An Events Data Base on Political Terrorism in Canada: Some Conceptual and Methodological Problems[1]

by
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INTRODUCTION

While terrorism is hardly a new phenomenon,[2] there has been a worldwide increase in the amount of attention paid by the media, governments and academics to this type of behavior for the last two decades.[3] This increased interest has lead to an increasing number of studies of political terrorism in advanced industrialized democracies.

Very few studies, however, analyze political terrorism in Canada. Undoubtedly, Canada has had a limited experience with terrorism compared to other forms of political conflict.[4] The majority of studies that do focus on Canada suffer from a multitude of problems. These studies, like those of the subject as a whole, are for the most part descriptive, atheoretical, and devoid of empirical analyses. The very few empirical analyses of terrorism[5] generally focus on either international or transnational terrorist events while other types of terrorism, for example, interstate, state, and domestic, have been seriously underrepresented. Moreover, these studies have a number of methodological problems.

While there are a variety of methodologies for studying terrorism[6] the most popular is the events data approach. While the reliability and validity of events or conflict data in general has been criticized,[7] a data set on political terrorism has definite advantages. From a statistical analysis of terrorist incidents researchers should be able to:

a) show that terrorists choose among a certain range of options;

b) determine the physical, temporal and terrorist imposed boundaries within which terrorists act;

c) delimit the range of choices open to the terrorists at any particular point in time;

d) attach a statistical probability to these choices;

e) predict the terrorists' most likely actions;

f) compare terrorists' stated rationale for their actions to their target selection;

g) develop appropriate counter-measures to be taken by policymakers, national security agencies, etc.;

h) prevent panic and overreaction to terrorist events;

i) allow for comparison with rates and trends in other countries to test theories of political performance;

j) compare terrorist compaigns;

k) undertake a comprehensive modelling effort that includes multivariate, time series, and process analysis; and,

l) carry out simulation studies.

Consequently the author, in his efforts to create a data set on Canadian terrorist events that is more detailed, rigorous and comprehensive than other compilations, reviews the conceptual and methodological problems with studying terrorism both in general and in Canada. In summary, this project is a step in the direction of more reliable data, interpretation, and analysis of the pattern and trends of terrorism in Canada.

CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS

Introduction

The study of political terrorism regardless of the level of analysis (country, organization, or individual) is fraught with many conceptual problems. A clear understanding of these problems should help in conducting sound methodological research. Two areas are relevant to this paper: the problems with studying terrorism in general and the problems with studying terrorism in Canada.

Problems with Studying Political Terrorism

Defining Terrorism

Some conceptual questions about the nature of terrorism must be resolved before proceeding. A considerable debate exists about the proper definition of terrorism.[8] After an exhaustive analysis of over 100 expert definitions, Schmid concludes that there is no "true or correct definition."[9] Nevertheless he outlines twenty-two elements of definitions and ostensibly develops a consensus definition consisting of five parts which this author accepts with one modification. First, terrorism is a method of combat in which random or symbolic victims are targets of violence. Second, through previous use of violence or the credible threat of violence, other members of that group or class are put in a state of chronic fear. Third, the victimization of the target is considered extranormal by most observers, which, fourth, creates an audience beyond the target of terror. Fifth, the purpose of terrorism is either to immobilize the target of terror in order to produce disorientation and/or compliance, or to mobilize secondary targets of demands, for example, government, or targets of attention, for example, public opinion.[10] This definition encompasses terrorism by governments, by oppositions, and by international movements. While Schmid's definition is certainly an improvement on most definitions, it is a little narrow neglecting, as it does, nonhuman terroristic victimization (for example, destruction of property and sabotage). While Schmid "concedes that some violence against symbolic things can be considered terroristic," he sees this "as an exception to the rule and therefore it need not [be] included." Just because it is an exception does not mean it is insignificant. Therefore I would contend that terrorism includes nonhuman targets.

Typologies of Terrorism

Regardless of the definitional problems with the concept of terrorism, the study of terrorism can be further complicated by delineating the different types. Like the definition of terrorism itself, several

typologies have been introduced in the academic literature to classify different terrorist actions.[11] One of the most popular and useful ways to classify terrorist events is the typology developed by Mickolus, accepted for the purpose of this paper. He distinguishes four types of political terrorism based on whether an event involves government control or direction and direct involvement of nationals of more than one state. Mickolus thus identifies interstate, international, state, and domestic,[12] as types of terrorism.

First, interstate terrorism, also known as state-sponsored terrorism or surrogate warfare, is carried out by individuals or groups controlled by a state, involving nationals of more than one country. An example of this type of terrorism occurred when the U.S. government sent Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-backed Green Berets into Cambodia to assassinate political officials. Second, international terrorism is carried out by autonomous non-state actors, affecting nationals of at least two states. This type of terrorism would include, for example, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) assassination of the Israeli ambassador in Paris.[13] Third, state terrorism is confined to terrorist actions conducted by a government within its national borders. This type of terrorism includes the death squads which have operated in El Salvador and Brazil. Finally, domestic terrorism is carried on by autonomous non-state actors, in their country of origin, against domestic targets. An example of this is the activities of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) in Northern Ireland. None of these types, however, are mutually exclusive in practice. Terrorist groups operating in a country may take part in both domestic and international terrorism, as, for example, in the FLQ kidnapping of James Cross, the British Trade Commissioner in Montreal. All types of terrorism identified by Mickolus have occurred in Canada: *state,*[14] *international,*[15] *interstate,*[16] *and domestic.*[17]

Atheoretical Studies

The majority of research on terrorism, however, have tended to be descriptive, uncomparative, normative, and marked by theoretical generalizations without any basis in empirical data.[18] This is largely a result of the multitude of popular treatments which focus on case studies of particular incidents, groups or terrorists, leading a number of scholars to suggest that the state of theory development in the field of political terrorism is poor or as bad as other areas of social science research.[19]

Paucity of Empirical Studies

With a few exceptions there is also a lack of good empirically-grounded research on terrorism.[20] The term "empirical research" implies the use of the methodologies of the social sciences. Methodologies in conflict analysis, in particular, are:

> techniques for ordering information systematically and drawing inferences from that information about the patterns, trends, causes, processes and outcomes of conflict. Since political terrorism is a type of conflict, the full spectrum of techniques for conflict analysis are

potentially applicable to it. Methodologies does not mean simply the analysis of quantitative data, although the most technically-sophisticated methods are those designed to generate and analyze quantified informa- tion. The term also encompasses systematic case studies, that is case studies guided by an explicit theoretical argument or framework.[21]

Having arrived at a working definition of political terrorism, outlin- ed the different types of terrorism, and examined two major problems with research in this area one must examine the problems with studying political terrorism in Canada.

The Problems with Studying Political Terrorism in Canada

There are three major problems with studying political terrorism in Canada, some of which mirror the problems of studying terrorism in general and some of which are specific to this country. These problems include: the difficulty with studying political violence[22] in Canada; the lack of rigorous analysis; reliance on atheoretical case studies; and a paucity of empirical analyses.

The Problems with Studying Political Violence in Canada

The problems with studying political violence in Canada are occa- sionally lamented by Canadian scholars.[23] Specifically, the difficulties are largely a result of the lack of scholarly attention paid to terrorism and the resultant inadequate data base.

Lack of scholarly attention

While certain acts of political violence have profoundly affected the Canadian political process from time to time,[24] the subject of political violence in Canada has generally been characterized by an equally pro- found lack of scholarly research. Several reasons may account for this phenomenon. Among the more popular have been the myth of the "peaceable kingdom," the nature of Canada's political culture, and Canadians' tendency to be deferential to authority.

There are a variety of versions of the so-called "myth of the peaceable kingdom."[25] The assumption that underlies this myth is that Canadians have traditionally been, and remain, a thoroughly non-violent people in five areas: history, culture, economics, government, and free press. First, Canadian history has been relatively free from episodes of insurrection, revolution and domestic violence. Second, Canada's cultural composition has emphasized order, peace, and non-violence. It is an egalitarian society without major differences or hostilities along class or cultural lines, with a healthy respect for institutions, civil rights, and the rule of law. Third, Canada has been a wealthy country without the major pockets of poverty or the major obvious divisions that lead to internal strife. Fourth, the government has been stable with institu- tionalized and active opposition as a mechanism for expressing dissent. Finally, the free press provides an instrument of dissent and also can be an instrument to promote social change and the resolution of social and

economic irritants.[26] Numerous examples, however, can be found in Canadian history to counter these propositions.

Second is the argument that the Canadian political culture is generally less violent than those of most other Western nations. Canada has been perceived as a more conservative or traditional country culturally, especially compared to the United States. According to Lipset, the most important reason why Canadian culture is more conservative and traditional is that Canada emerged out of a successful "counter-revolution" while the United States represented the outcome of a successful revolution.[27] Canadians have also felt it necessary to differentiate themselves from Americans; they are more influenced by monarchical institutions, by a dominant Anglican religious tradition and a less individualistic and more generally controlled frontier expansion than was present in the American west.

Third, Canadians on the whole are believed to be more differential to authority than many other Western nationalities.[28] According to Naegele, there is a greater acceptance of limitations and of hierarchical patterns in Canada.[29] Moreover, Canadians use "lawful" and traditionally institutionalized means for altering regulations which they feel are wrong, whereas Americans are more disposed to use informal and often extra-legal means to correct what they perceive is wrong.[30] Furthermore, Canadians on the whole are more obedient towards the law.[31] For example, taking the difference in population into account, Canada has had a lower crime rate than the United States for violent offenses.[32] Similarly, Canadians have a greater respect for police than Americans.[33] While the "peaceable kingdom," argument can be dismissed, the counter-revolution, and deference to authority arguments may be more relevant in explaining why violence in Canada has been ignored in the scholarly research.

Inadequate data base

Another major impediment to our understanding of contemporary political conflict in Canada is the lack of adequate empirical data.[34] Though several comparative studies have generated conflict data for Canada,[35] most cross-national data sets on conflict, however, generally under-report small-scale, intra-societal events. This under-reporting is a result of most data being derived from such sources as the *New York Times Index, Kessings Contemporary Archives*, and *Facts on File*, all of which tend to concentrate only on major conflict events. The several data sets developed in the United States for broad cross-national studies of political violence are simply not detailed enough to support careful theoretical investigation of the Canadian case.

Nevertheless, three empirical studies in the literature examining "collective violence" using domestic sources may be relevant. First, Jackson, Kelly and Mitchell examined all issues of the *Globe and Mail* for the period from 1965 to 1975 and identified 129 incidents of collective violence in Ontario. They found that the amount of violence was relatively stable from year to year and that demonstrations and incidents relating to foreign political questions attracted the largest number of participants.[36]

Second, Frank and Kelly using Canadian sources for the period of 1963 to 1975 identified some 281 incidents of collective violence in Ontario and Quebec. The incidence of collective violence was found to be relatively similar in the two provinces but the form, intensity and content of the violence differed markedly between them.[37]

Third, Aunger analyzed news reports of political strife events in New Brunswick covering the years 1964-83. According to Aunger, political strife includes events such as demonstrations, strikes, riots, raids, and bombings. In his most recent study he identifies 58 events and concludes that the level of violence in New Brunswick is relatively low. The most frequently-occurring events involving violence in New Brunswick were demonstrations and riots; bombings only accounted for two events.[38]

While these studies are limited in their scope, centering around three provinces out of a total ten provinces and two territories, and analyze different time periods, they have laid the foundation for further inquiry. Undoubtedly, the serious investigation of political conflict in Canada is hampered by the absence of a comprehensive and detailed national data set based on indigenous sources sufficient to develop and test alternative theoretical models. Over the nine years since these studies were conducted political violences in Canada has not subsided. Moreover, agencies responsible for Canada's national security are concerned about what effect the world-wide increase in terrorism has had on Canada.[39]

Paucity of Rigorous Analysis

Despite the lack of scholarly attention given to political violence in Canada and the inadequate data, there have been a handful of studies on terrorism in Canada. While there is a growing literature on terrorism in general, there is a paucity of rigorous analyses of terrorism in Canada and the majority of the literature is unsystematic in its method of anlaysis. This is understandable as there are very few academic treatments of terrorism in Canada, the exceptions being a few articles, theses, and dissertations. Consequently, the lion's share of information on terrorism in Canada consists of popular periodical coverage from magazines, newspapers, and the like, and a handful of government documents.

Reliances on atheoretical case studies

The majority of articles, books, dissertations, and governmental reports written on political terrorism in Canada consist of case studies of various terrorist incidents, case studies of domestic terrorist groups, printing of revolutionary literature, and autobiographies of ex-terrorists. These case studies rely heavily on descriptive analyses and consequently are usually atheoretical and unsystematic in methodology.

First, the literature is dominated by case studies of various terrorist incidents primarily focusing on the October Crisis of 1970[40] and the Air India disaster in 1985.[41] Second, case studies of terrorist groups or groups using terrorist tactics operating in Canada focus on domestic groups and include, in order of frequency, the activities of the FLQ,[42] of

the Sons of Freedom Doukhobors,[43] and of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).[44] Third, manifestos or other revolutionary literature occasionally are printed.[45] This mainly involves the writings that justify terrorism which appear either in book form, in the mainstream news media, or in underground newspapers. Fourth, and closely related to the printing of revolutionary literature, are autobiographies of ex-terrorists, especially those who were members of the FLQ.[46] Other than these four categories, there has been a lack of empirical analyses of political terrorism in Canada.

Studies that have used more rigorous approaches

As exceptions to this lack of rigor, one might include a handful of academic treatments such as the analysis of some issue with respect to one terrorist group, the analyses of one aspect of terrorism as it related to the Canadian scene, and quantitative studies analyzing the frequency of international terrorism in Canada. First, studies that analyze a particular aspect of terrorism include: the analysis of news coverage of Armenian terrorism in Canada;[47] the governmental response to the FLQ during the October Crisis;[48] public opinions with regards to October Crisis;[49] and the impact of transnational factors on separatist terrorism.[50] Second, miscellaneous topics on terrorism which affect Canada which have been analyzed more rigorously include: jurisdictional issues;[51] hostage negotiations;[52] policy and organizational responses;[53] and legal concerns.[54] Studies dealing with one particular issue with respect to one particular terrorist group and miscellaneous issues tend to be more systematic and comparative in methodology.

Most studies of terrorism do not present a comprehensive picture of the scope, intensity, and range of terrorism occurring in Canada: 'scope' includes studies of how widespread political terrorism might be; intensity refers to the frequency of occurrence, seriousness, destructiveness and political impact of each type of violation at a given time; a range covers the variety of tactics, issues, or groups that use domestic political terrorism events. Further, the majority of studies are not empirical. While several methodologies exist to examine terrorism empirically at the national level[55] the amount of terrorism occurring in Canada is best found through the use of aggregate data or an events data approach.

There are only two quantitative studies that either analyze terrorism affecting Canada as part or all of their study using the events data approach.[56] These studies deserve special attention and will be examined under the section dealing with problems with statistics on terrorism in Canada.

EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Introduction

There are several methodologies for empirically analyzing terrorism. Four of the most commonly used methods are evaluated as possible ways to measure terrorism in Canada: direct observation; content analyses of

terrorists' self reports; survey research; and aggregate data analyses. The author argues that the aggregate data approach would be the best method for understanding the scope, intensity and range of political terrorism in Canada. Studies which analyze statistics on terrorism in Canada are also evaluated, including consideration of the difficulties in creating a reliable data base.

Direct Observation

If one wants to know why terrorist actions are initiated or subside one might directly observe the dynamics of a terrorist organization. Participant observation permits the investigator to study individuals as they actually behave in a real social or political setting. This strategy is similar to that used by J. Bowyer Bell in his case studies on terrorist organizations[57] or by Gerard Chailand in his work on guerrillas.[58] This method, however, presents a number of difficulties: lack of comprehensiveness, access, mistrust by terrorists, reactivity, a variety of ethical dilemmas, and the potential of death or arrest by authorities.

Content Analyses of Terrorists' Self Reports

A better method might be content analyses of statements, books or articles written by people who have engaged in terrorist actions. According to Manheim and Rich, content analysis is

> the systematic counting, assessing, and interpreting of the form and substance of communication. Content analysis provides us with a method by which we may summarize fairly rigorously certain direct physical evidences of the behaviors of, and the relationships between various types of political actors.[59]

Only the communications of those terrorists that have been active in terrorist campaigns should be analyzed. While this research has not been done, two studies analyze in whole or in part the written biographies of former or active terrorists.[60]

This methodological approach also presents a few problems. First, not all "important" terrorists have written autobiographies or articles. Second, this type of research will necessitate a team of researchers that have facility in different languages (for example, French, English, German, etc.). Third, autobiographical reports are designed for a purpose whether it be description, persuasion, exhortation, direction, self promotion or even obfuscation. Therefore, in analyzing such communications, one must attempt to interpret their content in the context of their apparent purpose.

Survey Research

Another method possible might be that of interviewing or surveying terrorists who are either active or incarcerated. According to Manheim and Rich, survey research is

> a method of data collection in which information is ob-
> tained directly from individual persons who are selected
> so as to provide a basis for making inferences about
> some larger population.[61]

This information may be obtained by direct questioning through per-
sonal or telephone interviews, or by having the subjects complete
previously mailed or self-administered questionnaires. A well-designed
survey can provide five types of information about respondents: facts,
perceptions, opinions, attitudes and behavioral reports.[62] The best
method for this study would be personal interviews as other types of
surveys tend to have a very low response rate. Once again only terrorists
who have committed a substantial number of actions should be question-
ed.

The survey method is not without its problems, especially with ac-
cess and reliability. It is very expensive and can produce highly biased
data because of the features of the interview process itself. Difficulties
stemming from the mutual suspicion of terrorists and governments are
inevitable. West German social scientists, for example, found it very dif-
ficult to interview incarcerated members of the Red Army Faction and its
successors. Most were unwilling to meet with researchers.[63] They also
found somewhat paradoxically that local government authorities were
reluctant to cooperate even though their study was commissioned by the
federal Minister of the Interior. The West German effort, however, was
hampered most because researchers attempted to interview suspected ter-
rorists who were under arrest or undergoing trial but who had not been
convicted. Knutson, on the other hand, succeeded in interviewing some
convicted terrorists in American prisons. She found the authorities
helpful and the prisoners eager for a chance to express themselves to a
sympathetic listener; most felt that during their trials they had not been
given an opportunity to explain the reasons for their actions.[64] Dif-
ferences both in method and in situation may explain Knutson's relative
ease of access compared to the difficulties encountered by the West Ger-
mans.[65]

Aggregate Data/Events Data Approach

Aggregate data on terrorist groups and state actions are probably
the most useful in testing macro-theories about terrorism or conflict
behavior for that matter.[66] It allows us to focus on the terrorist behavior
itself, using the discrete incident as its unit of analysis, rather than
statements by observers and practitioners. It is also the most prevalent
type of data on terrorism.

The events data approach with respect to Canada has several im-
mediate shortcomings: access to statistical information, lack of statistical
information on Canada, and problems with that statistical information.

Statistical Information on Terrorism in Canada

Statistical information on political terrorism affecting Canada is
either publicly unavailable, inaccurate, dated, or limited to international

or transnational events. Of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) or the Department of National Defence (DND), the national security agencies responsible for investigating and combating acts of terrorism, none publish either statistics or a chronology of events; neither do metropolitan or provincial police forces.

This finding was the result of a request which was sent out by the author to major Canadian newspapers for in-house news indexes, and to major metropolitan Canadian police departments, provincial police departments, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and the Department of National Defence, all of which were asked for available chronologies and data bases on terrorism. This procedure yielded very little, if any, information.[67]

One might be able to turn to the larger terrorist events data collections.[68] Six publicly available resources of information on terrorism are relevant to Canada. First, the Rand Corporation has published a chronology of international terrorist incidents encompassing the years 1968-1974, updated yearly. While the Rand Corporation has a chronology and data set on domestic terrorism in the United States, it presently does not have one on domestic terrorist incidents in other countries.

Second, the Risks International Corporation has a "Terrorism Data Base," which is a computer readable file of information on terrorist activities in non-communist countries worldwide. The data base is used primarily in answering inquiries from corporations about the current situation in a region, country, or city and for producing quantified information for two of their publications: *Executive Risk Assessment* and *Quarterly Risk Assessment*. Like the CIA, Risks does not separate Canadian statistics from U.S. statistics but combines them under North American totals. A copy of the March 1983 *Quarterly Risk Assessment* reveals much background information on incidents in this report to be false, sensationalistic, and/or unconfirmed. Moreover, while Risks maintains files since 1970, information has only be coded and placed on computer since 1981, and the data are geared for commercial use. Mitchell adds that Risks provides only composite figures, and the coding scheme used for assessing potential incidents for inclusion is not particularly rigorous.[69]

Third is the International Terrorism—Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) data base originally developed by Edward Mickolus. The publicly available version, ITERATE II, indexes terrorist acts from 1968 to 1979 and is based on reports from more than 200 news services. The ITERATE II system contains information on 3329 incidents of transnational terrorism. Each year, a total number of terrorist acts per group is determined. Since the amount of terrorism by a group tends to vary over time, the total number of terrorist acts per group per year of activity is determined and then an average (total number of terrorist acts divided by years of operation) is determined.[70]

Several criticisms have been voiced regarding the ITERATE data. According to Schmid, the range of incidents labelled as "terrorism" is wide. It harbors some categories of incidents which are doubtful, and policy considerations may play a bigger role than scientific criteria in including or excluding incidents of political protest and violence.[71]

Fourth, a narrative chronology of ITERATE II was published in 1980.[72] It presents totals of international terrorist events by country, committed by external groups and broken down into several categories. Summaries of many of the incidents enumerated in the CIA tabulations are available in this publication. Unfortunately, this information is dated and difficult to interpret. In addition, the chronology of events which take place in Canada includes events which upon close examination are not terrorist in nature and omits others that are.

Fifth, there is the CIA published "Tabulations of International Incidents" through 1980. The information is based on individual terrorist acts which are compiled into a computerized data base, from which descriptive statistics are calculated, and long term trends in terrorist campaigns are investigated. Unfortunately, as with Risks data, these tabulations do not separate Canadian statistics from U.S. statistics but combine them together under North American totals. Moreover, the reports do not include a chronology of events to permit checks on the accuracy of their data collection.

Sixth, the U.S. State Department's "Office for Combating Terrorism" publishes an annual survey of transnational incidents. This survey, which was initiated by the CIA in 1968, was turned over to the State Department in the early days of the Reagan administration. Since its inception, the CIA/State Department data set has been a highly regarded and widely-quoted source of descriptive statistics. Allegations, however, have been made that its coding scheme was redesigned in 1981 in order to suit the foreign policy objectives of the Reagan administration. The entire data set was then back-dated which resulted in a doubling of the number of incidents since 1968. Threats and hoaxes were now defined as incidents.[73]

Statistical Studies Focusing on Canada

There are three studies which analyze statistical data on terrorism in Canada: Mitchell,[74] Kellett,[75] and Charters.[76] Mitchell, for example, examines the incidence of politically-motivated insurgent terrorism in North America from 1968 to 1983 and the resultant policy and organization responses of the U.S. and Canadian governments. He notes the lack of data on terrorism in Canada but does not actually collect any for his study. Instead he relies on data from Rand, CIA and Federal Bureau of Investigation sources previously mentioned.

The most detailed study of terrorism affecting Canada which actually involves data collection is Kellett (1981). The report focuses specifically on some trends in international terrorism, emphasizing the period 1968-1979, and assesses potential developments. It includes a chronology

of international terrorist events affecting Canada and concludes that Canada has experienced and will probably continue to experience a relatively low level of international terrorism.

This report is a useful beginning but has several drawbacks. First, the information is dated; numerous terrorist events have occurred in Canada since 1981. Second, events which are not specifically terrorist in nature (threats, hoaxes, capture and the like) or are not confirmed as terrorist events are included in the chronology of events. Third and most important, the report is limited to only one type of terrorism, that being international, whereas—as will be shown below—most terrorist incidents in Canada have been domestic.

Finally, Charters reviews the publicly available information on Canada's experience as an espionage and terrorism 'target' since 1945. He collects data on international terrorism because he feels it has been Canada's "most persistent problem" and domestic terrorism has not.[77] Charters' definition of terrorism is too broad. He has also erred in contending that domestic terrorism is not as persistent as international terrorism. His chronology of international terrorism suffers from most of the problems of Kellett's, because it is largely based on Kellett's work and newspaper articles retrieved from the InfoGlobe data base. Finally, the chronology has a "success" factor for each event. This factor is not defined, thus potentially confusing any interpretations that one might derive from it.

While the empirical focus is on international and transnational terrorism most terrorism occurring in Canada is carried out by domestic groups aimed at domestic targets.[78]

Problems with Chronologies and Events Data Bases on Terrorism in General

There are two major problems with chronologies or events data bases on terrorism: sources of data and data base construction. Data bases on terrorism are usually derived from media accounts which are often hampered by inaccuracies due to journalists' working conditions, selective reporting because of editorial limitations or decisions, the invention of news by journalists (for example, the Pulitzer prize winning journalist of the *Washington Post* who invented a story of a ten year old boy who was addicted to heroin), and the planting of 'news' by secret services on terrorist actions which did not occur.[79]

Moreover, data bases or chronologies in particular suffer from their own problems: their definitions of terrorism are sometimes too broad or imprecise; the information is dated or limited to a short time span or to international or transnational events; country statistics are not separated but combined under regional totals; events which are not purely terrorist are included;[80] events which have not been confirmed as terrorist inspired are included; data collectors seldom have the funds or the means to do a thorough job; indigenous sources are not used; chronologies and detailed summaries of the events are not provided so that researchers can check up on the variety of different types of sources, data bases, chronologies,

printed news indexes, and case studies of terrorist organizations, are not consulted;[81] and *a priori* policy considerations often biases their research, that is, they may be set up to examine the responses to terrorism rather than the causes.

Coding procedures can also affect the accuracy of the data. Specifically, what constitutes a separate event affects one's collection and analysis of data. For example, RAND's first chronology[82] viewed a wave of forty bombings by one group during one night in the same city as one incident, whereas ITERATE logged forty incidents. This can lead to unnecessary inflation or overestimation of the amount of terrorism. Therefore it is important for the researcher to use such data with these limitations and biases in mind.

Miscellaneous Reasons Why a Data Base Has Not Been Created

Besides the general lack of scholarly interest in the empirical study of political violence in Canada and the inadequate data base previously mentioned, one reason why a data base on terrorism in Canada has not been created to date is the absence of a news index or data base indexing news stories before 1977. A related factor is the cost both in time and money in compiling a long-run data base.

A computer readable data base of Canadian news sources—InfoGlobe—and an index of Canadian newspapers—*Canadian News Index*—was created in 1977. Previously, Canadian researchers had to use either vertical files produced by libraries or to read through each issue of a particular newspaper, either in hard copy or in microform, until they found what they wanted. The first method was very unreliable as it depends on the selection criteria of librarians who were perhaps not as sensitive at selecting articles on terrorist events as were trained researchers/coders. The second method was costly in time and money. The news index speeded up searching for articles thus reducing the cost of hiring trained researchers/coders to look through each issue.

Regardless of whether or not an index is used, this type of research takes much time to complete, time to search for appropriate articles, to compile an accurate picture of an event, to code the information, and then to place it on computer files. All the information for each event is rarely located in one source thus making it necessary to consult several sources and several issues to gain a composite picture of a single event. There are blind alleys: for example, a case study will mention that a bomb went off in the latter part of a particular year in a particular city without specifying the exact date. This means that the researcher/coder has to search the newspapers from this city starting with the last month of the year and working backwards until an article is found referring to this event. Sometimes, the researcher/coder fails to find an article on this event either because one was never printed or because the author of the case study made an error. Since all necessary microforms are rarely located in the same place, acquisitions of needed microforms can delay the coding process. Finally, this medium is visually tiring thus requiring that the researcher/coder limit working time with microform readers.

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The searching and coding process can be speeded up and the reliability of the study increased using several researchers/coders. However, needless to say, this only increases the cost of the research.

CONCLUSION

The preceding article has outlined the conceptual and methodological problems of conducting research on political terrorism in Canada. Developing a general, sound, and accepted means to measure political terrorism entails a monumental amount of work, and still there undoubtedly will be measurement flaws which may produce misleading conclusions. The awareness of these problems, however, should help in constructing a reliable and useful data set on political terrorism in Canada.

Endnotes

1. The following article represents the conceptual and methodological problems encountered in the empirical study of political terrorism in Canada. The project is divided into three data collection and analysis stages based on the types of terrorism: domestic, international (including transnational) and state. The project, titled Attributes of Terrorism in Canada (ATIC), is computer readable. The author wishes to thank the editor and an anonymous reviewer for their comments on this article.

2. See Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977).

3. See any one of a number of bibliographies: Edward F. Mickolus, *The Literature of Terrorism: A Selectively Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980); Amos Lakos, *International Terrorism: A Bibliography* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986); and UMI's recent project, *Terrorism: An International Resource File.*

4. Political conflict such as riots, clashes, and attacks have been the most common. Actions like coups, guerrilla conflicts, civil wars, and revolutions have been non-existent. See Judy Torrance, *Public Violence in Canada, 1867-1982* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1986), p. 45.

5. See, for example, selections in Yonah Alexander and John M. Gleason (eds.), *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism* (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1981) and Manus I. Midlarsky, M. Crenshaw, and Y. Fumihiko, "Why Violence Spreads: The Contagion of International Terrorism," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 24 (1980), pp. 262-298.

6. See Ted Robert Gurr, "Methodologies and Data for the Analysis of Oppositional Terrorism," paper prepared for the Symposium on International Terrorism, Defense Intelligence College, Washington, D.C., 1985. The author also recognizes that a complete understanding of any field requires a multidisciplinary approach.

7. See Charles Doran *et al.,* "A Test of Cross-National Event Reliability: Global versus regional data sources," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 17 (June 1973), pp. 175-203; David C. Snyder, "Collective Violence: A Research Agenda and some Strategic Considerations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* vol. 22, no. 3 (September 1978), pp. 499-534; and Robert W. Jackman and William Boyd, "Multiple Sources in the Collection of Data on Political Conflict," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 23 (May 1979), pp. 434-458.

8. See for example Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism,* (Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1987), Chapter 4.

9. Alex Schmid, *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide to Concepts, Theories and Data Bases and Literature* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1983), p. 100.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

11. See for example Frederick J. Hacker, *Crusaders, Criminals, Crazies: Terror and Terrorism in Our Time* (New York: Bantam, 1976); Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1982); and Edward F. Mickolus, "Combating International Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1981.

12. The definitions of the different types of terrorism are based on Mickolus, 1981 pp. 2-8 - 2-9.

13. For purposes of clarification the CIA distinguishes between international and transnational terrorism. The CIA's definitions of international and transnational terrorism are equivalent to Mickolus' respective definitions of interstate and international terrorism. For purposes of this study international and transnational terrorism are combined under the category of international terrorism.

14. See Lorne Brown and Caroline Brown, *An Unauthorized History of the RCMP* (Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, 1973); Robert Dion, Crimes of the Secret Police (Montreal: Black Rose Books, Ltd., 1982); and Canada, Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Second Report -Freedom and Security Under the Law* (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1981); and, Quebec, "Rapport de la Commission d'enquette sur des operations policiere enterritoire quebecois," (The Keable Report), (Quebec: Ministere des Communications, 1981).

15. See Anthony Kellett, *International Terrorism: A Retrospective and Prospective Examination* (Ottawa: Operational Research and Analysis Establishment, Canadian Department of National Defence, May 1981).

16. James Littleton, *Target Nation: Canada and the Western Intelligence Network* (L & O Dennys and CBC Enterprises, 1986).

17. See Jeffrey Ian Ross, "Domestic Political Terrorism in Canada 1960-1985: A Statistical and Critical Analysis," paper presented to the Annual Meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, Hamilton, Canada, 1987; and Jeffrey Ian Ross and Ted Robert Gurr, "Why Terrorism Subsides: A Comparative Study of Trends and Groups in Canada and the United States," paper presented to the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 1987.

18. Mickolus (1981), pp. 1-3.

19. Schmid (1983), p. 160.

20. See Gurr (1985).

21. See Gurr, 1985, pp. 3-4. Bell, on the other hand, contends that, given the inadequacies of hard data on terrorism, case studies are to be preferred to quantitative comparative studies. See J. Bowyer Bell, "Trends on Terror: The Analysis of Political Violence." *World Politics*, vol. 29 (April 1977), pp. 476-488.

22. The terms political conflict and political violence are used synonymously in this study.

23. See Micheal J. Kelly and Thomas H. Mitchell, "The Study of Internal Conflict in Canada: Problems and Prospects," *Conflict Quarterly*, vol. II no. 1 (Summer 1981), pp. 10-17; and Thomas H. Mitchell, "Politically-Motivated Terrorism in North America: The Threat and the Response," Ph.D. dissertation, Carleton University, 1985.

24. See Thomas H. Mitchell, "Review Essay: Violence in Politics in Canada," *The American Review of Canadian Studies*, vol. XII, no. 2 (Summer 1982), pp. 87-99 for an excellent review of the literature on political violence in Canada; see also Ron Haggart and Aubrey E. Golden, *Rumors of War* (Toronto: New Press, 1970); Kenneth McNaught, "Violence in Canadian History" in John S. Moir (ed.), *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Creighton* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 66-84; John Gellner, *Bayonets in the Streets: Urban Guerrillas at Home and Abroad* (Don Mills, Ontario: Collier-Macmillan Canada), 1974; Dennis Szabo, "Assassination and Political Violence in Canada," Supplement G in J.F. Kirkham *et al., Assassination and Political Violence* (New York: Bantam, 1970); Brian A. Grosman, "Dissent and Disorder in Canada," *Report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism*

(Washington, D.C.: 1976), pp. 479-96; and Roger Gibbins, *Conflict and Unity: An In-troduction to Canadian Political Life* (Agincourt, Ontario: Methun Publications, 1985).

25. For the earliest explanation of this thesis see Judy Torrance, "Cultural Factors and the Response of Government to Violence," Ph.D. dissertation, York University 1975.

26. See Canada, Special Committee of the Senate on Terrorism and Public Safety, *The Report of the Senate Committee on Terrorism and Public Safety* (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1987), pp. 13-14, for a summary of this thesis.

27. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1968), p. 32.

28. Kaspar Naegele, "Canadian Society: Some Reflections" in Bernard R. Blishen *et al.*, (ed.), *Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), pp. 1-53; and Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *Deference to Authority: The Case of Canada* (White Plains, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1979).

29. Naegle (1961).

30. Lipset (1968), p. 41.

31. See Seymour Martin Lipset, "Canada and the United States: The Cultural Dimension," in Charles Doran and John H. Sigler (eds.), *Canada and the United States: Enduring Friendship, Persistent Stress* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1985), p. 130.

32. Statistics Canada, 1982 and U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984 as quoted in Lipset (1985), p. 130.

33. Lipset (1985), p. 131.

34. See also Kelly and Mitchell (1981).

35. See Ted Robert Gurr, "A Comparative Survey of Civil Strife," in Ted Robert Gurr and Hugh Davis Graham (eds.), *Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (Washington, D.C.: National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, 1969), pp. 443-495; Ivo K. Feierabend and Rosalind L. Feierabend and Betty A. Nesvold, "Social Change and Political Violence: Cross National Patterns" in Ivo K. Feierabend, Rosalind L. Feierabend, and Ted Robert Gurr (eds.), *Anger, Violence and Politics: Theories and Research* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 107-124; and Charles Lewis Taylor and David A. Jodice, *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators* (3rd edition; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

36. See Robert J. Jackson, Micheal J. Kelly, and Thomas H. Mitchell, "Collective Con-flict, Violence and the Media in Canada," in Ontario Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry, *Report Vol. 5: Learning from the Media* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1977).

37. J.A. Frank and Micheal J. Kelly, "Etude preliminaire sur la violence collective en On-tario et au Quebec, 1963-1973," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 10 (March 1977), pp. 145-57; and J.A. Frank and Micheal J. Kelly, "Street Politics in Canada: An Examination of Mediating Factors," in *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 23, no. 3 (August 1979), pp. 593-614.

38. Edmund A. Aunger, "Political Violence in Canada: The Case of New Brunswick," in John Darby, N.N. Dodge, and A.C. Hepburn, *Political Violence in Comparative Perspective* (Belfast: Appletree Press, forthcoming 1988).

39. See Canada (1987).

40. Generally referring to the kidnap of James Cross, the kidnap and assassination of Pierre Laporte and the imposition of the War Measures Act including suspending civil liberties in Canada. Representative of this literature is Eleanor S. Wainstein, "The Cross and Laporte Kidnappings, Montreal, October 1970," R-1986/1-DOS/ARPA (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1977).

41. See Salim Jiwa, *The Death of Air India Flight 182* (London: Star Book, 1987).

42. See for example Louis Fournier, *The FLQ: The Anatomy of an Underground Move-ment* (Toronto: NC Press, 1984); and Gustave Morf, *Terror in Quebec* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company Ltd., 1972).

43. See for example Simma Holt, *Terrorism in the Name of God* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964); and George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Doukhobors* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977).

44. See for example Julian Sher, *White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983).

45. See for example Pierre Vallieres, *White Niggers of America* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972).

46. See for example M. Tremblay, *De Cuba le FLQ parle* (Montreal: Les Editions Intel, 1975); and Carole De Vault and William Johnson, *The Informer: Confession of an Ex-terrorist* (Scarborough, Ontario: Fleet Publishers, 1982).

47. Micheal J. Kelly, "The Media and Terrorism: An Examination of News Coverage of Armenian Terrorism in Canada," Ph.D. Dissertation, Carleton University, 1986.

48. See for example Ronald David Crelinsten, "Limits to Criminal Justice in the Control of Insurgent Political Violence: A Case Study of the October Crisis of 1970," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Montreal, 1985.

49. M. Bellance and M. Gilbert, *L'Opinion publique et la crise d'octobre* (Montreal: Editions du Jour, 1981).

50. Amy Sands Redlick, "The Transnational Flow of Information as a Cause of Terrorism" in Yonah Alexander *et al., Terrorism: Theory and Practice* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1979), pp. 73-98.

51. Robin Bourne, "Terrorist Incident Management and Jurisdictional Issues: A Canadian Perspective," *Terrorism: An International Journal*, vol. 1 (1978), pp. 307-314.

52. Peter A. Shoniker, "The Efficacy of Negotiation and Assault as a Response to the Terrorist Act of Hostage Taking in Urban Canada: An Evaluation of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department Experience," M.A. Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1981.

53. Mitchell (1985).

54. Leslie Green, "Terrorism - the Canadian Perspective," in Yonah Alexander (ed.), *International Terrorism: National, Regional and Global Perspectives* (New York: Praeger, 1976), pp. 3-29.

55. For a review of these methodologies see Gurr (1985).

56. See Kellett (1981); and David Charters, "Canadian Security Intelligence Problems in Historical Perspective," paper presented at the Conference on Intelligence and Policy, jointly sponsored by the Defense Intelligence College and the American Political Science Association, August 27-28, Washington, D.C., 1986.

57. See for example J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA 1916-1979* (3rd rev. ed.; Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1986).

58. Gerard Chailand, *Guerrilla Strategies: A Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan* (Berkeley, California: University of California Berkeley Press, 1982).

59. Jarol R. Manheim and Richard C. Rich, *Empirical Political Analysis* (New York: Longman Press, 1986), pp. 152-153.

60. Konrad Kellen, "Terrorists - What are they like? How some terrorists describe their world and actions," N-1300-SL (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, November 1979); and David Rapoport, "Terrorist Perspectives on Terrorism: The Memoirs of Terrorist Leaders," paper presented at the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 1986.

61. Manheim and Rich (1986), p. 105.

62. *Ibid.*, (1986), p. 105.

63. J. Jager, G. Schmitchen, and L. Sullwold. *Analysen zum Terrorismus* [Analysis of terrorism] vol. 2, Lebenslauf-Analysen [Biographical anlaysis] (Opladen Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981) as quoted in Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Political Terrorism" in Margaret G. Herman (ed.), *Political Psychology: Contemporary Problems and Issues* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986), pp. 379-413.

64. J.M. Knutson, "The Terrorists' Dilemmas: Some Implicit Rules of the Game," *Terrorism: An International Journal*, vol. 4 (1980), pp. 195-222; and J.M. Knutson, "Social and Psychological Pressures Toward a Negative Identity: The Case of an American Revolutionary Terrorist," in Yonah Alexander and John M. Gleason (eds.), *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism* (Elmsford, New York: Pergamon Press, 1980), pp. 105-152.

65. Crenshaw (1986)

66. Researchers, however, must be cautious of the discrete versus aggregate data problem. "The difficulty arises out of the fact that what may be true of aggregates need not be true of the individual who composes them." Heinz Eulau, "Segments of Political Science Most Susceptible to Behavioristic Treatment," in James C. Charlesworth (ed.), *Contemporary Political Analysis* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 47.

67. The majority of organizations could not provide me with any information. Sources that did send me information included a chronology of Sons of Freedom Doukhobor incidents from Gregory Cran of Department of the Attorney General of British Columbia and a listing from Sheila Mooney of articles on terrorism and the Sons of Freedom Doukhobors that appeared in the "morgues" of the *Vancouver Sun*.

68. For a more in depth, but slightly out of date, review of terrorism data bases see William W. Fowler, "Terrorism Data Bases: A Comparison of Missions, Methods, and Systems," N-15103-RC (Santa Monica, California: Rand Publications, 1981). For an alternative review of data bases see Schmid (1983), Chapter III.

69. Mitchell (1985).

70. The 1980-1987 updates of the chronology will be available this year from Iowa State University. The IBM-PC diskettes of the ITERATE III data set will be available this summer through Vineyard Software. Personal Communication with Edward Mickolus October 17, 1987.

71. Schmid (1983), pp. 259-260.

72. Mickolus (1980).

73. George Lardner, "CIA Report Adds Thousands of Incidents to Statistics on International Terrorism," *Washington Post,* June 16, 1981, p. A10; Charles Mohr, "Data on Terrorism Under U.S. Revision," *New York Times*, April 24, 1981, p. A17; and Michael Stohl, "CIA rapport valt beleid-Haig af," *Volksrant* (30 March 1981), p. 1, as quoted in Schmid (1983), p. 213.

74. Mitchell (1985).

75. Kellett (1981).

76. Charters (1985).

77. Charters (1985), p. 3.

78. Ross (1987); and Ross and Gurr (1987).

79. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "The Roots of Terrorism," *The New Republic* (July 25, 1981), pp. 29-32.

80. Inclusion of threats and hoaxes are almost surely under-reported in the media and are usually not perpetrated by terrorist groups. Additionally, an explosive device which was not connected to a detonator cannot necessarily be considered a bomb; it should be considered a threat or a hoax.

81. For a more detailed discussion of the source coverage issue see Mickolus (1980); Edward E. Azar, "The Problem of Source Coverage in the Use of Events Data," *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 16, no. 3 (December 1972), pp. 373-388; Edward E. Azar, Stanley H. Cohen, Thomas O. Jukan and James M. McCormick, "The Problem of Source Coverage in the Use of International Events Data," *International Studies Quarterly* (September 1972), pp. 373-378; Phillip M. Burgess and Raymond W. Lawton, "Evaluating Events Data: Problems of Conception, Reliability, and Validity" in Charles W. Kegley Jr., Gregory A. Raymond, Robert M. Rood and Richard A. Skinner (eds.), *International Events and the Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), pp. 106-119; and Charles F. Doran, Robert E. Denley, and George E. Antones, "A Test of Cross-National Event Reliability: Global versus Regional Data Sources" *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 2 (June 1973), pp. 175-203.

82. Brian Jenkins and Janera Johnson, "International Terrorism: A Chronology, 1968-1974," (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1975).