The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection

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Ideology plays a crucial role in terrorist's target selection; it supplies terrorists with an initial motive for action and provides a prism through which they view events and the actions of other people. Those people and institutions whom they deem guilty of having transgressed the tenets of the terrorists' ideologically-based moral framework are considered to be legitimate targets which the terrorists feel justified in attacking. As an extension of this, ideology also allows terrorists to justify their violence by displacing the responsibility onto either their victims or other actors, whom in ideological terms they hold responsible for the state of affairs which the terrorists claim led them to adopt violence. While it is not the only factor which determines whether a potential target is attacked, ideology provides an initial range of legitimate targets and a means by which terrorists seek to justify attacks, both to the outside world and to themselves.

Terrorist attacks are occasionally called 'indiscriminate'. The implication is that the act of violence has been committed with little thought as to who or what is harmed, the random infliction of harm - and the attendant publicity - supposedly bringing sufficient benefits for the terrorists. In practice, however, attacks by non-state terrorist groups are rarely indiscriminate. Target selection is instead determined by a number of factors, and the terrorists' ideology is central to this process, not only because it provides the initial dynamic for the terrorists' actions, but because it sets out the Moral framework within which they operate.

Due to the stigma which has been attached to terrorism over the years, its Purpose has been obscured by a desire on the part of some to damn Political opponents by attaching this particular epithet to their activities - even where these activities are not violent in themselves. In fact the term terrorism describes a particular use of violence for political ends, where the Violence is intended to create a psychological reaction in a person or group of people - the psychological target - to make them act in a way which the attacker desires. The physical attacks themselves are not necessarily aimed at the Psychological target or targets -although they might be - but are Intended to make it or them behave in a particular way. It should also be borne in mind that some attacks may not be intended to cause a negative reaction - such as fear - in the psychological target, but may be intended to evoke a positive reaction. For example some attacks - such as the assassination of an unpopular person - may be
intended primarily to invoke admiration and a reaffirmation of support amongst the terrorists’ supporters, who, in this case, would constitute the main psychological target.

Terrorism is defined here as the recurrent use or threatened use of politically-motivated and clandestinely organised violence, by a group whose aim is to affect one or more psychological targets in order to make them behave in a way which the terrorists desire.

Terrorists’ target selection is affected by a number of factors. Ultimately, terrorists seek to achieve their political aims by co-ordinating the group’s resources, pattern of attacks, and any other actions - possibly including overt political activities - into an effective strategy. The strategy adopted has a fundamental effect upon the selection of targets in that - given a choice of targets - terrorists acting rationally will choose to attack those which confer the greatest benefits upon their cause. Thus, using the model of terrorism shown above, it is clear that, ideally, a terrorist group’s strategy will involve attacks which maximise the chances of achieving the desired reaction by the psychological target. Terrorist strategy, and hence target selection, is also affected by factors such as the resources of the group, the reaction of society to the terrorists’ actions, and the security environment within which the terrorists operate. Therefore, while the place of ideology in the selection process is crucial, there is no single cause which can adequately explain terrorists target selection.

A point to bear in mind is that, for reasons of either misjudgement or operational incompetence, the reaction that terrorists may actually provoke is not always the response they intended. This occurred in January 1979, in Genoa, when the Red Brigades (Brigate Rosse - BR) shot dead Guido Rossa, a popular communist union official, because he had denounced a fellow car-factory worker as a Brigadist. This killing alienated those very industrial workers whose support the BR wished to mobilise, as was shown by the large anti-BR demonstrations which followed the killing. Alternatively, terrorists might attack the wrong target due to bad luck or incompetence. For example, in the Dutch town of Roermond in May 1990, Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) members shot dead two Australian tourists whom they had mistaken for British soldiers. A realisation that the results which terrorists achieve are not always those which they intended is important when trying to divine their motives from the results of their actions.

**A Definition of Ideology**

An ideology is the beliefs, values, principles, and objectives - however ill-defined or tenuous - by which a group defines its distinctive political identity and aims. Some ideologies - particularly separatism and politiced religion, but others as well - may include elements of historical, semi-mythical, and supernatural beliefs. What is
important is that ideology provides a motive and framework for action. 9.

There may be a distinction between the professed ideology of a group and the actual beliefs of individual members. The leaders of political groups usually have a fairly specific ideology with clear political objectives, but for many of their followers a sufficient motive for belonging to the group is provided by adherence to the group or a visceral dislike of an 'enemy', however defined. In the case of terrorists, this can be seen with various far-right organisations in Britain during the late 1970s and early 1980s, and in letters from Italian fascist terrorists imprisoned in the 1970s and 1980s. In both cases, there was a clear divergence between the fairly well-developed ideological beliefs of the leaders and the relatively crude prejudices of their followers.10

While in practice most groups' ideologies are fairly unique, for the purposes of convenience the following categories are used to classify ideologies: separatism, religion, liberalism, anarchism, communism, conservatism, fascism, single-issues, and organised crime. The inclusion of single-issue groups and organised criminal groups may be questioned on the grounds that such groups do not have an overarching ideology. Nevertheless, their political concerns do provide a rationale for their actions, fulfilling the role which more orthodox ideologies provide for other groups. In the case of single-issue groups, while they do not intend to change the system of government or radically alter social or economic relationships, they do try to exert influence over relatively narrow policy areas.11. With regard to organised criminal groups, while ordinary criminal activity does not qualify as terrorism, where criminal organisations have used violence to safeguard or promote their interests by systematically intimidating politicians and public officials - as has occurred with the Mafia in Italy and with drug traffickers in Colombia - or to gain systematic immunity from the law, then these groups are subverting the policy process, an act which is ultimately political.12.

These ideological categories are not mutually exclusive and it is perfectly possible for a group to hold to more than one political aspiration. Indeed, the beliefs of many groups form ideological hybrids. For instance, although the categories of communist and separatist are listed separately, the Basque group ETA (Euzkadi ta Askatasuna - Basque Homeland and Liberty), together with its political partner Herri Batasuna, has considered itself to be both separatist and Marxist.13. This has caused splits in ETA.14 Similarly the Palestinian group Hamas can be described as both a religious group and as a separatist group. It combines what it claims to be a true interpretation of Islamic tenets with the desire to set up an Islamic Palestinian state. 15 Insofar as it is an Islamic group, Hamas can be classified as a religious terrorist group, but it is also separatist because it advocates Palestinian independence.
How Ideology Influences Terrorists' Target Selection

Unless they are motivated by a pure lust for power and the benefits which it can confer, most political groups are motivated by an ideology. This is also the case with terrorist groups. The actual decision to turn to terrorism may occasionally be provided by the ideology of the group, but frequently it is determined by other strategic factors, such as the failure of non-violent methods of achieving the group's goals, or the repression of non-violent methods by state or non-state bodies.

Irrespective of how the decision to turn to terrorism has been made, when a group takes the decision to use violence, an early step is to determine who or what will be attacked. A group's ideology is extremely important in determining target selection because it defines how the group's members see the world around them. The ideology of a terrorist group identifies the 'enemies' of the group by providing a measure against which to assess the 'innocence' or 'guilt' of people and institutions. This gives rise to the idea that certain people or things are somehow 'legitimate targets'. The concept of the legitimate target should not be confused with common or legal notions of guilt and innocence. For instance, members of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) in Britain frequently claim that although technically breaking the law, they are in fact responding to a higher law which compels them to act as they do. Similarly, a member of the PIRA told Tony Parker:

I don't expect to be judged by your rules: if Brits do that, then they'll see the IRA as a lot of ruthless maniacs which by their definition I suppose we are. Ruthless, definitely yes: and maniacs if that's what people are who're never going to see sense as you define it, well yes that'd be an appropriate word. The IRA has its own logic and oh no it's not yours.

Consequently, events and the actions of various people - both potential targets and others - are interpreted in terms of the terrorists' cause, even if the people concerned have never given the terrorists a moment's thought. For instance, according to Patricia Hearst, Emily Harris, of the Symbionese Liberation Army in 1970s California, justified the possibility of law students being killed by a bomb under a police car on the grounds that, 'Those law students are studying to be lawyers and they'll go to work for some big, piggy, corporation, and so they are pigs too.'

The students' action in choosing to study law, was seen in terms of Harris' ideological mindset rather than their own perception of what they were doing. Likewise, in 1977, the PIRA carried out a short-lived campaign of assassination against prominent businessmen on the grounds that the very presence of such firms was felt to underpin the British occupation of Northern Ireland. The businessmen probably
did not see their actions in this light, but the PIRA did, and this meant that they became targets. The unpopularity of this campaign resulted in its swift termination. When the PIRA assassinated businessmen again, from the mid-1980s onwards, they attacked those which carried out activities deemed to be in support of the security forces, such as the maintenance of police stations, or the supply of goods or services to the security forces or their members. In the meantime, the PIRA continued their bombing campaign against all forms of commercial premises in an attempt to disrupt Northern Ireland’s economy, but the bulk of these attacks were not intended to kill people.

As a result of their ideological beliefs, terrorists often seek to identify their victims as being in some way deserving of the treatment meted out to them (although this does not necessarily apply where the terrorists acknowledge that they have unintentionally harmed the wrong people). Furthermore, the supposed guilt of their victims absolves the terrorists - at least temporarily - of feelings of remorse for their actions, because a person who is defined as an enemy deserving punishment obviously deserves to be attacked. It also legitimises the terrorist’s actions in their own minds, in those of their followers, and, they hope, in the minds of those people who are uncommitted. Thus in July 1990 the PIRA killed the Conservative MP Ian Gow with an under-car bomb because he was a close friend of the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, and was deemed to be ‘... central to policy decisions...’. He was seen as part of the ‘British war machine’ responsible for the British presence in Northern Ireland, and was therefore categorised as a legitimate target. His friendship with the Prime Minister, association with her policies, and steadfast support for Ulster unionism, made him an even more tempting target - according to McKittrick almost a surrogate for Margaret Thatcher herself.

The account of an Italian Red Brigadist shows how someone can be adjudged to be ‘guilty’ in terms of the terrorists’ ideology and thus becomes a legitimate target:

... you carry out an enquiry on someone so there is a sort of political enquiry beforehand, but psychologically it becomes something different, you single out someone who is responsible; it is not the State as before ... with policemen, and the Flying Squad [but] real physical people, this chap does this ... and has done that and you start a trial ... The trial begins when you single out someone on paper, that is to say, you make a person correspond to a political need ... that chap is responsible, it is him right here and now, there is already a trial logic ... when you’ve already decided that he is guilty ... and what makes you different is the penalty, the penalty that you allot to that person who is guilty of those things ... he is not even a person any more, he has been emptied and you load him up with other crimes, other responsibilities.
A repentant Brigadist, Massimiliano Bravi, has also noted:

The ideals of justice turned into murderous violence directed against the men who represented the State (the human being totally crushed in his social role) and in our eyes they were the guardians and perpetrators of every possible injustice and social suffering. They were 'the unjust' and we were the 'avengers'.

The notion of guilt, or indeed innocence, is thus dependent upon the subjective moral imperatives of the terrorists. For example, in March 1985, Ezio Tarantelli, a Professor of Economics at the University of Rome and an adviser to the Italian Government, was shot dead by the PCC (Partito Comunista Combattente - Fighting Communist Party; a faction of the Red Brigades) because they deemed him 'one of the most authoritative technical political exponents in the service of large capital'. The language employed shows how the use of ideological terminology drains the humanity out of people and transforms them into legitimate targets.

A good example of the difference between terrorists' perception and that of more generally accepted institutions occurred in April 1991 when a Red Army Faction (RAF) sniper shot dead Detlev Rohwedder, the Director of the Treuhandanstalt (Trusteeship Office for East German State Property - the agency responsible for overseeing the privatisation of companies formerly owned by the East German state) in his Dusseldorf home. Following the assassination, an editorial in the London-based newspaper The Independent condemned the RAF as, '... a tiny band of sick people representing no views beyond those concocted in their own closed minds', whilst the newspaper's obituarist called Rohwedder '... one of the good guys on the German political scene'. However, the Red Army Faction communique following the assassination accused Rohwedder - who had previously been State Secretary in the West German Economics Ministry - of having sold arms to fascist regimes in the Third World, and of having traded nuclear know-how for uranium from the apartheid regime in South Africa. They condemned him as a 'brutal reorganizer' when manager at Hoechst Chemicals, and called him:

One of those armchair murderers who daily go over dead bodies and who in the interest of power and profits plan the misery and death of millions of human beings.

They also condemned the expansion of Germany, the imposition of 'free market economics' on East Germany and the Third World, and condemned the nature of capitalism and the price it exacted from people in the Third World. By killing Rohwedder the RAF believed they were striking at the roots of the development of a racialist and capitalist 'Greater Germany' and were sending a message to people in the former East Germany. For the RAF, far from being the murder of a 'good guy', the killing of Rohwedder was a moral act.
As suggested by the example of Rohwedder's killing, another important effect of ideology is that it transforms people or objects into representative symbols. A loyalist who bombed a pub in a Catholic part of Belfast in 1974 has noted how he and his colleagues 'dehumanised' Catholics, seeing them as 'animals' who gave support to the Provisional IRA.31 This dehumanisation can be seen in the way members of the other community have been given derogatory labels. Loyalist terrorists in Northern Ireland have regarded Catholics as 'taigs' - a disparaging term for Irish Catholics. In June 1994, six Catholic men drinking in a country pub were shot dead by loyalist gunmen, one of whom called the victims 'Fenian bastards', the Fenians being a nineteenth century republican revolutionary movement.32 On the other side of the divide, soldiers in Northern Ireland have been seen by Irish republicans as 'Brits' to be 'stiffed' [killed]. Republican terrorists have noted how they regard the soldiers as a 'uniform' representing the occupying force' in Ireland rather than seeing them as human beings.33

Such rationalisation and dehumanisation is not confined to terrorists and indeed is common in wartime. According to Glenn Gray:

The basic aim of a nation at war in establishing an image of the enemy is to distinguish as sharply as possible the act of killing from the act of murder by making of the former an act deserving all honour and praise.34

Thus, during the Second World War British soldiers killed their German adversaries and vice versa, despite holding little personal animosity towards them, because they were the enemy.35 Such rationalisations were sometimes extended to killing civilians. British aerial bombing raids against German cities were justified to the British people as revenge for similar raids by the German Luftwaffe - or indeed for the moral turpitude of the German people - as well as attacks on Germany's economic capacity. 36 Thus, on occasion, democratic states as well as terrorists have dehumanised an enemy, even when this has involved justifying the killing of civilians.

A person or institution does not have to carry out or fail to carry out some action to become a legitimate target. Just being who, what, or where one is may be enough. In May 1972, Japanese Red Army (JRA) terrorists carried out a gun and grenade attack against passengers at Lod Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel, killing 27 and injuring 70. Most of the victims were Puerto Rican pilgrims. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) - on whose behalf the JRA were operating - justified the deaths on the grounds that by being in Israel the victims were held to have tacitly recognised the Israeli state to which the PFLP were opposed.37 Likewise, Crenshaw makes the point that during the Algerian Rebellion of 1954 to 1962 the FLN saw bomb attacks upon any European 38 civilians in Algeria as legitimate because the Europeans' very presence made them symbols of French
and settler authority in Algeria. Moreover, by virtue of being Europeans, the death and injury of these civilians had a direct influence on the conflict because it polarised the European from the Algerian population. Thus, an entire racial category of people was seen by the terrorists as legitimate targets. Although the attacks were not targeted against specific individuals, it would be inaccurate to call them indiscriminate. They were intended to harm a particular - albeit very wide - category of people. This was in order to affect chosen psychological targets; the European and Algerian populations by driving them apart, and the French Government by sapping its will to rule Algeria.

This attitude on the part of terrorists explains how being a member of a particular religion or race can make someone a target for attacks without the victim or victims seeming to have done anything blameworthy. In July 1994 this was demonstrated when a building housing the Delegation of Argentine - Israeli Associations and the Argentine - Israeli Mutual Association was bombed, killing 96 people and injuring 236. As the attack was thought to be in retaliation for an Israeli attack on a Hizbollah base in Lebanon the previous month, a Lebanese authority on the Hizbollah was asked why Jews were targeted in Argentina rather than in Israel. The reply was that:

The Jews of Israel come from Poland, from Russia, from Europe or from Latin America ... What is the difference? It is the same. 41

Thus, all Jews were seen as a legitimate target for attacks aimed at punishing the state of Israel, to which they were perceived to be affiliated.

Terrorist attacks are not always preceded by a detailed ideological inquiry. Where the target is readily identifiable, and any decisions as to the guilt of the target - whether an individual, an institution, or a group of people - have been made, target selection is quite straightforward. Bishop and Mallie point out that the initial PIRA decision in 1970-71 to kill British soldiers meant simply resuming a war against a traditional enemy. The decision that British soldiers were a legitimate target had been settled a long time ago by republican ideology, which saw them as representatives of an occupying force. For instance, in November 1987 a PIRA spokesman noted that there was no need for a local unit to gain permission from a higher level to carry out a bombing attack against soldiers. They were automatically seen as legitimate targets.

As well as deciding who or what may be determined as legitimate targets, ideology also allows terrorists to displace the blame for their actions onto other people. Sometimes, as in the above-mentioned RAF assassination of Detlev Rohwedder, the terrorists' victim is blamed. On other occasions the actions of others - sometimes the psychological target - are held to make the terrorists' actions
inevitable. For example, according to Abu Iyad the Black September
kidnapping of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in September
1972, was caused by failure of the International Olympic Committee,
and the international community as a whole, to accord proper
recognition to the Palestinians. Likewise, he claimed that the
subsequent deaths of nine of the Israelis were due to the German
authorities' rescue attempt at Furstenfeldbruck Airport, rather than to
the terrorists' decision to carry out the operation in the first place, and
to kill the hostages once a rescue attempt was made. In a similar
vein, the leader of a group of Palestinian hijackers who seized a
Lufthansa aeroplane in October 1977 is quoted as having said 'We
don't want to shed blood ... but as the imperialist fascist West German
regime rejects our demands we have no choice', and at another point
claimed 'What happens now is solely the fault of the fascist German
government and of Helmut Schmidt.' Thus, according to the
terrorists the responsibility for the hijacking and its consequences lay
with the psychological target rather than with the terrorists
themselves. In a similar fashion, following PIRA attacks, terrorists and
other republican spokesmen have claimed that all deaths in the
Northern Irish conflict are ultimately the responsibility of the British
for not leaving Northern Ireland. Furthermore, in January 1987, the
PIRA claimed that the authorities' assertion that normality had
returned to Belfast forced them to bomb commercial premises in
Northern Ireland to disprove the assertion. Again, responsibility for
the terrorists' actions was laid at the door of the Psychological target.

Sometimes the overt ideological justification for an attack is supplied
after the attack has occurred rather than worked out beforehand. It
appears that the higher levels of the PIRA have sought to justify
actions by local units after attacks which they would not have
sanctioned had they received Prior notice. Going further, Moss
records that in Turin in the late-1970s the Red Brigades often did not
issue a communique justifying an attack until after they had seen the
press reaction. They then tailored it accordingly. According to
Willan, during this period BR targeting was often based on slipshod
research and trivial considerations. On one occasion, after they had
shot and wounded the wrong person, Willan claims that they rewrote
the original communique so as to give the impression that the victim
had been their intended target.50

Some terrorists have also widened the limits of what can be
considered a legitimate target if such widening has made it easier for
them to attack appropriate targets. In the early-1970s, the PIRA - at
least overtly claimed that they primarily targeted the security forces
and buildings that constituted 'economic' targets, such as shops and
offices. However, as noted previously, by the mid-1980s the limits of
what constituted a legitimate target was broadened to include people
working with the security forces in ways which were not directly
linked with security force operations. According to one PIRA member:
Our definition of who the enemy is isn’t one which follows the same line as yours either. We regard all people who support the armed forces of the British Government in any way as legitimate targets. ... We’ll define whether someone’s helping the security forces or not: it’s not for you to make the definition and criticise us for not agreeing with it. I don’t know if I make that clear: probably not and if that’s so then I have to say it doesn’t greatly matter to me. 52

Hence, whilst a workman involved in the construction of a police station might see himself as an innocent civilian, the PIRA would see him as a ‘collaborator’ liable to ‘execution’.53 The fact that he was a softer target than a member of the British Army would be a bonus in operational terms, although in symbolic terms killing a soldier would be preferable.54 Thus, when assessing the influence of ideology upon targeting, one must also allow for operational factors such as the availability of targets and the resources of the group concerned, and also for the incompetence or idiosyncrasies of individuals or groups within the overall terrorist organisation.

**Targeting Patterns of Different Ideological Groups**

The influence of ideology on terrorist targeting can be seen by comparing the targets attacked by different groups. Differences between groups with different ideologies, and similarities between groups with similar ideologies, may demonstrate to a degree the extent to which ideology affects target selection.

The differences in target selection between groups holding different ideologies, but operating within the same geographical arena and with a common background of mutual communal antipathy, can be illustrated by a comparison of people killed by terrorists in Northern Ireland. The groups concerned are either republican terrorists - primarily the Provisional IRA, but also including the Official IRA (OIRA), the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), and other smaller groups, and loyalist terrorists - primarily the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), but also other splinter groups. Although their ideologies have altered over the years, it is accurate to say that the republicans have aimed at achieving a united Ireland by excluding British rule from Northern Ireland, while the loyalists’ objective has been to prevent Northern Ireland from being forced into a united Ireland. In addition, both republicans and loyalists have sought to protect the communities from which they almost exclusively derive their support - the Catholic community for republicans, the Protestant community for loyalists - from what they see as the depredations of the other side.55

In general, separatist terrorists - such as the Irish republican terrorist groups - tend to attack people who are members of, or co-operate with, organisations which they see as representing the ‘foreign’ occupier. For instance, the Basque separatist group ETA have
frequently selected the Civil Guard (Guardia Civil - a national paramilitary-style police force), national police, and the military as the primary targets for their attacks in the Basque Country and elsewhere in Spain. According to Clark’s account, law enforcement officials and members of the armed forces (excluding alleged spies and informers against the terrorists) made up 62.4 per cent of those killed by ETA and 40.5 per cent of those wounded between 1968 and 1980. Similarly Llera, Mata, and Irwin estimate that police and military officers made up 59.1 per cent of the fatalities caused by ETA operations between 1968 and 1988. The heaviest casualties have occurred among the Civil Guard. This unit deploys its members outside the areas in which they were recruited. It was widely feared and seen as a symbol of Francoist repression in the Basque provinces in the 1960s and early 1970s. The Civil Guards are still seen by ETA members and their supporters as symbols of foreign -Spanish - occupation. Thus, between 1968 and 1980, Civil Guard members made up 50.8 per cent of security force deaths caused by ETA attacks and 57.7 per cent of security force members wounded.

On the other hand extreme right-wing terrorists - such as the Northern Irish loyalist terrorists - use terrorism to protect the existing state of affairs, sometimes claiming to protect the state from subversion. In the 1980s, the supposed function of Colombian extreme right-wing terrorist groups (often referred to as death squads), such as Death to Kidnappers (Muerte a Secuestradores - MAS) and the Association of Peasants and Ranchers of the Magdela Valley (Asociacion de Campesionos y Ganderos del Magdela Medio - ACDEGAM), was to combat communist insurgents such as the April 19th Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril - M-19), and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - FARC). However, from 1985 onwards they attacked members of the Patriotic Union (Union Patriotica - UP, the FARC’s legalised political party) - and members of other organisations such as peasant groups and trades unionists, which have sought to challenge the existing balance of political power. By 1994 Amnesty International estimates that 1,500 UP members had been killed by extreme right-wing death squads. Hundreds of trade unionists and workers have also been killed, particularly those taking strike action against their employers, as have judges and others involved in the investigation of such killings. While the killings have been condemned by members of the Colombian Government, the death squads have justified them as action against subversives.

The respective targeting patterns of ETA and the Colombian death squads are broadly similar to those of the republican and loyalist terrorists in Northern Ireland. For republicans, particularly the PIRA which is the largest republican terrorist group, target selection is fairly simple. Anybody who is a member of the security forces, or who aids the British presence in Ireland, is automatically considered a member of the 'British war machine', and thus a legitimate target. This
includes contractors who work on military or police buildings in Northern Ireland, politicians or officials involved in the formulation of policy towards Northern Ireland, unionist politicians, informers, and anybody whom the PIRA deem to be actively collaborating with the security forces. 66

On the other hand, while republican terrorists can identify security force members quite easily - by seeing them at work in their uniforms or identifying them entering or leaving security force premises - it is comparatively difficult for loyalists to identify and target members of republican groups. By their nature, active terrorists tend towards a degree of clandestinity. In Northern Ireland, republican terrorists also generally live in strongly Catholic areas where it would be difficult for loyalists to pick up information on individuals. By contrast, several republican political activists have been attacked by loyalist terrorists because the overt nature of their activities makes them far easier to identify as republicans.67 However, even these targets became relatively harder to attack, as many overtly active members of Sinn Fein took protective security measures, such as reinforcing the doors to their houses. Besides, the deaths of such activists primarily affected republicans rather than the Catholic population as a whole, and the aim of loyalist terrorists has often been to intimidate the entire Catholic population.

Killing Catholics at random turned the entire Catholic population in Northern Ireland into a psychological target as all were potential targets.68 By attacking Catholics, loyalist terrorists have hoped to force ordinary Northern Irish Catholics - particularly in strongly republican areas - to put pressure upon the PIRA to stop its terrorist campaign, and to prevent British Government moves towards a united Ireland.69 As a result loyalist terrorists have often attacked any Catholics they can find, believing them to be sympathetic to republican terrorism or at the very least culpable for not putting pressure on the PIRA to stop their campaign, a suspicion reportedly shared by many ordinary Protestants in Northern Ireland.70 In addition to the effect which such killings may have on the Catholic population, sectarian attacks have also provided a means for loyalist terrorists to retaliate for republican attacks. Again, such attacks have been rationalised on the grounds that those killed were somehow - even if tacitly - responsible for republican actions.71

The pattern of terrorist killings in Northern Ireland, as shown in Table 1, may be skewed by the gap between the terrorists' intentions and the results actually achieved. However, one can see that loyalist terrorist attacks have been mainly directed against ordinary Catholics. A number of republican terrorists or political activists have been killed by loyalist terrorists, as have a fair number of other loyalists.72 The concentration of loyalist attacks against Catholic civilians confirms that the Catholic population as a whole has been seen as a legitimate target. The communal nature of much of the violence in Northern
Ireland can be seen in the number of sectarian killings on both sides, but there is a much higher concentration of primarily sectarian killings amongst the victims of loyalist groups than those killed by the republican groups. This is what one would expect to see with loyalist terrorist groups that regards an entire community - in this case the Catholics living in Northern Ireland - as suspect or subversive.

Republican terrorists have primarily selected members of the security forces as their targets for lethal attacks. If one includes all of those people whom republicans term part of the 'British war machine' - that is members of the Army, RUC, UDR/RIR, prison officers, alleged informers, and people who work for or supply goods and services to the security forces - they represent 65 per cent of the victims of lethal republican attacks between 1969 and 1993. This accords with the republican philosophy that the forces of the Crown and their 'collaborators' are representatives of a foreign, occupying force, and can therefore be classified as legitimate targets. The decline of the proportion of British soldiers killed by republican terrorism as compared to members of the UDR/RIR and RUC is shown in Table 2. This demonstrates how - in practical terms - the PIRA and other republican terrorists have found it increasingly hard to kill British soldiers.

### TABLE 1

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<th>LOYALIST</th>
<th>REPUBLICAN</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
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<td>UDR/RIR (a)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>RUC (a)</td>
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<td>Security force workers (b)</td>
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<td>Internal feuds (c)</td>
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<td>Opposing terrorists (d)</td>
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<td>Political activists (e)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Other (g)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>845</strong></td>
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n.b. Percentages are rounded up or down to nearest 0.1%.

**a** - Includes former members.

**b** - Civilian contractors and direct employees carrying out work for the security forces.

**c** - Loyalists killed by loyalists and republicans killed by republicans.

**d** - Republicans killed by loyalists and loyalists killed by republicans.

**e** - Nationalists and republicans killed by loyalists and unionists and loyalists killed by republicans.

**f** - Catholics killed by loyalists, and Protestants killed by republicans, primarily because of their religion.

**g** - Excludes killings outside Northern Ireland. Excludes terrorists killed by their own bomb but includes other unintended deaths.


**TABLE 2**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RUC (a)</th>
<th>UDR/RI (b)</th>
<th>Army</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-1973</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-1977</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-1981</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1985</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-1989</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1993</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>293</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**a** - Includes RUC reserves and part-time RUC

**b** - Includes part-time UDR/RIR.
n.b. This table includes 19 security force members killed by loyalists or mistakenly killed by other security force members. The vast majority of security force deaths have been caused by republicans.


Consequently, however desirable attacks on the British Army might be in terms of ideology, republican terrorists have tempered this with operational pragmatism and carried out a higher proportion of lethal attacks against the local security forces. Nevertheless, the continuation of attacks against the Army shows the importance which the PIRA in particular place upon such attacks.

A controversy which has arisen between Steve Bruce and Robert W. White concerns the extent to which sectarianism plays a part in PIRA's target selection. In particular, they disagree as to whether PIRA attacks upon members of the local security forces are largely inspired by sectarianism, as Bruce appears to contend, or whether they are primarily straightforward attacks upon the British state's security forces as White seems to suggest.73 (it should be noted here that neither writer takes an extreme attitude - arguing that such PIRA attacks are wholly sectarian or wholly nonsectarian. Thus, the debate is largely concerned with the extent to which such attacks are prompted by sectarianism rather than by strategic factors.) The controversy has a degree of relevance to this article because it illustrates the extent to which the overt ideology of a group - in this case Irish republicanism - may be affected by other societal factors and thus influence the selection of targets.

The number of victims of republican sectarian attacks against civilians - including attacks by the PIRA and minor groups such as the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and the Irish People's Liberation Organisation (IPLO) - is indicated in Table 1. While substantial in number, such attacks make up a relatively small percentage of the overall number of fatalities caused by republican terrorists. However, as Bruce points out, in order for the PIRA to kill a Protestant it is not necessary to carry out blatantly sectarian attacks against civilians, as it is much more likely that members of the local security forces - the RUC and the UDR/RIR - are Protestants rather than Catholics. Thus an attack on a security force member is much more likely to kill a Protestant than a Catholic. 74 McKeown's statistics bear this out. He estimates that during the 20-year period up to 12 July 1989, out of 525 Northern Ireland-born security force members, prison service members, and ex-security force members killed, 486 were Protestants. This is about 93 per cent of the total security force deaths, a proportion which he notes is about the same as the proportion of the security forces which are Protestant.75 This estimate of the religious composition of the security forces was partly confirmed by a reply to a parliamentary question in January 1993,
which indicated that about 7 per cent of RUC members were Catholics - although the proportion of Catholics in the Ulster Defence Regiment by the late 1980s was much lower at less than 2 per cent. 76

The PIRA and other republicans have claimed that their attacks on members of the RUC and the UDR/RIR have not been sectarian, but have been intended purely as attacks on the forces of the Crown.77 Indeed Catholic members of the local security forces have been attacked.78 Ultimately, there is a problem with ascribing this pattern of deaths to sectarianism on the part of republicans, or, alternatively, of claiming that even a totally non-sectarian targeting policy aimed at the security forces would kill this proportion of Protestants because of the religious composition of the RUC and UDR/RIR. The problem is that, despite the seeming willingness of those involved to give interviews, one cannot really get into the mind of the perpetrators of these killings, particularly their state of mind at the time of the killings. Furthermore, as with most people involved in politics, one cannot accept their subsequent public rationalisation at face-value; nor, by the same token, can one automatically dismiss them. In the final analysis, outside judgements of the motives for attacks - however well-informed - can only be based on speculation reinforced as far as possible by objective data.

Another area where it can be argued that the Provisional IRA's activities might show proof of a sectarian attitude concerns the use - and in particular the location - of bombs. While the religious details of bystanders killed by terrorist attacks are not specifically represented in Table 1 as a separate category, the large number of 'others' killed by republicans reflects their use of bombs against both property and human targets, as bombings aimed at one target frequently harm other bystanders. There is as yet no readily accessible database of the location, nature, and religion of the owners of the various buildings and other commercial and residential facilities attacked by republican terrorists during the recent troubles, and White rightly points out that there are dangers in concentrating upon accounts of specific highprofile events rather than statistics when seeking to establish a pattern of behaviour. 79 Thus one cannot definitely state that the PIRA bombing campaign in Northern Ireland has a sectarian edge. Nevertheless, as Bruce points out, through the years the PIRA do seem to have found it acceptable to detonate large bombs in predominantly Protestant areas in order to attack commercial premises or security force members and facilities. 80 Highprofile examples of such attacks include the Enniskillen bombing of November 1987, which killed eleven people and injured 63, the 2,000 pound van-bomb which destroyed the Northern Ireland Forensic Laboratories in September 1992 but also damaged more than 1,000 houses in a Protestant residential area, and the Shankill Road bombing of October 1993, an attempt to wipe out the Belfast UDA leadership, but which instead killed nine Protestant civilians - including two children - and one of the bombers.81 Overall, White's
collation of the Irish Information Partnership’s data shows that between 1969 and 1989 PIRA bomb attacks killed 111 Protestant civilians compared to 47 Catholic civilians. While such attacks might not seem as blatantly sectarian as the deliberate assassination attempts carried out by loyalist terrorists against Catholic civilians, they do show a high degree of disdain for the importance of the lives and livelihoods of ordinary Protestants.

It can be argued that the PIRA’s attitude towards such attacks is not necessarily sectarian - in the sense of being specifically aimed at Northern Irish Protestants - because the PIRA has shown the same willingness to kill and injure bystanders in its bomb attacks in England. This is often due to the nature of the bombs and the inadequate nature of the warnings given. Amongst many other incidents, these include the bombing of two Birmingham pubs on 21 November 1974, which killed 21 people and injured 162; the bomb in Warrington in March 1993, which killed two children and injured 56 other people; and the bomb in Manchester in June 1996, which destroyed part of the city centre and injured about 200 people. Such attacks suggest that the PIRA’s lack of concern for Protestant casualties also extends to the victims of PIRA bombs in England. One could therefore argue that this shows that the PIRA are not specifically sectarian in their attitude towards Protestants, but only if one accepts that they seem to harbour the same indifference towards the infliction of harm upon ordinary English people as they show towards Protestants.

When examining overall terrorist targeting in Northern Ireland, another area which might repay further research is that of vigilante actions - or as they prefer to call it ‘policing’ - by both sets of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland. Like the republican attacks on commercial premises, the figures for ‘punishment’ attacks on people identified by republican or loyalist terrorists as criminal or otherwise anti-social do not generally appear in the statistics on killings as most such attacks are not fatal. According to the RUC, republican groups carried out 138 punishment attacks in 1994 and 76 in 1995, while loyalist groups carried out 86 and 144 respectively. Terrorists and their supporters on both sides of the Northern Ireland conflict portray these attacks as a means of preventing lawlessness within their communities, and bearing in mind that many of the terrorists live in these communities one should not dismiss their motives out of hand. Nevertheless, such attacks are also a useful means by which the terrorists on both sides can, under the guise of social concern, establish control over the communities within which they operate and discourage or eliminate dissent. To a degree such attacks are determined primarily by strategic rather than ideological concerns. They reflect the terrorists’ desire to maintain a high degree of support in those geographical areas where they are strongest, to discourage rivals and to intimidate those who might cooperate with the security forces. However, it is notable on the
republican side, that when dealing with those they deemed to be non-political criminals, the PIRA have justified their actions by referring to the need to protect the community rather than referring to their own need to maintain their support base, thus demonstrating the need for some form of moral justification for their attacks.  

When examining the activities of the terrorist groups in Northern Ireland, it must be realised that while statistics concerning attacks and their consequences are generally tabulated in terms of the organisations to whom responsibility for the attacks is attached, organisations as large as the Provisional IRA, the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force are not monolithic. These organisations consist of smaller groups and ultimately individuals who are, in practice, subject to greater or lesser degrees of control by the central leadership. As a result they frequently lack both the cohesion and the effective hierarchical chain of command one may expect to find in an efficient military or police organisation. Consequently operational decisions may be made by middle-ranking or junior terrorist leaders on the ground, rather than by the heads of the terrorist organisations, and thus it would be a mistake to attribute decisions about target selection to one central doctrine or mindset.

The conflict in Northern Ireland shows how the different ideologies of groups operating in the same geographical and social environment develop different patterns of target selection. It is argued here that much, though not all, of the reason for this is that the ideological differences lead the terrorists to select targets of very different natures. The republicans tend to select members of the security forces or people linked to them, while the loyalists tend to select those people - primarily ordinary Catholics - whom they see as subversive of the existing order. However, as well as targeting differences between groups with different ideologies, there can also be notable differences in targeting between groups with apparently similar ideologies, such as the various European communist terrorist groups of the last thirty years.

The writings of revolutionary communist writers have been taken seriously by communist terrorists as a source of political principles and as guides to concrete action. Arrigo Cavallina of the Armed Proletarians for Communism recalls how he systematically read the complete works of Marx, Lenin, and Mao in a vain attempt to turn himself into a 'professional revolutionary'.  

Likewise, Becker mentions the publication of Marighela's Minimanual of the Brazilian Urban Guerrilla in West Germany in 1970 as having provided Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin - the original members of what became the Red Army Faction - with ideas such as the importance of carrying out bank robberies as a way of gaining experience. Marighela also appears to have inspired the Red Brigades in Italy. The Italian publication in 1970 of the mini-manual by Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, a
publisher who set up the a forerunner to BR known as the Partisan’s Action Group (Gruppo di Azione Partigiano - GAP) in 1969, provided the Red Brigades with a blueprint for organising a revolutionary communist group and running its campaign. A comparison of the initial organisation of the Red Brigades in the mid-1970s with the organisation for urban guerrillas suggested by Marighcla confirms this influence.

Overall, communist ideology provides terrorists with a ready list of targets because, although it purports to be an objective, scientific theory of history, it also confers a strong moral sense of what is good and what is bad, and defines those people who are bad. Essentially, the capitalist ruling classes and those people and institutions who support them are bad and form the enemy. However, in most communist terrorist campaigns, ideology and strategy have been adapted to local conditions. This is in line with the thinking of communist ideologists such as Mao and Debray, who have both emphasised that the military strategy to be adopted in any given conflict is specific to that conflict.

Looking specifically at the ideology of communist terrorist groups in Italy and West Germany, in particular the Red Brigades and the Red Army Faction, one finds that, although their ultimate aims were similar - to overthrow the capitalist political and economic system - there were important ideological differences which translated into differences in target selection. These ideological differences were publicised when documents captured by the Italian police in June 1988 revealed the relative failure of the RAF and the PCC faction of BR to agree a co-ordinated strategy. Although the Red Brigades have specifically referred to the ultimate enemy as the Imperialist State of Multinationals (SIM) - a system characterised by the American-led domination of the Italian state by a combination of multinational corporations and NATO - in practice, Italian communist terrorists put a much higher premium upon the overthrow of the Italian state. The West German groups generally saw their objective as the destruction of international capitalism and imperialism as a whole. At a deeper level, it can be argued that the original anarchistic outlook of the original leaders of the Red Army Faction contrasted with the origins of the BR as a splinter from the Italian Communist Party whose power was largely concentrated in the factories of northern Italy. This translated itself into a greater concentration on symbolic targets by the German groups, and upon industrial targets by the Italians.

The targeting pattern of communist terrorist groups in Italy and West Germany can be seen in Table 3. Again, one must allow for discrepancies between what the terrorists intended to do and the actual result. Furthermore, the relatively small number of attacks involved in the West German example leads to single attacks distorting the overall pattern. Many of the RAF’s anti-American attacks were bombs intended to cause mass casualties, with the
result that the attacks on US military facilities caused a high proportion - about 51 per cent - of the overall casualties. Similarly, a single bomb attack on the Springer newspaper complex in May 1972 accounted for 16 of the total of 17 media casualties. This makes the media appear to be a higher priority target than it probably was, although the same cannot necessarily be said of the proportion of casualties inflicted by attacks on US bases, given the RAF's ideological hostility to the US, which it saw as the centre of the capitalist, imperialist system.

### TABLE 3
PEOPLE KILLED, WOUNDED OR KIDNAPPED BY COMMUNIST TERRORIST GROUPS IN ITALY AND WEST GERMANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italy: 1970-82</th>
<th>W.Germany:1967-91(a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>69 23.1</td>
<td>9 7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial</td>
<td>13 4.3</td>
<td>4 (b) 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penal</td>
<td>14 4.7</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>27 9.0</td>
<td>5 (c) 4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>85 28.4</td>
<td>5 4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>9 3.0</td>
<td>17 (d) 14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>82(e) 27.4</td>
<td>77 (f) 65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>299 99.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>117 100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.b. Percentages rounded up or down to nearest 0.1%

* a To 2 April 1991.

* b Includes officials or politicians in judicial-related posts.

* c Includes senior officials.

* d Includes 16 injured in bombing of Springer Press office.

* e Includes 17 targeted doctors.

* f Includes 60 killed or injured in attacks on US military facilities.

Notwithstanding these observations, Table 3 illustrates how important differences between the ideologies of the Italian and West German groups affected their selection of targets. On the whole, the RAF attacked higher-profile targets, such as US military personnel, senior business executives, and senior government officials (US military personnel of any rank count as high-profile targets because of their high symbolic value). They tended to avoid junior officials and ordinary police officers, although police bodyguards for high-profile targets were deliberately killed in the process of attacking the primary target.

The differences between the West German and Italian communist terrorists in selecting police officers as targets illustrate the important ideological differences between them. Even if one discounts the 60 casualties caused by attacks at US bases, police officers make up 15.8 per cent of the total casualties caused by West German communist terrorists, substantially less than in the Italian case. In fact, the West German policemen killed were either incidental or secondary targets - as was the case when three bodyguards were killed during the kidnapping of Hans-Martin Schleyer in 1977, or became casualties in gun-battles which occurred when the police tried to arrest terrorists. The RAF did not deliberately select police officers as primary targets for attack. On the other hand, although 27 of the Italian police officers who became casualties were killed or injured either in gun-battles where they were trying to arrest terrorists or as bodyguards to the primary target, the remaining 30 were deliberately selected as primary targets. In some cases communiques from BR sought to portray attacks on police officers as revenge for specific actions by the state. Thus, in November 1979 two carabinieri were shot dead whilst drinking coffee in a cafe in Genoa, supposedly in revenge for the suicide of an imprisoned Genoese BR member the previous month. Later the same month, the Red Brigades shot dead another police officer, whom they subsequently described as an 'executioner in disguise'. According to L'Expresso, the Red Brigades targeted ordinary police officers, in addition to anti-terrorist detectives, so as to affect police morale. At the time BR justified these attacks on the grounds that whilst the capitalist state could replace its leading members, it could not operate without its lesser functionaries. Thus they provided themselves with an ideological reasoning which made police officers guilty of propping up the capitalist regime in Italy. The difference in target selection concerning the police reflected the primary preoccupation of the Red Brigades and other Italian communist terrorists with targets and issues possessing a national or even local significance, as opposed to the international emphasis of the communist terrorists in West Germany.
A contrast also exists between the targeting of the business sector by Italian communist terrorists compared to the West German groups. With the exception of the bombing of the Springer publishing works, and the Schleyer kidnapping, the RAF did not target businessmen for assassination or abduction until the mid-1980s. After this point the RAF targeted highlevel, prominent businessmen who represented the 'Military-Industrial Complex' (MIC) or international capitalism as a whole. When the RAF shot dead Emst Zimmerman, the Chairman of the Federal Association of the German Aeronautics, Space, and Armaments Industry, at his home in Munich in February 1985, they justified the killing on the grounds that Zimmerman's federation

... had the function to push through the interests of the MIC here in this state, on the Western European level, and thus on the international level. 103

Likewise, in July 1986 the RAF used a bomb in a cart to kill Dr Karl-Heinz Beckurts and his driver whilst Beckurts was on his way to work. Beckurts was a director of the electronics firm Siemens and a member of the nuclear energy working group of the German National Industries Association, and as such the RAF said that he represented

... the course of international capital in the current phase of political, economic, and military strategy of the overall imperialist system ... Siemens - like almost no other company in the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany] - represents the concentrated power and aggression of the most reactionary factions of the bourgeoisie organized by the military-industrial complex. 104

Subsequent business targets such as Alfred Herrhausen, Chairman of the Deutsche Bank, who was killed by a car-bomb in November 1989, and Detlev Rohwedder of the Treuhandanstalt who, as noted, was shot in April 1991, were both characterised by the RAF as men who represented the attempt of the capitalist system to dominate and subjugate the lives of ordinary workers, workers in the Third World, and of workers in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Soviet system.105 The important point to note concerning the businessmen attacked by the Red Army Faction is that they were high-ranking, and the attacks were aimed at highlighting wide issues rather than specific industrial conflicts.

The Italian groups, on the other hand, were well-organised in some of the factories of northern Italy and, compared to the West German groups, undoubtedly gave a far higher political priority to intervening in specific domestic industrial conflicts. The Red Brigades targeted business managers whose companies were involved in conflicts with their staff, although in some cases - as with the Front Line attack on a business school - Italian communist terrorists attacked the business sector as a general category. 106 As Moss points out, those managers
who were attacked tended to be those who had direct supervisory functions rather than high-level executives:

... foremen, security staff, workshop supervisors, technical staff responsible for production schedules, middle management from personnel offices, full-time negotiators with plant unions. 107

In most cases the attacks took the form of maiming, with the victims being shot in the legs. Although a senior business manager had bled to death after being shot in the leg in September 1978, it was not until January 1980 that a manager was deliberately killed - Silvio Gori, a manager at the Maghera plant of Petrolchimico, died, as did two managers in Milan in November 1980.108 The decision to kill the managers in Milan, Renato Briano of Magneti Marelli and Manfredo Mazzanti of Falck, was not taken by the BR leadership, but by a dissident, factory-based section of BR which called itself the 'Walter Alasia Column' after a Milan BR leader who had been killed in a gun-battle with the police in 1976.109 The BR condemned this, and other actions, by the Walter Alasia column as undisciplined, although the Veneto column of BR had been responsible for the January 1980 killing of Silvio Gori, and kidnapped and later killed Giuseppe Talierno - the personnel manager of the Montedison plant at Marghera which had made a number of workers redundant.110 From the mid-1980s sections of the BR - which by then had fragmented - did carry out lethal attacks on high-ranking people in what might broadly be called the industrial sector. However these were generally high ranking industrial advisers or political appointees rather than businessmen. 111 After Professor Ezio Tarentelli - an economist, trade union consultant and adviser to the Italian Government - was shot dead at the University of Rome in March 1985, the subsequent BR communique branded him as a man who had '... learned the arts and techniques of capitalist exploitation and accused him of framing policies which would lead to the imposition of lower working standards upon ordinary workers. 112

Although both West German and Italian communist terrorists targeted politicians and officials, the nature of their targets differed somewhat. Those attacked by the Red Army Faction tended to be senior officials rather than politicians. For example Dr Gerhold von Braimmuehl, the head of the political department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was shot dead in October 1986. Assassination attempts were also made in September 1988 on Dr Hans Tietmeyer, then a state secretary in the Ministry of Finance, and in July 1990 on Hans Neusel, the second-ranking official in the Ministry of the Interior and the official in charge of internal security. 113 Even this latter attack, aimed at a leading member of the German internal security apparatus, was given an international dimension when it was projected by the RAF as an attack on 'Europe as a global power' although it also referred to the RAF's demand that imprisoned RAF members be kept together.114 No attacks have been made by the RAF on senior German politicians.
However, in February 1975, Peter Lorenz, the Christian Democratic Union (Christlich-Demokratische Union - CDU) candidate for Mayor of Berlin, was abducted by the June 2nd Movement, whose ideology was more idiosyncratic than the RAF and less orientated by strict adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology. 

On the other hand, despite the professed BR aim to attack the 'Heart of the State' the political targets attacked by the various communist groups in Italy primarily consisted of junior and middle-ranking members of political groups. The exceptions to this were the kidnapping and subsequent killing of the former Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978 and the attacks on the semi-official academic advisers mentioned above. Of the 28 political targets killed, wounded, or kidnapped by Italian extreme left-wing terrorists between 1968 and 1982, 24 were members of the conservative Christian Democrats (Democrazia Cristiana - DC), who were the major partners in the various ruling coalitions in Italy between 1945 and 1993. These attacks were in line with the BR 'Strategic Resolution' of November 1977 which aimed to:


The Red Brigadists saw the DC as having a central role in the Imperialist State of Multinationals, and attacked them accordingly. Four-fifths of the attacks on the Christian Democrats occurred between 1977 and 1979, and attacks on DC property in Rome, occurred about once a fortnight during that period, putting the party in what Moss terms 'an acute sense of being under Siege. Indeed, by attempting to cause chaos within the government machine, what the BR called 'disarticulating' the Italian state, the Red Brigades hoped to cause conflict within the political system and prevent it from functioning properly as a prelude to its final collapse. However, despite this declaration of intent, the attack on Moro was the only successful attack upon a leading Christian Democrat politician.

Ideology was not the only reason for the differences in targeting strategy between the Italian and West German communist terrorists. Operational and strategic factors also played a part. The BR had many more members than the RAF and could carry out more actions, including actions against less prominent targets. While the RAF could have attacked low-profile human targets with much greater ease than the high-profile targets which were attacked, they chose not to. Such attacks would have had far less impact upon their chosen psychological targets international working-class opinion and workers in the Third World than attacks on high-profile targets. In practice, their internationalist stance meant they were not as interested as the Red Brigades in trying to agitate and provoke the population within their own country, and consequently their target selection differed. Overall the RAF showed a much greater tendency to target high profile
targets than the Red Brigades, reflecting the ideological concentration on attacking international capitalism and imperialism. On the other hand, the Red Brigades, with their roots in the northern Italian factories and opposition to the Italian state, concentrated far more on attacking factory managers, ordinary police officers, and junior or middle-ranking politicians.

Having said this, one has to be aware that the Italian and West German communist terrorists did occasionally attack targets which fall outside the generalisations outlined above. Both groups carried out occasional robberies, primarily for logistical purposes, but they also attacked targets which do not fit their normal pattern. For example in December 1981 the Red Brigades abducted US General James Dozier - who was freed by the police the following month, and in February 1984 the BR shot dead Leamon Hunt, an American diplomat who was Director General of the Multinational Observer Force (MOF) operating in the Sinai peninsula following the Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt.123 There was an Italian dimension to both attacks - Dozier was the head of NATO's land forces in southern Europe and was based in Italy, while the Multinational Observer Force in Sinai contained Italian troops. Nevertheless, these attacks were undoubtedly intended to highlight the position of the US forces in Italy - and in the Hunt case to highlight opposition to attempts to accommodate Arab governments to Israeli policy - and as such represented an awareness of events outside Italy which was not normally reflected in the activities of Italian communist groups.

The West German extreme left-wing terrorists also carried out attacks which were untypical. As mentioned above, in May 1972 the RAF bombed the administrative headquarters of the Springer newspaper company, and in May 1975 the B2J abducted Peter Lorenz. In the 1980s, in addition to attacks on traditional targets, a series of attacks occurred against targets which appeared to represent new technology or threats to the environment - a primary case being the construction of a new runway at Frankfurt Airport. These attacks do not seem to have been carried out by any of the older West German terrorist groups, but included attacks by the Revolutionary Cells. At the time, these attacks seemed to represent an attempt by the terrorists to create a link with the then growing environmental 'Green' movement in Germany, and as such differed from the typical preoccupations of the communist terrorists - particularly those of the Red Army Faction. 124

**Conclusion**

In an earlier article I argued that similarities could be found among terrorists with similar ideologies - in that case conservatism - and by extension I implied that differences would be found between groups with dissimilar ideologies. 125 The targeting patterns of the terrorist
groups examined here tend to bear out the contention that terrorists' targeting choices are crucially affected by their ideology and that ideological differences lead to differences in the targeting patterns of terrorist groups - even between groups which have superficially similar but distinct ideologies. Terrorists are rarely mindless or indiscriminate in their attacks, although they may appear to be so to observers who have not examined their ideological beliefs.

Of course terrorist campaigns are not static in their nature. The terrorists' ideologies may develop and alter over time, and this may be reflected in the pattern of their attacks. There are also a number of other changeable factors which need to be considered when trying to explain or understand the selection of targets by any terrorist group: such as the security environment within which they operate, the desire to maintain traditional sources of support, and the state of the group's logistics. Nevertheless, even after taking these reservations into account, it is still ideology which provides terrorists with the moral and political vision that inspires their violence, shapes the way in which they see the world, and defines how they judge the actions of people and institutions. This in turn forms their views as to who or what may be seen as a legitimate target, and to a degree it allows the terrorists to dehumanise those people whom they intend to harm - seeing them as symbols rather than as flesh and blood human beings. By establishing such parameters, the influence of ideology is crucial in determining the range of terrorists' potential targets.

NOTES


3. In this article the term target is assumed to refer to the physical target of a terrorist attack unless it is otherwise qualified - for instance as in the term psychological target.


7. W. A. Rosenbaum, Political Culture (London: Nelson, 1975), p. 120.


22. 'Gow Killed Because of his Influence on Thatcher, IRA Says', The Independent, 1 August 1990.


30. Ibid, p.82.


38. In this context the term European refers to French and other European settlers in Algeria and their descendants.


41. 'Hizbollah Adopts An "Eye for an Eye" Tactic', The Independent, 20 July 1994,

42. P. Bishop and E. Mallie (note 19), p. 171.

43. 'Bombing "Devastating" to IRA', The Independent, 11 November 1987.


47. 'IRA warns of more bombs', The Observer, 1 February 1987.


51. J. Bowyer Bell (note 48), pp.31-2.

52. T. Parker (note 17), pp.325-6.


60. R. P. Clark (Note 57), p. 136.


68. 'For Queen and Country', The Guardian, supplement, 19 October 1993.


74. S. Bruce (note 73), pp.64-5.


78. Ryder makes the point that early in the current troubles those Catholics who joined the UDR were especially vulnerable to intimidation, and that this - along with perceptions of anti-Catholic
bias in security force activities - led to an 'exodus' of Catholics from the unit from 1971 onwards. C. Ryder (note 77), pp.45-9, 60, 196.


80. S. Bruce (Note 73), p.66.


82. R. W. White. 'The Irish Republican Army: An Assessment of Sectarianism' (note 73) pp.38-42. In particular see Table 3 on page 37.


90. C. di Giovanni (Note 10), p.147.


97. In 1971 Ulrike Meinhof of the RAF specifically stated that they did not target police officers who were not specifically trying to harm them. S. Aust (note 45), p.43.


104. D. Pluchinsky ibid., p.69.

105. Y. Alexander and D. Pluchinsky, (note 26), 68, 80.


113. D. Pluchinsky (note 103), pp.70, 71-72, 74-75.


116. A. Jamieson. (note 5), p. 120.

117. D. Moss (note 5), p. 120.


119. D Moss (note 5) p. 122

120. D. Moss (note 5), p. 120.


