

Analysis of the army of god terrorist philosophy essay



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In the current essay I would like to make an analysis of one of the U. S. terroristic organization - so-called " Army of God". I would like to consider what aims this organization wants to achieve, what methods it uses and how our society relates to this organization. As a matter of fact terrorism - is a policy, based on the systematic use of terror. The word " terror" is a synonymous to the words " violence", " intimidation" and " fear". In the U. S. legal system terror - is a premeditated, politically motivated violence, perpetrated against the civilian population or objects by different sub-national groups or clandestine agents in order to influence the mood of society. There are different types of terrorism, among them are:

By the nature of the subject, terrorism is divided into: unorganized or individual - in this case, the attack is made by one or two people and organized (collective) - the terrorist activity is planned and implemented by a certain organization (Al-Qaeda, IRA, ETA and so on). As a rule, organized terrorism is the most common in the modern world.

Goals of terrorism are divided into following: nationalist - pursues separatist or national liberation objectives; religious - can be linked to the struggle between the adherents of a religion (Muslims and Christians etc.).

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Social – is intended to partial or radical changes in economic or political system, to attract public attention to any acute problem. Sometimes this kind of terrorism is called revolutionary. Of course, this division is conditional and terrorism similarities can be found in all its forms, as described in US Domestic Terrorism: Army of God. It can be said that “ Army of God” is related to organized and social terrorism. On the one hand, “ Army of God” is well organized group of people with common goals and on the other hand, partial changes in economic and political system of the U. S., specifically, complete ban of abortion.

It should be noted that “ Army of God” is an anti-abortion terrorist organization, which approves violence and terrorism to fight abortion in the United States. AOG supports the Second Defensive Action Statement, which is issued by the Defenders of Life, which read: “ We, who sign below, announced that divine justice action is required, including the use of violence, to protect innocent human life (which was born and the unborn). We just announced any acts of violence and it is reasonable to maintain the life of a child born to defend the life of an unborn child”, as stated in Army Of God?

Body

I presume that terroristic activity against abortion began in United States and Canada in the 70-ies of the XX century. As a fact, at first appeared terrorist organization “ Anti-Abortion Violence Movement” (AAVM). Terrorists set fire, blow up and destroy clinics, kill doctors and politicians and so on. As a rule, AAVM had training centers for like-minded people, where organization showed how to plan and organize military operations. Terrorists have their <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-the-army-of-god-terrorist-philosophy-essay/>

own magazine; maintain contacts with right-wing movements, such as the Ku Klux Klan.

As a matter of fact, our country has a long history of small terrorist groups with religious nature, which carry out attacks on certain sectors of society who do not follow their own moral teachings and principals. One of such groups is the American Christian fundamentalist organization is known as the " Army of God". This group promotes the usage of violence against abortion clinics and homosexual community. The Army of God has been linked to several bombings of such clinics, and uses biblical justification for an attack on the medical personnel who carry out abortions. For example, Pastor Michael Bray - one of the leading members of the organization was serving sentence in prison for the bombing of abortion clinics. As a fact, army of God has developed a manual for counseling members on how to attack the clinic using arson, acid, as well as instructions on bomb making, as described in Army of God: Still Marching.

It can be said that Army of God demonstrates the profound conviction as anti-abortion, homophobic, and sharply criticize the U. S. government for not holding to what it sees as Christian values. In 1998, a member of the Army of God, James Kopp killed Dr. Barnett Slepian and it is considered that the organization has been linked to many other similar surveys between 1994 and 1997. The Army of God have also tried to use public fears of terrorist biological attack with one member, Clayton Waagner, sending more than 550 letters to abortion clinics in 2001, claiming they contained anthrax and can infect those who opened them.

It is believed that the group operates major terrorist network. In combination with a very close knit nature of communities, many of the members came to organization from the army; they seem to have lack of experience in funding or knowledge how to carry out large-scale effective attack. It is believed that the Army of God may be involved in the attacks on gays and lesbians in May 1999, when 2 people were killed. It is unlikely that the Army of God is real organization beyond the individual groups and no strong leadership has been defined, although several people have joined the group. The most famous terroristic act of the organization was bombings at the 1996 Olympics Atlanta that killed one person and injured more than hundreds of others. The Army of God is a good example of a low level fundamentalist terrorist's group, which get their limited knowledge and skills from the Internet or some ex-soldiers to carry out low level attacks and criminal activities in the future, what they see as their own moral code, as stated in History of the Army of God.

Many experts consider that " Army of God" is the latest extremist religious group in the spotlight. I would like to consider what an army of God is. No one is sure, but the name has been used for 30 years. Here is an entry: in the early 1980's, women's clinic in Granite City, Illinois, was defeated repeatedly by fundamentalist protestors. Then the operator of the clinic, Dr. Hector Zevallos and his wife Rosalie have been kidnapped by a group of men that called themselves as the " Army of God". Couple held for eight days in an abandoned munitions bunker. The kidnappers said they killed them both, " if Dr. Zevallos pledged to stop performing abortions - he did, and they were released". Then, these three men were later convicted for the

kidnapping. The leader, Don Benny Anderson, declared that “ God told him to wage war against abortion”. After that, Anderson received a 30-year prison sentence. Also, he was convicted of setting fire in two Florida abortion clinics and drew the second 30-year period.

In 1984, when the Norfolk Women’s Clinic was firebombed, the initials of “ Army of God” were scrawled on the wall. Soon after this, clinic near Washington was firebombed, and people claim that they represent the army of God. In 1993, the fundamentalist Rachelle Shannon had shot clinic doctor in Wichita, Oregon. She boasted that she was providing “ God’s will”. The police found the Army of God manual filled with quotations of the Bible, bomb-making instructions, and the “ declaration”, saying that abortion should be stopped. Guide said the army of God units did not stay in one place, so that “ the feds will never stop us”, as describe in *The Army of God: More Religious Killers?*

In 1996, two more nail-studded bombs hit Atlanta – January 16, in a clinic for women and 21 February at gay nightclub. After the second explosion, raw, unsigned, semi-literate letter was sent to Reuters, who passed it on to the FBI: “ the letter said that both bombs were placed by the units of the army of God.” It also stated that those, who were involved with abortion “ can become victims of retaliation”. With regard to gay club, in latter there was ungrammatically described the following: “ We will target sodomites, there are organizations and all those who push there agenda”, as stated in *The Army of God: More Religious Killers?*

The police also found a letter, which threatened the United Nations and the United States government. As a fact, it declared the following: “ We declare and will wage war to destroy the ungodly communist regime in New York and your legislative-bureaucratic lackey of Washington. It is you who are responsible and preside over the murder of children and the policy question that the wicked perversions destroy our nation... Death of the New Order world”, according to FBI National Press Release. Now, the FBI circulated a letter nationally, in the hope that some citizens will recognize the language style and determine bombers. Unfortunately, the army of God saga emphasizes an unpleasant fact of life: the most dangerous people are often the most religious.

Without any doubts many Americans are categorically against this organization and its methods of struggle for their moral beliefs. As a matter of fact, in the 90's of the XX century the scandal erupted, when Nail Horsley posted on the Web so-called “ Nuremberg files”. It was a list of doctors, owners of the clinic that make abortions, as well as their family members, judges, famous political and social activists, lobbying for abortion. Also in the file were listed women who have done abortions. The files presented not only photo with the name of the “ murderers”, but also their addresses, telephones, video - anything that can be useful if you decided to find a person. It should be noted that these files Horsley collected himself by walking, recognizing, photographing, and published it in the Internet. In addition, he paid photographers and volunteers, who did pictures for his list. Horsley strongly believes that doctors, who have helped to do the abortions, should be judged in a Nuremberg trial. Horsley declared the

following: “ The “ Nuremberg files” remind people that the doctors who kill babies are criminals and should be judged just like the Nazis at Nuremberg”, as described in The Army of God.

To be more precise, the U. S. Supreme Court long ago made it clear that there is nothing against abortion. However, authorities did not find anything illegal in Horsley’s action and explained that under the First Amendment, these actions have nothing criminal. In my opinion, this situation is connected with the fact, that among influential Americans there are a lot of supporters of abortion ban in the U. S., for example George Bush Senior is considered one of the opponents of abortion. Moreover, after this Web publication Horney also stated the following: “ We do not want all of them to die. But then, three thousand babies will die today – it’s a fact and this fact is ignored in the past 25 years”, according to Anti-Abortion Violence Defines “ Army of God”. In my opinion this characterizes AOG as organization of implacable fanatics on the religious and moral grounds, who believe that they have a right to decide what people can, and what can not do. As a result of this Web publication some abortion supporters were killed or wounded: doctor John Britton was murdered in 1994 by AOG activist Paul Hill, Dr. David Gunn was shot in 1993, Canadian Dr. Garson Romalis and Hugh Short were wounded by snipers.

Moreover, Horsley became cross the names of dead doctors on his site. According to Anti-Abortion Violence Defines “ Army of God”, Horsley declared: “ My position is that people, who kill babies are responsible for the abominable act, and we should not be surprised if other people rise to fight against them. That is why we should legally prohibit abortion. Otherwise, <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-the-army-of-god-terrorist-philosophy-essay/>

murder and terrorism will grow up around us". Many people interpreted this as an open challenge to society and demanded to punish AOG and its participants, but authorities stated that freedom of speech can not be prohibited in the U. S.

However, Stephanie Mueller, from the National Abortion Federation, declared that Horsley did not tell the full story on the site link to the attacks on doctors. She said that one doctor was attacked in the summer of 2000, after the fact that information about him was published by Horsley. " We know other doctors who have received death threats after being caught in the " files". We think that the site is really cause violence against those who do abortions", as stated in Anti-Abortion Extremism: The Army of God.

Psychological aspect

In order to understand AOG behavior and motives I would like to concentrate on the analysis of AOG relation to such concepts like human life, abortion and its consequences. It should be noted that human embryos - is human life form. Consequently, in the eyes of an absolutist religion, abortion - is evil, that has no different from murder. As a fact, one of the most vociferous opponents of abortion is the Catholic Church. When George W. Bush came to power, authorities began to fiercely protect human life as long as it is in its infancy (or terminally ill) state, not hesitating to ban medical research that could save the lives. Embryos topic, it seems, has on many religious persons truly hypnotic effect. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, accepting the Nobel Prize, said bluntly in her speech: " The worst enemy of peace - is abortion".

Returning to the theme of war against abortion, I suggest you listen to the founder of the " Randall Terry rescue operation", according to Understanding <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-the-army-of-god-terrorist-philosophy-essay/>

The Army Of God, he said following: “ When I or my supporters will come to force in this country, you will be better to disappear soon, because we will find, judge for trial and punish you. I’m not kidding. I will do my best to condemn and punish them all”. Randall Terry is referring to abortion doctors. His Christian feelings are evident and in subsequent statements: “ I want to see you on the head faced a wave of intolerance, a wave of hatred. Yes, hate - it’s what you need... Our goal - is a Christian nation. Our duty is recorded in the Bible, God told us to conquer this country. We do not want pluralism. Our goal must be simple. We need a Christian nation, founded on the law of God, and without “ but”, according to Understanding The Army Of God.

Many experts consider that such intentions create something like Christian fascist state, which is very typical for religious organization in the U. S. This is almost an exact copy of an Islamic fascist state, of which many dream on the other side of the globe. Fortunately, Randall Terry did not come to power, yet. But those who are watching the developments on the American political scene there is no reason to particularly enjoy. Supporters of ethics or utilitarianism are likely estimate the issue of abortion from a different perspective and try to estimate the amount of suffering. The most important question - if the embryo is suffering? Doctors state that if the abortion is performed before the formation of his nervous system, most likely - no, even if the nervous system is already there, it certainly suffers from less than an adult cow in a slaughterhouse. Does a pregnant woman or her family suffer in case the abortion is denied? It is quite possible, and in any case, given the almost complete absence of the embryo nervous system, is not it should

give preference to well-developed nervous system of the mother? In my opinion, it should be. We live in a free country with developed civil society, our right of choice should be guaranteed.

As a fact, the advocates of ethical implications have their own reasons to oppose abortion. It is assumed, that embryo does not suffer, but a culture that allows interrupting a human life can lead us too far. Where do we draw the line? Where is the line that separates us from killing children? In my opinion, this line is natural birth, and perhaps we can say that in an earlier, embryonic, developing a similar milestone is hard to find. These arguments are also possible to put forward as the arguments against euthanasia.

However, AOG and other opponents of abortion do not care about these arguments. From their point of view everything is much easier. Embryo – is a baby, its destruction – is the murder. That is it, end of discussion. From such an absolutist position it is difficult to make far-reaching conclusions. They require, despite the dizzying medical perspective, to stop research on embryonic stem cells, because, as a result, embryos' stem cells die. Illogicality of the last argument is obvious when you think about what is now widely used by IVF (in vitro fertilization), during which doctors stimulate the production of the female body more ovum for in vitro fertilization. At the same time receive up to a dozen viable embryos, of which the uterus is implanted two or three. It is expected that one or two will survive. Thus, the destruction of embryos occurs at two stages of IVF, but the procedure for the society as a whole have no complaints. For over 25 years, IVF is a standard practice that brings happiness to childless couples, as described in

Annihilating abortuaries is our purest form of worship.

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A certain category of religious believers can not see the moral difference between destroying a microscopic group of cells on the one hand and the murder of an adult doctor - on the other. According to Doctor Chaplain and the Army of God: " In a terrible book of Marc Yurgensmayer " Terror in the name of God" there is printed a photograph of the Rev. Michael Bray with his friend, the Rev. Paul Hill, holding a banner with the slogan: " Is it possible not to hinder the murder of innocent babies?". They and their associates from the Army of God are committed to set fire to abortion clinics and do not hide their desire to kill doctors. As a fact, July 29, 1994 at the entrance to the clinic of the city of Pensacola, Florida, Paul Hill killed with a revolver Dr. John Britton and his bodyguard James Barrett. After he surrendered to the police, he stated that shot the doctor to stop the killing of innocents.

Before proceeding to a discussion of abortion I would like to consider Paul Hill's case, as one of the typical example of AOG participants behavior. As it was mentioned above, Paul Hill, with the full support took the law into his own hands and killed the doctor. Hill started to defend his action by making a distinction between killings, say, retired doctor to vengeance and murder of a medical practitioner to stop them produce " regular babies killing". In turn, abortion supporters stated that, despite the apparent sincerity of Paul Hill's belief, he should not forget that if everyone starts to punish and pardon according to personal beliefs, not adopted by the laws, society will slide into a monstrous chaos. Is it not correct to change the law in a democratic manner? Paul Hill replied: " Well, the problem here is that sometimes we have no real, genuine law, the law sometimes is fabricated on the spot of the head, as in the case of so-called law on abortion rights, a judge imposed on

its people...”, according to Doctor Chaplain and the Army of God. In my opinion Paul Hill’s relation to these questions very much like the position of living in Britain of Muslims, who openly declare that they are subject only to Islamic law, and not accepted in a democratic manner the laws of country of their residence.

In 2003, Paul Hill was executed for the murder of Dr. Britton and his bodyguard; he claimed before the execution that to save the unborn would have killed again. He was speaking to reporters: “ I believe that by punishing me, the state makes me a martyr”. Authorized by law, the murder of Hill, it is reasonable, but it may provoke new attacks by providing an effect opposite to the expected. Paul Hill on the way to the death chamber was smiling, saying: “ I expect reward in heaven... I look for fame”. He urged others to follow in his steps, as stated in Doctor Chaplain and the Army of God.

I presume that very interesting was the fact, that one of the representative of certain abortion clinic named Paul Hill as a dangerous psychopath. But people like Hill, do not consider themselves as dangerous psychopaths, they consider themselves as good, moral people who perform the covenants of God. Frankly, I do not think that Paul Hill was psycho. In my opinion, he was just a very religious man. Without any doubts he was dangerous man, but not a psychopath. To be more precise, misinterpretation of religion made him dangerous. In accordance with AOG religious beliefs, Hill was right and moral by killing Dr. Britton.

It should be noted that almost all vehement opponents of abortion are deeply religious. “ Army of God” activists do not see the moral difference

between killing the embryo and killing a doctor, except that the embryo, by their definition, is the innocent baby. Proponents of ethical implications are able to evaluate the differences. In the early stages of embryo development in their ability to feel and even in structure and appearance, does not exceed the tadpole. The doctor, on the contrary - is formed, endowed with the consciousness of the individual with hopes, aspirations, dreams, fears, a wealth of knowledge, ability to complex emotions, most likely leaving behind inconsolable widow, orphan children, perhaps - a loving elderly parents.

In my opinion, Paul Hill has caused a real, deep, prolonged suffering to human being that was able to feel and has a complex nervous system. His victim, a doctor did not do this. As a fact, embryos do not have the nervous system on early stage of development, and undoubtedly, are not affected. Moreover, even at a later stage embryos with nervous systems suffer not because they are human, but because they are living beings. In other words, there is no reason to believe that human embryos at any age suffer more than cows or sheep embryos of similar age. And there are many reasons to argue that all embryos, including human, suffer much less than an adult cow or a sheep to the slaughter, and even more so slaughtered during the ritual killing of animals in some Muslims countries, when, according to religious requirements, they must be fully conscious at the time of cutting the throat.

Of course, it is not easy to evaluate the suffering. You can argue about the details, but this does not change the main idea, which regards the differences between the position of opponents and supporters of the ethics implications of religious, absolutist moral philosophy. The first concerned whether the embryos suffer. The second concern, whether those are human
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beings. Religious moralists argue when embryo becomes a person, a human being. Despite this, abortion supporters, most likely, will put the question differently: it does not matter whether it is a person, more important questions, in what age the developing embryo is capable to feel pain, no matter what kind of animal it is.

Conclusion

To sum it up, I would like to say that Army of God is a terrorist organization within the U. S., which main purpose is in achieve a complete prohibition of abortion on the territory of the United States and also to punish medical personnel as well as women who have had abortions by different prison sentence and death penalty. Especially I would like to mention the fact that according to AOG, every doctor who made an abortion (“ kill” the embryo) must be killed, because he deprived a human being of life. As a fact, AOG began its activity from 1982 and exist even today. From that moment AOG issue manual instructions how you can make a bomb or fire up abortion clinic. Also, there is AOG website, on which every person can enter the organization and help to their “ right” case. Moreover, in its activity AOG is based on religion, namely Catholic Christianity and approve all violence by interpretation of the Bible. It can be said that the organization is responsible for two bombings in 1996 in Atlanta, a series of murders and cases of kidnappings in relation to doctors and other medical staff of abortion clinics all over the country.

As a fact, the advocates of ethical implications have their own reasons to oppose abortion. It is assumed, that embryo does not suffer, but a culture that allows interrupting a human life can lead us too far. However, AOG and <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-the-army-of-god-terrorist-philosophy-essay/>

other opponents of abortion do not care about these arguments. From their point of view everything is much easier. Embryo - is a baby, its destruction - is the murder. That is it, end of discussion. From such an absolutist position it is difficult to make far-reaching conclusions.

In my opinion, this whole nightmare comes from the usual differences of perception. There are people because of their religious beliefs considering abortion as murder, and ready to open fire, protecting embryos, which they prefer to call their babies. On the other hand, there are people, no less sincere support abortion without any religious views, but with principles of morality. They also see themselves as champions of the idea of providing medical care to the patients in need, who otherwise would have had to turn to unskilled underground healers. Each side believes the other murderers or accomplices of the killers. And each in his own way sincere. It is difficult to find a common ground in this situation. I think that first of all each side should show greater understanding and reduce the level of aggression towards the opponents. As a solution, I propose to consider the possibility to build abortion clinics in certain areas, similar to gambling that allowed only in several areas. On the one hand, women will have an opportunity to make an abortion in safe conditions and doctors will no longer fear for their lives. On the other hand, abortion opponents will be satisfied with the fact that abortion is legal only in several areas in the country and every woman on her way to the clinic will have an opportunity to think if she really needs to take this step. I strongly believe that our society should take measures to solve this problem, and such organizations like Army of God with its violence will no longer have support of our citizens.