the next chapter, is but one of these. Paul Wilkinson's classification is typical: he distinguishes between nationalist movements, ideological movements, religio-political movements, single-issue groups, and state-sponsored or supported groups.[28] Explicitly, Wilkinson's "nationalist" type corresponds to the "national liberation" category in the above typology. His "ideological" type encompasses both the "revolutionary left" and "secular right" types, his "religio-political" encompasses the "Islamist" type, and possibly the "millenarian" type, and seems to also extend to elements of the "religious Christian right", and his "single issue" type encompasses other aspects of the "religious Christian right" and the "radical environmental/animal liberationist".

For the purposes of this analysis – the identification and assessment of the different modes of justification that different types of groups employ – it makes sense to unpack some of the sub-categories in Wilkinson's classification. There are good reasons for suspecting that the moral world-view and types of justifications employed by, for example, the religious Christian right might differ significantly from those of radical environmentalists. And to determine whether that suspicion is borne out, it makes sense to treat them as separate categories. A similar argument can be made for unpacking the subcategories of groups within Wilkinson's "ideological" and "religio-political" categories.

An *a priori* assessment of the different group types' justificatory literature is difficult, but further supports the idea of unpacking broader classifications in order to examine their constituent parts. Preliminary assessment suggests that the justificatory form employed by groups that are representative of the eight distinct types may break down as follows, but these will need to be revisited in terms of future further research:

1. ***Religious Christian right***, specifically those engaged in campaigns of intimidation/assassination against abortion providers. The issue here is, do they do so because it results in fewer abortions (a consequentialist justification) or because abortion providers are evil people who must be punished or who represent an affront to the will of God (deontological)?

2. ***Radical Islamist*** – the concept of *jihad* against the infidel appears, on an overly simple level, to be classically deontological. However, there are concrete goals that such groups desire to attain. How do the concrete goals relate to the goals of performing religious duty?

3. ***Revolutionary left*** groups might be expected to be employ a largely consequentialist justification, as suggested in section 5.

4. ***National liberation*** groups are interestingly complex. On one level, the goal of establishing independence from perceived foreign occupation or the goal of secession from an existing state are concrete and apparently attainable real-

world end goals that might lead us to suspect a consequentialist form of justification for violent action. But elements of deontological justification might also be seen with regard to the concepts of one's duty to the nation, national self-defence and the right to national self-determination – that is, in the deification of the nation.

A related and very important issue is that whether the justification for violence used by a national liberation movement is primarily consequentialist or deontological might well depend on what type of state or society the group envisages the newly liberated nation as having. That is, the issue of what the secondary or subsidiary ideology is. If that secondary ideology relates to the establishment of a socialist economy or a liberal democracy, then maybe the overall justificatory form will be primarily consequentialist. But if the nationalist identity is inextricably linked with religious identity, in the sense that the establishment of, for example, a Christian, Sikh, Jewish or Islamic theocracy is demanded, and also with the idea that there is a moral duty to establish such a state after the colonial yoke is thrown off, then maybe the dominant justificatory form will be primarily deontological.

5. ***Secular right*** (fascist and race-hate groups) might in certain cases overlap with the Christian religious right in terms of deontological inspiration, but, overall, an *a priori* judgement on their likely justificatory form is harder to make. This is partly because of the proliferation of such groups, their different ideological bases, their small size and often short life span, and the frequent incoherence of their infrequent public statements. However, one possible justification they might use is that violence will help to drive a

particular target group out of the country, or put them in their (natural or divinely ordained) place, because white people/"the Aryan race" are superior/God's anointed people, and it is contrary to nature/God's will for races to intermingle. Here again we see the potential difficulties of disentangling elements of consequentialism and deontology: a deontological duty to ensure the purity or dominance of "the Aryan race" might require actions justified in terms of the consequences of achieving that end.

6. The justificatory form of ***radical environmental/animal liberation*** groups is similarly hard to call from an *a priori* standpoint. They might be expected to be broadly consequentialist, but with the potential for a dose of deontology in parts (an extreme example might be the argument that the human race is a destructive parasite on the planet, therefore we must be forced to conform to the ecological natural law). In terms of future research, labels such as the "Animal Liberation Front" and the "Earth Liberation Front" have become, to a large extent, militant "brands" that may be adopted by individuals and small groups of activists. A similar situation pertains with right-wing extremists. With regard to both of these types, therefore, the actual groups that might be analysed in future research will depend on the availability of justificatory literature.

7. The justificatory form of ***reactionary or pro-state groups*** might vary according to the nature or ideology of the state they seek to defend or support – that is, they too may have a secondary or subsidiary ideology. Such groups may be little more than an illegal, unofficial arm of the state – and questions

may be asked as to whether, in that context, they are genuinely sub-state. Be that as it may, it is possible that reactionary/pro-state groups are deontologically pursuing their perceived duty to attain or preserve the good as they define it. But, once again, further research is required into such groups' specific justifications.

8. ***Millenarian groups***, such as Aum Shinrikyo, may be argued by some not to be "political" in a strict interpretation of the term: trying to kick-start Armageddon in order to hasten the second coming of Christ seems to fall outside "political status". However, I have argued for using the term *political violence* to refer to both violence that is used in support of concrete political and ideological ends and violence that seeks to advance some religious or spiritual end, whether concrete or not (see note 1). Under this interpretation, millenarian groups would be included. Bringing about "the second coming" is clearly a desired consequence – though improbable, to say the least – but there may be a heavy emphasis on the deontological duty of bringing about this consequence and, perhaps, the duty simply to exterminate the opposition.

8. Choice of groups

As previously noted, there are numerous different violent groups and much associated justificatory documentation available. Due to the constraints of space and time, it is not possible in this current study to examine every single instance of a particular type of group nor every publication or statement that any particular group might release. Such a task is for the future. The groups examined in this study either selected themselves, being widely accepted to be archetypes of a

particular category of group, and/or were chosen because of the amount, detail and availability of their justificatory literature in the English language. In terms of archetypes, we have the (nationalist) Provisional IRA and the (revolutionary leftist) Red Army Faction. Other chosen archetypes are the (radical Islamist) al-Qaeda network and the anti-abortion militants who have actually been convicted of assassinations, Paul Hill and James Kopp.

The next chapter deals with Christian anti-abortion activists and al-Qaeda. Chapter 4 deals with the Red Army Faction, and Chapter 5 deals with the Irish Republican Movement.

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[1] For the sake of brevity, I will tend to use the term *political violence* to refer to both violence that is used in support of concrete political and ideological ends and violence that seeks to advance some religious or spiritual end, whether concrete or not. Thus, the use of the term "political" in this context should not be taken to rule out religious motivation. See also section 2 of Chapter 1.

[2] Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, translated by H. J. Paton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 70: "I ought never to act except in such a way *that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law*". Kant also wrote: "... if any action is to be morally good, it is not enough that it should *conform* to the moral law –it must also be done for the sake of the moral law: where this is not so, the conformity is only too contingent and precarious, since the non-moral ground at work will now and then produce actions which accord with the law, but very often actions which transgress it" (pp. 57-58); and: "An action done from duty has its moral worth, *not in the purpose* to be attained by it, but in the maxim in accordance with which it is decided upon..." (pp. 67-68).

[3] Nancy Davis, "Contemporary deontology" in Peter Singer (ed.) *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell 1991), p.205.

[4] Samuel Scheffler, "Agent-centred restrictions, rationality, and the virtues" in S. Scheffler (ed.) *Consequentialism and its Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), p 244.

[5] Ted Honderich, in *Violence for Equality: Inquiries in Political Philosophy*, 3rd edition, (London: Routledge 1989), p. 68, has argued persuasively that there is little or no moral difference between acts and omissions, particularly omissions that occur in the context of adequate knowledge (his argument can be succinctly expressed through the question he poses – "how did I not turn off the radio at noon?" – and his answer: "by *staying my hand*").

[6] Such an example is discussed by Bernard Williams in "Consequentialism and integrity" in Scheffler (ed.), op. cit. p. 34

[7] Davis, op. cit., p. 207.

[8] Philip Pettit, "Consequentialism" in Singer (ed.) (note 3) p.204.

[9] Bernard Williams has some interesting things to say about individual squeamishness in the face of rationally prescribed consequentialist acts in his essay "Consequentialism and Integrity" in Scheffler (ed.) op. cit.

[10] Scheffler, op. cit, pp. 251-2.

[11] Ibid., p. 252.

[12] Ibid.

[13] J.J.C. Smart and Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 83

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., p. 87.

[16] Ibid., p. 13.

[17] J. L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (London: Penguin, 1977), p. 149.

[18] James Griffin, "The human good and the ambitions of consequentialism" (1992), reprinted in Pettit (ed.) *Consequentialism* (International Research Library of Philosophy; Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993), p. 51.

[19] Ibid., p. 57.

[20] Scheffler, op. cit., pp. 249-50.

[21] Thomas Nagel (1979), "War and massacre", reprinted in Scheffler (ed.) op. cit., p. 72.

[22] Philippa Foot (1985), "Utilitarianism and the virtues", reprinted in Scheffler (ed.) op. cit., pp. 232-5.

[23] Michael Slote (1984),"Satisficing consequentialism", reprinted in Pettit (ed.) op. cit, p. 352.

[24] Marcus Singer (1977), "Actual consequence utilitarianism", reprinted in Pettit (ed.) op. cit., pp 293-303.

[25] Philip Pettit (1984), "Satisficing consequentialism", reprinted in Pettit (ed.) op. cit., pp. 378, 386.

[26] Animal Liberation Front, *No compromise: Animal Liberation Front and more*, http://nocompromise.org/alf/alf.html, accessed 24th May 1999.

[27] Crenshaw, Martha, "Theories of terrorism: instrumental and organizational approaches", in David C. Rapoport (ed.) *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1988), p. 15. Rapoport adds: "scholars rarely study the literature written by terrorists", in "The international world as some terrorists have seen it", in Rapoport op. cit., p. 32.

[28] Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus Democracy: the Liberal State Response* (London: Frank Cass, 2001), pp. 19-21.

Chapter 3
Deontological justification in action: Christian and Islamic extremists

The groups examined in this chapter are both similar and different. They are similar insofar as they seem to be ultimately guided by a moral imperative based on their particular interpretation of the dictates of their respective religions; they are different in the scale of their violent activities – Christian anti-abortion militants have killed relatively few people, and then primarily those they believe to be explicitly guilty, whereas Islamic extremists have killed and injured many thousands. The focus in this chapter will first be on the theorising and justifications for action promulgated primarily by two men who have become icons to sympathisers with anti-abortion violence – Paul Hill and James Kopp, both of whom have been convicted of killing abortion providers. The second focus of this chapter on the justificatory and explanatory writings of Osama bin Laden, widely regarded as the leader of the Islamic extremist network al-Qaeda.

The chapter begins with a consideration of the commonly made distinction between religious and secular violent groups. Section 2 looks at the organisational structure known as leaderless resistance as it might apply to anti-abortion militants, and considers whether it might be a useful concept to apply to the understanding of the relatively recent proliferation of violent Islamic extremist groups. The next section deals with the basic ideology of the militant anti-abortion movement in the United States and sections 4 and 5 focus in more detail on the justifications for violence put forward by Paul Hill and James Kopp respectively.

Section 6 introduces the consideration of violent Islamic extremism, focusing on the status of violence in Islamic religious law. Section 7 goes on to

consider the justificatory rhetoric contained in bin Laden's speeches and interviews, while section 8 analyses those justifications. Section 9 tries to draw general conclusions about both groups' overarching justificatory form.

1. Religious versus secular

In much of the political violence literature, a contrast is commonly made between religious and secular violent groups. This is an important distinction – however, it is not sufficient. The importance, I believe, primarily lies in the fact that this distinction almost inadvertently draws attention to the fundamentally deontological/non-consequentialist, as opposed to consequentialist, orientation of religious groups, which I believe to be a key factor in attempting to understand the activities of such groups. For example, Hoffman states that "for the religious terrorist, violence is first and foremost a sacramental act or divine duty executed in direct response to a theological demand or imperative". He continues: "Terrorism thus assumes a transcendental dimension, and its perpetrators are consequently unconstrained by the political, moral or practical constraints that may affect other terrorists".[1] He also says that religious violence of this sort "embraces markedly different means of legitimation and justification than that committed by secular terrorists; and these distinguishing features lead, in turn, to yet greater bloodshed and destruction".[2]

Unsurprisingly, there is a parallel between groups that use a deontological form of justification and religiously motivated groups. Almost by definition, religiously motivated groups have a conception of the good that conforms to deontological constraints or obligations. The commonly made distinction between religious and secular groups is not sufficient, however, because the

religious/secular distinction is too crude. It allows us to miss the fact that a secular group, for example, a nationalist movement, may have deontological elements. An attempt to focus on the deontological or consequentialist nature of violent groups, rather than on religious versus secular, might allow us to more accurately identify the essential character of those groups.

That said, however, purely deontological groups are rare, or at least difficult to unambiguously identify, because there are always – in the short-term at least – concrete agent-external ends that are sought. Most religiously motivated violent groups employ some sort of justification based on holy writings or traditions. And most such scripturally based justifications are primarily deontological in character. They are often based on particularistic, and perhaps anachronistic, interpretations of canonical religious texts that do not reflect the mainstream interpretation of the relevant religion in the contemporaneous historical context. There are thus similarities in the manner in which certain groups choose, interpret, and employ religious texts. The literal, fundamentalist, and particularistic interpretation of certain Qur'anic texts by what tend to be called Islamic militants has a direct analogy with the literal and fundamentalist interpretation of certain Christian texts by various militant anti-abortion groups and white supremacists. So, a group with a religiously based ideology – for example those Christian activists who firebomb abortion clinics and assassinate doctors – might justify its actions deontologically in terms of divine justice in terms such as these: "These abortionists are murderers, and the punishment for murder is death. We are acting in accordance with the will of God, which is to remove the stain that such abominable practices leave on his Creation".

However, as we noted in the previous chapter, they may also employ a second-order *consequentialist* justification, that by committing such acts they will not only remove a guilty abortion provider, but will also deter others from providing, and thus will save innocent lives in the long run. In extreme cases, violent action may be justified in order to overthrow the sinful state and institute the reign of God's law on earth. According to Juergensmeyer, violent anti-abortion activist Paul Hill was disappointed that the earlier assassination of Dr. David Gunn had not achieved all that it could: he had apparently hoped that the killing of the abortion provider would prove to be "a watershed in the pro-life movement and that an IRA sort of paramilitary uprising would occur".[3] There are similar blends of consequentialism and deontology in the pronouncements of Islamic fundamentalists. And determining whether the motivation and justification is primarily consequentialist or deontological is difficult, given that the vast majority of consciously directed violent activity is seen as in some sense instrumental to the attainment of some concrete end-state. That is, there is an end to be achieved. Even groups that see their activities as being an expression of divine justice or the will of God are likely to have some consideration of the concrete consequences that can be achieved. Violent activity is usually committed in order to attain some purpose (whether that be agent-external or agent-internal), and every action has observable external consequences that might be an expression of the perpetrator's goals.

The only way we could actually tell if a given group was primarily deontological, in that any considerations of actual consequences were only secondary, would be to imagine a case where it was absolutely certain that no possible second-order consequentialist ends could be achieved through violent

action, but violent action continued to be used as an expression of moral duty. For example, if it was absolutely certain, beyond any doubt, that the violent actions of a Christian anti-abortion group would not deter abortion providers or save the lives of foetuses – perhaps because for every doctor killed or clinic bombed, three more took their place in a show of solidarity – but still that group persisted in its campaign, we might be able to conclude that they were acting primarily on the basis of perceived moral duty. That is, any consequentialism was purely second-order, a side effect of the first-order duty, and which was marginal to the decision to engage in violent action. In such a case, we could label groups deontological/non-consequentialist rather than consequentialist with a reasonable degree of accuracy. But of course, abstracting from the potential real-world consequences of actions like this is not possible. I believe that the nearest we can get to identifying whether groups are primarily consequentialist or primarily deontological is to look at how such groups regard themselves, to look at what their actual statements and justifications for actions are, and to try to classify them on that basis. This is what I am attempting.

The importance of the issue of whether religiously motivated groups are primarily deontological or consequentialist is this: if primarily consequentialist groups realise that the goal they are trying to attain is, in reality, unattainable through the use of violent means – however long this realisation might take to penetrate their layers of self-delusion – they may be likely to give up violent struggle or disband. Examples are the voluntary disbanding of the Red Army Faction, or the ending by the Provisional IRA of armed activity (the specific instances are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5). Conversely, it may be the case that a primarily deontological violent group feels that it has a bounden moral duty to

continue to act in certain ways – to punish the guilty or to attempt to implement God's will on earth, and so forth. In such cases, the instrumental rationality of continuing or discontinuing the violent struggle will not be a factor. The actual attainability of concrete end-goals will be irrelevant. The violent activity is an end in itself, an expression of deeply felt moral duty. Such groups might be much more intransigent in a conflict resolution situation. In some extremes, compromise might be impossible. Even apparently primarily consequentialist groups might come to have the characteristics that we are ascribing to primarily deontological groups.[4] This might happen if the good that was to be attained ceases to be as important as the efforts to secure that good. The good that the violent activity was directed towards becomes less important than the continuation of the violent efforts themselves: the activity, rather than the end, becomes the good. This might explain the often-noted characteristic of some groups engaging in "terrorism for terrorism's sake" – the previously agent-external good has transformed into an agent-internal good.

2. Group structure: leaderless resistance?

As noted in the opening paragraph of this chapter, radical Christian Right anti-abortion militants and radical Islamic extremists are similar insofar as they seem to be ultimately guided by a moral imperative based on their particular interpretation of the dictates of their respective religions. But they may be similar in other respects, as well. How do the violent lone actors of the militant anti-abortion movement and the widely geographically dispersed Islamic extremists receive and interpret their particularistic moral imperatives in such a seemingly coherent way, without the central direction of some overarching organisational

structure? Why do apparently unaffiliated individuals and small groups decide to act on these particular perceived moral imperatives? How is the motivational and justificatory ideology disseminated and spread? The answer might lie – for both sorts of groups – in the concept of "leaderless resistance".

It is a frequently mentioned characteristic of militant anti-abortion groups and groups of the white-supremacist and racist right that, structurally and organisationally, they often tend to consist of relatively amorphous, disparate collections of individuals and small groups who may have no formal or physical contact with each other, let alone be part of any sort of traditional organisation with a hierarchical leadership. Indeed, calling them "groups" as such might even be said to be misleading, imputing to them a level of organisation that may not exist. It might be more accurate to describe them as collections of loosely affiliated individuals or cells informed, influenced and guided by a similar and relatively coherent ideology. Some individuals who have been convicted of violent actions – for example, Rachelle Shannon (see section 3) – have been members or on the fringes of more mainstream pressure groups that formally reject and eschew the use of violence. Although such individuals may have links or affiliations with more mainstream groups, any violent activities that are undertaken do not occur under the auspices of the more mainstream pressure groups and are often condemned by them, albeit in sometimes equivocal form.[5]

Ideological support for individual and small groups of violent militants is often disseminated through non-traditional channels. This support includes motivational analysis, tactical and logistical information (including the names and addresses of targets and advice on how to use improvised explosives) and justificatory arguments. The means of dissemination of this material has evolved

beyond privately published and photocopied pamphlets to encompass the whole gamut of contemporary global electronic information sources. The consequence of this is that lone individuals sympathetic to a particular worldview can gain relatively easy access to the knowledge and information required to undertake some sort of violent activity. Internet discussion and bulletin boards can provide an ideological support community, even if the various members never meet in real life.

This is no random evolution. The principle of "leaderless resistance", adapted and popularised by Louis Beam, whom Hoffman describes as "one of the pre-eminent figures in American white supremacism",[6] underlies these developments. Beam is said to have pioneered the use of computer bulletin boards and discussion forums as a means for militant activists to communicate with each other and to circulate and distribute information and literature that would be banned by federal postal services.[7]

"Leaderless resistance" is seen to be an alternative mode of structuring a violent underground movement, one that avoids what Beam sees as the apparently inherent flaws of other modes of organisation. The first of these, Beam refers to as "the orthodox scheme of organization … diagrammatically represented by the pyramid".[8] This is the typical hierarchy, with the mass of the membership in the lower echelons and a vertical chain of command. Beam considers this pyramidal hierarchy to be too easy to infiltrate – "electronic surveillance can often penetrate the structure, thus revealing its chain of command". He continues: "Experience has revealed over and over again that anti-state political organizations utilizing this method of command and control are easy prey for government infiltration, entrapment, and destruction of the personnel involved … an infiltrator can destroy

anything that is beneath his level of infiltration, and often those above him as well. If the traitor has infiltrated at the top, then the entire organization from the top down is compromised and may be traduced at will".

Beam also rejects the cell system, often used by revolutionary movements. Although he considers that the system of numerous independently operating cells of activists – who are isolated from each other, have no knowledge of each other's orders and identities, and are co-ordinated by a central headquarters – is an effective organisational remedy against infiltration by enemies, he argues that such a system is dependent upon central direction, which in turn requires "impressive organisation, funding from the top, and outside support". He concludes: "obviously, American patriots have none of these things at the top or anywhere else, and so an effective cell organization … is impossible".

The organisational answer is thus "leaderless resistance", or the "phantom cell" mode of organisation. This is, according to Beam, "a system of organization that is based upon the cell organisation, but does not have any central control or direction, [in which] all individuals and groups operate independently of each other and never report to a central headquarters or single leader for direction or instruction". He further explains:

> At first glance, such a form of organization seems unrealistic, primarily because there appears to be no organization. The natural question thus arises as to how are the 'Phantom Cells' and individuals to co-operate with each other when there is no inter-communication or central direction? The answer … is that participants in a program of leaderless resistance through 'Phantom Cell' or individual action must know exactly what they are doing and how to do it. It becomes the responsibility of the individual to acquire the necessary skills and information as

> to what is to be done. [This is possible because] in any movement, all persons involved have the same general outlook, are acquainted with the same philosophy, and generally react to given situations in the same way ... all members of phantom cells or individuals will tend to react to objective events in the same way through usual tactics of resistance. Organs of information distribution such as newspapers, leaflets, computers etc., which are widely available to all, keep each person informed of events, allowing for a planned response that will take many variations. No one need issue an order to anyone. Those idealists truly committed to the cause of freedom will act when they feel the time is ripe, or will take their cue from others who precede them.

Beam also notes that this mode of organisation will necessarily lead to very small one man resistance cells, and that it is desirable that such people have the ability to camouflage themselves by blending in among more mainstream associations that are generally seen by the general public as being harmless.

While these principles seem to have been wholeheartedly accepted and put into practice by a range of militant advocates of quite disparate ideologies – including anti-abortionists, white supremacists and other right-wing groups, and even animal rights and environmental activists – it might be worth briefly considering whether the recent rash of attacks allegedly perpetrated by Islamic extremists might fit a similar organisational pattern. There may be evidence that previously unaffiliated lone individuals or small groups, inspired by the wider ideology, have engaged in radical Islamic violence (for example, the perpetrators of the 7th July 2005 London attacks), and the range of distinct groups in a disparate global network might serve to indicate that contemporary Islamic attacks are born out of an "international conglomerate" of groups rather than traditional

inter-group co-operation. Many of these groups have links that are so close that they may be said to have an overlapping membership. For example, a leader of Jemaah Islamiya, the group that is said to have been responsible for the October 2002 Bali bombings, the bombing of a hotel in Jakarta in August 2003 and an assassination attempt on the Philippine ambassador to Indonesia in August 2000, is also said to be al-Qaeda's "Southeast Asia operations chief".[9] Likewise, the group accused of carrying out the Madrid train attacks in March 2004 (the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group) is said to have close links with al-Qaeda: the latter is said to have assisted the former in the May 2003 bombings in Casablanca. The U.S. State Department alleges very close links – ideologically, logistically, and operationally – between al-Qaeda; Lebanon-based Asbat al-Asnar; Egypt's Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (one of the leaders of which co-signed Osama bin Laden's February 1998 fatwa[10], and which is reported to have been behind the November 1997 attacks on tourists at Luxor and the attempted assassination of the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in 1995); the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan; and the remnant members of Egypt's al-Jihad, which merged with al-Qaeda in June 2001.[11]

Al-Qaeda itself seems to represent an evolution and extension of the traditional cellular structure employed by many revolutionary and nationalist movements. The U.S. State Department says that the organisation has cells worldwide and "serves as a focal point or umbrella organization for a worldwide network that includes many Sunni Islamic extremist groups".[12] Paul Wilkinson has said that it is "a genuinely transnational organisation with multinational membership with the finances and support networks that, as far as we can understand, are independent of states. Undoubtedly there are many dormant cells,

preparative cells, and sleepers..."[13] Apart from the well-known attacks on New York and Washington D.C. in September 2001, al-Qaeda has allegedly been directly or indirectly associated with attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Indonesia, Turkey, Afghanistan and Iraq in 2003; Kenya, Indonesia, Kuwait, Yemen and Tunisia in 2002; Yemen in 2000; and Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. The attacks were primarily directed against tourists and foreign workers, Jewish centres and synagogues, U.S. and British embassies and consulates, and U.S. military personnel.[14] Between 1998 and 2004, these attacks associated with al-Qaeda, not including the March 2004 Madrid attacks, have killed more than 3,600 people and injured more than 6,200.[15]

While the organising structures of contemporary radical Islamist violence are relatively decentralised, it would not seem totally accurate to describe these structures as representing a species of "leaderless resistance". The term *leaderless resistance* refers explicitly to a network of independent, un-coordinated individuals and small groups informed and motivated by a similar ideology. However, there are obvious similarities. On a macro scale, the disparate Islamist groups throughout the world could be said to parallel the disparate, lone individuals in the micro-level leaderless resistance model. At both the macro and micro levels, units are informed and motivated by a coherent ideology. At both levels, there is logistical, justificatory and exhortational information and material disseminated via pamphlet, speech, interview and Internet. And at both levels there is little central direction, insofar as, just as there is no right-wing puppet-master pulling the strings of all the anti-abortion activists in the U.S., bin Laden is unlikely to be sitting in a cave in the hills of Afghanistan ordering and arranging particular operations. The micro-management of individual operations is not the

issue. Bin Laden and similar ideologues have issued a generalised call for attacks on particular categories of targets and have stated that such attacks constitute an individual duty for all Muslims.[16] Indeed, more recently, the al-Qaeda website apparently published this statement:

> Although the al-Qaeda organization fights to defend the [Islamic] nation, it does not fight on the nation's behalf; therefore, anyone who cannot join al-Qaeda is not exempt from the obligation of *jihad* [until] he has done everything possible to search for *jihad* and did not succeed in joining any of its fronts, and after he has invested his best efforts, as he would in search for a medical specialist for a dread disease for someone dear to him.[17]

However, the system of organisation employed by the disparate Islamist groups and the precise nature of the links between them is very unclear, so further comment on this topic would get us deeper into unsubstantiated speculation.

3. Anti-abortion activists

The United States' National Abortion Federation says that, since the 1973 Supreme Court decision of *Roe v Wade*, which legalised abortion in the US, there has been an organised campaign of opposition, intimidation and eventual violence against abortion providers, beginning with peaceful picketing, through direct harassment of staff, up to the first arson attack on a clinic in 1975, a series of bombings in 1978, and on to the assassination, or attempted assassination, of abortion providers from the early 1990s.[18] It is, of course, important to note that the anti-abortion militants of the Christian Right are a small minority, and that the Christian Right as a whole is much broader and has much broader concerns than

those features of contemporary American society that drive these militants to engage in violent actions. That said, anti-abortion militants are representatives of the more extreme elements of the Christian Right that engage in political violence.

"The long-range goal of the anti-abortion movement is to outlaw abortion. Their short-range strategy has been to attack access to abortion".[19] This seems to be a clear consequentialist approach, does it not? However, a pro-choice website quotes the following from a programme for a 1996 banquet for anti-abortion militants: "The just punishment for the capital crime of abortion, as with any murder, is death."[20] While the veracity of this quote cannot be ascertained, there are many confirmed statements with the same tenor.[21] A statement released by a group named Defensive Action before the trial of Michael Griffin, accused of the March 1993 killing of Dr. David Gunn outside his Florida clinic, reads:

> We, the undersigned, declare the justice of taking all godly action necessary to defend innocent human life, including the use of force. We proclaim that whatever force is legitimate to defend the life of a born child is legitimate to defend the life of an unborn child. We assert that if Michael Griffin did indeed kill David Gunn, his use of lethal force was justifiable provided it was carried out for the purpose of defending the lives of unborn children. Therefore, he ought to be acquitted of the charges against him.[22]

The statement is interesting on a number of justificatory levels. First, the use of the term "godly action" seems to imply that such actions have divine sanction or that they represent God's will. Secondly, it is the defence of *innocent* human life that is at issue. This makes clear the difference in the moral worth of the lives of innocents rather than the guilty. It also indicates how anti-abortionists can claim

to be pro-life at the same time as ending or endangering the lives of medical practitioners: They are pro *innocent* life, and the guilty must answer for their sins, with death if necessary. Thirdly, there is the equation of the life of a born child with that of the unborn foetus. This has a clear basis in contemporary Christian theology. And fourthly, the latter part of the statement indicates a consequentialist justification, in that the use of lethal force is justified if it serves to defend the lives of unborn children.

Another example represents an even clearer form of deontological justification. It is the closing declaration of a pamphlet entitled *When Life Hurts We Can Help ... The Army of God*, subtitled *A How To Manual of means to disrupt and ultimately destroy Satan's power to kill our children, God's children.* The publication was found buried in the garden of Rachelle (Shelley) Shannon, who was convicted of the attempted assassination of an abortion provider in Kansas in 1993. The manual includes directions for harassing and destroying clinics, including instruction on arson, the making and detonation of home-made bombs, jamming telephones, and clogging doors with glue:

> We, the remnant of God-fearing men and women of the United States of Amerika, do officially declare war on the entire child-killing industry. After praying, fasting, and making continual supplication to God for your pagan, infidel souls – we then peacefully, passively presented our bodies in front of your death camps, begging you to stop the mass murdering of infants. Yet you hardened your already blackened, jaded hearts. We quietly accepted the resulting imprisonment and suffering of our passive resistance. Yet you mocked God and continued the Holocaust. No longer! All the options have expired. Our Most Dread Sovereign Lord God requires that whosoever sheds man's blood, by man

> shall his blood be shed. Not out of hatred of you, but out of love for the persons you exterminate, we are forced to take arms against you. Our life for yours – a simple equation. Dreadful. Sad. Reality, nonetheless. You shall not be tortured at our hands. Vengeance belongs to God only. However, execution is rarely gentle.[23]

This statement also has a number of elements. Primary among them is the dark Old Testament imagery of the wrath of a vengeful God who will punish the sinner. The implication is that God's will is at work, and to kill an abortion provider is merely to send them early to God's eternal judgment. A second element is the argument that the decision to resort to violence was taken only after all other methods failed – praying, fasting, occupation, and other modes of passive resistance. It was only after these failed that the resort to violence became necessary. This echoes the "last resort" condition in just war theory, connecting the killing of abortion providers to the idea of justified defence against aggression – and, as we will see in the case of Paul Hill, "justified" becomes "morally required" when the defencelessness of the victims is stressed.

A further point is the apparent willingness of the activists to submit to the judgment of the temporal, civil power, and accept their punishment accordingly. This draws an implicit distinction between earthly and divine justice. If temporal imprisonment is the price to be paid for carrying out the justice of God, so be it, for it is to God's justice that we ultimately answer to, not to the laws made by corrupt, venal, and weak politicians. Two more points are relevant. First is the reference to abortion providers as "pagan", "infidel", and "heathen", with "blackened, jaded hearts." This reference serves to draw a distinction between the moral status of abortion providers and that of "God-fearing" anti-abortion activists. It has certain parallels to the references of fascist and racist organisations

to "heathen mud-races". It also parallels certain anti-Semitic statements allegedly made by Fr. Paul Marx, the chairman of Human Life International.[24] The second, perhaps minor, point is the idiosyncratic spelling of "Amerika". Groups of both the left and the right have used this spelling to indicate their belief that the contemporary United States ("Amerika") has strayed from the ideals of its founders by either becoming a quasi-fascist state or becoming dominated by a "Zionist occupational government".

There are many similar such justificatory statements available, most of which refer to the just punishment for murder being death and often refer to anti-abortion violence as being righteous. However, these examples will serve for our purposes.[25] These statements have a clear and overwhelming deontological character. Their justifications of violence are clearly based on the belief that it is their duty to carry out the justice of a vengeful God, as established by the Old Testament. To a large extent, at least in the extracts quoted, any consequentialist justification ("we do this to save lives in the long run") is of very secondary importance. Though it would be a logical consequence of their actions that abortion providers may be deterred, this is a minor part of their justification for the use of force. The justification seems to be primarily about dispensing divine justice and punishing sinners, and this is an archetypal deontological position.

4. Paul Hill

One of the most sophisticated expositions – in a relative sense – of a deontological justification for anti-abortion violence was written by Paul Hill, a Presbyterian "minister of the gospel". The paper was originally written to justify the 1993

killing of Dr. David Gunn by Michael Griffin.[26] In the paper, Hill argues that a distinction must be made between what is just and what is legal. A government may obviously call an act legal that is actually unjust according to God's law. This refers to the currently legal status of abortion in the USA, even though the laws that allow what Hill calls the killing of unborn children are unjust in God's eyes. So, in the eyes of God, Hill argues, it is a just act to "protect the innocent from a bloody death at the hands of a paid killer". This echoes the statement released by the anti-abortion group Defensive Action (of which Paul Hill was the director) before the trial of Michael Griffin (quoted in section 3 above).

Hill reinforces his argument with copious Biblical quotation. He says that the Bible clearly teaches that individuals may protect their lives with deadly force, if necessary. He bases this on *Exodus 22:2*: "if the thief is caught while breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there will be no blood guiltiness on his account". This statement is extended to cover the unborn by appeal to the commandment to love your neighbour as yourself. He also argues, from *Acts 9:23-25*, that God's law supersedes the law of man: "when the state or any other authority requires one to do what is contrary to God's law, the child of God must obey God rather than man". Hill takes this to mean that individuals may use force to "protect unborn children from imminent death even if the government forbids us to do so". Hill concludes that, on the basis of God's law, there is no question but that deadly force should be used to protect innocent life. And he contrasts the moral worth of the abortion provider with the moral worth of the unborn: "Whose life is innocent – those who kill our children or the children who are being killed?" This indicates in no uncertain terms what the answer should be to those who ask how those who kill abortion providers can claim to be pro-life: they are pro-*innocent*-life.

Another Biblical example seems to indicate that there are other reasons than the saving of innocent life that justify the use of force. Phinehas, in *Numbers 25*, killed "two immoral persons in order to turn God's wrath away from the people" as a whole. Hill argues, presumably with a mind to drawing an analogy with today, that Phinehas' "violently zealous actions", which were committed with no due legal process nor by a duly constituted civil power, served to atone for sin: "Though sin had fanned God's righteous anger into a searing blaze, the shedding of guilty blood has cooled the flame and saved the people from destruction".[27] There seems little doubt that Hill believes this to be an actual historical occurrence, and the argument is that not only does the use of force save innocent lives but also that shedding the blood of the guilty in carrying out God's justice serves to assuage God's wrath and persuade him not to wreak vengeance on all (presumably Christian) humanity.[28] All actions such as that of Phinehas must arise from pure motive, must conform to the "legal standard" as summarised in the Commandments, and must ultimately seek the glory of God.[29]

Hill also argues that though scripture affirms both the individual's and the leaders' responsibilities to protect the innocent from unjust harm, the responsibility to protect innocent life is not given directly to government leaders from God; rather, this responsibility is first given to the people, who delegate some of this responsibility to their appointed leaders. And if those leaders neglect their responsibility, the burden falls all the more heavily on the individual. Any law passed by the civil power which contravenes the law of God is no law at all, a position supported by appeal to figures such as Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and Knox. So the fact that the government describes "what Dr. Gunn was about to

do as abortion does not change the fact that it was the bloody slaughter of people made in God's image":

> The fact that Dr. Gunn killed the innocent in the white garb of the doctor with government approval does not justify his killing [the killing by Gunn]. His killing was no more justified than a man entering a school and personally killing school-age children. Dr. Gunn was the violent aggressor. The man who killed him was defending your neighbor's children at great personal cost.[30]

Hill then proceeds to deal with various objections to his advocacy of force, and many of his responses are rooted in the arguments that have gone before. However, in specific response to the challenge that the spiritual approach of peaceful prayer and fasting should be the method that the pious Christian adopts, Hill says that the submission of Christ to the civil authorities was the result of a direct command from God that he should offer his life as an atoning sacrifice, and as such, his case and his example were unique. We, on the other hand, are not bound by any such divine imperative to submission. Instead, we have a God-given responsibility to take "defensive action" to protect life. The spiritual, passive approach is insufficient – "true faith shows itself by good works", in the active sense. "Any thinking Christian", says Hill, "will soon see the Biblical inconsistency" of this objection to the active use of force: "Common sense clearly condemns the 'piety' that would respond to the mugging of a helpless victim with prayer without taking defensive action". If we love God, we will keep his commands to defend innocent life. Hill sees the defence of the unborn, with violent force if necessary, as being an expression of love for God, represented by the keeping of his commandments.

Another response is particularly worthy of note. He recognises that many people would see his position as being one of religious fanaticism, and he says:

> It is true that all men are religious and have accepted by faith either the validity or invalidity of the Word of God. By faith, Christians accept God's Word to be true and may deduce from his Word the principles in this paper. People who assert their faith that God's Word isn't true no longer have an objective standard from God by which to determine what is ultimately right or wrong. When those who reject the truth of the Scriptures mock those who accept them, we may ask, "by what absolute moral standard do you ridicule the truths of God's Word?" They have none. For those who reject God's Word, there is no consistent higher ethic from which they can conclude that the killing of Dr. Gunn was unjust. Their mockings are ultimately directed at God. Their hatred of their Creator reaches its most blasphemous heights when they kill the unborn made in His image and vilify us for protecting them.[31]

Here, Hill is addressing the perennial meta-ethical problem of the radically indeterminate nature of the status of moral evaluation. He argues that there is no objective standard for moral evaluation outside of divine law. Of course, he doesn't attempt to prove the objectivity of this divine law, for, as a Christian, acceptance of God's law is a matter of faith. But equally, rejection of God's law represents a matter of faith as well: there is no objective basis for denying the existence of God or his law, and so atheism is equally a matter of faith. But for the Christian, his faith allows him to *know* in his heart what is true. Christian faith allows individuals to perceive the truth of God's law, to deduce what it

commands, and, ultimately, to deduce the principles that Hill defends. Those who oppose these principles are, fundamentally, mocking God.

Towards the conclusion of his paper, Hill seems to advocate not just the assassination of individual doctors, but actual insurgency against the state. In a section entitled "The duty of defensive war", Hill states that the current civil government will not admit that both the Bible and the U.S. Constitution are fundamentally opposed to "the murder of unborn children" and that the civil power defends this murder with force. Hill argues that "government leaders … have the God-given responsibility to resist our civil government that we may escape the wrath of God [that is] due to our country". It is unclear exactly what distinction Hill is making here between "government leaders" and "our civil government". Nevertheless, Hill outlines various options, citing "the classic treatment of just war principles [that are] found in Samuel Rutherford's *Lex Rex*". The first of these options is protest. This has been used in the past, and abortion continues: "Nor may we justly be content to wait for four years and six million human souls to pass before we try the poll box option of protest again. If any viable options exist, we have a responsibility to pursue them".

The second option is to flee. But any flight from the present circumstances would represent a flight from the responsibility to protect those who cannot flee, the unborn. The third option, Hill says, which remains the only just and viable option, is to "take up arms in a defensive war under a lower magistrate":

> Considering the pressing urgency of our cause and the lack of any other justifiable course of action, our duty is to pursue a defensive war if possible. Defensive wars have been waged even where there was no apparent hope of victory. Such wars have shown the righteous indignation of those oppressed. Just

> wars are, however, usually considered unwise until there are enough men and resources available to offer a reasonable hope that the effort to overthrow the existing government will be successful. In order to obtain such resources, people must be won to the cause.[32]

Peaceful civil protest, Hill is saying, has failed. Picketing, lobbying, praying, voting, occupying clinics – all these have proved insufficient. Fleeing the country, presumably to escape God's righteous vengeance, is not an option either. Rather, as a last resort, people must take up arms against the government that allows abortion. When Hill speaks of the distinction between "government leaders" and the "civil government", and when he talks of taking up arms "under a lower magistrate", he may be referring to citizens and state leaders in opposition to the federal government. He says that Americans have the responsibility to defend the defenceless and the constitution, and refers to the second amendment: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed". Moreover, Hill invokes the memory of the American Civil War, saying that "thousands died in violent action … for a lesser cause".[33]

Throughout the exposition of his principles, Hill underlines almost every point with the idea that God requires us to act in certain ways, and that we have a moral duty, a Christian duty, to act in these ways: "isn't sacrifice and suffering in doing our duty to protect life the honorable way to serve our God?" and "go forth to show forth God's righteous indignation upon those who defile with gruesome death children made in His image and likeness". This is a classically deontological position. He clearly states that obeying God is not only the best thing to do, but is also the wisest. Moreover, "God has given you the energy and

resources you now have for His service", and now is the time to use them to protect the unborn: "If we will but act in true repentance and faith, God will bless our zealous but feeble efforts with abundant success".[34]

But Hill was no mere theorist. The year after writing this paper, he turned these justifications into action when he shot and killed an abortion provider and his driver/bodyguard. Again, Hill produced justificatory writings, this time specifically addressing his own experience.[35] He says he realized that his actions would accomplish a number of things, some of them explicitly consequentialist, such as putting pro-life rhetoric into action, waking up complacent public opinion, and forcing people to choose sides. However, what Hill considered to be the most important aspect of his action is explicitly deontological in nature: "I realized that this would uphold the truth of the Gospel at the precise point of Satan's current attack (the abortionist's knife)".[36]

His description of his motivation, decision to act, and state of mind in the days before the attack has the almost mystical flavour of personal revelation from God. After he had made his decision, he refers to the feeling of a "swelling pain in my chest of praise … I was reminded of God's promise to bless Abraham, and grant him descendants as numerous as the stars … I claimed that promise as my own…". More significantly, perhaps, Hill claims that he considered himself not to be standing for his own ideas, but for God's truths: "Who was I to stand in God's way? He now held the door open and promised great blessing for obedience. Was I not to step through it? … I felt that the Lord had placed in my hands a cup whose contents were difficult to swallow, but that it was a task that had to be borne". Hill clearly felt that his action would be in accordance with God's will,

even God's command, and that he had an unavoidable duty to act. He believed that not only was God on his side, but that God had inspired the idea to act, calmed his troubled mind, "opened a window of opportunity" that Hill had been appointed to step through. Indeed, in a classically deontological manner, he says that "obedience was the only option", "much of the joy I felt after shooting the abortionist, and still feel today, is the joy of having freely obeyed the Lord after being enslaved to fearful obedience to men", and that "defending the unborn with force … is a Biblical duty".

The court that convicted Hill and sentenced him to death refused to accept his defence of "justifiable homicide". After his conviction, Hill said that Jesus would have done the same.[37]

5. James Kopp

The anti-abortion activist James Kopp, known to his community of militants on the internet as "Atomic Dog", and reputed to have been the author of the Army of God manual, was sentenced in 2003 to 25 years to life, without parole, for the killing of Dr. Barnett Slepian in Buffalo, New York. In the transcript of the sentencing hearing,[38] Kopp makes a lengthy statement explaining his motivation and quotes from Popes John Paul II and Paul VI, St. Ambrose and Thomas Aquinas. The thrust of his explanation in this statement is more reasonable in tone than the writings of Paul Hill, less apocalyptic in terms of imagery, and relatively more straightforward. Hill was an evangelical Presbyterian, whereas Kopp is Catholic, and it would be tempting to ascribe the differences in tone to this fact. Be that as it may, Kopp's explanation of his justification is largely based on two strands. Firstly, one should not obey a law, or be complicit in the application of a

law, that is immoral. Secondly, we have a moral obligation to attempt to prevent harm to others.[39]

The first of these strands is drawn from the Popes' statements. Kopp paraphrased John Paul II as saying: "No one, no Supreme Court, no New York State Legislature, absolutely no one has the authority to destroy unborn life, no doctor, no nurse, no mother, no matter how sympathetic we might be to her situation, no one ever has the authority to destroy unborn life".[40] This is followed by a direct quote from John Paul II –"abortion is death. It is the killing of an innocent creature" – and a lengthier quote from Paul VI:

> Whatever may be laid down in civil law in the matter of abortion, no one can ever obey a law which is in itself immoral, and such is the case of a law which would admit in principle the liciety of abortion, nor can one take part in the propaganda campaign in favor of such a law or vote for it. Moreover, one may not collaborate in its application.[41]

Kopp stressed the last sentence, and argued that anybody who stood by and did nothing "while children are being killed" was complicit in the application of an immoral law. This brings us to the second strand in his explanation. Kopp quoted St. Ambrose, "He who does not repel an injury to his fellow, if he is able to do so, is as much at fault as he … who commits the injury", and Aquinas, "stopping an act of aggression in defence of oneself or another must be with the moral certitude that harm will be inflicted on that individual if force is not used".[42] He followed these statements with a more recent quote from a Bishop Austin Vaughan of New York:

> The moral law of God does not unequivocally condemn the use of force to stop persons who seek to harm innocent life. The use of violence to protect human life against attack is not intrinsically immoral. Those who take up arms against abortionists cannot be simply condemned, nor are they guilty of murder.[43]

There is an obvious deontological, moral-duty basis to Kopp's justification of his actions. The structure of the justification is as follows. First, abortion is the destruction of unborn human life. Second, no one ever has the authority to do this. Third, laws providing for abortion are immoral. Fourth, no one should obey an immoral law. Fifth, complicity in the application of an immoral law is itself immoral. Sixth, standing idly by while an immoral law is applied is to be complicit in the application of that law. Seventh, we have a moral duty to do what we can, including the resort to lethal force, in order to prevent an act of violence against our fellow humans. Kopp continued the point by making an analogy with a picnicker witnessing a knife attack by a stranger on the child of another picnicker, and asking who would not intervene? His point is that it makes no difference whether the attacked child is six years of age, six days' of age, or six weeks' in gestation: he argues that "the thing that provides the imperative for you to defend that child … is the innocence, with respect to her attacker, which resides in the child itself … we have a moral imperative to try to protect [children]".[44] Here, Kopp blends the moral argument that it is imperative to protect other human beings with its necessary biological corollary with regard to abortion, namely, that the unborn foetus is a human life, is not materially or morally different from born human life, and has the same moral worth and moral rights as any other member of the human race.[45]

With regard to whether militants such as himself would consider abandoning the use of violence if it was proven that their actions would not deter abortion providers or save the lives of foetuses, Kopp was ambiguous: "I will happily promise never to use force again as long or as soon as this country demonstrates that it has stopped child killing".[46] That is, he will not use force as long as the circumstances that would give rise to him feeling morally obliged to use force do not exist.

6. Islamic political violence

Here, the focus is on the sorts of justifications that are used by some Islamic extremist groups, specifically on the Qur'anic text-based scriptural interpretations such as those that have been employed by Osama bin Laden, reputed leader of the al-Qaeda organisation, in speeches, articles, and interviews. Although obviously massively different from the anti-abortionists in terms of the scale of violence used, there are similarities in terms of the nature of the moral imperatives derived from their particularistic interpretations of the dictates of their respective religions and their similar bases in a scriptural tradition.

Al-Qaeda has, since 2001, been top of the list in terms of the popular imagination's identification of a paradigmatic terrorist organisation, and it is certainly true to say that this network and its associated allies have been responsible for multiple more deaths, injuries and destruction than anything ever envisaged by Paul Hill and his ilk. The al-Qaeda organisation has its origins in the late 1970s as a sort of administrative facilitator, run by bin Laden amongst others, for Muslim opposition to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.[47] In the 1980s, the original organisation – called the "Services Office" by Western sources –

apparently extended its concerns to the training of Muslim fighters to carry a militant campaign beyond Afghanistan.[48] Al-Qaeda was formed in the late 1980s, allegedly with the ultimate aim of, variously, seeking to "rid Muslim countries of what it sees as the profane influence of the West and replace their governments with fundamentalist Islamic regimes",[49] and/or the aim of uniting all Muslims and establishing "a government that follows the rule of the Caliphs".[50]

Formally, Islamic law prohibits violence except as official punishment for criminal transgressions, in personal self-defence, or in the case of formally declared legitimate war. Clandestine violence against defenceless victims is condemned.[51] However, the Qur'an permits the use of force for two reasons: self-defence and the propagation of Islam.[52] The term we tend to be familiar with is *"jihad"*. This is usually interpreted as meaning "holy war". While it can have this implication, its literal meaning is "effort" or "exertion". This may include effort or exertion in war, but the meaning is not restricted to this. It may refer to day-to-day moral struggles, or to the attempt to convert non-believers through peaceful argument and persuasion, in ways that have nothing to do with the use of force.[53] Abd Al-Hamid Al-Ansari, a contemporary Muslim scholar described as 'liberal' by the media organisation that translated the text, has said:

> *Jihad*, in its true sense as defined in the Qur'an and as implemented by the Prophet [Muhammad] and his noble companions, is a means of defending differences, pluralism and diversity. That is, it is [a means] of defending freedom of choice [as is written in the Qur'an] – "There is no coercion in Islam"... [2:256]. From the beginning, *jihad* has been defined by two goals: The first was a response to aggression and oppression [as told in the Qur'an 22:39]: "To those

> against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; and verily, Allah is most powerful in assisting". The second [goal] is the liberation of the persecuted peoples from tyrannical regimes, as happened to the Persian and Byzantine peoples.[54]

In one *sunna* (or tradition of the prophet), Mohammed describes the use of force in battle as the minor *jihad*, and self-exertion in peaceful personal compliance with the dictates of Islam as the superior *jihad*. Likewise, another *sunna* reports that Mohammed said that the best form of *jihad* is to speak the truth in the face of an oppressive ruler.[55] However, certain verses of the Qur'an apparently sanction the use of force against non-Muslims. It has been argued that such verses should be seen as being rooted in the context of the time they were written: a context of insecurity and hostility between neighbouring peoples, a context where the very survival of Islam was paramount. The corollary position is that these verses, or strict interpretations of them, are not relevant today and should be open to reinterpretation by Muslim scholars.[56] Al-Ansari argues that, in modern times, the concept of *jihad* has been distorted by those he terms "the new Khawarij,[57] those groups that took for themselves the title of *Jihad* – but [*Jihad*] against whom? Against their societies and governments". Al-Ansari argues that such ideas are based on the writings of the radical Islamist dissidents Sayyed Qutb and Abu A'la Al-Mawdoudi, and he says "the perception of *jihad* in the eyes of these two masters emerges from the assumption that the Muslims are the guardians of the human race, that Allah has charged them with liberating it from the tyrants on earth, and that *jihad* is the only means of establishing an Islamic government that will rule the world".[58]

That said, the two goals of *jihad* mentioned by Al-Ansari – as a response to aggression and oppression, and for the liberation of persecuted peoples from tyrannical regimes – can obviously be interpreted by some as being relevant to their perception of the contemporary state of world affairs, with the U.S. and Israel being cast in the roles of oppressors and aggressors and with states such as Saudi Arabia, which are perceived to be corrupt, decadent, puppet regimes of the West, cast as tyrannical.

The first Qur'anic verses that, in a literal interpretation, sanction *jihad* (in the sense of force) against non-Muslims are as follows:

> Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress the limits [initiate attack or aggression], for God does not love transgressors. And slay them wherever you catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out, for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque [Mecca] unless they first fight you there; but if they fight you there slay them because that is the reward of the unbelievers. But if they cease, God is most forgiving … And fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression and there prevails faith in God; but if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression.[59]

Verses of chapter 9 of the Qur'an are, in this context, generally taken to contain the clearest permission for the use of force against non-Muslims and are believed to have superseded all previous verses that limit this use of force. This passage was in fact quoted by Osama bin Laden in the opening paragraphs of his second *fatwa*, of 23rd February 1998, calling for a *jihad* against "Jews and Crusaders":

> [Once the period of grace – 4 months or until the end of a specified treaty – is over] … then fight and slay the unbelievers wherever you find them, and seize them, and beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem [of war]; but if they repent and establish regular prayers and pay *zaka* [Islamic alms and religious tax] then open the way for them, for God is most forgiving…[60]

A notable verse in this chapter refers to the treatment of "people of the book" – Christians and Jews who have been enlightened by divine Biblical scriptures:

> Fight those People of the Book who do not believe in God or the Last Day, nor hold as forbidden what has been forbidden by God and His Apostle [Mohammed], nor acknowledge the Religion of truth until they pay *jizya* [poll tax] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.[61]

As an aside, various Qur'anic verses stress that Muslims should seek support from within the Muslim community, or *umma*, and should disassociate themselves from non-believers, not taking them as friends, helpers, or supporters.[62] Similarly, Muslims should not take Jews and Christians as friends or allies, as they are friends and allies for each other. Any Muslim who turns to "people of the book" for friendship or support becomes one of them.[63] A passage in bin Laden's so-called first *fatwa* of August 1996, seems to reflect this. Arguing that the Saudi regime's "collaboration" with "the Crusaders and Jews" represents apostasy, bin Laden says that to use man-made law instead of *Shari'a* (the interpretation of the Qur'an and of the deeds of Mohammed) and "to support the infidels against

Muslims is one of the ten 'voiders' that would strip a person of his Islamic status".[64]

It has been argued that there is a clear progression with regard to Qur'anic sanction of the use of force against non-Muslims from using force for self-defence to using force in the propagation of Islam – moreover, these are the only circumstances in which the use of force is justified.[65] According to An-Na'im, early Muslim scholars developed the interpretative theory that Islam and unbelief cannot both exist in the world. There are many instances of Mohammed, and his succeeding Caliphs, instructing Muslim armies to offer the enemy the opportunity to convert to Islam. If they converted, then no force was allowed to be used against them. If they refused to convert, but were Christians or Jews, then they were offered the choice of reaching an agreement with Islam wherein they would pay poll tax and submit to Muslim sovereignty, but retain the right to practice their religion and apply their personal laws. If this second option was rejected, then Muslims must use force: "then seek help from God and combat them".[66]

Leading founding scholars of *Shari'a* spoke of a permanent state of war between the Islamic world and the non-Muslim world. Muslims may have to enter into peace treaties with non-Muslims if Muslim interests required it, but such treaties should only be of a temporary nature, to allow Muslims to resolve their internal differences or to prepare for the next period of conflict with non-Muslims.[67] Thus, whether through active fighting or by other means, the territory outside the jurisdiction of Islam must be brought within that jurisdiction.[68] The literal interpretation of this, combined with the injunction on individual Muslims to rectify – if possible – by direct private action whatever they perceive to be

injustice or evil, seems to form the basis for the beliefs of militant proponents of the literal application of historical *Shari'a*, or what are often called Islamic fundamentalists.[69]

7. The example of al'Qaeda and Osama bin Laden

Like Paul Hill's writings, the justificatory form employed within Osama bin Laden's speeches, articles, and interviews is overwhelmingly deontological. Indeed, in a clear statement, he says that "victory is not recognized only through ostensible gains, as people tend to believe. Rather, victory is adherence to principles". In the same statement, he also says:

> No Muslim would in any case wonder what profit those [perpetrators of the 11th September attacks] made, or say that they wasted their lives, and whoever says so is a complete ignoramus. They won the satisfaction of God the Almighty and the heaven God promised them. For victory is not only material gains, but also adherence to principles.

And, later in the same piece:

> God enabled those young people to say to the head of world infidelity, America and its allies: You are in the wrong and you are misguided. They sacrificed themselves for the sake of "There is no god but Allah".[70]

Bin Laden and al-Qaeda initially denied having any knowledge or responsibility for the 11th September attacks. But although denying responsibility, he publicly welcomed the attacks within a few hours of their occurrence, and shortly after

released a videotape, broadcast on al-Jazira on the 7th of October, in which he said "God has blessed a group of vanguard Muslims, the forefront of Islam, to destroy America; may God bless them and allot them a supreme place in heaven".[71] In the video statement released in December 2001 (see note 70), he implied that the U.S. offensive against the Taliban in Afghanistan is unjustified, and is based on "an unspeakable Crusader grudge against Islam". He argued that if the evidence of responsibility for the attack clearly pointed to a non-Islamic group, such as the IRA, other means than all-out war and regime change would have been used, but "because the matter was a mere suspicion pointing to the Muslim world, the Crusader grudges against the Muslim world appeared very clearly". The implication of this statement, that the apportionment of responsibility to Muslims is unwarranted and a "mere suspicion", is of course inconsistent with other statements in the same transcript, which are quoted above. What he may be saying, then, is that it is the Taliban regime that has been unjustly targeted. He also appears to be talking about the Taliban in his assertion in the December 2001 video that it is unreasonable to assume that "this group of mujahideen … who left their countries to champion the oppressed should go today to kill innocent people, as some people allege". Contrast that with his interview with John Miller of ABC News in May 1998,[72] where bin Laden said that "we do not differentiate between those dressed in military uniforms and civilians" and the apparent al-Qaeda statement justifying attacks on civilians, reported in November 2002, which said that American civilians freely vote for their leaders and voluntarily pay taxes that contribute towards attacks in Islam: "the conclusion is that the American people are the financiers of the attacks against us; they are watching – through their elected senators – the spending of those taxes".[73]

The primary "real-world" issues that apparently concern bin Laden relate to the occupation, and thus desecration, of the lands of Islam's holiest shrines by non-believers. This includes the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem, and indeed the very existence of the state of Israel, as well as the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, the site of Mecca and Medina. He is also concerned about the U.S.'s support for Israel and for what he sees as the corrupt and degenerate Saudi state. These examples provide first-class bases for straightforward deontological motivations and justificatory structure.

Another set of issues relates to the perceived oppression of Muslim people in, among other places, Iraq, Palestine, Somalia (through the abortive US mission there), Bosnia, and Chechnya. These feed into the "self-defence" aspect of the literal interpretation of *Shari'a*. For example: "...Afghanistan, having raised the banner of Islam and started to seek to apply the *Shari'a* of Islam, by the grace of God, has become a target of the Crusader-Jewish alliance..."[74] In the transcript of his December 2001 videotape address (see note 57), bin Laden goes so far as to say that "the United States is practicing the detestable terrorism in its ugliest forms in Palestine and Iraq. Bush the father – the ill-famed man – was the reason behind the killing of over one million children in Iraq. This is in addition to the men and women. *What happened on 11 September is nothing but a reaction to the continuing injustice being done to our children* in Palestine, Iraq, Somalia, southern Sudan and elsewhere, as well as Kashmir and Asia" [emphasis added].[75]

These issues are, by and large, interlinked in bin Laden's addresses. A representative quote is this, from May 1998:

> It does not worry us what America thinks. What worries us is pleasing Allah. The Americans impose themselves on everyone who believes in his religion and his

> rights. They accuse our children in Palestine of being terrorists. Those children that have no weapons and have not even reached maturity. At the same time they defend a country with its airplanes and tanks, and the state of the Jews, that has a policy to destroy the future of these children.[76]

Here bin Laden seems to be implying that resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and opposition to America, Israel's perceived supporter, is a matter of divine will. The struggle is one to vindicate Islam and religious rights. In another quote, from the same interview, he discusses his 1998 *fatwa* (see note 78) that called on all Muslims to kill Americans wherever and whenever they can:

> Allah ordered us in this religion to purify Muslim land of all non-believers, and especially the Arabian Peninsula where the Ke'Ba is. After WWII, the Americans became more aggressive and oppressive, especially in the Muslim world ...Each action will solicit a similar reaction. We must use such punishment to keep your evil away from Muslims, Muslim women and children.[77]

The passage goes on to talk of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, and the inability of these weapons to distinguish between civilians and military. It also refers to the "co-operation between Christian and Zionist forces" in massacres of civilians in Lebanon, and to the effects of the "American-led" economic sanctions in Iraq, before continuing:

> All this was done in the name of American interests. We believe that the biggest thieves and terrorists in the world are the Americans. The only way for us to fend off these assaults is to use similar means. We do not differentiate between those

> dressed in military uniforms and civilians: they are all targets in this *fatwa* ... The *fatwa* includes all who share or take part in killing of Muslims, assaulting holy places, or those who help the Jews occupy Muslim land.

The 1998 *fatwa* (the so-called second *fatwa*) states that U.S. policies, actions, and interventions in Muslim lands constitute a "clear declaration of war on Allah, his messenger, and Muslims" and states that the ruling to kill Americans and their allies "is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it, in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa mosque [in Jerusalem] and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim".[78] This statement is supported by the Qur'anic verses quoted above (section 6, see note 59).

These passages – and the opening paragraphs of the 1998 *fatwa* make this very clear – are employing the "defence of Islam" position. There is no mention of a duty to propagate the religion of Islam beyond the boundaries of what is traditionally held to be Muslim land, though actions undertaken in self-defence are clearly sanctioned beyond this area. The statement clearly echoes the interpretation of *Shari'a* that says that it is a personal duty of all Muslims to rectify what they perceive as evil or injustice by direct personal action.[79]

In a classically deontological statement of motivation and justification, bin Laden responds to a question about him being seen as a terrorist leader in the West by invoking the will of God:

> We do not worry about what America says. We look at ourselves and our brethren as worshippers of Allah who created us to worship him and follow his books and prophets. I am one of Allah's worshippers. I worship Allah, which includes carrying out the *jihad* to raise Allah's word and evict the Americans from all Muslim land.[80]

And:

> We are sure of Allah's victory and our victory against the Americans and the Jews as promised by the prophet, peace be upon him: Judgement day shall not come until the Muslims fight the Jews, whereupon the Jews will hide behind trees and stones, and the tree and the stone will speak and say "Muslim, behind me a Jew, come and kill him", except for the al-Ghargad tree, which is a Jewish plant.

The latter passage seems to suggest that conflict with the Jews is the will of Allah, is thus inevitable, and that victory is assured, as the very trees and rocks will turn against the Jews. Victory is assured against the U.S. also, but for less magical reasons – namely, the righteous fury of the devout at their perceived desecration of Islamic holy sites:

> We are sure of our victory. Our battle with the Americans is larger than our battle with the Russians. The Americans made a very stupid mistake that no one has made before. They attacked the Muslim symbol, the Kibla, of 200 million people. The reaction by the Muslim scholars and the youth was very encouraging. We predict a black day for America and the end of the United States as united states, and will be separate states, and will retreat from our land and collect the bodies of its sons back to America. Allah willing.[81]

In the December 2001 videotape transcript, he seems to go as far as to apply the epithet "terrorism" to the activities of his movement, although the translation of the term from Arabic may not be entirely equivalent:

> Our terrorism against America is commendable. It seeks to make the unjust stop making injustice. It seeks to make America stop its support for Israel, which kills our people.

As it stands, this appears to be a consequentialist explanation. He goes on to say that the U.S. and the West have repeatedly labelled Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Palestine as terrorist organisations. Bin Laden says that his organisation's activities are comparable, but says:

> If self-defence is terrorism, what is legitimate then? ... We fight for the sake of Almighty God and to make the word of God the higher word and the word of the unbelievers the lower one, and to end the oppression inflicted on the weak in Palestine and elsewhere.

Here he has returned to deontological justification, albeit mingled with a second-order consequentialist statement.

In April 2004, bin Laden issued a statement apparently offering European countries peace, if they refrained from involving themselves in what bin Laden would perceive as attacks on Islam. Beginning with the sentence "This is a message to our neighbours north of the Mediterranean, with a proposal for a peace

treaty, in response to the positive reactions which emerged there", bin Laden continued:

> What happened in September 11 and March 11 is your own merchandise coming back to you. We hereby advise you … that your definition of us and of our actions as terrorism is nothing but a definition of yourselves by yourselves, since our reaction is of the same kind as your act. Our actions are a reaction to yours, which are the destruction and killing of our people as is happening in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine … By what measure of kindness are your killed considered innocents while ours are considered worthless? By what school [of thought] is your blood considered blood while our blood is water?[82]

Apparently addressing the populations of European states rather than their governments, bin Laden then argues that "When you look at what happened and is happening, the killing in our countries and in yours, an important fact emerges, and that is that the oppression is forced on both us and you by your politicians who send your sons, against your will, to our country to kill and to be killed". The statement takes a tone that is uncharacteristic of most of bin Laden's addresses. Indeed, the tone seems to emulate that of the European left in its criticism of the Iraq war. Bin Laden talks of those who would shed blood for their own narrow interests, and says that the ordinary people have an interest in thwarting the designs of such people, who are in "vassalage to the White House gang". He goes on to speak of the war making millions of dollars for large corporations – arms manufacturers or companies engaged in the reconstruction of Iraq – and he names Halliburton and its sister companies as examples, which could be construed as a pointed jibe at members of the U.S. administration who have links to that

company. Bin Laden terms those that are profiting from the war and its aftermath "merchants of war, the bloodsuckers who run the policy of the world from behind the scenes". He also refers to "President Bush and his ilk, the media giants and the U.N." as all being a "fatal danger to the world, and the Zionist lobby is their most dangerous member" before saying "Allah willing, we will persist in fighting them".

Bin Laden's tone thereafter seems remarkably conciliatory: he has so far identified the U.S. administration and Israel as being dangers to the world as a whole, and as representing the sorts of individuals and corporations that see war as an opportunity for profit. He has even appealed to the ordinary citizens of European states, saying, in effect, that their interests are rather more closely allied to the ordinary citizens of Islamic states than they are to the "narrow" interests of the U.S. administration, Israel, and big business.

He then builds on this by calling for the establishment in Europe of "a permanent commission to nurture awareness among Europeans regarding the justness of our causes, particularly the cause of Palestine" and asks that the considerable resources of the media be used to further this task.[83] This would build on what bin Laden says were the positive developments, represented by "recent events" – one could conjecture that he is referring to the defeat of the Spanish government in the wake of the Madrid bombings – and expressed in opinion polls, that show that most European peoples want peace.

Bin Laden then formally offers his peace:

> I hereby offer them a peace treaty, the essence of which is our commitment to halt actions against any country that commits itself to refraining from attacking Muslims or intervening in their affairs, including the American conspiracy

> against the larger Islamic world. This peace treaty can be renewed at the end of the term of a government and the rise of another, with the agreement of both sides. The peace treaty will be in force with the exit of the last soldier of any given [European] country from our land.

This opportunity – what bin Laden calls "the door of peace" is to last for three months from the time of the statement's broadcast. He says, in essence, that should the treaty be rejected, it will imply that war is wanted, and he states that: "Whoever rejects the peace and wants war should know that we are the men [of war], and whoever wants a peace treaty and signs it, we hereby allow this peace treaty with him".

An interesting point about this "door of peace" is its closeness – at least in duration, if not also in spirit – to the "period of grace" mentioned in the Qur'an, verse 9.5, quoted in full in section 6: "[Once the period of grace – 4 months or until the end of a specified treaty – is over] … then fight and slay the unbelievers wherever you find them, and seize them, and beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem [of war]".[84] The opening clause of bin Laden's quotation of this passage in his "second *fatwa*", of February 1998, is rendered: "But when the forbidden months are past…"[85]

Another interesting point that we might recall from section 6 is that, according to An-Na'im, the Qur'an indicates that, while Muslims may have to enter into peace treaties with non-Muslims if Muslim interests required it, such treaties should only be of a temporary nature, to allow Muslims to resolve their internal differences or to prepare for the next period of conflict with non-Muslims.[86]

Bin Laden's next argument is more straightforwardly consequentialist in tone than many of his other statements. He says:

> Stop shedding our blood in order to protect your own blood. The solution to this easy/difficult equation is in your own hands. You should know that the longer you delay, the worse the situation will become, and when that happens, do not blame us, blame yourselves.

He continues, arguing against the perception that the Islamic cause is groundless or that Islamic political violence is the preserve of deranged lunatics who "hate freedom and kill for the sake of killing". He says that the evidence contradicts this: Russians died only after the invasion of Afghanistan and Chechnya; Europeans, only after the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan; Americans, in the "battle of New York", only died after their support for Israel and their presence in Saudi Arabia, and American deaths in Somalia happened only after the U.S. intervention there. He does not refer to the other explicit actions against America, but presumably these would be argued to have been either reactions to a specific intervention or a reaction based on one of the fundamental issues – support for Israel and, since 1991, the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia.

The more instrumentally rational nature of this statement seems to be at odds with the tenor of bin Laden's other addresses. One reason for this is, of course, the fact that instrumental rationality itself may be bounded by wider non-instrumentally rational constraints: crudely, one can act consequentialistically while remaining within the boundaries of a broader deontological imperative. Another reason might be simply the nature of this statement as a direct polemical appeal to a

Western audience. Most of bin Laden's earlier statements were addressed to a specifically Muslim, and specifically radical Islamist, audience. These statements are replete with Qur'anic quotation and references to *Shari'a*, and often put one in mind of the quasi-religious/quasi-political pamphlets published by the supporters of Parliament during the English Revolution. But just as many of those pamphlets[87] change their tone and, indeed, mode of argument depending on the audience that the writer seeks to address, the same might be said to be true of bin Laden's statements. At the very least, those that are explicitly aimed at a Western audience carry fewer Qur'anic references and quotations, and are more readily and directly accessible to that audience.[88]

Be that as it may, the core of bin Laden's justification of radical Islamist political violence remains primarily deontological. Several of his statements contain passages such as:

> Clearly, after belief, there is no more important duty than pushing the American enemy out of the holy land [the Arabian Peninsula]. No other priority, except belief, could be considered before it; the people of knowledge, Ibn Taymiyyah stated: 'to fight in defence of religion and belief is a collective duty; there is no duty after belief than fighting the enemy who is corrupting the life and the religion. There are no preconditions for this duty and the enemy should be fought with one's best abilities.[89]

This is an archetypal deontological constraint – no other duty, apart from the duty to have faith in your religion, is more important than driving the infidel from Saudi land. In the same statement, bin Laden quoted Ibn Taymiyyah (a 13th century scholar) again: "The ultimate aim of pleasing Allah, raising his word,

instituting his religion and obeying his messenger … is to fight the enemy, in every aspect and in a complete manner; if the danger to the religion from not fighting is greater than that of fighting, then it is a duty to fight them even if the intentions of some of the fighters are not pure".

It would be difficult to find a more unambiguously deontological justification, although bin Laden makes the attempt when he says (addressing the U.S. in the same *fatwa*) that "terrorising you, while you are carrying arms on our land, is a legitimate and morally demanded duty", that "it is a duty now on every tribe in the Arab Peninsula to fight *jihad* in the cause of Allah and to cleanse the land from those occupiers", and that "the most honourable death is to be killed in the way of Allah". And in the December 1998 interview with ABC News, he said "we are all servants of God, and he has prescribed for us killing and fighting. This is an honour bestowed by God, praise and glory be to him, on whoever from among his servants he wants to support his religion".

8. Analysing bin Laden's justifications

Returning to theoretical considerations, we can see three main points.

1. The justificatory form, as is the tendency with justifications based on religious texts, is overwhelmingly deontological. The publications and interviews are replete with statements that the perpetrators of violent acts are acting in accordance with the will of God, that it is their moral and religious duty to wage *jihad* against the infidel in order to preserve and defend Islam itself and to cleanse Islam's holy sites of the desecration that the Western presence represents. There is, however, little suggestion that *jihad* is to be waged in order to propagate Islam

throughout the world. That said, certain interpretations of *Shari'a* suggest a permanent state of conflict between the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds – treaties concluded with non-Muslims are to be respected only as temporary measures to allow the Islamic world a breathing space to resolve its internal differences. Given that the brand of literal fundamentalism we have been discussing (which tends not to take into account changing historical contexts) has many difficulties with regimes within the Islamic world (notably the Saudi regime which, although from the perspective of the Western world is seen as a state that implements a very harsh version of Islamic law, bin Laden believes to be an apostate regime that has replaced *Shari'a* with "man-made law" and is actively collaborating with the U.S.), it is possible that, if these differences were resolved in the manner that the fundamentalists would favour, then their literal and anachronistic interpretation of *Shari'a* could come into play.

2. A second-order consequentialist justification can be seen in certain passages. That is to say, they hint at a consequentialist short-term, or "tactical", justificatory structure, but within the boundaries of a broader deontological imperative. It is not to suggest that the overarching structure of justification is anything other than deontological. The hints towards a second-order consequentialist justificatory structure relate primarily to deterrence: for example, for every delay that the US makes in retreating from the Holy Sites, "they will receive a new corpse from Muslim countries".[90] If the Americans want to avoid this, and if they want to avoid having to explain and justify to their people why a US passenger aircraft, for example, has been shot down, then they should pull out of Saudi and stop their support for Israel. Straightforwardly stated, the position is that we're perpetrating

particular acts in order to persuade you to undertake a certain form of action. This can be seen also in bin Laden's "peace treaty" offer, where he says "stop shedding our blood in order to protect your own blood". This is a justification with a consequentialist form. The consequentialist goal is a concrete and distinct end state that could, conceivably, be achieved. However, in terms of the overarching deontological structure, there is an actual moral and religious duty to attempt to achieve this end – whether or not it is consequentially rational to do so and regardless of the possibility of actual success. There is a (deontological) bounden duty to attempt to achieve this consequentialist end state, even if it is apparent that the task is impossible.

3. With regard to the moral relevance of those who bin Laden sees as Islam's enemies, there is a clear sense that the lives of devout Muslims are worth more than those of infidels, even "people of the book". In his first *fatwa*, bin Laden seems to refer to U.S. troops in Saudi as "the most filthy sort of humans". In the May 1998 interview with John Miller, there is also the implication of an international Jewish conspiracy, quite similar to that propagated by neo-Nazi groups. Thus bin Laden says that Jews have the first word in American government, borne out if we look at the department of defence, the state department, and the CIA. This is how the Jews "use America to carry out their plans in the world and especially the Muslim world … The presence of Americans in the Holy Land supports the Jews and gives them a safe back". At a time when there are many homeless and poor in the US, "we find the American government turning toward helping Israel in occupying our land … The American government

is throwing away the lives of Americans in Saudi Arabia for the interests of the Jews":

> So we tell the American people, and we tell the mothers of soldiers, and American mothers in general, if they value their lives and those of their children, find a nationalistic government that will look after their interests and not the interests of the Jews.[91]

With regard to Jewish people themselves, bin Laden gives a clear indication of how he sees their moral status:

> The Jews are a people who Allah cited in his holy book the Koran as those who attacked prophets with lies and killing, and attacked Mary and accused her of a great sin. They are a people who killed Allah's prophets – would they not kill, rape and steal from humans. They believe that all humans are created for their use, and found that the Americans are the best-created beings for that use…[92]

9. Conclusions

As noted in the introductory sections, there can be a considerable degree of difficulty in attempting to determine, not only whether a *group* is primarily deontological or consequentialist *per se*, but also whether a given piece of rhetoric exemplifies a deontological or a consequentialist justification. Again, this is because, no matter how spiritual or "other worldly" some ends are (for example, "acting in accordance with the will of God"), there are usually another set of ends that are concretely of this world and are, theoretically, actually attainable. One may never know whether one is truly acting in accordance with God's will to the

best of one's abilities, but shutting down an abortion clinic is at least a measurable agent-external outcome. When we start to assess the perceived attainability of agent-internal ends versus agent-external ends, we begin to run into difficulties. And the entangled thread of deontological and consequentialist justifications, and agent-internal and agent-external ends, is clear from the examples discussed. Both the anti-abortion militants' and Osama bin Laden's justifications for the use of violence can be broadly labelled deontological: more deontological than consequentialist, at any rate. But between the two, the bin Laden examples tend to display a higher level of second-order consequentialist content. But this is somewhat mitigated by the sheer force of some of the deontological statements. In particular, the repeated argument that it is an individual duty for all Muslims to "kill the Americans and their allies, civilians and military" in "any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Mosque [Mecca] from their grip",[93] even if they are not formally a member of an Islamist organisation, and excused only by disability[94] or the fact that, although willing and able, they have not yet found an appropriate venue or opportunity for engaging in *jihad*, truly indicates the relative importance of the deontological as opposed to the consequentialist justification.

However, the issue is not so much whether there are consequentialist or agent-external end goals that could be achieved – there usually are – rather, the issue is whether the activities are perceived as the right thing to do regardless of whether those consequentialist end goals are really attainable.

[1] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), p. 94.

[2] Ibid, p. 88.

[3] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 136.

[4] A tentative example of this situation might be the dissident Irish Republican groups, or those remaining Red Army Faction prisoners (discussed in Chapter 4) who refuse to renounce or retrospectively denounce violence. Some commentators and journalists have referred to "traditional Republican theology" when writing about the belief system of the Republican Movement. The justificatory form of the IRA in the context of national-liberation movements will be discussed in Chapter 5.

[5] For example, the director of Advocates for Life Ministries, Andrew Burnett, allegedly said after a failed assassination attempt on an abortion provider: "I can't in good conscience condemn someone who's trying to save someone's life ... if my kids were going to be killed in that clinic, I'd have wanted her [the would-be assassin] to be a better shot". The person who attempted the assassination, Shelley Shannon, was apparently a member of Advocates for Life Ministries. The source for the quote is a pro-choice website, www.webcom.com/~pinknoiz/right/terror2.html, accessed 6th February 2003.

[6] Hoffman, op. cit., p. 117.

[7] Ibid, p. 118. Hoffman continues: "Even now, information and literature that was once difficult to obtain is readily available over the net to millions".

[8] Louis Beam, *Leaderless Resistance*, reproduced on the website of the white supremacist group Stormfront, at www.stormfront.org/crusader/texts/bt/bt04.htmt, accessed 4th February 2004. All quotes from Beam in this section are drawn from this brief article.

[9] U.S. State Department report *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2003*, Appendix B, p. 124. The full report is available at www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2003/31711.htm, accessed 15th October 2006 and 9th May 2004.

[10] See note 64.

[11] U.S. State Department report *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2003*, Appendix B, pp. 116-7, 119-20, 122, 124.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Quoted in David Whittaker (ed.) *The Terrorism Reader*, 2nd edition, (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 45.

[14] U.S. State Department report *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2003*, Appendix B, p. 132.

[15] Estimated from figures published in the State Department report, ibid. .

[16] The 1998 *fatwa*. See section 6 and note 65.

[17] Reported and translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), *Special Dispatch - Jihad and Terrorism Studies - No. 569*, 9th September 2003, www.memri.org/sd.html. It should be noted that MEMRI has been accused by pro-Palestinian activists of having a pro-Israeli bias. The Palestine Media Watch website says MEMRI is "an organization dedicated to showing Arabs in the worst possible light" and says that its president and co-founder is a former

Israeli army intelligence officer and counter-terrorism advisor to two Israeli prime ministers (www.pmwatch.org/pmw/ cast/memri.asp, accessed 8th June, 2004). See also the article "Selective MEMRI" by Brian Whitaker, *The Guardian*, Monday 12th August 2002 (www.guardian.co.uk/elsewhere/journalist /story/0,7792,773258,00.html, accessed 8th June 2004) and the response by MEMRI's president Yigal Carmody, "Media organisation rebuts accusations of selective journalism", *The Guardian*, Wednesday 21st August 2002 (www.guardian.co.uk/israel/comment/0,10551,778373,00.html, accessed 8th June 2004).

[18] From www.prochoice.org/about_abortion/violence/history_violence.html, accessed 24th October 2006.

[19] At www.feminist.com/resources/ourbodies/abortion.html, accessed 24th October 2006. It might well be worth investigating whether people and groups who think primarily in terms of instrumentally rational reasons for action and those who think primarily in terms of moral duties are actually capable of reasoned debate and accurate characterisation of their opponents' motives. Perhaps a primarily consequentialist pro-choice advocacy group will always be fundamentally unable to understand the actions and arguments of a non-consequentialist anti-abortion group unless they try to shoehorn the latter's activities into an instrumentally rational framework.

[20] www.altculture.com/aentries/a/abortionxc.html, accessed 24th May 1999.

[21] The American Coalition of Life Activists' *Contract with the Abortion Industry* states, in a section entitled "Five undeniable truths about abortion":

"**Abortion is murder**. The killing of an unborn child, by any method or for any reason, through abortifacients (e.g. intra-uterine device, the pill, Norplant, etc) or in connection with scientific experimentation, for economic reasons, for the psychological or physical comfort of the mother, in response to rape or incest, or for the purpose of preventing the birth of unborn children, is murder.

Crime and punishment. The Bible requires capital punishment for murder. Therefore, the civil magistrate should 'bear the sword' against all persons intentionally involved in the murder of unborn children". The source for the quote is a pro-choice website, www.webcom.com/ ~pinknoiz/ right/terror2.html, accessed 6th February 2003.

[22] The undated Defensive Action statement and the list of 31 signatories to it can be found at http://www.cais.com/agm/main/statemen.htm. The veracity of the text is confirmed by newspaper reports, for example *The Irish Press*, Thursday 11th November, 1993.

[23] Extract from the *Manual of the Army of God*, reprinted in *Ms* magazine, May/June 1995. The manual is also available at www.armyofgod.com, accessed 6th February 2003. The manual also quotes the *Book of Numbers*, 35:33: "So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood defileth the land; and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it".

In an "interview" with a supposed member of the Army of God appended to the manual (*The Army of God Speaks Out*, www.armyofgod.com/AOGsel7.html, accessed 6th February 2003), the representative says that "the only rational way to respond to the knowledge of an

imminent and brutal murder is direct action" and that "Jesus Christ was never a pacifist except in His role as the Suffering Servant. As for Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., non-violence was only a tactic. King stated publicly on several occasions that they would resolve the 'conflict' with non-violence or with violence".

[24] Tom Burghardt of the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR) alleges that Fr. Marx's autobiography, *Confessions of a Pro-Life Missionary* (Human Life International, 1988) has a chapter entitled "Pro-Abortion Jews and the New Holocaust", which includes statements such as "notice how many Jews led the infamous 1971 abortion planning meeting in Los Angeles, which I exposed" and "note the large number of abortionists (consult the *Yellow Pages*) and pro-abortion medical professors who are Jewish". See www.etext.org/politics /Arm.The.Spirit/Antifa/anti-choice.germany, accessed 7th June 2004. I have been unable to obtain a copy of Fr. Marx's book to verify the authenticity of this claim.

[25] For a detailed analysis of the theological basis of anti-abortion militancy, I recommend two pamphlets. The first is by the anti-abortion activist, Rev. Paul Hill, entitled *Should we Defend Born and Unborn Children with Force?* (1994), which is discussed below. The second is by Tom Burghardt of the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR), entitled *The Crown Rights of King Jesus: A Brief Outline of Christian Reconstructionism*. Both papers can be obtained from BACORR, which is based in San Francisco, www.webcom.com/~pinknoiz/right/bacorr.html.

[26] Paul J. Hill, *Should we Defend Born and Unborn Children with Force?* (1994). Reproduced on the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR) website at www.webcom.com/ ~pinknoiz/right/knowenemy.html.

[27] Hill says: "Are there any heinous sins being committed today that could again fan the flames of God's righteous anger to the scorching point? Is there any need in today's world for men of the stamp of Phinehas? Could the bold daring of Cozbi and Zimri in parading before Moses as he wept over sin have any modern parallels? The righteous zeal of Phinehas did not permit him to stay his hand long enough to even ask Moses or the church leaders of the wisdom of his action. If any similar zeal be found among us today, occasion to exercise it will not be lacking". Ibid.

[28] In reference to what Hill calls Christ's violent act of civil disobedience in cleansing the Temple of moneychangers, Hill asks "who could say whether [this] helped stay God's hand of judgment on Jerusalem for a few more years?". Ibid.

[29] Interestingly, Hoffman (note 1, p. 119) says that in recent years a violent militant group known as the Phineas Priesthood has emerged. The actions of the Biblical Phinehas, in killing Zimri, the Midianite woman he found having sex with an Israelite, have apparently been interpreted by some anti-abortion militants and Christian Identity Movement adherents as a Biblical decree against race mixing and as a call to "strike down those who are viewed as enemies of the pure white race". According to Hoffman, the mission of the Phineas Priesthood is "allegedly to impose what they believe is 'God's law' on earth: that is, the enforcement of prohibitions against inter-racial marriage, homosexuality and abortion and an end to the federal banking system".

[30] Paul J. Hill, *Should we Defend Born and Unborn Children with Force?* (1994). Reproduced on the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR) website at www.webcom.com/~pinknoiz/right/knowenemy.html.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] He also states that some people have suggested that, in the Civil War, "the South lost some of its will to fight due to the realization that *some* of its slaves were being mistreated" (emphasis added). Ibid.

[34] He precedes this with: "Many battles in the Old Testament were fought and won when God's people rose in a just cause. In many instances God's people virtually stood by and watched as God fought for them". Ibid.

[35] Paul Hill, "Why shoot an abortionist?", www.armyofgod.com/PHillonepage.html, and "Defending the defenceless", www.armyofgod.com/PHill_ShortShot.html, both accessed 6th February, 2003. The former is a much-abbreviated version of the latter.

[36] Paul Hill, "Defending the defenceless", op. cit.

[37] Jacqui Goddard, "Execution could trigger anti-abortion lunatic fringe", *The Irish Times*, 26th August 2003.

[38] Sentencing transcript available at www.jameskopp.com/sentence.doc and http://jameskopp.com/sentence2.pdf, accessed 5th February 2004. The latter is an edited version of the former. The statement takes a number of interesting approaches to justifying his actions, some of which are more tangential to our current purposes than others. For example, Kopp seems at one point to employ a "feminist and minority rights" slant, claiming that women are typically "brainwashed, browbeaten and bullied into abortions, usually by men" and that "black women today get twice as many abortions as non-black women per capita. There are twice as many abortion mills located in the inner city as elsewhere" (p. 81). He links this latter statement with a claim that the Planned Parenthood Movement in the U.S. in the 1930s advocated sterilisation for eugenic purposes and that the movement's ideas were an influence on Hitler's policies (pp. 75-78). Kopp is implying that the origins of the pro-abortion movement had nothing to do with women's rights; rather, it was part of a eugenic programme to reduce or eliminate non-white minorities in the U.S. Indeed, he attributes a quote, via hearsay, to the doctor he killed – Dr. Slepian is alleged to have said that one of the reasons he performed abortions was that it was "part and parcel of keeping the minority quotient manageable" (p. 80).

In disparate parts of the statement, Kopp also seems to imply that there are moral similarities between his actions and the actions of the French resistance and the German army officers who plotted the assassination of Hitler. Incidentally, he claims to have been intending only to wound Dr. Slepian in the arm, in such a way as to render him permanently incapable of performing abortions. This reflects a statement in the interview with an apparent member of the Army of God (cited above, note 20), where it is said that one way of "disarming" the "murder weapons" that are the doctors and clinics is by cutting off doctors' hands, "or at least their thumbs below the second digit".

[39] Which is, interestingly, similar to the bases of a recent successful defence by anti-war activists in the Irish courts concerning the justifiability of damaging US warplanes bound for Iraq.

[40] Sentencing transcript, op. cit, p. 84.

[41] From Paul VI's *Declaration on Abortion*, quoted by Kopp, pp. 84-85 of the transcript.

[42] Transcript, p. 86.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid, pp. 89-90.

[45] Kopp also made reference to a case in which a pregnant woman, who was being beaten by her husband in what Kopp claimed was an attempt to induce a miscarriage, was found not guilty of his murder when she stabbed him to death while defending herself. Kopp claimed that the court did not find her "not guilty" on the basis of a self-defence argument, as the injuries she suffered were not threatening to the life of the woman; rather, the court held that she had a right to use lethal force in order to protect her quadruplets from miscarriage. Kopp then pointed out that the court said that they wanted to make it clear that this doesn't apply to abortion, and Kopp went on to say "but the only thing that makes it not apply to abortion is them saying so. The morals and precedent and everything else is there" (pp. 91-92). Kopp seems not to recognise the possibility that the court's decision might have been based on the woman's right to choose the fate of her unborn children or what happens to the contents of her womb.

[46] Transcript, p. 133.

[47] Council on Foreign Relations, www.cfr.org/publication/9126.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] From www.fas.org?irp/world/para/ladin.htm, accessed 25th October 2006.

[51] An-Na'im, Abdullahi Ahmed, "Islamic Ambivalence to Political Violence: Islamic Law and International Terrorism", *German Yearbook of International Law*, 31 (1988) p. 307.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid, p.325.

[54] Dr. Abd Al-Hamid Al-Ansari, former dean of the Faculty of Islamic Law at the University of Qatar, in an article in the London Arabic-language daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, translated and reported by MEMRI, *Special Dispatch No. 699 – Reform Project*, 26th April 2004, www.memri.org/sd.html, see note 17.

[55] An-Na'im, op. cit., p.325.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Al-Ansari, op. cit., writes: "The first ones to distort the concept of *jihad* were the ancient Khawarij ['those who go out']. They rose up with arms against the Righteous Imam [i.e., the Caliph Ali Ibn Abi Taleb] and against the virtuous society of the companions of the Prophet. The Khawarij called themselves Al-Muwahhidoun ['the unifiers of God', or monotheists] and they called their movement *Jihad*. The companions of the Prophet were not deceived by these shows of piety and numerous ritual acts; they called them Khawarij and saw their actions as insurrection and rebellion".

[58] Ibid.

[59] Verse 2:190-93 of the Qur'an, quoted in An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 326.

[60] Verse 9:5, quoted in An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 327.

[61] Verse 9:29, quoted in An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 327.

[62] An-Na'im (note 38) p.325. Cf. verses 3:28, 4:144, 8:72-3, 9:23 and 71, and 60:1.

[63] Ibid, p.325.

[64] *Declaration of war against the Americans occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places (expel the infidels from the Arab Peninsula): a message from Usama bin Muhammad bin Ladin to his Muslim brethren all over the world and in the Arab Peninsula specifically*, August 1996, available at www.geocities. com/_dcjarviks//Idler/vIIIn165.html and at http://efreedomnews.com/News% 20Archive/terrorists/ Fatwah1_BinLaden.htm, accessed 8th December 2002.

[65] An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 328.

[66] Ibid, pp.328-9

[67] Ibid, p.330

[68] Ibid, p.331.

[69] Ibid, p.333

[70] From the transcript of a videotaped statement transmitted by the Qatari satellite news channel Al-Jazirah on 27th December, 2001.

[71] *The Irish Times*, Monday 8th October 2001.

[72] Interview with ABC News' John Miller, in May 1998, available at http://abcnews.go.com/sections/_world/DailyNews/miller_binladen_9806.html, accessed 8th December 2002.

[73] "Al-Qaeda issues revenge manifesto", *The Sunday Times*, 17th November 2002.

[74] Remarks by Osama bin Laden in a December 1998 interview with ABC News, in the context of the then US cruise missile attacks on Afghanistan.

[75] In the December 2001 videotaped statement bin Laden repeatedly refers to the "blessed attacks" against "world infidelity and the head of the infidelity, namely America", which "struck the largest military power deep in the heart, thanks to God the almighty".

[76] Interview with ABC News' John Miller, in May 1998.

[77] The Ke'Ba is the most holy structure in Islam, and is held to be the centre of the world. It is situated in Mecca, and it is towards this structure that Muslims perform the salat, the prayer. The area around the Ke'Ba is considered sacred and inside the area "the truce of Allah reigns".

[78] World Islamic Front Statement, 23rd February 1998, *Jihad against Jews and Crusaders*, at http://efreedomnews.com/News%20Archive/Terrorists/fatwah2_BinLaden.htm (accessed 12th August 2002) and at www.emergency.com/bladen98.htm (accessed 10th September 2002). The statement was signed by bin Laden and four other leaders of radical Islamist groups based in Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

[79] An-Na'im, op. cit., p.333.

[80] Interview with John Miller, May 1998.

[81] Ibid.

[82] This version of the statement was translated by MEMRI, *Special Dispatch No. 695 – Jihad and Terrorism Studies*, 15th April 2004, http://www.memri.org/sd.html, see note 17.

[83] Bin laden has previously castigated the media, including the media in Islamic countries, for, as he would see it, uncritically parroting the analyses and arguments of those that he would see as the "merchants of war". In his December 2001 videotape statement he uses an (obviously self-serving) allegory to make the point that those who condemned Islamic political violence without understanding the dynamic context of action and reaction. He called this view parochial and said: "in doing so they act just like the wolf, which upon seeing a lamb said 'You are the one who muddied my water last year'. The lamb replied: 'It was not me who did it'. The wolf replied: 'No, it was you'. The lamb then said: 'I was born only this year'. The wolf replied: 'So, it was your mother who muddied my water'. The wolf then ate the lamb. Upon seeing her child being torn under the fangs of this wolf, the poor mother, motivated by the sentiment of motherhood, butted the wolf without causing him any injury. The wolf cried out, saying: 'Look at this terrorist'. So the parrots repeated what the wolf said. They said: 'Yes, we denounce the butting of the wolf by the female sheep'."

[84] Verse 9:5, quoted in An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 327.

[85] World Islamic Front Statement, 23rd February 1998, *Jihad against Jews and Crusaders*, at http://efreedomnews.com/News%20Archive/Terrorists/fatwah2_BinLaden.htm (accessed 12th August 2002) and at www.emergency.com/bladen98.htm (accessed 10th September 2002).

[86] An-Na'im, op. cit., p. 330.

[87] For example, the writings of the Digger Gerrard Winstanley.

[88] In the report "Al-Qaeda issues revenge manifesto", *The Sunday Times*, 17th November 2002, the journalist notes that the statement, which was directly released to the media via an al-Jazirah journalist, is "notable for its lucidity and lack of religious quotations". The al-Jazirah journalist, Yosri Fouda, has said that "there is little doubt that this elegantly written document is a kind of manifesto. It addresses non-Muslims" ("Fundamentalists threaten a Crusaders' war", *The Sunday Times*, 17th November 2002).

[89] *Declaration of war against the Americans occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places (expel the infidels from the Arab Peninsula): a message from Usama bin Muhammad bin Ladin to his Muslim brethren all over the world and in the Arab Peninsula specifically*, August 1996, available at www.geocities.com/_dcjarviks//Idler/vIIIn165.html and at http://efreedomnews.com/News% 20Archive/terrorists/ Fatwah1_BinLaden.htm, accessed 8th December 2002.

[90] Interview with John Miller, May 1998.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] The second *fatwa*, 1998, op. cit.

[94] Transcript of *Usamah Bin-Ladin, the destruction of the base: interview with Usamah Bin-Ladin*, available at www.terrorism.com/terrorism/BinLadinTranscript.shtml, accessed 8th December 2002.

Chapter 4
The primacy of consequences: Left-wing revolutionaries

The examples in the previous chapter seem to indicate that violent groups that are inspired by religion, and motivated by a particular interpretation of the moral dictates of that religion, tend more towards the primary use of non-consequentialist or deontological forms of justification, although there is not that clean-cut a distinction. If it is the case, however, that we can classify such groups as exemplifying primarily a non-consequentialist justificatory tendency, can we identify the beginnings of a clear dichotomy with regard to justificatory approach between so-called "religious" groups and those that we might think are more likely to be secular, or at least inspired by secular ideologies of revolutionary Marxism and nationalism/national liberation? With regard to the two exemplar groups examined in detail in this chapter and the next – the Red Army Faction and the Provisional Irish Republican Army – ceasefires, cessations of violent activity, and ultimate voluntary disbandment have either happened or seem likely. The reasons for this may lie in either (a) the belated rational recognition that the resort to violence was never going to lead to the achievement of their desired real-world objectives; (b) the realisation that current political conditions (either domestic or international) render the continued use of violence less effective (and indeed, less acceptable) than non-violent political action; or (c), in a related point, the recognition that the use of violence has got the group as far along the road towards their ultimate demands as is possible, and that the continued use of violence cannot be justified in conditions where non-violent political action seems capable of further advancing those demands. Such reasons, if accurate, would

seem to imply that, for at least some revolutionary-leftist groups and national liberation movements, the initial decision to resort to and continue with political violence was justified in consequentialist terms. This brings us back to the point made in Chapter 2 that consequentialists, by the nature of consequentialism, may be more open to a cost/benefit calculation regarding the relationship between ends and means.

1. Fighting communist organisations

The focus of this section is on what have become known as "fighting communist organisations" (FCOs), defined by Pluchinsky as "small, lethal, urban terrorist group[s] which are guided by Marxist-Leninist ideology", found mainly in Western Europe, and whose ultimate objective is "to overthrow the democratic government in their country and replace it with a vaguely defined 'proletarian dictatorship'".[1] Pluchinsky's extensive comparative analysis lists some of the core ideological themes of FCOs, including (a) viewing the world through the prism of dialectical materialism; (b) seeing capitalism as the cause of all the proletariat's problems; (c) the belief that only force can overthrow capitalism; (d) the belief that "the proletariat does not currently possess the necessary revolutionary consciousness to carry out the violent overthrow of the capitalist system"; (e) the idea that the traditional leftist parties no longer represent the working class, and have indeed "forfeited their right" to, meaning that the FCOs are "forced to fill the revolutionary void"; (f) the belief that Western Europe is the "imperialist centre … of a chain of imperialist states … fabricated by the United States"; and, importantly in the context of the Red Army faction (discussed below), (g) the

idea that the "latent, fascist tendencies of the capitalist, imperialist state must be exposed to the proletariat".[2]

In terms of the shape of the revolutionary struggle, Pluchinsky claims that FCOs typically see it in terms of two phases. The first phase is the phase of "armed propaganda" and incorporates three ideally simultaneous components: "a revolutionary strategy, a structured organisation … and the initiation of armed combat".[3] The purpose of this phase of the struggle is to use political violence to spread revolutionary consciousness and ideas among the proletariat.[4] Pluchinsky quotes from a pamphlet by the French communist Frederick Oriach:

> During this phase, the guerrilla movement obviously does not seek to defeat militarily, but only to harass and step up operations which will push the bourgeois state into assuming the defensive; this is what we must go after (we must get to a point where there will be sandbags in front of every bank, where each burrow of the bosses, of the police, of the army, of the system of justice, and of the politicians will have to be surrounded with barbed wire).[5]

At first glance, this appears to be a rationally stated, consequentialist approach, saying something rather like: "Look, we all know we cannot overthrow the state by force of arms, but our use of political violence can push the state into an impossible position". What that impossible position might mean in practice is unclear, but it seems that it might form the backdrop to the second phase of the armed struggle. That phase is revolutionary civil war, "aimed at winning political-military victories that will in effect change the force ratio".[6] In 1980, a group of (Italian) Red Brigades prisoners spoke of the purpose of FCO political violence as being to raise the political consciousness of the proletariat so that they can be

organised into "revolutionary mass organisms" or "political-military combat organisms", and they referred to the armed propaganda phase in these terms: "... this objective movement is interwoven with the armed propaganda initiative, which the fighting communist organizations have tirelessly pursued over the past ten years, in order to instill in the proletariat awareness of the need and the possibility of communist revolution in the imperialist metropolis".[7]

In the next phase, the revolutionary civil war, the fighting communist organisation evolves into the "fighting communist party": the successful raising of proletarian consciousness in turn leads to increased support for and membership of the FCO. The fighting communist party will assist the working class to seize power and overthrow capitalism.[8]

In terms of the operational characteristics of FCOs, Pluchinsky's overview is also authoritative.[9] Briefly stated, FCOs tend to avoid operations that might endanger innocent bystanders, nor do they employ suicide attacks or operations that carry a high level of risk to operatives. These latter characteristics might be linked to the fact that most FCOs apparently have a relatively small number of core activists (Pluchinsky puts the number at less than 25), and this in turn might also explain why the number of attacks carried out by FCOs per year is relatively low. Further, attacks that are carried out are well planned – not spontaneous or arbitrary – with "considerable thought ... given to the political 'message'" of each specific operation: "each attack carries a political message which in turn is usually part of a broader campaign theme".[10] They also tend to publicly claim responsibility for their actions, excluding "proletarian expropriation" operations (the term used for the financing of a group through armed robbery or kidnapping for ransom) and other logistical actions. In terms of their targets, Pluchinsky says

that they are mainly "prominent personalities who are perceived as symbols, representatives, or decision-makers in government, business, politics, and the judicial or law enforcement sectors".[11] Also targeted are representatives or symbols of US military or political interests, including US and NATO military bases, particularly in relation to West Germany's Red Army Faction. They also frequently respond or react to international events: during the first Gulf War, three European FCOs carried out attacks on Western targets.[12]

2. Revolutionary archetype: The Red Army Faction

The Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion), active in West Germany from 1970 until its disbandment in 1998, is one of the archetypal politically violent revolutionary leftist groups. Like its ideologically similar contemporaries, such as the Italian Red Brigades and the United States' Weathermen, the RAF grew out of the climate of radical student protest and left-wing dissent common in the late 1960s. The revolutionary violence of the RAF did not aim to overthrow the state directly through force of arms and thereupon institute a socialist state, although the establishment of an egalitarian socialist society that would facilitate the liberation of oppressed humanity was its ultimate end goal – indeed, its conception of the good. It was that end that all its activities were ultimately directed at attaining. But what we might call the group's intermediary consequential goals – that is, the shorter-term consequences that might eventually lead to this ultimate desired end, and which were the *de facto* consequences that underlay much of the group's justifications for individual actions – were somewhat more symbolic: as well as attacking representatives of "imperialism" (such as the US military presence in West Germany, NATO, and industrial and

commercial interests), the group apparently hoped to provoke the state into massive overreaction against the RAF and the broader radical left, with the purpose of exposing to the masses what the group saw as the coercive, oppressive, and still fascist nature of the state, whereupon, presumably, the masses would rise up in revolution, leading to the attainment of the ultimate end goal of an egalitarian socialist society.

In terms of provoking the state into introducing draconian counter measures, it largely succeeded, and its rhetoric concerning the German "police state" was not just hyperbole. But it failed in its primary purpose, which was the mobilisation of the masses in reaction to this "unmasking" of the coercive and oppressive nature of the state. The German government succeeded in sidelining the organisation and isolating it from the broader left, and the populace regarded them largely as dangerous criminals rather than the revolutionary heroes they sought to be.

Although the name "Red Army Faction" was not formally used until 1971, the existence of the group is often dated from the May 1970 freeing of Andreas Baader from custody by a group including Gudrun Ensslin and Ulrike Meinhof. These three would become the nucleus of what became popularly known as the "Baader-Meinhof group". Although the incorporation of Meinhof's name in this popular moniker may imply an equality of leadership, in reality she had little actual influence, except for writing many of the RAF's communiqués. The group's effective leaders were Baader and Ensslin, who were lovers.

Baader had been imprisoned for his part in arson attacks on two Frankfurt department stores in 1968, in which Ensslin had also been involved. Released pending an appeal, the perpetrators went underground, with Baader alone being

rearrested in April 1970. Meinhof, a well-known left-wing journalist, was instrumental in the planning and execution of his escape a month later. After the escape, Baader, Ensslin, Meinhof and about 20 supporters travelled to a Palestinian Al Fatah training camp in Jordan. Their stay there was short lived – they were expelled from the camp – and were back in Berlin by August, whereupon they set about acquiring money by robbing banks, as well as sourcing cars, safe-houses and weapons.

The first communiqué to use the term "Red Army Faction" was *The Urban Guerrilla Concept*, released in April 1971.[13] In it, the group says that urban guerrilla warfare represents "the only revolutionary method of intervention available to what are on the whole weak revolutionary forces" and "the urban guerrilla's aim is to attack the state's apparatus of control at certain points and put them out of action, to destroy the myth of the system's omnipresence and invulnerability".[14]

The group launched a series of bomb attacks against the police, judiciary, US army bases, and the conservative press in May 1972, killing four and injuring about 60. Shortly after this, the group's leadership and core activists were arrested. Thereafter, those who assumed the RAF leadership outside the prisons focused primarily on attempts to get the imprisoned leadership released. These attempts included the hostage siege at the West German embassy in Stockholm (April 1975), the assassination of the federal prosecutor in charge of the cases (April 1977), and the kidnapping of Hans-Martin Schleyer, president of the Federation of German Industry and the Federal Employers' Association (September 1977). In support of the demands made by Schleyer's kidnappers, a Lufthansa jet was hijacked in October by a cell associated with the Popular Front

for the Liberation of Palestine. The hostages were freed by German counter-terrorist forces after four days. The next day, the remnants of the historical leadership of the RAF – Baader, Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe – were found dead in their cells. (Meinhof was already dead, having been found hanging in her cell in May 1976.) A fourth member, Irmgard Möller, survived, having sustained serious stab wounds. The official verdict was suicide, though the evidence for this has been said to be inconclusive (see Aust's exhaustive account[15]). Schleyer was killed by his captors within hours.

After the deaths in prison of the RAF's so-called "historical leadership", the center of power in the RAF leadership shifted to those outside the prisons and the emphasis of the "second generation" (led by Brigitte Mohnhaupt and Christian Klar) moved away from attempts to secure prisoner releases back towards what they saw as the main anti-imperialist struggle. After a period of re-organisation, the RAF's next high-profile attack was the nearly successful attempted assassination of NATO commander General Alexander Haig in Belgium in June 1979. There were no high-profile attacks after that until August 1981, when a car bomb exploded at a US army base. In September, an attempt was made to kill the US army's European commander General Frederick Kroesen in a rocket attack. This was the last attack carried out under the "second generation" of the RAF leadership, who were arrested in November 1982.

The third-generation leadership did not make its presence felt until December 1984, with the attempted car bombing of a US base. During the '80s and early '90s, the RAF engaged in assassinations or attempted assassinations of industrialists and government officials, another bombing of a US base (in conjunction with the French group Action Direct), and a machine-gun attack on

the US embassy in Bonn. The joint operation with Action Direct was the first collaboration between two European left-wing violent groups. A joint communiqué stated: "The revolutionary movement in Western Europe must today move its fight into a new phase by intensifying the discussion and organization of its offensive against the imperialist apparatus with all its political, economic, and military ramifications on all levels". It continued: "Each strategic, anti-imperialist operation and offensive changes the entire balance of power in favor of the revolution and contributes to the on-going disintegration of the imperialist system of states".[16] In 1992, following the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the reunification of Germany, the RAF declared a cessation of violence against representatives of business and the state. Despite this, in 1993, the RAF destroyed a newly built prison with 600 pounds of commercial explosives and retaliated with several small firebombs for the death of one of its members in a shootout with police. Thereafter, the organization was inactive.

In April 1998, the RAF announced its official disbandment, saying "almost 28 years ago, on 14 May 1970, the RAF was born from an act of liberation: today we are ending this project. The urban guerrilla in the form of the RAF is now history". And in a piece of philosophical introspection, they added that revolutionaries desire a world in which nobody has the right to decide whether another person lives or dies, and that "attacking people in their capacity as functionaries for the state is a contradiction to the thoughts and feelings of all revolutionaries in the world – it contradicts their notion of liberation".[17]

3. Operational characteristics

In 1992, Pluchinsky[18] stated that "the RAF is one of the most dangerous terrorist groups in Europe", for five reasons. Firstly, the RAF had the demonstrable willingness and ability to operate outside Germany, and this was facilitated by the existence of networks of supporters and sympathisers in other countries. Secondly, the group consistently survived the arrest of its leaders, with successive "generations" succeeding to the leadership. Thirdly, it was the prime mover in attempts to construct a Europe-wide alliance, or "anti-imperialist front", of similarly minded groups, with evidence of co-operation in 1987 with France's Action Direct to establish what they termed an "Anti-Imperialist Front of West European Guerrillas" and a similar effort in 1988 with a faction of Italy's Red Brigades. Fourthly, the RAF had a tendency to target high-profile and well-protected individuals, a feature that Pluchinsky calls a "tactical audacity" unmatched by any similar European group. The fifth reason that is cited is also related to target selection, specifically the tendency to target US military and diplomatic interests. Pluchinsky goes on to outline a putative RAF operational code,[19] which includes the dicta: "do not carry out operations that could endanger innocent bystanders"; stick to the plan, even if the security forces become aware of it; only target high-profile personalities "who can be symbolically linked to the current political-military line"; and always claim responsibility for attacks, even if they fail – conversely, don't claim responsibility for attacks that the RAF was not involved in, and don't claim responsibility for logistical or fund-raising operations because of the intelligence about operational current abilities that such a claim of responsibility might provide to the police.

4. Early justifications

After the operation to free Baader in 1970, a statement that has been attributed to Ulrike Meinhof was released in early June. Entitled *Build up the Red Army*[20] and written as an abusive and theoretically unsophisticated diatribe, it contains some valuable nuggets of justification for their actions. For example, it says: "did any pig really believe we would talk about the development of class struggle, the reorganisation of the proletariat, without arming ourselves at the same time". This points to the later rationalisation of the RAF's perceived role in stimulating class-consciousness. The statement also implies a form of "self-defence" justification – defence from the structural violence of the state – and conveys the idea that conventional political means have been tried for long enough and have been found wanting:

> It is no use to explain the right thing to the wrong people. We tried that long enough. We do not have to explain the operation to free Baader to the intellectual windbags or the cowards or the know-alls, but only to the potentially revolutionary parts of the people … who are able to at once understand an action because they are prisoners themselves … those who could not give a damn about the waffle of the Left because it did not have any consequences.

The implication of this is that the traditional, conventional form of left-wing political activism has been totally ineffectual in addressing the concerns and welfare of the working class, and that this has led to some degree to the alienation of at least some sections of that class from the conventional left. The communiqué continues with a list of historically socially disadvantaged areas around Berlin and refers to groups of people that, from a particular perspective, could be argued to

be oppressed in terms of economics, labour market relations and patriarchy. These people have been lied to repeatedly, the statement argues, and have had enough. It is to this constituency that the statement seems to be addressed (although there are repeated verbal assaults on the "bootlickers", "assholes" and "morons" of both the conventional Left and the establishment), and it seems that this is regarded as the natural constituency for the nascent group of violent activists. This constituency will naturally and immediately understand both the reasons for and necessity of the operation to free Baader (which involved the shooting of a guard, though not fatally). "Baader's liberation is just the beginning", the statement continues, "the power of the cops will come to an end". The Red Army is the army of this oppressed constituency:

> So, what does it mean to carry the conflict to the extremes? It means: not to get butchered. That's why we build up the Red Army. Behind the parents stand the teacher, the youth welfare department, and the police. Behind the foreman stand the master, the personnel department, the factory security, the welfare, and the police. Behind the caretaker stand the property manger, the bailiff, the eviction, and the police. The pigs achieve with censorship, redundancies, dismissals, bailiffs' seals and batons what they can achieve. Sure thing they get out their guns, the tear gas, hand grenades and machine guns; of course they escalate the means if they feel the need to.

The failure of conventional Left politics is restated and the necessity of violent agitation is implied as a result of this failure: "it is Social Democratic rubbish to claim it is possible to infiltrate, to lead on, to overpower, to intimidate and to vanquish by peaceful means the imperialist system … without building up the Red

Army, the pigs can do whatever they want, the pigs can continue with what they are doing: to imprison, to dismiss, to impound, to steal children, to intimidate, to shoot, to rule".

The statement as a whole clearly indicates the ideas that (a) the "Red Army", once established, will represent a reactive self-defence force for the proletariat, plus (b) a proactive revolutionary force, as well as the ideas that (c) traditional leftist politics have been tried and found to fail, thus (d) violent political action is the only option. The statement ends with a call to arms: "Trigger the class struggle! Organise the proletariat! Start the armed resistance! Build up the Red Army!"

5. Theory and praxis

As noted above, the first communiqué to use the name "Red Army Faction" was *The Urban Guerrilla Concept*, released in April 1971. This represents more of a position paper than the *Build up the Red Army* communiqué, and it is considerably more reflective and theoretically sophisticated, as well as being more lengthy. The statement in this communiqué (quoted in section 2) that urban guerrilla warfare represents "the only revolutionary method of intervention available to what are on the whole weak revolutionary forces" continues thus:[21]

> The urban guerrilla ... starts by recognising that by the time the moment for armed struggle arrives, it will already be to late to start preparing for it ...To this extent the "urban guerrilla" is the logical consequence of the negation of parliamentary democracy long since perpetuated by its very own representatives; the only and inevitable response to emergency laws and the rule of the hand grenade; the readiness to fight with those same means the system has chosen to

> use in trying to eliminate its opponents. The "urban guerrilla" is based on a recognition of the facts instead of an apologia of the facts…
>
> The urban guerrilla can concretise verbal internationalism as the requisition of guns and money. He can blunt the state's weapon of a ban on communists by organising an underground beyond the reach of the police. The urban guerrilla is a weapon in the class war. The "urban guerrilla" signifies armed struggle, necessary to the extent that that it is the police which makes indiscriminate use of firearms, exonerating class justice from guilt and burying our comrades alive unless we prevent them … The urban guerrilla's aim is to attack the state's apparatus of control at certain points and put them out of action, to destroy the myth of the system's omnipresence and invulnerability. The "urban guerrilla" presupposes the organization of an illegal apparatus, in other words apartments, weapons, ammunition, cars and papers.[22]

The statement further says that the group's original intention was to work closely with and within existing socialist groups in various contexts in grass-roots activism, alongside their armed struggle. However, this failed because of the level of police surveillance of these left-wing groups. Thus, the RAF concluded that "individuals cannot combine legal and illegal activity".

As it stands so far, the justification is classically consequentialist. Given the weakness of the broader left and the anti-communist activities of the state, revolutionary violence is the only means available to advance their cause. There is also the sense that there is a self-defence-based justification here too, with implications of "fighting back" against anti-left state action and what Mertens would consider to be "structural violence" (see Chapter 1). However, this passage is, in the main, consequentialist, with a firm declaration of intent (to attack the

state's apparatus of control) and the statement that violence is necessary in the absence of other avenues.

But only certain forms of violence: the pamphlet displays a concern for the appropriate context in which, and the targets against which, violence may be used. So it says:

> We do not "use weapons recklessly". The cop who finds himself in the contradiction of being the "little man" and the labourer for capitalism, being the recipient of a small salary and the warder of monopoly capitalism, is not forced to obey orders. We will shoot whenever we are shot at. The cop who lets us get away will be left alone by us.[23]

Nevertheless, the pamphlet admits there is a contradiction between revolutionary violence and "middle-class morality", and goes on to say that "the organisation of armed resistance groups … at this moment is right, is possible and is justified … it is right, possible and justified to create an urban guerrilla movement". The pamphlet quotes Mao and Lenin approvingly ("the armed struggle is 'the highest form of Marxism-Leninism'" and "if you want to know what the communists think, look at their hands and not at their mouths", respectively), but recognizes that an armed campaign cannot be a substitute for all other forms of political activism – it says that they do not claim that the organisation of armed resistance groups can take the place of legal proletarian organizations and the broader class struggle or that armed struggle will replace political activism in the factory and the community – however, "the one is the precondition for the success and progress of the other".

In other places, the pamphlet shows a clear awareness of the international context, mentioning the Civil Rights Movement in the US, worker discontent in France, and the widespread student protests of the late '60s, and linking this to a supposed contemporary crisis in global capitalism. In Germany, however, the pamphlet argues, the general discontent was successfully absorbed by the "social-liberal coalition", who were able to convince the majority of the discontented to accept the postponement of, or reduce the relevance of, a communist alternative through the offer of short-term reforms. This has blunted the edge of the anti-capitalist movement. The socialist student movement "fell apart when the spark … did not develop into a prairie fire of unfolded class struggles; it could name the goals and issues of the anti-imperialist fight, but – not being the revolutionary subject – could not achieve the organizational conveyance". But the student movement (with which the RAF says it has a shared history) "reconstructed Marxism-Leninism as a weapon for the class struggle and established the international context for the revolutionary fight in the metropolis".

However, the political possibilities of imperialism "in neither their reformist nor in their fascist variant are exhausted" and imperialism's capacity to "integrate or suppress the contradictions created by it has not yet come to an end". So, "the concept of an urban guerilla movement … is not based on an optimistic assessment of the situation" in West Germany. This is at least a rational, realistic assessment of the situation facing a newly formed revolutionary leftist "urban guerrilla" group in Western Europe. It took the RAF 28 years to realise that the situation wasn't going to change. However, at that point in their history, they were up for the struggle, however hard it might prove, and were convinced of the role that the RAF had to play in the process:

> We doubt that it is already possible under the existing conditions in the Federal Republic and West Berlin to develop a strategy to unify the working class, to create an organisation that can at the same time be both expression and initiator of the necessary unification process. We doubt that it is possible to weld the alliance between socialist intelligentsia and proletariat together with programmatic statements and the demand for a proletarian organisation ... We claim that there won't be a unification process without revolutionary initiative, without the practical revolutionary intervention of the *avant garde*, the socialist worker and the intellectual.[24]

It would appear that the RAF saw itself as the *avant garde* that would provide part of the practical revolutionary intervention, and it began to put its plans into action in earnest. In November 1971, a letter to "The Labour Party of the People's Republic of Korea" was found, apparently seeking assistance for the RAF's revolutionary endeavours, specifically military training. In the letter, the RAF was described as "a group, still small in number, of communist workers and intellectuals, which has embarked on the armed anti-imperialist struggle in West Germany and West Berlin". It continued: "We think that the organisation of armed operations in the big cities of the Federal Republic is the right way to support the liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the correct contribution of West German and West Berlin communists to the strategy of the international socialist movement in splitting the powers of imperialism by attacking them from all sides and striking once they are split."[25] Whether the letter was genuine or whether or not it might have borne fruit is unknown. However, by June 1972, the RAF's first-generation leadership were imprisoned.

In May 1972, the only sustained campaign of violence conducted by the first-generation leadership of Baader, Ensslin, Meinhof and Raspe began. In the communiqués claiming responsibility for the various actions, there were clear demands stated. Among these, were demands for the "immediate suspension" of the mine blockade and bomb attacks on North Vietnam and demands for the complete withdrawal of US troops from Indochina.[26] The statement after the first attack in this campaign also said that West Germany was "no longer a safe hinterland for the extermination strategy in Vietnam" and that the "crimes against the Vietnamese people have created [for the perpetrators] new bitter enemies [and] there will no longer be any place in the world where they can be safe from attacks by the revolutionary guerrilla units".[27] Interestingly, this rhetoric is remarkably similar to current statements made by al-Qaeda and similar groups.

The statements tended to justify the violent acts in the classically consequentialist terms of "we do act X to achieve result Y" – for instance, "we will continue to carry out bomb attacks against judges and public prosecutors until they stop committing violations of the rights of political prisoners".[28] The clear implication is that if the group achieved the consequences it desired in this instance (the cessation of "violations of the rights of political prisoners"), then the targeting of judges and prosecutors would no longer be necessary or desirable. Similar consequentialist demands were made on the conservative popular press to "stop the anti-communist propaganda against the New Left, against solidaric actions of the working class … against the freedom movements in the Third World, particularly against the Arab countries which are fighting for the liberation of Palestine".[29] Other statements contained language of a more retributive nature – speaking of the "crimes of American imperialism and their domination of the

ruling class" in Germany and saying that "the people … know that bomb attacks on the mass murderers of Vietnam are justified; because they have discovered that demonstrations and words are of no use against the imperialist criminals".[30] It is unclear whether or not the RAF really believed that their actions could influence US foreign policy in Vietnam or whether their actions were designed to result in the cessation of the perceived collaboration of the West German state with the US, or even to encourage the US to stop using Germany as a site for military bases. What is clear is that there is the definite tone in this statement of punishment for crimes committed. And there is also the clear restatement of the idea that peaceful, conventional political means were useless with regard to the results the revolutionary left desired.

6. The urban guerrilla and class conflict

The Urban Guerrilla and Class Conflict was another substantial position paper, released in 1974. In it, there is further trenchant criticism of the mainstream left for its lack of internationalism and their unwillingness to engage with the RAF in a broader front: "the only methods of intervention that come into her [the mainstream left's] mind are still only those that the working class developed in the era of competitive capitalism and parliamentarism". To the RAF, the urban guerrilla represented a merging of national and international class struggle, and their violent acts were an opportunity to expose the structures of imperialist rule. It further stated that there could only be progress in the class struggle if legal work was complemented by illegal work, and that the political propagandist work should include the possibility of urban guerrilla warfare.[31]

This statement exemplifies a strong consequentialist basis. The authors argue that the repressive counter-measures they sought to provoke can no longer be kept secret, and furthermore the state has been forced to contravene its own laws in the process: "they are forced to break with their own rules and appear as what they truly are: the enemy of the people". The reaction of the state does not render the RAF's tactics inappropriate, they argue, even though they say that the working class as a whole is bearing the brunt of the state's counter measures and that it has become extremely difficult "to embed the guerrilla within the masses". "Resistance does not become something wrong just because of the lengthiness of the war. What do the comrades expect anyway in a country that has allowed Auschwitz to happen without any resistance? Whose working class has the history of the German working class and whose police the history of the SS?"[32]

Though the statement has an explicitly consequentialist basis, there is an indication, through the use of a quote from Mao, that the victims of the RAF's violence may fit into different categories of moral relevance. The quote says that if one dies in the interests of the people, that death is "weightier than the Tai mountain", but if one is paid by the fascists and dies for the exploiters and oppressors of the people, that death "has less weight than a swan's feathers". However, the 1998 statement announcing the official disbandment of the RAF contradicts this interpretation, stating that revolutionaries desire a world in which nobody has the right to decide whether another person lives or dies, and that attacking people in their capacity as functionaries of the state is "a contradiction to the thoughts and feelings of all revolutionaries in the world – it contradicts their notion of liberation".[33] The use of the classic argument from necessity in the 1998 statement indicates that, while their victims may have been agents of the state,

they nevertheless were morally autonomous individuals, and their right to life was only transgressed as a last resort. This is the argument that certain contexts require the necessary and regrettable use of violence that results in death in order to achieve a situation that is of great benefit to the majority.

The Tai mountain/swan's feathers quote from the 1974 pamphlet is set in the context of what some call the structural violence of capitalist oppression. The pamphlet begins by outlining the numbers of people that directly or indirectly die through acts or omissions that the authors, less than convincingly, attribute to the capitalist system, including 20,000 road vehicle related deaths ("because the shareholders of the automobile industry only produce for profit and show no consideration for the technical safety of cars and the building of roads"), 12,000 suicides ("because they do not want to die a wretched death in the service of capitalism"), and 1,000 children "murdered each year because flats are built too small so as to help landlords maximise rental income". Unconvincing and overly emotive as these statements may be, they set the stage for the following point, which says much about what the RAF believe to be the context and nature of their actions: "Death in the service of the exploiters is called a natural death; refusal to die in the service of the exploiters is called an unnatural death. Human acts of desperation because of the living and working conditions that capital has created are called a crime". The pamphlet also explicitly identifies the foreign and domestic policies of the West German government with the "foreign and domestic policies of the corporations that dominate markets and politics domestically and abroad". The state is seen as an agent of capitalism, and this is in turn linked to another recurring theme in the RAF's justificatory literature: German capitalism is tainted by its fascist past. Further criticism of the mainstream left follows.

Because of the mainstream left's recognition that the resistance of the German working class to "the rule of capital" will not be triggered by a focus on the problems of less-developed countries, but only by domestic political considerations, the mainstream has eschewed true internationalism, it does not make those very problems part of the agenda of domestic politics.

> That is the dogmatism and narrow mindedness of a part of the left. The fact that the working class in West Germany and West Berlin only thinks and only can act in national terms does not change the fact that capitalism thinks and acts multinationally; rather it is an indication of the schism in the proletariat, an indication of its weakness. A left that only makes the domestic politics of capitalism the subject of its critique and ignores its foreign politics has internalised the schism in the working class; it tells the working class only half of the truth about the character of the system...[34]

So the mainstream left (or at least parts of it) has got it wrong and cannot lead the working class in the right way. It has abandoned true internationalism, and its condemnation of the idea of urban guerrilla warfare is "far too superficial and *ad hoc* for us [the RAF] to contend with the growing gap between their realisation and our practice, *even though we think that we cannot overcome this gap through our own efforts alone*" (emphasis added). So it seems that the RAF recognises the fact that urban guerrilla warfare alone cannot succeed in a context where there is no corresponding mass traditional left movement. However, neither can traditional, non-violent leftist activity succeed in the absence of an armed campaign. This brings us again to the justification of action because it is the last resort in the attempt to achieve their aims. The authors of this 1974 policy

statement explicitly say that urban guerrilla warfare is the link between national and international class struggle: "Urban guerrilla warfare has the possibility of making people aware of the reality of imperialist rule … [it is] the revolutionary method of intervention of altogether weak forces. Progress in the class struggle can only be made by connecting legal with illegal work, if political propaganda work has the perspective of armed struggle, and if political organisational work includes the possibility of urban guerrilla warfare".

This is both a justification for violent action, a criticism of the mainstream left and indeed an appeal to the mainstream left – and it is clearly consequentialist. An assessment of the self-perceived realisticness of the RAF's chances of success in their endeavours can be made by considering this statement from the influential revolutionary tract *Thirty Questions to a Tupamaro*, which is quoted with obvious approval in this pamphlet, and with the intent to persuade not only themselves, but others on the left: "In the current stage of history, nobody can deny that an armed group, however small, has better prospects of evolving into a large people's army than does a group that reduces itself to the propagation of revolutionary dogma".

That said, the group still believed that it needed an answer to a common criticism of the mainstream left, although, as an answer it is more evasive than rebutting. The mainstream argument goes along the lines of this: While revolutionary political violence is clearly justified under (say) an oppressive South American military regime and in the context of extreme poverty or colonial occupation, none of those conditions actually exist in West European liberal democracies.[35] The RAF's answer is, somewhat unclearly, that such an argument "serves more to disguise the domestic conditions rather than unveil them".

Somewhere in here is the idea of the distinction between absolute and relative poverty, and, by extension, the distinction between absolute and relative oppression, a debate that any intelligent revolutionary leftist violent group should have to grapple with. The idea of that distinction and whether it is a *relevant* distinction is obviously either consciously alluded to or subconsciously in mind, but it is not actually argued out. Perhaps the RAF answer would have benefited from it. Instead, the RAF's answer is that the Latin American guerrillas do (or would) support RAF actions in Germany:

> According to this, the bombs against BASF in [Germany] are mocking the bombers of BASF in Brazil. The Latin American comrades think differently about that. And so does BASF. The argument that the Federal Republic is not Latin America is made by people who comment on current affairs from the point of view of secure monthly incomes; it is an indication of coldness and intellectual arrogance towards the problems of the people here.[36]

7. "The dialectic of revolution and counter-revolution"

The RAF statement argues that, despite the left's weakness and capitalism's strength, the capitalist establishment is increasingly preparing itself for what the RAF terms "the militarisation of the class conflict". This "militarisation" includes the sacking of critical journalists and of leftists from the educational and manufacturing sectors, as well as increases in the numbers of police and in the level of their training, powers and armament.

In what is one of the most clearly consequentialist justificatory statements in this tract, the RAF explicitly details its long-term strategic goal, rather than its short-term propagandist goals. It says "the question is not whether we want the

reactionary militarisation or not; the question is whether we can exploit the conditions – which force them towards fascist militarisation – for revolutionary mobilisation; whether we can manage to turn the reactionary militarisation into a revolutionary one". This is the clearest indication yet of the long-term RAF strategy of provoking the state into, as they would have it, unmasking its true nature.

The RAF statement acknowledges that it is a difficult task, but those who are put off by the enormity of the task do not see the fear and nervousness of the establishment – "in the militarisation they only see the weapons, not the crumbling of [the establishment's] mass support … in the terror against us, they only see the terror, not the fear of the explosive social power of the RAF, which they have to 'smother before it spreads'". Which might have been a tad optimistic. Nevertheless:

> We do not say that it is easy to engage in guerrilla activity, that the masses are only waiting to join in with the guerrilla. But most of all we do not think that the situation will shift by itself. We do not believe that the guerrilla can spontaneously emerge out of mass conflicts – we consider such perceptions to be unrealistic. A guerilla that spontaneously emerges out of mass conflicts is the bloodbath, not the guerrilla [sic]. We do not believe that the guerrilla can form as the 'illegal wing' of a legal organisation. The illegal wing would result in the delegalisation of the organisation, i.e., its liquidation … We do not believe that the concept of the guerrilla can emerge naturally from political work. We believe that the possibilities and specific functions of the guerrilla in the class struggle only become collectively thinkable … when the guerrilla exists … We mean that the guerrilla will expand, that it will establish itself, that the development of class

> conflict itself will assert the concept – but only if there are still some who do it, who act, who are not demoralised, who do not just lay down.[37]

And this section of the 1974 paper, entitled "The dialectic of revolution and counter-revolution", again concludes with an approving quotation from *Thirty Questions to a Tupamaro*: "No party can claim to be revolutionary that does not prepare for armed struggle, and indeed so on all levels of the party".[38]

The authors turn to the issues of logistics and funding, particularly the justification of armed bank robbery as both necessary and, indeed, valuable in itself. They argue that robbing a bank is an intrinsically political act, referring to them as "actions of disappropriation". They say that they realise that, in and of itself, bank robbery changes nothing about the nature and rule of exploitation, but – in a relatively well thought out (or at least pithily stated) and clearly consequentialist justification –they say that there is no other solution to the funding problems encountered by revolutionary organisations: "It is logistically right because there is no other solution to the funding problem; it is politically right because it is an action of disappropriation; it is tactically right because it is a proletarian action; it is strategically right because it serves the funding of the guerrilla".

In further justification for such acts of proletarian expropriation, and perhaps with an eye to defending their actions against those on the left who might have criticised them for doing too much robbery and not enough actual revolution[39], they say:

> In the metropoles of imperialism, the organisation of anti-imperialist struggle as simultaneously legal and illegal, political and armed struggle, cannot dispense

> with bank robbery. It points in the direction that is aimed at: disappropriation; and the only method with which the dictatorship of the people against the enemies of the people can be established: armed struggle.

And later:

> The solving of logistical problems includes securing the continuity of the revolutionary organisation. We put great emphasis on the tactical task of ensuring the continuity of the Red Army Faction ... Without organizational continuity, without permanently and organisationally securing the results of revolutionary processes, one leaves revolutionary processes exposed to the anarchy of the system, to chance, to unhistorical spontaneity. We consider the neglect of the question of organisational continuity to be a manifestation of opportunism.

The tenor of the justification seems clear. If, as the RAF argues, the armed struggle of urban guerrillas – illegal activity – combined with legal leftist political activism represents the only way in which the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and capitalism can succeed, then securing the current and future operational ability of the revolutionary organisation is of paramount importance. So, if the use of violence is justifiable, so too must be the securing of the logistical capacity to carry out that violence. To think otherwise would not be rational – it would not represent the apparently rational calculation regarding which present means are, in the estimation of the perpetrating agents, the most likely to advance and secure the consequences that are ultimately sought.

The 1974 pamphlet concludes with a dose of Marxist rhetoric and a broad summing up of the RAF's goals and the nature of the arguments put forth in the

pamphlet. It is interesting because it explicitly refers to the RAF as a revolutionary vanguard, which it is necessary to be because the spontaneous revolt of the proletariat will either not happen spontaneously or will be based on amateurish improvisation, which will endanger many more lives, it seems to be argued, than an armed campaign by a professional revolutionary vanguard. Professionalism and preparedness is called for, which, by implication, only the RAF can provide. The conclusion to the tract is also interesting, because one of the pamphlet's very last lines makes explicit reference to the desirability of achieving the revolutionary goals with the minimum of casualties:

> The revolutionary process is one precisely because it makes the laws of capitalist production and exchange of commodities its object, instead of becoming the object of those processes. It cannot be measured by applying the criteria of the market ... "As far as possible, we have to avoid unnecessary victims. All people within the ranks of the revolution must care for one another, must behave lovingly towards one another, must help one another."[40] SERVE THE PEOPLE! ALWAYS MAKE THE QUESTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY THE CENTRAL QUESTION! SUPPORT THE ARMED STRUGGLE! BUILD UP THE URBAN GUERRILLA! VICTORY IN THE PEOPLE'S WAR! "The armed struggle is a technical matter and therefore requires technical knowledge: training, fighting spirit, and finally practice. On this level, improvisation costs many lives and results in failures. The 'spontaneity' that those who talk vaguely about the revolution of the people, of 'the masses', brag about is either simply an excuse or consists of relying in the decisive phase of the class struggle on improvisation. Every vanguard movement that wants to remain true to itself in the decisive moment of the struggle has to intervene and understand the

techniques of how to channel public violence against oppression, so that the goal can be achieved with as few casualties as possible."[41]

8. Thoughts of the imprisoned founders

The Urban Guerrilla and Class Conflict was the last substantial position paper for some time[42], but some of the thoughts and statements of several of the imprisoned first generation of leaders and ideologues are notable. For example, during their trial, in 1974, Ulrike Meinhof explained the goals of the RAF in these terms: "The anti-imperialist struggle, if it is to be more than mere chatter, means annihilation, destruction, the shattering of the imperialist power system – political, economic and military."[43] Shortly before this, Meinhof had begun an official history of the RAF (which she never completed). In her notes, the "last resort" character of the justification of the RAF's activities comes out. She said that the formation of the group was spontaneous, and that those who joined the movement saw it as "the only way of doing their revolutionary duty."[44]

In August 1975, there was a particularly interesting exchange in the courtroom between the prisoners and the presiding judge concerning the nature of "terrorism".[45] Baader quoted an interpretation of terrorism put forward by the interior minister of one of the German federal states, who said: "The basic rule of terrorism is to kill as many people as possible. Numb horror is the state of mind [that] terrorists obviously wish to produce in more and more people throughout the world". Of this definition, Baader said that it was the "precise definition of Israel's policy towards the Palestinian liberation movements [and] of the USA's policy in Vietnam". He continued:

> That is the precise definition of the policy of the Chilean junta, and that is the precise definition of the policy of the [West German] Federal Prosecutor's Office, its basic rule being as many dead fighters as possible, executions in the open street, shooting to kill, and so on. Numb horror is, in fact, exactly the state of mind the Federal Prosecutor's Office wants to produce in more and more people by having more and more "dead sections" built in prisons,[46] putting prisoners in them more and more often and leaving them there ... What Federal Prosecutor Buback is doing is by exact definition terrorism, state terrorism. And thus the terrorist Buback...[47]

At this point Baader's microphone was switched off. But Meinhof continued the theme:

> Terrorism is the destruction of utilities such as dykes, waterways, hospitals, power stations. All the targets at which the American bomb attacks on North Vietnam were systematically aimed from 1965 onwards. Terrorism operates amidst the fear of the masses. The city guerrilla movement, on the other hand, carries fear to the machinery of the state ... The actions of urban guerrillas are never, never directed against the people. They are always directed against the imperialist machine. *The urban guerrilla fights the terrorism of the state* [emphasis added].

The statement that urban guerrilla actions are never directed against the ordinary people is backed up by the transcript of a conversation held between Baader and negotiators involved in the resolution of the October 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa plane, by a cell associated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, in support of demands to free the imprisoned RAF members. Baader

reportedly said that, up to that point, "the RAF has rejected this form of terrorism".[48] It is interesting that he reportedly used the word "terrorism" to refer to this sort of action. He went on to say that the prisoners had never condoned operations that involved innocent civilians, and that they still did not condone them. Moreover, it was likely that the succeeding generations of RAF leaders would increase the level of brutality, and that the attitudes of the state had "helped this extreme form to break through".[49] In answer to the question of "where terrorism begins", Baader reportedly answered: "With this kind of terrorist violence against civilians …This is not the doing of the RAF, which has been aiming at a form of political organization for some time … As opposed to what's going on now, the RAF has pursued a policy of moderation."[50] He also reportedly said that "international terrorism isn't the RAF's scene" and that "terrorism is not the policy of the RAF".[51]

In a further continuation of "fighting the terrorism of the state" theme, in May 1976, the prisoners' defence sought to call several well-known statesmen and politicians as witnesses, including Richard Nixon, a former US secretary of defence, Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt. The point was to argue that the US government had violated international law and had used West Germany as a base for this, implying that there might be a legal defence of justifiable action for attacks against US military operations in Germany.[52] In June 1976, this argument was explicitly stated, with defence counsel saying that if West German territory had been used to facilitate "war crimes", then the West German state itself was involved in breaches of international law. If so, there might well be an "internationally legal right to resist … against institutions of the aggressor" present in West German territory.[53] This defence is actually quite similar to that

which was successfully used in the summer of 2006 by lawyers for the Shannon Airport protestors, who damaged US air force planes.

Somewhat cheekily, the RAF prisoners' defence quoted a former West German public prosecutor, who had written that "the right to resist is not confined to a state's internal area. It crosses national frontiers. Not only is it everyone's right, it can also be used for everyone's good."[54] The defence further gave the hypothetical example of a bomb attack on the Nazi hierarchy before the war, arguing that, in the prosecution of people accused of such an attack, would the present judges refuse to allow evidence of actual and planned Nazi atrocities to be admitted, and concluding: "Everyone who has ever studied law knows that in the area of the right to resist or the use of emergency protective measures, one may in some circumstances call upon such rights even if the ensuing action leads to the loss of human life."[55]

Here again, in the arguments of the prisoners' defence, we can see the parallels drawn between the current West German state and the Third Reich and the argument for the justifiability of violent action for the purposes of attempting to stop actual or potential atrocities and human rights violations.[56]

9. Self-criticism and philosophical introspection

So far, the forms of justifications for violent action that have been used by the RAF look straightforwardly consequentialist. Some of the themes, briefly restated, are:

- The use of political violence is a last resort. Conventional politics has been tried and has failed. Legal mainstream political activism will not, on its own,

achieve the desired results. Illegal violent activity combined with legal political action will achieve results.

- The violence is directed against representatives and sites of "US imperialism" and the state and key state actors only, not – if it can be avoided – ordinary civilians. To deliberately target civilians would be "terrorism".
- The violence is both reactive, insofar as it represents a defence from and an attack on the structural violence of the capitalist system, and proactive, insofar as it seeks to stimulate class consciousness to a critical mass in response to the provoked unmasking of the "true nature" of the West German state.
- Violence against US interests represents a justifiable "right to resist" breaches of international law and the commission of "war crimes".
- There is a parallel between the nature of capitalism and imperialism in West Germany and that country's Nazi past.

These themes and variations on them repeatedly recur in the individual communiqués issued claiming responsibility for individual attacks and in the more infrequent policy/position papers. Of the latter (of those that are readily available in English), the most significant for further assessing the ethical bases of the RAF's justification for the use of violence are the 1985 joint RAF/Action Direct communiqué (*For the Unity of West European Revolutionaries*), the 1992 statement offering a suspension of violent activities, and the 1998 statement announcing the dissolution of the RAF.

The first of these (the 1985 joint statement) may represent the beginnings of the realisation that the RAF's campaign, in the form in which it had hitherto been conducted, was not enough in and of itself to achieve the organisation's

goals. And, for a consequentialist, if the means you are currently using in the attempt to achieve your goals no longer appear likely to work towards that end, then the means used should adapt or change. The 1992 and 1998 statements would then represent the logical culmination of this early change in understanding of the nature of the relationship between means and ends.

Underlining this interpretation, the 1985 joint RAF/Action Direct communiqué (*For the Unity of West European Revolutionaries*)[57] begins thus: "It is now necessary and possible to initiate a new base for the development of an authentic revolutionary strategy in the imperialist centres, and as a condition for this qualitative jump, create the international organization of the proletarian struggle in the cities, and its political-military nucleus: the Western European guerrilla."[58] The use of the phrases "*necessary* … to initiate a new base" and "qualitative jump" is significant for the implication that a new strategic focus is needed. Similarly, the reference to the "development of an *authentic* revolutionary strategy" could be taken to imply that the previous revolutionary strategy was not "authentic".

Be that as it may, the communiqué contains much of the standard rhetoric about the need for revolutionary unity in the face of the "unified imperialist strategy", the need to develop a "proletarian policy" in the metropoles, and the need to break the "imperialist strategy in the centres themselves". An apparent reference to the EU and European integration is interesting: "The central project in the present phase of the imperialist strategy is the attempt to weld the West European states together into one homogenous structure … which is to be completely integrated into the core of imperialist power, NATO … as the most complete imperialist structure of oppression." Indeed, the European states have

become tied into an "offensive strategy … as relief for the American military machine…"[59]

If the 1985 statement seems to be setting the stage for a re-evaluation of the RAF's activities, later statements explicitly question the group's *raison d'être.* Clues emerge in the November 1989 statement claiming responsibility for the assassination of Alfred Herrhausen, chairman of Deutsche Bank.[60] References to "the completely changed international situation" that require "the further development of the entire revolutionary process" precede the call for a "new composition of the revolutionary movement".[61]

The April 1992 statement that offered a suspension of the RAF's campaign is important in this regard.[62] It begins with a less dogmatic, more emotive rhetoric, addressed to all those "who are seeking paths on which a life that is worthy of man can be organised by addressing very specific issues, and implemented here and everywhere in the world: *that is what we are seeking too*" (emphasis added). The statement goes on to say that "for us and for all of those who have a record of resistance … things cannot go on as they have done … we must seek new guidelines for a policy that is truly able to bring about changes for human life, and that, in *the long term*, completely strips those in power of the right to determine the reality of life."

So the same ultimate goal is still there, albeit more poetically stated, but there is a questioning of the means. The statement explicitly says that the RAF must reassess their history, and notes that the collapse of the Stalinist bloc represents "a completely changed situation regarding the international balance of power" and goes on to say that "we were faced with the fact that we had failed to accomplish our objective". The statement also says that "the policy we pursued in

the years before 1989 had not strengthened ourselves politically, but weakened us". And in perhaps a nod to critiques by other revolutionary leftist violent groups,[63] the RAF statement goes on to say that "we very much reduced our policy to attacks against imperialist strategies, failing to look for immediate positive objectives and to show how an alternative was able to exist here and today".

Whatever about that, the authors of the statement recognise that "the guerrillas cannot take a central position in [the] development process ...[and] attacks by us against top officials of the state and the economy with intent to kill cannot advance the process that is now necessary, because they will result in an escalation of the whole situation." The statement continues: "We have decided to prevent such escalation. That means that, in the process that is now necessary, we will suspend attacks against leading representatives of the economy and state."

Around the time of this statement, evidence began to emerge of something of a split in the RAF regarding its future. There is no need to examine in depth the various statements and discussion papers published by the different parties to the split, but some of the themes are worth exploring briefly. One party to the split, which called itself the Anti-Imperialist Cell, seemed to believe that the mainstream RAF was selling out with its declaration of a suspension of attacks, and argued so in very emphatic terms:

> Considering the level of exploitation/destruction of human existence in the Three Continents, it is the fucking moral duty of everyone in Germany who defines him or herself as left-radical to continually make new attacks here. That's why we can fully understand the anger of the foreign comrades we have spoken with when we discussed the recent statement from the guerrilla: They can't understand how

> comrades who surely realise that the imperialist elite's war against the people of the Three Continents advances more and more every day can be responsible for calling an end to armed struggle in Germany. [64]

Later, the statement says that "militant actions are not only morally necessary, they are also politically useful".

The use of the term "moral duty" in this statement is especially interesting. Of course, whether the term in the original German actually implied *moral* duty or rather referred to principled commitment to one's desired ends is unclear. And another possibility is, of course, that the split brought out a distinction between those who still assessed the campaign in terms of the efficacy of the means in achieving the desired end, and those who had – consciously or unconsciously – begun to see the use of violence as a symbolic act of resistance, almost an end in itself. This might also explain why, even now, some RAF prisoners refuse to publicly renounce the past use of violence, when such renunciation would expedite their release.[65]

However, as noted in Chapter 2 (section 1), consequentialism "starts from a *conception of what is desirable* … and then tells us always to promote as much of it as we can" (emphasis added).[66] And it is clear that no form of consequentialism that is more than simple, selfish personal utility maximisation can yield any judgement of right action without the assistance of some conception of the good that is in fact an abstract moral principle.[67] This means that, if one is a consequentialist, there will be always be a principled commitment to the achievement of one's desired end goals. But there is a radical distinction between (a) having a principled commitment to the ultimate attainment of, for example, the liberation of humanity oppressed by capitalism, justifying one's actions in terms

of whether those actions will contribute to the attainment of that end, that is, to the attainment of that to which one has a principled commitment to, and (b) justifying one's actions in terms of some deontological rule or principle. Although it might well be argued that the ultimate end goal of liberating oppressed humanity might be a secular parallel to the ultimate end goal of establishing God's law on earth, the difference is in the justificatory structure: the first, crudely but emphatically, says "we do this in the pursuit of attaining that, and if it is obvious to us that it is unattainable, then there is no point in continuing doing what we are doing"; the second, again crudely, says "we do this because it is the right thing to do, regardless of the actual attainability of our desired end".

The same statement also denies the relevance of the collapse of the Soviet system, but a RAF statement in November 1993[68] reasserts the relevance of the "global changes at the end of the '80s" and says that critical reflection on the struggle of the RAF was desperately needed, that this was "the most banal form of revolutionary self-understanding". The statement goes on to argue that a new way must be discovered and that "we don't really care whether that will still be called the RAF, or whether it will simply be a transformation of the RAF within a new formation of the revolutionary left. What's of primary importance is the correspondence of the necessities and proposals for a process of change."

10. "The urban guerrilla is history"

By March/April 1998, the internal debates seemed to have come to an end, with the release of the statement announcing the RAF's disbandment.[69] This statement, heavily reflective and self-critical, is worth examining in detail. One of the first things the statement says is "we stand by our history", and, later, "despite

everything we could have done better, it was fundamentally correct to oppose the conditions in West Germany and to seek to wage resistance to the continuity of German history". The authors describe the RAF as "the revolutionary attempt by a minority of people to resist the tendencies in this society and contribute to the overthrow of capitalist conditions" and they say:

> We are proud to have been part of this attempt. The end of this project shows that we were not able to succeed on this path. But this does not speak against the necessity and legitimacy of revolt. The RAF was our decision to stand on the side of those people struggling against domination and for liberation all across the world. For us, this was the right decision to make.

This is a very clear statement of a consequentialist justification. It involves the recognition that the chosen means were unable to achieve the consequences sought. And so, if the means are ineffective, the means should be discarded. However, at the time of the RAF's formation, without the benefit of hindsight, it was possible to believe that the means might have been effective and should be attempted: "the RAF … was nothing more than a phase of transition on the road to liberation".

The statement provides a concise history of the organization, stating that the RAF "arose from the hope of liberation" and that the "armed struggle was a rebellion against an authoritarian form of society", "which had never broken with its national-socialist past". With reference to what is called the "1977 Offensive", which involved the kidnapping of Hans-Martin Schleyer (see section 2, above), the statement speaks of the continuity of Nazism in West Germany and of the fact that Schleyer had been in the SS. In an apparent reference to the EU, the statement

says that "Schleyer worked towards the ends of the Nazis and the capitalists to create a European economic region under German dominance. The Nazis had wanted a Europe in which there were neither struggles between industrial workers and capital nor any resistance whatsoever to their system … After 1945, Schleyer worked towards the same economic goals – in a more modernized form."[70]

There is further self-criticism when the statement considers the 1977 aircraft hijacking, saying that the giving of approval for this action "made it appear as though the RAF no longer differentiated between the top and bottom sectors of the society. Although the attempt to free the prisoners from torture was justified, the social-revolutionary dimension of the struggle was now no longer visible." Moreover, the events of 1977 showed that the RAF did not have the necessary political or military strength to direct the course of the aftermath of the affair, and the statement says that this "revealed the limitations of the old urban guerrilla concept". Thus, the idea of the anti-imperialist front of the 1980s. The statement says that this idea was flawed, though, because it "failed to recognise that, in the given social situation, only a very few people saw any purpose in a liberation struggle on the level of a war. The liberation struggle … only makes sense when there is a possibility that there are forces in society who are willing to take it up and expand it." This is a retrospective recognition of a lack of appropriate popular support.

As well as this recognition, doubts are also cast on the RAF's entire strategic approach in the 1980s, doubts that are similar to the GRAPO critique outlined in note 63:

> In the 1980s, the RAF operated under the assumption that a social-revolutionary approach lay in the attacks on the central power structures of imperialism. With this approach, the RAF's politics became increasingly abstract. This led to a split

> of what should be united: anti-imperialism and social revolution. The social revolutionary outlook disappeared from the theory and praxis of the RAF. The orientation became reduced to the anti-imperialist line, and the result of this was the anti-imperialist front. The RAF was not a factor in social questions. This was a fundamental mistake.[71]

In an interesting insight into what might be termed the generational evolution of the RAF's membership, it appears that the RAF generation that issued the disbandment statement were motivated by similar feelings about the necessity of armed revolt as the earliest generation, but also by a sort of nostalgic gratitude for the sacrifices made by earlier generations. The statement says that "we, most of whom became organised in the RAF very late, joined in the hope that our struggle could contribute new impulses for global revolt in the changed conditions", but also that they "wanted to give something back to those who had taken up the struggle before us, and who had died or been sent to prison". But the primary motivation again seems to be primarily necessity based: "Armed struggle in illegality was, for us, nothing more than the only possible and necessary way for the liberation process." The pamphlet restates the long-held (since the days of Meinhof-penned communiqués) belief that illegal and legal action together was necessary, if it could have been achieved, but says that "in no phase of our history was an outreaching, political organisation realised in addition to the political-military struggle. The concept of the RAF knew only the armed struggle..." The statement refers to this as a strategic mistake.

The collapse of East Germany changed "the existing social situation" and the statement says that the RAF felt that "it was important ... to bring [the] struggle in tune" with that new social situation. In a sentence that seems indicative

of a particular idealised, and indeed misguided, conception of the nature of "real existing socialism" in East Germany, the statement goes on to say that "we wanted to take steps to relate to all those people whose dreams had ended with the collapse of the DDR and its annexation". Nevertheless, later in the statement it says that they recognize that "true liberation was not possible under the model of real existing socialism". And in the changed context, "the attempt to anchor the RAF in the 1990s was an unrealistic proposal". The idea had been to "transform a concept that had arisen from the 1968 movement into a new, social revolutionary and internationalist concept in tune with the 1990s". But "weighed down by the dogmas of the past years", they "made the same mistake that all of us made after 1977: we overestimated the support for this conception of struggle". They say that "the contradiction between war and liberation often got pushed off or talked away by us"

In an unprecedented level of public self-criticism by a politically violent group, the 1998 statement says:

> Fundamentally, the danger exists of discrediting armed struggle when it is maintained without explaining how it concretely advances the revolutionary process and leads to a strengthening of the liberation struggle. It is important to deal with this issue in a responsible manner, because otherwise the armed struggle becomes discredited – even for another situation, in which it is needed again.

And in one of the clearest indications of the consequentialist consideration of the likelihood of the present means achieving the desired goals, and of the

concomitant undesirability – indeed, consequentialist irrationality – of continuing to engage in violent action either for its own sake or for symbolic purposes:

> In short, the end of the RAF is not the result of our process of (self)-criticism and reflection, rather *because it is necessary, because the concept of the RAF does not contain the necessary elements from which something new can arise* ... We needed to realize that the form of struggle, above all else, was what had remained from the old concept. There was no new meaning, something which could offer a perspective of an alternative... [emphasis added].

The strategy of armed struggle did not get the RAF to the point at which there is a "tactical option of a comprehensive liberation strategy" and the "preconditions for placing the struggle on the [legal] political level" (which the statement said the RAF wanted to do in 1992, and the debate about which precipitated the split) were absent – "but, in the end, that was simply the result of fundamental strategic mistakes". Such mistakes were inherent in the concept of the RAF throughout the organisation's history and show that "the concept of the RAF can no longer be relevant in the liberation processes of the future".

And it is explicitly stated that such future liberation processes will be necessary, but "it is not a contradiction for us to end our project while still recognising the necessity that everything that is useful and possible must be done so that a world without capitalism can come about, one in which the emancipation of humanity can be realised." This shows that the RAF believes that the goals they sought to achieve remain, and remain valid, and perhaps remain attainable, but that the use of armed struggle in the pursuit of those goals will not work (and in retrospect, perhaps would never have worked). So the means of armed struggle

must be abandoned in favour of other means that might be calculated to be better suited towards the achievement of those goals. The key to these future liberation processes is to find a way to unlock the "closed, reactionary consciousness" that is inculcated in the people and by "awakening the desire for emancipation and liberation".

And even if newly adopted legal means can be developed, and are developed, but fail to achieve the desired goals, it is still the case that the continued use of violence would be unjustifiable in consequentialist terms. Because violence in pursuit of unattainable goals cannot be a good in itself. More precisely, it is not about the unattainability of those goals in an absolute sense; rather it relates to the unattainability of the desired goals in the "here and now", using these particular tactics, and also the contradiction between the perceived benefits that would accrue to humanity from the achievement of that goal and the costs inflicted by the chosen means on people in the given circumstances:

> Our struggle ... had a difficult, a heavy side. The liberation war has its shadows, too. Attacking people in their capacity as functionaries for the state is a contradiction to the thoughts and feelings of all revolutionaries in the world – it contradicts their notion of liberation. Even when there are phases in the liberation process when this is viewed as necessary, because there are people who desire injustice and oppression and who seek to defend their own power or the power of others. Revolutionaries desire a world in which no one has the right to decide who may live and who may not. Nevertheless, our violence upset some people in an irrational way. The real terror is the normality of the economic system.

In yet more self-analysis, the statement also recognises that the concept of the RAF as a revolutionary vanguard is outdated and unworkable. It says that, although the conscious idea of the RAF as vanguard "had been dropped from our understanding of the struggle for years, the old concept of the RAF would not allow this to be actually done away with". This is yet another reason why the old form of struggle must be abandoned. And the statement's conclusion contains yet another example of a consequentialist justification, this time retrospective – while it admits the failure of the campaign to achieve its objectives, it simultaneously asserts the value of the campaign in keeping the idea of the necessity of social change in circulation:

> The RAF was not able to point out the path to liberation. But it contributed for two decades to the fact that there are still thoughts about liberation today. Putting the system in question was and still is legitimate, as long as there is dominance and oppression instead of freedom, emancipation, and dignity for everyone in the world.

11. Principled consequentialism

Although clearly consequentialist in justificatory form (and even if the justifications that were used referred directly to the attainment of shorter-term intermediary goals that might eventually contribute to the attainment of the desired ultimate end goal), it is also clearly a consequentialism guided by an identified universalisable conception of the good, as opposed to the consequentialism of a simple, selfish personal utility maximiser, such as a Mafia organisation. Moreover, certain language in certain statements indicates that it was a consequentialism that was perhaps bounded by certain side-constraints.

Even a consequentialist – but perhaps specifically a consequentialist that is guided by a universalisable end goal – may find their decisions on the means to be used and the actions to be taken side-constrained by the recognition that there are certain egregious forms of action that hardly anyone would want to attempt to justify their engagement in. So, while the ends might justify the means, they don't necessarily justify *all* means.

Some of the RAF's language – specifically language such as "attacking people in their capacity as functionaries for the state is a contradiction to the thoughts and feelings of all revolutionaries" and "revolutionaries desire a world in which no one has the right to decide who may live and who may not"[72] – and indeed their actions in deliberately avoiding mass civilian casualties may imply that the group had self-imposed limits, or side-constraints, on what it considered to be permissible actions: don't deliberately target the innocent; target only those who are implicated or complicit in oppression. Even its attacks on representatives of industry and the state seem to be regretted, though seen as necessary, in its last statement.

The point is that even the most committed consequentialist is not debarred from holding certain types of action to be unjustified in the pursuit of her ends. The statement that "revolutionaries desire a world in which no one has the right to decide who may live and who may not"[73] is telling in this regard. One of the aspects of the desirability of the egalitarian socialist society that was the RAF's ultimate end was this aspect relating to the power of life or death over others. But that obviously raises evaluative problems for a group engaged in political violence, so they may well have, consciously or unconsciously, put self-imposed limits on what sort of actions were permissible in the pursuit of their ultimate end.

What this displays is, again, the issues relating to the specification of the relationship between consequentialism and deontology adverted to in Chapter 2. It indicates that even a thoroughgoing consequentialist might have a pre-categorisation of permissible actions – that is, actions that are side-constrained by certain other principles. That said, if the RAF thought their socialist utopia would be instantly attainable if they were to blow up a primary school, would they have done so? The consequentialist cost/benefit analysis would seem to indicate that, if one act of egregious violence – for example, dropping atomic bombs on two enemy cities – will attain you your end, then it might be justifiable in consequentialist terms to the perpetrator as a last resort.

However, the idea of principled consequentialism might also feed into the suggestion that groups that base their justifications on consequentialism might be more moderate in their demands as well as their means when faced with a persuasive argument that *those* means will not attain *those* demands. A consequentialist, if she is a consequentialist, will, by definition and inclination, be open to taking into account the complexity of the potential consequences of her actions – and not just in terms of those actions' likelihood of achieving the ultimately desired end, but also in terms of considering the short-term consequences, such as, for example, continued death and destruction. In terms of a simple example, what is the point of establishing an egalitarian socialist society wherein all can flourish and develop their distinctive human potentialities, if the only way of getting to that point is to annihilate 95% of the human population by way of nuclear weapons? Do the means not then contradict the goal of allowing the development of human potentialities? That is to say, consequentialists, because they are consequentialists, may tend to take into account the complex

consequences of their actions – or the balance of consequences – and might realise that the achievement of their overall ultimate end goal may not justify all the consequences of the actions undertaken in pursuit of that end.

This is to say that a crucial point in a nuanced understanding of consequentialist justifications for political violence (and also in the understanding of how organisations that employ a predominantly consequentialist justificatory form might voluntarily abandon violent means, which we see in this chapter with the RAF and in the next chapter with the IRA) is the idea that even an overwhelmingly consequentialist justification for violence need not accept *all* means as neutral and equal. A consequentialist could, for example, take Rawls' idea of the "plurality and distinctiveness of individuals"[74] seriously and accept that – even in terms of what is posited as the ultimately desired consequence or end goal – the use of means that inflict harm on individuals is, other things being equal, undesirable (or even "wrong"). It is precisely this feature of violent means that leads politically violent groups to feel that they need to explain or justify their actions in the first place: certain means tend to be seen by ordinary people, in real-life situations, as wrong, morally questionable, or unjustifiable. To cope with this apparent contradiction between the desired ultimate benefits of the ends and the costs of the presently employed means, two main strategies seem to be employed. Firstly, there is the attempt to mitigate the "wrongness" of the violent act by implying the guilt or complicity of the victims (and we see this approach in the justificatory literature of all the groups examined in this thesis). Secondly is the claim that violence is the last resort, that it is the only possible means available for the achievement of the desired end. However, with regard to the RAF, and even more so with regard to the IRA in the next chapter, it may well be the realisation

that there are possibly other, more efficacious, means available – or a change in the calculation as to the effectiveness of violence, given the circumstances – that may lie behind the ultimate transition from the use of violence to engagement in conventional politics.

A considerable amount of space, in relative terms, has been accorded to the RAF in this work, and a similar amount will be allocated to the Irish Republican Army in the next section. The primary reason for this is importance. With regard to the RAF, not only was it one of the first of the European "fighting communist organisations" (both it and the Italian Red Brigades being formed in 1970) and one of the most long-lived (the Red Brigades more or less ceased to operate in an offensive capacity in 1988), and not only was the RAF considered to be among the most dangerous – the reason is also related to the fact that, at least in terms of its explanatory and justificatory literature, the RAF is probably unique. In the RAF, we have the relatively rare example of a group that is observable and documented (and, indeed, self-documented) from its inception to its voluntary dissolution, and verbose enough to provide a multitude of statements whereby we can determine the mode of justification used: which is straightforwardly and resolutely consequentialist. Although not yet voluntarily dissolved, much of this goes for the IRA, too.

[1] Pluchinsky, Dennis A., "Western Europe's red terrorists: the fighting communist organizations", in Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), p. 16.

[2] Ibid, pp. 20-24.

[3] Ibid, p. 25.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid, p. 26. Quoted from Frederich Oriach, "La lutte armée, nécessité, stratégique at tactique du combat pour la révolution", publisher unknown, c. 1985.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Red Brigades (prisoner collective), "L'ape e il comunista: elementi per la critica Marxista dell economia politica e per la construzione del programma di transizione al comunismo", December 1980, quoted in Pluchinsky op. cit., p. 26. Pluchinsky argues that this Red Brigades document has been considered by some analysts to be the "blueprint for European FCOs" (p. 26).

[8] Pluchinsky, op. cit., p. 27. The Red Brigades prisoners' collective's document says in relation to this phase: "It is understood that if our organisation has not hitherto realised the upgrade to *party* status, this is not because, through direct confrontation, unity with other guerrilla formations has not been built; a confrontation that in various and contradictory forms is always pursued. The root cause is found, instead, in the still embryonic development of the objective and subjective conditions of the revolutionary process that do not permit the 'upgrade' from a political-military vanguard, which essentially establishes a 'propaganda' relationship with the masses, to an organic political-military vanguard, which directs and organises the political and military struggle of class layers" (quoted in Pluchinsky, op. cit., p. 27).

[9] Op. cit., pp. 28-31.

[10] Ibid, p. 29.

[11] Ibid, p. 30.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Or *The Concept 'Urban Guerrilla'*, 1971, attributed to Ulrike Meinhof.

[14] Attributed to Ulrike Meinhof, *The Concept Urban Guerrilla*, 1971, an English language extract prepared by Richard Huffman. Many RAF statements in the original German are available on the Internet. The source for those statements that are referred to, unless otherwise indicated, is Richard Huffman's *This is Baader-Meinhof*, at http://www.baader-meinhof.com/students/resources/ communique/index/htm, accessed 24th August 2000 and 5th January 2005. I would like to thank Heinz Brandenburg, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Aberdeen, and Marion Seibert for translating some of the statements.

[15] Aust, Stefan. *The Baader-Meinhof Group: the inside story of a phenomenon*. Translated from the German *Der Baader-Meinhof Komplex* (Hamburg, 1985) by Anthea Bell. London, 1987.

[16] Quoted in Dennis A. Pluchinsky, "An organizational and operational analysis of Germany's Red Army Faction terrorist group (1972-91), pp. 43-92 in *European terrorism: today and tomorrow*, edited by Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky (New York: Brassey's, 1992), pp. 67-68.

[17] Quoted in full in section 10.

[18] Ibid, pp. 44-45.

[19] Ibid, p 57.

[20] Sourced in German from www.baader-meinhof.com/students/resources/communique/index/htm, accessed 3rd July 2002, and translated by Marion Seibert.

[21] Attributed to Ulrike Meinhof, op. cit.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Translated by Marion Seibert. The translation of this passage in Aust, op. cit., p. 143, is: "We do not 'make reckless use of guns'. The cop who finds himself in the contradictory position of being a 'little man' and a capitalist lackey, a low wage earner and a police officer of monopoly capitalism, is not under absolute compulsion to act. We shoot when we are shot at. We spare the cop who spares us".

[24] Translated by Marion Seibert.

[25] Quoted in Aust, op. cit, p. 183.

[26] Quoted in Pluchinsky, op cit., p. 57.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid, p. 58.

[29] Ibid, p. 59.

[30] Ibid.

[31] *The Urban Guerrilla and Class Conflict* (1974), attributed to Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin and translated by Heinz Brandenburg and Marion Seibert.

[32] Ibid.

[33] RAF statement on the organization's disbandment, April 1998. The statement is a long and often critical overview of the history of the RAF. In it, they say that they are proud to have been part of a revolutionary attempt by a minority to resist the tendencies of capitalist society and contribute towards its overthrow. However, they are critical of some of the organisation's past political strategies, particularly of what they see as the dominance of anti-imperialist over social revolutionary theory and praxis.

[34] Attributed to Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin, *The Urban Guerrilla and Class Conflict* (1974), translated by Heinz Brandenburg and Marion Seibert.

[35] The RAF statement imagines what the content of such a mainstream left argument might consist of, and is interesting insofar as the outlined generic arguments of the mainstream left, presumably designed to serve as a straw man, still seem to have more force than the counter-arguments of the RAF: "The argument that the Federal Republic is not South America serves more to disguise the domestic conditions rather than unveil them. This means – insofar as it is not just thrown into the debate as a conversational matter – poverty here is not as catastrophic as over there; here the enemy is not a foreign power; here the regime is not as hated by the people; no military regime rules here, as in so many Latin American countries. It means: over there the conditions are so unbearable that violence is the only answer, while over here conditions are still bearable enough not to justify violence. [In the preface of a book about the justifiability of

revolutionary violence in developing countries it says] that the publication is meant as a protest against arrest and torture in Brazil, and not as instructions for action here, 'however weak and threatened by its own system the parliamentary democracy might be' [and it also says that] 'to use this counter-violence [of the Latin American guerrillas] against the terrorist system of the rule of capital in a country where participation is at least discussed is mocking the damned of the earth'". Translated by Heinz Brandenburg and Marion Seibert.

[36] *The Urban Guerrilla and Class Conflict* (1974), translated by Heinz Brandenburg and Marion Seibert.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] "Many comrades are impressed with the actions of the Tupamaros. They do not understand why we do not engage in popular actions, but instead concern ourselves with logistics. They do not make the effort to imagine what urban guerrilla is and how it works."

[40] The material within the quote marks is unattributed.

[41] Again, the material in the quote marks is unattributed, but is identical in rhetorical style to the rest of the pamphlet. It may be speculated that the quote marks were added by the authors simply for emphasis, but this is indeed pure speculation.

[42] A distinction must be made between the relatively infrequent justificatory position papers or ideological tracts and the much more frequent claims of responsibility released after particular actions, which tended to be much more emotive (and often mainly "revenge"-based) in their explanation for the particular actions undertaken. See Alexander and Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 37-38.

[43] Quoted in Aust, op. cit., p. 257.

[44] Ibid, p. 258.

[45] Quoted in Aust, op. cit., pp. 320-321.

[46] Here Baader is referring to the policy of keeping RAF prisoners in virtually complete isolation from communication with both the outside world and from each other, which the prisoners and the outside organisation regarded as psychological torture and an attempt at both breaking the spirit and at brainwashing.

[47] Quoted in Aust, op. cit. Buback was killed, along with his driver and bodyguard, in April 1977, in the first attack by the second-generation RAF leadership. In the communiqué claiming responsibility (quoted in Dennis A. Pluchinsky, "An organizational and operational analysis of Germany's Red Army Faction terrorist group (1972-91)", pp. 61 in *European Terrorism: Today and Tomorrow*, edited by Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky [New York: Brassey's, 1992]), the RAF said that Buback "was directly responsible for the deaths of Holger Meins, Siegfried Hausner and Ulrike Meinhof". Meins was a RAF prisoner who had died on hunger strike in 1974, Hausner died during the seizure of the West German embassy in Stockholm in 1975, and Meinhof was found dead in her cell in 1976. The communiqué continued: "In his function as federal attorney general – as the central coordination facility between the courts and

the West German news service, in close cooperation with the CIA and the NATO security committee – he started and oversaw their murder". It was a classic revenge-based justification, no doubt not unrelated to Baader's labeling of Buback as a terrorist.

[48] Quoted in Aust, op. cit., pp. 525-527.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid. The negotiator was understandably sceptical at this claim, given that the RAF had killed eight people in the previous few months, but Baader said that that "brutality was provoked by the state" and involved "members of our second, third or fourth generations". Moreover, he said that the imprisoned first-generation leadership didn't even know the current leadership of the outside organisation and that the idea that current operations were masterminded from the prisons "can't be so, except in the ideological area. The armed combat has internationalised itself. It could be the Japanese [Red Army] or the Palestinians who are going to decide the course of events now. I don't know enough about it any more." By the end of the month, all but one of the imprisoned RAF leadership were dead.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Aust, op. cit., pp. 343-344.

[53] Aust, op. cit., p. 357.

[54] Quoted in Aust, op. cit., p. 357.

[55] Ibid

[56] The argument is continued in Aust, op. cit., p. 358. Defence lawyer Otto Schily said: "I think it is necessary to state … what is involved: the committing of genocide through the agency of military establishments based here on the soil of the Federal Republic of Germany … Perhaps … I should remind you of those pictures of children burned with napalm which we saw in this country on television. The pictures are the same: the Jewish child in the ghetto going towards the SS men with his hands up; the Vietnamese children running, burned and screaming, towards the photographer … And the evidence concerns this question: should such murderous operations be permitted or hushed up, or was there justification for taking action against the state machine and the mechanisms whereby those murderous operations were carried out?"

[57] Reprinted in Alexander and Pluchinsky's *Europe's Red Terrorists* (1992), op. cit., pp. 65-67.

[58] Ibid, p. 65.

[59] Ibid, p. 66.

[60] Ibid, p. 68-69.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Reprinted in Alexander and Pluchinsky, op. cit., pp. 85-89.

[63] For example: "At heart, what is involved is the existence of significant differences in the assessment of the character of the European revolution, proletarian internationalism, the political organisation of the masses, the role and objectives of the armed guerrilla struggle, strategy, tactics, etc … this examination will allow us to demonstrate that the 'anti-imperialists' do not have a Communist political program, that their activities and their tactics consist of 'anti-imperialist', anti-USA, anti-NATO activities, and that their objectives and ideological positions

held, far from representing those of the working class, rather are consistent with class positions held by significant sectors of the petite bourgeois." From a communiqué by the Spanish group GRAPO, quoted in Alexander and Pluchinsky's *Europe's Red Terrorists* (1992), op. cit., pp. 43-44. And a particularly interesting apparent critique from the Belgian group CCC (Fighting Communist Cells) seems to cut to the heart of the early RAF explanations and justifications: "One of the silliest explanations imaginable is being chanted by the media and mimicked by others who are really ignorant, but don't want to seem too dumb: 'the revolutionary guerrilla movement hopes to bring about a situation of police fascism and thus provoke increasing social discontent.' A statement like this reveals only the extent of the stupidity of those who make it. There has never been any intention, especially by the CCC, to base a historic revolutionary strategy on the radicalisation of the police. How stupid can you get?! What the Marxists know, however, is that the expansion of the class struggle inevitably leads to police and military repression. The issue ... is not one of whether or not one 'wants' the exercise of repression, but of being prepared for it, because it will be increasingly evident as the revolutionary process continues"; (ibid, pp. 163-4).

[64] From the Anti-Imperialist Cell discussion paper of 22nd May 1992, *A Critique of the RAF*, at www.etext.org/Politics/Arm.The.Spirit/Guerrilla/Europe/Anti-Imperialist.Cell/aiz.0592, accessed 3rd July 2002 and 1st September 2006.

[65] Thanks to Heinz Brandenburg for drawing my attention to this.

[66] Samuel Scheffler, "Agent-centred restrictions, rationality, and the virtues" in S. Scheffler (ed.) *Consequentialism and its Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), p 252.

[67] James Griffin, "The human good and the ambitions of consequentialism" (1992), reprinted in Pettit (ed.) *Consequentialism* (International Research Library of Philosophy; Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993), p. 51.

[68] *Red Army Fraction Communiqué: A response to the 28.10.93 Declaration by Brigitte Mohnhaupt Regarding a Split Within the RAF*, 2nd November 1993, available at www.etext.org/Politics/Arm.The.Spirit/Guerrilla/Europe/Red.Army.Fraction/split.documents, accessed 3rd July 2002 and 1st September 2006.

[69] Available at www.etext.org/Politics/Arm.The.Spirit/Guerrilla/Europe/Red.Army.Fraction/march.1998.communique, accessed 1st September 2006, and at www.baader-meinhof.com/students/ resources/communique/engrafend.html, accessed 24th August 2000.

[70] Later in the statement it is said: "In Europe ... the old 'welfare states' are coming under the political and economic hegemony of Germany, with Germany serving as a racist frontline state in an entire continent that is turning into a police state" and "in the struggle for political hegemony and economic power, only those economies survive that increasingly orient their capacities towards the blank profits of the corporations and an ever smaller segment of society". And, some would say presciently: "If their own economic and political interests are at stake, the rich nations will intervene in these conflicts [which will be caused by increasing poverty and inequality] with their own wars, in order to secure unlimited access to raw materials in the earth and to enhance their positions of power."

[71] The statement also says: "The RAF's notion of armed action at the focal point of the struggle placed less importance on the political and cultural processes outside of the political-military struggle. Overcoming this strategic direction, which had come from the fundamental structure of the concept in the 1970s, should have been a precondition for any new revolutionary project. The front could not become this new liberation project to remove the distinctions between the movements and the guerrilla … The resonance within the society remained limited, because the proposal to create consciousness in the society and to break the consensus between the state and the society – a central moment of any revolutionary process – disappeared. Instead, the RAF sought to destroy the state's dominance of control by increasing the intensity of its attacks. The priority shifted to the military dimension. This emphasis remained throughout the 1980s and it defined our struggle."

[72] From the disbandment communiqué, op. cit.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 29.

Chapter 5
The primacy of consequences?
National-liberation movements

As with the RAF, the Provisional Irish Republican Army has been chosen as the exemplar group of this chapter for three main reasons. Firstly, it has been variously described as "the biggest, most significant and best organised of the paramilitary groups operating in Ireland" and a "guerrilla organisation of long standing that has endured a quarter century of armed activity" with "sufficient material to equip the equivalent of two battalions [and] keep the ... low-intensity war going indefinitely";[1] "one of the longest-established terrorist organisations in the world [that] conducted a ferociously violent campaign for almost 30 years";[2] and "the most resilient and formidable of all resistance movements in the West".[3] The second reason is the longevity of its campaign – its current phase goes back to 1969/70, but it can trace its roots and justificatory ideology much earlier. Thirdly, like the RAF, there is more than sufficient documentary evidence available (from both IRA sources and from the closely associated political party Sinn Féin) to allow us to track the language and tenor of its justifications from the early days through to its abandonment of its armed campaign in 2005.

There are a couple of preliminary issues to be dealt with before dealing with Republican Movement's justificatory literature. One of these is to (very briefly) consider the nature of nationalism and national liberation movements. Another is to consider (again, quite briefly) the role of secondary or subsidiary ideologies in the overall ideology cluster of a national liberation movement.

To take the second issue first, the idea of a secondary ideology relates to the nature or character of the sort of state, society, or political/economic system

that the national liberation movement desires to be established if its primary objective of national independence is achieved. As a thought experiment, contrast, for example, Group A's secondary goal of establishing a liberal democracy (once national independence is achieved) with Group B's secondary goal of establishing a fundamentalist theocracy. It would seem to stand to reason that the character of the secondary ideology would affect the character of the justification for political violence, even if the primary justification is the classic "expel the colonisers/imperialists/foreign oppressors from our shores" (which on the face of it would appear to be consequentialist, but with the introduction of notions of religious or, indeed, patriotic or national duty, might well change its character in some form to non-consequentialist). So, whether the justification for violence used by a national liberation movement is primarily consequentialist or non-consequentialist might well depend on what the secondary/subsidiary ideology is. If that secondary ideology relates to the establishment of a socialist economy or a liberal democracy, then maybe the overall justificatory form will be primarily consequentialist. But if the nationalist identity is inextricably linked with religious identity, in the sense that the establishment of, for example, a Catholic or Jewish or Islamic theocracy is demanded, and also with the idea that there is a moral duty to establish such a state after the colonial yoke is thrown off, then maybe the dominant justificatory form will be primarily non-consequentialist.

Often, of course, the existence of a single secondary ideology in a broadly based national liberation movement might be unclear from its public statements and justifications, because the movement may be based on a broad front of nationalistic, but otherwise ideologically disparate, subgroups – and to explicitly identify the movement as a whole with one or other of these groups' secondary

ideologies would be detrimental to the political, propagandist and operational effectiveness, or indeed the existence, of the movement as a whole.

But, to return to the first preliminary issue, what do we mean by "nation"? Miller writes "a nation, we may say, is a community of people who recognize that they are distinct from other communities and wish to control their own affairs", but goes on to ask "what is the source of unity that holds nations together?".[4] There are two possible broad answers to this, he says. Firstly, it can be argued that "nations are essentially voluntary associations of people held together simply by the continuing will of their members. We form a nation because we want to be politically associated." A second answer is that "nations are marked out by certain objective characteristics that their members share – by racial descent, by language, by religion, by common traits of character, and so forth." Neither of these two answers is adequate as they stand, Miller argues, and a more adequate answer will combine elements of both:

> A nation exists when its members recognize one another as belonging to the same community and as bearing special obligations to one another, but this is by virtue of characteristics that they believe they share: typically, a common history, attachment to a geographical place and a public culture that differentiates them from their neighbours. Because nations are communities on a large scale, they are inevitably "imagined communities" … they depend for their existence on collective acts of imagining which take place through media of communication...[5]

So, what about what Miller terms the "content of national identities"? He argues that "such identities usually incorporate a certain proportion of historical myth, in the sense that past events are interpreted in such a way as to highlight their

continuity with events in the present" and this implies that "although we actually know very little about our thirteenth-century ancestors, for example, we are invited to see their heroic struggles against their neighbours as the precursors of our own". Secondly, he argues that "nations tend to exaggerate their own homogeneity, supposing that every member conforms more or less precisely to the cultural stereotype that forms part of the national identity". And thirdly, "national identities are to some degree able to be manipulated by powerful groups, especially political leaders, whose command of the media enables them to refashion the content of the imagining to suit their purposes. No political leader can invent a nation where one does not exist; but it may be possible to persuade a nation that its legitimate territorial boundaries stretch more widely than it had hitherto imagined, or that a particular subcommunity – an ethnic group for instance – that has long lived happily as part of the nation does not after all belong there."[6] All of these factors are visible in, for example, the traditional account of the ideology of the Irish Republican Movement, outlined below.

Although nationalism as a form of ideology is primarily, according to Miller, "a phenomenon of nineteenth- and twentieth-century political thought", its "constituent ideas ... stretch back much further in time. Among the Jews of the Old Testament and among the ancient Greeks we find the sense of belonging to a distinct people marked off from the rest of the world by special characteristics".[7] Indeed, examples of a sort of proto-nationalist sentiment can be seen in the discourse at the time of the rebellion of the Earl of Tyrone (Hugh O'Neill) against English rule. Morgan quotes, for instance, a prophecy – which he describes as being "old and popular" in the 16th century – that "if two Hughes lawfully, lineally and immediately succeed each other as O'Donnells, being formally and

ceremoniously created, according to the country's custom, the last Hugh shall (forsooth) be monarch in Ireland and quite banish thence all foreign nations and conquerors".[8]

So, among the elements or ideas that might be constitutive of a national-liberation ideology, we might expect to find factors such as:

- The pre-existing idea of, or the construction of, a historical national/regional/ethnic identity, based on an identified difference between the self and the other. The identified difference might be linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic, and so on. And the definition of that other forms the basis of the notion of national self-determination.
- A theory of colonialism/neo-colonialism/external aggression (including the motivation of that aggressor/coloniser).
- The construction of a romantic history/tradition of popular resistance, perhaps embodied in popular and folk culture.
- A cult/tradition of martyrdom, self-sacrifice, and a cult of personality alongside it.
- A vision of how a national, liberated society would be better. This is where the role of the subsidiary ideology comes in.

1. The IRA and the construction of nationalist identity

The history of the Irish Republican Movement since the 19th century, and particularly its evolution since the 1960s, is well documented, and exhaustively so.[9] For the purposes of this work, there is little need to outline that history. However, the present incarnation of the IRA, as other generations of the Republican Movement have before, sees itself as part of a tradition of resistance

to British rule in Ireland. The rhetoric often stresses the notion of "800 years of rebellion" and the idea that every generation of Irish men and women has thrown up a valiant few who will not rest until the invader has been driven from the country's shores. In more recent times, rhetoric such as this has been largely toned down, probably in line with both modern propagandist trends and in recognition of political realities in Northern Ireland. However, the IRA remains in the classic, archetypal "national liberation" mould of justification, and is interesting in the sense that – along with many of its contemporaries – it often mixed a Marxist analysis (the secondary ideology) with its traditional justification, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s. The basic and traditional political position of the Republican Movement is as follows:

> Throughout history, the island of Ireland has been regarded as a single national unit. Prior to the Norman invasions from England in 1169, the Irish people were distinct from other nations, cultivating their own system of law, culture, language, and political and social structures. Until 1921, the island of Ireland was governed as a single political unit as a colony of Britain. A combined political/military campaign by Irish nationalists between the years 1916 to 1921 forced the British government to consider its position. With the objective of "protecting English interests with an economy of English lives" (Lord Birkenhead), the partition of Ireland was conceived. Partition was imposed on the Irish people by an act of parliament, the *Government of Ireland Act 1920*, passed in the British legislature. The consent of the Irish people was never sought and was never freely given. Proffered as a solution under the threat of "immediate and terrible war" (Lloyd George, the then British prime minister). The act made provision for the creation of two states in Ireland: the "Irish Free State" (later to

> become known as the Republic of Ireland), containing 26 of Ireland's 32 counties; and "Northern Ireland" containing the remaining six counties.[10]

This historical analysis serves a number of purposes. Firstly, it seeks to establish a historical claim to Irish nationhood, with the existence of a unique language and culture. Secondly, it both emphasises the 800 years of occupation and alludes to a tradition of continued resistance. Thirdly, it sets the basis for the contemporary Republican analysis of the conflict. That is, it stresses that partition was a coerced imposition on the Irish people that had the purpose of safeguarding British economic and military interests. Later in the passage (continued in note 75), it emphasises the Irishness of the unionist population and bemoans the fact that partition has served to further blind unionists to their true nationality.

It is instructive to compare this traditional statement of Republican ideology with a remarkably similar statement outlining the nationalist ideology of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the violent national-liberation movement in Sri Lanka (which, incidentally, was among the pioneers of suicide bombing):

> The Tamil people of the island of Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) constitute a distinct nation. They form a social entity, with their own history, traditions, culture, language and traditional homeland ... As a nation, Tamils have the inalienable right to self-determination, a universal principle enshrined in the UN Charter that guarantees the right of a people to political independence. Apart from the right to self-determination, the Tamil Eelam may also be justified in terms of international law under the concept of reversion of sovereignty and the concept of effectiveness. Before a succession of western nations (including the Portuguese, Dutch and the British) ruled the island, there were two distinct

> kingdoms on the island, the Tamil Kingdom in the north and the Sinhala kingdom in the South. For ease of administration, the British amalgamated the two distinct nations into a single entity with its capital in Colombo. The British gave Ceylon independence in 1948, handing over control of the entire island to a Sinhalese government, based in Colombo, which renamed the island Sri Lanka. The Sinhala state's oppression of the Tamil people began in various forms almost immediately, attacking everything that defined the Tamils as a nation ... With all democratic ways to achieve equality having failed repeatedly, an armed struggle for independence began, led by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). International law recognises that the armed resistance of the Tamil people to Sri Lankan rule is lawful and just.[11]

To return to the context of the Irish Republican Movement, passages such as that quoted have the purpose of identifying the existence of a historic Irish nation and hence the existence of a nation's *rights* – rights to independence, to self-determination, and the right to resist external aggression. It is the self-professed primary purpose of the Republican Movement to vindicate these national rights. The constitution of the IRA used to explicitly refer to the organisation's elected leadership, representing the General Army Convention, as the only legitimate government of the Irish Republic. This legitimacy was traced back to the second Dáil, a separatist assembly established following elections in May 1921, and seen as the successor to the "Provisional Government of the Irish Republic" proclaimed during the Easter Rising of 1916. The first Dáil had maintained that "the existing state of war between Ireland and England can never be ended until Ireland is definitely evacuated by the armed forces of England".[12] Traditional, and indeed old-fashioned, Republican ideology maintains that the second Dáil was

never legally disestablished, and thus legitimate government of the Republic passed to those opposed to the Anglo-Irish Treaty, signed in December 1921, which established the Irish Free State and partition.

The current IRA constitution, known as *The Green Book*, does not explicitly make this claim. However, it states among the primary objectives of the organisation that it is to "guard the honour and uphold the sovereignty and unity of the Republic of Ireland".[13] It is not the legal entity represented by the Irish government to which it refers. Furthermore, the constitution states that "The Army Council, only after [General Army] Convention, shall have power to delegate its powers to a government which is actively endeavouring to function as the *de facto* government of the Republic".

The IRA's other objectives, as set out in the constitution, are to support the establishment of an Irish socialist republic based on the 1916 Proclamation; to support the establishment of, and uphold, a lawful government in sole and absolute control of the Republic; to secure and defend civil and religious liberties and equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens; and to promote the revival of the Irish language as the everyday language of the people. Its means to these ends are to "organise Oglaigh na hÉireann for victory", "to build on a spirit of comradeship", "to wage revolutionary armed struggle", and "to encourage popular resistance, political mobilisation, and political action in support of these objectives".

The justification is based on a classic national self-defence scenario: The Irish people are a nation with rights to self-determination and self-defence. The legitimate authority of the Irish Republic does not reside with the collaborators with British rule in the Dublin government. Revolutionary armed struggle

combined with popular political mobilisation must be waged in order to secure a withdrawal of British forces and the establishment of a 32-county socialist republic.

2. The secondary ideology

An interesting feature of much of the literature produced by the Republican Movement in the 1970s and 1980s is the identification of the movement with the goals of the revolutionary left. Although the split in the Republican Movement in 1969/70 was characterised as a split between those who wished to orient the movement towards Marxist political activity in a broad-front type scenario and those who were seen as traditional old-school "physical force" republicans, the latter – who formed the Provisional IRA – developed their own left-wing political ideas within a couple of years, perhaps as a result of an influx of rapidly politicised young recruits. In 1971, the movement unveiled its Eire Nua policy – a plan for a federal-style united Ireland with four regional parliaments. This was Sinn Féin's official policy until 1982. By the mid-1970s, there was a clear tension between what has been described as "the 'Young Turks' who supported [Gerry] Adams" and "the old guard".[14] Adams, indeed, under the pen name "Brownie", had written critically in *Republican News* of the Eire Nua policy and argued for developing a political struggle to complement the armed one.[15] The "Adams faction" ultimately prevailed and the Republican Movement increasingly began to develop a parallel political strategy that emphasised a socialist analysis – or at least used a revolutionary socialist rhetoric.

Indicative of the way in which the movement was developing politically is the fact that, in a 1980 interview, Seán Mac Stiofáin, a former chief of staff of the

PIRA who would have been seen as an archetypal "physical force" man and who had apparently distrusted even the Eire Nua policy as a potential distraction from pure militarism,[16] explicitly called the IRA a revolutionary left-wing organisation.[17] He further said that the armed struggle and the political struggle in Ireland were merely part of the one real struggle, "the revolutionary struggle against capitalism, imperialism, and racialism" – "a revolutionary movement, if it *is* a revolutionary movement, will support revolutionary movements all over the world".[18] He went so far as to characterise the 1969/70 split as "a split between the revolutionary left [the Provisional faction] and the revisionist left" and said that one of the main reasons for the split was "the question of involvement in parliamentary politics":

> ... the position of the IRA [is] that the Dublin government is illegal, the Stormont government is illegal, and the Westminster presence in Ireland is also illegal and that involvement in any of those parliaments would be tantamount to recognition of them. And this would be in effect denying the right of the IRA to exist. And we saw it not to be merely a fine point of revolutionary theory – these were illegal parliaments and therefore we couldn't be involved in them – we knew that sooner or later the people playing a parliamentary role would abandon the armed struggle.[19]

Defining the movement's position further, he said that "as revolutionaries we must be anti-capitalist, we are anti-capitalist, and as anti-capitalist we are revolutionary left".[20] However, "there would be no revolution without the armed struggle, but an active, dynamic political struggle backing up the armed struggle is essential".[21] And Mac Stiofáin further argues that the "defeat of imperialism in

Ireland" will be of benefit to the British working class, because it would hasten the defeat of capitalism in Britain".[22]

However, the traditional national self-defence perspective was never too far away:

> ...the nationally minded, the Irish-minded people of the North know that the IRA is their army, is the revolutionary army of the Irish people, and they know that many IRA volunteers have died fighting in defence of their areas. They know they will never be able to lead a normal, peaceful and happy life until the British imperialist presence has been removed from this country ... the masses appreciate the sacrifices of the revolutionary army.[23]

And:

> ... the British presence in Ireland is illegal ... this illegal presence is responsible for the war situation ... is responsible for everything that has happened here and in Britain since the beginning of the struggle. And that situation will only end with a British withdrawal.[24]

But simple withdrawal is not enough: the IRA's objective is the establishment of a democratic socialist republic, and the interests of the Irish people can only be promoted in the context of such a republic – "certainly no true revolutionary wants to see an extension of the reactionary 26 county state into a 32 county state. We have a word in Irish – gombeen – and it means a petty capitalist, and we don't want a gombeen capitalist republic. That would be the outcome of the struggle if the movement was content with simple withdrawal."[25]

The main justificatory form in this interview is largely consequentialist – as in "we take up arms as a last resort in order to secure national self-determination, socialist democracy, peace, and justice" – although in the more traditional expressions of Republican ideology there are sometimes quasi-theological elements that are rarely explicitly stated, represented in a subcultural rhetoric of punishing the invader and asserting the true legitimacy of the organisation's position. Moreover, there is often the implication that it is an Irish person's duty to resist British rule. But during the '70s, and even up until the early '90s, the rhetoric of revolutionary leftist anti-imperialism co-existed with more traditional rhetoric in the Republican Movement's justificatory arguments.

3. Changing rhetoric?

The fundamental demand of the IRA for generations is exemplified by a letter sent to the British government in January 1939, calling for a withdrawal of British forces from Ireland, failing which the IRA would begin a bombing campaign in England. It is striking in its formality and insofar as the IRA refers to itself as the government of the Irish republic.

> Your Excellency, I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Irish Republic, having as its first duty towards its people the establishment and maintenance of peace and order here, demand the withdrawal of all British armed forces stationed in Ireland. These forces are an active incitement to turmoil and civil strife, not alone in being a symbol of hostile occupation, but in their effect and potentialities as an invading army ... we must insist upon the withdrawal of British troops and a declaration from your Government renouncing all claim to interfere in its domestic policy or external affairs. [...] The occupation of our

> territory by troops of another nation and the persistent subvention here of activities directly against the expressed national will and in the interests of a foreign power, prevent the expansion and development of our institution in consonance with our social needs and purposes, and must cease. Neither the Government of the Irish Republic nor the Irish People are actuated by any feelings of hostility to the people of Britain. [...] We shall regret if this fundamental condition is ignored and we are compelled to intervene actively in the military or commercial life of your country as your Government are now intervening in ours. The Government of the Irish Republic believe that a period of four days is sufficient notice for your Government to signify its intentions in the matter of the military evacuation and for the issue of your Declaration of Abdication in respect of our country.[26]

The traditional belief that the unity and self-determination of Ireland, which "were the essential conditions for the freedom and development of Ireland", "could never be fully realised while Britain retained a presence in the country" and that "physical force offered the only avenue by which this situation might be changed"[27] remained the bedrock of the Republican position up to and including the stage of more radical politicisation in the 1970s. Indeed, part of the tensions between the so-called Adams faction and the older PIRA leadership in the mid 1970s was related to the fact that the younger faction began to see the current leadership as "the type of men who stand up with every generation and say that at least they fought but lost and left it to another generation".[28]

So, after the "Adams faction" gained control of the IRA (but not yet Sinn Féin) and the Republican Movement as a whole began the process of parallel politicisation that would eventually lead to the first electoral successes of Sinn

Féin, and ultimately, perhaps, to the peace process of the 1990s, did the nature of the public rhetoric change? Perhaps not too quickly, as Adams' 1987 book *The Politics of Irish Freedom* was seen by John Whyte in 1990 as a textbook exemplar of the traditional nationalist position.[29]

In April 1978, *Republican News* published a speech by then Sinn Féin vice-president Daithi O'Conaill, made at the annual commemoration of the 1916 Rising, that falls firmly into what might be called the traditional nationalist mould. Speaking of the 1916 Proclamation, he said that it "defined the basic principles of Irish freedom": "the right of the people of this land to the ownership of Ireland; to the unfettered control of Irish destinies; to be sovereign and indefeasible". He goes on to speak of "the denial of those rights by an alien power" being "the root cause of all the conflict, bloodshed and suffering which this country has endured for the last 60 years" and, since the late 1960s, "the agony of an oppressed people in their struggle to end British rule".

> Never before in this country has the fight for freedom been sustained with such vigour and endurance ... It is nearly ten years since the flame of freedom sprang anew in this very city of Derry. We must resolve today that even if it takes another ten years, we shall fan and spread the flame of freedom until it destroys every vestige of English rule in Ireland. It has been clearly demonstrated recently that the Irish Republican Army has the capacity and means to sustain the armed struggle indefinitely.[30]

There is one brief mention of socialism, and the speech – by, it must be admitted, a traditionalist of the old school – concludes with the statement: "We are an old and historic nation For centuries we have been a subject nation, burdened with the

curse of occupation and division." So far, it's the traditional consequentialist "armed struggle to get the Brits out" justification. But the front-page story in the same issue, opposing the idea of an independent Northern Ireland, had more socially radical language: "Republicans and revolutionaries are opposed to 'independence' because the reactionary potential of the loyalists would be enshrined under a pseudo-social democracy" and "the Irish Revolution initiated by the Republican people would be stunted and would never develop into a class struggle." So, within the same issue of the same Republican weekly, there is the verbatim transcript of a speech by one of the traditionalists still among Republican leadership and a lead story that talks of mobilising the "future revolutionaries" who are "chained to the kitchen sinks ... on the dole queues ... slaving in factories".

The traditional consequentialist approach is continued in a statement published in September 1978[31] that quotes from the 1916 proclamation, but also says: "We cannot aim or stop at anything less than full democracy: full economic, cultural and political freedom: a 32 counties socialist republic."

> Mere separation from England is worthless unless it puts the actual people of Ireland in effective ownership and control of all the wealth and wealth-producing processes of this island. Some 800 years of foreign domination taught us this at least: Those who own the country make the laws and control the lives and liberty of the Irish people. Achieving anything less, and we have nothing but empty symbols and trappings of freedom without substance.

The statement goes on to outline the movement's economic policies, including the nationalisation of the banks, mining, energy, insurance and fishing, and worker

ownership and control of "the units of production in farm, factory and workshop". The political structures that are envisaged are referred to as "intelligent creative federalism" that involves community-level district councils, regional administrations, four self-governing provinces, and a federal government that has control only over foreign affairs, defence and over-all finance. And a related statement from October 1978 lays out three basic demands: the restoration of political status for Republican prisoners, a British declaration of intent to withdraw from Northern Ireland, and a "new Ireland to be negotiated by the people following all-Ireland elections".[32]

The on-going debate about federalism, however, is highlighted by the publication of a letter critical of the policy from a Republican prisoner in the recently merged *An Phoblacht/Republican News* (*AP/RN*) in July 1980.[33] His basic argument is that federalism, by making "permanent the division of Ireland", will damage the hope of removing the "mentality that separates the Protestants from the rest of the Irish people" and that "imperialism would use the Ulster provincial parliament as a vehicle to perpetuate loyalism and its attendant right-wing philosophy". The writer further notes the potential of an Ulster provincial parliament to secede. Later that year, a major analytical exposition of Irish Republican political philosophy was published in *AP/RN*.[34] Nowhere is the federal programme of Eire Nua mentioned. The writer traces the roots of Irish Republicanism to Wolfe Tone, and quotes liberally from the writings of Tone, Thomas Davis, James Fintan Lalor, Padraig Pearse and James Connolly, essentially incorporating their thought as constitutive elements in Republican theory, and also implying an unbroken tradition of the movement's existence, in some shape or form, from the late 18th century.[35] The writer asserts the principles

of Irish Republicanism as being separatism, non-sectarianism, secularism, nationalism and socialism, and gives a version of traditional Republican ideology similar to that outlined in section 2. But there is a more systematic exposition of the alleged main features of imperialism in Ireland since 1921, including military occupation of the North, the economic domination of the South's economy by British and foreign capital, the lack of democracy in the North and "the use of religious discrimination to divide the working people", "political subservience by Dublin governments in foreign policy and trade", and various other types of economic, financial, political and cultural domination of the island. Republicanism is the solution to these problems. But in an interesting development, the writer says:

> Only a fool, or the politically naive, would suggest that imperialism can be defeated by the armed struggle alone, however successful it is, or even by action in the six counties alone. All the manifestations of imperialism must be fought and all these areas of struggle must be organised and integrated by the active involvement of the people under the leadership of the only revolutionary organisation committed to the defeat of imperialism.

In essence, the writer is arguing that (or explaining why) the Republican Movement should involve itself in a more diverse set of activities and political engagements than simple and traditional armed struggle.[36] But he is not arguing that there is no place for armed struggle – indeed, he seems to be saying that it is the very continuation of armed struggle that gives the movement the legitimacy to engage in these other diverse areas of activity, as the leading exponent of Irish anti-imperialism:

> The most consistent element of the Irish Republican tradition is armed resistance to British imperialism, which will be continued – because progress in the struggle at other levels or against other manifestations of imperialism ... depends on the continuance of the war at a high level. It is from this that the Republican Movement draws its legitimacy.

That said, on the tenth anniversary of the first British soldier's death since what *AP/RN* described as "the current war", the IRA issued an appeal to the British people to pressurise their government to withdraw its troops "so that today's death toll of more than 300 soldiers will not be added to".[37] The statement said that the British government knew it could not win a military victory, but went on to say: "We want peace, and the war in Ireland could be ended very quickly if the British government acknowledged the democratic right of the Irish nation to self-determination, and announced a British withdrawal from Ireland and an amnesty for all political prisoners."

However, after the election of Bobby Sands – the first of the ten men who were to die on the 1981 hunger strike – as a Westminster MP, the IRA's annual Easter statement said:

> The electorate of Fermanagh and South Tyrone were asked to act by proxy on behalf of the Irish people. They have given a lead to the rest of us and an answer to the British government who showed, yet again as they did after the general election of 1918 and the setting up of Dáil Éireann, that they are not prepared to recognise the will of the people even when that will is expressed peacefully and democratically. That clearly leaves armed struggle as the only other option, an option tried and trusted in Ireland and by other peoples throughout the world. Only through armed struggle will we be listened to, only through the struggle

> waged by the Irish Republican Army can we win national freedom and end division and sectarianism in Ireland.[38]

Although Sinn Féin would eventually capitalise on this first electoral success, albeit a success by proxy brought on by widespread public sympathy for what was essentially a single issue, this statement shows still a quite high level of distrust of the usefulness of the electoral process. To dismiss as a failure, a mere couple of weeks later, the election of Sands on the 9th April, although Sands was to die on May 5th, seems to show – at the very least – a certain impatience with the pace of electoral politics. Nevertheless, the statement reiterates the idea that only violence will work and incorporates again that "last resort" element, in that electoral politics have been tried, have failed due to British intransigence, hence armed struggle is the only means left if the goals are to be attained. It seems not to matter that the purpose for engaging in that particular instance of electoral politics was the short-term goal of concessions on prisoners' political status rather than the long-term overall goals of the Republican Movement, so the statement seems to imply a rejection of electoralism – but ends with the ambitious and somewhat politically ambiguous statement that "the Republican Movement commits itself to securing the political leadership of the whole people of Ireland [...] we are determined to secure conditions in which all the people of the country will unite in a 32 county democratic socialist republic". How they were to attempt this was ultimately shown to be through the twin tracks of political violence and electoral politics.

4. The twin-track approach: early days

The decision to engage more fully in electoral politics, alongside continuing political violence, represents the same sort of consequentialist calculation regarding the relationship of means to ends and the efficacy of those means that we saw earlier with the Red Army Faction. The acceptability of the possibilities of a parallel electoral strategy is shown in an interview with an IRA spokesman in the 5th September 1981 issue of *AP/RN*, and it is instructive to compare Mac Stiofáin's statements from the previous year's *Hands Off Ireland!* (discussed in section B3) with regard to the issue of contesting elections – that "involvement in any of those parliaments would be tantamount to recognition of them. And this would be in effect denying the right of the IRA to exist."[39] By September 1981, the position had evolved somewhat, perhaps because the possibilities of real successes on the electoral front had been seen. The IRA spokesman said "there is room for republicans to examine if the struggle for independence can be improved by an intervention in the electoral process in order to show clearly that people support radical republicanism and resistance to the British presence more than they support any other collaborationist tendency" (an apparent reference to the SDLP). In an analysis that contradicts Mac Stiofáin's 1980 interview, the IRA said:

> Generally speaking, what was wrong with the 'Sticks' [Official Sinn Féin and the Official IRA] was not that they contested elections but that they had a totally incorrect analysis of the nature of British imperialism. They believed that the six-county state could be 'democratised' from within and that the so-called democratic process was one method by which this reformation could be made. There was also, at the time of the split, a simplistic republican attitude,

> heightened by the 1969 pogroms, to the Stickies' position. Therefore, there was a reaction within the Republican Movement against taking political control within the nationalist community or examining methods, even electoral, for doing this.

The statement goes on to remind readers of past Republican involvement in the electoral process, albeit with the caveat that "the republican attitude towards elections cannot be divorced from our total rejection of the six-county state, our struggle for the last 12 years of unbroken resistance to the British government and its crown forces, and our refusal to compromise with loyalism":

> Republicans have periodically contested elections in both six and 26-county states. In 1917, 1918 and 1919, before partition, and from then until the 1950s and in 1964, republicans contested elections on an abstentionist ticket. There is no reason now, where practical, as it appears in West Belfast, that republicans should not oppose nationalist collaboration [again, an apparent reference to the SDLP]. If Sinn Féin contests this election, the IRA will obviously whole-heartedly support their decision.

For those who might be concerned that the emerging electoral strategy "is a new tendency or departure, they can be assured that the military struggle will go on with all the energy at our disposal, and, in fact, would actually be hastened with the development of a complementary radical political offensive". Although the development of this radical political offensive should be a matter of debate within the Republican Movement, "what should not be the basis for discussion is whether this intervention means a run-down of the armed struggle. It patently does not." Moreover, the statement ends with: "We must fight on many fronts and

the armed struggle has been historically and contemporarily shown to be the most important. It must be coupled, of course, with political and economic resistance."

It has become common in recent years to talk of the difficulty of the Republican Movement's leadership in bringing along with them, in the process of electoral politicisation and the wider peace process, those more grass-roots traditional or simply physical force nationalists. From this statement, it looks like the leadership's awareness of this difficulty stretches back further than many had thought.

This message is backed up by an article in *AP/RN* in July 1982.[40] In it, the writer says that "the effective show of military might by the British in the South Atlantic [Falklands War] should finally lay to rest any simplistic notions of the IRA physically driving the British out of the six counties ... the idea of getting rid of the British by purely military means is totally unrealistic":

> No guerrilla war of national liberation anywhere has ever been, nor ever will be, won on the basis of military success alone. It is a question of favourably changing the balance of **political forces**, not just in Ireland, North and South, but also in Britain. The IRA can never hope to militarily defeat the British army. What it must eventually do is break the will of the British – their army, people and government – to remain in Ireland. A necessary part of this process will, of course, be **military successes**, but that is far from being sufficient [emphasis in original].

But, after a discourse on the differences between the inter-state Falklands War and the IRA's campaign,[41] the writer argues that a focus on attacks on British military personnel rather than locally recruited UDR or RUC personnel will have

maximum propaganda impact – "attacks on explicitly British targets should be primary" – on British public opinion: "They must be forced to ask: how much longer must we stay in Ireland, is the loss of 'our boys' worth it?"

By 1983, *AP/RN* was speaking of a "struggle for national liberation [that] is dynamic and developing, finding new levels" and "the nationalist revolution in the North [that] has seen the Republican Movement develop its political potential through Sinn Féin, just as on the military front the IRA gives the crown forces the only answer they are prepared to heed".[42] And, significantly, in the same issue, Sinn Féin's publicity director, Danny Morrison, is quoted as saying the party should be prepared to enter into talks with the SDLP, "on a principled basis" and that "there is nothing to be lost for us at least having been seen to have attempted to secure maximum nationalist successes" in the forthcoming Westminster elections.[43] He added that the SDLP "will have to face up to a historical compromise with the growing forces of radical republicanism".

Later that month[44] there is a reiteration of the role the Republican Movement sees political violence as playing – its purpose is to force the British government, "by bleeding white the British presence in Ireland", to the "inescapable conclusion that they cannot rule us":

> That understanding and its realisation is what the IRA means when it says that it is out to inflict a **political defeat** on the British will to remain in Ireland. And that is why it is republican dogma that the armed struggle will continue and must continue until the guerrilla war achieves its end. Time is no factor... [emphasis in original].

Note that it speaks of a *political* defeat. The notion that armed struggle alone can deliver a military defeat is gone (although it is doubtful whether such a notion would have been seriously held by more thoughtful Republicans, and, indeed, it is always the case that military defeats are also political defeats in the wider sense). And although "time is no factor" (supported by references to Vietnam and the Palestinians), "the war can undoubtedly be shortened – not ended – by victories on the political front". The writer obviously feels the need to reassure the Republican reader that conventional political activity will not replace political violence. That seems to be why any time electoralism or conventional political activity is mentioned, it is always balanced by a strong restatement of the need and role for political violence.[45]

But that violence needs to be in the appropriate context. In a 1983 speech that seems to presage the 1986 dropping of parliamentary abstentionism in the South – a further recalculation of the appropriate means towards the desired end – Gerry Adams said:

> Armed struggle, a necessary and morally correct form of resistance in the six counties against a government whose presence is rejected by the vast majority of Irish people, has no part to play in the development of our struggle in the 26 counties [...] Republicans know the British government cannot exist in Ireland without Dublin collaboration ... but we have also to realise that ordinary people, understandably enough, accept Free State institutions as legitimate. To ignore this reality is to blinker republican politics, to undermine the development of our struggle and is to have a basic flaw in our analysis. It has to be stressed that the people of the six counties cannot secure Irish independence and the conditions for

> our Irish republic on their own. A firm foothold and a relevant organisation in Southern politics is vital.[46]

He went on to say that "we have a duty to interpret and develop our republicanism so that it meets today's political conditions" and that developing a political strategy for the South must be the "primary short-term objective". This shows a clear evolution in Republican thought and indicates clearly the on-going internal debate about the appropriate means to be used in pursuit of the movement's goals.

At that year's ard fheis, Adams assumed the party's leadership from O'Bradaigh, who said that his decision not to stand for president again was related to the dropping of the federal policy and the party's decision to contest elections in the South, both of which he had opposed.[47] There was also a debate about the policy of abstentionism, with a controversial decision being made to contest European elections and to sit in the European parliament if elected. Those who spoke in favour of this were closely associated with the new leadership. In a perhaps more significant event, a motion seeking to reaffirm the ban on even discussing the policy of abstentionism (moved by Matt O'Bradaigh) was defeated, as was a motion seeking the expulsion of members who advocated the registration of Sinn Féin as a political party in the South.[48] But at the 1984 ard fheis, a motion calling for such registration was defeated, with the opposition being based on the idea that it would represent a "recognition of Leinster House", "a sell-out of republican principles" and a "reflection of 'creeping Free Statism and reformism' in the party".[49] Also at the 1984 ard fheis, a motion proposing that Sinn Féin should not participate in any elections "related to Leinster House", whether on an abstentionist ticket or not, was defeated, with ard comhairle member Sean Crowe arguing that such a decision would "tie the hands of the organisation that is

supposed to represent the people" and that a vote in favour of the motion would represent a rejection of Sinn Féin's electoral involvement.[50]

5. The military track

Throughout 1984, the IRA leadership gave several interviews and statements that reiterated the by now well-worn consequentialist justification for political violence. For example, in January, a spokesman said that "the armed struggle is the cutting edge of the campaign to remove British forces and achieve a united Ireland" and that the IRA could not be beaten because "it is a people's army, recruited from an oppressed people who will fight until that oppression ceases".[51] And in relation to violent acts, the spokesman said that it was IRA policy to avoid or minimise civilian casualties, particularly in Britain. The reason for this seems to be to avoid alienating potential British public support for withdrawal. The spokesman said that the IRA's policy was to "inflict damage against enemy political and military targets and to bring to the attention of the British public that their government is involved in a war in Ireland, that their government will not allow the Irish people their national rights". This strategy is based on the assumption that the public "do not support British government-sponsored murder" in Ireland and that the majority of them favour a British withdrawal. The spokesman also argues that the British public have the potential to "eventually force the British government, because of the cost of the war or the attrition rate or because of demoralisation and war-weariness, to withdraw". It appears that the IRA is stating that the avoidance of civilian casualties is part of a long-term strategy to influence public opinion, and the last thing that is needed is to harden

public sentiment against the IRA. Indeed, the spokesman goes on to say "if the IRA wanted to kill British civilians, it could do so in hundreds".[52]

In the IRA's 1984 Easter statement,[53] the refrain is familiar – "armed struggle linked to political action will end the British connection" – but with a twist. The statement also welcomes Sinn Féin's "continuing political successes ... in the electoral field" and says that "the IRA's use of revolutionary force results from the inescapable fact that we are left with no peaceful or democratic alternative by which to achieve the national rights of our people [...] It is a reluctant course of action for any oppressed people to take..." This, of course, seems to open the door to the idea that, if such peaceful and democratic alternatives *were* available, then the use of political violence would no longer be necessary and/or justifiable.

An October 1984 interview with an IRA "GHQ spokesman",[54] in the aftermath of the Brighton bomb attack on the Conservative Party conference, shows a somewhat detached, objective analysis in places. Stating that the intention was to kill most of the cabinet and "several dozen" other leading Conservatives, the answer to a question about the political implications had the operation succeeded in this intent is:

> We believe that such a devastating blow, in the short term, would have led to widespread repression and major reprisals, and indeed we are warning all republicans to still expect government-sanctioned assassinations, possibly through some loyalist organisations. Such repression could have included internment, the proscription of Sinn Féin, and joint action from the Dublin government ... We estimated that the bulk of the IRA would remain intact [...] From this political crisis, the inability of the British to cope with the situation,

> and the inestimable, expensive cost to their political system, would have dawned on them and led to a major and radical rethink along the lines of withdrawal. Our objective, remember, is to wear down their political resolve, and we are determined never to lay down our arms until the Irish people as a nation are allowed to determine their own future.

There are a number of interesting elements here. One of these is the relative ambiguity concerning what the phrase "until the Irish people as a nation are allowed to determine their own future" means. On the one hand, it means the straightforward demand for British disengagement. But in hindsight, a member of the Republican Movement today might be able to interpret that phrase as implying the attainment of conditions that render the continued use of political violence unnecessary, such as those contained in the Good Friday Agreement. But it is anachronistic to impute any such meaning.

Another interesting element is the apparent willingness of the IRA to risk what it would term reprisals and political repression. The intent, it would seem, was to bring about an escalation of the conflict, including the repression of Republicans and the concomitant effects on recruitment that experience from the early 1970s might suggest would occur, and political crisis in Britain.

In response to a question about the targeting of democratically elected politicians, the spokesman says "nobody in Ireland elected Thatcher's cabinet ... It is the Irish people who are denied democracy" and goes on to reference Guy Fawkes, Bobby Sands (who, the spokesman claims, "got twice as many votes as [Thatcher] personally received"), the firebombing of Dresden and Cologne, and the Americans' use of atomic weapons on Japanese civilians:

> America justified [that] on the basis that the Second World War could be brought to a speedy conclusion. We detonated a bomb against the key people responsible for the violence and war in our country in order to bring this war to a speedy conclusion. There's a big, big difference.

What the "big, big difference" is is not particularly well explained. It seems to have to do with the claim that "Britain waited until the towns of Hamburg, Dresden and Cologne were packed with refugees before fire-bombing hundreds of thousands of civilians" and the similar point about the US atomic bombs being specifically directed at civilians, whereas the IRA's Brighton bomb was directed against a political elite ("these people aren't angels") that supports "plastic bullets, shoot-to-kill policies, judicial corruption" and "judicial murder in the form of capital punishment". The spokesman goes on to say: "However, we do not hide behind the state and we accept moral responsibility for our actions whilst ultimately holding Britain's occupation responsible for necessitating armed struggle in the first place."

6. The political track

Gerry Adams' address at the 1984 ard fheis referred to the "attempted execution" of the British cabinet and otherwise remained with familiar themes.[55] In the "15th year of this last phase of our historic struggle for independence", he expressed solidarity with Republican prisoners, but also with "those throughout the world who are engaged in similar struggles", including "our black brothers and sisters in Africa", especially those in South Africa, as well as the Palestinians, those in Central America and the Basques:

> ... a successful conclusion of our struggle is a victory for you, just as a victory for you is a victory for us. We make no apologies for condemning the American government's foreign policy, the apartheid policy of the South African regime, the Zionist policy of the Israeli government or the imperialistic and colonial attitude of the British government.

Elsewhere, he again articulates the traditional nationalist interpretation as outlined in Whyte[56] and in the outline of Republican ideology quoted in section 1, and also says: "Constitutional nationalism in the Irish context is a contradiction when the constitutionality involved is British constitutionality. And British constitutionality in Ireland means the maintenance of a six-county colony which is not, never has been and never will be a viable social, political or economic unit."[57]

A December oration by Martin McGuinness, however, referred to the need to "bring Britain to the negotiating table", which only "the freedom fighters of the IRA" can do.[58] The speech also used the phrase "a real and lasting peace", a phrase that has now evolved into common Republican currency (with "just" instead of "real"). He reiterated the belief that only force would make the British listen, and although he said that "Irish people have a moral right, a moral duty to resist oppression with whatever means they may deem necessary", he said that he deeply regretted "that anyone should die, whether they be British or Irish". Here we see one of the relatively rare times when Republican political violence has been cast in terms of moral duty.

There seems to be little variation in terms of the standard justificatory rhetoric used until January 1987, when the Sinn Féin election manifesto for the South (the party having dropped the abstentionist policy at the 1986 ard fheis – see note 57) was launched.[59] Even then, the variation on the standard rhetoric is

minimal. The manifesto calls for the standard demands of self-determination, a declaration of intent to withdraw, an amnesty for political prisoners and an end to "cross-border collaboration" (a euphemism for extradition). While restating the argument that neither the South nor the North can "achieve their full economic potential while partition remains", the party also "recognises that the national question alone cannot mobilise people who are suffering under the unjust systems of both states". To that end, the manifesto has "realistic short-term" social and economic proposals in the areas of "unemployment, emigration, taxation, cuts in public spending, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, neutrality, the environment, culture, women, and youth". While not being a justification of political violence per se, the manifesto does seem to indicate a decision to take electoral politics more seriously – and that would eventually have repercussions for the perceived role of "armed struggle".

In the same issue of *AP/RN*, a speech by a Dublin Sinn Féin candidate at a Derry Bloody Sunday commemoration is published.[60] He spoke of the movement's failure to build upon the public reaction to Bloody Sunday, and said Republicans must come out of their self-imposed isolation:

> For too long, we in the South did not involve ourselves in the lives of our people ... we were content to remain the heroic minority. We were seen as the defenders of the nationalist people and even as the only true inheritors of the historic freedom struggle, but we failed to show that that struggle involved *all* the Irish people. We failed to see that organising support for the armed struggle of the IRA was not in itself sufficient to make republicanism relevant to the people of the 26 Counties [...] Once the powerful weapon of political involvement is taken up,

> what republican would throw it away when it has inflicted so many embarrassments and defeats on the enemies of Irish freedom?

Referring to the dropping of abstentionism, he says "we took a big step last November", that it was taken with "hope and courage in our Movement and our people", and that it was taken so that "we can challenge the failure and corruption of successive Free State governments": "Our entry into Leinster House will not, by itself, achieve such [political, social, and economic] justice but, by confronting the self-servers who have betrayed the trust of the people of the 26 Counties, we are confident that the day of justice will come all the sooner."

In an editorial in February that signalled increasing awareness of the realities of the political context in the South, *AP/RN* said that Sinn Féin's participation in the election would "bring no revolutionary changes to Leinster House".[61] While reasserting that "we must all hold fast to a revolutionary vision", the editorial states that that vision is a long-term one. In the short term, however, there are everyday problems for ordinary people, such as unemployment, poverty, medical care and deprivation: "It is these problems that committed radical representation can fight to redress, in the short term". Although the election did not result in a single Sinn Féin TD and only a 2% share of the vote, Gerry Adams said that, in hindsight, he was "sorry that abstentionism wasn't dropped years ago" and that the abstentionist policy had led the Republican Movement to miss out capitalising on "high points of national discontent in the last 20 years".[62]

7. "A scenario for peace"

The usual justifications for IRA political violence and "traditional nationalist" analyses continued right up to the mid 1990s. However, in the 1980s there were

some significant developments. They are significant because they represent the beginning of a process whereby a movement that had traditionally seen the use of violence as the primary means of attaining its political objectives was ultimately persuaded that violence had outlived its usefulness in terms of achieving those desired goals.

One of these developments was the beginning of talks between Sinn Féin and the SDLP in 1988. Another was the publication of the Sinn Féin discussion paper *A Scenario for Peace* in 1987.[63] And both of these seem to be linked to the internal debates on political alternatives that took place in the mid-1980s, exemplified by the speech Gerry Adams gave to what is described as an "internal conference" in 1986.[64] In an interesting extended metaphor, which is worth quoting in full, Adams compared the Republican Movement's political journey to a planned trip to a "destination which we want to travel to". He said:

> "... let us say for some unimaginable reason, somebody persuaded us that if a hundred of us were to get to Cork City by next week we could use our combined skills there to secure a much better way of life and that this was conditional only on a hundred of us getting there. Of course, there would be obstacles on our route which would have to be overcome, but these would be merely logistical difficulties which could be overcome by handpicking out contingent. Now, if a hundred of us were persuaded to set off for Cork merely because of rhetoric, we wouldn't have travelled very far outside this hall before doubts would set in. After walking for a while, some of us would be tired and drop out. They only went along for the crack. They hadn't really thought it out [...] Somewhere else along the route somebody else might decide, for example, that Cashel is as nice a place as Cork and, anyway, they never really intended to go any further from the

> start. In the course of the journey, recriminations would start – it's better going this way or that – it's better doing it like this – so eventually if any of us ever got to Cork, our original one hundred would have diminished, and those remaining would be disunited and divided. However, if first of all we got agreement on going to Cork, an agreement on what that meant, we could more easily get agreement on how to get there. *We could deploy ourselves accordingly, developing a policy from this basis and planning our strategy and tactics to suit our resources and the prevailing conditions.* We could agree to take a bus or a train or even to walk. *We could know that not everybody wanted to go the whole way, but if we planned accordingly on short-term objectives we could pick up new recruits on route.* We could even agree to go from bus stop to bus stop, from short-term objective to short-term objective, taking the maximum number with us each time. *The important thing, of course, is that those really committed to getting to Cork would be in charge and that they would proceed with the maximum support from the maximum number involved.* That way, we would arrive united and intact [emphasis added].

The destination, Adams said, was "the reconquest of Ireland by the Irish people", meaning "the expulsion of imperialism in all its forms, political, economic, military, social and cultural", adding that "real national independence is a prerequisite of socialism. You cannot have socialism in a colony or a neo-colony." And on the issue of the appropriate means to that end, he said: "What will make a movement like ours revolutionary is not whether it is committed to any particular means of achieving revolution, for example, street agitation or physical force, but whether all the means it uses – political work, propaganda and mass education, armed struggle, projects of economic resistance – are conducive to achieving the revolutionary end..." This is a clear consequentialist statement that the means used

must be assessed, and continually assessed, in the light of whether they are conducive to the attainment of the desired ends. He further said that the "guiding light" for the movement's policies "must be that they are based on general republican principles and that they bring us somewhere along the road towards our objectives".[65]

In 1987's *A Scenario for Peace*, the traditional nationalist interpretation of the nature of the conflict remains, as does the call for British withdrawal, but the document is notable for stating: "Sinn Féin seeks to create conditions which will lead to a permanent cessation of hostilities, an end to our long war and the development of a peaceful, united and independent Irish society". Among the familiar rhetoric ("such objectives will only be achieved when a British government adopts a strategy for decolonisation"), the important phrase is that relating to "conditions which will lead to a permanent cessation of hostilities, an end to our long war". Also significant is the mention of "a cessation of all offensive military actions by all organisations" as being a necessary condition for a "peaceful transition to a negotiated settlement". While the demands for British withdrawal as the only solution to the conflict remain, the changing use of language seems to indicate further evolution in Republican thought: it is surely significant that Sinn Féin lists this as the first in its archive of key documents in the Peace Process.

The party credits that document for directly leading to the 1988 talks with the SDLP. In the Sinn Féin document on those talks, the use of political violence is demoted from the level of necessary tactic to the level of "a political option".[66] In another classically conseqentialist consideration of the efficacy of means, the use of violence is described as being "considered in terms of achieving national

political aims and *the efficacy of other forms of struggle*" (emphasis added). The clear implication of this is that, if other forms of political struggle were seen to be effective, then political violence would be redundant as a tactic. However, at that stage, Sinn Féin still stated that it was opposed to a "power-sharing Stormont assembly" and said that there "cannot be a partitionist solution", rejecting what it termed the SDLP's "gradualist solution".[67]

The traditional Republican rhetoric and justification for violence remained apparent in the early 1990s. A new and short-lived Republican publication, describing itself as "the theoretical magazine of the Republican struggle"[68] squarely put the blame for the conflict on British-imposed and maintained partition and argues for the traditional solution: British disengagement. It did reiterate the idea that Sinn Féin "seeks to create conditions which will lead to a permanent cessation of hostilities", and so on, adding that "the establishment of such a [peaceful, united and independent democratic] society will se sectarianism shrivel with the emergence of class politics and a realignment of political forces along the lines of left and right". And, the next year, the classic Republican analysis was reaffirmed in a discussion document launched at the 1992 ard fheis, called *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland*.[69] However, it contains a number of interesting elements.

Foremost among these is the fact that the document does not contain an explicit call for British withdrawal. Rather, terms such as "the failure of partition" (p. 6) and the disastrous "social and economic effects of partition" (p. 3) are used. Rather than an explicit call for withdrawal, the document says that "a genuine peace process requires the recognition of the effects of partition". And rather than earlier language such as "withdrawal within the lifetime of a British parliament",

what is needed is "a British government that makes the ending of partition its policy" (p. 3) and "the responsibility of the British government in persuading the unionists" (p. 4). How that policy is to be implemented seems to be left ambiguous, but it should involve both London and Dublin, be done in "co-operation with unionists and Northern nationalists" and would represent the beginning of the "process of national reconciliation" (p. 3).

The use of violence is mentioned in these terms: it has historically been seen as "a legitimate part of a people's resistance to foreign oppression", it is an "option of last resort", "there is no constitutional [that is, non-violent] strategy to pursue national independence", and, "in the circumstances, the onus is on those who condemn the *option* of armed struggle to advance a *credible alternative*" (emphasis added) (p. 4).

The document concludes with an eight-point summary (p. 6), including statements that "peace requires the conditions of democracy, freedom and justice to eradicate the causes of war", "Irish republicans are committed to playing a constructive role in building national democracy when the British government finally adopts a policy of withdrawal", and calls for EU and UN involvement.

By 1994, the Republican Movement must have decided, or been persuaded, that "conditions which will lead to a permanent cessation of hostilities" (as first mentioned in 1987's *A Scenario for Peace*) were in place.

8. Totally unarmed strategy or tactical use of armed struggle?

In a document apparently circulated for discussion in the Republican Movement before the 1994 IRA cessation, a "TUAS option" was referred to.[70] Known as "the 'TUAS' document", it has been speculated that the acronym refers to either totally

unarmed struggle, or tactical use of armed struggle. In it, the traditional aims are restated, including no internal settlement, but it also says that "a straightforward logic" indicates that "republicans at this time and on their own do not have the strength to achieve the end goal". The strategy is thus to build "an Irish nationalist consensus with international support", involving the Irish government, the SDLP, the EU and the USA. The primary listed aim of that consensus is to "effect [sic] the domestic and international perception of the republican position ... as one which is reasonable". The document goes on to state that the Republican Movement's leadership had decided that if sufficient agreement could be reached with the Irish government, the SDLP and the Irish-American lobby on "basic republican principles" that would create a "dynamic that would considerably advance the struggle, then it would be prepared to use the TUAS option". And sufficient agreement has been reached, the document says, announcing that the TUAS option had been decided upon. The document concludes:

> Tuas has been part of every other struggle in the world this century. It is vital that activists realise the struggle is not over. Another front has opened up and we should have the confidence and put in the effort to succeed on that front. We have the ability to carry on indefinitely.

This statement clearly illustrates the IRA's intention to at least explore alternative means towards the achievement of their stated goals. And on 31st August 1994, the IRA announced a ceasefire, using terms such as "the potential of the current situation" and "an opportunity to secure a just and lasting settlement".[71] The ceasefire was called, according to the statement, "in order to enhance the democratic process" and it makes reference to the IRA's "definitive commitment"

to the success of that process, adding that "a solution will only be found as a result of inclusive negotiations". In December, there was a meeting between a Sinn Fein delegation and officials representing the British government. On 10th January 1996, Sinn Fein published its submission to the International Body on arms decommissioning,[72] which although it contained the phrase "A clear and absolute objective of a lasting peace settlement is the removal forever of the gun from the political equation in Ireland. This is an absolute requirement", also contained a more traditionally militant analysis of the political progress to date:

> [After the IRA cessation there was] a widespread acknowledgement that at long last the political circumstances existed for a negotiated and agreed settlement which would take the gun out of Anglo-Irish politics permanently. Regrettably, 16 months later, the British side has prevented any movement in that direction. Having initially employed a number of stalling devices to impede progress, they eventually created an impasse on the basis of a contrived stumbling block. In so doing, they turned an objective of the peace process into an obstacle. That demand for a surrender of arms from the IRA, a native guerrilla army which has not been defeated, by an occupying power which has not been victorious, raises many questions about the good faith of the British, including their actual agenda and their real intentions.

However, the document admits that the issue of arms must be dealt with, but dealt with in a "context where it is most likely to be achieved in practice". This context is to be an agreed political settlement that is able to find agreement on demilitarisation. This in turn involves agreement on "the transitional role and deployment of the British Army and the RUC, pending the establishment of

acceptable law and order forces"; British troop withdrawal and the establishment of an unarmed police force; the issue of legally held guns; judicial reform and "the removal of all repressive laws"; prisoner releases; and the disarmament of all armed groups. Perhaps significantly, given the manner in which IRA decommissioning was eventually carried out, the document also proposes "the disposal of arms by those in possession of them" as "a method which may find acceptance".

On 9th February, the ceasefire ended, with an IRA statement later that month (29th February) lending support to interpretations of the term TUAS as meaning "tactical use of armed struggle". The statement indicated frustration with the pace of political developments, citing "the failure of the British government to put in place inclusive negotiations free from preconditions, the abuse of the peace process by the British over 18 months, and the absence of an effective and democratic approach capable of providing an irrevocable momentum towards a just and lasting peace".[73] That year's Easter statement[74] reinforced the message of the February statement, speaking of the "utterly failed policies of exclusion and marginalisation of republicans" and a political agenda that involved "a return to Stormont". "That is never going to happen", the statement said:

> The IRA, whose mandate for armed struggle derives from Britain's denial of the fundamental right of the Irish people to national self-determination and sovereignty, has made its position abundantly clear ... The IRA remains fully committed to its republican objectives and for so long as Britain persists in its denial of national and democratic rights in Ireland, then the IRA will continue to assert those rights.

However, in an indication that the return to the use of violence may not be the desired permanent option, the statement says that the IRA "remains ready to help in developing the conditions which will allow for a meaningful negotiation process". It reiterates the call for a negotiated settlement that is free from preconditions and, in an optimistic note that implies the IRA recognises that the utility of violence has passed, says that the only remaining place left "for all the representatives of the Irish people" is the negotiating table.

In February 1997, Gerry Adams wrote that Sinn Fein "wants to see an end to all armed actions", that the party was "committed to work for an end to conflict, regardless of the difficulties involved", and that the party was committed to "peaceful and democratic means of resolving political problems".[75] He went on to state that Sinn Fein could, "with credibility", try to persuade the IRA to restore its cessation of violent activities – if a "meaningful and inclusive process of negotiations" was genuinely offered – and that such a restoration, Sinn Fein believed, would be "genuinely unequivocal, containing a clear and unambiguous commitment to enhance a genuine peace process". Among what Adams said were the key issues involved were the removal of preconditions before and during negotiations and what were referred to as "confidence-building measures": on the part of the IRA such a measure would be the restoration of the ceasefire; on the part of the British government, it should – rather vaguely – outline "the substance of a programmatic approach on issues which will generate confidence", particularly in the realms of equality and human rights and demilitarisation.

In July 1997, "having assessed the current political situation", the IRA resumed its "cessation of military operations".[76] The statement also said that the IRA "is committed to ending British rule in Ireland" and that they "want a

permanent peace and therefore we are prepared to enhance the search for a democratic peace settlement through real and inclusive negotiations". The political context was the Labour Party's assumption of power in Westminster in May; the beginning of further exploratory talks between British government representatives and Sinn Fein, also in May; the joint British and Irish government proposals on the issue of decommissioning weapons, in June;[77] and a joint statement by Gerry Adams and SDLP leader John Hume on 18th July, which welcomed "the moves that have been made" by the new British and Irish governments to "remove the obstacles, erected by the previous British government, to an inclusive and meaningful negotiations process".[78]

9. Changed goals

The tactical aims of the IRA's political violence had clearly changed since the late 1970s aim of wearing down the British government's will to maintain the union with Northern Ireland, so that there would be a unilateral British withdrawal. By the period where the first IRA cessation ended, the tactical aim seemed to be simply to guarantee Sinn Fein's participation in negotiations without (too many) preconditions. Indeed, by this stage there is a real sense that Sinn Fein – once little more than a cheerleader for the IRA – had become the dominant element of the Republican Movement, with the IRA serving as little more than a set of bargaining chips or a reservoir of potential future concessions to be used to advance Sinn Fein's participation in the purely political negotiation process. That said, the aim of ultimately getting to a negotiation process is clearly presaged as far back as Martin McGuinness's December 1984 speech (see note 58) that

explicitly mentioned the need to "bring Britain to the negotiating table" and used the phrase "a real and lasting peace".

In *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland*,[79] published in October 1997, the traditional long-term goals, and much of the traditional historical analysis, of the Republican Movement remain, but are restated in more conciliatory language: "The primary aim of Irish republicans [in the negotiations] is to dispense once and for all with the legacy of the unjust and coercive Union and to replace it with a new relationship of trust between independent nations … To our unionist brothers and sisters we offer the hand of friendship".[80] "New and lasting relationships between the peoples of these islands" must be created, based on trust and justice. However, an internal settlement is rejected – it "cannot work": "a lasting political settlement will require fundamental change in the constitutional status of the six counties". It may be significant that an internal settlement is rejected on the basis of its unworkability, rather than on the basis of principle, leaving open the possibility that if such a settlement could be made to work, through imaginative structures, then it might be a viable option. But we must be careful of imputing interpretations with the benefit of hindsight: the 1997 document clearly restates the traditional Republican position vis à vis the imposition of partition by Britain, the failure of that partition, and the need for a 32-county unitary state. This position is reiterated in the IRA's New Year statement on 8th January 1998.[81]

The IRA also rejected the "Propositions on heads of agreement", issued by the Irish and British governments on 12th January.[82] These propositions – including the idea of "balanced constitutional change" of both Irish and British law; the principle of consent; democratically-elected institutions in Northern Ireland, including an assembly elected by proportional representation with

structures to ensure the participation of all sections of the community; an inter-governmental council; a North/South ministerial council; "standing intergovernmental machinery"; and provisions relating to "the comprehensive protection of fundamental human, civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights" and measures dealing with prisoners, policing, security and decommissioning – were rejected by the IRA as not being "a basis for a lasting peace settlement", as a "pro-unionist document" and as an example of "yet another British prime minister [succumbing to] the Orange card".[83] Sinn Fein had rejected the proposals three days earlier.

After the Good Friday Agreement on 10th April 1998, the IRA issued a statement saying that they would judge the agreement "against its potential to deliver a just and durable peace".[84] On 30th April, another statement described the agreement as marking a "significant development", but whether it "heralds a transformation of the situation is dependent totally on the will of the British government".[85] In what seems to have begun to be a recurrent pattern – hard-line statement (perhaps to mollify the movement's membership) being later followed, after internal debate and an assessment of the current political context, by acceptance – the statement takes the hard line:

> It remains our position that a durable peace settlement demands the end of British rule in Ireland and the exercise of the right of the people of Ireland to national self-determination. Viewed against our Republican objectives or any democratic analysis, this document clearly falls short of presenting a solid basis for a lasting settlement. In our view, the two imminent referenda do not constitute the exercise of national self-determination…

The statement goes on to state that the IRA will not decommission its arms in response to that issue being raised as "an obstacle to progress", but says – giving the IRA some wriggle room – that "this issue … is a matter only for the IRA, to be decided upon and pronounced upon by us. We are mindful of our responsibilities…" In May, Sinn Fein confirmed support for the agreement. Also that month, there was a split in the IRA, with the emergence of what was dubbed the "Real IRA". In an interview in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* after the August 1998 Omagh bombing by the Real IRA (RIRA), an IRA spokesman described the bombing as "a disaster and a tragedy of enormous proportions" that had "undoubtedly caused damage to the struggle for Irish independence and unity", and described the dissidents as having "no coherent political strategy", offering "no credible alternative" to the IRA, and called for them to disband "sooner rather than later".[86]

With regard to the Good Friday Agreement, the spokesman said that the IRA was concerned at the slow rate of progress, called on the Irish and British governments to fulfil "their commitment to implement all aspects of the agreement", and, in a significant change of tone since April that year, said "we share, of course, the desire of the vast majority of the Irish people to see [the agreement] deliver on its potential".[87]

Accusations against the unionist parties and the British government of foot-dragging, raising old preconditions (i.e., decommissioning), and failing to grasp the opportunities presented by the IRA ceasefire were recurring themes over the next period, as were restatements of the IRA's commitment to the peace process, of its rejection of the demand for decommissioning as being symbolic of defeat or surrender, of its ultimate objectives, and of the need to remove the

causes of the conflict.[88] An interesting point, however, from the statement of 21st July 1999, is the IRA's complaint about the failure to "establish the political institutions set out in the Good Friday Agreement". Contrast this complaint with the characterisation of the agreement as falling "short of presenting a solid basis for a lasting settlement" in the 30th April 1998 statement, or the dismissal of the proposed "Heads of Agreement" on 21st January 1998, or Sinn Fein's rejection of an internal settlement in 1997's *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland.* It appears that the Republican Movement's analysis of what it might call "the current political situation" was evolving quite fast. Indeed, the IRA formally decided to engage in preliminary discussions with the decommissioning body (the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning [IICD]) after the establishment of those political institutions,[89] saying: "We were persuaded to take this step on the understanding that it would help end the political vacuum, which had been created and maintained by unionist politicians for the previous 18 months, and bring about forward political movement."[90] The same statement referred to the need for the British government to "rapidly implement a process of demilitarisation", saying that there was now an "unprecedented opportunity to leave behind the failures of the past". In a later statement, they said that, although they believed that the issue of arms could be resolved and that "the issue of arms needs to be dealt with in an acceptable way and this is a necessary objective of a genuine peace process", that resolution would not be on British or Unionist terms.[91] Contrast that with the statements emphasising no decommissioning and decrying the raising of "old preconditions" up to as recently as July 1999, although we can see that these statements tended to be less than unequivocal, as in the 30th April 1998 statement (see note 85). The issue of IRA engagement in the

decommissioning process was to be repeatedly used as a bargaining chip, by all sides.

On 6th May 2000, the IRA issued a statement in which it said it was "committed to a just and lasting peace" and that "the maintenance of our cessation is our contribution to the peace process and to the creation of a future in which the causes of conflict are resolved by peaceful means":

> The full implementation, on a progressive and irreversible basis by the two governments, especially the British government, of what they have agreed will provide a political context, in an enduring political process, with the potential to remove the causes of conflict, and in which Irish republicans and unionists can, as equals, pursue our respective political objectives peacefully. In that context the IRA leadership will initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use.

10. The road to the ending of the armed campaign

Statements after February 2000 revisited much well-travelled ground about the IRA's commitment to the peace process, its historic and unprecedented initiatives, the British government's bad faith, crises in the peace process, the nature of the decommissioning process, the need to fulfil the potential of and commitments made in the Good Friday Agreement, and to remove the causes of conflict so as to allow both communities to pursue their political goals peacefully, alongside a smattering (and much less than ten years before) of the traditional Republican historical and justificatory analysis.[92]

But during those years, there were a number of interesting elements to some of the statements. One of these is April 2002's "statement of apology",[93]

issued after repeated implicit and explicit calls for just such a statement. In it, the IRA said:

> We offer our sincere apologies and condolences to [the families of non-combatants killed and injured by IRA actions] ... We also acknowledge the grief and pain of [the relatives of combatants on all sides]. The future will not be found in denying collective failures and mistakes or closing minds and hearts to the plight of those who have been hurt. That includes all of the victims of the conflict, combatants and non-combatants. It will not be achieved by creating a hierarchy of victims in which some are deemed more or less worthy than others. The process of conflict resolution requires the equal acknowledgement of the grief and loss of others ... The IRA is committed unequivocally to the search for freedom, justice and peace in Ireland. We remain totally committed to the peace process and to dealing with the challenges and difficulties which this presents. This includes the acceptance of past mistakes and of the hurt and pain we have caused to others.

This has certain parallels with the RAF disbandment statement discussed in section 10 of the previous chapter, where the RAF says: "Our struggle ... had a difficult, a heavy side. The liberation war has its shadows, too."[94]

Another interesting element is contained in the private statement given to both governments on 13th April 2003.[95] In it, the IRA said: "We are resolved to see the *complete and final closure of this conflict* ... Furthermore, the full and irreversible implementation of the agreement and other commitments will provide a context in which the IRA can proceed to *definitively set aside arms to further our political objectives*" (emphasis added). Here, the language use seems to indicate that the IRA has adopted the (non-violent) peace process as the necessary

consequentialist means to its end, and to have abandoned the use of political violence as a means. Later in the statement, the IRA says:

> We support genuine efforts to build a just and peaceful future for all the people of this island … We are Irish republicans. Our objective is a united Ireland. We are not unionists or British and no one should expect us to set aside our political objectives or our republicanism. We do not claim to fully understand unionist perceptions. But we are prepared to listen and to learn. And we are committed to playing our part in creating the conditions in which unionists, nationalists and republicans can live together peacefully.

And in another apologetic note:

> Much hurt has been inflicted by British government policy, by successive British governments and by the old Unionist regime. Great pain has been caused by the British army, the RUC and loyalist paramilitaries. Irish republicans and nationalists have a proud and honourable record of resistance against these forces. *We know unionists do not see it like that. We are also conscious that non-combatants were killed and injured as a consequence of some of our actions.* We offer our sincere apologies and condolences to their families and friends. The IRA is committed to supporting every effort to make conflict a thing of the past (emphasis added).

In a speech by Gerry Adams in October 2003, he referred to the previous ten years as "a political and emotional rollercoaster ride for republicans and unionists, nationalists and loyalists".[96] The speech is interesting for a number of reasons, not least the argument that political ideologies should be capable of evolution and not simply be set in stone. He said that the struggle – and he refers to the 1986

"journey analogy" discussed in Section 7 – means that Republicans should engage in "the battle of ideas", take initiatives, and put their case to their opponents. In a probable criticism of dissident republicans, he said: "Being an Irish republican means more than paying lip-service to the 1916 Proclamation or to the ideal of the 'The Republic'. It means refusing to stand still. It means taking risks. It means reaching out to others. It means moving forward." Later, he spoke of "seeking to change minds and attitudes", "trying to build new and better relationships between the people of this island, and between us and the people of Britain".

Perhaps more importantly, he said that "republicans have worked to have the Good Friday Agreement implemented, not only because that is our obligation, not only because that is the right thing, but because *it fits into a strategy to create an alternative to conflict. It is a peaceful means of bringing about change* and of sustaining and anchoring the peace process" (emphasis added). This is a classically consequentialist statement that newer and potentially more effective means are now available towards the achievement of the desired ends, and those means have the advantage of being peaceful.

So, in the balance of consequentialist calculation about the efficacy of means versus ends, it seems obvious that the means that will cause less harm to (perhaps) achieve the given ends should be preferred to those that will cause greater harm in the pursuit of a similarly uncertain achievement of the given ends. In short, the Republican Movement seems to have worked out, decided, or been persuaded that mainstream politics might be as efficacious – or more so, especially given the post-2001 'war on terror' – towards the achievement of their goals as the use of political violence. Related and also interesting issues are: (a) could the Republican Movement have been persuaded of this in the early 1970s;

and (b) would mainstream political participation at that time by the Provisional Republican Movement, with a concomitant abandonment of violence and given the political context, have been viable? Almost certainly not, given the underdeveloped nature of the movement's political strategy and the role/status of Sinn Fein at the time.

Be that as it may, Adams' position in 2003 was:

> ...to reiterate my total commitment to playing a leadership role to bring an end to conflict on our island, including physical force republicanism. Our strategy to do this is based on creating a purely peaceful and alternative way to achieve democratic and republican objectives ... The Good Friday Agreement, with its vision of a fair and just society operating exclusively democratically and peacefully, was democratically endorsed by the vast majority of the people of both states on the island of Ireland. Sinn Féin is committed to the full implementation of the agreement. The IRA leadership wants the full and irreversible implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in all its aspects and they are determined that their strategies and actions will be consistent with this objective.

There has been significant evolution between this speech and the 30th April 1998 IRA statement, discussed above, regarding the unsatisfactory nature of the agreement as a basis for a lasting peace and the comments that the simultaneous North/South joint referenda do not represent a democratically valid exercise in national self determination.

Adams' speech contains more examples of interesting and largely (in the traditional Republican lexicon) atypical phraseology – "total and absolute

commitment to exclusively democratic and peaceful means of resolving differences"; "opposed to any use or threat of force for any political purpose"; "collectively building a new future based on justice and peace"; "things have changed. Our success in bringing this about was not a matter of chance, it was a matter of choice"; "totally committed to establishing an entirely new, democratic and harmonious future with our unionist neighbours"; "like it or not, we're all in this together". He concludes by saying that "we can build a future of equals on this island", a peaceful future that "empowers, and enriches and cherishes all the children of the nation equally". Moreover, "the people of this island have the right to be free". But this time it's not freedom from British imperialism that he is explicitly referring to. Rather, it is living "free from discrimination and inequality, without violence and conflict". And he again references the 1986 "journey" metaphor:

> Sinn Féin means to journey on from there, to be part of building a republic worthy of the suffering and sacrifice of all of those who have gone before us. I want to appeal to republicans throughout Ireland and abroad to continue to support Sinn Féin's peace strategy. Initiatives by republicans cause pain and difficulty for all of us. I know activists will have reservations about much of this. But we have to look at the bigger picture. We have to look towards the common good. Bobby Sands summed it all up best for me. Despite great hardship, deprivation and physical hurt, he never lost sight of his vision for a new Ireland, an Ireland in which our revenge will be the laughter of our children. It is always easier to begin a journey. The hard thing is to finish it. Sinn Féin is in this process to the finish.

Here, Adams' speech raises a number of issues. Most obvious among them is the use of the name of the contemporary Republican Movement's most respected icon, the hunger striker Bobby Sands. The way in which the name is used seems to imply that Sands would have agreed wholeheartedly with the direction the Republican Movement is taking. This is important given that, in the same paragraph, Adams appeals for continued support from republicans for this direction and acknowledges that some of the radical shifts in the direction of the movement have been difficult, even bewildering. But he puts these shifts in terms of a much longer-term goal than the old fashioned "Brits out in the lifetime of this parliament" goal. He phrases the goal in terms of the "big picture" and "the common good". And that common good seems to have a multi-generational element. The striking phrase "our revenge will be the laughter of our children" could be taken to imply that the movement's goals may not be achieved during the lifetime of any of its current members, but that the important thing is that a journey has been started that will be of great benefit to future generations: Sinn Fein is to be "part of building a republic worthy of the suffering and sacrifice of all of those who have gone before us" – contributors towards that construction, rather than site directors. But perhaps this interpretation is too grandiose.

11. A new mode

In December 2004, the IRA released a statement – in response to British and Irish government proposals for a comprehensive agreement published the day before – in which it announced that it had decided "to support a comprehensive agreement by moving into a new mode which reflects our determination to see the transition to a totally peaceful society".[97] It also said that it had ordered all members not to

do anything that might endanger that "new agreement". In that context, they said, the IRA would conclude the decommissioning process, or in their terms "completely and verifiably put all our arms beyond use". They also reiterated their desire for the achievement of a "context in which Irish republicans and unionists can, as equals, pursue our respective political objectives peacefully". That phrase was first used in an IRA statement in May 2000.[98]

Much of this is reiterated in the IRA's 2005 New Year statement,[99] although that statement contains a restatement of commitment to their "republican objectives":

> We share a vision for the future. This vision includes the unity and independence of Ireland. While a Peace Process can produce an accommodation, and the IRA is prepared to assist this process, Irish unity and independence provides the best context for the people of this island to live together in harmony and prosperity.

The ultimate vision is unity and independence. It seems that the IRA regards the peace process as conducive to reaching a political accommodation, which then in turn might serve as the basis for attempting to advance that ultimate vision.

In another apparent hard-ball/soft-ball tactic, in February 2005, the IRA announced that it was "taking all [its] proposals off the table".[100] This was in the context of heavy criticism of the IRA following the Northern Bank robbery. They said: "peace cannot be built on ultimatums, false and malicious accusations, or bad faith" and "progress will not be sustained by the reinstatement of Thatcherite criminalisation strategies, which our ten comrades died defeating on hunger strike in 1981". The statement further invokes the iconic hunger strikers by saying that it would be a betrayal of their courage if the organisation tolerated either

"criminality within our own ranks or false allegations of criminality against our organisation by petty politicians motivated by selfish interests".

However, in July 2005, "the leadership of Oglaigh a hÉireann … formally ordered an end to the armed campaign".[101] The statement included an order to all members to "dump arms", to "assist the development of purely political and democratic programmes through exclusively peaceful means", and to "not engage in any other activities whatsoever" (i.e., crime). The statement also said that they would proceed with the decommissioning process and that "unprecedented internal discussion" had shown that there was "very strong support among IRA volunteers for the Sinn Fein peace strategy". It called for full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

And crucially, in terms of consequentialist considerations, the statement said: "…our decisions have been taken *to advance our republican and democratic objectives*, including our goal of a united Ireland. We believe *there is now an alternative way* to achieve this and to end British rule in our country" (emphasis added). The statement also says: "We reiterate our view that the armed struggle was entirely legitimate", but presumably, in consequentialist terms, the Republican Movement sees political violence as no longer necessary or useful.

And, in its Easter 2006 statement,[102] there is a further interesting point – minor, perhaps, but possibly symbolic – in terms of traditional Republican ideology: it puts the onus on the Irish government (which it refers to as "the Irish government" rather than the terms "Dublin government" or "Free State government" that it would have used 20 years before) to "promote an end to partition and to create the conditions for the unity and independence of Ireland". The IRA seems to have given up the mantle that it believed it inherited in 1922.

There is an interesting element to the IRA abandonment of violence that sets it apart from the RAF's "this isn't going to get us anywhere and there are no viable alternatives, so lets shut up shop" abandonment. And it relates to the importance of the secondary ideology. Apart from a 32-county socialist republic, which hasn't been mentioned as a policy item for at least ten years, the point of Irish national liberation for the Republican Movement was the creation of an independent and *democratic* 32-county republic. And the interesting element relates to the issue of majoritarianism and consent. If democracy is thought of by the Republican Movement primarily in purely majoritarian terms – that is, as not necessarily inclusive – then Unionist consent would not be necessary, either in terms of them being a "national minority" (as the traditional nationalist one-nation approach would have it) or in terms of them being ultimately outvoted in a demographic sectarian head-count.

However, there is evidence from the (more recent) analysed statements that some level of Unionist consent is seen as either pragmatically necessary for a "just and lasting peace", or even democratically required. Remember, for example, the statement that said: "Being marginalised, abandoned and disempowered is wrong for nationalists. It would also be wrong for unionists" (see note 80). This has important implications for justifications of violence. If in either or both of these perceptions (pragmatic necessity or democratic legitimacy) violence comes to be seen as an ineffective and/or illegitimate means, and, in the latter case, comes to be seen as illegitimate insofar as it contradicts the desired consequence that is the basis of the justificatory argument in the first place, then a change in the conception of what the desired consequences are can result in a re-

evaluation of the means. Perhaps this is what we have seen with regard to the Republican Movement.

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[1] Sean Boyne, 1st August 1996, *Jane's Intelligence Review*, reproduced at www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/ frontline/shows/ira/inside, accessed 2nd October 2006.

[2] From the cover lines of Rogelio Alonso, *The IRA and Armed Struggle* (London: Routledge 2006).

[3] From a Westminster speech by MP Roger Stott, 18th November 1997, reproduced at www.publications. parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmhansrd/vo971118/debtext/71118-18.htm.

[4] Miller, David (1998), "Nation and nationalism", in E. Craig (ed.) Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (London: Routledge). Retrieved 20th January 2003 from www.rep.routledge.com/article/S039.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Morgan, Hiram, *Tyrone's Rebellion* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1993), pp. 124-5. Other elements of the contemporary discourse also indicate that, at least among the elite classes, a distinction was made between Ireland as a nation and foreign nations. For example, in 1579, the demand that Hugh O'Donnell should "help defend Ireland against Englishmen" was made by Turlough Luineach O'Neill (Morgan, p. 118); a 1596 letter from Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell to the Spanish king refers to "the commonwealth of Ireland" (p. 210); in 1598, the loyalist Irish Council warned London that "this rebellion is now thoroughly sorted to an Irish war ... to shake off all English government and subtract the kingdom from Her Majesty" (p. 219); and Morgan refers to the use of a "faith and fatherland ideology to transcend regional particularism, ethnic divisions and factional loyalties to galvanise the war effort against foreign oppressors" (p. 221).

[9] See, for example, Owen McGee's *The IRB* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), Tim Pat Coogan's *The IRA* (London: Harper Collins, 2000) and *The Troubles* (London: Arrow, 1996), Sean Cronin's *Irish Nationalism: A History of Its Roots and Ideology* (Dublin: The Academy Press, 1980), Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie's *The Provisional IRA* (London: Corgi, 1988), J.

Bowyer Bell's *The Irish Troubles* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1993), and Liam Clarke's *Broadening the Battlefield: The H-Blocks and the Rise of Sinn Féin* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1987).

[10] This quote is from a Sinn Féin political education document entitled *Freedom*, published as a pamphlet in May 1991. The text is also available on www.sinnfein.org by clicking the link entitled "oldest political movement" on the introductory page and then clicking the link "Freedom" – accessed 5th January 2005. The document continues thus: "Northern Ireland (the Six Counties) represented the greatest land area in which Irish unionists could maintain a majority. The partition line first proposed had encompassed the whole province of Ulster (nine counties). Unionists rejected this because they could not maintain a majority in such an enlarged area. The partition of Ireland was merely an innovation of the British government's tried and trusted colonial strategy of divide and rule, used throughout its former colonial empire. However, while the British government had the single objective of 'protecting English interests', its strategy for achieving this created deeper, more acute and more bitter multiple divisions in Irish society than those previously fostered, and which, until then, had helped sustain British rule in Ireland. Partition did not only physically divide the national territory of Ireland. It spawned the Civil War in 1922, which has moulded politics in the 26-County state ever since. It made more acute the divisions between nationalists and unionists in the Six-County state, and between the populations of the two states. Not least, it created real and lasting divisions among nationalists themselves. Increasingly, partition has generated the foolish and self-interested ostrich mentality in the power structures of the two statelets, which seeks piecemeal treatment of the symptoms, through coercion and censorship, instead of root-and-branch treatment of the problem. Throughout the 19th century and until partition in this century, the British government provided its colonial rule in Ireland with a cover of 'democracy'. Like other colonial powers in continental Europe, which 'integrated' their colonies into the imperialist state, Britain 'integrated' Ireland into the 'United Kingdom' through the *Act of Union (1801)*, which made provision for Irish representation at the British parliament. In the changed conditions of a full-blown struggle for independence in 1920, new means for 'protecting British interests' had to be found together with a new 'justification' for the continuing British presence which that necessitated. The 'wishes' of Irish unionists in North East Ireland have provided that 'justification' since partition".

[11] From www.eelam.com/tamil_eelam.html, accessed 27th January 2003 and 12th September 2006. Another site, www.eelamweb.com/history/short, accessed 27th January 2003 and 12th September 2006, has a longer article with sections entitled "The early Tamils", "The early Sinhalese" and "Who came first?", with a historical analysis purporting to describe the ethnic make-up of the island from 2,500 years ago. The site's FAQ section includes the following: "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is the armed rebellion organisation fighting for the independence of Tamil Eelam. It is a unique organisation in the world in the following aspects. 1. Every cadre wear a cyanide capsule around the neck and commit suicide to avoid divulging vital

information. 2. LTTE is the only rebel organisation which has naval and air wings known as Sea Tigers and Air Tigers respectively. 3. All the cadre wear uniform."

[12] Quoted in Cronin, op. cit., p. 125.

[13] *The Green Book* is published in full as an appendix to Martin Dillon's *The Dirty War* (London: Arrow 1990), pp. 482-496.

[14] Dillon, op. cit., p. 84.

[15] Bishop and Mallie, op. cit., p. 285.

[16] Coogan, Tim Pat, *The IRA*, (Fontana; 1980), pp. 468-9.

[17] "Interview with Sean Mac Stiofáin" in the Revolutionary Communist Group's publication *Hands Off Ireland!*, no. 10, April 1980, pp.10-15. It is possible that Mac Stiofáin's remarks were tailored towards the magazine's audience, but very similar revolutionary socialist style rhetoric was being widely used in Republican Movement publications by then.

[18] "I, for one, regard the revolution in all these countries [Algeria, Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, Aden, among others] as one revolutionary struggle – the struggle against capitalism and its offspring – imperialism and racism. And the revolutionary in Ireland – his first duty is to promote the revolution in Ireland and by doing so he is helping the revolution all over the world. If only by good example! Revolutionary success in any part of the world is a success for all because it is going to encourage revolutionaries elsewhere to take action. So I regard our struggle in Ireland, the struggle of the Basque people, the struggle in Zimbabwe, in Southern Africa, in Southern America – anywhere in the world – as one struggle. Our victory will be their victory. Any defeat that any revolutionary movement suffers is a defeat for us all. And I'm quite sure that we will see more and more co-operation between revolutionary movements"; Sean Mac Stiofáin, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[19] Ibid, p. 10.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid, p. 11.

[22] Ibid, p. 13.

[23] Ibid, p. 11.

[24] Ibid, p. 12.

[25] Ibid, p. 14.

[26] The letter is Appendix XIV in Cronin, op. cit., pp. 328-329.

[27] Comments on IRA ideology by Seán Hegarty, a Republican prisoner in Belfast from 1954-1962, Appendix XVII in Cronin, op. cit., p. 335.

[28] An "IRA source" quoted in Dillon, op. cit., p. 83.

[29] Whyte, John, *Interpreting Northern Ireland* (Oxford: OUP, 1990), pp. 134-136.

[30] O'Conaill, Daithi, "Easter 1916 remembered", *Republican News*, 8th April 1978, p. 12. *Republican News* was the official newspaper of the Republican Movement published in Belfast.

[31] "March to victory in Derry", *An Phoblacht*, 16th September 1978, pp. 4 and 8: "From the outset, ours was a revolutionary struggle ... We aim to establish a new nation, raise up a free people, in strength and security, their right inalienably rooted in the actual possession and control of the

Irish nation and all within it." *An Phoblacht* was the official newspaper of the Republican Movement published in Dublin.

[32] Derry Sinn Fein statement, *Republican News*, 7th October 1978, p. 5. The statement in the previous note is also reprinted in this issue.

[33] Letter from Tommy McKearney, who took part in the first (1980) hunger strike, *AP/RN*, 26th July 1980, p. 8. At the 1980 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, reported in the 8th November issue of *AP/RN*, the then Sinn Féin president, Ruairi O'Bradaigh, proposed and won a motion to retain the Eire Nua policy, albeit with an amendment that "anyone holding reservations about federal policy should document what they propose as an alternative and that it be circulated for discussion". The federal policy was finally dropped at the 1982 ard fheis, contrary to O'Bradaigh and vice-president O'Conaill's preferences.

[34] Flynn, Phil, "What is Republicanism?", *AP/RN*, 11th October 1980, pp. 6-7.

[35] Indeed, on 8th November 1980, *AP/RN*'s front-page headline was "Bond of continuity" and its opening lines were "the historical bond of continuity between the seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation and today's seven H-Block hunger strikers was symbolically sealed at the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis ... when James Connolly's daughter ... clasped the hand of a recently released 'blanket man' ... and congratulated the H-Block men on their stance." The stressing of this continuity of struggle is a very important recurring theme in the Republican Movement's justificatory literature. Another example is the report of the appearance at the 1985 ard fheis (reported in *AP/RN*, 7th November 1985, p. 1) of "veteran republican Dan Gleeson", who joined the IRA in 1917 and who "has been unwavering in his support for the Republican Movement ever since". *AP/RN* said that Gleeson's appearance emphasised "the unbroken chain which links earlier phases of the republican struggle to today's struggle for freedom". A similar example can be seen in *AP/RN*, 18th October 1984, p. 9.

[36] "To sum up, then. Republicans must act as the mass organiser of the people, to lead them in agitationary activities on issues such as land, for better working, living and social conditions; showing them in all these fights that their enemies are their landlords and their gombeen exploiters banded together into the establishment"; Phil Flynn, op. cit., p. 7.

[37] *AP/RN*, 14th February 1981, p. 2. The IRA statement was released on the 6th February.

[38] *AP/RN*, 25th April 1981, p. 13.

[39] Sean Mac Stiofáin, op. cit., p. 10.

[40] Dowling, Peter, "Lessons of Malvinas", *AP/RN*, 8th July 1982, pp. 6-7.

[41] "There are, of course, vital differences between the South Atlantic war and the Northern Irish war, which have meant that although the Brits can beat the Argentinians in a conventional war over the Falklands/Malvinas within 13 weeks, they cannot beat the IRA in a guerrilla war lasting 13 years [...] The answer is purely one of different political constraints in any particular context dictating what level of state violence is considered productive or counter-productive."

[42] *AP/RN*, 28th April 1983, p. 1.

[43] Ibid, p. 3.

[44] *AP/RN*, 12th May 1983, p. 1.

[45] For example, in an address at a hunger strike commemoration that year, Martin McGuinness spoke of the way the Republican Movement has changed since the strikes and of "rediscovered political consciousness" and politicisation. He went on to say that: "An examination of other revolutionary struggles proves that only through armed resistance, coupled with clear and principled political direction, can working class people achieve the right to participate in the decisions that affect their destiny", *AP/RN*, 12th May 1983, p. 8.

[46] Speech at the annual Wolfe Tone commemoration at Bodenstown, Kildare, reprinted in *AP/RN*, 23rd June 1983, pp. 6-7.

[47] *AP/RN*, 17th November 1983, p. 7.

[48] Ibid. As an interesting aside, a decision was made to change the declaration in the party's constitution that it based its objectives on "Christian principles" and replace it with the words "Irish republican socialist principles in accordance with the Easter Proclamation of 1916 and the democratic programme of the First Dáil in 1919".

[49] *AP/RN*, 8th November 1984, p. 6.

[50] Ibid.

[51] *AP/RN*, 5th January 1984, pp. 4-5.

[52] This interview took place in the context of the fallout from the December 1983 Harrods bomb attack that killed six people, including three police officers, and must be seen as a form of political damage limitation. Indeed, there was some talk that the IRA would "discipline" the operatives involved in the attack (as reported in the *Irish Press* on the 29th December 1983).

[53] Published in *AP/RN* on 26th April 1984, p. 2.

[54] Published in *AP/RN* on 18th October 1984, pp. 3. The front-page splash on that issue went with the tabloid-esque headline "IRA blitz Brits".

[55] *AP/RN*, 8th November 1984, pp. 8-10.

[56] Whyte, op. cit., pp. 118-145.

[57] This theme is reiterated in a 1985 interview published in *AP/RN* on 8th August 1985, pp. 8-9. In that interview, Adams also denied that there were "dissensions" within the Republican movement: "dissent is quite normal ... but divisions or major splits do not exist". However, the issue of abstentionism was again an extremely controversial topic at the 1985 ard fheis, with a motion that it be viewed as a tactic rather than a principle (reported in *AP/RN*, 7th November 1985). Ard comhairle member Tom Hartley said that "there is a principle riding above all principles, and that is the principle of success ... because we republicans have no right to commit further generations of young people to the graves and the jails if we don't know how we're going to win this struggle." The motion was defeated, and abstentionism was restated. The Eire Nua policy was further amended and an O'Bradaigh-sponsored motion calling for the establishment of a "convention or parliament of Sinn Féin elected representatives" (which ard comhairle member Sean Crowe described as "appropriate for 1918" but "totally unrealistic" in 1985) and another motion calling for the return of the federal policy were "overwhelmingly defeated". In 1986, there was a major split in the movement between the traditionalist O'Bradaigh/O'Conaill faction and the Adams leadership over the issue of abstentionism in the

South, leading to the establishment of the breakaway party Republican Sinn Féin and, it is alleged, the so-called Continuity IRA.

[58] Oration at the funeral of two IRA members killed in December 1984; reported in *AP/RN*, 13th December 1984, p. 2.

[59] Reported in *AP/RN*, 29th January 1987.

[60] Speech by Dublin South West candidate, John Noonan; ibid, pp. 8-9.

[61] *AP/RN*, 12th February 1987, p. 2.

[62] Interview in *AP/RN*, 26th February 1987, p. 4. He also said: "Abstentionism is a historical tradition and is understandable in this context. It is not a policy nor a basis for policy. It does not even have the pretence of a strategy..."

[63] Available at www.sinnfein.ie/peace/keydocs, accessed 18th September 2006.

[64] Adams, Gerry (1986), "A bus ride to independence and socialism", speech to Sinn Fein internal conference, published as part of a pamphlet entitled *Signposts to Independence and Socialism* (Dublin: Sinn Fein Publicity Department, 1988), and reproduced on http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/sf/ adams88, accessed 21st September 2006.

[65] He also, interestingly, said that the movement needed to avoid "ultra-republican positions" such as public unconditional support for the IRA and implied that abstentionism was such a position

[66] *The Sinn Féin/SDLP Talks*, available at www.sinnfein.ie/peace/keydocs, accessed 18th September 2006, p. 4.

[67] Ibid., p. 5.

[68] *An Camcheachta: The Starry Plough*, issue 1, no. 1; the magazine is undated, but the content suggests it was published immediately before or during the Inter-Party Talks held in mid 1991 when Peter Brooke was Northern Secretary.

[69] Subtitled *A Summary Guide to the Sinn Fein Peace Proposal*, it is available at www.sinnfein.ie/ peace/keydocs, accessed 18th September 2006. It was published by Sinn Fein in October 1994, after the first IRA cessation.

[70] TUAS document, first published by the *Sunday Tribune* on 23rd April 1995, and available at http://cain. ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/tuas94.htm, accessed 21st September 2006. The CAIN archive (conflict archive on the internet), maintained at the University of Ulster, has a very comprehensive archive of documents relating to all the parties to the conflict in the North, including many IRA statements.

[71] Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[72] *Building a Permanent Peace in Ireland*, Sinn Fein Publicity Department, published 10th January 1996. Available at www.sinnfein.ie/peace/keydocs, accessed 18th September 2006. The document as a whole represents a very interesting contemporary summary of the Republican Movement's analysis of what it called "the past twenty-five years of conflict".

[73] Ibid.

[74] 7th April 1996; ibid.

[75] Adams, Gerry, "Bridging the gap", *The Irish Times*, 22nd February 1997; incorporated into the Sinn Fein document *The Peace Process: the Current Situation and Background*, published in October 1997 and reproduced on the website of the South Armagh Sinn Fein Burns and Moley Cumann at www.burnsmoley. com/text/articles, accessed 21st September 2006.

[76] Statement of 19th July 1997; ibid.

[77] Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ events/peace/docs/ai25697.htm.

[78] Joint statement issued by Gerry Adams and John Hume, 18th July 1997, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ events/peace/docs/ha180797.htm, accessed 5th October 2006.

[79] Subtitled *Freedom, Justice, Democracy, Equality, Constitutional Issues*, the document was Sinn Fein's submission to strands 1 and 2 of the peace talks, and, confusingly, shares its main title with the October 1994 document referred to in section 7 (see note 69).

[80] In the conclusion of the document, it states: "We recognise that a section of the Irish people cherish a British heritage. We do not seek to end the expression of this legitimate sense of identity. What we do seek is an end to British sovereignty, partition, and the denial of basic human and civil rights. When Irish Republicans talk about British interference and the British presence, we do not mean the Unionist section of the people of Ireland. Being marginalised, abandoned and disempowered is wrong for nationalists. It would also be wrong for unionists."

[81] Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[82] Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/hoa12198.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[83] Statement issued by the IRA in response to the 'Heads of Agreement' document, issued 21st January 1998. Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[84] IRA statement of 12th April 1998, reported at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/pp9899.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[85] Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[86] Interview with IRA spokesman, *AP/RN*, 3rd September 1998.

[87] Ibid. Other notable quotes from the interview are: "If the objective conditions exist for violent conflict, then such conflict will occur ... The challenge for everyone ... is to remove the causes of conflict" and: "We remain both optimistic and confident that we will achieve our objectives, a united and independent Ireland, a national democracy. Over many generations IRA volunteers have given their lives and their personal freedom for this cause. This particular phase of struggle has been the first which has passed unabated over successive generations. This unbroken pursuit of our objectives is testimony to the courage, commitment and discipline of both our volunteers and our supporters throughout this phase of struggle. That commitment remains intact. This year sees the 200th anniversary of the rebellion by the United Irishmen. Our vision remains as theirs, a free, independent and sovereign Ireland, a country where Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter

stand as equals. These have been the goals of successive generations of republicans. These are our goals. We are committed to their achievement."

[88] See, for example, the 1999 New Year statement and the statements of 31st March 1999, 21st July 1999, 15th February 2000, and 19th April 2000, all available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/ statements.htm.

[89] Statements of 17th November 1999 and 2nd December 1999, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[90] IRA New Year statement, *AP/RN*, 6th January 2000; also available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[91] Statement on decommissioning, 5th February 2000, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[92] All these issues have been raised, and phrases used, in some shape or form in IRA statements between February 2000 and December 2004. See, for example, the statements of 25th October 2000, 5th December 2000, 8th March 2001, 11th April 2001, 14th August 2001, 20th September 2001 (includes an extension of "sympathy to the people of the United States and especially to the family and friends of the victims of the deplorable attacks" on 11th September – 20 years before that, the Republican Movement might well have hailed the attacks as a valuable anti-imperialist blow), 23rd October 2001 (this statement illustrates the IRA perspective on the development of the decommissioning issue: "Decommissioning was no part of [the original cessation] ... At every opportunity, [the British and the Unionists] have used the issue of arms as an excuse to undermine and frustrate progress. It was for this reason that decommissioning was introduced to the process by the British government. It has been used since to prevent the changes which a lasting peace requires. In order to overcome this and to encourage the changes necessary for a lasting peace, the leadership of Oglaigh na hÉireann has taken a number of substantial initiatives."), 8th April 2002 (announcement of another IRA decommissioning "initiative": "the securing of a democratic settlement is not solely a task for Irish republicans..."), 16th April 2002, 30th October 2002, 9th January 2003, private statement to the Irish and British governments of 13th April 2003 (publicly released 6th May 2003), and 8th April 2004. All available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[93] 16th April 2002, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[94] Available at www.etext.org/Politics/Arm.The.Spirit/Guerrilla/Europe/Red.Army.Fraction/ march.1998.communique, accessed 1st September 2006, and at www.baader-meinhof.com/students/ resources/communique/engrafend.html, accessed 24th August 2000.

[95] Private statement to the Irish and British governments of 13th April 2003 (publicly released 6th May 2003), available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[96] Adams, Gerry, text of speech delivered on 21st October 2003 at the Balmoral Hotel, Belfast; available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/sf/ga211003.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[97] Statement of 9th December 2004, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[98] Statement of 6th May 2000, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[99] 6th January 2005, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[100] 2nd February 2005, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[101] IRA statement on the ending of the armed campaign, 28th July 2005, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

[102] 13th April 2006, available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/ira/statements.htm, accessed 21st September 2006.

Conclusion

As noted in Chapter 2, there can be a considerable degree of difficulty in attempting to determine, not only whether a *group* is primarily deontological or consequentialist *per se*, but also whether a given piece of rhetoric exemplifies a deontological or a consequentialist justification. However, when we broadly contrast the language and rhetoric of the anti-abortion militants and Islamic radicals with the language and rhetoric of the Red Army Faction and the Irish Republican Movement, we can see a marked difference in the tone of the justificatory statements. We can see that the two sets of groups seem to be looking at their actions from distinctly different perspectives.

It is probably the case that we cannot definitively determine whether or not a group predominantly exemplifies a particular form of justification until we observe the entire life cycle of a group – that is, we see if it moderates or abandons its violent tactics, and perhaps adopts alternative peaceful means, in the face of a dawning realisation that its concrete real-world objectives may not be achieved, or whether it continues to labour under a perceived moral imperative of punishment, retribution or divine justice. However, the justifications analysed in the cases of all four groups enable us to make some tentative conclusions, and these might be relevant in terms of extrapolation to other, similar groups.

The Christian and Islamic extremist examples seem to more clearly indicate the use of primarily deontological or non-consequentialist justifications – and the non-consequentialist nature of those justifications is the relevant thing: it means that they do not primarily justify their actions in terms of actually attainable real-world consequences.

Conversely, the tone of the justifications employed by the RAF and the IRA seem straightforwardly consequentialist, and to a large extent this is borne out by the fact that both groups voluntarily adapted or abandoned their use of violence when faced with a changing political context that either allowed them to recognise that their chosen means would be ineffective in the pursuit of their desired ends, or to realise that alternative peaceful political means were a realistic and preferable alternative. In both cases, of course, the nature of the desired end goals may have radically changed, and this may have facilitated this recognition.

With regard to the groups that seem to exemplify a more deontological form of justification, there is still the difficulty that no matter how spiritual or "other worldly" some ends are, there are usually another set of ends that are theoretically actually attainable. As noted in Chapter 3, one may never know whether one is truly acting in accordance with God's will, but shutting down an abortion clinic is at least a measurable agent-external outcome. So there may be an entangled thread of primary deontological and secondary consequentialist justifications. However, the issue is not so much whether there are consequentialist or agent-external end goals that could be achieved. Rather, the issue is whether the activities are perceived as the right thing to do regardless of whether those consequentialist end goals are really attainable.

Both the anti-abortion militants' and Osama bin Laden's justifications for the use of violence can be broadly labelled deontological/non-consequentialist – more deontological than consequentialist, at any rate. Of the two, the bin Laden examples tend to display a higher level of second-order consequentialist content. But this is somewhat mitigated by the sheer force of some of the non-consequentialist/ deontological statements, and this may more accurately indicate

the relative importance of the deontological as opposed to the consequentialist justification.

But I think we can say that, yes, different types of groups do tend to predominantly utilise justifications with different ethical bases. The question then is: does this have an impact on group behaviour in the long run? While that question cannot yet be definitively answered with regard to the Christian and Islamic extremists, it is possibly the case that the expression of moral duty through violent actions (rather than the instrumentally rational consideration of the relationship between means and ends) might lead such groups to persist in violent activity irrespective of the actual or even perceived attainability of agent-external actual consequences. But I think the question of whether groups that primarily exemplify a consequentialist basis for their justifications are likely to moderate or adapt their means given a realisation that the goals are unattainable has at least been partially resolved by the analysis of the changing nature of the justificatory rhetoric and the voluntary disbanding or cessation of armed activities by those groups discussed.

That is, it seems likely (both on *a priori* theoretical grounds and from the implications of the analyses in this work) that those groups that exemplify a consequentialist justificatory form are more likely to be amenable to conflict-resolution methods than those that exhibit primarily non-consequentialist justifications.

1. Lessons learned

The examples discussed in Chapter 3 seem to indicate that violent groups that are inspired by religion, and motivated by a particular interpretation of the moral

dictates of that religion, tend more towards the primary use of non-consequentialist or deontological forms of justification. If we could classify such groups as exemplifying primarily a non-consequentialist justificatory tendency, we might be able to identify a dichotomy with regard to justificatory approach between so-called "religious" groups and those that we might think are more likely to be secular. With regard to the Red Army Faction and the Provisional Irish Republican Movement, there have been clear adaptations of the means used to advance the desired goals – ceasefires, cessations of violent activity, and ultimate voluntary disbandment – and this seems to indicate that there is a consequentialist calculation at work concerning the relationship between ends and means. At the very least, it seems to indicate that the ends are more important than the means. The reasons for such an adaptation may lie in the realisation that:

- Violence will not lead to the achievement of their desired real-world objectives, and/or
- Current political conditions render the continued use of violence less effective than non-violent political action, and/or
- Violence has got the group as far along the road towards their ultimate demands as is possible, and/or
- The continued use of violence cannot be justified in conditions where non-violent political action seems capable of further advancing those demands.

If any of these reasons for an adaptation of means are verifiable, it would mean that there was a consequentialist calculation concerning the relationship between ends and means at work.

The analysis of the changing nature of both the RAF and IRA's justificatory literature bears out the conclusion that both groups recognised that the initially chosen means were unable to achieve the consequences sought. This is clearly indicative of a consequentialist justification. It involves the recognition that if the means are ineffective, the means should be discarded.

The last few RAF statements reiterated their commitment to their goals but recognised that the use of violence in the pursuit of those goals would not work, so political violence should be abandoned in favour of other means that might be better suited towards the achievement of those goals. This is one of the clearest indications of the consequentialist consideration of the likelihood of the present means achieving the desired goals, and of the concomitant undesirability – indeed, consequentialist irrationality – of continuing to engage in violent action. Indeed, the continued use of violence would be unjustifiable in consequentialist terms, because violence in pursuit of unattainable goals cannot be a good in itself.

The conclusions regarding the Irish Republican Movement must necessarily be more tentative with regard to the possibility of generalising any lessons learned from its case to other nationalist or national-liberation movements. This is because of their apparent, and until relatively recently often proclaimed, adoption of socialism as their secondary ideology. As discussed in Chapter 5, determining whether the justification for political violence used by a national liberation movement is primarily consequentialist or non-consequentialist might well depend on what the secondary/subsidiary ideology is.

With regard to the IRA, the main justificatory form tended towards the consequentialist, but any generalisation about other nationalist movements might be skewed by the fact that, for much of the last 30 years, they employed, in

parallel, the rhetoric of revolutionary leftist anti-imperialism as well as a more traditional nationalistic rhetoric. However, it is clear that, from relatively early on, the movement as a whole decided that it should involve itself in a more diverse set of activities and political engagements than simple and traditional armed struggle. And the decision to engage more fully in electoral politics, alongside continuing political violence, represented the same sort of consequentialist calculation regarding the relationship of means to ends and the efficacy of those means that we saw with the Red Army Faction.

The Republican Movement accepted the possibilities of a parallel electoral strategy. Ultimately, this was to become, first, their dominant strategy, and then their only strategy. This was a process whereby a movement that had traditionally seen the use of violence as the primary means of attaining its political objectives ultimately realised (or was persuaded) that violence had outlived its usefulness in terms of achieving those desired goals. And this is classically consequentialist: the means used must be assessed, and continually assessed, in the light of whether they are conducive to the attainment of the desired ends – if other forms of political activity are seen to be effective, then political violence would be redundant as a tactic.

2. Further research

Many issues that need further research have been raised by each chapter in this thesis. Of the aspects of this work that have raised obvious questions and issues for further research we have:

- **What is the relationship between consequentialism and deontology?** A more detailed and systematic examination of the relationship between

consequentialism and deontology/non-consequentialism is needed. A more comprehensive specification of the relationship between these two ethical approaches, in real and everyday life, would be crucial in attempting a more precise disentangling of different groups' different justificatory arguments.

- **What is the relationship between nationalism and the secondary ideology?** There is a need for research on the relationship between nationalism and the (necessary) secondary ideology. There is always a secondary ideology. It seems likely that, given the primary imperative of "liberating the nation", the form of societal and/or economic arrangements that a particular group envisages that the liberated nation will ultimately have may reflect on the justification used for violence in pursuit of this end. Again, a national-liberation movement that envisages the establishment of a theocracy after the expulsion of the occupying power may be expected to employ a justification based on different ethical bases than movements that envisage a liberal democracy after independence. But this needs to be, first, theoretically articulated at greater length, and then empirically tested.

- **How far are the conclusions concerning the groups discussed in this work generalisable to other similar groups?** A third avenue of future research raised, is whether or not the characterisation and conclusions of the groups analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 are generalisable to other groups of their type. With regard to the Irish Republican Movement, that question is related to the question of the secondary ideology discussed above, but are the conclusions with regard to the revolutionary left generalisable?

- **What about the other groups in the typology?** The most important issue, in my view, would be to extend the relatively limited scope of this research work to encompass the other four types in the eightfold typology outlined in Chapter 2. The purpose of this sort of analysis is not only to find out more about why the members of any one particular politically violent group believe that what they are doing is justified or right, or just to understand the inner logic of their justificatory arguments, but to do so in a comparative sense. And this would require further research of the justificatory literature of a very wide range of groups. As noted earlier, the results of such a systematic focus might provide insights into issues such as the amenability of a particular group or type of group to various types of conflict resolution, the possibility of negotiation and compromise, and the likely longevity of their campaign of violence. So, if it becomes clear that a broadly consequentialist group might eventually realise or be persuaded that the outcomes it desires are impossible to attain, will it cease violent activity and either embrace other avenues of political action or disband? And, conversely, what about the amenability of a non-consequentialist/ deontological group to such persuasion? This study has provided some preliminary answers to these questions in relation to a relatively limited range of groups, but more needs to be known. The issue of whether most contemporary political violence is carried out by groups whose mode of justification implies that they are not amenable to negotiated settlements or compromise is surely important to both the theory and practice of conflict resolution. The type of analysis in this study can also be seen as representing a preliminary, exploratory and ground-clearing framework for

the possible coding of a future content analysis of politically violent groups' justificatory literature. As well as confirming whether groups that exemplify a particular mode of justification are likely to be more amenable to different forms of conflict resolution, such a content analysis could address issues such as whether groups with one justificatory form are more likely to engage in large-scale attacks, attacks primarily on civilians and indiscriminate attacks, and whether groups that exemplify a particular mode of justification kill and injure more people than groups that exemplify the other mode.

3. Summing up

A couple of quotes may serve to best summarise what my endeavour has been:

> The fundamental contradiction the terrorists must deal with is that while they deliberately employ what we in fact regard as terrorist violence, they characterize their actions as something else. While a criminal may accept that he is indeed a criminal, a terrorist goes to extraordinary lengths to deny he is a terrorist.[1]

And, in the same article, originally published in 1987:

> Much research has been devoted to examining what terrorists have done in the past and to identifying trends for predicting what they might do in the future. Less attention, however, has been focused on terrorist motivations, mindset or indeed, on *terrorists'* self-perception. By using the primary materials provided by the terrorists themselves, that is, memoirs, statements, interviews and communiqués, much information about the terrorist mindset and decision-making can be gleaned.[2]

That is a better summary of what I have tried to do in this work, using the prism of ethical theory, than I would have written myself. I believe that this may prove to be a valuable approach in both theoretical and analytical terms, and I hope that its implications may ultimately be valuable in the real world of conflict resolution.

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[1] Cordes, Bonnie, "When terrorists do the talking: reflections on terrorist literature", in David Rapoport (ed.), *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, (London: Frank Cass, 1988) p. 150.

[2] Ibid.

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