

# State terrorism and non-state terrorism



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

**State terrorism is often a neglected phenomenon in terrorism studies. Discuss how terrorism has been used as a weapon by states over the past 50 years. Is state terrorism fundamentally different from non-state terrorism?**

### **ABSTRACT**

Over the past half century States like Zimbabwe, Iraq, Myanmar, North Korea and Bosnia have conducted violent actions, against their own nationals and foreigners home and abroad. These actions though lethal and damning were considered justified by the respective Governments as appropriate in the pursuit of political objectives. At the same time, these violent acts are condemned by the international community as terrorism. However the state justifies its actions as state security supported by its sovereignty and constitution notwithstanding the outcry. The Cold War was advertised as the ideal environment for state terrorism but with the absence of tangible evidence to support these claims studies only surmised the depth of its employment. The identity and nature of state terrorism have evolved considerably through the years particularly during the period of the 70's and 80's. The post-Cold War era has provided the backdrop for an increase in non-state terrorism predominantly because factions like the 'Mujahideen', that were given support in the fight between "super powers" were now determining their own future without any guiding hand or resources to support the efforts. These non state actors and the emergence of the phenomenon of radical Islamic terrorism have provided fodder to eclipse the focus on state terrorism. These apparent paradigms shift meant a decreased focus on state terrorism and a convergence on non state terrorism. This in no way signaled the discontinuance of the phenomenon but merely another evolution in the cycle and the possible creation of a more menacing brand of an already lethal ritual.

This paper will be twofold in nature; initially it will explore the viability of state terrorism as an effective tool (using case studies) used by governments within the last 50 years to achieve its political aims. Secondly, it will submit as highlighted by Professor Igor Primoratz moral arguments that will highlight the differences between state terrorism and non state terrorism.

## **1. Introduction**

- \* Outline the paper
  
- \* Define Terrorism, State terrorism, Non state terrorism
  
- \* Thesis Statement – Even though states terrorism does not occupy the prime hallways in scholarly studies, it does not signal the closing stages of an art but merely a juncture in the evolution cycle of a lethal tendency

## **2. State terrorism as the first prominent form of terrorism**

- \* The early instances of state terrorism
  
- \* Internal Terrorism – against national of a country, with a political aim
  
- \* External Terrorism
  - o Coercive diplomacy – discrete and controlled, and makes non compliance intolerable.
  
  - o Covert state terrorism – aimed at producing fear and chaos
  
  - o Surrogate terrorism – assistance to another state or organization to improve capability to perform terrorism

o “ Overt to covert” - Shift from state terrorism to state sponsored and state supported terrorism

\* Use of war as a proxy/ cover for state terrorism

### **3. Evolution of States Terrorism**

\* Totalitarian states employment of revolutionary or ethno-focused terrorism

\* The Cold War struggle as fertile ground for state sponsorship of terrorism.

\* State terrorism as an extension of foreign policy

\* Politico-religious motivated states terrorism

### **4. Uses of Terrorism by state actors**

\* Case studies of totalitarian regimes

o Joseph Stalin and Russia - 1922 - 1953

o Adolf Hitler and Germany - 1934 - 1945

o Idi Amin and Uganda - 1971 - 1979

o Augusto Pinochet and Chile - 1974 - 1990

o Robert Mubabe and Zimbabwe - 1987 to present

### **5. Shift away from state sponsored terrorism**

\* Post Cold War era changes in philosophies of traditional sponsors of terrorism

\* International pressure due to treaties and conventions

- \* Terror groups forced to be motivated towards self determination as a means for resources and safe havens.

- \* The synthetic drugs era and the impact on terrorism financing

- \* Globalization

## **6. Differences between state terrorism and non state terrorism**

- \* Moral Arguments

- o The state mode of terrorism claims vastly more victims than terrorism by non-state actors.

- o State terrorism is mired and compounded by secrecy, deception and hypocrisy.

- o State terrorism breaches international commitments but non state terrorism can never.

- o Non state terrorism is often justified by the argument of no alternative.

## **7. Conclusion**

- \* Though there has been a shift in focus on the topic of state terrorism, there has been no decrease in its employment; rather it means that states were probably given the opportunity to unleash a greater diversity of lethality against its enemies.

- \* Further, less focus meant that states could continue to use a hidden hand to provide the motivation to non state actors to destabilize and destroy its political enemies, while embedding terrorism as a fundamental instrument of the states machinery, its foreign policy and counter-terrorism policies.

<https://assignbuster.com/state-terrorism-and-non-state-terrorism/>

**Bibliography:**

Ahmad, I., Excerpts from the chapter titled ' State Sponsored Terrorism', in Veryan Knan, ed., Beacham's Encyclopedia of Terrorism, Washington, DC: Beacham Publishing, 2010.

BBC online, 2009, retrieved on 27 December 2009.

Bjorgo, T., Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, reality and ways forward, London and New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 198-213.

Byman, D., ' The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism'. The Saban Centre for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, Analysis paper Number 16: retrieved on 23 December 2009.

Byman, D., Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005a.

Croswell, A., Ostergard, R. & Tubin, M. ' From State-Supported Terrorism to the Terrorist-Supported State: Explaining the Effective Operation of Modern International Terrorism' Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Le Centre Sheraton Hotel, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 17 Mar, 2004 , 2009, retrieved on the 27 December 2009.

Georges-Abeyie, D. E.. " Political criminogenesis of democracy in the colonial settler-state: Terror, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare" Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 14. 1 , 1991, retrieved on 1 January 2010

Hoffman, B., Inside Terrorism, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005a, pp. 1-2, 17-18, 40-41, 258- 267

Jackson, R., *The Ghosts of State Terror: Knowledge, Politics and Terrorism Studies*, paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 49th ANNUAL CONVENTION, BRIDGING MULTIPLE DIVIDES, Hilton San Francisco, SAN FRANCISCO, CA, USA, 26 Mar, 2008 , 2009, retrieved on 23 December 2009.

Moreorless: *Heroes & Killers Of the 20th Century*, , 2009, retrieved on 27 December 2009.

Moreorless: *Heroes & Killers Of the 20th Century*, 2007, retrieved on 27 December 2009

Newman, E., ' *Weak States, State Failure, and Terrorism*', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 19: 4, 463 — 488 , 2007 (retrieved on 27 December 2009).

Primoratz, I., ' *State Terrorism and Counterterrorism*' Working Paper 2002/3, Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, Department of Philosophy, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 2002.

Primoratz, I, ' *Terrorism*', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta(ed.), 2007, retrieved on 27 December 2009

Raymond, G., ' *The Evolving Strategies of Political Terrorism*', in *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes and Controls*, C. Kegley, Jr. (ed), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002, pp. 72

Schiff, F., ' *Rewriting the “ dirty war”*: State terrorism reinterpreted by the press in Argentina during the transition to democracy' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 13. 4 , 1990, retrieved on 1 January 2010.

Sonin K. ' The Dictator's Approach to Electoral Patterns'. VOXEU – Reports, 2008, retrieved on 23 December 2009.

Stohl, M. and Lopez, G. A. eds., The State as Terrorist, London: Aldwych Press, 1984a

Times Online, 2008, retrieved on 27 December 2009.

UNODC, Definition of Terrorism, 2006, retrieved on 27 December 2009.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, ' The Holocaust' Holocaust Encyclopedia. 2009, retrieved on 23 December 2009.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, ' The Holocaust' Holocaust Encyclopedia. 2009, retrieved on 23 December 2009.

Wilkinson, P., Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 15-16, 20-21.