

An Inquiry into the Morality of Terrorism

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Introduction

Terrorism is associated with “explosive and incendiary bombings, shooting attacks and assassinations, hostage-taking and kidnapping, and hijacking” (Wilkinson 2000, 13). Political agents employ terrorism to achieve political goals – ethnonational, religious, or ideological. Despite its long history, public discourse on terrorism had been relegated to the background, until the bombing of the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City on 11 September 2001, popularly known as 9/11. Since then, terrorism has been made a center of intense and emotionally-charged public discourse.

The first form of modern terrorism was actually conducted by states or governments. The states were responsible for the most ruthless terrorism that killed thousands of people during the last century. Yet, today, terrorism is mostly attributed to small, clandestine, and militant groups such as Al-Qaida, Hamas, Fatah, Jemaah Islamiya, Abu Sayyaf, Irish Republican Army (IRA), Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA), among others.¹ These groups have carried out attacks on popular resorts, buses, trains, airports, and other public utilities and structures. Their attacks have killed hundreds of people. Some are motivated by political ends while others by religious fanaticism, more particularly radical Islamism, which goes beyond the traditional Left-Right division of terrorism. The Left constitutes the nationalist movements while the Right promotes anti-capitalism and anti-Americanism (Laqueur 2003, 9).

Terrorism in the twenty-first century aims to effect maximum destruction, not only of properties, but more importantly of innocent human lives. In an interview, a secular Palestinian terrorist said: “No

distinction [is] made between armed actions on soldiers or on civilians; the main thing [is] the amount of blood. The aim [is] to cause as much carnage as possible" (Post 2005, 623).

The desire to kill and the desire to kill as many people as possible are quite disturbing. It challenges our long-held belief that people have reason and conscience not to resort to atrocities. It leads the so-called "civilized" humanity to reflect on its assumptions about being human. This makes terrorism not only a major political concern but also a difficult and controversial moral issue that needs urgent deliberation.

The rational majority easily dismisses acts of terrorism as senseless and inhuman, but from the terrorists' point of view, they are legitimate instruments to promote their political objectives. They are problematic claims, so a renewed inquiry into the moral legitimacy of these arguments is called for.

This paper focuses on the question: Is terrorism morally justifiable? The sub-questions are: 1. What is meant by terrorism? 2. What makes terrorism wrong? 3. What might justify terrorism?

Roots of Terrorism

Terrorism was originally used as a political means of the state against its own citizens. Between 1793 and 1794 in France, the young Jacobin government under Robespierre launched the "Reign of Terror" against perceived counter-revolutionary critics (Sterba 2003; Jaggar 2005, 202). Thousands of French citizens – peasants, workers, aristocrats, moderate revolutionaries, and others – were killed by means of the guillotine. As such, the first form of terrorism was state terrorism.

In the nineteenth century, Europe saw the shift of state terrorism to sub-state and non-state terrorism. Governments became the targets of terrorist acts perpetrated by groups who embraced an extreme ideology (Jaggar, 203). Political leaders and heads of states were targeted in assassination plots, like Czar Alexander of Russia in 1881 and Empress Elizabeth of Austria in 1897. Politically motivated assassinations continued through the early twentieth century. In the late twentieth century, terrorism took the form of anti-colonial struggles waged by Left-wing groups that included the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, the IRA, and ETA among others. These nationalist terrorists regard themselves as fighters of a noble cause, and they enjoy a large reservoir of public

support, which gives them more staying power. They do not only have a military wing engaged in ambushes and assassinations but also a political arm which provides social services and education, runs businesses, and contests elections (Laqueur 2000).

However, while anti-government violence intensified in the twentieth century, the states were responsible for the century's most extensive terrorism directed against another state or against its own citizens (Sterba, 11). This includes British and American bombings on enemy targets during World War II and Nazism in Germany, among others. But these acts are rarely called terrorism because terrorism has become more associated with non-state groups.

After the September 11 attack, the idea that terrorism is perpetuated not by states but by non-state groups was reinforced. The U.S. State Department's definition of terrorism excludes state terrorism although it recognizes "state-sponsored terrorism" (Sterba, 11). Terrorism is defined as activities carried out by "sub-national groups or clandestine agents." A new public image of the terrorist also emerged. The contemporary image of the terrorist is one who is typically brown-skinned, "Arab or Muslim-looking," and foreign born (Jaggar, 204). That is, he is not white. This image is both questionable and disturbing since there are white-skinned terrorists, one being Timothy McVeigh who bombed the Alfred Murrah Building in Oklahoma City in 1995. The stereotyping builds suspicions and mistrust between Muslims and the West – which could only result in greater conflicts.

But why is there terrorism? Why does it exist despite the claim that there is a growing civility among human persons?

There are objective conditions that generate terrorism. One is the unjust social, political, and economic condition – the condition of poverty and exploitation. This intolerable condition creates psychological frustration that pushes a group to resort to aggression so that the indifferent majority can hear their grievances and aspirations (Wilkinson 1997, 93). Or, according to Jeremy Waldron (2004, 26), by engaging in terrorist acts the oppressed punish their oppressors, sending the message of proportionality: "What you have done is as bad as this." But the socio-political and economic injustice factor is not completely conclusive. Hardly any terrorist activity occurs in countries included in the list of least developed countries designated by the United Nations (Laqueur 2003, 15). Meanwhile, becoming rich is not a guarantee that

one will not become a terrorist. According to Paul Wilkinson, spoiled children of affluence committed politically motivated terrorism in the past, like the Red Army Faction in West Germany and the Red Brigade which kept Europe under the grip of fear for almost two decades. The members of Bin Laden's network are graduates of universities, technical schools, and military academies. Indeed, poverty and oppression can be causes of terrorism; but they are inadequate reasons to explain the existence of terrorism. What could be the other factor(s)?

Attributing terrorism to psychological factors emphasizes the mental and emotional states of a person - his personality - that influence his behavior. Psychologists trace one's personality to childhood experiences. Personality, they say, is a product of the various relationships one has had with his family, friends, and the greater society. We could say that the terrorist's inclination towards violence could be a product of constant exposure to violence, which his culture considers morally acceptable. Or the childhood experience of discrimination and humiliation planted the seeds of hatred and animosity towards another group, so that a deep-seated desire for vengeance preoccupies his life while growing up. This makes the individual an easy recruit of the terrorists.

However, the role of personality in the "creation" of a terrorist is a perplexing fact. Some minorities who are victims of injustice and oppression, who suffer from extreme poverty and discrimination never resort to violence in order to make their grievances known. If the objective factors and the psychological factors are not sufficient explanations for terrorism, what could be the other reasons?

Walter Laqueur (2000, 19) suggests that one reason for the spread of terrorism is the clash of civilizations, between Islam and the West. Islamists violently oppose modernism and call the West, specifically the U.S., the Big Satan. Though both Islam and the West recognize the values of freedom, human rights, and justice, among others, their interpretations of the concepts are different. The West promotes the separation of state and religion, Islam emphasizes their union. The Islamic factor has been very prominent in the history of wars and contemporary conflicts. According to Laqueur (2003, 19), almost ninety percent of the conflicts that have occurred in recent years appear to affect Muslim countries and societies. This does not imply that Muslims are predisposed to terrorism. Yet, we wonder why there is so much Muslim aggression at present. In this situation, the objective factors of the cause

of terrorism could become useful. In addition, religious fanaticism, most particularly Islamic fanaticism, which is "totally convinced of its own rightness and intolerant against everything else," could be a decisive factor as well (Laqueur 2003, 25). With this historical background of terrorism, we can now attempt to characterize terrorism.

Outlines of Terrorism

"One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" goes the famous adage (Merari 1993, 226). But if terrorism becomes a relative concept, then it will be difficult to make moral evaluations about it. It will also be difficult to preserve the moral character of the men and women who fight just wars and of the nations and communities they are called to defend. That is why terrorism has to be defined. I propose to break down the concept of terrorism into four interrelated aspects: its goals, methods, targets, and agents.

Goals of Terrorism

At a more general level, the major goal of the terrorists is to conquer their opponent. If terrorism is a battle, then like any other battle, the terrorists aim to crush their enemy and end up as victor. This is not a substantial description though since any conflict, small-scale or large-scale, involves the desire to win. At a more specific level, the goal of the terrorists is to attack not only the military capacity, but more importantly the psychology of their opponent and its supporters. Through terrorism, the terrorists aim to weaken their opponent's will to fight. Like tyranny whose first aim is to break the spirit of the subjects, terrorism seeks to destroy the enemy's morale and confidence (Walzer 1997, 198; Wilkinson 1997, 80). Through the loss of lives, the destruction of symbolic structures, and more importantly the creation of fear among the populace, the terrorists paralyze their opponent, undermining its political will and rendering it vulnerable to political and social disintegration.

Governed by fear, the social world "is no longer structured by calculable law and predictable exercise of force" (Waldron, 22). The threats of death, injury, and destruction would lead to inaction, which in turn would lead to grave social, economic, and cultural consequences.

Thomas Hobbes was well aware of this. If the condition of general insecurity prevails:

[T]here is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently, no culture of the earth, no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea, nor commodious building...no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society (Hobbes 1994, 76).

Continual fear undermines social relations. People will no longer interact with others. Reduced to being alone with their fears, they cease to enjoy the rewards of interpersonal exchange. The terrorists take these Hobbesian insight to heart, achieving their objectives without having to win any decisive military victory. Thus for the terrorists, the success or failure of their action is judged not purely on the traditional military criteria of actual deaths and damage but rather on the political and psychological impact created.

Methods of Terrorism

A major method that terrorism uses is terrorist violence in order to inflict injury or death to a person, or damage or destruction to properties. Terrorist violence is intended to create fear - acute and long-lasting enough - to influence the behavior of its enemy. Hence, it is inherently indiscriminate. "The initial act of violence sets off the moral cascade: death and injury to some, anxiety and fear for many more, the degradation of the social order for all," and the collapse of the people's will (Scheffler 2006, 9). A small amount of violence could produce a disproportionate effect of horror to a greater number of people. "Kill one, frighten ten thousand" (Wilkinson 1997, 49).

It could also happen that the greater the destruction and death, the greater the paralysis of the will of the opponent. Terrorists use violence arbitrarily and unpredictably to effect maximum death and destruction. Their brutality and barbarous cruelties are also manifested in the way they improvise their weapons. For example, in the Provisional IRA in London in the 70s, "the bombs contained ball-bearings and coachbolts to cause maximum deaths and injuries to bystanders" (Wilkinson 1997, 53). Today's terrorism has become even more dangerous with the possibility that terrorists would employ chemical weapons. But according to Laqueur (2000, 154), while the terrorists of today are inclined toward

indiscriminate killing, they will not engage in overkill by using weapons of super-violence if their traditional weapons are sufficient to continue their struggle and achieve their objectives.

Targets of Terrorism

Since the terrorists do not recognize rules and conventions of war, they make no distinction between combatants and noncombatants. A combatant is uniformed and armed, which could include guerilla and underground forces. A noncombatant is unarmed. In other words, the noncombatants are the ordinary unarmed civilians whose preoccupation is how to survive the daily challenges in the office, at home, or in their personal life. They also include the children whose world only revolves around play. For a terrorist who is about to bomb a commuter train, all human lives are expendable. No one is innocent. Oftentimes, it is the civilians that terrorists attack, although the civilians constitute their secondary target. The target of the action is rarely the immediate enemy.

Today, the possible target of the terrorists has expanded. Terrorists attack not only humans but also structures (and infrastructures), especially those with symbolic significance (Jaggar, 2007). Attacking symbolic targets has proven to be effective in causing and maximizing the spread of fear among the noncombatant population. Though terrorism is indiscriminate, its target is carefully chosen to produce its most desired effect.

Agents of Terrorism

It is not only sub-state or non-state groups that conduct terrorism. Jaggar and Sterba note that states were responsible for the greatest forms of terrorism as exemplified by Nazi Germany. States have more capacity to engage in terrorist acts than sub-state groups and individuals by virtue of their large resources. State coercion takes many forms, such as discriminatory law enforcement and legislation, or organized militias used to assassinate political opponents, or ethnic cleansing.

States likewise use terrorism against other states. They employ terror bombing to destabilize other societies or other states. Such was what happened when the Allied Forces bombed Hiroshima during World War II or the Israeli bombing of Lebanon in 2006.

Given the descriptions above, we can now formulate a definition of terrorism:

Terrorism is the indiscriminate yet deliberate and systematic use of violence by states and non-state groups with the intention of coercing and intimidating governments, groups, and individuals. It attacks combatants and noncombatant civilians with the aim of weakening not the military might of the terrorists' opponent but rather its will to fight, thereby making it vulnerable to political and social disintegration.

Terrorism and Conventional Warfare

Jaggar (209) defines conventional warfare as an open armed conflict between states recognized by the international community, such as the United Nations. This warfare involves the use of conventional military weapons and battlefield tactics aimed at the destruction of the opponent's military capacity, thereby forcing the latter to surrender. Since it is a war between states, conventional warfare involves armies. Terrorism is not equivalent to conventional warfare, but it is one tactic that can be used during wartime. A state can sow terror among the civilian population of the enemy state through bombing of residential homes and structures with the aim of weakening its fighting spirit. This was what happened during the bombing of Hiroshima during World War II, which forced the Japanese to surrender to the Americans.

Terrorism and Guerilla Warfare

Guerilla warfare is aimed at weakening the *military might* of the enemy, usually a government. The guerillas directly attack military outposts and barracks. Since guerillas know that the state possesses far more firepower than they do, they need an extensive mass-based support, which includes peasants in the rural areas, and laborers, students, and even some businessmen in urban areas. They need solid civilian backing in order to win the war. That is why guerillas, as a principle, do not attack innocent noncombatant civilians. These are the people whom they badly need and whom they claim to be defending. As Michael Walzer (184) says: The guerillas fight as civilians, among civilians, and for civilians.

This does not mean that guerillas do not attack ordinary civilians. They also burn villages and take hostages. But if ever they attack civilians, they select well-known officials, notorious collaborators, and

so on (Walzer, 180). Some so-called guerilla organizations involved in kidnapping and extortion are little more than a branch of organized crimes, decadent guerillas than genuine revolutionaries. The principled guerillas know who their enemies are and where they are. According to Wilkinson (2000, 15), although guerilla movements use terrorism to weaken the political hold of an existing government, "terror violence occupies only a relatively minor or auxiliary role in the majority of guerilla insurgencies." Such a position stems from the realization of serious insurgent groups that terrorist attacks do not advance their strategic political goals, especially if they aim to become major players in power struggles.

Terrorism and Criminality

Terrorist acts are analogous to crimes. A crime implies a violation of any legal code as well as a moral responsibility for one's actions. Bombing, kidnapping, and assassination constitute criminal offences. They are indiscriminate acts of murder, which place the terrorists outside the law. But there remains a distinction between the criminal and the terrorist. Although a criminal directly attacks an innocent noncombatant victim, his act cannot be called terrorist because it is devoid of any political ideology and does not seek to weaken his opponent's will (Coady 2004).

Organized crimes like the Mafia use violence such as murder and assassination to extort money from famous and wealthy individuals in exchange of security protection. They assassinate respectable individuals whom they consider threats and enemies. But the Mafia is not a terrorist group. Their acts have no political or ideological motivations. They perceive themselves not as fighters of justice but as a dangerous group concerned with huge profits from drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and money laundering. The Mafia then is a criminal syndicate, not a terrorist group.

Terrorism and Assassination

Terrorism is frequently associated with assassination - "the targeted killing of specific individuals," e.g. government officials, heads of states, and royal dignitaries (Jaggar, 210). But strictly speaking, assassination is not equivalent to terrorism. We judge an assassin not only by his victim but also by his purpose. If what is targeted is a military personnel or political leader without the purpose of weakening the will to fight of the assassin's enemy, then the act could be an act of political rivalry. There

could be other motives too, like ideological agenda in which the target is an obstacle, money as in the case of contract killing, simple revenge, or act of espionage. But if the act aims to produce a psychological effect on the assassin's opponent, then it is terrorism.

I have proposed a narrow definition of terrorism, which emphasizes the psychological dimension of using indiscriminate violence. To be considered terrorism, the act must intend to weaken the will to fight of the terrorists' opponent by attacking not only combatants but also noncombatant innocent civilians. This definition of terrorism distinguishes it from other forms of armed struggle, such as conventional warfare, guerilla warfare, criminality, and assassination attempts. These have some conceptual similarities, but they are different from terrorism.

In practice though, the criteria of terrorism will be difficult to apply and borderline and disputed cases will remain. But it does not stop us from making a moral assessment of terrorism.

What Makes Terrorism Wrong

The prevailing public attitude towards terrorism is moral condemnation. State leaders, thinkers, sociologists, political scientists, and others do not consider terrorism morally justifiable. Unlike conventional wars that can be justified, terrorism is aligned with the negative side of many dichotomies in the vocabulary of war. Terrorism is branded as uncivilized and barbaric. The terrorist is considered treacherous and dishonorable. Above all, he is a murderer. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon refers to radical Islamic terrorists as "an enemy composed of lunatic individuals, lunatic regimes, and lunatic countries" (Held 2005, A10). I will present the arguments why terrorism is considered morally wrong by specifically looking at its choice of means and of targets.

Sowing Fear

The ultimate goal of the terrorists is to expose and exploit the psychological vulnerability of their opponent by sapping its will and undermining its morale to fight. Terrorists think that employing terrorism as a psychological weapon to subdue the will of their opponent could be more cost efficient than directly attacking its military might. Terrorism is a cheap way of conquering the terrorists' enemy without

using sophisticated weapons, and without recruiting and training many members to carry out the group's ideals. They can operate clandestinely in small numbers, use improvised bombs and explosives, and effect maximum destruction. If the objective of terrorism is to intimidate and coerce, then, says Lawrence Freedman (2005, 162), its method and choice of particular victims are very important.

In legitimate conventional warfare, a military attack is also a form of strategic coercion, aimed to reduce the opponent to an un-thinking and un-free being who is made to follow the aggressor's demands. From the point of view of military tactic, this is one way to vanquish the opponent and force it to surrender.

In terrorism, strategic coercion is carried out differently. To expose the opponent's psychological vulnerability, terrorists do not only attack the military but also more importantly, the civilian population. With civilians dead or injured, the larger population experiences the effects of the terror attack. The senseless destruction of lives and properties keeps the populace under the grip of fear - a widespread, acute, and long lasting fear that significantly alters their social or political lives. It was reported that after 9/11, Americans avoided flying lest they be hijacked in midflight. Similarly, after the anthrax scare in 2001, Americans avoided handling postal mail lest it be anthrax-impregnated. Fear imposed constraints on the people's choices. There was a loss of freedom, spontaneity, and even privacy because of constant surveillance.

Being ruled by fear is a psychological violence, which corrupts the individuality as well as the imagination of the aggrieved party, in this case the civilian population. According to Kant (1998, 446), human beings possess a will in so far as they are rational. This will is a kind of causality, that is, it empowers the individual to act, to choose independence from external determinations. To have a will then is to be capable of being moved by reason, by a rational cause than by merely external, nonrational determination. Consequently, autonomy is presupposed in the will of all rational beings. Now, when one is under the grip of fear, one cannot act rationally and autonomously. That is, he is paralyzed, not being able to think and act properly. This is a direct assault on the subjectivity or personhood of the individual. Not only his humanity but also his existence is crushed. According to Hobbes (95-96), a life filled with fear is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Continual

fear, not the temporary anxiety “but the grinding, unrelenting fear of imminent violent death...” is unspeakably awful (Scheffler 2006, 4). A life filled with constant terror is inhuman, terrible, and suffocating. It is scarcely a life at all, worse than being materially impoverished.

It cannot be denied that in some cases the rule of fear can be beneficial.² Samuel Scheffler says that governments may also sow fear among its civilian population, not to terrorize them but to maintain its grip on power and to preserve the established order. Scheffler distinguishes the political use of state terror and terrorism. He argues that although fear and terror might be used to produce instability in the existing social order in a society as what terrorism does, the use of threat or fear could also be used to stabilize and preserve social order. State terror, he argues, does the latter. But how does fear and terror produce stability and social order? Alluding to Hobbes, he says that fear could preserve existing social order because it is a passion (understood as natural inclination of man) that relates to power. All human beings possess a power to be a threat to each other. When such power is concentrated in a sovereign, it produces a redistribution of the capacity to inspire fear. People’s relation with one another is no longer governed by mistrust and, more importantly, everyone fears the sovereign’s power. Consequently, they obey its laws and so the social order becomes stable.

However, this is not the type of fear and terror that terrorists use on the civilian population. The terrorists intend to sow a form of fear—acute and long lasting—meant to destabilize the society, with the hope of exposing the psychological vulnerability of their opponent, leading to its political and social collapse.

Thus, creating fear among the populace is as good as breaking its will to live a human and fruitful life. It violates the basic principle of civility and feeds on the weak spot of the individual, which reduces him to an instrument that is at the mercy of the terrorists. This makes terrorism morally questionable.

Indiscriminate Violence and Intentional Killing

To weaken their opponent strategically, terrorists employ indiscriminate violence directed both at the military and the noncombatant civilians. Terrorists offer two justifications for these acts. First, their victims are all guilty. Second, terrorists are engaged in an

asymmetric conflict. As their enemy is more powerful than them, they use “out of bounds” tactics, which can hurt their opponent the most and by which they can win the war. “Doing so,” says Shanon French (in Sterba 2003, 34), “is not seeking an unfair advantage; rather it is an attempt to counteract the unfair advantage that favors their opponent. It is simply leveling the playing field.” Terrorists think that if they follow the same rules as their enemy, victory is out of their reach. Therefore, they do not have to obey the rules of war.

C.A.J. Coady (775) argues that terrorism violates the principle of *jus in bello* (permissible methods in the conduct of war) by directly attacking noncombatant innocent civilians who do not harm nor threaten the terrorists. As to the claim that their victims are all guilty, Igor Primoratz (1997, 224) says: “They (terrorists) can say that only on the basis of an extension of the notion of guilt so extreme that the whole distinction between guilt and innocence no longer makes much sense, at least in the context of moral appraisal of the sorts they do to their victims.”

While it is true that terrorists are fighting an asymmetric conflict, this does not license them to use whatever means they want. The asymmetric conflict may justify the terrorists’ strategy of fighting with fewer restraints, but then they are not morally permissible to act with no restraints whatsoever. More particularly, they are not justified in intentionally attacking and killing civilians. Intentional killing is different from accidentally killing someone, like when a soldier on a legitimate mission accidentally hits civilians. The latter is justified from the point of view of the principle of Double Effect, which says that an action, which brings about an unintended or unnecessary bad effect normally called collateral damage, is justified if the primary intention of the action is to produce a good effect. But if the intention is to kill, and directing it to a helpless and harmless human being, it is a serious moral problem. What makes intentional and indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians morally repellent?

Primoratz (223-224) argues that this form of killing violates two significant principles as regards human persons: first, is the separateness of persons and second, is the respect for persons. Firstly, the terrorists kill men and women, the children and the old, without taking into consideration whether these people are guilty or not. What matters to them is that these people are part of the price that has to be paid in the pursuit of their goal to weaken the will to fight of their opponent, and

achieve political or nonpolitical concessions. So in their calculation of victims, human beings are reduced to units to be added and subtracted. But this is unacceptable primarily because human persons are separate from other persons. In other words, human beings are individuals, with their own uniqueness and "irreproducible thread of life and a value that is not commensurable with anything else" (224). The terrorists, however, find this view ridiculous. Everyone is a possible victim, for as long as he falls into the category of their enemy, normally a proponent or supporter of an "evil" state, or a group they want to extinguish or answer for its misdeeds.

Secondly, such indiscriminate attack on innocent human beings is an utter disrespect for persons. Primoratz claims that terrorism offends the respect for persons on two levels. On one level, the terrorists do not recognize and respect the basic human rights of persons necessary in the preservation of personal freedom. Human rights are natural rights that human beings acquire by virtue of their being human. One of such rights is the right not to be killed or maimed or harmed, except for some lawful punishments handed down by a legitimate institution or authority. Even in such punishments, the basic human rights of the person have to be recognized too. Terrorist acts, done in view of punishing one state or group, do not take cognizance of this inalienable right. On another level, terrorism does not respect the principle that persons are not to be used as mere means towards an end. It is unacceptable to be killed or maimed merely to promote the interests of the terrorists. It is morally disgusting to sacrifice an individual's basic human rights to life and bodily integrity for the sake of respecting the rights of a certain group of people.

If and when an individual is used as means, according to the Kantian principle, the minimum requirement of consent should be made. This means that the person who is sacrificed also shares the end of the terrorists' action. But the victims of the terrorist acts are not in a position to do this. Those whose lives are destroyed, injured, or damaged are simply used as mere means for the terrorists' ends. To be more precise, the primary victims (the ones who are killed) are used as means to a means: "that is, they are treated as means to the end of treating the secondary victims (the ones who are terrorized) as means to an end" (Scheffler, 9). Thus, by disrespecting persons, terrorists do not only display a callous indifference to the grief, fear, and misery of their victims but also a complete disregard for human dignity.

As regard its goal to expose the psychological vulnerability of the opponent and weaken its will to fight, I have argued that terrorism employs means that are morally questionable. In terrorism, instrumentalization of human beings takes place on two levels: on the civilian population gripped by fear and on the immediate victims. This constitutes the reason why terrorism is morally reprehensible.

However, while terrorism is widely condemned, we have to avoid one danger, that is, to de-legitimize struggles by the weak while legitimating repression by the strong. This is unreasonable, such that we have to be open to the possibility that terrorism, in some extreme cases, might be permissible.

What Might Justify Terrorism

Wary of moral absolutes, some moral philosophers treat terrorism not as absolutely wrong, but as "almost absolutely wrong" (Coady, 777). This means that terrorism is not *a priori* beyond the moral pale, and unacceptable in all circumstances. Terrorism is certainly atrocious but this does not mean that it is prohibited absolutely. Just as some wars are justified, so are some forms of terrorism. The only thing is that justifying its moral permissibility not only requires a heavy burden of proof but also a vigilance that such a position does not lead to abuse. That is why constraints have to be observed in justifying terrorist attacks. But when are such attacks permissible? When can some people be used as means to an end?

When to Wage Wars

As early as Aristotle, rules were specified when to resort to war. Under the heading of just war theory, there are six requirements for embarking on a war. For the purposes of this paper, I will only choose those that are relevant for my discussion. These are just cause, right intention, last resort, and proportionality.³ Though I discuss them here separately, the conditions have to be combined together to make going to war just.

First, a war can be resorted to when it is done for a just cause: Douglas P. Lackey (1989, 33) says that as early as Cicero in the first century BCE, just cause has been understood to mean a cause fought for because of a "wrong received" from another party through humiliation, violation of

human rights, verbal disrespect, and desecration of national or cultural symbols, among others. For the aggrieved party, those misdeeds have to be repaid by the culprit; thus, retaliatory actions can be launched against the latter. To fight for a just cause is not equivalent to vengeance. Lackey (34-35) says it is a quest for moral reparation for what has been tarnished or lost—the individual or nation's pride, sovereignty, identity, and dignity—all essential to being human and ought to be respected. Some examples of just cause are national self-defense or defense of rights as well as self-determination.

Second, a war can be resorted to when it is fought for the sake of right intention. Right intention is closely related to just cause. Michael Stevens (2005, 515) says right intention is in accordance with the cause that prompted the war. Or as Lackey (32) notes, right motive excludes the love of violence or hatred of the enemy. Determining the motives of an action can be difficult though, since people usually have multiple motives for their actions and a morally right intention could mean different things to different people. Despite this difficulty however, it remains important to retain this criterion.

Third, a war can be resorted to when doing so is the last resort. Steven argues that war becomes the last resort when all other peaceful means such as negotiation, deliberation, and dialogue have been exhausted but are rendered futile. That is, no available means less dangerous, and more or less effective, exist. If the just cause might be achieved by other means that have not been attempted, then a state or sub-state group cannot resort to war. Otherwise, such war is unjust although it is fought for a just cause. Lackey (40) remarks: "If the cause is just but cannot be achieved by war, then war for that cause is not just war." This does not mean that resorting to war as a last resort guarantees victory, but rather the probability of victory should be sufficiently high. Going to war as a last resort sees a "chance of victory."

Finally, war can be resorted to when the rule of proportionality exists. "The rule of proportionality states that a war cannot be just unless the evil that can reasonably be expected to ensue from the war is less than the evil that can be reasonably expected to ensue if the war is not fought" (Lackey, 40). In other words, a war can only be fought or resorted to when such action produces more benefits than not resorting to war. For example, there will be less death, less suffering, less injury,

less destruction of properties, less violation of rights and so on, as a result of war.

Determining the consequences of war is however only a play of probabilities. The actual consequences might be different from the rationally expected probable consequences, which according to Haig Khatchadourian (2003, 39-40), makes moral judgment on the resort to war difficult. But finding a way out, he says that although the actual consequences could determine the overall moral value or worth of the act, when probable consequences turn out to be bad or much less good than expected, they cannot be outrightly judged as wrong. "Instead, we regard them as regrettable or unfortunate, sometimes tragic." Now, let us see how the conditions of resorting to terrorism are parallel but at the same time significantly distinctive from just war conditions.

When to Use Terrorism

If war can be resorted to when there is just cause, can the condition of the just cause be the basis of using terrorism? In my opinion, it could be. However, this needs further qualification as it might open the door to virtually unlimited use of indiscriminate violence and intentional killing of civilians. Not all oppression or forms of injustice necessarily constitute a legitimate cause to resort to terrorism. If your piece of land is unjustly taken away from you, such injustice does not legitimate you to kill the innocent child of the one who did it to you or the latter's relatives who do not have anything to do with what had happened. Doing so is plain murder. Or if a tyrannical government oppresses a group, a third party state does not just immediately resort to terrorism to topple that government and "establish" democracy. That is simply unjustified invasion. So, when does a form of injustice or oppression become a legitimate reason to resort to terrorism?

Alison Jaggarr says terrorism becomes legitimate when the intensity or the degree of injustice and oppression of a people, not simply of an individual, has become rampant.⁴ That is, injustices have gone beyond human proportion, so that toleration and other peaceful means of seeking justice are no longer feasible. This happens when there is massive and systematic violation of human rights, not mere small forms of injustices, or when there are real threats of mass extermination. In other words, gross and blatant forms of political and social evils affect

the population. These situations, Jaggar (214) writes, constitute a cause that is "overwhelming in its righteousness," either from the viewpoint of the future and present victims.

However, a just cause can only be fought if the people that seek for it are legitimate representatives of the oppressed group. They must have a legitimate authority proceeding from the approval of the aggrieved party. The problem though is how to determine legitimacy. Is it a numbers game? Is it a battle between the majority and the minority? If the majority or the many support the group, then the latter is legitimate. This is what Virginia Held (183) argues. Legitimacy, she says, is dependent on popular support or popular will. According to Mlada Bukovansky (2002, 185), with the advent of globalization, popular will as determinant of legitimacy is no longer exclusive to domestic recognition; it also includes external or international recognition.

Last Resort

If war can be resorted to as a last resort, can terrorism be also resorted to as a last resort? A war is resorted to when all peaceful means of attaining the objectives of the group have been rendered futile. But this situation does not automatically justify resorting to terrorism. The condition to use terrorism as a last resort has a significant difference from the condition allowing the use of war as a last resort. Using terrorism as a last resort, says Wilkinson (1997, 24), does not only require that all peaceful means have been exhausted but also other forms of violence less atrocious than terrorism should have been used but proved unsuccessful. No free media, no representative institutions, no international support or even recognition, that is, no other nonviolent means to pursue a group's political cause. Or if these nonviolent means are available, the terrorists are denied access to them, or if they have gained access, the means prove to be ineffective. That is, deliberation, dialogue, negotiation, and other intellectual persuasions used by "rational" and "civilized" individuals in a democratic polity have become useless. Ted Honderich (2002, 102) argues that it is difficult if not useless to explain the rationality of negotiation to a young student in Zambia when everyday he sees the half-lives or quarter-lives of people suffering from hunger, malnutrition, and disease which are to a considerable extent fruits of international negotiation. Similarly, it

is also difficult to explain to the people of Palestine who have already experienced the futility of international negotiation.

But why not just resort to war and use conventional means of war? As the enemy has a trained army and better weaponry, doing so is futile. Pushed to the wall, the oppressed group uses terrorism as its last card. However, resorting to terror as a last resort should have a high probability of achieving the group's legitimate ends. Terrorism should not be used if the chance of success is too far to be realized. This effectiveness of terrorism as a last resort, in my view, is crucial.

Recall that terrorism seeks to expose the psychological vulnerability of their opponent so they can pursue their political or social ends. While attacking the will of the opponent could prove to be more cost efficient than attacking its military might, it might not necessarily be effective. The terrorists' way of thinking mainly relies on the theory of human behavior, that a person could lose his morale by attacking what is dear to him, so that he becomes vulnerable and easy to control. This logic could be erroneous. Terror has different effects on different people. The destruction of lives and symbolic structures is not necessarily a sufficient condition for people to psychologically recoil. There is no guarantee that at the individual or the state/societal level, acts of terrorism can subdue the opponent's will to fight. Freedman (164) states that there is little evidence in psychological literature indicating that "terrorism can work by producing such psychological effects that populations and governments are moved by *unreason* to attitudes and behavior that they could not reach through the application of *reason*—that is, through an assessment of costs and benefits of alternative course of action." If psychological coercion is uncertain, then attaining the political or social objectives of the terrorist group is also uncertain.⁵ This makes resorting to terrorism as a last resort problematic.

However, while the effectiveness of terrorism as a last resort is questionable, it is also possible that its validity remains an empirical question, which can only be settled by going through the merits of specific cases. Kai Nielsen (1981, 446-449), for example, asserts that terrorism, combined with more conventional methods of war, has been proven effective as a tactic in driving out the oppressor in South Vietnam and Algeria. Yet, there were also instances in the past or even in the present where terrorism failed to achieve its political objectives and

consequently perpetuated greater oppression. For example, the terrorist strategy of the Palestinians has not given them liberation and rightful re-acquisition of occupied lands. Their aggression only aggravates their oppressed and deplorable condition. It shows that as regards terrorism, there are no uniform historical experiences. If we judge terrorism based on its effectiveness to attain its objectives, we cannot absolutely claim that it is completely justified or never justified (Primoratz, 223).

Proportionality

The resort to war and the use of violence may be justified if doing so produces more good consequences. The probable (or actual) good consequences for the group override the duty not to kill the innocent. Is this applicable to terrorism? According to Nielsen, other than the condition that there is a good reason to believe that terrorism might be effective, terrorism should not cause more injury and suffering than would simple submission or nonviolent resistance or even conventional wars. As Martha Crenshaw (1983, 3) maintains: "Terrorism must not, as far as the terrorists can see, result in worse injustice than the condition the terrorists oppose." Terrorism may violate human rights by indiscriminately and intentionally killing civilians. But if doing so produces more good consequences than not resorting to terror, then terrorism in this instance might be justified. By virtue of the good consequences, terrorism becomes a form of lesser evil, as Wilkinson says.

According to Michael Walzer, in a supreme emergency, there is the *imminence* of danger—not only the danger of death and military defeat but an unusual and horrifying danger where justice, freedom, survival, and civilization are at risk.⁶ That is, an unimaginable disaster of the political community is at hand. Such being the case, an effective means or weapon, like terrorism, is immediately needed to remove the danger. The sense of obligation and moral urgency calls for the employment of terrorism, which if not carried out, could produce disastrous effects. Thus, in a supreme emergency, where an opportunity presents itself of getting rid of the world of a great evil, terrorism must be done as a moral duty, even if it means attacking and killing noncombatant and innocent civilians.

A problem raised about proportionality is that it is difficult to calculate the consequences, probable or actual. According to Wilkinson (24), there is no guarantee that the use of terror is final because of

possible retaliatory attacks from the group attacked. So the calculation is problematic. The basis for weighing the relative cost of innocent victims of the final blow with the possible cost of continuing conflict by other means is also ambiguous. How much does one human life cost as compared to a ravaged building? Yet, alluding to Bertrand Russell, Khatchadourian (139) says probability is the guide of life. Calculations can only be estimates, yet that is what rational human beings can do the least as regards their actions. However, this reasoning should not be taken matter-of-factly. For what is at stake in terrorist attacks are not mere expendable objects but rather the lives of the innocent civilians who have nothing to do with the terrorists' cause. The calculation, though only probable, must be done carefully. That is why it must also be stressed that the adoption and use of terrorist tactics in order to attain legitimate objectives must be characterized by restraint. As Jaggard (214) writes: terrorism "must be kept to a minimum, in terms of both quantity and quality."

I have outlined the arguments that might justify terrorism. One, terrorism could be justified when it is fought for a just cause, born out of a situation of massive and systematic injustice and neglect, or threat of imminent danger. Here, terrorism might become overwhelming in its righteousness. Second, terrorism, in connection with the first condition, could be justified when it is used as a last resort to be able to attain legitimate objectives. Third, terrorism might be justified when doing so produces more good consequences than not resorting to terror. These arguments should not be taken separately but in combination. Together, these conditions could override the prohibition of not killing the innocent. As can be seen, the conditionalities are so stringent that they are probably difficult to realize. But it is an illogical conclusion to say that in the end it is indeed impossible to justify terrorism. The difficulty of meeting the conditions only shows that justifying terrorism is laden with restraints. This is important because the danger of justifying terrorism might lead to a slippery slope, that is, unnecessary and questionable consequences, for example, treating all forms of terrorism whether carried out by the state or by non-state groups as morally justified. That is why caution has to be observed.

Justification in Practice

Let us review some cases of terrorism, and determine whether they are justified or not. I have chosen three examples of terrorism: Islamic-fundamentalist terrorism, nationalist-separatist terrorism, and the Hiroshima bombing. The examples do not represent the whole spectrum of terrorism, but will suffice for this paper.

Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism

Without prejudice to the Muslims, let me discuss briefly a contemporary example of religious terrorism, that is, Islamic fundamentalism. Although the religious leaders of Islam preach the peaceful character of Islam as a religion, it is disheartening to know that most violent conflicts and terrorism occur in Muslim countries or in those countries with active Muslim minorities (Laqueur, 128). Mark Juergensmeyer (217) says that religious terrorists, like Islamists, believe that they are involved in a cosmic war, a war between good and evil, a war sanctioned by God.⁷ What I am more interested in however is the source of Islamic fundamentalism's tendency towards violence. With the rapid secularization and "Westernization" of the modern world, Islamic terrorists believe Islamic values are threatened, so that Allah commissioned them to protect His name and teachings against the enemy, largely the West. According to Laqueur (129), "violence is sanctified in Islam if it is carried out against infidels or heretics in the path of Allah." This could imply that Islam has low tolerance for nonbelief or even apostasy. Radical Islamists, following this mantrā, engage in *jihad* against all that they consider enemies of Islam and aim at the destruction of the satanic enemy.

Lacquer says that Islamists interpreted *jihad* only as a holy war by means of the sword, rejecting its spiritual meaning—the struggle of one's soul against one's own base instinct. For them, to fight infidels in the path of Allah is a sacred duty, and only the coward and the unfaithful refuse to carry out the task. Their struggle has to continue until competing religions are conquered and those fighting against Islam are crucified, mutilated, and killed or at least expelled from Muslim lands. They know that the road to victory might not be fulfilled within human history. Yet wait they do, for theirs is a struggle waged in divine time and inspired by the infinite promise of heavenly reward.

Bin Laden's Al-Qaida Network holds the same views. According to Saul Smilansky (2004, 796), their ideology is radical: "It is antidemocratic and totalitarian, utopian, opposes universal human rights and the emancipation of women, anti-Western and anti-Semitic, and in favor of a continuous violent struggle toward the establishment of universal fundamentalist Muslim rule." So they perpetrate mass casualty terrorism, that is, bombing structures where a mass of innocent civilians can be found. Hamas, Fatah, and Islamic Jihad do the same although their primary goal is the destruction of Israel and re-acquisition of their occupied lands.

Intuitively, it could be said that there is something wrong with this reasoning or belief. It is wrong because it violates our conception of religion that primarily provides tranquility and peace.⁸ How can religion be the motivation and justification for violence? How can terrorism become a sacred duty? One whose life is governed by such belief can be easily dismissed as sick. If we go back to history, religion has been used to justify atrocities whose proportions go beyond human civility. But has human civilization not grown and learned its lessons from these unfortunate episodes of human history? Perhaps, religious terrorists feel that what they are doing is wrong. But because doing terrorist acts eases their own pain or fills their own psychological need, they tend to rationalize their deeds.

Judging from the arguments we have discussed above, Islamic fundamentalism, most particularly Al-Qaida, could hardly be justifiable. From the deontological point of view, it is indeed immoral. In an interview, an Islamic fundamentalist said: "The extent of damage and the number of casualties are of primary importance" (Post, 627). The mass killings and the desire to destroy the enemy at all costs are inherently disgusting. Human persons, most particularly the civilians, are instrumentalized. By disregarding noncombatant immunity and moral innocence, the terrorists reduce persons to calculable units, recognizing no rationality, freedom, or uniqueness. They do not respect the dignity of persons, turning them into mere means.

What makes Islamic fundamentalism like Al-Qaida more problematic is that even from the point of view of consequentialist arguments it could hardly be defended. First, it does not have a legitimate cause. According to Smilansky (796), given the twenty-two independent Arab League countries and other explicit Islamic states,

there are sufficient venues for Islamic self-expression, the development of Muslim culture, and the practice of Islam. Also, the terrorists' dream of a paradisiacal world, purged of all evils, and where Islam reigns supreme, is but an illusion. That can never materialize, given the multicultural society we live in today. Second, it is not clear if Islamic fundamentalist terrorists are legitimate representatives of their own religion. Not all Muslims support Bin Laden's jihad against the Christian West. Also, the terrorist acts do not produce more benefits to the Muslim world as they have only generated stereotypes, animosity, and dislike towards Muslims. (The last resort argument is outrightly inapplicable to Islamic fundamentalism because its objectives are outrightly questionable.) Therefore, radical Islamism, like Al Qaida, not only fails to meet the requirements of consequentialist arguments that might justify terrorism but more importantly it violates deontological principles. As such, it is unjustified.

National-Separatist Terrorism

National-separatist terrorism is also known as ethno-nationalist terrorism. This form of terrorism, Jerrol M. Post (619-620) says, fights for a new political order or state based on ethnic dominance or homogeneity. The cause then of separatists is ethnic autonomy or separatism, which is essential for group identity of the ethnic minority (Wilkinson, 85). The struggles of the national-separatist terrorists emulate the models and styles of anti-colonial and Third World liberation struggles, where the government is seen as a colonial oppressor. Here, I will take the example of the Moro struggle in the Philippines.

For over three decades now, Muslim rebels have been waging a war against the Philippine Christian government, a war which has displaced one million civilians and killed 120,000 people. The Muslim struggle is a continuation of their resistance against the Spaniards in the sixteenth century and the Americans at the turn of the twentieth century. The current Moro struggle was ignited in the 1970s when the Philippine Armed Forces summarily executed twenty-eight young Muslim recruits who refused to carry out a secret mission to invade Sabah, Malaysia. Known as the "Jabidah Massacre," it pushed the Muslims, who have become minority in Mindanao, to form private armies that launched retaliatory attacks against government military troops and Christian civilians as well. Supported by a mass base, Moro rebel groups like

the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (a breakaway of MNLF) became formidable forces that advanced the Moro objectives of reacquisition of ancestral lands and the creation of a *Bangsamoro* Republic in Mindanao through armed revolution.

The Moro armed struggle in Mindanao is justified from the perspective of a legitimate end. It is a struggle of self determination and recognition. Because of colonialism, the Moros were forcibly deprived of their own homeland. Their ancestral rights to their lands are disrespected. Moreover, they have been reduced to a minority, subordinate to the Christian majority, making them strangers in their own land. Afraid of extinction, they demand a space of their own, otherwise they will be overwhelmed completely by the Christian "invaders." Being the minority, the Moros have been neglected by the government of the Philippines. The National Statistical Coordination Board reported in 2003 that Muslim communities are among the poorest in the Philippines.⁹ For many years, their complaints have fallen on deaf ears in the august halls of Congress. They had no legitimate representatives in the Christian government. For quite some time, the Philippine government did not take their claims seriously, outrightly rejecting them as illegal and whimsical. The Christian majority also look on the Muslims with disdain and mistrust.

However, while the Moro struggle for self determination is legitimate by virtue of their right to ancestral lands, this does not legitimate them to use terrorism. There is no condition of gross or systematic violation of human rights of the Muslims since they still enjoy the same basic human rights as their Christian brothers and sisters. Muslim children can go to school. Muslims can practice their religion freely. They can also vote and participate in the elections, though it cannot be denied that they experience discrimination. Given these more or less favorable conditions, there is no overwhelming righteousness for the Muslim rebels to resort to terror. Further, the military option is always there and it has proved to be effective in forcing the Philippine government to take their demands with more seriousness. Therefore, the Muslim militant's terrorist acts of burning houses in Christian communities, or bombing a Christian Cathedral on an evening mass, a waiting shed for well-wishers in an international airport, or shopping malls and commuter trains are never justified. These are pure acts of instrumentalization

of innocent lives, although done out of self determination. The Moro rebels are justified in engaging in armed struggle but they are not justified in using terrorism.

Given the cases above, a justified act of terrorism, even from just cause arguments, is nowhere to be seen. Although the armed struggles of the Moro and the IRA are justified acts of war by virtue of self determination, their use of terror is not necessary, therefore, unjustified. They do not have legitimate causes to use terrorism and consequently, they only sacrifice innocent civilians by intentionally targeting them in their acts of terrorism.

The Case of the Hiroshima Bombing

On 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing 80,000–120,000 Japanese. Three days later, an atomic bomb exploded over Nagasaki, annihilating 50,000 people and wounding another 50,000.

Although there are those who condemn the bombing as morally unacceptable, Charles Landesman (2003, 22) argues that it was justifiable. The use of the atomic bomb was necessary to end the war as quickly as possible to save many lives, both of the Americans and the Japanese. Although the exact number of casualties could not be ascertained if the war had dragged on, Landesman says the casualties could be horrendous. The invasion of Okinawa and Kyushu, where a considerable number of American and Japanese soldiers as well as Japanese civilians died, provided the concrete proof. While the alternatives of invasion and naval blockade could probably force the Japanese to surrender, they were not resorted to. Landesman (23-24) says that such alternatives would have delayed the Japanese surrender, which would cause greater devastation. Through intercepted messages, the Americans learned that the Japanese were decided to fight for their country to the bitter end, which is a characteristic of their samurai culture. A military invasion in Japan would have destroyed countless lives either through disease and starvation, not to mention the lives that would be lost in the territories occupied by Japan. Robert P. Newman (1995, 138-139) estimates that from 1931 to 1945, the Japanese Empire was responsible for more than seventeen million deaths, and that 250,000 people would have died each month if the Japanese Empire continued to reign beyond July 1945.

The Americans also discarded truce or negotiated peace, which the Japanese hoped to force upon them. It would not guarantee a just and lasting peace and would still leave the military capacity of Japan (and Germany) intact. For the Americans, the militaristic and expansionist desires of the Japanese had first to be crushed through an unconditional surrender.¹⁰ To do that, a weapon that would produce such psychological horror has to be used, even if it means killing thousands of Japanese civilians. The atomic bomb then was the key to this tactic.

On utilitarian grounds, Landesman contends that the atomic bombing in Hiroshima is justifiable. The deaths of the few saved the many. Not only that, it is also justified because the necessity called for it. There was an extreme emergency, an imminent danger was at hand—the possibility that the war would drag on, or that the Nazis would claim victory. Resorting to a different military tactic might have produced unimaginable political or social consequences. If the right to life of the Japanese civilians who died because of the bombing was violated, it was a violation that was done to secure the rights of the many, including those who suffered in the hands of the Japanese in the occupied territories. There were countless stories of Japanese atrocities during their military adventurism, such as raping women, torturing prisoners, among others. Although the Americans were not the direct victims of oppression by the Japanese (except for the attack at Pearl Harbor, which targeted a military base), their attack through atomic bombing was carried out in the name of justice and the good of humanity. There was an overwhelming righteousness then to use the atomic bombs.

By our standards today, the Hiroshima bombing not only ended the war quickly, thereby saving lives, but it also created a just and lasting peace between the international community and Japan (as well as Germany). Thus, the good ends in one way or another had offset the killings brought about by the atomic bombing. This is not to say that such bombing was not evil. It was but it was a necessary and lesser evil. In this case, terrorism might be justified.

Let me finish with two points. First, given the cases above, it appears that the only case of terrorism that might be justified based on consequential grounds is the Hiroshima bombing, which is an example of state terrorism. This is not to say that all non-state or sub-state terrorism is unjustified. Nor does this show that all state terrorism is justified. This only shows that while it could be difficult

to identify the moral questionability of terrorism, it is much more difficult to justify terrorism. That is why it is also hard to find cases where terrorism might be justified. Second, it appears that the criteria for a legitimate argument as a potential justification for terrorism can be hardly achieved, what with the many constraints. For example, the conditions of legitimate cause to resort to terrorism are stricter compared to those of resorting to war. Self-determination and political autonomy are legitimate causes to resort to armed struggles. But they are not sufficient causes to resort to terrorism.

Conclusion

Terrorism is a conceptually distinctive phenomenon. It is defined as the indiscriminate yet systematic use of violence directed at the combatant and noncombatant civilians with the intention of weakening the will to fight of the enemy. With its employment of fear and indiscriminate violence, terrorism instrumentalizes human persons—both the civilian population who are terrorized and the immediate victims of the terrorist attacks. Human beings are reduced to puppets controlled by terrorists and mere means toward the achievement of their goals. By virtue of these deontological arguments, terrorism is morally wrong.

However, an absolutist position against terrorism is also uncalled for. If some wars can be justified, certain forms of terrorism might be also justified. That is, when it is fought for attaining justice brought about by massive and systematic violation of human rights, and when as a last resort using terrorism produces more good consequences than not resorting to terrorism. Terrorism is inherently evil but if it is the only way to acquire justice, save lives and protect others' rights, then it becomes a necessary and lesser evil. Yet, justifying terrorism is difficult and can be problematic. Restraints have to be observed, too. If terrorism is used, it must be kept to a minimum, both in terms of quantity and quality. The superiority of nonviolence should be affirmed over indiscriminate violence, for that is the only way by which we can live freely and justly as civilized and rational individuals.

Notes

¹This is based on the U.S. State Department's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

²I am not denying also that terrorist tactics may also create social cohesion and integration and maintain social order. Terrorism may also perform some positive social functions, for example, creating and maintaining social and ethnic solidarity. However, I concur with Martha Crenshaw on two points. First, it is hard to determine whether terrorism is the cause of such social cohesion, if there is, or that the latter is brought about by the resilience and strength of the social order. She reveals that even in most acutely disturbed societies, "life goes on with superficial normality." Individuals learn to adjust to conditions, which from the outsider's perspective are intolerable. But of course, this does not dismiss the negative, sometimes unimaginable, social effects of terrorism. Second, terrorism may create social cohesion among the members of the group but it could also increase widening gap between groups or communities—as the IRA against Protestants, Algerians against European settlers, or Palestinians against Israelis. Cf. Lewis A. Coser, *The functions of social conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1956). Cf. also Martha Crenshaw, "Introduction," in *Terrorism, legitimacy, and power – The consequences of political violence*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983, 21-22.

³The other conditions I omitted are competent authority and sufficient probability of victory. I will mention them though in the course of my discussion.

⁴Jaggar, "What is Terrorism?" 214. Here, I am limiting the experience of injustice to the collective, not to the individual. A mere singular experience of injustice is not sufficient to resort to terror. I am not saying though that individual violation of rights is irrelevant. My point is that the resort to terror by a group must be based on a mass experience of injustice or oppression.

⁵It must be stressed, however, that if the psychological coercion can be hardly attained, then, the political or social objectives of the group are not necessarily illegitimate.

⁶Walzer, *Just and unjust wars*, 252. Walzer's application of supreme emergency, however, is limited to states and their representatives. Such pro-state bias is criticized by C.A.J. Coady, arguing that it should also be extended to non-state actors. Cf. C.A.J. Coady, "Terrorism, Morality, and Supreme Emergency."

⁷Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the mind of God - The global rise of religious violence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, 146. I am not disregarding though the fact that some form of religious terrorism is constituted by political goals, making it related to political terrorism. For example, among Hamas and

Islamic Jihad members in Palestine, their political awareness started during prayers in the mosques, planting the seeds of becoming soldiers of Allah. In the sermons in the mosques, the terrorists and their attacks against enemies of Islam and Muslim oppressors are both glorified. Cf. Jerrold M. Post, "When hatred is bred in the bone: Psycho-cultural foundations of contemporary terrorism," in *Political psychology*, 26 (4), 2005, 626-627.

⁸I am not saying though that this is the only way to see religion. Others might see religion differently. There is an important discovery of Juergensmeyer who argues that some religions, like Christianity, have intrinsic or natural propensity to violence. He alludes to the Eucharistic celebration of Catholics where the worshippers share in the flesh and blood of Christ. However, he said that this is not the whole of the story though because in the ritual, violence is also transformed and defeated. Such act is also the road to redemption, and so of unity with God and tranquility of the soul, since the body and blood of Christ brings new life. Cf. *Terror in the mind of god: The global rise of religious violence*, 159.

⁹<http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2003/notes/notesF.asp>

¹⁰According to Landesman, the Potsdam Declaration of 26 July 1945, unconditional surrender as applied to Japan contains the following conditions: Japan was to submit to occupation, the power of the militarists was to be eliminated, a peaceful government was to be established, the armed forces were to surrender, and the conquered territories were to be relinquished. Cf. Landesman, "Rawls on Hiroshima," 26.

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