The Rhetoric of Terrorism

by Paul Wolf, 19 December 2003

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Subject: The Rhetoric of Terrorism

The Rhetoric of Terrorism and Counterterrorism
by Richard W. Leeman, Greenwood Press, 1991 (excerpts)

The Reagan administration's counterterrorist rhetoric was characterized by dogmatism, double standards and disinformation. Each of these eroded and inhibited the international political consensus which the administration sought to foster and which some important scholarship suggests is essential for lessening terrorism. By definition, a democratic rhetoric would have avoided these problems, and thus strengthened the United States' credibility and counterterrorist policy.

Dogmatic discourse oversimplifies complex topics, reducing them to broad assertions using condensational symbols. The problem with such discourse is that it hinders understanding on the part of the body politic. In the case of terrorism, Walter Laqueur pointed out broadly that the "indiscriminate use of the language has led to loose thought on the subject."[145] Others have concurred, directly linking the "loose talk" to the use of bipolar discourse. Adam Roberts, for example, condemned the propensity to classify organizations as either terrorist or not terrorist, noting that "reality is often messier." This kind of either-or thinking, he warned, "may actually inhibit understanding and lead to ill-conceived policies."[146] The use of naming to vilify opponents and reinforce the bipolar view similarly leads to a miscomprehension of the problem. Conor Cruise O'Brien, former prime minister of Ireland, wrote that stereotyping the terrorist as "some kind of nut," or "thug," or "goon," "serve[s] mainly to confuse the debate on the subject."[147] Paul Wilkinson argued specifically that the Reagan administration's campaign to document terrorism as a Communist-inspired "network" did increase public concern, but also "had the effect of vastly oversimplifying the debate." [148] Similarly, Laqueur warned that the cancer metaphor was misleading when applied to terrorism.[149]

The problems resulting from this simplification were not simply philosophical, however, for it affected how the body politic thought and talked about terrorism and its solutions. Specifically, oversimplification obscured more important problems, and subverted the development of an international political consensus.

Simplifying the debate, and using dogmatic exhortation, meant that the administration exaggerated the magnitude of the terrorist threat and the "action" necessary to counter that threat. Contrary to the claims of the Reagan administration, international terrorism was neither new nor unprecedented.[150] It was also, in and of itself, not a severe physical threat to American or international security.[151] Yet, because the administration characterized terrorism as so large a problem, the solution required was of similarly large proportions. Specifically, the zero sum game assumed that America needed to totally win -- "or else."

Such exaggeration distracted public attention from other, more pressing foreign policy problems. In a 1987 Roper poll a majority of Americans indicated that terrorism was the number one foreign policy problem faced by the United States. Yet Laqueur, writing about the same time, was persuasive as he emphatically disagreed.

> Compared with the truly important problems of our time (the potential dangers of modern technologies, global debt, hunger in the Third World, overpopulation, certain new and incurable diseases -- terrorism [is], after all, a sideshow.[152]

Exaggerating the physical threat of terrorism itself also obscured the major threat of terrorism, for example, to the democratic functioning of the system. According to scholars like Paul Wilkinson and Walter Laqueur, the greater threat of terrorism is that a conflict begun by terrorism might escalate, both internally and externally. An internal escalation would threaten civil liberties, while an external escalation could lead to war between established states.[153] In both instances, the threat is from the response to terrorism, not from terrorism itself. A bipolar world view avoids that realization, however, focusing instead entirely upon the terrorist’s evil.

Dogmatically asserting the zero sum nature of the conflict also inhibited the full development of an international political consensus against terrorism. First, it is important to note that much scholarship suggests that terrorism is best treated by defining acts as criminal, rather than trying to define the more ambiguous term "terrorism" as illegal.[154] By narrowly defining what is illegal, terrorists can be prosecuted for specific, illegitimate actions. That is, international terrorism, as all international crime, should be approached in the same manner as ordinary crime, only on a multinational basis. Indeed, according to Christopher Hewitt’s exhaustive study, putting terrorists in prison does reduce the incidence of terrorism.[155] In the case of international terrorism, the problem is to ensure that criminal statutes are enforced, and only a voluntary political consensus can, at this point in time, ensure that enforcement. In a very real sense, international law works in the same way that domestic law works -- via consensus.[156] Reagan’s bipolar division of the world -- civilization versus the terrorist barbarian -- ignored the evolution of international law and the possibilities therein. Conceiving the conflict simply as one of "moral resolve" allowed few opportunities for consensus to be built.[157]

Adam Roberts singled out the Tokyo Declaration as one case in point. The Tokyo economic summit advanced the claim that "terrorism has no justification." The problem, as Roberts

saw it, was that the Declaration gave "no clue that the various attempted justifications of terrorism have been undertaken at all seriously."[158] Phrased another way, like so much of the Reagan administration's rhetoric, the Declaration exhibited a paucity of evidence and lack of good reasons to warrant the stated conclusion. As Roberts pointed out, evidence and reasons existed in sufficient number. The Declaration assumed a political consensus, rather than trying to build one.

This lack of consensus has hindered the enforcement of international law. Greece, for example, has refused to prosecute or extradite Mohammed Rashid.[159] Italy, of course, permitted the release of Abul Abbas. Significantly, in the most notable case where the Reagan administration prosecuted a terrorist, extreme care was taken to seize Fawaz Younis in international waters and never let him enter any other country's jurisdiction -- even an ally's.[160]

Dogmatic, exhortative discourse, then, oversimplified the discussion of terrorism, raised unrealistic expectations, and subverted political consensus building. In each instance, a nonreflective strategy of democratic rhetoric would have avoided the problem. Greater use of evidence and referential symbols would have provided the body politic with a clearer conceptualization of the problem. Foreign policy in general and the goals of counterterrorism specifically could have been formulated more realistically. Greater attention to eliciting rather than exhorting cooperation would have built consensus, not tried to command it.

The double standards invited by a strictly bipolar world view also eroded rather than built political consensus. In 1980 the US took Iran to the World Court on charges of illegally holding embassy employees hostage in Tehran. The World Court found for the U.S., providing some significant leverage in the diplomatic negotiations for release of the hostages.[161] Yet in 1986 the World Court ruled against the U.S. in the case of mining a Nicaraguan harbor. The US withdrew from the case, the Reagan administration denying that the Court had authority in the matter. The double standard thus applied was apparent.[162] O'Brien put the matter directly.

> [For America to] provide clear and consistent political and moral leadership [would] require the United States ... to accept, without the present reservations, the authority of the World Court. I believe that a President of the United States who had taken these steps would be in a far stronger position than is now the case to give the world a lead in combined action against terrorism and to prepare the way for eventual superpower consensus on this matter.[163]

A second example from Reagan's term was the bombing of Libya. Serious questions remain as to whether the action was justified under international law, as the administration claimed. Self-defense, as enumerated in Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, has typically been interpreted as an immediate response to attack, not a retaliatory, punitive action as was the air strike on Libya.[164] Again, this was not simply a theoretical linguistic exercise. International law consists of words, and for those words to have effect a political consensus must be built around a single interpretation of them. Five weeks after the U.S. bombed Libya, South Africa flew a series of punitive strikes against Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Echoing Reagan's justification, they claimed they had attacked "terrorist centers," which was clearly not the case in these instances. The double standards the Reagan administration employed in international law thus encouraged -- rather than discouraged -- additional terrorism.[165]

The Reagan administration's disinformation campaign was yet a third example of the kind of policy invited by a reflective rhetoric. In the summer of 1986 the administration let leak exaggerated reports of Libyan plans for coming terrorist activity. The second half of the campaign was to put out the word that the United States was "planning" sizeable military retaliation. The purpose of all this was to frighten Qadhafi and unsettle his hold on the government of Libya.[166] The relationship of the campaign to the counterterrorist rhetoric of the administration was made clear in Secretary Shultz's subsequent justification. Using World War II as an analogy to their counterterrorist effort, he paraphrased Winston Churchill. "In time of war, the truth is so precious, it must be attended by a bodyguard of lies."[167]

Clearly, however, the disinformation campaign damaged the administration's efforts to build consensus. Rather universally, international allies condemned the campaign and suggested that U.S. credibility had been significantly compromised. The Economist's reaction was typical.

> If the [Reagan] administration wants to be believed when it really has something important to say about Colonel Qadhafi, it would do well, before it is too late, to remember Matilda: For every time she shouted "Libya!" they only answered "Little fibber!"[168]

The Economist analogized the incident to the Cuban Missile crisis. Adlai Stevenson, they argued, had so much trouble convincing the United Nations that Soviet missiles were in Cuba because two years earlier he had stood in the same forum and blithely denied U.S. involvement in the Bay of Pigs. Disinformation is a costly policy if consensus is a desired goal. Again, a nonreflective strategy of terrorism, stressing intellectual honesty, would have avoided this problem the administration's rhetoric incurred.

Thus, the Reagan administration's rhetoric of counterterrorism employed dogmatism, double standards, and disinformation. In each instance, political consensus was damaged. At the primary purpose of American counterterrorism at the international level is the preservation of consensual relations between nations, for example, the international rule of law. In all three cases, a non-reflective strategy would have avoided the problem by doing the opposite, and thus worked to build, not subvert, political consensus.

Indeed, the possibilities apparent in such an approach are suggested by Abu Iyad's recent article "Lowering the Sword." Compared with his 1981 autobiography, Iyad's shift in language is as sharp as George Shultz's discussed above. Iyad avoids invective, analyzes points with caution and care, allows for disagreement, and propounds compromise. For example, he not only avoids condemning Israel and America in categorical terms, but specifies some of those with whom he sees agreement; for example, Abba Eban, Ezra Weizman, and Yehoshafat Harkabi.[169] Iyad's consuming attention with the US.-PLO dialogue, as well as the article's timing, suggests that the change in tone owes much to the simple fact of the dialogue and the change in American strategy.

In effect, however, until late in its second term, the administration's reflective strategy of counterterrorism missed these opportunities, rejecting the advice offered by Senator Daniel Moynihan. "If we are to have any success, we must be seen to be acting in support of law. That is a standard to which neutral nations can repair. We have nothing to fear from it."[170]

Presenting a Consistent Position

While a reflective strategy of counterterrorism explicitly subverts political consensus by weakening credibility, it also fails to work positively towards building political consensus. To do the latter requires a consistent position which also presents a framework within which to build agreement. Avoiding those rhetorical tensions present in the rhetoric of terrorism would be one productive means for providing that consistency.

While praising democratic government and "the people," the Reagan administration demanded agreement, thus sending mixed signals about democracy to the body politic. Explicitly, democracy was praised, but implicitly, the discourse condemned it by rejecting its attendant terminology.

The administration's treatment of evidence is a case in point. Democracy imparts a high value on informed deliberation, which in turn imposes evidentiary requirements on the person advancing a claim. The Reagan administration acknowledged this requirement, even citing it as an indicator of the difference between "us" and "them."

> To retaliate, ... you've got to be able to get some evidence as to where are the bases from whence come these terrorists that you could strike at ... you've got to recognize that you don't want to just carelessly go out and maybe kill innocent people. Then you're as bad as the terrorists.[171]

As noted above, however, the administration's counter-terrorist discourse generally indicated little concern for documentation. Instead, truth was asserted and obedience exhorted, with the administration imposing a lesser standard of evidence upon itself.

> It's one of those things you can know ... but you can't really -- you couldn't go into court and prove that actually they were responsible for it, anymore than you contrive a couple of other governments that we feel are apparently supporting terrorist movements.[172]

The administration thus placed itself in charge of indicting, trying, judging and punishing violations of international law.

The contradictory position of elitism versus populism damaged the effort to build political consensus. By attempting to assert truth, the administration simply echoed the terrorist. Thus, for example, the honored morality of counterterrorism, as constructed through exhortative discourse, looked much like the immorality of the terrorists condemned by the same speaker. In January of 1986 Reagan indicted terrorists for being fanatical, because they believed they earned eternity by becoming martyrs. "In other words, finding some poor souls that are fanatic enough that they can be told that they got a free ride to heaven if they'll go out and give up their own lives to kill someone else, innocent people."[173] The grounds of his condemnation were, however, little different than those contained in the following eulogy, delivered seven months earlier in honor of four marines who died in a Salvadoran bombing attack.

> They were four young men who chose to follow an honored and ancestral path. And so they swung the bag over their shoulders, kissed their parents goodbye, and went off to serve their country... No words can console, but we know of the promise in the Bible, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." ... And [now] we receive them in death as they were on the last night of their lives, together and following a radiant light -- following it toward heaven, toward home. And if

> we reach or when we reach heaven's scenes, we truly will find it guarded by United States marines.[174]

The paradox, and the problem, was that Reagan condemned terrorists for asserting a divinely inspired morality, but then similarly asserted the same position on his own behalf. Those in the audience who already agreed with Reagan's position would certainly find his assertion credible. However, consensus is not built by reaffirming the believer's commitment, it is fashioned by persuading the neutral or unconvinced. For those auditors, Reagan's contradictory positions between deliberated persuasion, in which the body politic acts in a decision-making capacity, and exhorted belief, in which Truth is a function of elitist assertion, would strike a discordant note. Rather than exploit the terrorist's rhetorical tension, his administration's discourse simply repeated it. Rather than provide a consistent position upon which consensus could be constructed, the administration presented contradictory appeals.

Communication versus Action

The second rhetorical tension was between communication and action. The emphasis on action was documented above. The administration perceived a need to move "beyond words and rhetoric" to answer terrorism with "action." It emphasized those things which "do" over those which "say": the aborted attacks, the "steps" to be taken such as armed sky marshal programs or intelligence sharing. Implicitly, however, [Reagan] recognized that "steps" are often communicative in nature: for example, travel advisories, policy review committees, or political persuasion by Reagan himself.[175] Certainly the quantity of speeches given implied some value attributed to communication in the cause of counterterrorism.

Two specific costs were incurred by denying a critical role for communication in counterterrorism. First, there was a sense in which the reflective counterterrorist did not even apprehend the communication which surrounded the event. For example, Reagan frequently responded to Qadhafi through the media: quoting the Colonel, rebutting him, responding to his responses, concerned about what Qadhafi's reactions would be.

> [Qadhafi] said recently that Libya was -- and I quote -- "capable of exporting terrorism to the heart of America. We are also capable of physical liquidation and destruction and arson inside America."[176]
>
> I wouldn't believe a word he [Qadhafi] says if I were you.[177]
>
> We have the evidence and he knows it.[178]
>
> I'm not gong to talk beyond the action we've taken here. I am not going to make any comment as to whether we have other actions in mind or what might be done. I think that Mr. Qadhafi would be very happy if I did answer such a question, but I'm not interested in making him happy.[179]

Yet so strongly did Reagan disown communication with terrorists, he denied that a dialogue existed.

> Q. ... Can you comment on the concern of some people that your dialog with Colonel Qadhafi has resulted largely in enhancing his stature in the world?
>
> The President: Well, I haven't had any dialog with Mr. Qadhafi.[180]

The second problem is that the speaker realizes that communication is influential, but this force must be subordinated to the superior term "action." This is the kind of perspective which often gives rise to the disinformation and double standards discussed above. One clear instance of this tension at work concerned the definition of terrorism. The cliche "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" was repeatedly attacked.

> That's a catchy phrase, but also misleading. Freedom fighters do not need to terrorize a population into submission. Freedom fighters target the military forces and the organized instruments of repression keeping dictatorial regimes in power. Freedom fighters struggle to liberate their citizens from oppression and to establish a form of government that reflects the will of the people.[181]

The use of this definition was emblematic of the rhetorical tension surrounding "communication." The definition itself was reasonable, although the third part regarding self-determination has proven problematic since a least the Treaty of Versailles. The application of the definition, however, was at several times capricious. Why, for example, was the CIA's assassination manual not terroristic? The manual clearly targeted civilian leaders, and not military forces. Why was the truck bombing of the Marine barracks an act of terrorism? Were not the Marines "military forces" sent in support of a government? In what way did that act not fit the definition of "freedom fighter"? Why was South Africa not condemned as terroristic? More than once the Reagan administration was caught in this rhetorical contradiction, such that by their own use of discourse one man's terrorist did indeed appear to be another man's freedom fighter. Like the problem of double standards above, this contradiction could only retard the development of political consensus.

As with the contradiction of elitism versus populism, this attitude towards communication could have been resolved through an attitude that perceived discussion as an integral facet of democracy. Rhetoric would not be a tool by which to use the body politic, it would be a method of communicating whereby the speaker assisted the audience in its decisionmaking capacty. Such an attitude would allow the speaker to apprehend the dialogue of terrorist and counterterrorist, and to use language in a consistent, consensus-building manner. It would allow the counterterrorist to exploit, rather than repeat, the terrorist's rhetorical tensions.

The continuing message throughout this analysis is that communication does matter, and what we say is important. Paul Wilkinson points out that the challenge of terrorism is for the liberal democracy to remain "true to itself."[182]

To "remain true to itself" a democracy would remain true to its rhetorical fundamentals. It would focus on deliberation, openly and carefully constructing arguments for or against specific policies. It would de-emphasize dualistic thinking, hyperbole and bald dogmatism, concentrating instead on respecting the other and intellectual honesty. It would combine these with an ethic which considered the body politic as the ultimate arbiter of public policy. Mutual consent, not forced unanimity, would be the goal.

Building a political consensus is not just an act of idealistic consistency, however. It would likely lessen the incidence of terrorism, as the last section suggests. The French failed in Algeria, Wilkinson argues, because "they had nothing to offer the civilian population."[183] As Patrick Clawson notes, however, "law enforcement can be effective in a democracy only when it enjoys broad support from the general public, whose cooperation is needed to

provide information and support law enforcement efforts." [184] International law enforcement requires the same. For that reason, Lawrence Freedman warns that Western counter-terrorists should avoid alienating the "possible support population." To avoid that occurence, however, means that "discrimination and political sensitivity are ... prerequisites."[185]

Discrimination and political sensitivity do not fit well with a reflective counterterrorist strategy, however, as the example of the Reagan administration amply demonstrates. A bipolar view breaks the world into black and white, it does not discriminate the gray areas of support upon which consensus may be built. Creating an aura of fear by building a portrait of a cancerous terrorist network feeds this exhortation, but it does not help construct a discriminating or politically sensitive body politic. Using double standards, specious legal arguments, and disinformation does not demonstrate political sensitivity towards the international body politic. It erodes the communication vital to democracy, it does not build it.

Paul Wilkinson wrote tellingly that "terrorism, like war, is the enemy of the politics of compromise, bargaining, trust and relative peace."[186] The same could be written for the reflective strategy of counterterrorist rhetoric. If such a strategy is ineffective, however, a question remains whether compromise is possible between strategies. That is, would a mixture of reflective and non-reflective strategies be an appropriate alternative? I turn next to the case of the Nixon Administration.

. . .

Agnew's Reflective Rhetoric

Vice President Spiro Agnew drew on the reflective tendencies in Nixon's rhetoric and amplified them, using almost none of the non-reflective elements to mitigate his bipolar discourse. Agnew argued that the United States was divided between those who adhered to American values and those who did not. Like the Weathermen's, his division was a sharp one, legitimizing certain attitudes and actions because of those they opposed.

> America cannot afford to write off a whole generation for the decadent thinking of a few ... We can, however, afford to separate them from our society -- with no more regret than we should feel over discarding rotten apples from a barrel.[82]

In traditional bipolar fashion, Agnew argued that America was at a moral crossroad. Only two paths were available. Choosing one path would call "for all good men to fight for the soul of their country." Choosing the other was disreputable, filled with moral peril. "If we are lazy and foolish, this nation could forfeit its integrity, never to be free again."[83] Echoing the Weathermen's goal of polarizing the country, Agnew argued that polarization was desirable: "if, in challenging, we polarize the American people, I say it is time for a positive polarization."[84]

While Agnew talked of "positive" polarization, however, his dualistic world was constructed primarily by invective. Those who led the protests were the "merchants of hate," given to "storm-trooper tactics" in order to "impose absolutism or create anarchy."[85] They were "irresponsible," "reckless," with "dictatorial" demands. [86] Just as the Weathermen's

"system" was populated with imperialist pigs who "corroded" Americans' "minds," Agnew's "they" included the "radical faculty [who were] poisoning the student mind."[87]

Significantly, like Nixon, Agnew began his definition of "they" with those who used violence and then expanded the definition to include those who simply protested. He did not, however, begin with the functional definitions Nixon used. Agnew instead started with a single summarizing term: "campus radicals."[88] Like Nixon, however, Agnew began with those who were definitionally antidemocratic -- for example, "anarchists" and the "violent" -- but then expanded his term to include "hard-core dissidents."[89] Whereas violence was originally the defining characteristic for distinguishing "us" versus "them," now the voicing of unpopular opinions differentiated the two. This division resembled the Weathermen's, in which "they" were first defined as the "imperialist pigs" who created "the system," but then expanded to include those who showed "a little politeness" to the system.

Surrounding the term "campus radicals" Agnew layered invective which suggested a less-than-human status for his opponents, asserting his own "civility" in direct contrast to their "barbarity." For example, "they" were less-than-human because they wanted "irrational power" and engaged in "irrational protest." The Vietnam Moratorium was "idiotic."[90] Their less-than-human status made them akin to "vultures."[91] Sexual terms, too, were used to degrade opponents to brutish status. Protest leaders "pervert honest concern to something sick and rancid."[92] Agnew's invective echoed the Weathermen's metaphors of insanity, bestiality and sexual perversion. Just as for the Weathermen, those labelled less-than-human could be easily dismissed rhetorically. America, said Agnew, should "sweep that kind of garbage out of our society."[93]

Because the world was bipolarly divided into the moral "us" versus the immoral "them," no middle ground was permissible. As the Weathermen argued that "there are no neutrals," so, too, Agnew's "they" included those who might try to remain in the middle. Not only were protestors grouped with bombers, politicians who temporized were "parasites of passion" and "ideological eunuchs" who "ooze sympathy" for the "merchants of hate."[94]

As with most bipolar constructions, compromise was impossible because one side was moral and the other was not. Compromise was dangerous because of the enemy's insidious nature. "Evil cloaked in emotional causes is well disguised and often undiscovered until it is too late."[95] The conspiratorial forces at work were powerful: "If the people who can do something don't start acting -- I tremble at the thought of what forces could fill this vacuum."[96]

The bipolar division of legitimate and illegitimate also implied a dogmatic control of the truth, which required the speaker simply to exhort audience approval of action, not to deliberate upon which course of action to take. For Agnew, like the Weathermen, the veracity of his claims was absolute -- the "facts" were patently obvious: "the facts prove" and "this is a fact."[97] The question, therefore, was one of moral fortitude, not policy. "Any leader who does not caution this nation on the danger of this direction lacks moral strength."[98]

Agnew considered it his moral obligation to "speak out" because "how can you ask the man in the street in this country to stand up for what he believes if his own elected leaders weasel

and cringe?" [99] Just as Bernardine Dohrn complained that the Weathermen had been "wimpy on armed struggle," so Agnew disparaged any moderation toward me student demonstrators. Masculinity would be threatened by "giving in." "We are an effete society if we let it happen here." [100] Ill-defined was what "it" was that could not be allowed to happen.

Agnew's discourse revealed clearly the two rhetorical tensions displayed by the Weathermen: elitism versus populism and communication versus action. On the one hand, he held up for admiration the democratic process grounded in "the people": for example, "the rules" of democracy, and America's "pluralistic society." [101] But he also denigrated that minority who exercised their pluralistic right.

> Small bands of students are allowed to shut down great universities. Small groups of dissidents are allowed to shout down political candidates. Small cadres of professional protestors are allowed to jeopardize the peace efforts of the President of the United States.[102]

The rhetorical move in this passage was representative of Spiro Agnew's discourse. The first sentence condemned a group as illegitimate for two distinct reasons. They coerced others outside the rule of law, for example, they shut down universities, and they were in the minority. Two fundamental tenets of democracy were violated by these students. If they shut down the university not by calling a boycott but by physical take-over, or threatened violence, then their action was terrorism, as defined in Chapter One. The second group, however, was hardly terroristic, although they shared certain characteristics. They were not interested in dialogue, they were small in number, and they violated societal norms. However, while they violated fundamental democratic principles, values Agnew implicitly supported, they were not terrorists. The last group cited were those simply exercising the right of protest within a pluralistic, democratic society. They too, however, received Agnew's condemnation. Until this third sentence, popular support, for example, the process of deliberation, was meaningful for Agnew. Implicitly the "small bands" were in contrast to the "silent majority." In this last clause of the definition, however, people's opinions must yield to the superior knowledge of the elites. Agnew hid the rhetorical move through the repetition of "small" and through the labels "cadres" and "professional," as if those qualities rendered one's opinion automatically illegitimate. Like Nixon, Agnew shifted his definitional standards in the middle of his discourse.

What Agnew created, in this passage and others, was a discourse favoring elite rule and mass obedience, distrustful of deliberation and the body politic. As he constructed it, the leaders should be entrusted to lead. "Saying that the President should understand the people's view is no solution. It is time for the people to understand the views of the President they elected to lead them."[103] Agnew's characterization of the body politic was in sharp opposition to the attitude mandated by an ethic which valued honest disagreement. It mirrored, however, the Weathermen's "brainwashed" masses who would not listen to reason. According to Agnew, "frightening forces have been set in motion as the public has become conditioned to precipitate action rather than quiet discussion."[104] Within this sentence, Agnew displayed the contradiction of elitism versus populism. "Quiet discussion" suggested a vital role for the body politic, but one they could not be trusted to fulfill.

Agnew's rhetoric also displayed a mistrust of communication, while himself communicating. Too much facility with discourse was suspicious: one should beware the

"glib, activist element."[105] Just as the Weathermen characterized their opponent's discourse as "pig sounds," Agnew described his opponent's as "carping" and "clamor and cacophony."[106]

For both Agnew and the Weathermen, communication was not just distracting, but potentially dangerous. For the Weathermen, "politeness about imperialism" was evil. Similarly, those who admitted any merit in the protestors' arguments warranted Agnew's condemnation.

> Radical liberals have politically consorted and cooed with militants and radicals in our society. For years they have sought to give respectability to lawless conduct by pointing to the unhappy lot or alleged lofty social objectives of lawbreakers. For years they assiduously sowed the seeds of disruptions.... [They who] once fawned upon militants and radicals, now suddenly take a hard line against the riotous conduct which their inflammatory rhetoric excused and indirectly invited.[107]

Dissent was dangerous, protesting against policy disloyal, equivocation a sign of moral turpitude. This suspicion of discourse surfaced clearly in Agnew's discourse.

Agnew's rhetoric was, therefore, an extension of the reflective elements found in Nixon's own speeches. Both speakers began with a limited definition of illegitimate protest -- for example, terrorism -- but expanded it to include all of those who opposed their policy. Where Nixon minimized his use of bipolar constructions, invective, and hyperbole, however, Agnew's discourse knew no restraint. Agnew's rhetoric thus accentuated the reflective elements of Nixon's, giving them importance beyond what they might ordinarily have had.

Excerpts from *The Rhetoric of Terrorism and Counterterrorism,* by Richard W. Leeman, Grenwood Press, 1991, pp. 139-149, 172-176.

Footnotes

pages 139-149:

145. Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987) 299.

146. Adam Roberts, "Terrorism and International Order," *Terrorism and International Ordered*. Lawrence Freedman, et al. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986) 9.

147. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Thinking About Terrorism," *Atlantic Monthly* June 1986: 63.

148. Paul Wilkinson, "Trends in International Terrorism and the American Response," Freedman 51.

149. Laqueur 6.

150. Laqueur 301.

151. Christopher Hill, "The Political Dillemmas for Western Governments," in Freedman 98, 99. See also Laqueur 298.

152. Laqueur 298.

153. Laqueur 304, 32 1; and Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (New York: New York UP, 1979) 196.

154. Roberts 15.

155. Christopher Hewitt, *The Effectiveness of Anti-terrorist Policies* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984) 86.

156. Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, 41-47.

157. Stephen P. Cohen and Harriet C. Arnone, "Conflict Resolution as the Alternative to Terrorism," *Journal of Social Issues* 44 (1988): 175-189.

158. Robert 17.

159. Steven Engleberg, "Washington's War on Terrorism Captures Few Soldiers," *New York Times*, 3 Mar. 1989: E3.

160. *US. News and World Report*, 12 Sep. 1988.

161. Abraham A. Ribicoff, "Lesson and Conclusions," *American Hostages in Iran: The Conduct of a Crisis*, ed. Warren Christopher, et al. (New Haven, Ct.: Yale UP, 1985) 374-395; Oscar Schachter, "International Law in the Hostage Crisis: Implications for Future Cases," Christopher 325-345; and Harold Saunders, "Diplomacy and Pressure, November 1979 - May 1980," Christopher, 72-98.

162. Roberts 23-24; Wayne S. Smith, "Lies About Nicaragua," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1987: 87-103.

163. O'Brien 66.

164. David Owen, "State Terrorism, Internationalism and Collective Action," *Review of International Studies* 13, (1987): 87.

165. Roberts 20.

166. *New York Times*, 2 Oct. 1986: 1; *New York Times*, 3 Oct. 1986: 1; *New York Times*, 13 Oct. 1986: 16.

167. *New York Times*, 3 Oct. 1986: 6.

168. "Facts and Whoppers," *The Economist*, 11 Oct. 1986: 20. Emphasis theirs. See also *South China (Hong Kong) Morning Post*, 29 Aug. 1986, reported in the *World Press Review*, Oct. 1986: 9.

169. Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), "Lowering the Sword," *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1990, 91-112. It is especially interesting to compare this with his earlier commentary on Eban. Iyad 122.

170. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Terrorists, Totalitarians, and the Law," *Terrorism: How the West Can Win*, ed. Benjamin Netanyahu (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1986) 44.

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Propaganda, Violence and Manipulative Persuasion
by Paul Blackstock, Quadrangle Books, 1964 (excerpts)

Propaganda in the context of political warfare, has been termed "the planned dissemination of news, information, special arguments, and appeals designed to influence the beliefs, thoughts, and actions of a specific group."[1] The relationship of the rational use of force to persuasion is symbolized in the Latin motto which Louis XIV had inscribed on his canons: ultima ratio regum (the last argument of kings). Curiously enough, Soviet theory and practice subscribe to the same principle: "persuasion first, coercion afterward."[2] Persuasion may thus be likened to Santayana's characterization of love: an ultraviolet angel at one end of the spectrum and a red devil at the other; it has been defined as "the act of influencing the mind by arguments and reasons."

Persuasion is a broader term than propaganda, since in practice the "reasons" may be an admixture of threats and appeals which include a large element of spiritual or physical coercion and violence. For this reason, in political warfare, the more specific term is "manipulative persuasion." It includes the use of bribery, blackmail, and the threat or application of such physical acts of violence as kidnaping, torture, and the use of "controls" over selected targets or agents. A single, clear-cut example will serve to clarify the concept.

A half-frozen, half-starved prisoner of war is persuaded to collaborate with the enemy by a combination of threats of violence to his family (which is living in enemy-occupied territory) and promises of warm food and preferential treatment. His continued collaboration is then assured and controlled by a judicious combination of threats and rewards. This form of manipulative persuasion has been widely practiced in wartime and is standard practice in many covert operations in time of peace. The simplest and most familiar form of manipulative persuasion is bribery, in a variety of disguises ranging from unsolicited Christmas gifts to anonymous bank deposits in Switzerland. But manipulative persuasion frequently does spiritual and physical violence to its object and may have lasting traumatic effects.

In contrast to manipulative persuasion, the relationship of violence to ordinary propaganda is more indirect and attenuated, and varies with the propaganda source and the political or social system in which it originates. For example, propaganda in a democracy stems from many different sources and is normally a form of fairly harmless persuasion; that is, it attempts to get people to do things -- to vote a party ticket or to buy a particular brand of soap chips or detergent of their own free will. Behind the propagandist there stands only a party campaign chest or a private advertising agency. In a totalitarian regime, such as Stalinist Russia, propaganda emanates from one source only, the state. Its predetermined end is to make the public believe that everything the state does is in the best interest of the "people" whether they like it or not, and, if they are "truly democratic," they will of course like it. The inference of violence in such a situation is always clear, for back of the propagandist stands not a private sponsor but the secret police, ready to persuade with more direct methods. The fact that in the U.S.S.R. under Khrushchev the secret police have been downgraded in no way alters this basic principle. Internally, under a totalitarian regime, propaganda is a substitute for violence.

As an instrument of intervention, totalitarian or any other propaganda aimed abroad is likewise a substitute for violence, and like its domestic counterpart it is taken seriously in proportion to the extent that it is supported by the implied threat of armed force. In his early beer hall days, few paid much attention to Hitler, but when his armies were poised for attack in 1939, he had to be taken seriously. Similarly, countries behind the Iron Curtain, or enclaves such as Berlin, pay close attention to everything emanating from Moscow. With the lessons of Poland and especially Hungary in mind, they seek to read in the daily outpouring of the Soviet propaganda machine some clue to their eventual fate.

In all stages of aggressive intervention, propaganda is used to inspire terror, and physical terror in turn is used for its propaganda effect. The use of assassination as a political weapon in the internal struggle for power, particularly in a revolutionary or counter-revolutionary context, is familiar. In Czarist Russia, the conspiratorial-terrorist organization Narodnaya Volya (The People’s Will) after two years of intensive activity finally succeeded in assassinating Czar Alexander II in March, 1881, an act which was followed by the brutal organized counter-terror of the Security Police, which quickly reduced Revolution "to a cottage industry."[3] Sorel, the French apostle of "creative violence," laid the philosophic groundwork for the sporadic political terror and assassination, the so-called "propaganda of the deed," which characterized European revolutionary movements in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Political murder found its most devoted adherents prior to World War I in the Balkans, where the secret Macedonian terrorist society, IMRO, covered itself with

infamy for years. Finally, a Serbian society achieved dubious immortality with the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, an incident which escalated into World War I.

Following the Russian Revolution, terrorism was frowned upon and fell into disrepute among orthodox Leninist revolutionaries, since in What Is To Be Done the master had condemned it as part of the superannuated tactical baggage of the Economists, a Right deviationist faction.[4] In January, 1963, Soviet Premier Khrushchev strongly reaffirmed Lenin's condemnation of assassination as an instrument of policy. Although his speech was delivered to a congress of the East German Socialist United (Communist) party in Berlin, it was reportedly aimed as a warning to Cuban leader Fidel Castro and his followers not to employ terrorist tactics against Latin American politicians. Khrushchev recalled that in the struggle for liberation against the Czarist regime there were people who "believed that one must take the ax in one's hands, commit terrorist acts against representatives of the regime, so as to secure the success of the revolution." Noting that Lenin's brother, Alexander Ulyanov, had been executed for an attempt on the life of the Czar, Khrushchev quoted Lenin as saying on the day of his brother's execution, "We shall go another road. Only the road of the struggle of the masses under the leadership of the party of the working class can secure victory. Lonely heroes can die beautifully, but they are not in a position to change the social-political order, nor to achieve victory in revolution."[5]

Ironically, since World War II, after having been formally abandoned by the political Left, terror and assassination have been adopted as a favorite instrument of right-wing extremist groups. For example, ultra-nationalists of the Secret Army Organization in Algeria and France have become foremost exponents of terrorist tactics. On an infinitesimally smaller scale, the occasional political bombings reported in the United States, in areas such as Los Angeles, have likewise been ascribed to right-wing extremists.[6] In contrast to the nineteenth century, this penchant for the "propaganda of the deed," a logical extension of purely vocal dissidence, has thus become a hallmark of the authoritarian syndrome, the tendency of the typically militant personality to move to right-wing extremes of thought and action. Individual acts of terror connected with the integration movement in the Southern states of the United States in the 1960's illustrate the authoritarian syndrome at work. The assassination of Negro integration leader Medgar Evers in Jackson, Mississippi, and the senseless bombing of a Negro church in Birmingham, Alabama, which resulted in the deaths of four children, are cases in point.[7] Although the evidence, as in most such incident, is necessarily incomplete, it points to the work of individual fanatics nursing real or imaginary grievances who translate vocal dissidence into direct action beyond the pale of law. The case of Lee Oswald, who shot President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963, in the most sensational assassination since Sarajevo in 1914, probably falls into this category.

In the context of political warfare, such as that which prevailed in Algeria for several years, physical terror, kidnapping, and assassination serve a double purpose. First, political opponents may be temporarily or permanently removed from the scene, and second, the violence itself is used to create fear and hatred and to discredit one political group in the eyes of another. Operationally, this is the essence of forced disintegration or atomization, by which the political and social structure of the state is split apart. The technique was effectively used by the Nazis in extending control and influence abroad and figured notably in their seizure of Czechoslovakia in 1938. More recently, such terror tactics have been

incorporated into the doctrine of the dissident French officers and their Secret Army Organization, set forth in Colonel Lacheroy's "A Lesson in Revolutionary Warfare." This doctrine insists that in any seizure of power by a militant, determined faction, a decisive test must be avoided until the insurrectionists are ready to strike with maximum force. Thus the first or "pre-insurrectional" phase concentrates on selective terrorism and the exploitation of terrorist acts for their propaganda effect. In practice, according to a reliable observer, this has meant "murdering opponents, intimidating with plastic bombs, and seeking to 'intoxicate' the non-Moslem masses of Algeria and the excitable and romantic elements among French university students."[8] A persistent campaign of bombings and assassinations resulted in over five hundred deaths and a thousand additional casualties in Algeria alone during 1961, and continued on a similar scale during the first quarter of 1962.

Although frowned upon as a matter of formal Leninist revolutionary doctrine, in practice the most brutal forms of coercion and violence have been employed by Communists. Communist terror has been used both as a technique of internal governance under the Stalinist regime in the U.S.S.R., and as a means of extending power and influence abroad to a point where covert control has been achieved. According to a recent U.S. Department of State White Paper, A Threat to the Peace, North Viet-Nam's Effort to Conquer South Viet-Nam,[9] terror has been effectively used by the Communist faction, the Viet Cong, in extending covert control over areas legally within the jurisdiction of the government of South Viet-Nam. The report states in part: "Assassination, often after the most brutal torture, is a favored Viet Cong tactic. Government officials, schoolteachers, even wives and children have been the victims. Literally hundreds of village chiefs have been murdered in order to assert Viet Cong power and to instill fear in the populace." The actual figures indicate a level of terrorist activity even higher than the ultra-nationalist record in Algeria: "In 1960 the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam claimed that about 1,400 local Government officials and civilians were assassinated by the Viet Cong. Approximately 700 persons were kidnaped during the year. In the first six months of 1961, more than 500 murders of officials and civilians were reported and about 1,000 persons were kidnapped."[10]

With these developments in such widely displaced theaters as Algeria and Viet Nam, the theory and practice of the "propaganda of the deed" has come full circle. At first it was a favorite playtoy of the bomb-throwing anarchists and revolutionaries of the nineteenth century. Later it was denounced by Lenin, only to be taken up again and systematized by the Nazis and other ultra-nationalists. Today it is practiced by the totalitarian extremes of both the Right and the Left. The New Assassins, with their doctrine of "revolutionary warfare" in Algeria, and the Communistled terrorists in the rice-paddies of Viet Nam are mounting the old brand of combined open and covert assault on organized societies and governments.

In setting political and social groups against each other, martyrs have great propaganda value as symbols, and are valuable aids in the creation of mythologies and an atmosphere of bitter-end militancy. Both the Nazis and the Communists have developed a hierarchy of political martyrs whose memory is kept alive on "anniversary" occasions. In the case of political strikes, such as those against the Marshall Plan in France in 1947, Communist agents have been known deliberately to provoke the police and gendarmerie into acts of repressive violence in order to exploit the resulting "martyrs to the cause" for propaganda purposes. More recently (July, 1961), in connection with disturbances in the Congo, the Katangese Minister of Interior, Godefroid Munungo, reportedly told one of his white

mercenaries, "This week, I need some United Nations victims." Accordingly, the ambush of a United Nations unit near Kamina was ordered. The episode is indicative of how far the doctrine of "creative violence" has spread in the so-called underdeveloped areas of the world.[11]

Once the martyr has been found, the propagandists keep his memory alive as an integral part of a political mythology. Anniversaries of deaths, and occasionally even of births, are celebrated with religious pomp and circumstance. The role of both Utopias and myths as genuine historical forces, particularly the myth of the general strike, has been analyzed by Sorel.[12] The Italian sociologist Gaetano Mosca observes that:

> Almost all political assassins lose their lives in the execution of their enterprises. Many of them become martyrs to an idea in consequence, and the veneration usually paid to them is one of the less honorable, but not least effective means of keeping revolutionary propaganda alive.[13]

The role of persuasion (ranging from simple propaganda appeals to violence and coercion) in subversion is familiar, but it is more complex than in the case of forced disintegration. The massive use of propaganda plus the physical paraphernalia of a militant movement (flags, banners, marching societies, etc.) all create a persuasive moral atmosphere conducive to winning converts. Conversion and subversion are, of course, opposite sides of the same coin. But it should be emphasized that the experience itself is a moral one -- however evil may be the cause served -- and in the case of totalitarian movements, such as Nazism or Communism, frequently takes on a mystic, quasireligious quality.

The totalitarian concept of the state as a "community" or "peoples' community," in the old religious sense of a "communion of saints," is common to Nazism and Communism. Such a community is to the totalitarian zealot a holy thing which must be protected from contamination at all costs, and with the appropriate techniques, blessed in the history of the Western world by the Spanish Inquisition. It is significant that the Russian Nihilist, Nechayev, was fascinated by the Jesuit Order as have been many authoritarians since. Thomas Mann, as early as 1924, drew a picture of the type of authoritarian personality which was to emerge a decade later in Nazi Germany. This prototype, the Jesuit Naphta in The Magic Mountain, was fascinated by the totalitarian ideal expressed in the formula: "An absolute Command! Iron discipline! Rape, obedience, terror ... the army regulations of the Prussian Frederick or the Spaniard Loyola, pious and stern to the death!"[14] With prophetic insight Thomas Mann criticized the semi-religious concept of "community" which underlies the totalitarian state and accounts in part for its undeniable hold over the loyalties -- including the will to self-sacrifice -- of its devotees: "It gave nothing to the individual in his critical worth, but only to the [ ] and leveling Community, to the mystical submersion in it -- a submersion that was at the same time both dissolute and ascetic."[15] The subversion of the individual personality into the Nazi Gemeinschaft, a new, unholy "communion of saints," has been brilliantly dramatized in the following dialogue from the play, The Races, by the late Ferdinand Bruckner:

> TESSOW: It has nothing to do with your five senses; it's entirely a question of having an idea you can give your life to at last. ... We had to descend into the depths to discover the one meaning in life -- the community. We were starving of a superfluity of brains and the self-seeking which it fostered. (Takes a long breath.) At last I'm no longer myself.
>
> KARLANNER: (Slowly) Then what are you?

> TESSOW: Part of the great comradeship ... there is no life outside it. A materialist never really lives. Out of our innermost beings our sun has risen, the sun of youth. Don't torture yourself any longer. There is no sacrifice too great for us to make in this crisis. Because only our passion for heroic action will bring the sun back to Germany.[16]

The moral basis, the depth of emotional and ideological commitment of converts to the secular faith of Communism, has been fully documented in The God That Failed, the "confessions" of such former Communists or fellow-travelers as Arthur Koestler, Ignazio Silone, Richard Wright, Andre Gide, Louis Fischer, and Stephen Spender.[17] Victor Serge's The Case of Comrade Tulayev[18] gives a comparable literary portrayal of the faith of the old Bolsheviks in the U.S.S.R. during the period of the Great Purges (1936-1938). The addictive quality of Communism is such that for many who renounce their faith, the withdrawal symptoms after a "lost weekend in Utopia" are both agonizing and permanently damaging. A significant percentage of both former Nazis or Communists have become attached to new cults of violence after their disillusionment with either lost cause. This behavior pattern has been described by Louis Fischer:

> Among the ex-Communists and among those Soviet supporters who, like myself, were never Communists, there is a type that might be called the authoritarian by inner compulsion. A changed outlook or bitter experience may wean him from Stalinism. But he still has the shortcomings which drove him into the Bolshevik camp in the first place. He abandons Communism intellectually, yet he needs an emotional substitute for it. Weak within himself, requiring security, a comforting dogma, and a big battalion, he gravitates to a new pole of infallibility, absolutism and doctrinal certainty. He clings to something outwardly united and strong. Often he deserts Communism because it is not secure enough, because it zigzags and flipflops and thus deprives him of the stability he craves. When he finds a new totalitarianism, he fights Communism with Communist-like violence and intolerance. He is an anti-Communist "Communist."

Doriot, a French Communist leader, member of the Third International's ruling executive committee, became a Fascist and crusaded fiercely against Communism. Laval, former Communist, former French Premier, was later pro-Nazi and reactionary. Similarly, since the war, many Italian, Rumanian, Hungarian and Polish Fascists and German Nazis, many thousands of them, have joined the nationalistic, totalitarian Communist Party of their countries. Totalitarians of all feathers understand one another.[19]

In the case of subversion, persuasive appeals may be so intense that the subverted individual often experiences profound emotion akin to religious "conversion," in others he may be merely bought, like Judas, for the traditional thirty pieces of silver, or like many half-starved prisoners of war who have become enemy "collaborators," for a bowl of warm soup and the promise of privileged treatment.

Bribery has thus been used extensively as a form of manipulative persuasion in the wide range of political warfare. In the eighteenth century, funds for this purpose were publicly provided. The first appropriation act of the first U.S. Congress in 1789 contained a contingent fund for the "bribery" of foreign statesmen in the pursuit of American national interests.[20] In more recent times, such funds are usually discreetly camouflaged in national budgets or even in secret treaties. A secret pact proposed by the Soviet Union to Bulgaria in the months preceding the final Nazi-Soviet break in 1941 provided for delivery, by the Soviets, of very large sums of bar gold. Since interstate loans are made not on the basis of gold transfers but as extensions of credit, this provision could hardly have been included

except as a thinly disguised bribe.

The use of bribery tends to be far less effective as a means of persuasion in practice than it would appear to the novice in political warfare. Throughout the eighteenth century, the major European powers made heavy outlays for this purpose from secret funds, frequently with disappointing results. To support their intervention in Swedish affairs in the 1740's, England, France, Russia, and even Denmark spent enormous sums on the bribery of political party leaders. But legislators did not feel themselves obligated by these bribes and acted as they or their party leaders felt justified. By contrast, in Poland, each member of the Diet (with a liberum veto power) behaved like a sovereign state, and having once sold his vote, held to the agreement, so that the Polish Diet could be literally purchased for a relatively small outlay of secret funds. [21] At the time of the Seven Years War (1756-1763), not only Frederick the Great but most other statesmen of the time were convinced that the bribes flowing into the pockets of Bestuzhev-Riumin, the Russian Foreign Minister, directly influenced his decisions -- an impression which Bestuzhev deliberately cultivated as he needed money desperately. Recent historical research, however, has shown that the huge sums paid out for this purpose by Austria, Saxony, and, above all, by England, had very little effect on the broad lines of Bestuzhev's policy.[22]

The Czarist experience with Bulgarian politicians in the 1880's confirms the limitations of bribery as an instrument of political warfare. One official summarized the lessons learned as follows:

> As for the money which has been spent in order to win over some influential Bulgars -- I believe that money has been paid out at a complete loss. Sometimes much can be done with money, but not everything. I have often noticed that this money remains in the hands of intermediaries. It is a very delicate weapon and difficult to manage. We claim that the Bulgarians of the party at present in power are paid by the Austrians and English. I doubt that; they are paid otherwise, by the support given to their thirst for domination and other passions.[23]

Contemporary experience points to the same conclusion. A responsible intelligence service operating in the Middle East estimated that by 1960 Saudi Arabia had already paid out over three million dollars in a vain attempt to arrange for the assassination of President Nasser of Egypt.[24]

Manipulative persuasion, inoffensively called "control," is a standard element of covert operations. In the collection of secret intelligence, for example, the individual informant or source is frequently controlled or made dependent on his contact by means of payment in money, goods, or perquisites, and in some cases, narcotics, which of course represent the ultimate in control since for the addict they are physiologically indispensable, and are both expensive and difficult to obtain in most societies. This type of manipulative persuasion also includes control of key individuals through their mistresses or physicians. The latter variant was probably a factor in the case of Benes and the Soviet seizure of Czechoslovakia. Such ordinary forms of control are frequently supplemented by blackmail (often effective with sexual deviates) and threats of physical violence or of betrayal to the police or secret police, as individual circumstances may indicate. Sanche de Gramont cites a number of case studies which illustrate graphically the use of manipulative persuasion. Indeed, the recruiting or subverting of agents and their subsequent control by the operational networks of the Great Powers is one of the most fascinating aspects of the intelligence industry, and contributes to

the perennial popularity of both spy-thriller fiction and serious literature dealing with the craft of intelligence and espionage.[25]

The ever-present threat of betrayal to the state (security) police is a reciprocal bond of control in most conspiratorial or underground organizations within a police state. Dostoyevsky's novel, The Possessed, reflects the plan -- attributed to the anarchist Nechayev -- according to which four members of a conspiratorial group together murdered the fifth on the excuse that he was an informer, thus providing an interlocking chain of shared guilt and reciprocal control against betrayal. In such underground groups or cells, treachery, i.e., betrayal of other members to the security police by infiltrated agents, is a frequent practice. Prior to World War II, in both Fascist Italy and the Balkans, the Communist parties accumulated a wide and deep experience in clandestine operations. The objective of an aggressive faction or party (such as the Bolsheviks in Czarist Russia or certain Communist parties abroad today) may be to eliminate rivals in anticipation of a future day when repressive controls will be lifted and the struggle for power will emerge into the open, as it must after any coup d'etat. Within such a context the conditions of underground operations are highly favorable to the penetration and ruthless elimination of rival groups through proven techniques of treachery. Because of the secret, usually cell-type organization of most underground groups, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to determine that a given member of a particular group is an agent who has penetrated the organization. After penetration, such agents have been known to organize sabotage missions and, at the last moment, deliberately to alert the "security police" and then disappear, leaving the unfortunate members of the rival party or faction to face a firing squad or to languish in the nearest concentration or "re-education" camp.

Such brutal treachery has been a standard practice in underground or resistance operations for years. During the twoyear period before Hitler launched his attack on the U.S.S.R., in a Secret Protocol of September 28, 1939 Nazi and Soviet authorities in Poland agreed to cooperate wholeheartedly to suppress "Polish agitation which affects the territories of the other party."[26] In December, 1939, at Zakopane, Poland, at a joint meeting of Nazi and Soviet security officers, NKVD representatives proposed to set up in the Nazi-occupied area a secret Communist organization of agents provocateurs to penetrate the real Polish underground and submit reports to both the Gestapo and the NKVD alike. The proposal was accepted, and after successful penetration numerous Polish resistance leaders were liquidated. This organization of traitors later transformed itself into the PPR, the Polish Workers' Party, as the present Communist party in Poland is called. In the later stages of the war, one of the principal objectives of the PPR was to incite the real underground into a premature uprising which would have been ruthlessly crushed, thus leaving the field open after the war to the bogus "resistance" which had been secretly but systematically denouncing the genuine resistance groups.[27]

Manipulative persuasion is of greatest concern when it takes the form of carefully planned and propagandized quasi-military moves, such as the staging of "bandit raids," the massing of troops and tanks, or the brandishing of airpower, missiles, and thermonuclear "super-bombs." Such actions as purely political moves are by no means new. On the contrary, they are among the more familiar and time-honored tricks of international power politics. Marx himself, writing an article on "The Russian Humbug" in the New York Tribune of June 22, 1853, discounted widespread European press reports of Russian troop

movements toward the Balkans as "nothing but so many ridiculous attempts on the part of Russian agents to strike a wholesome terror into the Western World.[28]

New in international relations, however, is the deliberate peacetime planning and execution of quasi-military measures and their exploitation through the mass media of persuasion on a world-wide scale. Beginning with the Nazi "psychological warfare annexes" to plans for operations against Czechoslovakian the major powers have devoted increasing attention to overall "psychological strategy" and to the use of "the psychological instrument of statecraft." In the early 1950's, the United States established and for some time utilized a Psychological Strategy Board on the highest governmental level, directly responsible to the President.[29] In the months preceding the invasion of Poland in September, 1939, the Nazi regime ordered a number of provocations which were skillfully exploited primarily for their psychological effects on the target population, the Polish people. Moreover, there is evidence in Polish and other state papers of the period that the Poles themselves were well aware of the psychological purpose of such provocations and were not intimidated. As a concrete illustration of the latter case, Poland refused to be provoked by an influx of Nazi "tourists" in mid-summer of 1939: "The Polish Government was determined not to be scared by any psychological terrorism into imprudent action ... a war was not won by a few thousand 'tourists.' The Germans knew that quite well, and were mainly hoping to provoke and intimidate Poland."[30]

The late Professor Edward Mead Earle described how "fear of a knockout blow delivered by Germany from the air provided the political climate in which Nazism flourished. ... For physical apprehension -- 'something approaching naked fear' in the opinion of one British military critic -- of aerial bombing played a large part in causing people to make the worse appear the better reason and to misjudge the true character of their interests. This is not to say that the people of France and Britain were craven; it is merely to suggest that because of the threat from the air it was easier to persuade them than it otherwise would have been that there was merit to Hitler's claims, and that discretion was the better part of valor.... The subsequent defeat of the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain should not blind us to the fact that its bloodless victory of 1938 came periously close to deciding the fate of the world."[31]

In a like manner, in the period immediately following World War II, a moral atmosphere or political climate favorable to Soviet intervention has been created by the presence of Soviet troops stationed either within or along the borders of most Central European countries. In this respect, Ivo Duchacek writes, "The effect of the display of Soviet power is more responsible for Communist successes both in infiltration drives and final seizures of power, than the attractions of Marxist-Leninist doctrine."[32]

The primary role of such ready force in Soviet intervention in the East European satellites was first explained in an off-the-record speech (later suppressed) to Hungarian Communist party leaders by Jozsef Revai, Minister of People's Culture in March, 1949: "We were a minority in Parliament and in the Government, but at the time we represented the leading force. We had decisive control over the police forces. Our force, the force of our Party and the working class, was multiplied by the fact that the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Army, were always there to support us with their assistance."[33]

Excerpt from *The Strategy of Subversion*, by Paul Blackstock, Quadrangle Books, 1964, pp. 78-94.

Footnotes

1. W. E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* (Baltimore, 1956), p. 2.

2. Julian Towster, *Political Power in the USSR, 1917-1947* (New York, 1948), p. 20. On propaganda and violence as interrelated forms of persuasion, see Ernst Kris and Hans Speier, *German Radio Propaganda* (New York, 1944), pp. 322. On propaganda as "physical violence," see Serge Chakoutine, *Le viole des foules* (Paris, 1939), Chapter 14, "Symbolism and Political Propaganda." On the functional relationship of propaganda and terror, see E. K. Bramstedt, *Dictatorship and Political Police* (London, 1945), pp. 137-159. For a recent comparative analysis, see Hideya Kumata and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Working Papers on Propaganda Theory* (Urbana, 1955).

3. John Maynard, *Russia in Flux* (New York, 1948), p. 90.

4. V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (Moscow, 1952), 1, 282286. For a typical orthodox discussion of political assassination, see the chapter, "Tirannicidio e terrorismo," in Emilio Lusso, *Teoria dell Insurrezione* (Rome, 1950), pp. 145-155.

5. *Pravda*, January 17, 1963; *Washington Post*, November 29, 1963.

6. *Washington Post*, February 3, 1962.

7. *New York Times*, June 13 and September 16, 1963, respectively.

8. C.L. Sulzberger in the *New York Times*, March 4, 1962.

9. U.S. Dept. of State Publication 7308, Far Eastern Series 110, Parts I and 11, December, 1961.

10. *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 13.

11. Report of former U.N. Intelligence Chief in the Congo, Col Bjorn Egge, in *The New York Times*, November 16, 1961.

12. Sorel, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 32-33, 45-47, and 50.

13. Mosca, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-194, 203-204.

14. *Der Zauberberg* (Stockholm, 1939), 11, 186. On the character of Naptha as an authoritarian prototype, see also Robert Payne, Zero, *The Story of Terrorism* (New York, 1950), pp. 53-54.

15. Thomas Mann, *op. cit.*, 11, 187.

16. New York, 1934, pp. 14-15.

17. New York, 1950.

18. New York, 1950.

19. *The God That Failed*, pp. 202-203.

20. Harry Howe Ransom, *Can American Democracy Survive Cold War?* (New York, 1963), p. 176, n. 9.

21. Walther Mediger, *Moskaus Weg Nach Europa* (Braunschweig, 1952), pp. 304-305.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 582-597.

23. M.K. lonou to Giers, NKG, September 10/22, 1887, cited by Jelavich, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

24. The estimate was given by a former high-ranking Israeli intelligence officer and confirmed by Allen Dulles during a public visit, as a guest lecturer, to the University of South Carolina, April 2, 1963.

25. De Gramont, *The Secret War, passim.* For a case involving alcoholism, physical intimidation, and "the twin scourges of the lower middle class -- stupidity and cupidity" (Harry Haughton), see Chapter 10, pp. 299-345. On the problem of homosexuality, see the case of the two American defectors, William H. Martin and Bernon F. Mitchell, Chapter 12, pp. 404-419. For a comparable English case involving blackmail, that of William Vassall, see the *Washington Post* accounts of September 14 and October 10, 1962, and April 26, 1963. The sensational trial of Ivan Asen Khristov, a Bulgarian spy who allegedly received $200,000 from the CIA, was used by the regime as the pretext for stoning the U.S. legation in Bulgaria. Khristov alleged that the CIA had flown each of his three mistresses three times to New York to see him, which, if true, would certainly establish a record in the use of sex in agent control. See the *New York Times,* September 27, 28, and 29, 1963.

26. U.S. Dept. of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941,* p. 107.

27. According to the account of Dr. Branislaw Kusnierz, the Polish Resistance leader, in *Stalin and the Poles* (London, 1949), pp. 168-177. As Minister of Justice in the government of General Bor Komorowski, Dr. Kusnierz no doubt had access to highly classified documents concerning such operations.

28. See especially the "Case Green" (Munich) documents, N.C.A., 522-523 ff.

29. See Robert T. Holt and Robert W. van de Velde, *Strategic Psychological Operations and American Foreign Policy* (Chicago, 1960), especially Chapters I and 2, pp. 1-54.

30. Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations, Miscellaneous No. 9* (London, 1939), p. 96. On the Nazi-staged border incidents which were used as a pretext for the invasion, see Chapter 9 below.

31. "The Influence of Air Power Upon History," *Yale Review,* Summer, 1946, pp. 586-587.

32. *The Strategy of Communist Infiltration: The Case of Czechoslovakia* (New Haven, 1949).

33. See his "On the Character of Our People's Democracy; in *Foreign Affairs,* XXVIII, No. I (October 1949), pp. 143153.