ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST TERRORISM

"If inciting people to do that [9/11] is terrorism, and if killing those who kill our sons is terrorism, then let history be witness that we are terrorists..."
— Osama bin Laden.

5.1 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF TERRORISM

The heinous consequences of terrorism have convinced us of the fact that it is something bad, something undesirable. Thus to find out its justification would be meaningless. But being rational human beings we should at least once stop to see why the terrorists behave in such a manner, whether they have a logic behind their acts – we need to understand this logic and see whether it is tenable or not. We know that the expression freedom fighting is often associated with the acts of terrorism. This implies an approval for such acts, at least among those who use this expression. Hence examination of such a phenomenon from the ethical viewpoint becomes necessary in response to the intense and sustained claim of the terrorists that, they have social and moral grounds to take resort to terrorism as a method of redressal against the present socio-political evils. We therefore, wish to analyse the arguments which may be put forward by the terrorists in support of their activities.

5.1.1 Terrorism is a Just War

If we see clearly, it would be found that a terrorist is a most selfless person who can even sacrifice his or her own life for their ideology. They are really sincere and dedicated workers who fight to achieve their goals till the last breath. Sergius Stepriak, the renowned Russian revolutionary of the 19th century remarked that, the terrorist is noble, terrible, irresistibly fascinating (uniting) the two sublimities of human grandeur – the martyr and the hero. Thus it can be presumed that terrorists are sincerely committed to the conviction of the morality of their actions – and this is the most prominent argument they offer in favour of
their position. St. Thomas Aquinas forwarded three conditions for ‘Just War’,\(^1\) which are endorsed by Vincent Ferraro, as:-

(i) Declaration by a legitimate authority.

(ii) Just cause, (that is to say that those attacked must deserve it) like self-defense, where hostilities are initiated as a last-resort;

(iii) Just means, i.e., the war must not be waged by means more savage than necessary to ensure victory.

Does terrorism meet anyone of the above mentioned criteria – the question remains for us to judge. Hugo Grotius, the greatest jurist of the 17\(^{th}\) century, maintained that just war is a war to obtain a right (on the law of war and peace). Hence just wars are those fought for ‘just causes,’ (like defense, recovery of property and punishment); unjust causes included the ‘desire for richer land’ the ‘desire for freedom among a subject people’, and the ‘desire to rule others against their will on the pretext that it is for their own good’.\(^2\) Again a war becomes unjust if its ends can be attained by non belligerent means. It is generally observed that a war, which is otherwise just, becomes immoral if it is waged out of hatred.

In the modern world the former Soviet Union and some third world countries have seen the war of national liberation as a just war. Struggles to liberate colonies and dependent countries from imperial rule were claimed to be both ‘just’ and ‘sacred’ because colonial rule was seen as a fundamental denial of the principle of self determination and hence, was considered illegitimate. Here violent acts against such rule were seen as an assertion of individuals as well as of the nation’s violated dignity and as a means of inspiring the masses.

Such liberation movements had to resort to all sorts of unorthodox and clandestine methods of warfare or unconventional acts of violence (which has always been branded as terrorism by the affected governments, e.g., “Bengal terrorism” or other acts of revolt in India, which were mainly aimed against the British government or the British officers who symbolized particular aspects of colonial expression. Again, the Algerian war against France during the late 1950s, and the like to combat colonial or racist regimes having inevitable and organized superior military power\(^3\) – who cannot be curbed without the use of force. Thus
the methods of violence adopted by the leaders of liberation movements should not be classified as terrorist because such acts are committed to resist oppression and injustice, and in order to achieve independence and regain dignity. Now, any and every unconventional act of violence cannot be labeled as terrorism, because it can very well be a mode of guerrilla warfare or insurgency. Such forms of violence because of being founded on the right to self-determination, are legitimate. Hence we find that the justifiability of unconventional acts of violence depends on the offender’s declared objective and psychic motivation.

A war may be justified only when the responsible agents have a good intention. Thomas Aquinas in his book *Summa Theologica* stated the general principle that there must be the right intention to achieve a good to avoid an evil. If the motivation is personal gain and the objective is advancement of a reactionary political cause, the offender becomes a terrorist, as the element of morality evaporates. On the contrary, if the objective is to oppose colonialism, racism or alien domination and the motivation is to assert the principles of self determination for the people (the right of people and of the nation to self-determination was recognized as a prerequisite to the full enjoyment of all fundamental human rights by the U.N. Charter), the offender is elevated to a heroic level being engaged in a just struggle, at once altruistic and self-sacrificing; he is then, no longer a terrorist or legal offender.

Andrew Valls in his article ‘Can Terrorism Be Justified?’ in the book *Ethics In International Affairs*, has tried to justify terrorism based on the unit of ethical measurement of the just war criteria, i.e. Jus ad Bellum and Jus In Bello – as they are capable of deciding whether the violent deeds by such non state actors can be put within a particular frame of justice or not. He says that terrorism would be justified if the non-state actors fight for self-determination and nationalism to provide freedom to the citizens, if it is brought about by some legitimate authority who really think of the wellbeing of the citizens, and have the right intention to bring them out from the shackles of injustice and exploitations (instead of having selfish interests in fighting the war). It can be justified if terrorism adopted by them acts as a last resort, to make the government hear them. Again if the notion of proportionality is maintained both in the sense of balancing the means and ends, and also in the implementation of terror tactics where too many innocents
should not be killed. Finally Valls says that, such a terrorism would be justified where the rate of success is high and a strict discrimination is maintained between the legitimate and illegitimate targets of attack.

These are mainly the conditions of a just war. Now let us discuss each one of them and see whether the terrorists fulfil these conditions or not. If it can then terrorism can no more be termed as unjustified for it would then be a just war. But many would not be prepared to call it a war as it is implemented by non-state actors and mostly secretly.

The criteria of a Just War under Jus ad Bellum are :-

1. **Self determination:** As Khatchadourian points out: “The UN definition of ‘just cause’ recognizes the rights of people as well as states”, and in article 7 of the definition of aggression, the U.N refers to “the right to self-determination, freedom and independence, as derived from the charter, of peoples forcibly deprived of that right” (1998, 41) so both morally and legally “peoples” or “nations” enjoy a right to self-determination. When that right is frustrated, such peoples have the same just cause that states have when the self-determination of their citizens is threatened.

2. **Legitimate authority:** Non-state actors can also be legitimate authorities if and only if they have the right intention. Now the question arises, what is a right intention?

3. **Right Intention:** If a national group can have a just cause, and if a non-state entity can be legitimate authority to engage on behalf of that group, it seems unproblematic that those engaging in violence can be rightly motivated by that just cause. Hence, if just cause and legitimate authority can be satisfied there seems to be no reason to think that the requirement of the right intention cannot be satisfied.

4. **Last Resort:** Terrorism is justified if it really acts as the last resort or ultimate trial of their protest.

5. **Probability of Success:** Such a probability depends on the mindset of people, i.e., whether people would continue to call state actors oppressing
injustice as heroes and non-state actors doing the same as terrorists. However, Teichman in his book *Pacifism and the Just War* concludes that the historical evidence on the effectiveness of terrorism is “both ambiguous and incomplete”. And Baier in an essay named *Violent Demonstrations* found in the book *Ethical Issues* suggests that, at the least, “the prospects for the success of a cause do not seem in the past to have been reduced by resort to unauthorized force, by violent demonstrations that cost some innocent lives”. Finally Wilkins as found in John Davenport’s article *Just War Theory, Humanitarian Intervention, and the need for a Democratic Federation* in the *Journal of Ethics* is found to believe that some terrorist campaigns have indeed accomplished their goal of national independence and cities Algeria and Kenya as examples.

6. **Proportionality**: This criterion helps to find out whether the overall cost of violence would over weigh the overall benefits; if so then any form of war, even terrorism is justified.

**Jus In Bello**: states how a war would be fair in all respects and hence steps to legitimise it have to be taken. The steps of Jus In Bello are:-

1. **Proportionality**: Likeits counterpart in jus ad bellum, the criterion requires proportionality between the costs of an action and the benefits to be achieved; but in Jus In Bello, the requirement is applied to particular acts within the war. It forbids, conducting the war in such a way that it involves inordinate costs, those that are disproportional to the gains. If such a proportionality is maintained then once again terrorism is justified.

2. **Discrimination**: The principle of discrimination holds that in waging a war we must distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate targets of attack.

Thus Andrew Valls, as found in his book *‘Can Terrorism Be Justified?’* states that terrorism can be justified only when violence imposed by the terrorists can be justified. This violence should be found within limits in order to be justified and, indeed, placing limits on violence is what just war is all about. Although here Valls has tried to justify terrorism on the basis of arguments which have taken place entirely within the just war tradition, he agrees that, it can be
endorsed from other perspectives as well. For example, Annette Baier, though not a just war theorist, comes to hold a similar view: It is fairly easy to say that the clearer it is that the terrorists group’s cause is not being listened to in decision making affecting it and that the less violent ways to get attention have been tried in vain, the more excuse the terrorist has; that his case is better the more plausible is his claim to represent group’s sense of injustice or wrong, not just his own; that the more limited, the less indiscriminate, his violence the less outrage will we feel for his inhumanity.

5.1.2 Devine and Rafalko’s Three Arguments

Three arguments are considered in the article “On Terror” by P.E. Devine and R.J. Rafalko in favour of killing of innocent which was published in The Annals (Vol.463).

First, the ‘Economy of Scale’ argument; second, consciousness-raising argument; and the third, the ‘collective guilt’ argument.\(^5\)

‘Economy of Scale’ Argument: When terrorism is finally adopted by the terrorists as a last resort, when all other non-violent means such as negotiation, persuasion to the government etc. go in vain, then such a terrorism is perhaps justified. Terrorism, as the third option, is justified on the ground that it is preferably the ‘cheapest form of warfare’ (because it involves less finance and less man power than conventional warfare) and, at the same time, it compels the government to expand a significantly large portion of its resources to prevent the unconventional acts of violence thus putting a burden of pleasure on the uncompromising government to submit to the terrorists’ dictate.

‘Consciousness Raising’ Argument: The terrorists often justify their acts of violence as the cause of ‘making the public aware of institutional injustice’. Specially in underdeveloped or developing nations, where people lack literacy due to intense poverty, it is very important to make the mass realize that they are being deceived by the government, and are deprived of their constitutional rights. And those who are not politically aware, are mostly in the state of dogmatic slumber and would not even mind spending their entire lives being oppressed – as they are already satisfied with whatever little they get from the government.
The argument of ‘Consciousness Raising’ is borrowed from the first rebel movement in 1879 in Russia – the Narodaya Volya (“The People’s Will”). They felt the temporary and immediate necessity of terrorism in order to raise the consciousness of the masses. The Young Russian populist Nachayev was among the first to advocate conspiratorial violence as a method of arousing and educating the masses. According to the terrorists the common populace of a country is ‘lethargic’ and are simply not bothered about wrong doings of the government, even in democracies where people can raise their voices if required. At this juncture the terrorists take responsibility and initiative to awaken the people to the abuses of the government by means of terrorizing them. They think that such awareness will never be achieved by any rationally acceptable method, but can be obtained only through emotional means of creating terror. This will eventually compel people to lose faith in their own government which, in turn would help the terrorists to achieve their goal.

‘Collective-guilt’ Argument: This argument states that although terrorism is blamed to be an act which takes the lives of innocents – yet no person is actually innocent. The 9/11 incident of the crashing of world trade centre has led to the death of so many innocents – but the terrorists would retort back and say that those were tax payers of U.S. government, and with the help of these tax arms and ammunitions to destroy the Palestinian Muslims (the terrorists) were made – thus they were not innocents. The U.S. government was guilty of making such policies against them and the people living in such a government also seemed to be guilty as they were none other than a part of the government.

Burleigh Wilkins mentions the persecution of the Jews in Nazi Germany as the clearest and most indisputable example of collective guilt in recent history. Here of course the German people collectively are held responsible for the sufferings of the Jews, not for acts of omission (i.e., instead of looking into the injustice of the government the people are content by taking what it offers and ignore the evil doing of the government), but for what they had committed. Against such guilt, terrorism may have been born only self-defense.

People are also guilty in the eyes of the terrorists by association. Sometimes some of the high ranking officials, who work for those governments whose predecessors had committed crimes against people of that particular terrorist
group, are killed. There are ample examples of killing holiday makers, travelers and others just because they contribute to the economy of the guilty government or country.

For example all individuals, institutions, groups or people who are connected with Israel in economic dealings are judged to be guilty of a crime against the Palestinians.6

5.1.3 Let us now consider some of the other influential arguments in favour of terrorism

Terrorism is a Better Method than Revolution or Insurgency: Narodaya Volya of Russia during 1878 to 1881 was the most important of all the terrorist movements. This organization evolved a specific policy against the Tsarist authorities which, according to N. Morozov, was a new cost-effective form of struggle. In a pamphlet entitled “Terrorism and Routine” (1880), Tarnovsky defends Marxism on the ground that, the massive toll of death and sufferings are found more in revolution or insurgency.

It is ethically a better choice than allowing such a carnage.7 Due to this reason terrorism can be identified with a low-level conflict, and the deaths of those who die in this war on terrorism have to be accepted as inevitable consequences of war.

Terrorism is an Integral part of Marxist Theory of Class Struggle: The terrorists possibly have drawn inspiration from such revolutionary anarchist methodologies of not only Marx, but also of Tucker, Bakunin and Kropotkin who believed in hospitality towards the ‘coercive’ state, and were determined to use violent methods to achieve their ends. They totally discarded the idea of moral obligation and contended that all men have the right, if they have the power, to kill or coerce other men and make the entire world subservient to their ends.

Both Marx and Engels believed that violence was the engine of social change.8 They considered violence to be a therapy which alone could psychologically renovate the working class (who are constantly) oppressed and dominated by the capitalists. They further added that, greater force is necessary to combat the oppressive state and its allies, i.e., the exploiting bourgeoisie class.
According to the Marxists the state is a weapon used by the upper class for exploitation. Thus, through their bloody revolution they actually wanted to bring an end to such an oppression thereby completely abolishing of the state. The violence the Marxists propounded is identical to political terror which is also seen as an instrument of political control. Thus, in a communist regime, terror comes to serve two major objectives: on one hand, political control and, on the other, social change.

**Terrorism is a Revolt against Colonialism and Imperialism:** Some argue that, terrorism is justified as a revolt against colonialism (Palestine) and imperialism (Afghanistan). Colonial rule is a fundamental denial of the right of self-determination, and hence is seen as illegitimate in principle. Such a state loses its right to rule. The U.N Charter of 1945 states that people have a right to determine for themselves the form of state under which they choose to live. This is classified as the right to self-determination.

In Frantz Fanon’s opinion, colonialism is inherently racist and unjust. Under such conditions the oppressed lose their sense of uniqueness and dignity. Colonization is a process of “chosification”, i.e., turning men into things. And the only way to restore dignity is to commit violence against those who alienate and dehumanize them. Violence against such rule is legitimate, especially where democratic means fail to work. The ANC movement in South Africa can be cited here as an example, because it surely was an anti-colonial struggle.

**Terrorism Establishes the Right to Self-Defense:** Some justify terrorism as an exercise of the right to self-defense. The terrorists go on to justify their violent application of force when they themselves get subjected to murderous attacks from their oppressors. If the terrorists do not retaliate by murder, they will be killed by the power, i.e., oppressor, which cannot be accepted under any circumstance. For example, the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis was so horrifying that the Jews had no way but to adopt terrorism to get rid of such a torture. Benito Mussolini once said that, “There is a violence that liberates, and there is a violence that enslaves...” He was of the opinion that the previous form is moral, while the latter is immoral. In other words, here terrorism is met with terrorism. The South West African People’s organization (SWAPO) used all sorts
of unconventional methods of violence to liberate South West Africa (Namibia) from the illegal occupation of the land by South America during the late 1940s. Hence Namibian struggle cannot be called terrorism – it is rather a struggle for existence.

Burleigh Wilkins argues that terrorism is justified as a form of self defense when (1) all political and legal remedies have been exhausted or are inapplicable, and (2) terrorism will be directed against members of a community or group, who are collectively guilty of violence amounting to death and destruction aimed at these individuals, who consider the use of terrorism as an instrument of self-defense. Striking back in self-defense is a morally legitimate action on the part of anyone who has been condemned to death.

**Terrorism is the last Resort in Desperate Circumstances:** The general claim is which that terrorism is resorted to when would be justified the political avenues and other peaceful alternatives for the solution of the problems are absent or inadequate and further, when the forces believe, for political, social, economic, historical, ideological and other reasons, that their objectives are best served by violence. For them taking up arms is perceived as the only meaningful way left to bring about the expected transformation of society, where the people have been dispossessed of their homeland (Namibia in South West Africa), or where one part of a country is occupied by a foreign power which prevents it being reunited with the country of which it is historically and actually a part (Kashmir terrorism) or where one economic class or one race systematically exploits and other class (Terrorism and Moral Questions by Sanu Bhattacharya). Jean Paul Sartre and Simon de Beauvoir believe that the world is full of oppression and scarcity, and it is absurd to think that the rigid, oppressive institutions can be changed without violence. So violence against an oppressor’s freedom is justifiable.

It is important to note that they have excused violence even against the innocents. Any violence which leads to freedom for the greatest number and that which would stop the oppression that had been on for a long time and that which might, in future, take away the lives of many – is justified even at the cost of lives of some innocents. If such a violence is not implemented, then the despositism would carry on which would directly or indirectly take the lives of many more. Thus Sartre had supported the acts of many terrorist groups, and even called for an
all out Soviet nuclear strike against the U.S., though such actions would surely kill
innocent people. Renowned war analyst Gerry Wallace explained the situation of
area bombing by Britain or Germany in 1940-41, where it seemed that the
decision was inevitable in such a situation, where the British civilians were being
killed and maimed by Germany who showed little regard for human life. President
Churchill called it Supreme Emergency. The LTTE of Sri Lanka defends their acts
on similar ground. The ethno-social, political and religious crisis of the Tamil
people there led them to adopt terrorism as the last resort. This was also true of the
Naxalite movement of India, as people felt devastatingly deprived, socially and
politically, resorted to terrorism as a last-resort method of collective defense.

**Terrorism may be justified from the viewpoint of political expediency:** Here we
can mention the argument from political expediency in favour of terrorism – i.e.,
violece against people is justified because certain elements of the population
need to be eliminated for the good of the state (especially in states where people
live below the poverty line). Thus loss of human life is necessary for a better
government, or for a better country. This is how act of terrorism gets justified to
some extent. **Principle of Intervening** action may justify terrorism: In an
article “Are There Any Absolute Right” Alar Gewirth makes a mention of the
‘principle of the Intervening Action’ (though in a different context) which can be
accommodated here to justify the terrorist’s point of view.

This principle may be exemplified in the following way to suit the
terrorists’ stand point – Osama Bin Laden is being held morally responsible for
the attacks on U.S targets because of his preaching in support of Islamic causes
and against the Jews and their abettors. By the principle of the intervening section,
however it is Osama’s opponents who are responsible because it is their
intervention which led Osama to attack for self-defense.

**Terrorism may be justified by the Terrorists’ Moral Right to Choose:** Kant
believed that the right to choose autonomously without any other influence lies at
the core of humanity (which follows from the principle of respect for persons) and
such a right is claimed to be absolutely sovereign even by many modern thinkers.
Terrorists are none other than citizens of some country – thus they also have their
right to protest against the wrong-doings of the government. Hence, the terrorists’
right to choose their own means to achieve their own political goal (by whatever
means they deem fit) should not be denied, destroyed or limited by the ruling agent or by the society.

Thus we would be mistaken if we think that terror tactics of the terrorists is nothing but a severe damage of the use of arms. It is random and its randomness can bring an end to slavery or other forms of oppression. This is called mindless violence which, of course cannot be used in case of a Just War, as it does not observe the Jus in Bello (i.e. conditions of Just War) as in the distinction between the combatant and non-combatant, respecting the immunity of the non-combatants. But such a form of ruthless, mindless violence also speaks for itself – to which we cannot – afford to put deaf ears – at least not for a long time.

If the motivational aspect of terrorism is considered then it would be found that terrorism is frequently motivated by the urge for securing and preserving the right of self-determination. The question of the right to self-determination is relevant here because the terrorists are people who have a feeling of deprivation which produces a crisis of identity and frustration which, in its turn, can probe into human psychology we find that this feeling of aggression is universally present in all men. If aggression, as a reaction to deprivation leading to frustration is a psychological fact, then there seems to be no point in considering terrorism as evil from the motivational aspect.

Then why do we happen to black list the notion of terrorism altogether? Is it our anxiety or fear of the unknown danger or fear of insecurity? Statistic reveals that the total number of deaths caused by road accident is higher than the total number of deaths caused by terrorism, throughout the world. But still we are not terrified by the fear of road accidents in the way we are by that of terrorism. The reason behind such a fear lies not in any objective condition, but is purely psychological. Terrorism has been negatively portrayed by the media resulting into a mass negative attention globally. If we, being rational, shift our attention from the effects to their cause, then the problem can presumably be solved. But the irony is that, people against whom terrorism is applied seems to be stronger than the perpetrators. The common men, however, are influenced by the view of the stronger and hence, no media is prepared to consider the cause of the oppressed sympathetically. The world media also speaks for the power – be it political or economical. Thus it is highly improbable that it will justly focus the
cause of the powerless oppressed people which, perhaps, results into such aggressive behaviour.

If we notice carefully, we shall see that the goal of the terrorists is, perhaps, noble, honest and natural, i.e., to topple the oppressive government. But people fail to understand their cause or even fail to sympathise with them, because no one wants to entangle himself into unnecessary chaos created by the terrorists. If we agree that terrorism is an actio-reactio process, then it can be presumed that a change in the action would bring a change in the reactions too.

More importantly, we have to stop the never-ending blame game. We would accuse the terrorists for what they do, again they would accuse the government for which they are compelled to do such things and we being a part of the government, would be equally held guilty by them. Rather we should realize that “Tragedy at its most searching is a reminder that those forms of life which fear the monstrous lack of being at their own heart will tend to discover an image of this frightful Real in some hideous, misshapen creature who must be banished from their gates. In our own world, one consequence of that disavowal is known as terrorism. The terrorist is not the pharmokos (scape goat); but he is created by it, and can only be defeated when justice is done it” – thinks Terry Eagleton in his book *Holy Terror*.

Thus instead of simply criticizing the notion of terrorism, we have also to take care of the actions of the government so that no such group can be ever formed who would reply to the government with an equal and opposite reaction.

5.2 ARGUMENTS REFUTING TERRORISM

When we discuss the issue of terrorism we come across more arguments against it than in favour of it. Who would support such an act of violence, terror and bloodshed? We are basically peaceful in nature, thus we cannot entertain the barbaric acts, moreover such acts can in no way be termed as just, ethical.

5.2.1 In the previous sections we tried to justify terrorism by seeing it as a just war. Now we would go on to check whether terrorism is really a war for national liberation. In defining a ‘just war’ the terms ‘colonialism’, ‘racism’, ‘self-determination’, ‘alien occupation’, etc. are often used. But can we identify
terrorism with any of these positions. The war for National Liberation must be supported by all citizens, because the victory from it would be enjoyed by all of them. But indiscriminate violence, the most remarkable feature of terrorism, cannot be accepted by the citizens, nor can it bring good to all of them equally.

Just War was morally justified because it was defensive, it does not involve undue use of force nor, does it injure the non-combatants. Terrorism, on the other hand, uses violence and that too on people who are “innocents”, who are in no way related to their cause.

Again, ‘Just War’ adheres to the Principle of Double Effect, i.e., direct killing of non-combatants or innocents is prohibited, though it might cause intentional innocent-killing. This spirit is absent in terrorism.

Moreover ‘Just War’ believes in the good to be achieved of the war – should be proportional to the evil resulting from the war. This is known as Principle of Proportionality. But the devastating effect and major loss resulting from terrorism can never be claimed to be proportionate to the small amount of good if any (mainly the benefits of the terrorists) achieved. Hence terrorism actually denies this principle. If terrorism claims to be a Just War, then C.A.J. Coady states that, it has to follow the rules of just war – which it does not. The traditional conditions of both just ad bellum (conditions of a morally justified launching of a war) and of Jus in Bello (conditions of the just prosecution of war in progress) – have been violated by terrorism as pointed out by Haig, in his article “Terrorism And Morality.” St. Thomas Aquinas laid down a few conditions of Just War, which are surely in accordance with the conditions of jus...
ad bellum and Jus in Bello and these conditions are:—First, Just War should be declared by a legitimate authority and its end. Terrorism is not declared by any legitimate authority like the government of a state or its head. Secondly terrorism uses human lives as their means to reach their goal. But ethically human lives cannot be seen as the means, but has to be the end in themselves. Thus the means used by the terrorists cannot be called just. Therefore the concept of ‘Just War’ is not applicable in case of terrorism.

If the most brutal acts of terrorism directed at innocent civilians (in the form of threat or murder) are permitted, when committed by members of a liberal movement; then human rights will suffer a severe setback because all human beings are entitled to enjoy their right to life. Acts that violate any human right are morally wrong because, such acts do not adhere to the principle of respect for persons. Hence terrorism cannot be justified, even in the garb of liberation movement.

David Long, says that freedom fighting refers to a political goal, whereas terrorism refers to a tactic used to attain the goal. Even if we justify the goal, its means can not at all be justified. Ascribing such high valued expression to the acts of terrorism does not make the acts ‘Just’.

5.2.2 Now let us go on to examine Devine and Rafalko’s three arguments which support terrorism.

The first argument, i.e., ‘Economy of Scale’ argument seems to be preposterous because, to sacrifice innocents for the terrorist’s cause, and to think that it is being ‘cheap’ on their account is something most repulsive to reason. When the terrorists state that this is a cheaper method to revolt then do they mean that human lives are cheap — as unaccountable human lives go at stake with the implementation of this so-called ‘cheap’ method? To set free a single member of this group taken captive by the government, the terrorists go on to kill thousands of innocents. Does this mean that the life of their members is valuable, not of common men? But the terrorists do not protect their member’s lives also, as it is often seen that when their part of work is done then they are chucked off as they might prove to be dangerous, or they may be of no use later. Thus the members themselves do not have faith in each other because a breach is also noticed.
sometimes among the members of the same group. In this context we can remember the incident of Indian Airlines flight IC 814, which was hijacked and taken to Kandahar in December 1999. The act was believed to be the handiwork of ISI Pakistan, because Harkat-ul-Ansar claimed responsibility for the act, which was committed to get Maulana Masood Azhar free from Indian captivity. They held the plane for 9 days, and even killed one passenger on board. Does this argument hold that the ‘price’ of one terrorist is more than hundreds of innocent people? The utilitarian view holds that each person is equal than anyone else. This view is also supported by humanistic standpoint. In this regard we can quote deontological Hastings Rashdals Axiom of Equity, which says: “I ought to regard the good of one war as of equal intrinsic value with the like good of anyone else.” (The Annals Vol.463; Ed. By M.E Wolfgang, PP 40-47).

Moreover this argument of “Economy of Scale’ is fallacious for other reasons too –

It commits the error of ‘Species mistake’\textsuperscript{14} because the terrorists treat human beings as mere things. The species which has unconditional value is made identical with things having only instrumental value. The citizens of the country are seen as commodities. M. Martin says that it is the right of every human being to be treated as a person and not a thing, and this is his natural right which must not be violated.\textsuperscript{15} Moreover the mass massacre which are common occurrences on both sides, are prominent evidence against the projected argument. Again ‘cheap’ or ‘economic’ is a relative term which surely involves ambiguity. The above mentioned argument stands on a false presupposition that all cheap things are acceptable. It is false as our everyday experience states that the major premise of the argument is not correct. Hence the conclusion becomes redundant.

All cheap things are acceptable.

Terrorism is cheap.

Therefore, terrorism is acceptable.

The Economy of scale argument is therefore, invalid for its false major premise. It has admitted an improper generalization.
Secondly, the ‘Consciousness Raising’ argument also fails as without causing violence and bloodshed and through passive resistance, marches, sittings and non-cooperation the public can be made aware of their institutional injustices.

Killing of innocents is in no way necessary for this objective, at least, not in a democratic system. Gandhiji has proved this through his implementation of non-violent method to bring Swaraj in which he was successful. Peter Singer in his book Practical Ethics (Second Edition) says that, parliamentary representative may be over influenced by skilled and well-paid special interests, and the public may even be unaware of what is happening due to which the legitimate interests of a minority may be ignored.

Again this argument fails to accept the fact that people are sometimes competent to react against their felt grievances, and also that people can sometimes be their own guide. As J.S. Mill argues in ‘On Liberty’ that, men are their best judges; they are rational enough to understand whether they are provided with justice or not. [Although this is not true in the case of illiterates or morons, can they be made to realize such a truth ever, by any such violent policy? Rather, they would start hating such institutions which make the world a chaotic and unstable place to live in]. Thus this argument also denies the presence of reasoning faculty in men.

Thirdly, this argument of ‘Consciousness Raising’ imposes a subjective view on the mankind as such by an improper generalization. Here the argument takes a leap from particular to universal, which can never produce certainty. The terrorists however, are content with the probability of the conclusion that follows.

Fourthly, this argument creates a dilemma for the people – whether they should go against the terrorists and support the government, or should support the terrorists and go against the government. In both the cases they would face difficulty. If they do not abide by the government – then they would be punished for it; and if they go against the terrorists then they would be slaughtered ruthlessly. The logical form of this argument would run as follows: - If \( p \) then \( q \) and if \( r \) then \( s \); either \( p \) or \( q \); either \( q \) or \( s \) where \( p= \) people go against the terrorists and support the government, \( q= \) the terrorists will kill them, \( r= \) people support the
terrorists and go against the government, they will be punished (where the ultimate punishment implemented by the government may be death).

If the people are in both-ways insecure, then how can the terrorists claim to save them from oppression?

Among the three argument of Devine and Rafalko, the third argument is the 'Collective guilt' argument. In their article "On Terror"\textsuperscript{16}, Devine and Rafalko themselves have shown inconsistencies in this argument, which are mentioned below:

According to Spinoza "when everybody is guilty then nobody is guilty". Here the government, the people in it, the terrorists - all are guilty. The government is guilty for depriving those who have formed terrorists, and also guilty for making policies which go against the terrorists. The people of the government, i.e., the citizens are guilty because they do not protest against such exploiting policies made and implemented by the government and finally, the terrorists are guilty for taking lives of innocent women and children. Since all are guilty here the concept of 'guilt' stands no longer.

Secondly, those who justify bombing say, Israeli women and children in an airport, pointing to the responsibility of the victims for the oppression of Palestine, would be equally right if they point out that their victims are also subject to the sin of Adam.

Thirdly, when the terrorists go on to rectify the citizens of a particular government, they should keep this in mind that those citizens themselves do not know that, they are following the 'wrongs' of the government. First, the individual must know that wrongs do happen and it is only then, can we correct them.

Fourthly, a collective body or a single person can only be held responsible when there is a causal connection between one's faulty action and a harmful outcome. But the terrorists can show no causal connection between an innocent's deed (i.e., the acts of omission or commission by the innocents) and the so-called wrong doings of the government. If this be the case then, they cannot charge the innocent citizens for the wrong doings of the government. Even if a person gets involved into some wrong-doing of the government, being a part of the system, he cannot be targeted for the untoward situation, because it might be the case that he
does not know what is right or is, perhaps, unaware of his dereliction of duty. In fact, only those can be properly blamed who are responsible for implementation of such indiscriminate violence.

For example, Daniel Pearl, the wall-street journalist, was abducted from Karachi in Pakistan in 2002 by the terrorists, who tried to use him to negotiate with the US government for release of some Pakistan nationals held captive. Pearl was beheaded after a short while, even before any such negotiations took place. Surely, this cannot be the right way to remedy the society.

Fifthly, the entire country’s population or the members of a national group are so diverse in their views (which is really healthy, or else a stagnancy or a stunted growth of a society, viz., nation would be found as believed by J.S. Mill); that no relevant solidarity as the terrorists suppose, exists between them; wherefore they cannot be held to be guilty collectively. So ascribing collective responsibility to the entire population whole citizenry, must be rejected. If the terrorists cannot persuade the citizens to believe in the justice of their cause, then it would be simply a failure on their part and this would imply that their cause is not really strong.

This argument of ‘collective guilt’ involves the fallacy of circularity, because the terrorists think that people, along with the government are guilty, whereas the government, along with the common people think otherwise.

Moreover if people are implicated for guilt by association then one fails to understand why those Arabs are exempted, who live in Israel and contribute to their economy – and this is also true for the Palestinians who are employed in Israel.

5.2.3 Another observation proving that terrorism is wrong states that – “The wrong is so grievous that something must be done” can never imply “the wrong is so grievous that anything can be done” to make it right. This means that the government policies and its oppressions do not reach to those extents where anything can be done to rectify them (where the ‘anything’ involves massive loss of the society).
Moreover, politics to the terrorists may be an end in itself in their cognitive world, but for the common citizens politics serves as the mean to an end.

Again, the individuals are so preoccupied with their own routine life that, it is absurd to hold them responsible for every cause that needs remedy. Instead of lamenting and brooding upon the fact that the citizens have not done anything for the upliftment of the society, the terrorists might as well start doing something for a good cause without getting involved in barbaric and inhuman acts.

The Sophists believe in subjective morality. This means that an action is not right or wrong intrinsically, but it becomes right if the subject thinks it to be right and, accordingly, would become wrong when other consider it as something wrong. Thus the morality of an action changes with varying individuals and their viewpoints. Now, if there is no such thing as objective norm of ‘goodness’ and ‘justice’, with which we may judge our acts as good or just, then the standard of moral judgment would be the law of force /coercion. This further leads to the doctrine “might is right”, which has been modified by the terrorists and used at their own convenience.

Lastly, it can be argued that, when the terrorists cannot give lives then they can have no right to take them. Moreover by doing so they are extinguishing the individuals’ future capacity for good by killing him or her.

5.2.4 A close examination of the pro-leftist argument

Now let us turn to the pro-leftist arguments and those given by Tarnovsky for a closer examination. All those arguments in defense of terrorism are, in essence, untenable.

Tarnovsky’s ethical argument in favour of terrorism fails because first, the nature and purpose of revolution or insurrection is not identical to that of terrorism. Revolution involves the support of almost the entire population of the country and, hence, the change is caused from within where end or purpose is also accorded by the majority of the people. This is not true in case of terrorism. So the question of a choice between revolution and terrorism is not very relevant.

Secondly, the act of ‘deliberate killing of the innocents’ tantamount to ‘murder’ which in itself is immoral. If such deliberate killing is not for self
defense, and if it is justified, then this would mean that there is something about 
the person killed, by virtue of which the justification is possible. This means that 
the person killed is not at all innocent. But if he is innocent and, in no way related 
to their dispute then killing of that person would obviously be unjust. On what 
ground, then, did Tarnovsky try to justify killing less people as more ethical than 
killing more? Moreover, the dignity of life, which each human being possesses, 
cannot be destroyed under any circumstance. Thus, Tarnovsky’s assessment of 
killing less people is simply a quantitative evaluation of human life, which is 
humiliating.

Again, losing life in a just war or in a revolution implies some notion of 
martyrdom and, hence, can be ethically justified as dying for a great cause; 
whereas losing life in a terrorist attack merely implies ill fate for the victim. This 
can neither be ethically justified nor can it be logically substantiated.

The violence, which Karl Marx suggests during class struggle, is actually 
counter-violence without which the exploited sect of the society could not have 
been rescued. Marx himself opposes terrorism because of its premature attacks 
against the state due to which the proletariat movement could run into grave 
danger. It must to be remembered that, Marxist violence did not lose its 
revolutionary nature because, unlike terrorism, it did not make use of 
indiscriminate violence.

Terrorism, it is often said, borrows its inspiration from Marxism; this 
however, is not right as it never followed the path of Marxism in the truest sense. 
Karl Marx places incenses importance on man and his freedom, which the 
terrorists certainly do not.

Again the terrorists might even state that, they have drawn their inspiration 
from anarchist ideologies; but they miss the main spirit of anarchism where liberty 
and freedom is depicted as a genuine moral principle. According to the anarchists, 
freedom of others is a necessary condition of one’s own freedom.

**Firstly** the argument for the justification of terrorism as a revolt against 
colonialism and imperialism is nugatory, because any revolt must follow certain 
norms of society. The teleologists think that, for an action to be morally justified, 
it must be connected to some kind of human welfare. The action, in other words
should be concerned with less harm and more benefit of the people. But terrorism leads to more harm and less benefit (if it can at all be called human benefit). Instances have been found where terrorists have performed terrorism for their personal benefits, and did not consider the desire of the common men, i.e., did not look into the fact, whether they really want such a change – then how can the question of benefit arise at all?

**Secondly,** the exercise of the right in the present context invariably involves murder (because terrorist attacks involve killing of innocent people who are not aggressors) which, in principle, or in practice, cannot be justified.

Though Wilkins argued in favour of using terrorism as an instrument of self defense, he imposed certain restrictions – first, terrorism should be limited to the members of the community which is collectively guilty of the violence committed; secondly, terrorism should be confined to ‘primary targets’; thirdly terrorism should be directed initially at the perpetrators of violence and then at their accomplices in such a way as bring clearly the role they played in the violence.

These restrictions imply that unrestricted use of violence or terror tactic cannot be used even in the name of self-defense.

The argument ‘On last resort’ also fails. As when the government asks the terrorists enter into a dialogue, many a time they withdraw themselves from such negotiations. Moreover terrorism, as used by the terrorists state clearly that, it is not used by them as the last resort as it is pre planned carefully and consciously as a means only, after judging its repercussions on the public and the government. Indeed talk of ‘having no alternative’ needs to be construed in terms of certain goals and purposes in order to have sense made of it since there are usually other ‘alternatives’ which are inconsistent with certain values or ends which terrorism is believed to embody.

Again though a community may become so downtrodden and threatened in their conditions of life that to assert their dignity, they may react with an act of terrorism. This is no doubt, a possible case. But the common cases are those which involve a certain amount of pre planning.
Sartre as well as Beauvoir made freedom the primary value in morality, which is placed by them over and above the value of life. But terrorism does not ensure such a freedom to mankind.ii

5.2.5 Now let us now focus on the four internalist arguments of Gerry Wallace against terrorism:

Gerry Wallace in his paper "Area Bombing, Terrorism and Death of Innocents" explains four ‘Internalist arguments’, which claim that killing innocent people can never be morally justified.18

First, he says that, killing or taking some one’s life is not justified at all. It would be justified if the person killed is not innocent genuinely.

Any attempted justification here, would rely on the assumption that death of an innocent can be used as a means to serve some purpose. But such an idea is not morally repellent.

Secondly, he says if it is justified to kill innocents deliberately then the terrorist’s acts towards the victims is also justified. But surely there can be no such justification to cover the misdeeds of another person; nor can the justification be for the good of other, if some innocent person has to sacrifice his life. This would be manifestly wrong since nothing can justify the victim’s loss for others’ gain.

Thirdly, many terrorists claim that their act is just revenge towards the society which made them terrorists. But killing of innocents cannot be justified in the name of retaliation for what the terrorists themselves have suffered, because to retaliate in this way is simply to repeat the original deed. So how can such deeds performed by them are justified now, if they were not justified originally. No doubt, the terrorists suffered but they make the society suffer – but two wrongs cannot make a right. Moreover the innocents, who are killed in the war of

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ii Value of life to these existential philosophers was secondary as the life can be valuable only if it be subject to liberty and freedom. If humans are always at the mercy of others and if at every moment our desires, autonomy and individuality are curbed then that life is equivalent to death itself. Thus to them life should be defined by the freedom one gets.
terrorism, did not make the terrorists suffer in the past. Thus such a revenge of the terrorists towards them is not only meaningless, but totally unjust.

Fourthly, Gerry Wallace states that, anyone and everyone can perform the deed of killing innocent human beings. People who kill them for no reason at all do not seem to possess a sound moral character, as no sensible human being can do something like that even if that killing brings any good consequence.

5.2.6 Again, the principle of ‘intervening action’ cannot save the terrorists from their moral responsibility. The opponents of the terrorists would not bring harm to the terrorists as they know that a greater harm would then be brought on them by the terrorists.

Thus the harm which is caused is initiated by the terrorists and not by their opponents; the harm by them is intentional and not accidental.

The argument of making a free moral choice is repugnant. In this argument it is said that the terrorists should also enjoy their rights to choose what actions they should perform as rational human beings. But given this right, the terrorists, misuse it for their own convenience. Thus the terrorist’s claim for a moral choice to do immoral acts (like killing, abduction, bombing, hijacking etc.) is contradictory – The argument fails because no one has the right to harm others. Again their claim to choose their actions directly confronts with the identical claim of their victims who, unlike them, are innocent. In fact the terrorists are ready to enjoy the rights to moral but not prepared to carry out the corresponding duties attached to these rights.

Here we find two rights conflicting, with one another. One is the right of the terrorists and the other is the right of the common people, i.e., right to life. The utilitarians state that among the two rights, the one would be accepted which would yield maximum benefit to maximum number of people. Here right to life of the common people is more fundamental than the right to choice of the terrorists.

Moreover, in the name of destroying the evils of the government, the terrorists aim at destroying the capacity of the government to protect the rights of its citizens, which, finally, frustrates the citizens who then go against their government for its ineffectiveness and hence, the main purpose of the terrorists
get served. (For example, in the case of 26/11 the Mumbaites reacted, against the
government’s incompetence with ‘Enough is Enough’. This also was the theme of
the film entitled ‘A Wednesday’ which was made immediately after this attack).
We need to discuss the arguments that point to the defects of terrorism. Devine
and Rafalko, in their article “On Terror” mention some general objections that can
be raised against any form of terrorist activity. These are mainly of three kinds –
“(i) terrorist’s actions are counter-productive to their own cause; (ii) terrorists are
incoherent in the pursuit of an indefinable objective; (iii) terrorists direct their
campaigns of terror in precisely those societies that allow other means of redress
and appeal of injustice.”

If we take the first argument then we would see that the terrorists are not
always successful in achieving their goals. They provide terror to disunite the
mass of a particular region, but, by implementing such violent acts, they see that
the society becomes more strongly united. The assassination of Mrs. Indira
Gandhi, the then P.M. of India in 1984, by Sikh militants of Punjab, unified the
entire country against them, which was reflected in the mass murders and riots
against the Sikhs. So, their actions are mostly self-defeating.

If we look into the second argument, we find that the terrorists are
incoherent in their final aims, Devine and Rafalko as the consequence of a psyche
and its impulsiveness explain. This argument basically states that, the demands of
the terrorists are so outrageous that they can hardly be met and even when they are
met, the terrorists put forward newer demands. Thus they have a never ending list
of demands to be fulfilled by the government. So it is useless to at least try to
fulfil any of their demands.

Thirdly, terrorism targets free society – a society where the desired
changes of the terrorists could be brought about by other means. Violence against
a state, which provides pacific change – (while is one of the defining
characteristics of democracy), is surely unjustified. Terrorism gets success due to
the media support through publicity. The media can thoughtfully build up public
opinion against the governmental atrocities; instead it is used and manipulated to
publicize the violent acts of the terrorists to terrorize the citizens and, thus, to
create pressure on the government to fulfil their own demands. The terrorists, who
claim to bring revolution or change in the system, could take up the method of
litigation in the courts, or resort to other options available in such a free society. They could even build up option for a civil disobedience against the governmental injustices, instead of taxing the extreme measure of violence. This possibility shows signs of incompetent leadership on the part of the terrorists.

The terrorists might retort that they had already tried out those other methods mentioned above, but since they seemed to be futile they are compelled to take the up arms to petrify the government, to make their work done. Moreover they say, who would listen to the minority who is always kept aside in the society? Would the government really listen to their hardships if they do not make the government listen to them forcefully? The question remains. Although public opinion is an important feature of democracy, does the government give importance to such opinions of any and every one of the country? Can any layman freely express his problems to the government, is the government accessible?

Again it is said that the government ought to listen and ought to accept the decision of the majority i.e., 51% of population. Is it reasonable to say that we should agree with the 51 instead of the remaining 49? The question of the morality of an action cannot be settled through majority vote. Moreover, in real life, it is seen that ‘majority’ in a country is actually formed of the people who do not want to get entangled with any problem what they require is just a happy, peaceful and secured life.

Thus the terrorists often state that, if a society cannot decide its controversial issues by ‘ballots’ then it would have to choose ‘bullets’.

5.2.7 Next we would like to consider why terrorism is considered unjustified on socio-ethical, political, psychological and logical grounds:

C.W. Kegley views terrorism as a menace and a threat to undermine the very foundation of civilization. He ascribes ‘Seven Sins’\textsuperscript{21} to terrorism:

(i) It exalts violence – which includes bloodsheds.
(ii) It suppresses moral instincts.
(iii) Repudiates politics.
(iv) Spreads totalitarianism.
(v) Destroys democracy.
(vi) Exploits freedom and
(vii) It shapes the will of civilized society to defend itself.
Moreover we can add further observations –

Terrorism obviously abuses fundamental human rights of the victims. As the terrorists claim that, just as they themselves are deprived of their rights and hence revolt against the society, similarly the innocents can also protest against the terrorists on the same ground; namely, they are deprived of their right to life. The ‘right to freedom’ was recognized as one of the five fundamental rights of man, which every human being possesses by nature. This right was made a part of an international goal by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, and Mackenzie listed it among the most important of the human rights as found in the book “The Anatomy of Terrorism” by D. E. Long; P.139. On the other hand, the terrorists think themselves to be the guardians of the society and hence, they forcefully impose their opinion upon the entire population. To do this they employ any method whatsoever to suit their temperament, craze and ability — methods which directly violate the basic ethical precepts.

The terrorists destroy the peace and sanctity of human life. By nature men are peace loving and do not wish to live in panic. R.M. Hare says, “What makes terrorism wrong in most cases is that people do not want to be killed or bereaved.” The human right not to be tortured or ill treated is not only unfound in terrorism but also severely battered. The Palestinians for example cannot sleep peacefully even at nights due to constant bombardment from U.S aircrafts. People would be mental patients if they have to face such situations every day.

Suicide terrorism is another method used by the terrorists to get their work done by the government. Such a form of terrorism was introduced by LTTE of Sri Lanka to compel the government to withdraw military forces. This method was adopted by various groups of Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir, West Bank, and other places as an effective method to influence modern democracies in favour of the terrorist’s goal.

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In this context one must know that Human Rights are commonly understood as inalienable fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled simply because she or he is a human being. Human rights are thus considered as Universal (applicable everywhere) and egalitarian (the same for everyone). These rights may exist as natural rights or as legal rights in local, regional, national and international law. The idea of human rights states, if the public discourse of peace time global society can be said to have a common moral language, it is that of human rights.

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The bombers are usually young people who are brainwashed and trained in the terrorist's cause since their adolescence. They are the future citizens of the country who could do a lot of constructive work to benefit the society but, before their potentiality could even be used, they are made to sacrifice their lives — This is a loss to the society, and, hence country.

Terrorism is unjustified because apart from terrorizing the common people, the terrorists sometimes, simultaneously, carry out anti-social activities like drug trafficking, kidnapping for ransom, bank robbery and so on. They do these things for money which they need to carry on their terrorist activities, like ruining the organization, buying arms and ammunition etc. Thus apart from their main activity, which is no doubt illegal, they also break other laws of the country.

Terrorism is such a strategy that it does not let the terrorists to get converted to normal people, even if they realize their mistakes and want to get back to the mainstream. Rather if the leader of the organization comes to know of such intentions, they are simply killed. Terrorism, therefore, gives no chance of reformation to the terrorists and those who choose to be terrorists for some reason or other, are compelled to remain so throughout their lives. So a terrorist by choice becomes a terrorist by compulsion. Thus just discussed, it can be inferred that respect for human autonomy is tarnished by the philosophy of terrorism. Moral philosophers such as Sartre in *Bing and Nothingness* and R.M. Hare in *Essays on Political Morality* have held 'respect for individual autonomy' as a basic moral principle. A person is said to be autonomous only when he is self-governing and not controlled by any other external influence. The terrorists fight for 'autonomy' and protest against the government as they are deprived of their freedom; they themselves curb the autonomy of the citizens as well as of the other members of their group once they become terrorists. This is because sanctioning autonomy to the members of their group or to the citizens at large might disturb their plans and their implementation. In their opinion persons have no value as human beings; 'they are simply symbolic enemies or human collaterals to bargain for some political demand'. If this is the level of respect they have towards people then how can they in turn expect any respect?

The Maxim 'man is an end in himself' is reduced to 'man is a means, an instrument in himself', because the terrorists target and use common men as their
tools to achieve their goal. In a fight for eg. Just as weapons, if damaged, get replaced, - so also men are used as means to reach get the terrorist’s goals; and in the process, if one man gets killed, others are kept ready to be picked up for the terrorist activities. This indeed demeans the respect and dignity for humanity, beings do not possess instrumental value; they are intrinsically valuable.

Haig says, as found in D. E. Rapoport’s book ‘The Anatomy of Terrorism’, man’s cultural or ethnic, religious or racial identity or heritage must be respected, and the principle of respect for person states that, persons should be seen as unconditionally worthy agents. It is, moreover, the duty of any human being to act morally toward any moral being, because many deontologists admit that, it is the sense of morality that differentiates human beings from other beings. But according to the terrorists, we find, such rights and duties are irrelevant.

It seems then that terrorism adheres to the organic theory where an individual is viewed merely as a tiny cell in the huge organism of society. Like an expert doctor, the terrorist is determined to ampute the defective cells and organs in order to make the body (i.e., society) survive in good health. The value of the individual is assessed in terms of his utility to the society. So, it seems that according to the terrorists, all individuals should enthusiastically sacrifice themselves while serving the ends of the society. But such a notion is self-stultifying because, if all individuals sacrifice their lives then who would be left to enjoy the beneficial consequences of terrorism?

The terrorists might argue by stating that what they do in the form of assassination or mass murder is analogous to what a state does in the name of capital punishment. The question arises, is capital punishment justified? Perhaps not, because in this form of punishment the sinner is not given a chance to realize his mistakes and to rectify them.

Similarly, if common men fall prey to Government’s mistakes then, instead of killing them, they need to be explained as to what the wrong is and further that they perform such wrongs. Moreover the control principles of justice clearly state that a person is only responsible for what he has done when he does it voluntarily or when he could have avoided it. But the innocents do not voluntarily perform such wrong deeds: It is only the government that voluntarily does so.
Thus the targets of the terrorists should be the government and not the laymen. By carrying out indiscriminate violence at all times and in all places, the terrorists actually commit barbarism which is opposed to civilization, denying completely the moral and legal rights of the victims. They raise their voice as the government does not do justice to them, but do they do justice to — either to the government or to the society?

Terrorism is destructive as it shows no constructive endeavour; it is purely a negative notion and no negative notion can be beneficial for the society. In history also we find instances of destruction, but those destructions are constructive as they either save a clan or race or they help to conquer states or are aimed towards the benefits of the society.

Moreover it is to be noted that terrorist’s position gets into self-contradiction, when they deny civilization (and its attributes) through their barbaric activities to establish a civilized system of governance and also when they create cross border violence to establish democratic rule, because if they aim at establishing a democratic government within their own state territory they must fight their battle within their own boundaries.

The terrorists do not abide by the governmental laws because according to them such laws are made in such a manner that they do not accommodate them (the terrorists). Hence they conclude that along with them the citizens should not also abide by the government because like them they too are exploited by its policies. Thus the terrorists here commit a naturalistic fallacy — deriving ‘ought’ from ‘is’. As they ‘do not obey the government so people ‘ought’ not to obey the government.

According to David Hume, ‘is’ statements differ categorically from ‘ought’ statements, as both speak of a different kind of relation, where — ‘is’ statements refer to the world of facts, and ‘ought’ statements are related to the world of values. R. M. Hare supports Hume in expressing that ‘is’ statements are descriptive, while ‘ought’ statements have some sort of recommendatory force; they are not descriptive at all. Hence deriving ‘ought’ from ‘is’ is like defining a non-natural element in a naturalistic manner.
5.2.8 The terrorists also commit a number of logical fallacies in the form of fallacy of relevance, fallacy of presumption and that of ambiguity. The fallacies of relevance committed by them are as follows:

(i) The fallacy of 'ad populum' – an appeal to emotion – this takes place when reasoning is substituted by expressive language and other devices calculated to excite enthusiasm, excitement, anger or hate. The strategically planned speeches of Osama Bin Laden of Afghanistan or Prabhakaran of Sri Lanka, or Yasser Arafat of Palestine excite the listeners to a state of religious or patriotic frenzy, which ultimately enables them to achieve their goal.

(ii) The terrorists commit the fallacy of 'ad verecundiam' – an appeal to inappropriate authority. The political goal of the terrorists is often settled and implemented by some fanatics or by dogmatic leaders like Bin Laden who surely did not have such authority.

(iii) The terrorists also fall prey to the fallacy of 'ad baculum', i.e., an appeal to force. They use covert force or threat of force to bring about the acceptance of their position. They think that only force can make people listen obey them but such a thought has no rational basis.

(iv) The terrorists commit 'fallacy of presumption', i.e., the fallacy of converse accident, when they generally apply the 'collective guilt' argument. Such a fallacy takes place when a principle that can be applied to a handful is applied to all. This is something like inductive generalization in logic where the logicians pass from 'some to all'. The terrorists may experience the fact that some of the government officials are immoral and exploiters, from which they come to the conclusion that the entire government is guilty, and therefore, needs to be overthrown.

(v) The terrorists also commit the 'fallacy of division'. Here they impose the attribute of whole on the part. According to them since the entire government is guilty, each and every member being a part of it is equally guilty. Iriansky observes, when one wants to deal with the corrupt government (bourgeoisie regime), i.e., the bourgeoisie in the abstract (at the class as a whole), one starts hitting at any bourgeoisie – because every bourgeoisie is a criminal. This is a reflection of the need for a scapegoat. The abstract targets (the state or the
government) are inaccessible. So terror tactics are applied upon those who are easily available, namely, the citizens of the government.

These are fallacies committed by terrorists when they give arguments in favour of their action.

As citizens of a country the terrorists should abide by the laws of the country. No doubt they are morally justified to protest against the government oppression of that particular country. But breaking law and bringing about indiscriminate violence to the government which is elected by them, cannot be morally justified.

Now if the terrorists break laws in this way then they are either convicted according to the penal code of that country, or they are not considered as citizens any longer and are sent to exile (e.g. Laden was exiled by the Saudi government in 1991). Hence they would possess no right to protest against the government. Any protest from any citizen of a foreign country (just as Laden was sheltered by the Taliban government of Afghanistan) cannot be entertained by the government. Here the terrorists can reply by saying that obedience towards the government is one's 'prima facie' duty; but saving one's country from the oppressive government is his 'actual duty'. W.D. Ross distinguishes between 'prima facie duty' and 'actual duty' where he says that, the former indicates a duty that is always to be acted upon unless it conflicts on a particular occasion with an equal or stronger duty. Hence, prima facie duties are not absolute and in the event of conflict, it is not the prima facie duty, but the actual duty that should be performed, as the situation demands. At this point we can admire the terrorists' noble intention, but we can at the same time question him that by killing the innocents which part of the country do they hope to save?

5.2.9 The terrorists claim that they, by using such (brutal) methods, create an ideal society.

First, the question arises can a positive goal be achieved by a negative method? Secondly an ideal society should have two aims – of ensuring no harm to its members, and the other of helping its members to live happily. Does terrorism fulfil any of these criteria an ideal society? The answer is in the negative.
These principles correspond to three principles of conduct — harm no one, to give every man what is his own, and to live piously Leibnitz attacks the three motives of these three principles — the first principle is attached to the motive of self-interest or self regard, which is to be subject to prudence, and prudence consists in the maxim of doing to others what we would wish for ourselves. Hence, if one wants goodness from others, then one has to be good to others. But the terrorists, by harming others, can never be good to them.

The second principle is attached to sense of humanity, which corresponds to love. The terrorists, however, neither love their country, nor their citizens, nor, again do they love themselves. Thus on the part of the terrorists sense of humanity is nil.

The third principle refers to the motive of religion. Leibnitz believed that God has an important role to play in the implementation of moral law. The third motive is then twisted by the terrorists to suite their purpose which is far from morality. Thus the terrorists’ dream of an ideal society does not stand at all, as the motives implemented not terrorists’ motives.

As C.A.J Coady in his book ‘The Morality of Terrorism’ remarks that, “one of the reasons why people are so disturbed by terrorist activities is that they find such activities deeply undermining of social realities with which their lives are enmeshed and which provide a background of normalcy against which they can go about their ordinary living” (p.66). The constant fear of the citizens that they might be attacked by the terrorists at any time and at any place, takes away their energy and mental strength. This, in turn, robs the nation of its energy and spirit, thus hampering the well-being of the nation and of its people. In the modern times people seem to accept their death by terrorist activities as their natural destiny. This shows the feebleness of the minds of the common people which, undoubtedly, is a result of such never ending violence upon them.

Now, even if people realize that the existing government is incompetent, then also they would not like to take the risk of replacing this government with people who make their lives miserable (i.e., the terrorists). Between the two evils they would rather choose the lesser evil. For example, people of Afghanistan

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might not have been satisfied with the Nazi bulla government but surely they would not accept the Taliban government either.

Patriotism is not merely love for a piece of land, but it is love for a country which also includes its citizens. So it can never mean hatred for the numerous people living in it. How can the terrorists claim to be patriots, when they indiscriminately kill the innocents of a country? Many of them again posit the fact that their activity is for upholding Nationalism. But instead of upholding nationalism they are rather creating a 'perverted nationalism' which does not serve any one any good.

Terrorism would be greatly criticized by the environmentalists too, as the acts of violence disrupt the natural environ. Use of chemicals and bio-chemical weapons by the terrorists can cause great damage to nature. Moreover, due to such activities, a country’s natural resources might be at stake leading to inconvenience of not only trade and commerce, but also of agriculture as the lands may become barren.

5.2.10 Finally, it can be stated that the terrorists could be defeated by the following irrefutable argument which can be found in the article “On Terrorism”, by R. M. Hare, in the Journal of Value Enquiry; ed. By E. Laszlo and J. Wilbur P. 246 as follows:-

Either the terrorist must be prepared to use sufficient force against the representatives of the state to dislodge it from power, or he must resign himself to live as an internal alien in a world shaped by the state power.

It is well known that the terrorists’ strength is not a match to confront the state, and its machinery; they therefore adopt clandestine methods.

Therefore, he must refrain from his political plans to dislodge the state from its power by use of violent or hostile means.

The argument may be logically formed us:-

\[ p \lor q \]
\[ \neg p \vdash q. \]

\( p = \) terrorists must be prepared to use sufficient force against the representatives of the state to dislodge it from power.
Thus from the above arguments it is clearly seen that terrorism cannot be justified in any way, as the arguments against it are far more strong and more logical than the arguments in favour. Moreover, in a civilized society, such barbaric acts like terrorism cannot be entertained at all.

The acts of terrorism seem to have different meanings in time of peace than of war. In times of war terrorist acts come within the frame of Jus in Bello and are interpreted as war crimes against humanity. In peace time, its commission invites concern of the humanitarian group as well as of all involved in the general well being of this blessed earth. Thus acts of terrorism, whenever committed, is illegal, immoral, unlawful and should be condemned in absolute manner.

5.2.11 Earlier we had mentioned about the just war theory, but the classic just war theory does not really apply when the war or struggle is not between nations, but between a nation and a non-nation or non-state group. The just war theory had been named by some ‘thinkers as C and this new theory where the war is between the state and some non-state organisation is termed N. Through N the terrorists try to justify their view by stating that, they also have right intentions in fighting such a war; they too believe in the principle of proportionality (as they want to bring good over evil), this war, according to them, is the last resort since the government had always given them a deaf ear. Again as far as the principles of just cause and legitimate authorities go, – it can be said that if not all but some terrorists group do abide by such principles. In those cases such groups would be said to fight from within the moral realm. Where they actually depart from the realm is, in the ‘in Bello’ portion of just war theory. They can maintain the principle of proportionality though, but they do really go against the principle of discrimination, which must be accepted unanimously without any doubt.

At this point the terrorists go into denial. They present several reasons for denying their departure. They say that they can rightly seek vengeance, and can rightly apply the notion of ‘collective responsibility’ to blame to almost everyone in their opponent’s side, and can rightly fight as they do so out of necessity. But all their arguments fail. Most importantly, they fail because of the ease with which
they discount the status of their enemies. By their rhetoric, their enemies are guilty of crimes. But once their rhetoric is challenged, it becomes clear that it is morally impossible for terrorists to defend their own people, while butchering their enemies. In effect, terrorists who target ‘innocents’ deserve all the criticisms that they receive, for, in spite of their efforts, they do not uncover legitimate exceptions to the discrimination principle. Rather they violate the principle, in a most serious fashion. As they violate the principle jus in Bello – their ‘war’ cannot be considered as just. In fact in no way can we call terrorism moral neither can we morally support it. Such claims of the terrorists are therefore, superfluous and merely redundant.

So long we have discussed why terrorism is unjustified and identified one reason for it, namely, it kills the innocents. Now we would like go on to the question ‘what is so wrong in killing?’ and would try to answer it after the practical ethicist Peter Singer.

- Some say that human beings should not be slaughtered since they are members of the class Homosapien.

- Moreover, humans are self-conscious, rational beings – hence, they are superior to all other living creatures. Further, they have the capacity to improve the world and make a better place to live. Thus human beings cannot be meaninglessly slaughtered.

- Murder is wrong because it affects the victims directly and frustrates their future potentials.

- Again some thinkers (namely the classical Utilitarians) argue that terrorism is wrong not only because it harms the victims but because it traumatizes the other living beings, the survivors by such petrifying acts.

- According to preference utilitarianism, an action contrary to the preference of any being is, unless this preference is outweighed by contrary preferences, wrong. Killing a person who prefers to continue living is wrong, other things being equal. The wrong is said to be done to the victim whose preference here is thwarted.
• According to the classical utilitarian theory killing is wrong because of its side effects, which threaten the society at large with its negative impact and bring grave consequences for people who are still living.

• Again an argument states that the capacity to conceive of one as existing over time is a necessary condition of a right to life. Now this concept of right to life is related to the concept of desire to live. But the question arises that, if the person is unconscious or not fully conscious (as in case of sleep) or if the subject is an infant, then how do we know whether they have the desire to live. It has to be noted here that, when we are sleeping or are in a stage where we cannot express our desire to live, then such a desire for future existence does not cease to exist. The fact that they can conceive themselves for a continued existence over a period of time is the best proof for their right to life, irrespective of whether their desire for life is known by us or not.

• Man by virtue of being human beings possesses autonomy. By ‘autonomy’ as considered earlier, we mean the capacity to choose, to make and act on one’s own decisions. Rational and self-conscious beings presumably have this ability, whereas beings who can not consider the alternatives open to them are not capable of choosing in the required sense and, hence, can not be autonomous in the true sense. In particular, only a being who can grasp the difference between dying and continuing to live can autonomously choose to live. Hence killing a person who does not choose to die fails to respect that person’s autonomy; and, as the choice of living or dying, is about the most fundamental choice anyone can make, the choice on which all other choices depend killing a person who does not choose to die is the greatest possible violation of that person’s autonomy.

• Again as we value pleasure, killing those who lead pleasant lives eliminate the pleasure they would otherwise experience, therefore such killing is wrong. It is considered to be a good deed to increase the amount of pleasure in the world by increasing the number of pleasant lives and this is based on the other hand to reduce the amount of pleasure. Hence taking lives on this account is extremely wrong.
Above all these points, we feel that, killing is wrong not only because of the above mentioned reasons, but it is intrinsically wrong or wrong in itself. Hence terrorism which justifies killing cannot be justified at all — especially because here innocent killing is found at random.

References


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