UNDER-INVESTIGATED TOPICS
IN
TERRORISM RESEARCH

Special Issue
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Colleagues and Friends:

It is our pleasure to introduce "Under-Investigated Topics in Terrorism Research" - a special issue of *Perspectives on Terrorism*.

This issue is the first in a series designed to further the discourse surrounding the state of terrorism research. To open this series, it seemed appropriate to explore a set of topics that have been identified by esteemed participants in the Terrorism Research Initiative as in need of specific consideration for future debate and study.

It is imperative that we review and revisit the basis of our current conclusions through analysis of the underlying principles that govern our past and present beliefs. This issue seeks to draw attention to specific topics of concern as well as to the need to re-evaluate commonly held beliefs and attitudes present in today's environment.

Each manuscript published in this issue examines a unique and burgeoning topic in the field of terrorism studies. From local to global, the impact of our understanding of these under-investigated topics cannot be underestimated. We must put our efforts into comprehending each component of these pressing issues to instill rigor and vitality into our research and the policies that may reflect our findings.

We are excited to feature these authors and articles in this special issue and hope that you find value therein. Thank you for your support, and enjoy the publication.

Sincerely,
The *Perspectives on Terrorism* Staff

The Global War on Terror and State Terrorism

MICHAEL STOHL

While it is often proclaimed that the events of 9/11 changed "everything," it is important to stress that even more than the carnage and impact of that day, it has been the response of the Bush administration and its impact on multiple audiences around the world which have been more important than the al-Qaeda attacks in shaping the post 9/11 world. As Stohl (2008) argues, despite the etymological roots and historical employment of violence and terrorism by the state against its own citizens scholars who consider themselves experts on "terrorism" rarely consider the violence perpetrated by the state against its own population or those of states beyond its borders. This also results in databases for terrorism research which in addition to their many other problems do not include the state's use of terror and thus operationalize 'out' the study of state terror. In the case of evaluating the Bush administration and terror the primary foci have been upon the numbers and possibilities of attacks by al-Qaeda and other organizations identified as part of the global war on terror and the state of al-Qaeda as an organization and/or network. The focus of scholarly concern on the data of terrorism has been concerned with the quality of the reported state department provided data on insurgent attacks and not with the absence of reported incidents of state terror (see for example Krueger and Laitin 2004).

Much of the Bush administration's response to 9/11 has focused on (a) criticism of the choice to fight a "Global War on Terrorism," (b) the concentration on military power, (c) the choices made in the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan and then (d) linking Saddam Hussein to the war on terrorism and attacking Iraq. Each of these policy critiques arise out of the choice the Bush administration made to pursue a war-fighting rather than criminal justice approach to counterterrorism. The critiques then focus on the logic behind choosing to go to war in Iraq and how the war has been mismanaged and; they often only secondarily confront the inability (or unwillingness) of the Bush administration to differentiate among terrorists and their motivations, geographic foci and targets. For its part, the administration, which came into office believing that rogue states and their sponsorship of terrorism were the key to the terrorism problem (see for example Condoleezza Rice's 2000 Foreign Affairs article laying out the administration's

foreign policy assumptions), continues to justify its decision to attack Iraq as part of the Global War on Terrorism. Thus, their policy choices remain consistent with their pre 9/11 beliefs on confronting terrorism.

The Bush administration's counterterrorism strategy was initiated in October 2001 with the official launching of Operation Enduring Freedom and was followed eighteen months later by the attack on Iraq in what was dubbed Operation Iraqi Freedom. As has been noted previously (Stohl and Stohl 2007), the strategic approach for which the administration has opted, i.e. counterterrorism as war, does not recognize the difference between terrorism and other forms of violence in that it does not recognize the core communicative role that the violence of terrorism and counterterrorism plays. There has been much recognition that the choices made by the administration with respect to its willingness to challenge long standing principles of American military and legal policy such as the Geneva conventions and the use of torture, the CIA policy of rendition, as well as the unintended consequences of the scandal at Abu Ghraib have all diminished the standing of the United States in the eyes of much of the world's public. U.S. policy makers seem to have reinvented the logic of the 1950 Hoover Commission to justify policies and tactics that would "normally" be considered outside the bounds of acceptable behavior justifications, which would certainly appeal to Dostoevsky's brooding brothers Smerdyakov and Ivan Karamazov who concluded that "if there is no God, all behavior is permissible."

But what has not been examined closely is the relationship between these choices and the subsequent increase in both human rights violations and state repression in states that the United States has recruited into its War on Terror. Because scholars of terrorism have seen state violence and terrorism as outside the bounds of terrorism studies they do not consider how the choices in the Bush administration's counterterrorism strategy enable, acquiesce to or ignore the violence of the recruited states and this has deleterious effects not only for the populations that are repressed but also the counterterrorism efforts of the United States.

To pursue its strategic choices the United States engaged in coalition building, creating the Global Coalition Against Terrorism (http://www.state.gov/coalition/12669.htm) and as a key component of that coalition building, dramatically altered its arms sales and arms sales policies as well as providing significant diplomatic praise to its new partners for their assistance in the global war against terrorism. I will argue that a direct consequence of this strategy has been an increase in state repression and state terror. In addition, the prosecution of the GWOT in this manner has had the clearly unintended consequence of further alienating the very audiences that the US requires to support its goals if

its "war on terrorism" is to have any chance of success in the long term. The material and diplomatic alterations in US policy and the decision calculus of states are the most important nexus to consider in government choices to engage in state terrorism.   In the context of state terrorism, it is important to examine the consequences of the United States decision to build this coalition, not only in terms of its impact on confronting al-Qaeda and reducing the threat of terrorism to the United States, but also the impact that such a strategy and its implementation have on the conditions within the states that became members of the coalition.

Duvall and Stohl (1983) and Stohl (1984) explored the considerations that states may make in choosing to employ terror against their own citizens and to assist other states to do so. The underlying argument was that state decision makers pursued what Weiner (1972) refers to as an "Expectancy X Value" theory or expected utility theory of motivation in which "the direction and intensity of behavior is a function of the expectation that certain actions will lead to the goal, and the incentive value of the goal object." The argument assumes that an actor behaves in accordance with a basic calculation which consists of three main elements: (1) the benefits, that the actor would receive from some desired state of affairs; (2) the actor's beliefs about the probability with which the desired state of affairs would be brought about if the actor were to engage in a particular action; and (3) the actor's beliefs about the probable costs, or negative consequences that it would have to bear as a result of its engaging in that action. It assumes therefore that the greater the relative expected utility of terrorist action for an actor as compared to other forms of governance, the greater is the probability that the actor will engage in terrorist action.

When governments consider the costs of engaging in terrorist behaviors, two kinds of costs can be distinguished, response costs and production costs. *Response costs* are those costs which might be imposed by the target group and/or sympathetic or offended bystanders. The bystanders in the foreign-policy realm may include domestic and foreign audiences, while the target in international as in domestic affairs may be wider than the attacking party may have intended. When governments consider various means of governance, they are also attentive to the expected responses of others. What others likely will do in reaction affects the utility of a particular strategy.   Most relevant to a consideration of terrorism are what might be called punitive or retributive costs imposed by the target group and/or sympathetic or offended bystanders. Governments are sensitive to the costs imposed by other governments for their behaviors. Foreign government diplomatic condemnations, sanctions, trade embargoes etc. push governments to caution or secrecy in terms of their "unacceptable" behaviors, such as state terrorism, repression and other forms of

human rights violations.

In discussions of insurgent terrorists it is often remarked that these terrorists attempt to make themselves invulnerable. There are at least two means to this end. One is inaccessibility. Retaliators may know in general, or even in particular, who the terrorist is but be unable to locate him. The anonymity of refugee camps or urban areas, and physical mobility provide this inaccessibility for insurgent terrorists. Insurgents seek safe havens amongst supporters or within populations (or states) which are unwilling to confront them and make the calculation to acquiesce to the presence of terrorists within their midst. One of the key elements of any counterterrorism strategy is the struggle to convince populations that the costs of offering safe haven – or simply allowing safe havens – are greater than the cost of assisting governments in eliminating such havens.

In general, we don't think of governments and governmental decision makers as inaccessible in these terms, except to the extent that they completely insulate themselves from popular contacts, and to the degree that they are immune to international pressure. They tend to rely more on the second means of invulnerability, that is, secrecy of action. State terrorism can often be expected to be covert action, because in this way the government effectively reduces its vulnerability to retaliation even below its vulnerability to the (otherwise lesser) response costs expected for other means of governance. This means that, in general, state terrorism will not have "publicity of its cause" as an objective (This does not mean that the government wishes the "terror" to be unknown, but rather that the government does not publicize its role and relies on the communication of the threat through word of mouth and rumors). Also, it means that as public accessibility to governmental officials is greater, and/or as regime vulnerability to international pressure is greater, terrorism is more likely to be secretive or carried out by paramilitaries whose connections to the government are officially denied.

Production costs are the costs of taking the action regardless of the reactions of others. In addition to the economic cost - paying the participants, buying weapons and the like – there is the psychological cost of behaving in a manner which most individuals, under normal conditions, would characterize as unacceptable.

The psychological costs that an actor can expect from perpetrating violence on an incidental, instrumental, victim involves two conjoining factors. The first factor is the extent to which human life is valued (or conversely, the strength of internalized prohibitions against violence in general). The second is the extent to which the victim can be or has been dehumanized in the mind of the violent actor. Where moral/normative prohibitions are weak and especially where vic-

tims can be viewed in other than human terms, the self-imposed costs of terrorist actions are apt to be low and hence the choice of terrorist actions more frequent (Duvall and Stohl, 1983, p. 209).

The extent to which victims and potential victims can be dehumanized is affected by two important variables (for an extended discussion of this point see the seminal piece by Herbert Kelman, 1973). The first is the perceived social distance between the government and the victim population. The second is the extent to which action is routinely and bureaucratically authorized, so that personal responsibility is perceived, by all actors in the decisional chain, to be lower for governments (I) in a conflict situation with those they define as "inferior" and/or (II) with a highly bureaucratized coercive machinery. In the context of the global coalition, the United States identified al-Qaeda as an organization that operated in "more than sixty countries." Stohl and Stohl (2007) have critiqued the administration's use of the network designation through which organizational "links" were transformed into organizational control and which obscured the differing organizational goals, recruitment patterns and tactical and operational coordination. States however, were happy to request assistance or to be asked to accept assistance from the United States which would aid them in rooting out al-Qaeda and the designated "al-Qaeda organizational affiliate" from within their states. al-Qaeda (and violent jihadis in general) was characterized as apocalyptic and hateful, devoid of reasonable political aims, interested only in death and destruction and thus incapable of rational thought or political bargaining.

Since, from the administration's view, these terrorists and their organizations are only interested in death and destruction, the obvious strategic conclusion is that they must be eliminated because they cannot be neutralized or moderated. Thus, in Kelman's terms, the identification of the political opponents, minority groups and other terrorists as al-Qaeda served the function of increasing the perceived social distance between the government and the victim population for the government itself but even more importantly perhaps for the external "publics" in this case, the United States government and population (and others in the West) and thus provided for a reduction in response costs as well. Thus, all things being equal, a reduction in either or both production and response costs should increase the expected utility of the choice of state repression and/or terrorism by states.

We would therefore expect that increasing U.S. assistance to states in the Global Coalition against terrorism which have identified themselves as having terrorism problems linked to al-Qaeda should show declining human rights situations and increases in state repression and terror. Further, the communica-

tion of U.S. approval for the actions of such states should serve to reduce support for the United States within those countries, as populations there (and elsewhere) recognize the role that U.S. support for these repressive states plays in their ability to engage in repression and state terror. Thus, beyond those states that have received material support, states whose repressive policies have been given support are noticed and are likely to bring negative responses to the United States over time and thus reduce the ability of the United States to mobilize these populations against the terrorists the U.S. seeks to confront.

These important consequences of counterterrorism policy thus far have received much less consideration than warranted by their implications and we should briefly consider why. First, many scholars continue to have difficulty with the concept of state terrorism – except as it is applied to illegitimate rulers or non-democratic regimes. Violence by legitimate states tends to be considered well within the legitimate practices of the state and hence not terrorist in nature. Sproat noted in 1991 "As Crelinstein phrased it, 'the legitimacy and power of the state tend to cloak any overt forms of (its) violence in different guises, such as arrest instead of abduction . . . imprisonment instead of hostage taking, execution instead of murder,' and internationally coercive diplomacy instead of blackmail."

In addition, the discussions that have taken place about violations of the Geneva conventions and the use of torture with respect to the Bush administration in general focus on either the ticking bomb question or the issue of violations of law and the expectations of the behavior of democratic states rather than on the repressive states who join the coalition. The behavior of other national states who are "helping" the U.S. in the global war against terrorism and domestic conditions within those states has not been a traditional concern of "realist" scholars or political commentators who have no expectations that these states "should" behave better. Further, both international relations scholars and scholars of terrorism and counterterrorism have been far more concerned with hard rather than soft power (Nye 2008) and do not think in terms of multiple global audiences in the contemporary global communication and media environment. Thus, they do not normally consider the role of public diplomacy in counterterrorism. It is time to recognize that not only is the whole world watching, it is watching the whole world.

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Two Neglected Areas of Terrorism Research:
Careers after Terrorism and How Terrorists Innovate

LEONARD WEINBERG

I s it possible there are aspects of terrorism or terrorist violence that have not been investigated or remain under-investigated? At first glance the answer would have to be probably not. Few subjects in recent history have attracted as much attention by journalists, scholars, public officials, and members of the general public in various countries. Demonstrating this claim is not all that difficult. The library at the university where I work contains almost five thousand books on the topic. When I log on to Google and search under the heading "terrorism", the result is approximately fifty million entries! Given this extraordinary outpouring of work, how could any uninvestigated area exist?

I think there are at least two subjects that should benefit from far more attention than they have received. The first concerns the long-term effects of involvement in terrorist violence on those who have retired, in one way or another, from active participation in terrorism. The second subject involves identifying how terrorists innovate, how they adapt (or not) to changing conditions. The first topic is largely academic of interest to social scientists and historians. The second should compel the attention of all those with an interest in understanding how terrorist organizations function.

I.   It is true that Dr. George Habash, founder and leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine recently passed away in his late '70s. But by and large terrorism is an activity for the young. There are notable exceptions however. Dr. Habash and Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri devoted most of their adult lives to terrorist activities. A relative handful of individuals have begun careers in terrorism later in life. Ulrike Meinhof, one of the founders of Germany's Red Army Fraction, was middle-aged at the beginning of her career in terrorism. In Italy, the multi-millionaire publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli founded his own terrorist band, the Partisan Action Group, while in his '40s.[1] Nor are these older terrorists invariably leaders. During the 1970s the Red Brigades organization in Turin had a record-keeper, known as "La Nonna", who was arrested by the anti-terrorism police at the age of 77. (Before she was taken into the police van, "La Nonna" gave a clenched fist salute to journalists and passersby.)

In terms of central tendency though, terrorist groups draw on youthful individuals. According to Marc Sageman's data, the average age of al-Qaeda's core membership was about 25, young adults in other words.[2] There is also some evidence derived from a number of studies suggesting that the longer a terrorist group persists, the younger its recruits become.[3] It also seems to be true that later generations of terrorist recruits are on average less ideologically or religiously sophisticated than members of the first or founding generation. The new and younger recruits are typically "looking for action" without a clear understanding of the long-term purposes behind the action.

Naturally a significant number of terrorists are killed or kill themselves in the course of their operations. But many, perhaps most, survive either by evading capture or by being released from prison or detention facilities after serving sentences for terrorism-related crimes. Since we are dealing with a population of largely young adults the question becomes how do they spend the balance of their working lives?

There is selective evidence based on the careers of various terrorist celebrities. In Northern Ireland, Gerry Adams now heads the Sinn Fein, a peaceful political party, after having been a long-time leader of the paramilitary Irish Republican Army (IRA). In Italy, Antonio Negri resumed his career teaching political philosophy at the University of Padua after serving a prison sentence for his involvement in terrorism during the country's 'years of lead' in the 1970s. Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir both served as Israeli prime ministers despite having been leaders of the Irgun and the LEHI (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel) earlier in their careers. In apartheid South Africa, Joe Slovo served as the head of the "Spear of the Nation", the paramilitary wing of the African National Congress. Under his leadership, the "Spear" carried out a number of bombings and other terrorist attacks in the country's major cities. Slovo went on to serve as a cabinet minister in Nelson Mandela's first post-apartheid government. Yassir Arafat ended his public career as president of the Palestinian Authority. But of course he began it as head of Fatah, a Palestinian terrorist organization.

In the United States, Bernadine Dohrn, once on the FBI's Most Wanted list because of her involvement with the Weathermen now teaches law at Northwestern University. Her husband, also a Weathermen leader, teaches sociology at the University of Illinois' Chicago Circle campus. Mark Rudd, another central figure in the Weathermen, has taken to the lecture circuit. He currently makes public appearances along with the retired FBI agent who helped track him down during the terrorist phase of Rudd's career. Angela Davis, who was also listed on the Most Wanted list because of her terrorist involvements with the

Black Panthers, presently teaches political science at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Based on these examples, readers might very well get the impression that leadership in terrorist groups early in adult life is a pathway to later success in public service and academic life. The question though, is how representative are these terrorist celebrities of the general population of former terrorists? The celebrities number in the dozens, while the general terrorist population must number in the thousands.

There is an evolving body of research work on withdrawal from terrorist organizations. Does withdrawal involve a process of de-radicalization, for example? How are former terrorists re-integrated into society, if they are?[4] So far as I am aware, however, there are no studies which evaluate the long-term effects of membership in terrorist organizations. Is there an enduring impact on the lives of individuals who were involved in terrorism as young adults?

The reasons for this apparent inattention by scholars are not hard to come by. Out of necessity, terrorism research has tended to focus on the here and now. If terrorism is a crucial problem, the inclination is strong to pursue immediate solutions, e.g. how can terrorists be encouraged to desist, rather than long-term consequences. Second, there is a methodological issue: how would researchers go about obtaining a reasonably representative sample of individuals who were involved in terrorist violence long after they had turned to other pursuits? Some terrorist organizations keep membership records, these days on hard drives, but others do not. If terrorists have served prison sentences or otherwise been identified by the authorities it should be possible to develop a sample of these individuals and seek to interview them. It is not inconceivable that former terrorists would be reluctant to subject themselves to the questions of interviewers out of a desire to put their pasts behind them. On the other hand, there is some evidence that terrorists, especially those in prison, are pleased by the attention and enjoy telling their stories to serious investigators.[5] The problems in developing systematic information about the impact of terrorist experiences on the later lives of those involved are serious but probably not insurmountable.

It would certainly be intriguing to know if terrorist activity as a young adult had any lasting impact on a person's later life and, if so, what these effects might be. Does the duration of the terrorist experience make a difference? Does the role in the organization make a difference, e.g. leaders versus followers, those who direct the violence compared to those who inflict it? Does the political goal of the terrorist organization make a difference, e.g. left versus right, nationalist, religious? At present I think the best we can do is infer answers

from evidence based on the experiences of individuals who had been involved in organizations which bear at least some resemblance to terrorist organizations such as criminal gangs and other semi-clandestine bands or, on the other hand, military units whose members were exposed to extreme danger in circumstances where the outcomes were uncertain.

II.   I am sure readers are well aware that a substantial literature has appeared concerning the threat of terrorist groups acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The dispersion of Sarin gas by Aum Shinrikyo in the Tokyo subway system in 1995 led various analysts to the conclusion that a threshold had been crossed and that more groups would employ WMD in the wake of this attack. Further, the prospect of nuclear-armed terrorists, with the likelihood of thousands of casualties, following the collapse of the Soviet Union ("loose nukes") and revelations about the entrepreneurship of the Pakistani engineer A. Q. Khan caused sufficient alarm to stimulate a new body of literature in itself.

Years have passed since the alarms were first sounded but there has been little by way of WMD or nuclear terrorism. Some have argued that the threat has been overblown.[6] This is not to say, of course, that terrorist violence has become less destructive. The al-Qaeda or al-Qaeda inspired attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, nightclubs on the island of Bali, public buildings in Casablanca, commuter trains in Madrid, U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, and the subway system in London left thousands dead. In none of these instances did the perpetrators use chemical, biological or radiological weapons. Rather they relied upon conventional devices used, at least in some cases, e.g. the 9/11 attacks, in new or unconventional ways. (Lest we forget, in 1995 Timothy McVeigh was able to destroy the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City and kill close to 200 people by using a truck bomb made of material, ammonium nitrate and fuel oil that anyone could buy at a hardware store.)

Given terrorists' failure or reluctance to use WMD, at least to date, and their almost exclusive reliance on the bomb and the gun, some analysts, especially those writing before 9/11, have come to the conclusion that terrorist groups rarely engage in innovative behavior. The same reliance on the tried and true also applies to how terrorist groups organize themselves and the tactics they employ in seeking to achieve their goals. Unlike conventional military establishments which are constantly seeking new types of weapons and new ways of using them, terrorist bands appear relatively conservative.[7]

But consider the following. Within the last two decades terrorist organizations in the Middle East, Russia and South Asia have adopted the suicide bombing as one of their principal means of attack. In the '60s and '70s terrorist groups were

typically organized vertically, with strict command and control hierarchies. In more recent times the tendency has been in the direction of what Marc Sageman calls "leaderless jihad", small bands operating independently of one another. They may be inspired by or take cues from but do not necessarily receive direct orders from key figures in the movement. And of course the Internet has become a crucial way by which terrorists communicate with one another, make propaganda for attentive publics and attract new members.

Given its importance, at least to my thinking, the amount of attention paid to how and why terrorist groups innovate has been quite limited. Recent efforts to answer these questions have been based on theories of cognitive and social psychology. Martha Crenshaw and Adam Dolnik seek to identify types of terrorist innovations and the conditions or problems which lead to change behavior.[8] Both agree that innovation is more than simply the appearance of new or creative ideas by terrorists but requires their application by the relevant groups to their operations. And both Crenshaw and Dolnik certainly agree that some terrorist groups are able to innovate while others are not -- in approximately the same way that some business firms and political organizations are able to innovate while others do not.

Crenshaw suggests we distinguish among strategic, tactical and organizational forms of innovation. For his part, Dolnik focuses on tactical and technological innovations. Strategic innovation, Crenshaw writes, "… involves significant points of novelty in the historical development of campaigns of armed resistance."[9] Strategic innovations require the adoption of new goals and new ways of seeking to achieve these goals. Here Crenshaw refers to the wave of kidnappings, particularly foreign diplomats and business executives in Latin America during the 1960s. In her estimation this was a means by which the various "urban guerrilla" groups could internationalize their revolutionary struggles. The decision by the PFLP leadership to attack targets in Europe from 1968 forward would also represent a strategic innovation. Tactical innovations for both Crenshaw and Dolnik involve changes in targeting and method, the means by which terrorist operations are carried out. The 1985 seizure of the cruise ship Achille Lauro by the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) might serve as an example. The development of suicide bombings in Lebanon during the 1980s would also serve as a major example.

Organizational innovation, according to Crenshaw, involves changes in group structure and institutions. She mentions the role played by the German Red Army Faction in the 1980s in the formation of an Anti-Imperialist Front with French and Italian revolutionary groups. We might also mention the recruitment of terrorists via the Internet pioneered by al-Qaeda following the 9/11 attacks.

For Dolnik, technological innovations need not be limited to the adoption of new types of weapons or even their novel and unexpected use. Technological innovations would therefore include the televised beheadings of terrorist captives by Islamist groups in Pakistan, Iraq and elsewhere to inspire dread or admiration by viewers depending upon their points of view. The deployment of motorized hang-gliders against targets inside Israel by Ahmed Jibril and his Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine- General Command (PFLP-GC) during the 1970s would also represent a technological innovation. The attachment of barometric pressure devices to bombs planted on commercial airliners also by the PFLP-GC represents still another technological innovation.

What are the conditions which lead terrorist groups to innovate? Crenshaw suggests we pay particular attention to the failures experienced by these groups and the problems these failures pose. Innovation then becomes a form of problem-solving. For example, if security personnel at airports in London or Paris become wary of or detain certain individuals from the Middle East or Pakistan because of their appearance, the Islamist group then may recruit new European members and send them on suicide missions to blow up planes in mid-air. Crenshaw also considers changes in government tactics as a stimulus to terrorist innovation. This means terrorist groups may innovate based on changes governments have made in response to the groups' previous conduct. If, for example, Israeli authorities create barriers and checkpoints to block Palestinian suicide bombers from entering the country, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other groups respond by firing rockets and other stand-off weapons at Israeli targets.

Dolnik identifies the conditions involved in terrorist innovation based on the work of the Rand Corporation analyst Brian Jackson.[10] Jackson and Dolnik mention eleven factors they believe relevant to terrorist innovation. They stress the role of ideology and strategy; the dynamics of the struggle; countermeasures; targeting logic; attachment to weaponry; group dynamics; relationship with other organizations; resources; openness to new ideas; durability; and nature of the technology.[11]

Based upon the case studies method (or "structured focused comparison"), Dolnik then proceeds to test the roles of these factors in the behavior of four terrorist groups: Aum Shinrikyo (AS), the PFLP-GC, the Riyadis-Salikhin Suicide Battalion (the Chechen group – RAS) and the Greek group Revolutionary Organization November 17.

His conclusions may be summarized as follows. Groups whose ideology, tactics and targeting logic stress the desirability of inflicting mass casualties and the

staging of spectacular events (e.g. the Beslan school seizure in Russia) are likely to be innovative. In terms of what Dolnik and Jackson label "dynamics of the struggle," terrorist groups that enjoy safe havens or some territorial security are more likely to be innovative than groups that must operate in urban environments and on a clandestine basis. As with Crenshaw's observation, they conclude government counter-measures provide strong incentives to innovate. Dolnik also reports that attachment to or fascination with particular weapons and techniques, e.g. beheadings, is associated with innovation. Resources make a difference. Terrorist groups that enjoy the support of state sponsors and the philanthropy of wealthy individuals (or social networks) are likely to be innovative. Durability does not seem to make much difference. Dolnik finds that long-lasting groups such as Greece's November 17 in fact are likely to be conservative in their modus operandi. Displays of innovation are likely to come early in a terrorist group's career.

In three of the four cases Dolnik examines, AS, PFLP-GC, and RAS, the role of the leader was crucial in effecting innovation. The "group dynamics" were such that highly authoritarian leaders – Shoka Asahara, Ahmed Jibril, Shamil Basayev – interested in innovation for perhaps megalomaniacal reasons were able to impose their will on the rest of the membership. Democratic, bottom to top decision-making, under the category of "openness to new ideas", was not crucial in determining a group's innovative behavior.

In commenting on the relationship with other terrorist organizations, Dolnik finds a mixed picture. In some instances, he reports, cooperation among terrorist groups leads to innovation in the form of technology and technique transfers. For example, Hezbollah learned innovative techniques from Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in 1984-85 which were later passed along to Hamas. But in other cases cooperation played no role in innovation. The same applies to competition among terrorist groups. Japan's Aum Shinrikyo was highly innovative certainly in terms of weapons development without facing much competition. On the other hand, competition among Palestinian groups led the otherwise secular Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade to adopt the suicide bombing technique of the religiously inspired Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

What should we make of Dolnik's work? I think the work itself presents us with a mixed picture. For analysts, Understanding Terrorist Innovation is exceptionally helpful because of its systematic examination of factors that apparently influence the innovative behavior of terrorist groups. But the case study method – while beneficial – in many instances has well-known limitations. In this instance, the problem is that Dolnik is dealing with too many variables for

too few cases. His conclusions provide us with an understanding of what prompts terrorist groups to innovate. Efforts to generalize based on four cases, however, obviously have their limitations.

I think it would make sense in subsequent research for analysts to build upon Crenshaw and Dolnik's observations. This research undertaking would require the use of a comprehensive list of all current or recent terrorist groups along with the identification of their various attributes e.g. aims, size, structure, lethality. Researchers could then classify terrorist groups based on their innovative performances – strategic, tactical, organizational, and technological. In this way, by using conventional statistical procedures, it should be possible to associate what terrorist group attributes promote what forms of innovation and which do not.

Aside from the benefits social science would receive from investigating how and why terrorist groups innovate, those involved in counter-terrorism may be helped as well. Innovative terrorist groups seem to be exceptionally dangerous. Their innovations are often emulated by other groups – even ones with other aims and in other parts of the world. Therefore, in seeking to impede the activities of terrorist groups in general or just those with a "global reach", organizations engaged in counter-terrorism might well focus their strongest efforts on disrupting the operations of the most innovative groups.

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NOTES:

[1] Robert Meade, *Red Brigades: The Story of Italian Terrorism* (New YORK: St. Martin's, 1990) pp. 48-50
Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004)
See, for example, Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) pp. 47-70
[2] See, for example, John Horgan, "De-radicalization or Disengagement?" *Perspectives on Terrorism* 2:4 (2008)
[3] Lawrence Wright, for example, was able to interview dozens of current and former members of al-Qaeda in preparing his Pulitzer Prize winning volume *The Looming Tower* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006) pp. 439-445
[4] See, for example, John Mueller, Overblown (New York: The Free Press, 2006) pp. 13-48
For a discussion of this writing see Martha Crenshaw, "Innovation: Decision Points in the trajectory of terrorism," (a paper presented at a conference on Trajectories of Terrorist Violence in Europe held at the Center for European Studies, Harvard University, March 9-11, 2001)
[5] Crenshaw; Adam Dolnik, *Understanding Terrorist Innovation* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 3
[6] Brian Jackson, "Technology Acquisition by Terrorist Groups" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 24:3 (2001) pp. 183-213
[7] Dolnik, pp. 13-21.
[8] Crenshaw; Adam Dolnik, *Understanding Terrorist Innovation* (London: Routledge, 2007)
[9] p. 3
[10] Brian Jackson, "Technology Acquisition by Terrorist Groups" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 24:3 (2001) pp. 183-213
[11] Dolnik, pp. 13-21

In Cold Blood: The Madrid Bombings

PHIL WILLIAMS

Much of the current debate about the global jihad movement revolves around competing organizational models. The first of these is a top down model in which individual cells respond to direction from al-Qaeda's core leadership. In effect, this can be understood in its strictest form as a command and control model and in a softer form as an affiliation model. The second – and alternative model conceptualizes the jihad as a social movement in which individual cells-small networks or clusters-draw inspiration, but no more from al-Qaeda. They emerge bottom up, act with autonomy, and carry out local attacks. In the strictest form of the model these bottom-up groups are self-contained, not beholden to al-Qaeda, and not linked to its members let alone al-Qaeda central. The strict forms of the two models have been articulated in ways that leave little common ground between them; but in their softer forms they can be combined in ways which provide complementary insights and a deeper level of understanding.

A careful examination of the Madrid train bombings of March 11, 2004, suggests that although the top down component was far less powerful than the bottom up dynamic, the perpetrators were not isolated from al-Qaeda movement. Indeed, the Madrid bombers acted within a broader network of affiliation which included connections with people who were clearly part of al-Qaeda's organizational structure. Yet, there is little evidence to suggest that they were acting on orders from al-Qaeda. The implication is that neither the strict top down command and control model nor the strict bottom up or emergent model provides an adequate frame of reference for the Madrid bombings. This should not really be surprising: academic models, whether formalized or not, rarely conform to reality, and are seldom as exclusive or neat as their proponents claim. The basic thesis here, in fact, is that in a complex world, the integration of multiple models is likely to offer a much closer approximation to reality than models which claim exclusivity and universality. In other words, the debate has become overly stark and polarized and fails to capture the complexity of the Madrid bombings which contain elements of the softer variants of both models.

The Madrid case, of course, is itself complicated because on April 3, 2004 seven of the major perpetrators blew themselves up in an apartment in Leganes when surrounded by police. Therefore, the trial that took place in 2007 was missing a key component. Further uncertainties stemmed from the dramatic impact the bombing had on the Spanish election. The change of government and the withdrawal of the Spanish contingent from Iraq encouraged some observers to infer intentions from consequences. At the same time, there were some grounds for concluding that the attack had a clear strategic objective as it appeared that the bombers might have been encouraged by an analysis on a jihad web-site which identified Spain as one of the weak links in the coalition in Iraq. [1] It bears emphasis though that the new government's decision to withdraw from Iraq was not enough to prevent the Madrid bombers from an additional attempt to blow up a high speed train on April 2. The group had also identified a set of future targets, and had a substantial war chest sufficient to fund a series of additional attacks. The implication is that the attacks of March 11 were the opening salvos in what was intended to be a protracted campaign of terror rather than a one-time event. Important as a Spanish military withdrawal from Iraq was to the attackers the objectives went well beyond the war in Iraq.

Serhane ben Abdelmajid Fakhet, "the Tunisian", was a key figure in planning the attack. An arrest warrant issued on April 1, 2004 described Fakhet as the "leader and coordinator" of the attacks. [2] A 35 year old who had come to Spain in 1994 to study economics at the Autonomous University of Madrid; he had been a successful real estate salesman before undergoing some kind of personal crisis and subsequent radicalization. As part of this process – and probably both contributing to it and resulting from it - Fakhet developed close relationships with other extremists. These included:

- Barakat Yarkas (aka Abu Dahda) leader of the Madrid al-Qaeda cell, which prior to September 11 had provided support for Mohammed Atta's Hamburg cell. After September 11, Yarkas was imprisoned.

- Amer Azizi, who fled Spain to avoid arrest but had been part of the Spanish cell and remained an important second-tier al-Qaeda figure.

- Fakhet's Moroccan brother-in-law, Mustapha el-Mimouni, who had been recruited by Azizi in 2001 and was arrested in the aftermath of the Casablanca bombings in May 2003.

- Mouhannad Almallah Dabas who, along with his brother, played a very

important role in the indoctrination of the Madrid group. [3]

- Rabei Osman, known as Mohammed the Egyptian whom Fakhet met in March 2003. Although Osman encouraged Fakhet's extremism and subsequently boasted that Madrid was his project, in fact he was little more than a drifter and cheerleader who attached himself to different groups. This was reflected in his acquittal in the Madrid bombings trial in October 2007.

When his brother-in-law was arrested in May 2003, Fakhet took over the leadership role of the emergent cell. Soon afterwards, he began to care for the family of Yarkas. He regularly took Yarkas's son to visit him in prison; the last occasion was five days prior to the March 11 attacks. Although Fakhet was angry at Yarkas's imprisonment, the invasion of Iraq and Spanish support for the United States "made him furious." [4] During the trial, Almallah Dabas claimed that "Fakhet was deeply affected by the war in Iraq and started trying to persuade people to go there to wage jihad." [5] Reportedly, he also met with Azizi and asked for Moroccan militants to assist with an attack in Spain. Azizi refused, but encouraged Fakhet to recruit locally. It is seems likely, however, that there was at least an al-Qaeda endorsement or blessing for the enterprise. [6]

One of the other key figures was Jamal Zougam, who also had extensive contracts with the global jihad and was perhaps the most important connector among the Madrid bombers. Zougam had been a peripheral figure in the Yarkas cell. Some of his connections – especially Yarkas and Azizi - overlapped with those of Fakhet. Zougam, however, had more extensive international connections with figures involved in some way or another with the jihad. These included:

- David Courtallier in France.

- Abdelaziz Benyaich and Imam Mohamed Fizazi in Morocco, both of whom were involved in the Casablanca bombings.

- Mullah Krekar in Norway.

- Mohammed al-Garbuzi, a Moroccan cleric in London who was himself closely linked with Abu Qatada, the Jordanian cleric who played a central role in recruiting jihadis. Significantly, on April 3 in the apartment in Leganes, when the group was under siege efforts were made to contact

Abu Qatada who was incarcerated in Britain.[7]

In other words, the Madrid bombers were not an isolated self-contained group. Several key members had connections with people tied directly or indirectly to al-Qaeda. If they were well connected to the global jihad; however, there is no evidence that the group was under the direct control of al-Qaeda. On the contrary, the key driver from July 2003 until the bombings on March 11, 2004 was the relationship between Fakhet and a Moroccan drug trafficker named Jamal Ahmidan. This relationship was decisive in turning Fakhet's anger into action and in allowing what had hitherto been a group of people long on rhetoric, but short on concrete action, to develop the capacity to carry out a well orchestrated and highly lethal terrorist attack.

Although Ahmidan has often been described as the military planner for the Madrid bombings, this does not do justice to his role. He was the single most important individual in the execution of the Madrid attacks and without him the bombings would not have taken place. Yet, he was not an obvious candidate for such a role. Ahmidan was the successful leader of a small, but effective drug trafficking group, which smuggled hashish from Morocco and ecstasy from Holland to Spain. He had a reputation for violence and a flashy life style. Although he, along with other members of his drug trafficking group, had grown up in Tetuan (a Moroccan town known for its extremists) as a young man, Ahmidan was not particularly religious. Even after migrating illegally to Spain, he was far more interested in his criminal business than political and religious extremism.

This changed, in part, as a result of his experience in prison. Some observers trace this back to prisons in Spain while others focus on the period between mid-2000 and July 2003 when Ahmidan was imprisoned in Morocco. According to Ahmidan's wife, it was during this latter period that she first detected changes in her husband. Although "he lived like a king" because of money paid by his family for his protection, he told his wife in a phone conversation that when released he intended to go to Iraq. [8] The importance of Ahmidan's Tetuan prison experience was also emphasized by Rafa Zouhier, an intermediary in the acquisition of explosives and an informant for Spanish law enforcement. Zouhier described Ahmidan as "very radical: and observed that it "was in the jail in Morocco, where he made contacts, where he was transformed. Now, he came to Spain to roll." [9] Yet when Ahmidan arrived back at his home in July 2003, according to his wife he was initially his old self. By September or October; however, he had clearly fallen under the influence of Fakhet and wanted to move his son from Catholic School to the Madrasah at Madrid's M-30 mosque. [10] According to his wife, Ahmidan also began to spend more and

more time on the Internet looking at jihad sites. [11]

Even allowing for a natural tendency for Ahmidan's wife to downplay her husband's role and to place primary responsibility for the bombings on some else, Fakhet clearly had a profound impact on Ahmidan, crystallizing the process of radicalization already underway. Indeed, the relationship between Fakhet and Ahmidan is critical to the Madrid bombings. In some ways it parallels the two parolees who are featured in Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, neither of whom would have murdered the Clutter family without the presence of the other. Similarly, the interactions between Fakhet and Ahmidan created an outcome that neither one would have achieved without the other. Fakhet brought to the relationship an infectious zealotry and a commitment to violence that would have probably come to nothing without Ahmidan's capacity to organize and implement. Without Ahmidan, Fakhet would probably have remained a "wannabe" terrorist, full of anger and resentment, but lacking the ability to turn his aspirations into reality. And without Fakhet, Ahmidan would probably have continued to channel his drive, energy, and organizational skills into his drug business rather than the "trains of death" project.

As it was, Ahmidan had assets which were indispensable in moving from concept to reality. The first was his charisma and leadership which brought along the other members of his drug trafficking organization. A second was his contacts, some obtained from prison, which enabled him to obtain access to the dynamite that was used in the train bombings. The third was an ability to operate under the radar of law enforcement which led, for example, to the use of the safe house. Ahmidan also brought logistical expertise and provided "money, weapons, phones, cars, safe houses and other infrastructure". [12] Finally, and perhaps most important, Ahmidan acted as the financier of the attacks, using money, a stolen car, and hashish to pay for the explosives, and covering the rentals for both the safe house and the apartment in Leganes as well as the cell phones used to detonate the bombs. [13] In effect, the Madrid network was self-sufficient only because of Ahmidan and the use of proceeds from drug trafficking.

The combination of Fakhet and Ahmidan was very formidable – something that has been ignored by commentators looking elsewhere for the "mastermind" of the attack. Together the two men were motivated and capable of both planning and implementing the Madrid attacks. The train bombings of March 11 required neither external guidance, nor external resources. The finances for the Madrid bombings were self-generated. The attacks were "bottom-up" rather than top down and can best be understood in terms of what in complexity theory is called emergent behavior (in which the interaction of the components

parts has a major impact on the whole). This does not mean that the cell operated in a vacuum or without reference to al-Qaeda. Even though the Madrid bombings were   local in origin and had a local target, the bombers almost certainly saw themselves as part of the broader global jihad movement. Although there were no formal command and control links to al-Qaeda, the network that carried out the bombings was plugged into the global jihad and took at least some of its impetus, inspiration, and legitimacy from that connection. In the final analysis, therefore, by using the softer connectivity and affiliation model with the softer variant of the emergent or bottom up model, it is possible to develop a level of understanding that stricter more exclusive models fail to provide.

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[1] See Brynjar Lia & Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged al-Qaeda Policy Study Preceding the Madrid Bombings," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 27, No.5, September-October 2004, pp. 355-375.
[2] "Spanish police name suspected coordinator of 11 March attacks," , *Madrid EFE* in Spanish 1030 GMT April 1, 2004
[3] Javier Jordán and Robert Wesley, "The Madrid Attacks: Results of Investigations Two Years Later," *Terrorism Monitor* Vol. 4 Issue 5, March 9, 2006 pp.1-4
[4] See L Bokhari et al, "Paths to Global Jihad" Proceedings from a FFI Seminar, Oslo, 15 March 2006, p17, available at http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2006/00935.pdf
[5] Daniel Woolls, "Alleged Madrid bombing cell recruiter says he rejected offer to wage jihad," *Associated Press Worldstream,* February 20, 2007
[6] Elaine Sciolino,"Complex Web of Madrid Plot Still entangled" *New York Times* April 12, 2004[7] Lawrence Wright, "The Terror Web" *The New Yorker*, August 2, 2004
[8]"Wife details husband's transformation into Spanish train bomber" Madrid *El Pais (Internet Version-WWW)* in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Mar 2007 hereafter cited as "Wife details"
[9] See Luisa Barrenechea, "Lost in Translation" 8 June 2007. Available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/trackback/33961
[10] "Wife details"
[11] "Wife details"
[12] Sebastian Rotella, "Spain: Jihad's unlikely alliance" *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 2004
[13] "Spanish police identify financial mastermind of Madrid bombings" Madrid *El Pais (Internet Version-WWW)* in Spanish, May 17, 200

The Radical Milieu:
The Under-Investigated Relationship between Terrorists and Sympathetic Communities

PETER WALDMANN

One of the most under-investigated topics in terrorism studies is what could be termed the "radical milieu". By this term I am referring to the segment of a population which sympathizes with terrorists and supports them morally and logistically. Depending on the type of terrorism, the radical milieu can be a religious or ethnic community (ETA, IRA, Hizbollah), a subculture as outcome of a protest movement (Italy's Brigate Rosse, West Germany's RAF, or the Montoneros of Argentina, etc.), or a social network (transnational Islamic terrorism). What distinguishes the milieu from simple sympathizers is that within the former, there exists a form of social structure responsible for the observed in-group cohesion. It is not merely a sum of individuals holding similar political/cultural attitudes.

Mao taught that a guerrilla war can only be successful if waged by a guerillero moving in the population as a "fish in water". Many scholars, however, seem to believe that terrorism is not dependent on this kind of support. But this is only half true. In reality, terrorists, like guerrillas, can only subsist in the long run if they are backed by a sympathetic population. Without this base of support and recruitment they will, over the course of time, become weak and insignificant—even though they may not disappear at once. The IRA and ETA stand as examples of how important a radical community can be to a terrorist movement. At the climax of their popularity, each was endorsed by a considerable percentage of the northern Irish Republicans and the Spanish Basques, respectively. Only when this support dwindled did peace talks become possible.

Why do we know so little about the "radical milieu"? First, it should be noted that our knowledge about contemporary terrorists in general was limited for some time as well. This has changed only in the last years because of, among other studies,

the excellent monographs of Marc Sageman. Complimenting these studies are court reports and a growing body of primary documents collected by security agencies regarding real or suspected terrorists. All of these new resources have proven useful for analyzing of the social background of terrorists as well as the processes of radicalization. Unfortunately, no comparable resources have yet been made available for researchers to obtain information about people belonging to the radical milieu. Since the activities of the radical milieu remain legal they are not registered by state agencies or charged with the prosecution of terrorism. At the same time, their radical attitudes make them distrust any person approaching them for information. The more the state authorities extend their notion of "suspicious groups" or "preparing ground for terrorist acts" the more difficult it becomes for an external observer to have access to these communities.

Promises of Future Research

Nevertheless, this kind of research could help answer questions about the nature of the relationship between violent groups and the radical milieu that stand behind them. Evidently there is some bond of sympathy and solidarity between them, but the nature and meaning that bond remains outside the scope of current scholarship. For example, what mutual expectations underpin this solidarity? Further, what type of support is provided by radical milieu communities? Does the radical community hide persecuted members of the terrorist band or perhaps even help them escape to a foreign country? Do members of the radical milieu accept material sacrifices? And finally, are young males of this milieu eventually ready to enter into the violent organization, substituting the personnel losses suffered from repression or other forms of violent death?   In turn, what can the terrorists offer to their constituent populations? Does this solidarity have its limits in terms of time and scope, under which conditions tensions may rise between both parties? If so, how can their alliance be broken up?

The answer to these questions depends largely upon the type of terrorist movement we are confronted with. In cases which the terrorists constitute the spearhead of a movement and defend certain territorial claims (for example Hamas and Hezbollah) the bond between the radicalized segment of the respective population and its armed avant-garde is usually very strong. If the radical subculture is the offspring of some ideological protest and reform movement (be it religious as in the case of the Egyptian Islamic Group or Marxist as that of the Red Brigades) the solidarity pact usually is much looser. Even radicals, who in the beginning of the protest-demonstrations were firmly committed to bringing about some change, may come to a point where, under the stress of the high "costs", imposed by state repression or public repudiation, decide to abandon

the movement. Still more open is the question of how close transnational radical religious networks and their followers are linked together or what kind of radical milieu is supporting the "home-grown" terrorists of western diasporas? Pursuant to this, can the Internet and its chat forums offer a substitute to face-to-face contacts as a base of mutual support?

A central issue in the relationship between the radical milieu (community, subculture, and network) and the terrorist group is the question of who controls whom. Generally it is assumed that the armed avant-garde has a hegemonic position toward the radical circles supporting it, but this is a too simple vision. Even if the terrorists can force their followers by violent means to respect their wishes and orders, there remain many ways for the supporters to demonstrate that they are no longer willing to accept the burden of the armed struggle. Their mere passive resistance may suffice to oblige the terrorists to make substantial concessions. One of the main reasons to study radical milieus is that in so doing new ways might be found to help control and moderate terrorist organizations, whether directly or indirectly.

Conclusion: a Model for Analysis

A current model to explain the development of terrorism consists of three main variables: the terrorist organization, state agencies, and society. The idea of focusing on society as a whole is that theoretically everybody could be tempted to sympathize with the terrorists or join them. But this is a mistake. In fact, in all cases we know only a limited part of the population is open to the terrorists' goals and methods, with the vast majority rejecting both. Generally, the terrorists are well aware of this. The bulk of their messages and acts neglect the broad population and only address the small minority whose support is absolutely indispensable for them. For this very reason, I would propose that "society" in the triangular model [1] should be replaced by "the radical segment of society" as the third relevant variable to explain terrorist behaviour.

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[1] Of course, there can be and often is fluctuation between the general population and the radical milieu, but this depends on the type of radical milieu. As a point of illustration, the frontier between the radical segment of ethnic or religious minorities and the more moderate parts of these minorities or the general population is usually quite rigid while protest movements tend to have a much more fluid following.

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