The Four Waves of Rebel Terror and September 11

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September 11, 2001 is the most destructive day in the long bloody history of rebel terrorism. The casualties and the economic damage were unprecedented. It could be the most important day too. President Bush declared a "war" to eliminate terror,(2) galvanizing a response that could reshape the international world.

Exactly 100 years ago, we heard a similar appeal. An Anarchist assassinated President William McKinley in September 1901, moving the new president Theodore Roosevelt to summon a worldwide crusade to exterminate terrorism everywhere.(3)

Will we succeed this time? No one knows, but even a brief acquaintance with the history of terrorism should make us more sensitive to the difficulties ahead. To this end, I will briefly describe rebel terrorism in the last 135 years to show how deeply implanted it has become in modern culture. The discussion is divided into two sections. The first describes the four waves of modern terror, and the other focuses on the international ingredients in each. I will discuss the political events triggering each wave, but lack space to enumerate the great and persistent domestic impacts.

Every state affected in the first wave, for example, radically transformed its police organizations. Plain-clothes police forces were created as indispensable tools to penetrate underground groups. The Russian Okhrana, Scotland Yard, and the FBI are conspicuous examples.(4) The new organizational form remains a permanent, perhaps indispensable, feature of modern life.

Terrorist tactics invariably produce rage and frustration, often driving governments to respond in unanticipated, extraordinary, illegal, and destructive ways. Because a significant Jewish element, for example, was present in the several Russian terrorist movements, the Okhrana organized pogroms to intimidate the Jewish population, compelling many to flee to the West and to the Holy Land. Okhrana fabricated *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a book that helped stimulate a virulent anti-Semitism that went beyond Russia and continued

for decades, and that influences the Christian and Islamic terrorist worlds still.(5)

Democratic states over-react too. President Theodore Roosevelt proposed sending all Anarchists back to their countries of origin, though many had not committed crimes and were opposed to terror. Roosevelt's proposal was not acted upon; but President Wilson authorized Attorney General Palmer (1919) to round up all Anarchists, though many committed no crimes, in order to ship them to the Soviet Union. That led to the 1920 Wall Street Bombing which then became the impetus for an immigration quota law making it much more difficult for persons from Southern and Eastern European states (the original home of most Anarchists) to immigrate to America for several decades.

The Waves

In the 1880s, an initial "Anarchist Wave"(6) appeared which continued for some 40 years. Its successor, the "Anti-Colonial Wave" began in the 1920s, and by the 1960s had largely disappeared. The late 1960s witnessed the birth of the "New Left Wave," which dissipated largely in the 90s leaving a few groups still active in Sri Lanka, Spain, France, Peru, and Columbia. The fourth or "Religious Wave" began in 1979, and, if it follows the pattern of its predecessors, it still has twenty to twenty-five years to run.

Revolution was the overriding aim in every wave, but revolution was understood differently in each. Most terrorist organizations have understood revolution as secession or national self-determination. This principle, that a people should govern itself, was bequeathed by the American and French Revolutions. (The French Revolution also introduced the term "terror" to our vocabulary.(7)) In leaving open the question of what constitutes a "people," the principle is very ambiguous and can lead to endless conflict.

Revolution is also seen to be a radical reconstruction of authority, and this objective was often combined with efforts to create a new state by destroying two or more existing ones. Often the three conceptions were combined in different ways, and all were affected by different pre-existing contexts, which makes it useful to give each wave a distinctive name.(8)

The first three waves lasted approximately 40 to 45 years, but the "New Left Wave" was somewhat abbreviated. The pattern suggests a human life cycle pattern, where dreams that inspire fathers lose their attractiveness for the sons. Clearly, the life cycle of the waves does not correspond to that of organizations. Organizations normally dissipate before the wave does, though sometimes an organization survives its associated wave. The IRA, for example, is the oldest terrorist organization of the modern world; it began the anti-colonial wave in the 20's and is still here. By way of comparison, the average life of organizations in the third or "New Left" wave is two years.

The call of rebel terror is very ancient, going back at least to the first century. Hinduism,

Judaism, and Islam produced the Thugs, Zealots, and Assassins respectively–names still used to designate terrorists.(9) Religion determined every purpose and tactic of this ancient form.

Significant examples of secular rebel terror appeared before the "Anarchist Wave" began. The United States, for example, experienced two major successful ones. The Sons of Liberty, provoked by the Stamp Act, organized mobs to tar and feather colonists still loyal to the king,(10) forcing many to flee the country and settle in Canada. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) forced the federal government to end Reconstruction. But the two American examples were time and country specific. They had no contemporary parallels and no emulators, because they "did their dirty work in secret and kept their mouths shut afterwards."(11)

In contrast, the Russian experience in the 1880s spread rapidly to other parts of Europe, the Americas, and Asia before reaching its peak and receding. Despite this extraordinary spread of activities, unlike the American examples, *no* first wave group achieved its goal. The three subsequent waves show similar, though not identical, patterns. Each begins in a different locale and the participating rebel groups often share purposes and tactics that distinguish them from participants in other waves. Local aims are common in all waves, but the crucial fact is that other states are simultaneously experiencing similar activities. The "Anti-Colonial Wave" produces the most successes, but they are few in number and, in every example, the achievement falls short of the stated aim, as we shall elaborate below.

Why does the first wave begin in the late 19th century? There may be many reasons, but two stand out: doctrine and technology. Russian writers, particularly Nechaev, Bakunin, and Kropotkin, created a doctrine or strategy for terror, an inheritance for successors to use, improve, and transmit. Participants, even those with different ultimate objectives, were now able to learn from each other. The distinctiveness of this pattern is brought home by comparing it with those of the ancient religious terrorists, who always stayed within their own religious traditions. Each religious tradition produced its own kind of terrorist, and sometimes their tactics were so uniform that they appear to be a form of ritual. But if one compares Nechaev's *Revolutionary Catechism* with the *Training Manual* Bin Laden wrote for Al-Qaeda, the paramount desire to learn from the experiences of both friends and enemies is clear.(12) The greatest tactical difference between them is that Nechaev understands women to be priceless assets, while Bin Laden defers to the Islamic tradition and employs men only.(13)

The transformation in communication and transportation patterns is the second reason that explains the timing and spread of the first wave. The telegraph, daily mass newspapers, and railroads flourished in this period; and subsequently throughout the 20th century, technology continued to shrink time and space.

Strangely enough, the characteristics and possibilities of modern revolutionary terror were

partly inspired by studying the intrigues of the Russians in the Balkans. The Czars employed assassins against Turkish officials. The Turks responded by massacring Christian subjects, massacres that provoked Christian uprisings and war fever in Russia. Publicity and provocation, not pure terror were the objectives of the Czarist atrocities, and these objectives were incorporated in systematic Anarchist efforts to put atrocities at the service of revolution.

Narodnaya Volya ("The People's Will"), the first terrorist group in the first wave, inherited a world where traditional revolutionaries seemed obsolete or irrelevant. No longer could pamphlets, books, meetings, demonstrations produce mass uprisings, and even revolutionaries described themselves as "idle word spillers"! A "new form of communication" was needed, one that would be heard and command respect. Terror filled that need; no one could ignore it, and repeated acts of terror would generate the polarization necessary for revolution.

The Anarchist doctrine has four major points: 1) Modern society contains huge reservoirs of latent ambivalence and hostility.(14) 2) Society muffles and diffuses them by devising moral conventions to generate guilt and provide channels for settling some grievances and securing personal amenities. 3) However, conventions can be explained historically, and therefore acts we deem to be immoral, our children will hail as noble efforts to liberate humanity. 4) Terror is the quickest and most effective means to destroy conventions. The perpetrator frees himself from the paralyzing grip of convention to become a different sort of person, and society's defenders will respond in ways that undermine the rules they claim are sacred.(15)

An incident, often identified as the inspiration for the turbulent decades to follow, illustrates the process envisaged. Vera Zasulich wounded a Russian police commander who abused prisoners taken in a demonstration. Throwing her weapon to the floor, she proclaimed that she was a terrorist, not a killer.(16) In effect, the ensuing trial quickly became that of the police chief. When the court freed her, crowds greeted the verdict with thunderous applause.

A successful campaign entailed learning how to fight and how to die, and the most admirable death occurred as a result of a court trial where one accepted responsibility, using the occasion to indict the regime. The Russian writer Stepniak described the terrorist as "noble, terrible, irresistibly fascinating, uniting the two sublimities of human grandeur, the martyr and the hero." Dynamite, a recent invention, was the weapon of choice for the male terrorist, because it usually killed the person who threw the bomb also, demonstrating that he was not an ordinary criminal.(17)

Terror was extra-normal violence or violence beyond the moral conventions regulating violence. Most specifically, the conventions violated were the rules of war designed to

distinguish combatants from non-combatants. Invariably, most onlookers would label the acts atrocities or outrages.

The rebels described themselves as terrorists, not guerrillas, tracing their lineage back to the French Revolution, and sometimes to the Order of Assassins in medieval Islam. They sought political targets with the potentiality to shake up public attitudes.(18)

Terrorism was a strategy, not an end. The specific tactics used depended upon both on the context and the rebel's political objectives. Judging a context so often in flux was both an art and a science.

What gave the creators of this strategy confidence that it would work? In this case, as in the later waves, the moving forces were major political events, which unexpectedly exposed new vulnerabilities of government. Hope was excited, and hope is always an indispensable lubricant of rebel activity. The turn of events that gave rebels evidence of Russian vulnerability was the dazzling effort of the young Czar Alexander II to transform the system virtually overnight. In one stroke of the pen (1861), he freed the serfs (one-third of the population) and gave them funds to buy land. Three years later he established limited local self-government, "westernized" the judicial system, relaxed censorship powers and control over education. Hopes were aroused but could not be fulfilled quickly enough–for example, the funds to subsidize the peasants to buy land proved to be insufficient–and in the wake of inevitable disappointment, systematic assassination campaigns largely against prominent officials began, culminating in the death of Alexander II himself.

Soon other groups in the Russian Empire emerged, focusing on assassinations and robbing banks to finance their activities. The Armenians (Hunchaks) and the Poles were first. Then the Balkans exploded where many groups (*i.e.*, Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, Young Bosnia, and the Serbian Black Hand) found the boundaries of states recently torn out of the Ottoman Empire unsatisfactory. In the West, revolutionary Anarchists mounted assassination campaigns and helped stimulate comparable ones in India, such as the Maniktala Secret Society (1905).(19)

The Versailles Peace Treaty concluding World War I sparked the hope for the second or "Anti-Colonial Wave." The empires of the defeated states (which were mostly in Europe) were broken up by applying the principle of self-determination. Where independence was not immediately feasible, territories were understood to be "mandates" ultimately destined for independence. But the victors could not articulate the principle without also raising questions about the legitimacy of their own empires. The IRA emerged in the 1920s, and terrorist groups developed in all imperial domains except the Soviet after World War II. A variety of new states–Ireland, Israel, Cyprus, Yemen, Algeria…–emerged, and the wave receded as the empires it swept over dissolved.

Second wave tactics differed in some respects from those of first. Bank robberies were less

common, partly because diaspora sources this time contributed more money. Most conspicuous was the lesson learned that assassinating prominent political figures was often counterproductive, and few attacks on the prominent occurred. One organization continued the old practice, Lehi (a Zionist revisionist group the British labeled the "Stern Gang") and it proved much less effective than competitors in the struggle for independence. Martyrdom so often linked to assassinating the prominent seemed less significant too. The new strategy was first to eliminate via systematic assassinations the police, a government's eyes and ears. Military units would replace them and would prove too clumsy to cope without producing counter-atrocities, increasing social support for the terrorists. If the process of atrocities and counter-atrocities was well planned, it worked nearly always to favor those perceived to be weak and without alternatives.(20)

Major energies went into guerrilla-like (hit and run) actions against troops, attacks that went beyond the rules of war, however, because weapons were concealed and the assailants had no identifying insignia.(21) Some groups (*e.g.*, Irgun and IRA) made efforts to give warnings in order to limit civilian casualties. In some cases (*e.g.*, Algeria) terror was one aspect of a more comprehensive rebellion dependent on guerrilla forces. Although an important ingredient in colonial dissolution, terrorist groups rarely achieved their original purposes. The IRA gained an Irish state but not one extending over the whole island. EOKA fought to unify Cyprus and Greece but had to settle for the state of Cyprus, which split in two afterwards and has remained so ever since. Begin's Irgun fought to gain the entire Palestine mandate but settled for partition rather than risk civil war among Jews.

Anti-colonial causes were legitimate to many more parties than the causes articulated in the first wave, and that created a definition problem. The term "terrorist" had accumulated so many abusive connotations that those identified as terrorists found that they had enormous political liabilities. Rebels stopped calling themselves terrorists. Lehi (the last organization to rely on assassinations) was also the last to characterize itself as a terrorist group. Menachem Begin, leader of the Irgun (Lehi's contemporary and rival), concentrating on purpose rather than means, described his people as "freedom fighters" struggling against government terror. So appealing did this self-description prove to be that all subsequent terrorist groups followed suit. Governments appreciated the political value of "appropriate" language too, and began to describe all violent rebels as terrorists. The media corrupted language further, refusing to use terms consistently in the hope of avoiding being seen by the public as blatantly partisan. Major American newspapers, for example, often described the same individuals in the same account, indeed sometimes in the same paragraph, alternatively as terrorists, guerrillas, and soldiers.(22)

The agonizing Vietnam War produced the psychological requisites for the third or "New Left Wave." The effectiveness of Vietcong terror against the American Goliath armed with modern technology kindled hopes that the Western heartland was vulnerable too. The war also stimulated an enormous ambivalence about the value of the existing system, especially

among the young in the West.

Many groups in the "developed world" (*e.g.*, American Weather Underground, West German RAF, Italian Red Brigades, Japanese Red Army, and the French Action Directe saw themselves as vanguards for the masses of the Third World where much hostility to the West already existed. The Soviets encouraged these groups in many different ways. In Latin America, revolutionary groups repeated a pattern visible in the first wave; they abandoned the countryside and came to the city where they would be noticed. Carlos Marighella, a major figure on the Latin American scene, produced *The MiniManual of the Urban Guerrilla,* a handbook of tactics comparable to Nechaev's *Revolutionary Catechism* in the first wave.

In the third wave, radicalism was often combined with nationalism, as in the Basque Nation and Liberty (ETA), the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), the Corsican National Liberation Front (FNLC), and the IRA. The pattern reminds us of the first wave, where Anarchists sometimes linked themselves to nationalist aspirations, notably in Indian, Armenian, and Macedonian groups. Although every early effort failed, the linkage was renewed for the obvious reason that self-determination always appeals to a larger constituency than radical aspirations, and over time self-determination obscured the radical programs initially embraced. Nonetheless, most failed quickly. The survivors did not make much headway, because the countries concerned (Turkey, Spain, and France) did not understand themselves to be colonial powers nor did they display the ambivalence necessary for the separatists to succeed.

When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) became the heroic model. Originating after three Arab armies collapsed, its very existence was a statement that terror offered more hope than conventional military forces. The central position of the PLO was augmented by three powerful circumstances; Israel, its chief enemy, was an integral part of the West, it got strong Soviet support, and it was able to provide facilities in Lebanon to train terrorists from many countries.

The term "international terrorism" (commonly used during the "Anarchist Wave") was revived to describe "New Left Wave" activities.(23) The revolutionary ethos created significant bonds between separate national groups. The PLO had provided extensive training facilities for other groups. The targets chosen reflected international dimensions. Some groups conducted more assaults abroad than on their home territories; the PLO, for example, was more active in Europe than on the West Bank, and sometimes more active in Europe than many European groups themselves. On their own soil, groups often struck targets with special international significance, especially Americans and their installations. Teams composed of different national groups cooperated in attacks; from the Munich Olympics massacre (1972) and the kidnapping of OPEC ministers (1975) to Uganda (1975) and Somalia (1977). Libya, Iraq, and Syria employed terrorists in other countries as foreign policy instruments.

Airline hijacking was the most novel tactic in this wave, and over a hundred occurred during the 1970s. Hijacking had an international character because foreign rather than domestic landing fields were more available to hijacked planes. Hijacking also reflected an impulse for spectacular acts, a first wave theme abandoned in the second for more effective military-like strikes.

Planes were taken to get hostages, and hostage crises of various sorts dominated the era. The most memorable was the 1979 kidnapping of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades. When his government refused to negotiate, Moro was brutally murdered and his body dumped in the streets. The Sandinistas took Nicaragua's congress hostage in 1978; an act so audacious that it sparked the popular insurrection that brought the Somoza regime down a year later. In Colombia the M-19 tried to duplicate the feat by seizing the Supreme Court, but the government killed more than 100 people, including 11 justices, rather than yield.

Strikes on foreign embassies began in the third wave, when the PLO attacked the Saudi Embassy in Khartoum (1973). The most recent was the attack of the Peruvian "Shining Path" (1996), which held 72 hostages in the Japanese Embassy for more than four months (1996-7) until a rescue operation killed every terrorist in the Embassy.

Kidnappings occurred in at least seventy-three countries and were especially important in Italy, Spain, and Latin America. In the fourteen years after 1968, there were numerous international incidents, 409 kidnappings, and 951 hostages taken.(24) Initially, hostages were taken to gain political leverage. But it was soon apparent that hostages (especially company executives) could provide much cash. Companies insured their executives, and the unintended consequence was that it made kidnapping more lucrative and easier to consummate on the kidnappers' terms. Informed observers estimate that some $350 million were gained from the practice in the period.

Although bank robbing was not as significant as it was in the first wave, some striking examples materialized. In January 1976 the PLO together with their bitter rivals the Christian Phalange hired safe breakers to help them loot the vaults of the major banks in Beirut. Estimates range between $50 and a $100 million stolen. "Whatever the truth the robbery was large enough to earn a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the biggest bank robbery of all time."(25)

The third wave began to ebb in the 1980s. Revolutionary terrorists were defeated in one country after another. Israel's invasion of Lebanon (1982) eliminated PLO facilities to train terrorist groups, and international counter-terrorist cooperation became increasingly effective.

The "religious wave" began in the same decade. In the three earlier waves, religious identity was always important; religious and ethnic identities often overlap, as the Armenian,

Macedonian, Irish, Cypriot, Israeli, and Palestinian struggles illustrate. But the aim earlier was to create secular sovereign states, in principle no different from those present in the international world. Religion has a vastly different significance in the fourth wave, supplying justifications and organizing principles for the New World to be established.

Islam is the most important religion in this wave and will get special attention below. But we should remember that other religious communities produced terrorists too. Sikhs sought a religious state in the Punjab. Jewish terrorists attempted to blow up Islam's most sacred shrine in Jerusalem and waged an assassination campaign against Palestinian mayors. One religious settler murdered 29 worshippers in Abraham's tomb (Hebron, 1994) and a fundamentalist assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Rabin (1995). 1995 was also the year in which Aum Shinrikyo, a group that combined Buddhist, Christian, and Hindu religious themes, released nerve gas on the Tokyo subway, killing 12 and injuring 3000. A worldwide anxiety materialized over expectations that a new threshold in terrorist experience had materialized: various groups would be encouraged to use chemo-bio weapons soon, and each separate attack would produce casualties numbering tens of thousands.

Christian terrorism, based on racial interpretations of the Bible, emerged mostly in the amorphous American Christian Identity movement. In true millenarian fashion, armed rural communes composed of families would withdraw from the state to wait for the Second Coming and the great racial war that event would initiate. So far the level of Christian violence has been minimal, although some observers have associated the Identity movement with the Oklahoma City bombing (1995).

Three events in the Islamic world provided the dramatic political turning point, or necessary condition, for a new wave. The Iranian Revolution was the first. Street demonstrations disintegrated the Shah's armies and provided proof that religion now had more political appeal than the prevailing revolutionary ethos. Significantly, Iranian Marxists also active against the Shah could muster only meager support.

The Iranians inspired and helped Shiite terror movements elsewhere, in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Lebanon. Most important were the events in Lebanon where Shiites, influenced by the self-martyrdom tactic of the early Assassins, introduced suicide bombing. The result was surprising, perhaps even to the Lebanese themselves. American and other foreign troops who had entered the country after the 1982 Israeli invasion quickly left and never returned.

Later, in Afghanistan, Muslim resistance (partly due to US aid in bringing Sunni volunteers to the battlefield(26)) forced the Soviets out, an event which became a crucial step in the stunning, unimaginable disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. Religion now manifested the ability to eliminate a secular super-power.

Iranian and Afghan events were unexpected, but a third ingredient to give religion its

special significance was fully anticipated by believing Muslims. 1979 was the beginning of a new century according to the Muslim calendar, and the tradition is that a redeemer would come at that time, a tradition that had regularly sparked uprisings at the turn of Muslim centuries earlier. This tradition influenced the Iranian Revolution itself, which occurred in the crucial expected year and may even have intensified Afghan resistance. Certainly, it affected other events. Sunni Muslims stormed the Grand Mosque in Mecca in the first minutes of the new century and 10,000 casualties resulted. Whatever the specific local causes, Sunni terrorism soon appeared in many states with large Islamic populations: Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Sunni groups competed with the PLO in strikes against Israel. Afghan veterans who had volunteered from all parts of the Islamic world returned home with the will, confidence, and training to begin terrorist operations against weak home governments.

Assassinations and hostage taking, common features of the third wave, persisted, but "suicide bombing" was the most striking and deadly tactical innovation. It reasserted the martyrdom theme of the first wave, neglected by its two successors. The achievements in Lebanon inspired one remaining secular group, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, who used suicide bombing to give their ailing movement new life. The most spectacular Tamil act killed Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Despite the conventional wisdom that only a vision of rewards in Paradise could inspire such acts, the Tamils have used "suicide bombers" more than all Islamic groups put together![(27)]

Fourth wave groups, much more than their counterparts in the third wave, have made massive attacks against military and government installations. Americans, in particular, became frequent targets. An ambush in Somalia forced American troops, who had evacuated Lebanon, to abandon another mission. Suicide bomb attacks on military posts in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and an American destroyer went unanswered. Similarly, embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were struck, occasioning heavy casualties in the local populations. The responses were ineffective cruise missile strikes against suspected targets. In 1993, the first successful attack by foreign terrorists on American soil occurred, the first World Trade Center bombing. It was followed by unsuccessful efforts to coordinate new attacks in America on the eve of the new millennium.[(28)] Finally, the massive assaults on September 11 occurred, and the "war" against terror was launched.

The fourth wave produced an organization with a purpose and recruitment pattern unique in the history of terrorism; namely, Al Qaeda, led and financed by the Saudi Osama Bin Laden. It seeks to create a single state for all Muslims, a state that once existed, and one that would be governed by the Sharia, Islamic law. The aspiration resonates in the Sunni populations throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. In the past, every terrorist organization recruited from a single national base or people. Al Qaeda seeks members from all parts of the vast Sunni world, including those who have gone to live in the West, though Arabs, especially from Egypt and Saudi Arabia, supply most recruits. Its unity is enhanced

by common experience in Afghanistan, where virtually all recruits had trained. The first step in achieving its goal would be to strengthen rebel Islamic groups in various states of the Sunni world, an effort Americans help frustrate by supporting existing states organized on national lines, which many see as residues of collapsed colonial empires. Eliminating American influence in these states is a precondition of reunification. Forcing the Americans to withdraw troops from Islam's holiest shrines is the first step, and the second is to exploit a general anger over American influence in the Palestinian and Iraqi questions. Since Al Qaeda achieved none of its objectives and the early attacks produced virtually no response, the September 11 attacks could be understood as a desperate attempt to rejuvenate a failing cause by triggering indiscriminate American reactions.(29)

A Closer Look at International Dimensions

Although their relationships vary in each wave, there are four major international audiences for each terrorist group: foreign terrorist groups, diaspora populations, liberal sympathizers, and foreign governments. Vera Figner, who organized the foreign policy of Narodnaya Volya, appealed directly to three audiences. She identified totally with an international revolutionary tradition of socialists and Anarchists,(30) and developed good contacts with the Russian Diaspora community–an element hitherto "lost to the revolutionary tradition." By expressing her regret for the assassination of President Garfield, she tried to reach out to Western liberals, taking the occasion to emphasize that terror was always wrong in democratic states.(31) This statement alienated many radicals supporting her; indeed, it failed to convince all interested parties that she truly meant what she said. She made no direct efforts to shape the policies of foreign states, but diaspora and liberal communities worked to make their governments more sympathetic to the Russian terrorists. Russian foreign policies and Figner's political system in any case irritated other states. The offer of the Japanese to finance Russian terrorists during the Russo-Japanese War (1905) encouraged Indian terrorists to believe that the Japanese would help them, too.(32)

The 1890s became the "Golden Age of Assassination" in the West; monarchs, prime ministers, and presidents were struck down one after another. Most assassins were Anarchists who moved easily across international borders to assassinate foreign leaders, compelling affected governments to conclude that they had to share police information and cooperate to control borders. President Theodore Roosevelt seized the opportunity to call for the first international crusade to safeguard civilization.

> Anarchy is a crime against the whole human race, and all mankind should band together against the Anarchist. His crimes should be made a crime against the law of nations . . . declared by treaties among all civilized powers.(33)

But three years later, when Germany and Russia urged states to convene in St. Petersburg

to sign an international protocol to share police information, the US refused to come. Hostility to Germany, anxiety about involvement in European politics, and the fact that the US had no federal police force shaped that decision. Italy refused too, for a different but very revealing concern. If Anarchists were returned to their countries of origin, Italy's domestic troubles might be worse than its international ones!

The first great effort to deal with international terrorism failed largely because the interests and priorities of states pulled them in different directions, and, indeed, as the 20th Century began, some states actively helped terrorist groups. Bulgaria gave substantial support to Macedonian terrorists in the Ottoman Empire, and the suspicion that Serbia helped the assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was an important ingredient in launching World War I. Ironically, that assassination was crucial in stemming the first terrorist wave, and the deed might not have happened if Roosevelt's crusade had been successful a decade earlier.

The international ingredient in the next wave had a different shape. Terrorist leaders of different national groups acknowledged common bonds and heritage, but the heroes their literature invoked were overwhelmingly national ones.(34) The underlying assumption was that if one strengthened ties with foreign terrorist groups, abilities to use other international assets would be weakened.

The League of Nations drafted two conventions (1937) to cope with terrorism, but they were "political theatre," not serious efforts to deal with the problem, and never went into effect.(35) After World War II, the UN inherited the League's authority over international terror and over the mandates governed by colonial powers, territories that were now scenes of extensive terrorist activity. As the UN grew by admitting new states virtually all of which were former colonial territories, that body gave the anti-colonial sentiment more structure, focus, and opportunities. Significantly, UN debates regularly described anti-colonial terrorists as "freedom fighters."

Diaspora groups displayed abilities not seen in earlier waves.(36) The IRA received money, weapons, and volunteers from the Irish overseas, especially in America. The support of the U.S. government for Irish independence was partly dependent on Irish American influence too. Israeli groups got similar support from similar, especially American, diaspora sources. The Arab world gave the Algerian FLN crucial political support, and Arab states adjacent to Algeria offered sanctuaries and allowed their territories to be used as staging grounds for attacks. The Greek government sponsored the Cypriot uprising against the British, and as the revolt grew more successful, the more enraged Turkish Cypriots looked to Turkey for aid and received it. The Cyprus problem is still unresolved nearly a half century later.

The different Irish experiences illustrate how crucial influences are shaped by foreign perceptions of purpose and context. The first effort in the 20s, seen simply as an anti-colonial movement, gained the foreign support needed from Irish Americans and the US

government to secure an Irish state. The supporting parties abandoned the IRA during its brief campaigns to bring Northern Ireland into the Republic during World War II, when a more important concern prevailed. Support from abroad did not materialize in the 50s during the Cold War. IRA activities in the early part of the "New Left Wave" had a Marxist element that affected the usual sources of diaspora support. The Cold War had to end before an American government showed serious interest in the issue again, when it initiated moves that may ultimately resolve the conflict.

The conventional wisdom is that international connections always provide a terrorist group with enormous advantages. This wisdom is deeply flawed. One important and not fully understood reason for the fact that the third wave was the shortest was that it was so dependent on unreliable international connections. The emphasis on the revolutionary bond alienated potential domestic and liberal constituencies, particularly during the Cold War. Soon it was found that the effort to foster operational cooperation between terrorist groups posed serious problems for the weaker ones. Thus the German Revolutionary Cells, partners of the Palestine Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in a variety of hijacking efforts, tried to get help from its partner to release German prisoners. But the Germans found themselves wholly "dependent on the will of Wadi Haddad and his group," whose agenda was very different from theirs after all, and the relationship soon terminated.(37) A member of another German group (2nd June) suggests that the group's obsession with the Palestinian cause induced it to attack a Jewish synagogue on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, a date often considered the beginning of the Holocaust. Such "stupidity," he says, alienated potential German constituencies.(38)

Palestinian raids from Egyptian-occupied Gaza helped precipitate a disastrous war with Israel (1956), and Egypt was led to prevent the possibility that fidayeen raids would be launched from its territories ever again. A Palestinian raid from Syria brought the latter into the Six-Day War, and Syria ever afterwards kept a tight control on those operating from its territories. The third wave had one strikingly new international feature. Never before had one people became the favorite target of most groups. Approximately one third of the international attacks involved American targets. American economic, diplomatic, and military activities were visible in Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East. The support the US gave governments under terrorist siege only intensified this proclivity.

From its inception in 1968, the PLO, a loose confederation, often found international ties unexpectedly expensive because they complicated existing divisions within the organization. In the 1970s, Abu Iyad, founding member and intelligence chief, wrote that the Palestinian cause was so important in Syrian and Iraqi domestic politics that those states captured organizations within the PLO to serve their own ends. The result was that it was even more difficult to settle for a limited goal as the Irgun and the EOKA had done earlier. Entanglements with Arab states created other problems for both parties similar to those in 1956 and 1967. When a PLO faction hijacked British and American planes to Jordan (1970)

in the first effort to target non-Israelis, the Jordanian army devastated the Palestinians and the PLO lost its home. Finally, an attempt to assassinate an Israeli diplomat in Britain sparked the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, forcing the PLO to leave the home that gave it so much significance among foreign terrorist groups.

To maintain control over their own destiny, states began to sponsor their own groups, an activity unknown in the second wave, and a very costly one to the sponsors. In the 1980s, Britain severed diplomatic relations with Libya and Syria for sponsoring terrorism on British soil, and France broke with Iran when Iran refused to let the French interrogate its embassy staff about assassinations of Iranian émigrés. The limited value of state-sponsored terror was emphasized by Iraqi restraint during the Gulf War, despite widespread predictions that Iraqi terrorists would flood Europe. If terror had materialized, it would have made bringing Saddam Hussein to trial for crimes a war aim, and the most plausible explanation for Hussein's uncharacteristic restraint is the desire to avoid that result.

During the third wave, states for the first time cooperated openly and formally in counter-terror efforts. The international cooperation of national police forces sought so desperately in the 1904 St. Petersburg Protocol finally materialized in the mid 1970s, when Trevi and Interpol were established. The Americans with British aid bombed Libya (1986) for the terrorist attacks it sponsored, and the European Community imposed an arms embargo. Two years later, evidence that Libya's agents were involved in the Pan Am crash in Lockerbie, Scotland led to a unanimous UN Security Council decision obliging Libya to extradite the suspects, and a decade later, when collective sanctions had their full effects, Libya complied. When compared with League and UN activities during the "Anti-Colonial Wave," the UN action in the Libya case signified a dramatic change.

Nonetheless, sometimes even close allies could not cooperate. France refused to extradite PLO, Red Brigade, and ETA suspects to West Germany, Italy, and Spain respectively. Italy spurned American requests to extradite a Palestinian suspect in the seizure of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in 1984. The U.S. in its turn has refused to extradite some IRA suspects. In 1988 Italy refused to extradite a Kurd sought by Turkey because Italian law forbids capital punishment and Turkish law does not. Events of this sort will not stop until the laws and interests of separate states are identical.

Finally, the breakdown of the Lebanese government gave the PLO an opportunity to become the first terrorist organization to train foreign groups. When the PLO fled Lebanon, its host (Tunisia) refused to let it continue that activity, and to a large extent the PLO's career as an effective terrorist organization was over. Ironically, as the Oslo Accords demonstrated, the PLO achieved more of its objectives when it became less dangerous.

Religion (the basis for the fourth wave) transcends the state bond. But groups from different mainstream religious traditions do not cooperate. Even traditional cleavages within a

religion, Shia and Sunni for example, are sometimes intensified.

Within the same religion, particularly the same branch of that religion, the potentialities for cooperation affecting many interests may be great, particularly in the Islamic world where so many states exist. Whether or not the religious tie was crucial, the first successful strategic example of state-sponsored terror occurred during the fourth wave. Iran facilitated the suicide (self-martyrdom) bombings, which compelled foreign withdrawals in Lebanon. Inasmuch as the attacks were made by local elements on their own terrain, the targeted parties did not make retaliatory strikes at the sponsor. Al Qaeda's tactical strikes at the American installations and embassies were protected by the Afghan Taliban government's refusal to accept the UN ultimatum to force Al Qaeda to leave its bases. The religious ties may have been a crucial element in the decision. But whatever the reason, when the Taliban again refused to comply after September 11, it suffered the consequences.

Resemblances between Al Qaeda and the PLO exist, but the differences are significant. While the PLO prior to the Oslo Agreements targeted Americans more than any other non-Israeli people, the US was not the principal target, as it seems to have been for Al Qaeda from the very beginning. The PLO trained elements of pre-existing groups but those groups retained their identity; Al Qaeda trains individuals committed to its goal from various places in the Sunni world, including the West. The PLO had a loose, divided form that caused it enormous trouble but gave it an ability to persevere. While Al Qaeda has created unique "sleeper cells" in areas to be targeted, it does seem like a single unit, and hence much more dangerous. But there is a flip side to this structural difference. Once their centers are destroyed, better-organized groups are more likely to quit fighting.(39)

Conclusion

My conclusion is brief. The September 11 attack has created a resolve in America and elsewhere to end international terror once and for all. The first step, the unexpectedly quick and decisive success of the Afghan intervention, was impressive. At this writing, Al Qaeda seems destroyed. Certainly a few attacks by existing cells may yet occur, but much more important is the fact that the territory to regroup elsewhere as an organization will not be available because no host will accept the inherent risks. The extraordinary unwillingness of the Taliban and Al Qaeda to fight will also have its effect on the ability to generate successor movements from Islamic fundamentalism.

But an acquaintance with modern history does not inspire confidence that there will be many more striking successes. Previous international efforts have always been difficult to sustain over time, and the present coalition may be running into similar problems now. Different state interests and priorities will have their effects as the resistance of other countries to the American effort to pinpoint Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the "axis of evil" shows. Members of the coalition do not agree on how to apply the term. The issues of

Kashmir and Israel are cases in point; it is clear that some states will encourage groups that others abhor.

Even if the fourth wave follows the path of its three predecessors soon, another inspiring cause for hope is likely to emerge unexpectedly, as it has four times in the past. This history shows that the inspiration for a terrorist wave may dry out in time, and that resistance can destroy organizations or make them ineffectual. But, alas, it also demonstrates that terrorists regularly invent new ways to conduct their activities.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this essay was published in *Current History*, Dec. 2001, 419-25. (back)

2. On September 20, the President told Congress that "any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded as a hostile regime. . . [The war] will not end until every terrorist group of *global reach* has been found, stopped, and defeated." (My emphasis). (back)

3. See Richard B. Jensen, "The United States, International Policing the War against Anarchist Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13, 1 (Spring 2001): 15-46. (back)

4. The Russian police prior to the rise of rebel terror also were not armed; they carried ceremonial sabers only. (back)

5. Pope Leo XII blamed Jews, Anarchists, Socialists, and Freemasons for the stream of assassinations that occurred in the 1890s. *New York Times*, September 6, 1901. (back)

6. Anarchists were the most dominant element in the first wave. But in the Balkans, Poland, the Ottoman Empire, India, those influenced by Anarchist strategy largely had separatist ends. (back)

7. The term "terror" originally referred to actions of the Revolutionary government that went beyond the rules regulating punishment to make a people fit to govern itself. (back)

8. We will ignore "single issue" groups, *i.e.* some suffragette elements at the beginning of the century or contemporary elements of the anti-abortion and green movements. (back)

9. See my "Fear and Trembling; Terror in Three Religious Traditions", *American Political Science Review* (78:3) 1984, 658-77. (back)

10. Henry Dawson, *The Sons of Liberty* (New York: Private Publication, 1959). (back)

11. Most groups in every wave except the fourth cite the American Revolution as worth emulating. But I know no reference to the Sons of Liberty or its tactics. (back)

12. See Jerry Post's edited versions of the Bin Laden work in *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14:2 (Summer 2002) forthcoming. It took time for this attitude to develop in Islam. If one compares Bin Laden's work with Faraj's *Neglected Duty,* a work used to justify the assassination of Egyptian President Sadat (1981), the two authors seem to be in two different worlds. Faraj cites *no* experience outside the Islamic tradition, and his most recent historical reference is to Napoleon's invasion of Europe! See my "Sacred Terror: A Case from Contemporary Islam" in Walter Reich ed. *Origins of Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp. 103-130. (back)

13. The traditional still binding Islamic view is that women may participate in fighting only when no men are available. (back)

14. The French Revolution, in making us aware of the potentialities for perfection, was for the Anarchists the functional equivalent of the unredeemed divine promise for religious groups. (back)

15. An equivalent for this argument in religious millennial thought is that that the world must become impossibly bad before it could become unimaginably good. (back)

16. Adam B. Ulam, *In the Name of the People* (New York: Viking Press, 1977) p. 269. (my emphasis) (back)

17. The bomb was most significant in Russia. While Russian women were crucial in the organization, they were not allowed to throw the bomb, presumably because most bombers did not escape from the scene. Other terrorists used the bomb extensively, but chose other weapons as well. (back)

18. A guerrilla force has political objectives, as any army does, but it aims to weaken or destroy the enemy's military forces first. The terrorist strikes directly at the political sentiments that sustain his enemies. (back)

19. Peter Heehs, *Nationalism, Terrorism, and Communalism: Essays in Modern Indian History* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1998) Chapter 2. (back)

20. The strategy is superbly described in the film "Battle of Algiers," which is based on the memoirs of Saadi, who organized the battle. Attacks against the police occur whose responses are limited by rules governing criminal procedure. In desperation, the police set a bomb off in the Casbah, inadvertently exploding an ammunition dump killing Algerian women and children. A mob emerges screaming for revenge, and at this point the FLN has the moral warrant to attack civilians.

There is another underlying element which makes rebel terrorism in a democratic world often have special weight. The atrocities of the strong always seem worse than that of the weak because it is believed the latter have no alternatives. (back)

21. Guerrillas carry weapons openly and wear an identifying emblem, and we are obliged therefore to treat them as soldiers. (back)

22. For a more detailed discussion of the definition problem, see my "Politics of Atrocity" in *Terrorism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives.* Eds. Y. Alexander and S. Finger (New York: John Jay Press, 1997) p. 46ff.(back)

23. Most people using the term "international terrorism" thought that it was a product of the 60s and 70s.(back)

24. James Adams, *The Financing of Terror* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) p. 192. (back)

25. *Ibid*., p. 94. (back)

26. This was not the first time secular forces would help launch the careers of those who would become religious terrorists. Israel helped Hamas to get started, thinking that it would compete to weaken the PLO, and to check left-wing opposition, President Sadat released religious elements from prison who later assassinated him. (back)

27. From 1983 to 2000 the Tamils used suicide bombs 171 times while the combined total for all 13 Islamic groups using the tactic was 117. The figures were compiled by Yoram Schweitzer and cited by Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics," *Foreign Policy*, Oct. 2001, p. 69. (back)

28. Those attacks, as well as the expected ones which did not materialize, are discussed in a special forthcoming volume of *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14:1 (Spring 2002), edited by Jeffrey Kaplan. (back)

29. For a very interesting discussion of the circumstances which provoke American military responses to terrorist attacks, see Michele L. Mavesti, "Explaining the United States' Decision to Strike Back at Terrorists,"*Terrorism and Political Violence*, 13:2 (Summer, 2001) pp. 85-106. (back)

30. For a more extensive discussion of Figner, see my "The International World as Some Terrorists Have Seen It: A Look at a Century of Memoirs" in my *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 2001) 2nd Ed. (back)

31. A disappointed office seeker, not an Anarchist, assassinated Garfield. (back)

32. Heehs, note 8. p. 4. (back)

33. See Richard B. Jensen, "The United States, International Policing the War against Anarchist Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13, 1 (Spring 2001): 19. (back)

34. See my "The International World…" *op.cit.* (back)

35. Martin David Dubin, "Great Britain and the Ant-Terrorist Conventions of 1937," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (V, I). Spring 1993 p.1. (back)

36. Irish-Americans have always given Irish rebels extensive support. The Fenian movement was born in American Civil War and sparked a rebellion in Ireland. (back)

37. Hans J. Klein in Jean M. Bourguereau, *German Guerrilla: Terror, Rebel Reaction and Resistance* (Orkney, U.K.: Sanday, 1981) p. 31. (back)

38. Michael Baumann, *Terror or Love* (New York: Grove Press, 1977) p. 61. (back)

39. The Spaniards, for example, conquered the Incas and Aztecs easily, but the U.S. had much more difficulty with the less powerful but highly decentralized native peoples resisting it. Contrary to the argument above, Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin contend that that Al Qaeda is a uniquely decentralized organization and therefore less likely to be disturbed by destroying the center. "America and the New Terrorism" *Survival* 42, 2 (September 2000): 156-77. (back)