

# The differences of domestic terrorism and international terrorism



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The United States Code (2010) defines domestic terrorism as activities that-

(A) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State;

(B) appear to be intended-

(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;

(ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or

(iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and

(C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

The United States Code (2010) goes on to define international terrorism as activities that-

(A) involve violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any State;

(B) appear to be intended-

(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;

(ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or

(iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and

(C) occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the United States, or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum.

### **In what ways is it functionally different from international terrorism?**

Functionally domestic terrorism occurs within the boundaries of the United States while international terrorism occurs outside United States boundaries and jurisdiction.

### **Also, distinguish between domestic terrorism from above vs. domestic terrorism from below. Give examples.**

Terrorism from above occurs when persons who are legally empowered either covertly or overtly use, or threaten to use, political violence to maintain or defend political power within their domestic borders, or to maintain, defend, overthrow, or undermine the political power of other nations within the international community. Terrorism from below occurs when persons use, or threaten to use, political violence either to undermine or overthrow existing governmental policies or structures, or to intimidate individuals and groups they perceive as threatening to the social, political, economic, or ideological status quo (Vohryzek-Bolden et al, 2001, p. 11-12).

Simplified, terrorism from above is when a government inflicts terror on the people and terrorism from below is when the people rebel against the government. Terrorism from below is usually low tech and comprises of things simple to pertain. Some specific forms of terrorism that usually fall

into terrorism from below are assassination, “dirty” bombs, riots, and burnings. Terrorism from above can be more high tech and can use items not easily obtainable by individuals. Forms that usually fall into terrorism from above would be imprisonment, mass genocide, and nuclear and biological weapons.

Some instances where domestic terrorism from below have taken place in recent United States history are; the World Trade Center Bombing that occurred on February 26, 1993, the Oklahoma City Bombing that occurred on April 19, 1995, and the 17 year long killing spree of the Unabomber from 1978 until capture in 1996. The Ku Klux Klan also committed many acts of terrorism from below against African Americans, Jews and Roman Catholics over a 150 year period. Terrorism from above occurred when the first Americans starting driving out the Native American Indians and continued to do so throughout history limiting them to where they could live, work, and worship. Other cases of terrorism from above is the 1994 Rwandan Genocide that killed over 800, 000 people over the course of 100 days and the Holocaust in which the Nazi’s killed over 6 million Jews during World War II.

## **Exam Question 2**

2. Summarize the approaches to political violence as exhibited by Mao Tse-Tung, Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella, and Frantz Fanon. Which domestic terror groups from the past or present would you identify with these different approaches? Explain your position.

**Summarize the approaches to political violence as exhibited by Mao Tse-Tung, Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella, and Frantz Fanon.**

Mao Tse Tung, Che Guevara, and Carlos Marighella had good intentions about using political violence. These people had adapted guerrilla warfare to distinctly rural and urban locales; proposed that terror was to be used as a way to change existing political structures and transform them into Marxist governmental systems; and determined that terror was a tool to be used only to overthrow the abusers of power, never against innocent civilians. On the other hand, Franz Fanon revised their tactics by claiming that terror was a useful, justifiable means for achieving freedom and, in some cases, for acting as a cleansing force necessary to survival. Thereafter, some terrorists had devised a version of their concepts that terror was not merely to be used as a means to gain an end, but rather as an end unto itself (Vohryzek-Bolden et al, 2001, p. 69-70).

**Which domestic terror groups from the past or present would you identify with these different approaches? Explain your position.**

Like Mao, Guevara and Marighella, the protracted conflicts Irish Republican Army (IRA) and, more recently, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) of Northern Ireland have similar ways to deal with political violence. The “troubles” between England and Ireland are centuries old; the independent Irish Free State, however, was not established until 1920, after years of struggle by the illegal Irish Republican Army, which combined terrorism and guerilla warfare in its battle with England. At that time, England retained the largely Protestant northern counties of Ireland, called Ulster, and gave them

special status as an entity within Great Britain. Although this partition of Ireland was vehemently opposed by the newly independent Irish Free State, it continued and developed certain legitimacy over the years.

The IRA tactics, but not its goals, were immensely criticized by the Republic of Ireland during the post-independence era. Choice of tactics also led to the rupture between the PIRA and the OIRA (Official Irish Republican Army) in the early 1970s. The OIRA now tries to work for peaceful reform, while the PIRA remains a terrorist organization (Maxon-Browne, 1981). The PIRA's aim is to dislodge the British troops from Ulster and unite this area with the Republic. Through bombings in England and attacks on British soldiers in England and Northern Ireland, it hopes to wear down British resistance to unification. Each year there are tragic cases of the murder of civilians and soldiers. In 1990 a terrorist attack against the residence of the British prime minister was narrowly averted, and in 1992 the IRA stepped up its campaign of terror, with frequent bombings and bomb threats.

On the other hand, Fanon's approach is based on the belief that through violence the oppressed peoples of Algeria and other nations can rid themselves of their "inferiority complex and from [their] despair and inaction; it makes [the oppressed] fearless and restores self-respect." Fanon views violence not only as a liberating force but also as a means to make, "it possible for the masses to understand social truths and gives the key to them" (Dobson & Payne, 1982, p. 19). This was similar to Osama bin Laden and Al Qaida's approach. Bin Laden has used his ties with al-Qaida to conduct a worldwide campaign of terrorism. The primary goal of Bin Laden and his supporters is to liberate Palestine, with secondary goals of removing <https://assignbuster.com/the-differences-of-domestic-terrorism-and-international-terrorism/>

the Saudi ruling family from power and driving Western military forces and their corrupt, Western-oriented governments from predominantly Muslim countries. Most Islamic fighters have no interest in strategies of authentication or existential realization and no interest in Marxist theories of emancipation. But, in one respect, their actions echo Fanon's ideas – the act of terror not only had an expressive meaning for the hijackers, but an existential meaning as well. To wit, even suicide can be life affirming (Coker, 2003, p. 291).

### **Exam Question 3**

3. In your opinion, what were the earliest forms of terrorism in the United States? Who were the perpetrators? Who were the victims? Is your opinion the same as that contained in the Vohryzek- Bolden, et al. text? Give examples. Also, explain whether you believe these early terrorists were no better (or no worse) than modern terrorists.

The biggest form of early American terrorism in the United States happen when the newly settled British colonials captured, transported, and traded black Africans in America. The perpetrators were the British colonials and the victims were Blacks. I believe what the text states in that Blacks were bought and sold and treated as property of Whites. There was a legal slavery system that drove terror into all Blacks at the time. Most terrorist actions today, when carried out, only harm very few people even if the target audience is large, actual casualties are low compared to what the Blacks had to suffer through. For over 250 years blacks were forced into slavery and tortured, beaten, starved, and treated worse than a White man would treat his dog.

Because of the longevity and severity of the way Whites treated Blacks, it was worse than modern terrorism.

### **Exam Question 4**

4. In what ways are right wing terror groups bonded together by racism, religion, and anti-governmentalism? Also, what role does the right to bear arms under the 2nd Amendment play with these groups? How has Odinism become a part of the equation for some?

### **In what ways are right wing terror groups bonded together by racism, religion, and anti-governmentalism?**

Acts of terrorism have been around as long as people have. Today, terrorist activities have become more and more active all around the world. The 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center Towers shocked America and the rest of the world into realizing just how quick terrorism can strike. That also changed the US perception on terrorism and terrorists. Besides global terrorism, domestic terrorism has become a major concern for the US government. Right-wing extremist groups in the country are the most dangerous groups, as they pursue anti-government and racist ideology.

“ Right-wing terror groups are generally motivated by notions of white racial supremacy. They also hold anti-government and anti-regulatory beliefs. These terror groups sometimes include extremist Christian groups that launch a crusade against people who do not hold on to traditional belief and culture” (Michael, 2003, p. 131). Religion, racism and anti-government ideology have tied these right-wing terrorist groups together. They often



indulge in hate crimes such as launching attacks on abortion clinics and shooting members of particular communities.

These right-wing terror groups have different social, political and economic viewpoints. However, any right-wing group that has a different viewpoint cannot be termed as terrorist group. The right-wing groups involved in criminal activities are branded as terrorist organizations by the US government. Extremist right-wing groups engage in activities that are protected by constitutional guarantees of free speech and assembly. " Some of the right-wing terrorist groups active in the United States are the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) and the Aryan Nations. They propagate anti-government sentiment and racism-based hatred among people" (Michael, 2003, p. 132). Right-wing extremists continue to pose a serious threat.

" Between 1999 and 2001, there have been several large-scale, high-casualty attacks by right-wing terrorists in the United States" (Hamm, 2002, p. 68). In addition, many plans of such attacks had been foiled by the US security agencies in the past. The main objective of such groups was to create social and political chaos, thus forcing the US government to declare martial law. They believed that if martial law were declared in the country, it would ultimately lead to a violent overthrow of the government.

### **Also, what role does the right to bear arms under the 2nd Amendment play with these groups?**

" The Second Amendment of the US Constitution states that a well-regulated militia is necessary to the security of a free state. Hence, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed" (Rodgers & Tim, 2002,

p. 101). The legislation has come in handy for right-wing terror groups, as they exploited it to keep and bear arms, and use them against the state. Several terms in the Second Amendment remained vague. “ It was argued that “ the right of people” refers to the “ right of the state” and common people should not be allowed to carry arms” (Rodgers & Tim, 2002, p. 101). However, the terms of the legislation remained the same and it let right-terror groups to possess and carry arms in the public.

### **How has Odinism become a part of the equation for some?**

Odinism played an important role in the growth of right-wing terrorism.

Odinism is the indigenous religious faith of the people living in Northern Europe. Later, that belief was imported to the United States. The main objective of Odinism is to free itself from Christian influences and reassert its ancient independence. Followers of Odinism are very conservative and refuse to accept responsibility for the action of others (Michael, 2003, p. 81).

It has been noticed that right-wing terrorists have been greatly influenced by the Odinists. “ The right-wing extremist movement’s eclectic diversity is a “ secret collective of paramilitary survivalists, tax protesters, bankrupt farmers, bikers, prisoners, Odinists and devotees of the Identity Church, linked together by an elaborate network of computer boards, desktop publications and telephone hotlines” (Hewitt, 2002, p. 41).

### **Exam Question 5**

5. Describe in detail the groups Greenpeace and PETA. Are either of these terrorist organizations? What is the basis for your answer? Discuss the tactics

have they used from time to time. Are any of these tactics unlawful but morally justifiable?

### **Describe in detail the groups Greenpeace and PETA.**

Greenpeace is an international organization that was founded in Vancouver in 1971. “ When the Vietnam War escalated in the 1960s, thousands of draft resisters and deserters fled the United States and arrived in Canada. Members from that exodus group formed a key role in the founding of Greenpeace” (Downes et al, 2003, p. 56). The organization is known for its fight against atmospheric and underground nuclear testing. It took up several environmental issues such as global warming, destruction of forest and genetic engineering. Greenpeace has national and regional offices in many countries in the world. Ever since its inception, Greenpeace organizations have been deploying its ships elsewhere in the world to protect the environment. Rainbow Warrior, MV Sirius and MV Arctic Sunrise are some of the major ships owned by Greenpeace.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an American animal rights organization based in Norfolk, Virginia, and led by Ingrid Newkirk, its international president. A non-profit corporation with 300 employees and two million members and supporters, it says it is the largest animal rights group in the world. Its slogan is “ animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or use for entertainment” (PETA, 2010).

## **Are either of these terrorist organizations? What is the basis for your answer?**

Greenpeace cannot be termed as a terrorist organization, as it never uses violent methods. It raises issues that are related to environment and public health and protests using non-violent methods. However, its way of protest is very intense. Often the Greenpeace activists invite the wrath of the government and other agencies because of their nature of protest. The Greenpeace movement did not have a smooth ride. It had to encounter several problems in the past due to the oppressive nature of the government agencies. It is an irony that the tactics of non-violent protest used by Greenpeace and its system of governance have been sources of controversy. Its non-violent direct action has been termed as illegal act of civil disobedience. They are often arrested for minor offenses such as trespassing and breaking the security barriers during protest.

PETA could be construed as a terrorist organization even though the actions of PETA itself are non-violent. In the early 2000s PETA made contributions to the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) activists. Both ELF and ALF are known to participate in illegal and violate acts making them terrorist. They also have been known to give money to individuals who commit violate acts in support of what PETA believes in, such as burning down research labs that perform test on animals. Even though PETA says that it does not support any acts of violence, they are guilty by association, and can therefore be classified as terrorist by supporting terrorism.

**Discuss the tactics have they used from time to time. Are any of these tactics unlawful but morally justifiable?**

There has been some criticism that Greenpeace is very conventional. Its door-to-door fund-raising that relies on media exposure has been severely criticized. The government and other agencies believe that the organization's main intent is to get cheap publicity. "The "Save the Whales" campaign launched by Greenpeace activists was criticized by several agencies. Greenpeace had to fight legal battles against the hate tirades launched by some organizations that opposed the pro-whale campaign" (Downes et al, 2003, p. 61). Ultimately, it managed to win the legal battle.

In some instances, Greenpeace was found using false data in order to make its campaigns success and popular. "In 1995, Greenpeace launched a vociferous campaign to compel Brent Spar oil platform's owners Royal Dutch/Shell to dismantle the platform. Greenpeace argued that the Spar contained 5000 tons of oil" (Downes et al, 2003, p. 62). "The efforts made by Greenpeace led to the permanent ban on the dumping of offshore installations at sea. At a later stage, Greenpeace admitted that its claim was inaccurate and apologized for misleading the public" (Downes et al, 2003, p. 63). There is no doubt that Greenpeace used illegal ways to enforce the ban on Brent Spar oil platform. However, it was done in the wider public interest. The prime concern of Greenpeace was to protect the environment from any potential danger and it succeeded in it.

"In July 2003, the Justice Department charged Greenpeace under an old law that intended to end the practice of "sailor-mongering". The Greenpeace activists had boarded the ship to protest against the import of mahogany,

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which was illegal in the US. However, they were arrested by the authorities” (Downes et al, 2003, p. 78). Later, the case was thrown out of the court. The US government never prosecuted advocacy groups that engaged in peaceful civil disobedience. However, the prosecution of Greenpeace indicated a sea change in the US policy.

Ingrid Newkirk, PETA’s international president, has made comments stating that she does support freeing of animals from laboratories or any such facility even if it is by illegal means. The fact that PETA has supplied funding to individuals and organizations that have burned, broken into, and even bombed facilities that test or harm animals in any way, proves that they have committed illegal acts. But looking at it from PETA’s standpoint, they do not intend to hurt anyone in the process of freeing animals. They simply want animals to be treated the best way possible and not caged, prodded, or tested on. Looking on the situation in that prospective, PETA’s actions could be morally justified.