TERRORISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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HOW TERRORISM ENDS

SARAH MARSDEN

Approaching the question of how terrorism ends appears relatively straightforward as there are, after all, only a limited number of options. Either groups are destroyed by the military or counterterrorism efforts, they implode, they transition into mainstream politics, or, very rarely, they succeed and disband. However, as with many seemingly straightforward questions in terrorism studies, scratch the surface and we find more questions than answers. For example, we have only a limited understanding of the nature of the interaction between counterterrorism initiatives and factionalization; the differences between leadership and cadre outcomes; and the relationship between political and organizational outcomes. Even the best way of conceptualizing the outcomes of violent political groups is subject to debate. It is at the boundaries of the seemingly straightforward dichotomies that characterize much of the literature on how terrorism ends that some of the most interesting questions lie.

Our understanding of why and how terrorism ends is underdeveloped, both empirically and methodologically. Much of the literature takes an aggregate approach to describing how terrorism ends, rather than offering cogent explanations or setting out causal mechanisms that might tell us why particular outcomes come about. Similarly, our understanding of the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts is demonstrably weak. There is, therefore, much left to learn about how and why terrorism ends. What follows reviews some of the main findings to date and looks forward to the questions that remain to be answered. We begin by looking at some of the ways in which the question of how terrorism ends has been approached in the literature, and go on to set out what we know about the main organizational outcomes of militant groups, before considering some of the precipitants of these outcomes. We will first look at external drivers, including the impact of different counterterrorism efforts, moving on to examine factors internal to groups, such as factionalization and burn-out, before reviewing some of the debates over whether terrorism is successful at achieving the political aims of its enactors.

Conceptualizing how terrorism ends

Before beginning our exploration of how terrorism ends, we need to first establish what it is we are seeking to explain. The end of terrorism can be understood as the

cessation or dramatic decrease in the use of terroristic violence.[1] Groups may become incapable of using terrorism, choose to move away from violence, or their violence may come to be perceived as legitimate. For example, if a group gains political power their violence is no longer that of an illegitimate opponent but can instead be seen as the appropriate use of force to defend the people; alternatively, it may be interpreted as the repressive behavior of a brutal regime. Similarly, where the context changes, such that a campaign of terrorism evolves into an insurgency or civil war, violence may no longer be conceptualized as terrorism. Interpreting how to appropriately categorize violence is, of course, wrapped up in the thorny issue of defining terrorism, and is not something we will consider here. What is important to note, however, is that there are a number of paths away from terrorism, and these relate to capacity, coercion, agency, and position in the political context.[2]

A number of further dimensions are useful when approaching the question of how terrorism ends. Clark McCauley helpfully delineates between actors, actions and outcomes when conceptualizing how and why groups move away from terrorism (McCauley, 2011). Relevant actors include the militant group, its supporters and competitors, as well as state opponents, their sympathizers, and those in competition for state power. These actors may engage in a variety of actions that influence how terrorism ends. On the militant side, these relate to the degree of violence and its target, and the extent of political engagement, including developing alliances or engaging in negotiations. On the government side, a range of counterterrorism responses might be important, including target hardening, attacking militant groups, and reducing levels of support (through repression or incentivization), as well as negotiations and inducements for individual defection or group cessation. Finally, a range of outcomes can emerge from the interaction between actors and actions: militant groups may choose to desist from using terrorism, or the organization can break down, either due to a split or because of loss of support, members, or leadership, disabling the organization.

Using these three dimensions to conceptualize how terrorism ends brings valuable clarity. McCauley's approach delineates the actions that lead to particular outcomes, for example, differentiating between decapitation (action) and organizational disablement (outcome). Second, it draws a distinction between political outcomes (e.g. success) and organizational outcomes (e.g. disbandment, or a shift into politics). Finally, setting out actors, actions and outcomes highlights the dynamic and complex range of factors we need to be aware of, taking into account different levels of analysis and their interactions. Hence, whilst the focus of this chapter is on outcomes, it is vital to take into account the range of actors that affect outcomes, and the actions that precipitate them. In exploring this complexity what follows first establishes the organizational outcomes of militant groups, before going on to consider some of the actions that inform these outcomes.

How does terrorism end?

In setting out what we know about how terrorism ends we will rely on three major studies that have catalogued the outcomes of a large number of militant groups.

The first of these was carried out by Seth Jones and Martin Libicki (2008). Their study analysed 648 groups operating between 1968 and 2006. Of these only 10 percent ended because they had achieved their ultimate goals. The majority of militant groups ended by joining the political process, an outcome accounting for 43 percent of their sample. Other outcomes catalogued by Jones and Libicki were that 136 groups splintered into factions, a figure equating to 21 percent of groups in the RAND-MIPT database from which they drew their sample. The other major outcome was disruption by the police (40 percent), or, much less frequently, by military forces (7 percent). Jones and Libicki's account focuses most heavily on organizational outcomes, and less on the actions that brought them about, instead setting out the range of end games for violent oppositional groups.

The second, and perhaps most comprehensive, account of how terrorism ends is Audrey Kurth Cronin's book of the same name (Cronin, 2009). Cronin reaches a similar conclusion to Jones and Libicki regarding the extent to which militant groups achieve their ultimate objectives. Based on analysis of 457 groups active from 1968 onwards, only 4.4 percent fully achieved their aims, 2 percent achieved substantial concessions, with a further 6.4 percent managing to achieve limited strategic objectives. This means 87 percent of groups failed to achieve any of their primary aims. In addition to political success, the final outcomes of the groups in Cronin's study are categorized according to whether they were decapitated, by losing their leadership; reached a negotiated settlement; experienced repression resulting in defeat and elimination; transitioned to different forms of violence; or failed owing to group collapse or a loss of support. Exact figures for these various outcomes were not provided in Cronin's account, which focused most heavily on the impact of negotiations, the groups' lifespans, and the extent to which they achieved their political objectives. Although an important analysis of how terrorism ends, the categories of decapitation, negotiation, repression, transition, and failure conflate organizational and political outcomes and the actions that precipitate them, making it harder to develop clear causal accounts of what influences particular outcomes, although these are explored further in individual case studies.

The third and most recent of the major studies into the ultimate fate of militant groups, by Leonard Weinberg (2012), finds little to contradict Jones and Libicki or Cronin. Of the 268 groups Weinberg looked at, 40 percent ended through policing, 43 percent by politicization, 7 percent by military force, and 10 percent achieved victory. It is perhaps not surprising that Jones and Libicki and Weinberg reach exactly the same findings – displayed in Figure 8.1. Although they used different datasets, both studies are likely to be looking at a similar sample of groups, using a similar framework for interpreting outcomes, and, therefore, reaching similar conclusions. What is perhaps a more striking finding, across all three studies, is the abysmal failure of terrorism to achieve the political goals it was ostensibly employed to promote. On the basis of these analyses it is difficult to disagree with an earlier assessment by Ariel Merari (1993) which, using a different dataset, led him to conclude that 'the overwhelming majority of the many hundreds of terrorist groups which have existed in the second half of this century have failed miserably to attain their goal' (Merari, 1993: 384–5). We will return to this issue towards the end of
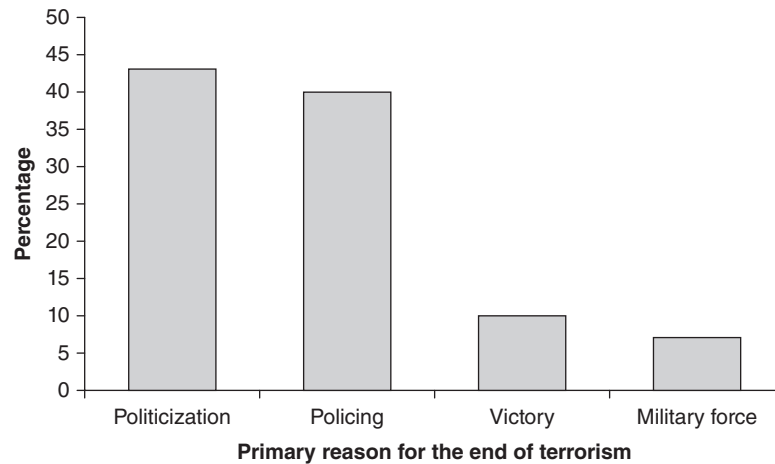
Figure 8.1   Primary reasons for how terrorism ends, drawn from Jones and Libicki (2008) and Weinberg (2012)

the chapter. For now it is enough to note that, according to the most comprehensive accounts of how terrorism ends, the majority of groups cease violence, either because they enter the political process, or as a result of policing.

Having laid out the broad sweep of organizational and political outcomes identified in the literature, we now turn our attention to some of the actions that have informed these outcomes. Clark McCauley delineates between internal factors impacting groups, for example related to membership and organization, and external factors, for example military offensives against the group (McCauley, 2011). Reflecting this approach, what follows describes some of the external reasons for why and how terrorism ends, before looking at internal causes for group dissolution or a cessation of violence. Our discussion concentrates on groups that have ended, rather than transitioned into other forms of opponent, such as political organizations or organized crime. Through the ensuing discussion it is important to remain aware that the distinctions between internal and external factors are employed more for the purposes of presentational clarity than to claim to represent an empirical 'truth' about how terrorism ends. Even though, as Weinberg helpfully emphasizes, analysts are generally looking for central tendencies rather than single factors (Weinberg, 2012), there are significant challenges in identifying the primary cause for a particular outcome. The reasons groups fail or move away from violence are complex, and intra- and extra-group factors are likely to interact in most cases.

External factors

In looking at some of the external factors that can inform how terrorism ends, we focus primarily on state actions. Although a number of external actors may impact how terrorism ends, including competition from other non-state groups, the primary external

determinant of how terrorism ends is generally the state. There are a number of ways states may respond to terrorism that can be delineated along two continua. First, there is the level of force involved, from the most severe form of violence, including assassination, through to arrest, and, at the least forceful end of the spectrum, covert surveillance. Second, we can delineate counterterrorism operations based on the specificity of the tactic, determined by the number of people it affects, ranging from targeting militant leaders to widespread violence or surveillance affecting whole communities. For example, large-scale violent repression of those perceived to support a militant group is both the most forceful and least specific form of response, whereas intelligence gathering against named militant leaders is the least forceful and most specific.

The range of options available to states is obviously wide-ranging; we will focus on those counterterrorism tools most commonly discussed in the literature. Methods involving the use of force include repression and military operations against militant organizations, and decapitation, either through the killing or arrest of leaders. At the less forceful end of the counterterrorism spectrum we will examine counter-intelligence and law-enforcement options for responding to violent oppositional groups.

Repression

Given the disproportionate capacity for violence between state and non-state actors, it might appear that of all the possible counterterrorism responses repression is most likely to destroy militant groups and secure state control. However, using military force can have a range of effects that go beyond disrupting the group. These can include impacting the perceived legitimacy of the state, consolidating support for the militant organization, the substitution of one type of target for another, and provoking a violent backlash (Duyvesteyn, 2008). Despite this, repression has remained a well–used tool against violent opposition throughout history. Generally understood to include the threat or use of physical sanction against opponents, repression continues to be employed in the response to terrorism today.[3]

Cronin suggests a number of reasons why states respond to terrorism with violent repression: catharsis; assuaging domestic pressure to 'do something'; retributive 'justice'; deterrence; to demonstrate resolve, both to the home audience and to allies; and to destroy a group's capacity to act against the state (Cronin, 2009). Cronin describes a range of cases of state repression against militant groups, including Russia's move against Narodnaya Volya in the 1850s and Chechen separatists in the 1990s, Peru's violent repression of Sendero Luminoso, and Egypt's response to the Muslim Brotherhood (Cronin, 2009).

Empirical evidence suggests a number of dimensions of repression that are important to take into account when examining coercive force by states. These include the timing and the target of violence, the timeframe for assessing violent responses in the face of repression, and the extent to which state behavior accords with militant aims to provoke a disproportionate response. There are also a number of actors that can be involved in violence directed at oppositional groups. Although perhaps most commonly associated with military intervention, paramilitaries can also be involved in counterterrorism operations. The Autodefensas

Unidas de Colombia (AUC) famously received plentiful support from the Colombian government to fight the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (Mazzei, 2009). As well as being deployed domestically, as in Colombia, militaristic responses can be international in scope. The global war on terror is perhaps the most famous such operation, designed to destroy al-Qaeda and – as originally conceived – international terrorism anywhere in the world (Burke, 2011). Alternatively, the scale of deployment can be relatively limited, as was the case with the comparatively smaller-scale US air strikes against Libya in 1986, retaliating against bombings directed at US targets in Greece and Germany (Prunckun and Mohr, 1997).

TEXTBOX 7   CASE STUDY: THE FUERZAS ARMADAS REVOLUCIONARIAS DE COLOMBIA – EJÉRCITO DEL PUEBLO [THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA – PEOPLE'S ARMY] (FARC-EP/FARC)

Year formed

Originated in May 1964 as the military arm of the Colombian Communist Party. Formally recognized as a guerrilla army in 1966.

Area of operation

Colombia is a mountainous and tropical state with a highly dispersed population. In keeping with traditional guerrilla tactics the FARC's operations were originally restricted to the countryside and mountainous areas. Its core zones of operation are divided into seven 'blocs' across the country, with FARC-related violence occurring across and between these delineated areas.

By the 1980s the FARC began expanding its operations in the coca-rich departments of Caquetá, Meta, and the Magdalena Valley to begin extracting new sources of revenue from the drug trade. Involvement in the cocaine industry and their declining support base in the countryside has brought the FARC closer to the urban centres of Colombia, and since the 1990s they have sporadically attacked large towns and cities.

Ideological framework

Explicitly Revolutionary Socialist, with its doctrine largely focused on the protection of peasants' land from business and landowners, the equal distribution of Colombia's countryside to the peasants, and the rejection of the privatization of Colombia's natural resources. The social unrest and disorder that emerged from Colombia's bloodiest civil war, La Violencia (1948–58), provided the nascent Communist guerrilla movement with an opportunity to establish 'independent republics' in Colombia's political vacuums. However, once the war ended, the communists became the target of Colombia's major political parties, backed by the USA, who needed to

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reassert their control over the state. Since then the FARC has waged a guerrilla insurgency against the political and military institutions of Colombia.

Whilst the FARC continues to reassert its political position *vis-à-vis* land reform, its involvement in the drug trade has prompted debate as to whether the FARC's motivation has transitioned from political grievance to criminal greed. The killing and kidnapping of civilians who refuse to cooperate in coca growing has also besmirched their image as protectors of the peasant class. In the current peace talks with the Colombian government the key issue for the FARC has been land reform and the regulation, rather than prohibition, of coca cultivation.

Disengagement

To encourage the decline of the FARC the Colombian state has offered 'rehabilitation programmes' to members since the 1960s. However, these initiatives have failed to result in the collective disengagement of combatants, largely due to the guerrillas' mistrust of the government and fear of reprisals. Colombia's current rehabilitation programme provides disengaged combatants with political amnesty, healthcare and education – if they prove that they haven't participated in acts of terrorism or human-rights violations. Peace talks have gone as far as offering the FARC the chance to retain territory they already control, but these have failed and resulted in a surge in violence in 1999. The Colombian government is currently offering the FARC an opportunity to join the legal political process if they demobilize entirely.

More recently there have been increasing numbers of individual disengagements as a result of ideological disillusionment. Nonetheless, the Colombian government will continue to face difficulties in encouraging the impoverished younger members to disengage while the drug trade continues to be so lucrative for them.

Given these various dimensions of scope, target, timing, and measures of success, what do we know about the effectiveness of repressive tactics against violent opponents? Given that repression is rarely the only form of response states use when responding to terrorism, it is difficult to separate out the effect of repression from other forms of counterterrorist action. Omar Ashour, in a detailed account of how a number of Islamist movements moved away from terrorism, argues that repression plays an important part in the renunciation of violence (Ashour, 2009). In the case of Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (in Egypt), the role of repression was seen at two stages in the movement's history. Initially, it was important in the radicalization of individuals in the early days of opposition, and, latterly, long-term, more severe repression in prisons led to a change in attitude and ideology. The leadership reached the conclusion that the torture, stigma, discrimination, and ill health suffered by members and their families was unlikely

if God was 'on their side' (Ashour, 2009: 100). This played a significant part in the de-radicalization of the movement.

In a similarly rigorous account, Mohammed Hafez uses the timing and target of repression to explain Islamist rebellions (Hafez, 2003). Distinguishing between preemptive and reactive, and indiscriminate and selective repression, Hafez finds that 'if state repression is reactive and indiscriminate, it will likely induce rebellion. If, on the other hand, state repression is preemptive and selective, it will likely deter mass rebellion' (Hafez, 2003: 77). Selective repression signals to supporters and sympathizers that only those at the core of the rebellion will be punished, and encourages latent supporters to avoid becoming too heavily involved. Indiscriminate repression leads those on the periphery to seek protection and those more heavily involved to harden their resolve. Further support for the importance of discrimination and the timing of military actions comes from Israel, where Efraim Benmelech and colleagues found that house demolitions targeting the families of suicide bombers resulted in fewer martyrdom operations, whilst preventative home demolitions saw a significant increase in the same (Benmelech et al., 2010). Similarly, Laura Dugan and Erica Chenoweth found that indiscriminate repressive actions against Palestinian militants led to an increase in terrorism, whilst indiscriminate conciliatory actions saw a decrease (Dugan and Chenoweth, 2012).

The timeframe by which any impact on militancy is judged is also important to take into account. For example, Walter Enders and Todd Sandler found that military retaliations against Libya by the USA in 1986 led to a short-term increase in attacks, but had little appreciable impact in the longer term (Enders and Sandler, 1993). Similarly, in an assessment of attacks in Israel between 1968 and 1989 Bryan Brophy-Baermann and John Conybeare found that only one major retaliation against Palestinian militants had any effect on reducing the number of terrorist attacks, the remainder having no observable impact (Brophy-Baermann and Conybeare, 1994).

Taking account of the empirical record assessing repressive and militaristic responses to terrorism, several points are worth underlining. The first is that states respond to terrorism using military force for a variety of reasons, and whilst decreasing the number of attacks may be an important measure – and is the one that has primarily been assessed in the literature – it is not the only issue we should take into account. Other metrics, such as assuaging domestic pressure, or demonstrating resolve to a wider audience, are also relevant when assessing the success or failure of military retaliation against terrorism. Secondly, looking at a tactic as broad as repression demands a careful approach, taking account of a number of important dimensions. The timing of an operation is relevant, as is the level of discrimination employed. Similarly, the timeframe by which we assess the effect of any military action needs to be considered. Finally, it is vital to assess how repressive responses interact with other forms of counterterrorism in order to develop a clearer account of its effects and the extent to which they accord with the aims of those instigating the operation.

Decapitation

Assassinating or capturing leaders, or core members of militant groups, has a long history in statecraft. The logic is simple: remove those who provide ideological or strategic leadership and the organization will be weaker, with a greater chance of failing entirely, or, at the very least, posing less of a threat. It is perhaps not difficult to see the appeal of targeted killing – it is more proportionate than the types of repressive military intervention we have just discussed; it is less resource intensive, more discriminatory; and it minimizes the number of civilians and military personnel likely to be killed or injured. It is, therefore, often seen as the 'least–bad option' (David, 2002). It certainly appears to be an attractive strategy for states; since the ban on assassinations by the USA was lifted following 9/11, targeted killing has become a central part of US counterterrorism strategy, with thousands killed in drone strikes in recent years, primarily in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia.[4] However, important ethical and legal challenges face advocates of targeted killings, as well as the need to consider the potential impact on relations between states, and the possibility of bolstering support for militant groups when civilians are mistakenly killed (Plaw, 2008). Whilst these debates are played out, one of the questions determining the utility of attempting to 'decapitate' organizations is its efficacy.

Efforts to assess the effectiveness of targeted killing as a strategy face significant challenges. The mechanism by which targeted killings may work to reduce the likelihood of terrorism is uncertain and differs across cases; as Cronin suggests, 'Charismatic leadership is not important to all groups at all stages and at all times' (Cronin, 2009: 15). As this point acknowledges, the role of leaders, and the impact of their removal from the field, are highly dynamic factors, subject to shifting perceptions, intra-group processes, and the wider political context. A robust account of why terrorism ends (or continues) following decapitation promises a response to these issues, but much of the existing empirical work falls short of this.

Increasing attention has, nevertheless, been directed towards the question of whether and how targeted killings end terrorism. Three major studies have addressed this issue in recent years.[5] Jenna Jordan, Bryan Price, and Patrick Johnston have looked across hundreds of cases to determine the efficacy of 'targeting top terrorists' (Jordan, 2009; Johnston, 2012; Price, 2012). No consensus has emerged from this work. Jenna Jordan looked at 198 cases where the leader or senior figure of authority was killed (Jordan, 2009). Jordan's primary measure of success was whether or not the group remained inactive for two years following the strike. Compared with a baseline figure of militant-group decline, Jordan concluded that decapitation does not make it more likely that an organization will collapse. In fact, Jordan found that those groups that lost their leader were actually likely to survive longer than those that had not.

In contrast to Jordan's findings, Bryan Price, who looked at 207 groups and 299 leadership changes, concluded that groups that lost their leader had a higher mortality rate than those that did not (Price, 2012). Price's analysis also revealed that the longer a group lasts, the less impact leadership decapitation has – when groups had been around for twenty years or more, losing their leader made little difference.

Further results from Price's research suggest that groups are negatively impacted by the loss of their leader regardless of whether they are arrested, killed, or arrested then killed. Finally, Price found that group size was not a relevant factor in determining the effect of leadership decapitation, and that groups adhering to a religious ideology experienced a greater negative effect than those following nationalist ideologies when they lost their leader.

The third of the major recent studies, by Patrick Johnston, analysed 118 efforts to decapitate militant groups across 90 counter-insurgency campaigns. Johnston found that killing senior leaders supported counter-insurgency aims across a range of measures (Johnston, 2012). In particular, Johnston's results suggest that decapitation serves to increase the chance that an insurgency will be defeated, and decreases the number of attacks, as well as bringing the overall level of violence down. However, Johnston is careful to point out that decapitation is not a silver bullet, and that the probability of killing senior leaders having a positive impact (i.e. in line with state aims) on an insurgency is around 25 to 30 percent. Importantly, Johnston's analysis compared successful and failed decapitation attempts, making it a valuable addition to the literature. However, he and Price both differ from Jordan on leadership decapitation, which raises the question of why this might be the case.

A number of challenges face efforts to interpret the effectiveness of decapitation that perhaps help to explain these diverging conclusions, not least of which is how we might most appropriately measure success. For example, we could look at the number and position of those killed, changes in the number of terrorist attacks, the failure of the organization, impact on group numbers, and a willingness to engage in ceasefires. Jordan sets the bar extremely high by demanding that groups remain inactive for two years following the death of their leader, whilst Price makes the case for looking at a longer timeframe. A second issue that is relevant to explaining these differing findings is sample selection. Johnston is alone in looking at insurgent organizations, rather than what are generally described as terrorist groups, which target civilians. Notwithstanding the difficulties associated with differentiating between these groups, using this selection criterion means he is using a different sample, which in turn should caution against making direct comparisons across studies. A further difference is the measure by which leaders are identified – Jordan and Price consider leaders and the 'upper echelon', whilst Johnston only looks at cases where the most powerful individual was removed. The challenges in interpreting definitions of success, sample selection and the criteria for defining leaders are compounded by the difficulties of accessing reliable data. Even the most rigorous analysis can face problems of accuracy when looking across hundreds of cases, particularly given the limits on open-source data. Hence, it is important to approach the conclusions of such studies – particularly where there is disagreement – with care.[6]

Alongside these broader studies, it remains important to look at individual cases of decapitation to try to understand its effects. In her analysis of the question Cronin points out that the effectiveness of a decapitation strategy depends on the extent to which the group relies on the leader, the group's popularity, and its level of mobilization. Whilst this does not perhaps offer the generalizations of the broader studies described above, these issues go some way to demonstrating the complex nature of the leader's role in militant groups, and the differing ways

particular groups are likely to respond to their loss. Broad level analyses such as those of Jordan, Price, and Johnston have laid out the landscape of the impact of targeted killings; it is now necessary to look at the contours of these issues. Given the import of any ensuing policy prescriptions, we need to develop our understanding of particular cases, as well as carefully assessing the moral and legal arguments associated with decapitation as a strategy.

Policing and intelligence

Moving down our continuum of force, governments have developed a plethora of responses to terrorism that preclude violence, ranging from pre-emptive arrest to promoting community cohesion.[7] The most pertinent strand of UK counterterrorism policy for our discussion is called Pursue, which focuses on stopping attacks. The others are prevent – stopping people engaging in terrorism; protect – strengthening protection against attacks; and prepare – mitigating the impact of attacks (HM Government, 2011). The focus, therefore, is on detecting, investigating, and disrupting terrorism, both domestically and internationally.

A number of organizations are involved in this type of counterterrorism work, most notably the police, security, and intelligence services. One of their core roles is intelligence gathering, something widely considered vital in counterterrorism efforts (Wilkinson, 2011). Broadly speaking, intelligence can be derived from people (known as HUMINT) and from electronic sources (SIGINT, or signals intelligence). Reviewing some of the attempts to define intelligence, Michael Warner concludes that intelligence is concerned with producing and disseminating information, is reliant on confidential sources and methods employed by state agents for state purposes, and – perhaps controversially – is primarily concerned with foreign entities (Warner, 2009). Many would argue that domestic intelligence gathering is as relevant as that focused on threats from overseas; however, perhaps the central point is that intelligence is covert and confidential.

David Charters describes counterterrorism intelligence in terms of three facets: warning intelligence, operational intelligence, and criminal-punishment intelligence (Charters, 1991). Warning intelligence aims to identify attacks and thereby safeguard targets; operational intelligence works to develop a picture of militant activity, including recruitment routes, group membership, leaders, associates, patterns of behavior, sources of funding and weapons, as well as developing knowledge of plans and plots; whilst criminal-punishment intelligence provides the information that enables successful prosecution. None of these are without controversy; debates over appropriate limits to state surveillance have most recently been seen in the context of the National Security Agency's surveillance program, the extent of which was revealed by former employee and whistleblower Edward Snowden (Byman and Wittes, 2014). Similarly, debates in the UK over 'closed material procedures', where secret information can be used against a defendant in court, but may not be seen by them, illustrate the sensitivities over releasing confidential information into normally public settings.[8] It is perhaps in this realm that the tension between the principles of liberal democracy and the need for security is most commonly seen, raising the question of the most appropriate balance between individual rights and liberties, and security (Wilkinson, 2011).

Martha Crenshaw sets out a number of further issues facing counterterrorism efforts (Crenshaw, 2010). The first is the cross-border nature of terrorism operations, no more emblematically exemplified than in al-Qaeda's global jihad. A further issue is the extent of state involvement in terrorism – the ongoing uncertainty over responsibility for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie is just one case in point. These issues make cross-border cooperation and international consensus on how best to respond to particular threats both extremely important and deeply problematic. Differing levels of commitment to the rule of law are just one challenge facing criminal-justice approaches to counterterrorism. The process of deporting Abu Qatada from the UK to Jordan took eight years, in part because of the possibility that evidence extracted under torture would be used against him. A further question Crenshaw raises, which has received differing responses from agencies within and across borders, is the stage at which the state should intervene in the 'causal chain' of terrorism. This raises questions about when freedom of speech becomes a license to incite violence, when freedom to worship without fear of surveillance becomes a price worth paying for security, and when it is appropriate to restrict someone's movements without testing the evidence against them in a court of law. A relatively limited evidence base from which to develop appropriate policy responses compounds these challenges.

Inevitably, the secrecy associated with counterterrorism work makes assessing its process and outcome something of a challenge. Indeed, our knowledge about the effectiveness of counterterrorism policy is relatively poorly developed. In a major review of the literature on counterterrorism published in 2006 Cynthia Lum and colleagues found that only seven of 20,000 studies evaluated the effect of counterterrorism empirically (Lum et al., 2006). Little has improved in the intervening years; as John Horgan suggests, 'counterterrorism is rarely evidence or outcome-based' (Horgan, 2005: 161). This is against the background that counterterrorism and intelligence – particularly warning intelligence – needs to be effective all the time to avoid devastating consequences. As the IRA famously stated following the Brighton bombing in 1984, which targeted the governing Conservative party and attempted to kill its leader, Margaret Thatcher: 'Today we were unlucky, but remember we only have to be lucky once. You will have to be lucky always' (BBC, n.d.).

Assessing the effectiveness of counterterrorism faces the challenge that relevant information is often classified, whilst appropriate criteria for assessing effectiveness is difficult to determine and can change depending on the political context (Freese, 2014). Similarly, the most appropriate way of framing counterterrorism evaluation is problematic. In a review of evaluative work in the field Nick Adams and colleagues found efforts were either trying to look across entire national counterterrorism programs, which had the effect of conflating successes and failures, or research examined individual cases in detail, offering few comparative insights (Adams et al., 2011). In response, Adams et al. looked at individual policies, and held them against their stated aims, alongside considering second-order effects of counterterrorism policy. They concluded that the least-controversial approaches to counterterrorism are likely to be the most effective. Most plots were foiled by routine police work, including information from the public and from

overseas intelligence. Conversely, Adams et al.'s study found no evidence to support the use of controversial counterterrorism tactics such as 'enhanced interrogation' and ethnic and religious profiling. Indeed, they argued that, given the importance of community intelligence, such controversial tactics can actually alienate those who are in a position to provide valuable information, and so may actually be counterproductive. Whilst these conclusions should be interpreted in light of the relatively weak evidence base on which there is to draw, Adams et al.'s study underlines the importance of clearly specifying appropriate evaluative criteria, and the need to consider unintended consequences of counterterrorism policies.

To supplement the above discussion on warning and operational intelligence, we will conclude this section by looking at Christopher Hewitt's research on arrest after an attack, which falls under criminal-investigation intelligence (Hewitt, 2014). Here, the appropriate measure of success is relatively straightforward: effective counterterrorism work is seen in the successful arrest and prosecution of those who have carried out an attack. In evaluating the main tools used by US police when investigating fatal terrorism attacks, Hewitt identified seven types of police action: crime-scene investigation, questioning witnesses, routine policing, informers, surveillance, tips from the public, and rewards. When looking at all fatal terrorist attacks since 1968, in which the attacker had not been killed or immediately surrendered, Hewitt found that there were differences between the most effective forms of policing against militant organizations and unaffiliated individuals. Informers and surveillance were more important against organizations, whilst witness identification and information from the public were more effective against unaffiliated individuals. Overall, routine policing, the use of informers, and information from the public were the most important factors in successfully identifying and capturing those responsible for attacks. Hewitt also looked, more briefly, at some of the main factors implicated in detecting plots, finding that undercover agents and informants had a substantial role in many operations, as did surveillance, although to a lesser extent. Indeed, a number of these have been something closer to entrapment than undercover policing.

The police and security services play a vital role in counterterrorism work. Preventing terrorism and arresting those who have carried out attacks are central to national security. However, as we have seen, there are important debates over the extent of state powers, and, given the necessarily covert nature of this work, appropriate forms of oversight are particularly important – not only to ensure that counterterrorism work is effectively managed, but also so that the public, and the community which often provides vital intelligence and information, does not feel alienated from the broader project of enhancing national security. In light of the wider question as to whether terrorism is successful, one of its most important victories, arguably, is when terrorism plays a role in undermining those liberal democratic principles to which many states aspire. As the Norwegian Prime Minister said on the anniversary of Anders Behring Breivik's attack: 'The bomb and the gun shots were meant to change Norway. The Norwegian people answered by embracing our values. The perpetrator lost. The people won' (Associated Press, 2012). However, before looking at whether terrorism is effective we will first consider some of the internal reasons why terrorism ends.

Internal

Internal reasons associated with how terrorism ends have been characterized as either leading to an organization becoming disabled or splitting up (McCauley, 2011). A group may become disabled for a number of reasons, most obviously due to a loss of personnel. Members may burn out owing to the fatigue associated with high-risk underground activism. If members defect in sufficiently large numbers this can also signal the end of the group. Internal processes such as disagreements or consistent failure to achieve political gains can also lead to defection (Horgan, 2009a). The state can play a role in encouraging disengagement, for example, through amnesties. Groups may also end because of a loss of support, or due to a failure to inspire the next generation to continue violent action. Alternatively, groups can splinter into different factions because of ideological, strategic, or personality differences.

It is important to stress that these factors are likely to interact with external actions. Pressure from counterterrorism efforts can impact internal group dynamics, whilst attempts to discredit a group's political message can affect the transmission of ideas between generations. Our knowledge of these issues is growing but still relatively limited, and cogent explanations for how and why internal group processes impact how terrorism ends are relatively limited. With this in mind, what follows sets out some of the literature on internal factors associated with how terrorism ends, beginning with organizational disabling and decline, then moving then on to look at factionalization and split.

Organizational decline

Describing the circumstances under which 'terrorism defeats itself', Cronin describes a number of features that can cause a group to implode (Cronin, 2009). The first of these is a failure of generational transition. Taking a longer-term view, and looking across campaigns and cycles of protest, a changing political context or an inability to frame issues in a way that encourages ongoing militancy can mean a group fails to pass the cause on to the next generation. A further cause of organizational decline described by Cronin sees leaders lose operational control. Al-Qaeda's ongoing struggles with its affiliates and adherents, perhaps most emblematically seen in the debates over appropriate levels and targets of violence between al-Qaeda leaders and the then head of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, exemplify these problems (Hafez, 2007; Moghadam and Fishman, 2010). Zarqawi's excessive violence was one of the reasons for the failure of his project in Iraq, resulting in a backlash that ultimately led to the Awakening movement, involving previously allied groups fighting against al-Qaeda in Iraq (Haykel, 2010; McCary, 2009).

Voluntary exit from militancy is a further reason why terrorism ends. Individual disengagement from terrorism has been characterized as involving push and pull factors (Bjørgo, 2009). Push factors relate to unpleasant aspects of being part of the extremist group, whilst pull factors refer to factors that become increasingly attractive when compared with ongoing involvement in violence. Tore Bjørgo suggests that push factors include negative social sanctions – for example, social

stigma and societal disapproval; losing faith in the ideology or politics of the group; the feeling that things are going too far; a sense of disillusion; a loss of status; and a sense of exhaustion. With respect to pull factors, these are thought to include the desire for a 'normal life'; the feeling of getting too old; potentially negative effects on career and personal prospects; and the desire to establish a family or serious relationship. Individuals can also be incentivized to leave organizations voluntarily – for example, when defection is encouraged through the offer of reduced sentences or more favorable conditions in prison, as was the case with the Brigate Rosse in Italy (della Porta, 2013).

Disenchantment, because of a dissonance between what motivated the person to become involved and the actual experience of involvement, can play a role in why people leave militant groups, as can burn-out (Horgan, 2009a). When it becomes impossible to maintain the momentum necessary to continue a campaign through fatigue and exhaustion, individuals can leave. Clandestine violence can be highly stressful, exacting a significant emotional toll. It can also be physically exhausting, as one member of Brigate Rosse described: 'I got between three and four hours' sleep a night ... when they [police] knocked on my door that morning, my first thought was "I knew it"; the second was "thank goodness, more sleep"' (della Porta, 2013: 279). Tore Bjørgo noted a similar experience in an account of disengagement from skinhead and extreme-right militant nationalists (Bjørgo, 2009). Whilst the excitement of being involved in a violent underground movement can be highly stimulating, over long periods of time it can also be exhausting and, ultimately, unsustainable.

Disillusion because of internal conflict over tactics, strategy, politics, or ideology can lead to significant internal group divisions, which can be an important reason why terrorism ends. For example, John Horgan suggests that differences of tactics, alongside difficulties in the relationship between Mohammed Nassir Bin Abbas and Jemaah Islamiya leaders, led to the former's disengagement form the movement (Horgan, 2009b). As well as infighting leading to individuals leaving an organization, in some cases comrades or leaders can kill members – for example, if the bonds of trust break down to such an extent that group members are no longer believed to be trustworthy or sufficiently committed to the cause. At its most extreme this can lead to the dissolution of the group – for example, Abu Nidal lost many of his men over the years as he tortured, dismissed, killed, or demoted his followers. In a particularly brutal purge in the late 1980s up to 150 cadre were killed, ultimately leading to a loss of state support, which precipitated the decline of the Abu Nidal Organization (Wege, 1991; Seale, 1992). Internal division can lead to individuals leaving a group, but it can also result in breakaway groups forming, a phenomenon which we will now look at in a little more detail.

Factionalization

Both intra- and inter-group dynamics can lead to factionalization and the dissolution of organizations into splinter groups (Wieviorka, 1993). Depending on the source of the disagreement, the result can be more extreme factions, or a shift of some elements of the group into the political process, a not uncommon driver of

internal division (Cronin, 2009; Jones and Libicki, 2008). Constituting over a fifth of all the groups in their dataset, Jones and Libicki's study identified 136 groups that splintered into factions, making factionalization a common outcome for militant groups. However, it is important to note that this dataset includes groups that, in some settings, have memberships and administrative leaderships that can be fluid and difficult to pin down. This is true of the Taliban, for example, where links to the central Taliban leadership are characterized as complex and dynamic, and 'in which the leadership seeks to increase its control, local commanders seek to retain their independence... and rivals seek to undermine each other through strategic affiliations' (van Bijlert, 2009: 169).

A group's size and organizational form can present challenges to leaders, which can inform how terrorism ends. 'Networked' organizations represent particular challenges to leaders seeking to unite conflicting groupings – something perhaps most emblematically seen in the ideological and strategic debates that exist in the 'global jihad'.[9] However, it is important to note that factionalization does not always lead to a decline in violence. Often splinter organizations instigate more extreme violence, and can play a crucial role in undermining efforts to move towards peace (Stedman, 1997). Nevertheless, many splinter groups do wither, making it important to consider in the context of how terrorism ends. This is particularly the case with militant groups. Victor Asal and colleagues' investigation of 121 ethnopolitical organizations in the Middle East found that, along with those exhibiting factional leadership, organizations using violence are more prone to split (Asal et al., 2012).

Perhaps two of the most high-profile militant organizations to have suffered from factionalization are the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA) in Algeria and the Irish republican movement. In an account of dissident Irish republicanism John Morrison (2013) described splits as one of the movement's 'most persistent phenomena'.[10] Although Morrison emphasizes that these splits did not constitute the end of terrorism, they are important in understanding the dynamic way movements rise and fall. Omar Ashour (2009) offers a similarly interesting comparative account of why the Armé Islamique de Salut (AIS) demobilized and reintegrated into Algerian society, whilst the GIA split. Of the minority of the AIS that did not engage in the reintegration process some remained part of the GIA, to be destroyed following government repression, whilst a splinter group broke away to become the Groupe Salafist pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), which split again when much of the group became al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2007. Ashour explains the differences between these factions' outcomes by looking at the role of state repression, social interaction with the 'other', selective inducements, and charismatic leadership. He argues that whilst all four were present when elements of the AIS moved away from violence, and state repression and selective inducements were constant features, there was often a lack of charismatic leadership and/or social interaction that resulted in continuous factionalization within the militant Islamist groupings in Algeria.

Examining how terrorism ends demands analysis that takes account of individual, group, and wider social factors. Ashour's study of de-radicalization in

Islamist groups is particularly valuable in taking this into account. A similar approach, employed by Lorenzo Bosi and Donatella della Porta (forthcoming) explains how the IRA and the Brigate Rosse moved away from political violence. Both groups have experienced significant factionalization and split, but were also influenced by wider socio-political conditions and shifts in repressive policies enacted by the state. Similarly, changes in organizational strategy as well as activists' perceptions led to disengagement from political violence. In Italy the result was disengagement predominantly at the individual level, which led to a lack of armed activists. In Ireland changes in constituency perceptions and organizational strategy saw disengagement from violence at the meso – or organizational – level, with many activists co-opted into the political process (Bosi and della Porta, forthcoming). The important point to note is the interaction between individuals, leaders, the group, and wider socio-political circumstances, and, relatedly, the relationship between internal and external drivers in informing the end of terrorism. Having looked at some of the main reasons why terrorism ends, it remains to consider how effective it is – a question about which there has been considerable debate.

Is terrorism 'successful'?

Having set out the range of reasons why groups fail, we now turn our attention to the question of terrorism's effectiveness. Inevitably, any discussion of outcomes is going to be determined by the metric we use.[11] If terrorism is primarily a communication strategy then we would need to look at measures such as the reach of political messages. If, however, terrorism is understood as a form of political coercion then we instead need to look at how effective it is at achieving political goals. Increasing attention has been paid to this question, making it important to consider in some detail.

The political goals of militant groups have been described as falling into the following areas: policy change, social control, territorial change, regime change, and maintaining the status quo (Kydd and Walter, 2006). The debate over how successful terrorism is at furthering these goals is characterized by diverse and contradictory views. Some argue terrorism enjoys considerable success (Pape, 2003), others that it is partially successful (Merari, 1993), whilst others pronounce it a failure (Abrahms, 2006). Equally, a variety of methods have been applied to understanding terrorism's political achievements, including formal models (Lake, 2002) and detailed examination of individual cases (Hoffman, 2011). Others draw out a few notable successes (Kydd and Walter, 2006). Repeated reference is made, for example, to a relatively small number of examples in support of terrorism's effectiveness. These include the FLN in Algeria, in their fight for independence; the Irgun in Israel, whose violence contributed to the end of the British Mandate in Palestine; and Hezbollah, who effectively pushed peacekeepers from Lebanon in 1984 and 2000. However, as Max Abrahms points out, these analyses generally fail to hold the relatively limited number of successes against a broader selection of cases (Abrahms, 2012).

We have already seen in our earlier discussion that analyses looking across many hundreds of cases have found that terrorism succeeds only around 10 percent of the

time. Smaller-scale analyses have confirmed terrorism's failure rate. Most notably, Max Abrahms has devoted considerable attention to this issue and he too finds terrorism is largely unsuccessful. In a study published in 2006 Abrahms found that of the 42 policy objectives held by 28 groups on the USA's list of foreign terrorist organizations only 7 percent were achieved. He compares this unfavorably with the literature on economic sanctions, considered effective 34 percent of the time (Hart, 2000), concluding that terrorism is an inefficient way of achieving political goals.

One apparent exception to the growing consensus around terrorism's failure to achieve political goals is Robert Pape's analysis of suicide bombing (Pape, 2003). Pape looked at all suicide attacks from 1980 to 2001, disaggregated into eleven campaigns of terrorism. Of these, six led to some of the groups' goals being addressed. However, exploring this analysis a little more carefully, it seems that the reason for this apparent disparity is the measure of effectiveness Pape uses. Most of the gains Pape sets out are partial successes and do not constitute a complete victory – the standard used for most of the other analyses. Pape also compares effectiveness before and after the implementation of terrorism, rather than holding achievement steady against pre-specified group goals, as for example Abrahms does. Similarly, the measures by which Abrahms and Pape understand success are different; for example, Pape sets Hamas' victory in pushing Israel out of Gaza as a success, whereas Abrahms marks down their failure to achieve an independent Palestinian state. Also, as Abrahms points out, whilst the Israeli Defense Force withdrew from parts of the Gaza Strip in 1994 – classified as a success by Pape – there was a simultaneous increase in the number of settlers, constituting a failure for Hamas (Abrahms, 2006).

Reviewing work to date on terrorism's ability to achieve militant groups' political ambitions, there is still support for Schelling's view expressed in 1989 that 'acts of terrorism almost never appear to accomplish anything politically significant' (Schelling, 1989: 20). Given the high costs associated with involvement in terrorism, this finding seems surprising. Why would people engage in such a risky form of political action given the relatively limited chances of success? Inevitably, our interpretation of this question is determined by the measure of success we employ. As discussed, most efforts to understand the success of terrorism have taken policy measures as the primary outcome. In making the case for this metric, Abrahms argues that they represent a 'stable and reliable indicator of their actual intentions' (Abrahms, 2006: 47). However, it is not difficult to think of groups that have significantly changed their goals over the course of a campaign. For example, Thomas Hegghammer has observed that jihadist groups have undergone a process of ideological hybridization which has significantly changed the extent to which the various currents focus on the 'near' or 'far' enemy (Hegghammer, 2009). Indeed, only two years after championing policy change as an ideal measure of outcome Abrahms published another article which characterized the protean and shifting nature of violent group goals as one of the fundamental puzzles of terrorism research, arguing: 'Some of the most important terrorist organizations in modern history have pursued policy goals that are not only unstable but also contradictory' (Abrahms, 2008: 88). If this is the case, and it seems likely that it applies to at least some militant

groups, then using policy outcomes as a measure is missing something more funda-mental about what those using terrorism seek to achieve.

A further important issue, which encourages us to think again about how to conceptualize outcomes, is the potentially fluid nature of perceptions of success and failure. Rather than fixed, static notions, progress and regress are perhaps best understood as dynamic concepts. Shifts in leader attitudes (or leader), changes in aims and aspirations, or changes of government can all alter perceptions of success and failure. What was once an unassailable goal may become a matter for debate or compromise. A static rendering of outcomes neglects these issues. Furthermore, the agenda-setting nature of terrorism, which attracts attention and forces govern-ments to confront the groups' aims, may be a necessary precursor for political engagement. The notion of the vanguard that makes real political change possible is relatively well established in the terrorism literature; however, this insight has not yet been applied to discussion of terrorism's outcomes. It suggests that we should perhaps be looking at the extent of political representation, or longer-term-outcome measures. Again, though, there are problems trying to apply single measures to a varied collection of actors. Whilst this may be useful in assessing some cases, it is not appropriate for those who are more interested in encouraging popular revolt than gaining official political representation, such as the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru. It seems that by solely using policy goals to assess success and failure the challenges of developing cogent explanations as to why ter-rorism ends and what it achieves are not being met.

Explaining terrorism's outcomes

When trying to interpret terrorism's outcomes it is important to set out the scope and subject of what we are attempting to explain. Efforts to explain why terrorism ends have generally taken one of three approaches: setting out broad-level explana-tions, proposing a series of lower-order factors argued to influence outcomes, or examining individual cases in detail. Abrahms reflects the first approach, suggest-ing that whilst group size, its capabilities, and those of its opponent are all factors influencing success, target selection is the most important reason why violent groups fail (Abrahms, 2006; 2012). Through a robust series of tests he finds that groups which select civilian targets are almost never successful compared with those that focus on military targets. Abrahms puts this down to the perception, by governments, that when groups are minded to use a tactic as extreme as terrorism they are likely to have equally extreme, radical political intentions. He argues that because of this flaw in communicating their aims governments perceive such groups as untrustworthy and incorrigible, thereby reducing the bargaining space available to the actors.

Abrahms' explanation, although based on rigorous analysis, only incorporates the group-state dyad and fails to consider the impact of the wider social context. Targeting civilians may, for example, impact group support from the organization's constituency, perhaps to the extent it can no longer operate. It also neglects the impact of group dynamics on targeting preferences, which can have similar negative effects. Finally, it doesn't clearly specify how governments develop their responses

based on interpretations of extreme demands. Indeed, there is evidence that governments clearly recognize the aims of those who use violence against their civilians. A number of groups have entered into negotiations with governments. In doing so they went through the process of setting out preconditions, agreeing the parameters for talks etc., all of which demand that the government, to some extent, acknowledges their wider aims. Abrahms seems to conflate governments' stated positions and their actual policy decisions. For example, the UK government has a policy of 'not negotiating with terrorists', despite engaging in back-channel negotiations over many years with the IRA (Ó Dochartaigh, 2011). In short, Abrahms' explanation is perhaps best understood as one possible reason why groups fail, falling short of a broader account of why terrorism is politically ineffective.

Drawing out central tendencies rather than offering robust explanations, Jones and Libicki consider group size to be the most powerful variable in determining group success (Jones and Libicki, 2008). They found it explained 32 percent of the variance in outcome, with additional variables offering little in explanatory power. Based on this, and the finding that groups in democratic settings tend to be smaller and achieve fewer of their aims, they offer a number of observations about the relationship between group size, level of host-country development, and terrorism's success rate. They propose that democratic political contexts offer a more stable environment with less likelihood of large-scale disaffection amongst their peoples. A more methodological response to their findings focuses on the Global Terrorism Database from which they developed their analysis. As its primary source is media reporting, it privileges high-income countries with media that are better established and operate more freely. As such, it is likely to under-represent smaller groups in countries with more restrictive media coverage, thereby failing to incorporate their relative success rates. As for explanations as to why group size is the most powerful variable affecting success rates, the authors suggest that somewhat tautologically, it is because they 'have stood the test of time and can stand on their own' (Jones and Libicki, 2008: 40).

Weinberg proposes that organizations succeed when terrorism is used sparingly and alongside other tactics, but almost never when it is the only form of coercion (Weinberg, 2012). Terrorism, Weinberg argues, is only likely to bring about tactical or strategic successes that fall short of achieving the ultimate goals of the group. Cronin agrees that terrorism rarely 'works' (Cronin, 2009). She suggests that when it does there are clear and attainable goals, a wider socio-political environment conducive to the group's cause, other methods alongside terrorism are applied, and powerful actors become convinced of the legitimacy of the group's aims.

In reviewing existing explanations for why terrorism ends and what it achieves, two main approaches have been considered: large-scale explanations aiming to account for most cases of non-state terrorism and its outcomes through reference to a limited number of variables (Jones and Libicki, 2008), and a range of more focused explanations that specify trends related to group and policy outcomes (Weinberg, 2012). As this discussion revealed, the causal processes implicated in specific organizational, political, and social outcomes are less clearly specified. With a phenomenon of such broad scope, setting out a range of potential pathways

and influencing factors, as Weinberg and Cronin do, is a valuable move towards explaining different outcomes. However, compartmentalizing them into aggregate categories, such as 'failure', is insufficiently specific about the causal processes at work and seems to confound an array of potentially important influential factors.

One of the main challenges, as Charles Tilly points out, are the multiple internal and external influences that impact the claims of political opponents (Tilly, 1999). This is something analyses to date recognize but do not entirely address. Indeed, Cronin and Abrahms sidestep this issue entirely in important elements of their analyses (Abrahms, 2006; Cronin, 2009). Where policy goals were achieved both wholly or partially, code groups as successful regardless of who or what may have actually contributed to the outcome.[12] To some extent this reflects a genuine problem in larger-scale analyses. Identifying exactly what carried the causal weight, when examining hundreds of groups, as Cronin does, is a significant practical challenge. However, the extent to which applying such an approach advances our understanding of when, and under what conditions, terrorism is successful is debatable.

Where, then, does this leave us in trying to understand militant-group outcomes? It might appear that in highlighting the challenges facing large-scale studies this discussion has merely reiterated some of the debates contrasting such approaches with case studies (Burnham et al., 2008). Is the only alternative to engage in detailed examinations of specific cases, expanding our knowledge of those groups, but offering little in the way of more generalized conclusions? As Richard English puts it in reviewing Cronin's book, the challenge 'is to harmonize the insights of the hedgehogs and the foxes: for case-study specialists to do more than they have tended to do to reflect on wider patterns, and for wide-angled students [foxes] of the subject to be sure to learn fully from case-study hedgehogs as they proceed' (English, 2011: 10). There is much to be done to respond to this call. However, recent work from political sociologists has begun to address these issues.

As we have seen, Lorenzo Bosi and Donatella della Porta applied a multi-level approach to the demise of the Provisional IRA and the Italian left-wing (Bosi and della Porta, forthcoming). It incorporates micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis, and offers a cogent account of how similar mechanisms operated across both contexts, but in crucially different ways, influencing the groups' shift away from political violence. Further recognition of the potential for such an approach has been seen in Domenico Tosini's mechanism-led account of campaigns of terrorism (Tosini, 2011) and the call for a greater focus on the causal processes and mechanisms that inform how violence emerges and declines (Bosi and Giugni, 2012). These tools afford the opportunity not only to set out how terrorism ends but also to explain why these outcomes unfold as they do.[13]

Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed some of the ways in which the question of how terrorism ends has been addressed in the literature, making the case for clearly conceptualizing the influence of actors, actions, and outcomes. We also examined the primary actions that inform how terrorism ends, focusing on internal group

dynamics and external, generally state-led responses, to elucidate a wide range of factors that influence the decline of groups. Finally, we asked whether terrorism is successful, setting out our current understanding about how and why terrorism succeeds or fails.

In explaining terrorism's outcomes it is vital to take account of the complex, nuanced, and dynamic reasons terrorism is used – and against which criteria it should be assessed. Using a single lens, be that organizational, strategic, or policy-oriented, risks imposing a top-down interpretation of militant-group goals that does not hold up to close examination of individual cases. Rather, we need to look far more closely at the causal mechanisms and processes that inform how terrorism ends. These almost always stretch further than mono-dimensional constructs such as strategic interaction with the state, continued organizational survival, or achieving specific policy concessions. Finally, it is important to remember that multiple levels of analysis are implicated in how terrorism ends. Individuals can leave terrorism, groups can demobilize or be repressed by the state, and, at the societal level, wider cycles of violence can come to an end. It is really only by taking account of the range of reasons, the interactions between internal and external factors, and the different levels of analysis that are implicated in this phenomenon, that we are likely to understand how to assess outcomes and the most appropriate way of explaining how and why terrorism ends.

STUDY BOX CHAPTER 8

Key reading

Abrahms, M. (2006). 'Why Terrorism Does Not Work', *International Security*, 31(2): 42–78.

Ashour, O. (2009). *The Deradicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements* (New York: Routledge).

Cronin, A. K. (2009). *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Jones, S. G. and Libicki, M. C. (2008). *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al-Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND).

Weinberg, L. (2012). *The End of Terrorism?* (Padstow, Cornwall: Routledge).

Study questions

1   How effective is repression and decapitation at ending a terrorist group's campaign?

2   To what extent does addressing the root causes of terrorism lead to its decline?

3   Does terrorism work?

Notes

1 As Erin Miller points out (2012), it is difficult to specify at which point, after the cessation of violence, terrorism may be safely declared over, as violence can re-emerge; hence the focus on the significant decline of the use of terrorism.

2 Some of the earliest treatments of the question of how terrorism ends set out a similar list of factors to take into account. For example, Martha Crenshaw (1996) emphasizes the likely interaction between the choices militant groups make based on the perceived effectiveness of terrorism; the increasingly high costs continuing violence is likely to produce as a result of government response to militancy; and alternative routes that do not necessarily involve violence, for example amnesty or other forms of collective action.

3 For a review of work on state repression see Davenport (2007).

4 Figures compiled by The Bureau of Investigative Journalism suggest that a conservative figure of 340 drone strikes have killed at least 2,600 people between 2002 and 2014. See www.thebureauinvestigates.com

5 Earlier work that is more limited in scope – primarily because it uses small samples or individual cases (notably Israel) – includes that by Hafez and Hatfield (2006), Byman (2006), Kaplan et al. (2005), Mannes (2008), and Langdon et al. (2004).

6 For a discussion of some of these issues see Carvin (2012). Particular issues facing targeted killing include the likelihood of 'blowback', and the potentially increased likelihood that militant groups will target political leaders for assassination in retaliation. Also, the next generation of leaders who replace those killed may be more extreme and violent. Finally, the unpredictability of the tactic in particular situations makes it a potentially risky strategy for states to pursue. For a collection of essays engaging with the legality and morality of targeted killings see Finkelstein et al. (2012).

7 As the focus of this chapter is how terrorism ends, it does not cover anti-terrorism, i.e. efforts to prevent terrorism, for instance through the use of target hardening or other defensive or deterrent measures. For a short review of some of the work on this see Sandler (2014).

8 For more on these debates see *The Guardian* (2012).

9 For comprehensive accounts of these issues see Moghadam and Fishman (2010) and Paz (2009).

10 Four main splits have shaped the republican movement. In the late 1960s the IRA and Sinn Fein split to form the Original IRA and Official Sinn Fein, and the Provisional IRA and Provisional Sinn Fein. A short while later the Irish National Liberation Army split from the official movement. In 1986 the Continuity IRA split from the Provisional movement, and in the late 1990s the Real IRA and the 32 County Sovereignty Committee were formed, also from the Provisional movement (Morrison, 2013).

11 For a discussion of the various ways successful terrorism can be conceptualized and interpreted see Marsden (2012).

12 Cronin states: 'Achievement is indicated if the group's goals were wholly or partially achieved during the group's life span, *regardless of who directly achieved or negotiated that outcome*. Usually the strategic goal of a group is shared by various actors in a conflict, and this database does not attempt to claim which group enjoys primary responsibility for the outcome' (2009: 211, italics in original). Similarly, Abrahms clarifies that 'all policy successes are attributed to terrorism as the causal factor, regardless of whether important intervening variables, such as a peace process, may have contributed to the outcome' (2006: 51).

13 For more on this mechanism- and process-led approach to interpreting the dynamics of violent political contestation see Tilly (2003; 2005), McAdam et al. (2001), and Tilly and Tarrow (2007).

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