Université de Montréal

Politics in Extraordinary Times. A Study of the Reaction of Political Parties and Elites to Terrorism

par

Christophe Chowanietz

Département de science politique

Faculté des arts et des sciences

Thèse présentée à la Faculté des études supérieures en vue de l'obtention du grade de Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) en science politique

Juin 2009

© Chowanietz, 2009

Résumé

Cette thèse porte sur le comportement des élites politiques durant les périodes de crise nationale et plus particulièrement sur leurs réactions aux attentats terroristes. Elle démontre que les crises terroristes sont tout comme les conflits militaires ou diplomatiques propices aux unions nationales et notamment aux ralliements des partis d'opposition auprès du gouvernement.

L'analyse statistique d'actes terroristes s'étant produits dans cinq états démocratiques (Allemagne, Espagne, États-Unis d'Amérique, France et Royaume-Uni) entre 1990 et 2006 révèle que l'ampleur d'un attentat en termes de pertes humaines ainsi que la répétition de ces attentats influencent dans une large mesure la réaction des élites politiques. Ainsi plus l'ampleur d'un attentat est élevée, plus la probabilité d'un ralliement est grande. En revanche, la multiplication des attentats augmente la possibilité de dissension entre l'opposition et le gouvernement. Par ailleurs, l'opposition est plus susceptible de se rallier au gouvernement lorsque l'attentat est perpétré par des terroristes provenant de l'étranger. L'analyse quantitative indique également que l'existence d'un accord formel de coopération dans la lutte antiterroriste entre le gouvernement et l'opposition favorise l'union des élites. Enfin, les données analysées suggèrent que la proportion des ralliements dans les cinq pays est plus importante depuis les attentats du 11 septembre 2001.

Une analyse qualitative portant exclusivement sur la France et couvrant la période 1980-2006 confirme la validité des variables identifiées dans la partie quantitative, mais suggère que les élites réagissent au nombre total de victimes (morts mais aussi blessés) et que la répétition des actes terroristes a moins d'impact lors des vagues d'attentats. Par

ailleurs, les analyses de cas confirment que les élites politiques françaises sont plus susceptibles de se rallier quand un attentat vise un haut-fonctionnaire de l'État. Il apparaît également que les rivalités et rancœurs politiques propre à la France (notamment suite à l'arrivée de la gauche au pouvoir en 1981) ont parfois empêché le ralliement des élites. Enfin, cette analyse qualitative révèle que si l'extrême gauche française soutient généralement le gouvernement, qu'il soit de gauche ou de droite, en période de crise terroriste, l'extrême droite en revanche saisit quasi systématiquement l'opportunité offerte par l'acte terroriste pour critiquer le gouvernement ainsi que les partis de l'establishment.

La thèse est divisée en sept chapitres. Le premier chapitre suggère que le comportement des élites politiques en période de crises internationales graves (guerres et conflits diplomatiques) est souvent influencé par la raison d'État et non par l'intérêt électoral qui prédomine lors des périodes plus paisibles. Le second chapitre discute du phénomène terroriste et de la littérature afférente. Le troisième chapitre analyse les causes du phénomène d'union nationale, soumet un cadre pour l'analyse de la réaction des élites aux actes terroristes, et présente une série d'hypothèses. Le quatrième chapitre détaille la méthodologie utilisée au cours de cette recherche. Les chapitres cinq et six présentent respectivement les résultats des analyses quantitatives et qualitatives. Enfin, le chapitre sept conclut cette thèse en résumant la contribution de l'auteur et en suggérant des pistes de recherche.

Mots-clés: Partis politiques; comportement des élites; terrorisme; union nationale; Allemagne; Espagne; France; États-Unis d'Amérique; Royaume-Uni.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the behaviour of political elites during periods of national crisis and particularly on their reactions to acts of terrorism. It demonstrates that terrorist crises, much like military and diplomatic conflicts, represent a fertile ground for rallies around the flag.

The statistical analysis of terrorist events that occurred in five democracies (France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) from 1990 to 2006 indicates that the magnitude of the attack in terms of fatalities and the repetition of attacks influence in large measures the reaction of the political elite. The higher the magnitude is, the more likely the rally. However, the repetition of attacks increases the likelihood of dissention between opposition and government. Moreover, the opposition is more likely to support the government when the attack is perpetrated by terrorists originating from abroad. The quantitative analysis also indicates that the existence of a formal antiterrorist pact between government and opposition increases the likelihood of a rally. Finally, the data suggest that elites are more likely to rally around the flag since the events of 9/11.

A qualitative analysis focusing solely on France and examining cases from the period 1980-2006 confirms the validity of the variables identified in the quantitative part but suggests that elites react to the total number of victims (including wounded) and that the repetition has less impact during waves of attacks. Furthermore, the case studies confirm that French political elites are particularly prone to rally when high-ranking representatives of the state fall victim to the terrorists. In addition, it appears that political rivalries and resentment (in particular following the Left's return to power in 1981) have

on occasion thwarted the rallying of elites. Finally, this analysis indicates that whereas the far-left generally supports the government (left-wing or right-wing), the far-right uses almost every opportunity to criticize the government and the parties of the establishment.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one suggests that during intense foreign policy crises (military and diplomatic) the behaviour of the political elite is often influenced by the national interest, rather than the electoral interest that predominates in quieter periods. Chapter two discusses the terrorist phenomenon and the corresponding literature. Chapter three analyses the rally-around-the-flag phenomenon, lays out a framework for analysing the reaction of elites, and presents a series of hypotheses. Chapter four details the methodology used. Chapters five and six present respectively the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Finally, chapter seven concludes with a summary of the author's contribution and suggests avenues of research.

Keywords: Political parties; elite behaviour; terrorism; rally around the flag; France; Germany; Spain; United Kingdom; United States of America.

Table des matières

Résumé i

Abstract.. iii

Liste des tableaux ix

Liste des figures ix

Liste des sigles x

Remerciements.. xiii

Introduction... 1

Chapter 1. When 'All Hell Breaks Loose!' Party Politics in Extraordinary Times ... 8

Introduction.. 9

1.1. Parties and elites 13

1.2. Politics in ordinary and extraordinary times 15

1.2.1. In front of Janus' Temple closed doors: party politics in peace time conditions 18

1.2.2. When the doors to Janus' Temple open: party politics in unsettled times 26

1.2.2.1. Roosevelt and the isolationists.. 29

1.2.2.2. Dewey and the Berlin Crisis 33

1.2.2.3. JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis... 36

Conclusion 40

Chapter 2. Politics and Terrorism 43

Introduction.. 44

2.1. An ancient phenomenon 45

2.2. A phenomenon on the rise?... 51

2.3. A conceptual quagmire 56

2.3.1. A blurred meaning 57

2.3.2. A plethora of definitions.. 60

2.3.3. The vantage point.. 67

2.3.4. How terrorism differs from other forms of political violence 70

2.4. A recent field of study 72

2.4.1. The state of the discipline ... *74*

2.4.2. Party politics and electoral behaviour in a terrorist context ... *79*

Conclusion ... 82

Chapter 3. In the Shadow of the Flag: Patriotic Imperative vs. Partisan Interest ... 84

Introduction ... 85

3.1. The rally-around-the-flag phenomenon ... 86

3.1.1. Rallies and other forms of public support ... *87*

3.1.2. Why rally? Two competing explanations ... *88*

3.1.2.1. The patriotic reflex ... 89

3.1.2.2. The opinion leadership explanation ... 92

3.1.2.3. Patriotic leadership? ... 95

3.1.3. Elites, media and public opinion: who leads the pack? ... *97*

3.2. The patriotic imperative ... 102

3.3. The magnitude-repetition model ... 105

3.3.1. Casualties and trends ... *106*

3.3.2. Rallying around the state ... *108*

3.3.3. The threat from within vs. the threat from abroad ... *110*

3.3.4. Rallying around the hawks? ... *110*

3.3.5. Railing against the mainstream elite ... *113*

3.3.6. The 9/11 effect ... *114*

Conclusion ... 115

Chapter 4. Methodology ... 116

Introduction ... 117

4.1. Scope of research ... 118

4.2. Selecting a database for terrorist events ... 120

4.3. Selecting a data source for reactions ... 124

4.4. Creating the database ... 125

4.5. Treatment of data ... 129

4.5.1. The quantitative analysis ... *129*

4.5.2. The qualitative analysis ... *131*

Conclusion 134

Chapter 5. Quantitative Analysis 135

Introduction........ 136

5.1. Results........ 136

5.1.1. The magnitude effect 139

5.1.2. The repetition effect 140

5.1.3. The target effect 141

5.1.4. The right-wing effect 142

5.1.5. The 9/11 effect........ 143

5.1.6. The international terrorism effect 144

5.2. Multivariate analysis........ 145

5.3. Country specific reports........ 147

5.3.1. Spain........ 147

5.3.2. France 149

5.3.3. Germany 149

5.3.4. The United Kingdom 150

5.3.5. The United States of America 151

Conclusion 151

Chapter 6. Case Studies 153

Introduction........ 154

6.1. Terrorism in France 157

6.1.1. Separatists and autonomists 157

6.1.1.1. Corsican terrorism........ 157

6.1.1.2. Basque terrorism 160

6.1.1.3. Breton terrorism 161

6.1.1.4. Caribbean and New Caledonian terrorism 162

6.1.2. Revolutionaries and reactionaries 162

6.1.3. International groups 164

6.2. Political parties in France........ 166

6.2.1. Mainstream parties 167

6.2.1.1. The Parti Socialiste 167
6.2.1.2. The Rassemblement pour la République 169
6.2.1.3. The Union pour la Démocratie Française 171
6.2.2. Radical parties 172
6.3. The 'Years of Lead' 173
6.4. The period 1990-2006 reconsidered 206
6.4.1. No support instead of likely support 209
6.4.2. Support instead of no support 217
6.4.3. Support instead of no reaction 220
6.4.4. No support instead of no reaction 227
6.4.5. No reaction instead of likely support 229
6.4.6. Likely support 230
Conclusion 235

Chapter 7. Conclusion 239

7.1. What have we learned? 241
7.2. Substantive implications 248
7.3. Methodological implications 250
7.4. Avenues of research 251
7.5. Final remark 254

Bibliographie i

Annexe A: Comparative table of databases on terrorist events xxxiii

Liste des tableaux

Table I. The impact of magnitude and repetition on the reaction of the opposition....... 132
Table II. The rallying phenomenon.. 139
Table III. The magnitude effect 140
Table IV. The repetition effect 141
Table V. The target effect.. 142
Table VI. The right-wing effect... 143
Table VII. The 9/11 effect.. 144
Table VIII. The international terrorism effect 145
Table IX. Factors affecting the probability of rally 147
Table X. Expected and actual reaction of the mainstream opposition based on the magnitude-repetition model (selected cases – period 1980-1990) 175
Table XI. Expected and actual reaction of the mainstream opposition based on the magnitude-repetition model (divergent cases – period 1990-2006) 208

Liste des figures

Figure 1. Global fatalities from terrorism, 1998 – 2006 (from the *Human Security Brief 2007*) 52
Figure 2. Global fatalities from terrorism 1998 – 2006, excluding Iraq (from the *Human Security Brief 2007*) 53

Liste des sigles

AD: Action directe

ARB: Armée révolutionnaire bretonne

ASALA: Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia

B2J: Bewegung Zwei Juni

BR: Brigate Rosse

CBRN: Chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear

CCC: Cellules communistes combattantes

CDU: Christlich Demokratische Union

CGT: Confédération générale du travail

CIRA: Continuity Irish Republican Army

CSPPA: Comité de solidarité avec les prisonniers politiques arabes et du Proche-Orient

CSTPV: Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence

CSU: Christlich Soziale Union

DGSE: Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure

ETA: Euskadi ta Askatasuna

EUROPOL: European Police Office

FANE: Fédération d'action nationale et européenne

FARL: Fraction armée révolutionnaire libanaise

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

FDP: Freie Demokratische Partei

FIS: Front islamique de salut

FLB: Front de libération de la Bretagne

FLN: Front de libération nationale

FLNC: Front de libération nationale de la Corse

FLNKS: Front de libération nationale Kanak et socialiste

FN: Front national

FNE: Faisceaux nationalistes européens

GIA: Groupe islamique armé

GOP: Grand Old Party

GTD: Global Terrorism Database

IK: Iparretarrak

INLA: Irish National Liberation Army

IRA: Irish Republican Army

ITERATE: International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events

LCR: Ligue communiste révolutionnaire

MIPT: Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism

MNR: Mouvement national républicain

NCTC: National Counterterrorism Center

OAS: Organisation de l'armée secrète

PC: Parti communiste

PGIS: Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services

PIRA: Provisional Irish Republican Army

PKK: Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan

PP: Partido Popular

PS: Parti socialiste

PSOE : Partido Socialista Obrero Español

RAF: Rote Armee Fraktion

RIRA: Real Irish Republican Army

RPR: Rassemblement pour la République

SFIO: Section française de l'internationale ouvrière

SPD: Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands

START: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

TKB: Terrorism Knowledge Base

TWEED: Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data

UDF: Union pour la démocratie française

UMP: Union pour un mouvement populaire

WITS: Worldwide Incidents Tracking System

WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction

À mes parents, ainsi qu'à Lisa, Kian et Lana.

Remerciements

C'est avec un certain vertige que je contemple la liste de celles et ceux qui par leur influence, leur soutien, leur présence ou tout simplement leur patience m'ont permis de vivre cette aventure exceptionnelle.

Mes premiers remerciements vont à mes directeurs de thèse, André Blais et Marie-Joëlle Zahar, qui par leur disponibilité, leur enthousiasme et leurs précieux conseils m'ont grandement facilité le travail. André m'a aussi accueilli au sein de la Chaire de Recherche du Canada en Études Électorales, et ce faisant m'a permis d'évoluer quotidiennement dans un environnement propice à la recherche, et de travailler et sympathiser avec un grand nombre de chercheurs et d'étudiants. Au premier rang de ceux-ci se trouve Sébastien Dubé avec lequel j'ai partagé un bureau et beaucoup de bons moments pendant cinq années. Je tiens également à saluer Marc André Bodet, Pascal Doray-Demers, Eugénie Dostie-Goulet, Silvina Danesi, Frédérick Bastien, Agnieszka Dobrzynska, Simon Labbé St-Vincent, Patrick Lemieux, Benjamin Ferland, Jiyoon Kim, Ludovic Rhéault, Maxime Ricard, Daniel Rubenson, Peter Loewen, François Gélineau, Éric Bélanger, Angelo Elias, Bruce Hicks, Henry Milner, Gianluca Cairo, Indridi Indridason, Romain Lachat, Raul Magni Berton et André Perrella.

Au-delà de la Chaire, nombreux sont ceux avec qui j'ai tissé des liens au cours de mon doctorat, je pense en particulier à Alexandre Carette, Aude-Claire Fourot, Thomas Gulian, Kristoff Talin, Afshin Hojati, Djalil Lounnas, André J. Bélanger, Michel Fortmann et Renée Leclerc.

Enfin, car il y a de la vie hors de l’université, je tiens à saluer mes amis Montréalais: Rositsa Mutafchieva, Pierre-Serge Anoelin, Adam Halstead, Amy Thomas, Catherine Vaillancourt, Bryan Campbell et Moira Warner.

Mes remerciements également à Jean-Philippe Thérien et Richard Nadeau dont les commentaires et conseils durant la soutenance de mon projet de thèse me furent d’une grande aide pour la suite de ma recherche. Je tiens aussi à remercier les évaluateurs anonymes de la revue *Party Politics* pour leurs nombreux conseils, ainsi que les commentateurs et participants qui lors de diverses conférences m’ont permis par leurs questions d’avancer dans la bonne direction.

J’adresse une pensée particulière à Gustavo Amorin-Fulle qui eut la bonne ou la mauvaise idée (c’est selon) de me prendre sous son aile et de me convaincre durant mes premières années universitaires que rien n’est aussi évident qu’il y paraît et qu’il faut sans cesse se méfier de ce que Pierre Bourdieu a appelé l’illusion du savoir immédiat. Ce rôle de mentor fut ensuite repris par Michael Palo dont l’enthousiasme contagieux pour les grands enjeux de ce monde me réconcilia avec les études. Sans ces deux personnes, l’idée même d’un doctorat n’aurait jamais germé dans mon esprit.

Je remercie également mes professeurs de la London School of Economics and Political Science, au premier rang desquels Fred Halliday et Christopher Coker, qui au travers de leurs cours et de leurs séminaires m’ont procuré une inépuisable source d’inspiration.

Une part importante de mon parcours se déroula hors du monde académique mais n’en fut pas moins formatrice. Mes remerciements s’adressent particulièrement à Joeke Abbing qui guida mes premiers pas au sein de la Commission européenne et me permit

de prendre part à la formidable aventure de l'élargissement européen, et à Dauphine Sloan dont je suis particulièrement fier d'avoir été le bras droit pendant ces années.

Ce doctorat, comme bien d'autres choses dans ma vie depuis maintenant une douzaine d'années, n'aurait été envisageable sans la présence à mes côtés de ma compagne, Lisa Pinheiro. Sa patience au cours de ces années, ses conseils toujours éclairés, son aide à des moments clés, et sa confiance en moi m'ont permis de garder le cap. Ma gratitude envers elle est sans borne.

Je tiens à remercier tout particulièrement mes parents, Claude et Hans-Joachim Chowanietz, et le soutien sans limite qu'ils m'offrent depuis tant d'années. Leur influence est inestimable et le courage qu'ils ont eu dans l'adversité ainsi que leur inébranlable joie de vivre m'inspirent quotidiennement.

Je tiens à remercier également Janeca Busca and James Lemkau. Ils m'ont apporté plus qu'ils ne peuvent l'imaginer et ont été présents à chaque étape importante de ma vie depuis maintenant une douzaine d'année.

Mes remerciements également à Bert Greenberg, Nicolette Zamparini, Anne Lessard, Rosa Antunes et Palmira Vieira qui à divers moments m'ont aidé, probablement sans même s'en rendre compte.

Enfin c'est à mes enfants que je souhaite adresser ces derniers mots. Kian et Lana n'étaient pas là au début de ce doctorat, mais c'est bien leur insouciance, leurs rires et tout simplement leur présence qui colorent ma vie et donne un sens à tout ce que j'entreprends. Ils me rappellent quotidiennement que nous passons une grande part de notre existence à nous poser des questions, beaucoup de questions, et à tenter de trouver des réponses. J'en ai notamment la preuve avec mon fils de quatre ans dont les multiples

questions sur les astres ou bien sur les animaux me font parfois regretter de ne pas avoir accompli un doctorat en astrophysique ou bien en zoologie. Lui et sa petite sœur s'intéresseront peut-être un jour aux sciences sociales, j'aurai alors deux ou trois choses à leur apprendre.

Introduction

"Ce qu'on appelle union dans un corps politique, est une chose très équivoque : la vraie est une union d'harmonie, qui fait que toutes les parties, quelque opposées qu'elles nous paroissent, concourent au bien général de la société; comme des dissonances, dans la musique, concourent à l'accord total. Il peut y avoir de l'union dans un État où on ne croit voir que du trouble; c'est-à-dire, une harmonie d'où résulte le bonheur, qui seul est la vraie paix. Il en est comme des parties de cet univers, éternellement liées par l'action des unes, et la réaction des autres" (Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*)

On September 12, 2001, in the midst of the worst terrorist crisis in US history dozens of members of Congress from both the Republican and Democratic parties stood side by side on the steps of the Capitol pledging their support to Georges W. Bush in a rare display of unity.[1] In the days that followed the tragic events of 9/11, Bush's public approval ratings rose from 51 percent to an unprecedented 86 percent.[2] With a large support both in Congress and across the nation, the rally around the flag was complete and of a proportion unseen in the United States since the attack on Pearl Harbor some 60 years before. Ensued a period of two weeks during which the mainstream political elite in Washington acquiesced to every major decision taken by the Republican administration. For all intents and purposes partisan politics in Congress had ceased, and in case anyone on Capitol Hill was tempted to publicly question the course of action adopted at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Attorney General John Ashcroft reminded the legislators that "the American people do not have the luxury of unlimited time in erecting the necessary defenses to future terrorist acts".[3]

During this silent autumn, the US government was able to launch a major military operation abroad and severely restrict the rights of its citizens at home, all in the name of the 'war on terror', all with minimal interference by the Senate and the House of Representatives. Meanwhile mainstream media remained by and large uncritical of the Republican administration, and the general population, draped in the Star-Spangled Banner, entered in a frenzy of patriotism. To be fair, the rally was not complete, at least not in the literal sense, it never is. By September 24, 2001, the hearings on the Patriot Act

[1] *The New York Times*, September 12, 2001.
[2] Source: Gallup Polls, September 7-10 and 14-15, 2001.
[3] House Committee on the Judiciary, *Administration's Draft Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001*, 107th Congress, 1st session, September 24, 2001, 2.

held by the Judiciary Committees of the House and Senate provided a stage for dissent. Representative Robert Barr (R-GA), for instance, questioned the wisdom of rushing the debate on the Patriot Act and asked whether the government was seeking "to take advantage of what is obviously an emergency situation to obtain authorities that it has been unable to obtain previously (…)".[4] Yet a month later only one senator out of a hundred and 66 representatives out of 423 voted against the passage of the Patriot Act.[5] Only after the White House entered a diplomatic stalemate with some of its traditional allies abroad did major figures within the Democratic Party (senators Tom Daschle and John Kerry for instance) openly question the Government's strategy in the war on terror. Meanwhile, the cloud of dust surrounding lower Manhattan barely dissipated, known 'dissidents' and radical minds such as Gore Vidal or Noam Chomsky explained the whys and hows of the tragedy that had befallen the 'land of the free' and pointed fingers at the political elite in Washington DC.[6] The blame game had started. Whether to unite the country or to criticize the government, the elites – mainstream and radical – were playing politics with terrorism.

The events of 9/11 not only profoundly changed the hierarchy of issues within the political debate, as national security became once more the paramount issue, but also redefined the prevailing cleavages in US politics. This time the dividing line separated the hawks from the doves, the patriots from the internationalists, the strong from the weak, us from them. The choice was clear for those running the executive branch of the

---

[4] House Committee on the Judiciary, *Administration's Draft Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001*, 107th Congress, 1st session, September 24, 2001, Part II, 1.

[5] Senator Feingold (D-WI) voted against whereas Senator Landrieu (D-LA) did not vote. Bill H.R. 3162, U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes 107th Congress, 1st Session, October 25, 2001. In the House, out of the 66 representatives who voted against only three were Republicans.

[6] By October 2001 Noam Chomsky had already published a pamphlet entitled *9/11*.

government: “Rally around the flag!” or else be lambasted as an enemy of the state. Rallying became a sign of support for the president/commander-in-chief, and by implications an acknowledgement that the patriotic imperative required ‘good citizens’ to remain uncritical of his decisions. As the security of the country stood atop the agenda, the political elite was expected to abandon, at least temporarily, party politics for the good of the country. National security was all that mattered, and many perceived the political debate as just a hindrance, notably for the swift passage of antiterror bills. Bipartisanship and cooperation across the aisle were the order of the day.

Eight years later much of the US political debate still revolves around the aftermath of 9/11, even though pressing concerns like the state of the economy have fought their way back to the top of the political agenda. Of course the issue of national security is again freely debated, in part because the price to pay both in human, diplomatic and financial terms is perceived by many as too high. Yet the rhetoric used by most Republicans and Democrats still revolves around the necessity to project an image of patriotism. Both parties’ national conventions in August and September 2008 served as a reminder that in the post 9/11 United States, one can never be too close to the Old Glory. In that respect, the effect of 9/11 promises to be long lasting.

Of course not all terrorist events are synonymous with ‘all hell breaking loose’, not all of them have a profound and lasting impact both domestically and internationally. In fact, a high number of terrorist acts – often nothing more than blown-up mailboxes – do not register on the media radar or initiate any kind of reaction from the political elite and public opinion. The multiple attacks of 9/11 are in that respect exceptional. Yet all acts of terror, regardless of whether they claim any victims or destroy any property,

represent a direct and at times serious challenge to the political system, particularly within open societies. The intention of the perpetrators rather than the act itself (and its consequences) is what matters. To paraphrase a Corsican nationalist, terrorism is the military occupation of the political space.[7] Indeed, what is terrorism if not an attempt to bypass the long and arduous process of debate and compromise by coercing through deeds rather than convincing through discourse, by menacing rather than appealing? As such, terrorism is in essence a repudiation of party politics, a denial of a key democratic institution. The definition of terrorism is of course a complex subject matter that will be covered extensively further below, but one should bear in mind that terrorism is not about killing or maiming, it is about political ascendancy. Terrorists seek the most effective strategy to gain the upper-hand in their struggle against the legitimate holders of political power.

This thesis is first and foremost a study of the behaviour of political parties and elites in exceptional periods, that is periods when the order of the day is not business as usual, but periods when the national community is being threatened or attacked. Many scholars over the years have looked at the effects of military or diplomatic crises on elites as well as on media and public opinion. Most of these works, on which much more will be written in the coming pages, suggest that rallies around the flag following wars and major diplomatic crises are the rule (at least as far as the United States are concerned). But what about terrorism? What are its effects on party politics and the behaviour of political elites? Despite mounting evidence that terrorism influences the behaviour of political elites in government and in opposition, this question has yet to be answered in a systematic and comparative way. This thesis attempts to fill the gap in the literature by

[7] *Libération* February 7, 1998.

analyzing political parties' reactions to terrorism in five countries – France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. More precisely, my objective throughout this thesis is to determine whether the opposition chooses to support or criticize the government and why it does so. In the process, not only do I intend to make sense of party politics in times of terror, but I hope to contribute to a better understanding of how terrorism impacts Western societies.

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter one begins with a discussion of both the evolution and the perception of political parties. I then consider the determinants of party behaviour during peaceful times and during critical times by notably providing historical examples of elite behaviour during foreign policy crises. The second chapter begins with a description of the evolution of terrorism through the ages and a discussion of recent trends in terrorist activities throughout the world. An in-depth discussion of the meaning of terrorism follows. Chapter two ends with a review of the literature on terrorism. Chapter three begins with an analysis of the rally around the flag phenomenon, and proceeds by presenting a theoretical framework for analyzing elite behaviour in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. I conclude chapter three by discussing a list of variables likely to influence the reaction of political elites and presenting a series of hypotheses on the behaviour of parties. Chapter four introduces the dual quantitative and qualitative approach used for analyzing the reaction of parties to terrorism. Chapter five presents the findings of the statistical analysis, whereas the qualitative analysis, which focuses exclusively on France, is presented in chapter six. There I examine in details, notably through a series of case studies, how the French political elite has reacted to terrorism

since the early 1980s. Finally, a conclusion sums up the findings and suggests further avenues of research.

Chapter 1

When ‘All Hell Breaks Loose!’ Party Politics in Extraordinary Times

“I have confidence in Lyndon Johnson (…) We must give this man our full cooperation and our prayers and work with him; and let’s see the kind of president he will be (…) President Johnson certainly has the training; he has the instincts; he has the ability. I think we must now, as a nation, unite behind him and help him all we can, and go the usual course of helping a president, of being critical when it’s needed and helpful when that’s needed” (Barry Goldwater, candidate for the Republican presidential primaries, November 24, 1963)

Introduction

With America's war of independence barely over and its democratic project still in its infancy, a bemused Thomas Jefferson dryly remarked that if he "could not go to heaven but with a party" he "would not go there at all" (quoted in Katz and Crotty 2006, 9). Not only was this sort of unflattering view on arguably one of the bedrocks of representative democracy quite common among the Founding Fathers – indeed George Washington, John Adams and James Madison were quite vocal and literal in their criticisms too – but it echoed a long held belief amongst political thinkers and practitioners of all ages, not least those of the French Revolution, that parties would spread division and chaos to the nations (Sartori 1976, 9-12). The derogatory meaning of the word *party* was of course entrenched in its Latin root *partire*, to divide, a meaning which later on evolved into a more forbearing and even promising sense – i.e. partaking or the French *partage* (Sartori 1976, 4).

That parties were initially despised was due in large part to the fact that they were a political novelty, conceptually barely distinguishable from the older form of political organization known as factions. Factions were often thought to be the epitome of selfish interests adverse to that of the community (Sartori 1976, 12). Sartori reminds us that the Latin word *factio* came to describe originally "a political group bent on a disruptive and harmful *facere*, on 'dire doings'. Thus the primary meaning conveyed by the Latin root is an idea of hubris, of excessive, ruthless, and thereby harmful behaviour" (Sartori 1976, 4). Not until the late 18th century did this misrepresentation of parties give way to a more enlightened understanding. Edmund Burke was by most accounts the first one to make a difference between faction and party. He defined the former as an enterprise for the

advancement of the personal interests of a few and the latter as "a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" (quoted by White in Katz and Crotty 2006, 6).

Edmund Burke's praise did little to attenuate suspicions that parties were factions in disguise unlikely to serve the interest of the state, particularly during critical times. Even a celebrated 'democrat' like Abraham Lincoln concluded that partisanship is divisive and disloyal in wartime (Smith 2006, 5). A point of view echoed by an editorial in the *New York Times* published shortly before the start of the Civil War claiming: "The party has failed us. Party organization is dead" (Smith 2006, 9).

The fortunes of parties and their role within the democratic game changed favourably with the re-examination of what representative democracy should be about. As Jacob Leib Talmon reminds us "what is today considered as an essential concomitant of democracy, namely, diversity of views and interests, was far from being regarded as essential by the eighteenth-century fathers of democracy. Their original postulates were unity and unanimity" (Talmon 1952, 44). Through a slow and arduous process, as the fear of disunity and diversity subsided, parties became accepted – and regarded as different from factions – and were finally understood as "parts *of* the whole" rather than "parts *against* the whole" (Sartori 1976, 13-14).

Today diversity is embraced, and parties are providers of diversity, but the debate on the role of parties and elites in our democracies is far from over. Sartori remarks that "what is central to the pluralistic *Weltanschauung* is neither consensus nor conflict but dissent and praise of dissent" (Sartori 1976, 16). Indeed we have come to expect our parties and their elites to oppose and criticize one another. Debating over grand schemes

or bickering over minutiae is an essential aspect of party politics, albeit one that can be exasperating at times. This is the normal state of affairs, a sort of default mode for our elites. It is a feature of what we might call *ordinary* politics, a concept to which we will come back shortly. As a result, cooperation across the aisle, bipartisanship and any other forms of non-partisan approach to politics represent in most advanced democracies the exception rather than the rule. Yet at the same time, we expect our parties and their representatives to exercise restraint in their criticisms, and even temporarily end their rivalry when the interests of the state are at stake, when in effect parties enter the realm of *extraordinary* politics – meant here as a synonym of unusual. Pluralism then cannot be taken for granted. Inherent in our modern representative democracies is this tension between the need for diversity and the necessity under certain circumstances to unite in order to preserve the collective interests of the greater community – i.e. the nation-state.

My objective throughout this study is to shed light on the behaviour of political parties and their elites during critical times. More precisely, my goal is to understand how these elites react to terrorist events. Do they choose to carry on opposing and criticizing one another as they do in quieter times, or do they favour cooperation instead? Answering this question implies that we distinguish party politics during *ordinary times* – i.e. characterized by the absence of major foreign policy or security crises – from party politics during *extraordinary times* – i.e. presence of a crisis.

There are of course different types of crises, reflecting different levels of gravity. A crisis represents a "phase of disorder in the seemingly normal development of a system", a transition "during which the normal ways of operating no longer work" (Boin, t'Hart, Stern and Sundelius 2005, 2). This aspect is crucial: "in a crisis the modus

operandi of a political system or community differs markedly from the functioning in normal time" (Boin et al. 2005, 16). Although I will focus here on man-made crises such as wars, diplomatic disputes and of course terrorism, crises can be caused by countless other disasters whether natural or induced by man (earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, wildfires, epidemics, economic and financial breakdowns, etc.). Not all of these crises affect our societies and communities as profoundly and durably as the 9/11 terrorist attacks or the current financial meltdown have, but all of them pose a challenge to political elites and particularly public office holders. In ordinary times, public office holders are 'just' overseeing business as usual, but in extraordinary periods their function calls for them to become crisis managers, albeit with different levels of responsibility. As such, these elites and the political parties they represent become accountable for their actions and reactions during the crisis. Some will not come out of these crises unscathed, as opposition elites rarely miss an opportunity to play the blame game (on postcrisis management see notably Boin, McConnell and t'Hart 2008; on the blame game during terrorist crises see Kassimeris 2008).

The following chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the role of parties and their elites in representative democracy. The second section examines party behaviour during ordinary and extraordinary times, and provides a review of the relevant literature.

1.1. Parties and elites

Parties, as we have gathered so far, have not always been seen with kindly eyes to say the least. What yesterday caused these misgivings – i.e. their tendency to divide rather than to unite – is today hailed as a hallmark of representative democracy. In fact, as early as 1888 James Bryce remarked that "no-one has shown how representative government could be worked without them [parties]. They bring order out of chaos to a multitude of voters" (quoted by White in Katz and Crotty 2006, 7). E.E. Schattschneider (1942, 1) in *Party Government* considered "modern democracy" to be "unthinkable save in terms of the parties", and more recently John Aldrich (1995, 3) deemed democracy to be "*unworkable* save in terms of parties". Likewise Sartori (1976), Crotty (2001) and Lai and Melkonian-Hoover (2005) to name only a few have claimed that parties and a competitive party system are essential to democracy and democratization as they provide a crucial link between people and government. Parties are, to use Giovanni Sartori's words, "the central intermediate structures between society and government", a bond, unlike factions, between a people and its decision-makers (Sartori 1976, ix).

The idea that parties fulfill an essential role in the democratic process by providing a linkage between society and government is generally not questioned. Yet, from David Broder's *The Party's Over* (1972) to Martin Wattenberg's *The Decline of American Political Parties* (1990) and more recently *Parties Without Partisans* (2002) edited by Russell Dalton and Martin Wattenberg, many have talked about the demise of parties. Of particular concern is the weakening of partisanship within the electorate (Aldrich and Niemi 1990; Milner 2002). Aldrich (1995, 17) notes that these days "elections are more candidate centered and less party centered". Another argument points

to the decline of parties as mediating institutions as they are increasingly by-passed by technologically savvy citizens who prefer to exchange points of view via the Internet than in political meetings (Davis 1999; 2005). A more general argument links partisan decline to the increasing number of policy demands placed on democracies that far surpasses their capacity to address these issues (Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki 1975; Huntington 1981).

Decline, resurgence or just transformation, the debate on the fate of parties is not over. Russell Dalton and Martin Wattenberg (2002) suggest that it all depends on whether we refer to parties in the electorate, as organizations, or in government – three analytical levels originally suggested by V.O. Key (1964). Their view is that parties in the electorate seem to be weakening, whereas parties in government have by and large kept their role, and parties as organizations are adapting to the new environment.

Although the role of parties as information providers and mediating institutions might not be as exclusive as it once was, parties remain essential for the actual working of representative democracy. Aside from informing voters and shaping the political debate, parties fulfill the basic electoral role of presenting candidates for public offices. They then perform the equally important task of organizing the government and providing the state apparatus with an elite of political practitioners. A party is thus a multipurpose organization. It is to use Robert Huckshorn's concise definition:

> "An autonomous group of citizens having the purpose of making nominations and contesting elections in hope of gaining control over governmental power through the capture of public offices and the organization of the government" (Huckshorn 1984, 10).

Implicit in this definition is the role of the opposition party whose task it is to dissent and "present a political alternative that acts to limit the present government and offers a potential for change at the next election" (Dalton and Wattenberg 2002, 8-10).

More importantly a party is a "social organism" (Eldersveld in Crotty, Freeman and Gatlin 1966, 42). It is, as Aldrich noted, "the creature of the politicians, the ambitious office seeker and officeholder" (1995, 4). "Their [the parties'] basis" he adds "lies in the actions of ambitious politicians that created and maintain them" (1995, 19). As such, parties represent institutional conduits through which power, this quintessential political goal, is harnessed by the elite (see notably Schlesinger 1991).

Politics is often about hard choices made by politicians and party leaders who need to balance a host of often diverging interests (Strøm and Müller 1999, 1). In view of the subject matter of this thesis, this raises two important questions: what drives the political elite? And is the behaviour of political elites context sensitive? The next section examines the determinants of political behaviour under two different sets of conditions: ordinary and extraordinary.

1.2. Politics in ordinary and extraordinary times

Under the influence of the school of rational choice, the majority of scholarly works published on party politics implicitly posits a world where the order of the day is business as usual, which by and large means winning or at least performing well at the next election in order to either maximize the number of votes, of governmental portfolios, or of influence on policy-making. The assumption is that political parties and elites, just like voters or any other actors in domestic politics, function and behave in a largely pacified

environment, free of major military conflicts, diplomatic crises or other security related issues. In essence then, what is being studied is politics during ordinary times as opposed to politics during extraordinary or unsettled times. This is hardly surprising since most studies concerned with political behaviour have been conducted in the post World War II era in countries and regions – essentially in the 'western hemisphere' – finally free from the tragedy of war, which until then had featured so prominently throughout their histories. In comparison, the literature on political behaviour in extraordinary times – i.e. broadly defined here as times when the nation is under threat – is sparse. Wedged between two subfields of political science – electoral behaviour and international relations – it has never been a research priority for students of the former. Yet there is something intuitively wrong about studying a set of domestic political actors with no regard for the international context in which they evolve, unless of course the context is perceived as essentially stable. For their part, international relations scholars have been far less hesitant to look into the interplay between international affairs and domestic politics (see notably Müller and Risse-Kappen 1993; Keohane and Milner 1996; Gaubatz 1999). Although the realist and neo-realist schools of thought have traditionally downplayed the importance of this interplay, essentially leaving the intricacies of party politics in a convenient black box – the theoretical equivalent of an *oubliette* – and treating the state as a unitary actor, many in the past 40 years have pursued a different approach and have decided to open the proverbial black box.[8] For example, Graham Allison (1969) in his groundbreaking article 'Conceptual models and the Cuban Missile Crisis' introduced his Bureaucratic Politics Model whereby he developed a theory on the

---

[8] The ongoing debate in international relations and foreign policy analysis opposes proponents of a liberal approach (constructivists and others) arguing for what some have termed *Primat der Innenpolitik* against proponents of a neorealist approach defending a *Primat der Außenpolitik*.

impact of bureaucracy on foreign policy decision making, arguing that government behaviour is the result of bargaining games.[9] Later on Peter Gourevitch (1978) coined the expression 'second image reversed' – in reference to Kenneth Waltz' notion (1959) – to describe how pressures on the international stage influence domestic politics and how in turn domestic factors influence international relations. More recently, Robert Putnam (1988) in 'Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games' demonstrated rather convincingly how governments engaged in international negotiations must play simultaneous games at the domestic level and international level.[10] Examples of studies on the interplay between domestic politics, or one set of domestic factors, and international affairs abound particularly in works on international political economy. Many have also written on the behaviour of democracies on the international scene, with some stressing that they are inherently pacific and others demonstrating that they are as likely to go to war as autocracies, if not more (see notably Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller 1996 on the democratic peace; Gaubatz 1999 on the impact of elections; Reiter and Stam 2002 on why democracies win war). I will not exhaust the readers' patience with countless other relevant examples, but rather point out the need for ever more studies such as Allison's and Putnam's that incorporate sub-national actors or institutions into the study of issues such as foreign policy or security crises. This approach can obviously shed light as much on international affairs as on domestic politics.[11]

---

[9] See also *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* by Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow originally published in 1971 and reedited in 1999.

[10] Putnam's article spurred a larger study involving contributions by several scholars that led to the publication of *Double-Edged Diplomacy* (1993).

[11] For a review of the literature on the interaction between the domestic and international levels see in particular Peter Gourevitch's "Domestic Politics and International Relations" in *Handbook of International Relations* edited by Walter Carlsnaes (2002).

This section is divided into two subsections. In the first one, I will define what is understood by ordinary politics and review the literature on the behaviour of political parties and elites during ordinary times. The second subsection will review the literature on party and elite behaviour during extraordinary times. My aim throughout this section will be to determine the objectives of parties and elites, and see to what extent they modify their behaviour when confronting extraordinary foreign policy or national security related events.

1.2.1. In front of Janus' Temple closed doors: party politics in peace time conditions

The closing of the doors to the Temple of Janus meant that the Roman Republic was at peace, which by all accounts was seldom the case. Even then, the ending of military activities and the return of the legions rarely meant the ending of political violence. Party strife was often settled through violent means and the use of armed force became at times the *modus operandi* of many prominent politicians – Pompey and Caesar among others (Taylor 1949, 21). In effect then, the Roman political elite behaved during peaceful and ordinary times much like they did during extraordinary and unsettled times. They fought each other – sometimes literally to the death – and remained often unable to unite for the greater good of the city. In other words, the context did not seem to affect their behaviour all that much. Alternatively one could also argue that the context did not change much – i.e. wars and military interventions were more or less a constant feature for Rome's overstretched Empire – and thus did not warrant a change of behaviour.

Leaving aside the atypical case of antique Rome let us turn our attention to contemporary politics and ask ourselves: have the doors to Janus' Temple ever really been closed in the recent past? Doubtful would be the initial response. The world might not be at war now but war is still very much part of this world. In fact, it would be difficult to pinpoint in the post World War II era a period during which Western democracies were not embroiled in some international military or diplomatic crisis. In the period 1946-2001, there were 225 armed conflicts of which 34 were still active in 28 countries at the beginning of 2001 (Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg and Strand 2002). The Cold War and the diplomatic crises and regional military conflicts it generated throughout the world and particularly in Latin America, South-East Asia, Africa and continental Europe have been a permanent feature of international affairs from the late 1940s to the early 1990s. At roughly the same time and often in conjunction with the Cold War, the disentanglement of European powers from their overseas possessions was anything but peaceful. These events influenced, sometimes heavily, the domestic politics of countless Western democracies. They shaped the nature of the political debate as with McCarthyism or the Vietnam War in the United States. They altered the political landscape and constitutional structure as in France with the decolonization process – particularly in Indochina and Algeria – and the polarization of French politics between pro-Soviets and anti-Soviets that brought about the demise of the Fourth Republic and the advent of the Fifth Republic. The post-Cold War era has been as war torn with 115 armed conflicts between 1989 and 2001 (Gleditsch et al. 2002, 616), not to mention countless other foreign or security policy related events.

The second part of the twentieth century has been by all accounts crisis-ridden and one could conclude that this is the standard situation, that this is in essence the context of ordinary politics. Extraordinary politics would then come to characterize periods of peaceful conditions. While maybe true for some countries, this view does not hold for most advanced democracies. First of all, the turmoil that has come to characterize much of the international affairs over the past 60 years is not constant. Brinkmanship is followed by détente and major military crises are a seldom occurrence. In fact, the number of military conflicts has started to decrease since the end of the Cold War (Gleditsch et al. 2002, 616). Second of all, and closely related to the first point, not all foreign policy or national security related crises are of the same magnitude. It is particularly worth noting that Western democracies have seldom been engaged in inter-state wars – defined commonly as armed conflicts causing at least 1,000 battle-deaths.[12] Over the course of the last 60 years, Western powers have been engaged in three such military conflicts.[13] As for diplomatic crises, they have not all had the implications of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, and have generally been limited in time. Finally, none of the wars in which Western powers were involved took place on their national territory. In fact most conflicts have taken place in Africa and Asia (Gleditsch et al. 2002, 616). Thus

[12] According to the Correlates of War project. Other datasets have a different threshold. For instance, the Uppsala dataset on armed conflict has a much lower threshold.

[13] The three conflicts are: Korea (1950-1953), Vietnam (1965-1975), and the First Gulf War (1991). This account is based on the list of inter-state wars (i.e. serious military conflicts between states) published by the Correlates of War project. This list does not include the ongoing Second Gulf War (2003-present), which so far has caused far more than 1,000 battle-deaths, nor does it include the current military operation in Afghanistan. As of May 1, 2009, 1,141 coalition soldiers have died in Afghanistan according to iCasualties.org (http://www.icasualties.org/oef/). The Falkland War (1982) caused 910 battle-deaths and is therefore not included. The Indochina War (1945-1954) and the Algerian War (1954-1962), which both caused tens of thousands of battle-deaths, are considered by the Correlates of War project as extra-state wars.

save perhaps for the all-encompassing Cold War only a few Western countries have actually been directly involved in these crises.[14]

My aim is not to belittle the military conflicts and diplomatic crises that have troubled our world in the recent past but rather to underline the fact that their impact was limited and that Western democratic states, on which the present study focuses, have been relatively spared. For these particular countries, foreign policy and national security policy crises are rare and exceptional. They are in a word *extraordinary* occurrences. This being said, there is a rather large grey area especially for diplomatic crises. How then do we distinguish an ordinary context from an extraordinary one? More importantly how do we define ordinary and extraordinary? A crucial measure of whether a context is extraordinary is whether the crisis at hand threatens, or is perceived as threatening, the interest of a country, its people, its territory or indeed its very survival.[15] An ordinary context, for the purpose of this work, describes a situation where the political elite does not feel sufficiently threatened by foreign or security policy events to alter its day-to-day political behaviour. Obviously, in many instances the elites will disagree as to whether a situation is threatening but there are times when the danger to the nation is unmistakably clear and present. Rosenthal, Charles and t'Hart consider that we speak of a crisis when policy makers experience "a serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a social system, which under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances necessitates making critical decisions" (1989, 10).

[14] Michael Brecher (2008) in his study on 391 international crises (non-intrawar crises) from the end of World War I to the end of 2002 classified 7.7 percent of these crises as *high severity* crises (among them the Berlin Blockade of 1948-49 and the Cuban Missiles crisis of 1962), 35.8 percent as *medium severity* crises (e.g. the North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993-94), and 56.5 percent as *low severity* crises (e.g. the 1991 Ecuador-Peru border dispute).

[15] The national interest is discussed in chapter three.

What then is ordinary political behaviour in a representative democracy? How do politics and particularly party politics operate during ordinary times? An essential aspect of politics during ordinary times is its predictability, particularly in terms of the electoral process. Although elections might not always be held on fixed dates, electoral laws ensure their frequency, typically every four to five years for parliamentary elections. The political activity of parties and elites, particularly those of the mainstream, rests on this predictability.

Anthony Downs in his groundbreaking *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957) suggested that parties are first and foremost interested in winning elections, that this is in essence their *raison d'être*. This assumption and its implications sparked an entire literature devoted to determining the objectives of political parties and their elites within. Paramount in this literature is the view that parties are rational and predictable actors. It posits a world where humans make rational choices to maximize utility. Over the past 50 years three models of competitive political party behaviour have tried to establish this assertion: the vote-seeking model, the office-seeking model, and the policy-seeking model.

The vote-seeking approach put forth by Downs (1957) argues that parties want to maximize the number of votes. Although it might capture the main purpose of mainstream political parties, critics have pointed out that it falls short of describing the intention of smaller parties or fringe parties that are more likely to be trying to appeal to particular groups of voters than to try to maximize their number of votes (Riker 1962; Robertson 1976). The office-seeking model developed by Riker (1962) addresses some of these concerns and suggests that parties are in fact seeking to maximize their control of

political offices and government portfolios. Yet, offices can be prized for their intrinsic value but also for their instrumental, electoral, or policy value (Strøm and Müller 1999, 6). Moreover, the office-seeking model fails to take into account parties that either refuse to enter into coalition governments and thus obtain portfolios or those who enter coalitions but eventually resign and relinquish the portfolios they were seeking in the first place (Strøm 1990). The policy-seeking model provides a partial solution by claiming that the objective of parties is to have maximum control over public policy. However, parties are likely to pursue as much office as policy, the former being a precondition for the latter (Axelrod 1970; Lijphart 1984; Budge and Laver 1986). In the end, it remains difficult to disentangle these various electoral objectives and one is left to conclude, as Strøm and Müller do, that “pure vote seekers, office seekers, or policy seekers are unlikely to exist” (1999, 12).

The three models outlined above assume an electoral rationale. They are, as Kaare Strøm reminds us, “less models of party behaviour than of electoral competition and coalition formation” (1990, 570). This, in itself, is not necessarily problematic since ordinary politics is centered on elections. What is more troubling is that these models tend to look at parties as unitary actors insulated from both the institutional and the international context. Yet the behaviour of parties is to a large extent dependent on the institutional features and notably the electoral system. If coalition formation is expected then the number of seats will be crucial as it will determine the leverage and bargaining power the party has. In addition, rational choice models often tend to forget that parties are complex entities and that the influence of adherents and partisans cannot be discounted altogether. In other words, the unconstrained and ‘dictatorial’ leader does not

exist (Strøm 1990, 574). In particular, party leaders are expected to remain fairly consistent in their policy choices (Downs 1957, 103-109) and party activists and party members are likely to limit their leaders' choice by reminding him or her of the party line, especially in the case of labour intensive party organizations (Strøm 1990, 578).

Institutional variables have started to be factored into models of rational behaviour towards the end of the 1970s (Hall and Taylor 1996).[16] Rational choice institutionalism, much like historical institutionalism, contends that institutions structure political behaviour (see notably Weingast 2002). Yet whereas historical institutionalists are first and foremost interested in understanding the context of politics through an inductive approach, rational choice institutionalists aim at deductively uncovering "the Laws of political behaviour and action" (Steinmo 2001). As Fiorina eloquently puts it "for most PTI scholars [Positive Theory of Institutions, i.e. rational choice] breadth trumps depth; understanding 90 percent of the variance in one case is not as significant an achievement as understanding 10 percent of each of nine cases" (Fiorina 1995, 110-111). In addition, rational choice institutionalists view institutions as essentially stable throughout time and very unlikely to be modified consciously by the rational actors (Steinmo 2001). In other words, rational choice institutionalists are unable to explain changes in the set of institutional rules, such as the ones provoked by political transitions. As Steinmo remarked, "this is unfortunate, because we know that human history is replete with change. A theory whose goal is to predict, but which cannot explain change

---

[16] Initially institutions were brought into the equation to explain the behavior of legislators within the US Congress.

has some difficulties" (2001, 573).[17] The rational choice institutionalists' most important contribution is best summarized by Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor:

> "They [rational choice institutionalists] postulate, first, that an actor's behaviour is likely to be driven, not by impersonal historical forces, but by a strategic calculus and, second, that this calculus will be deeply affected by the actor's expectations about how others are likely to behave as well. Institutions structure such interactions, by affecting the range and sequence of alternatives on the choice-agenda or by providing information and enforcement mechanisms that reduce uncertainty about the corresponding behaviour of others (…)" (1996, 945).

However despite this effort to bring the institutional variable into the equation, contextual matters, particularly those pertaining to the international situation, are not taken enough into considerations by scholars working on the determinants of elite behaviour, although a number of very useful studies have been undertaken over the years (Evans, Jacobson and Putnam 1993 being one of them). This gap in the literature is particularly manifest in the case of terrorism. As mentioned previously, the failure to assess the impact of terrorism on party behaviour is particularly troubling when one bears in mind that terrorism is essentially a negation of party politics.

Ordinary politics applies to a peaceful context, that is a situation when the country is not under threat and political elites seek to maximize their gains at the next election whether in terms of votes, portfolios or policy influence. However, what happens when the context changes due to foreign policy or national security related issues? Can the political earthquakes shake the foundations on which party politics stands?[18] One would expect a certain behavioural flexibility. Dramatic contextual changes such as a declaration of war should lead political elites to reassess their priorities and focus more on the national interest than on partisan interests.

---

[17] Rational choice theorists contend that on occasions the rules are altered by external shocks.
[18] The expression 'political earthquakes' was originally coined by Michael Brecher (2008).

1.2.2. When the doors to Janus' Temple open: party politics in unsettled times

Strøm and Müller (1999, 5) remark that "the scholarly literature that examines political parties is enormous, and yet our systematic knowledge of party objectives and behaviour is still quite modest". They themselves point out in passing that the domestic and international context may affect party behaviour through what they call *exogenous situational factors*, which basically include scandals, death of political figures, and social or economic events – i.e. riots, economic recessions, events associated with powerful collective memories (Strøm and Müller 1999, 25-26). Alas, they choose not to elaborate. Richard Katz and William Crotty, in the aptly entitled *Handbook of Party Politics* (2006), which invites contributions from leading experts in the field of political parties, do not even allocate a paragraph to party behaviour in times of foreign policy or national security crises, although they do mention that parties have had to adapt to changes brought about by the globalization of trade, finance and markets, the creation of regional political alignments such as the European Union, the electronic media, etc. (2006, 1). Incomprehensibly, international crises are not mentioned as events worthy of attention. The only international development that seems relevant to them, though not specifically for the behaviour of parties, is the so-called 'third wave' of democratization, which increased the number of parties and party systems over the last 15 years (Katz and Crotty 2006, 2). Perhaps extraordinary times are assumed to 'suspend' politics in which case one is left to wonder where these authors draw the line between extraordinary and ordinary times.

The overall impression left by a survey of the literature on party politics is that foreign policy and national security contexts are not sufficiently taken into consideration. The assumption then must be that traditional models of party behaviour are sufficient to account for the actions of parties during extraordinary times. Since these models are models of electoral behaviour one must conclude that maximizing votes, offices or policy influence is the prime objective no matter what, even when 'all hell breaks loose' on the international or national scene. A troubling assumption to say the least.[19]

To be sure, a number of important studies have dealt with party and electoral behaviour during foreign policy and military crises. For instance, Kurt Gaubatz in *Elections and War: The Electoral Incentive in the Democratic Politics of War and Peace* (1999) and Kristopher Ramsay in 'Politics at the Water's Edge: Crisis Bargaining and Electoral Competition' (2004) consider the impact of diplomatic crises and war on the electoral strategy of parties. Both authors point to the crucial role played by the opposition, which must balance at once its electoral strategy with the national interest. Kenneth Schultz' 'Domestic Opposition and Signalling in International Crises' (1998) points to exactly the same dilemma. Schultz observes that opposition parties can reinforce the credibility of the government by siding with it against an external foe, but at the same time force the government to be irreproachable on the international scene, and in particular avoid using foreign policy crisis for partisan reasons in what is commonly referred to as 'waging the dog'. Yet at the same time one could argue that during exceptional times the opposition has less room for manoeuvre than the government. Opposing the government during a severe crisis or accusing it of playing politics with the

[19] The review of literature presented in chapter 2 introduces several recent studies on party politics during terrorist crises, however none of them explicitly reappraise the prevalent models of electoral behavior.

crisis at hand can lead to counter accusations of disloyalty. Siding with the government and recognizing the primacy of the national interest over the partisan or electoral interest might thus be the safest course of action for the opposition.

Of course elections are always part of the equation and to some extent the behaviour of political elites remains influenced by the electoral timetable, even in the worst of times. The Second World War certainly did not prevent most free and democratic belligerents – the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – from organizing 'khaki elections', although Great Britain represents an interesting exception.[20] Up to a certain point, foreign policy crises can be construed as just one more set of issues that parties can choose to bring into the political debate, much like they decide to debate about the unemployment rate or tax reform. The assumption, however, is that the gravity of the context brought about by the crisis will dictate what kind of behaviour is preferable.

In order to illustrate this assumption and shed light on the behaviour of elites during extraordinary times, I look at three historical cases during which the US political elite had to deal both with a looming election and a severe foreign policy crisis: the 1940 US presidential campaign, which unfolded during the initial stages of the Second World War; the 1948 US presidential campaign, which coincided with the first major crisis of the Cold War; and the 1962 campaign for the midterm congressional elections, which overlapped towards the end with the Cuban Missile Crisis. These cases were selected because each represents a turning point for the United States of America (and for much of the world). The stakes were high and these crises had immediate implications for the US

[20] General elections in Great Britain were suspended during the Second World War. There were in fact no such elections between 1935 and 1945.

and its political elite. More importantly, these crises unfolded during election campaigns, which means that the opposition parties faced the dilemma described previously, namely to choose between their narrow electoral interest and the broader national interest. Because of the severity of the selected crises, these are cases where the foreign policy crisis at hand was *most likely* to have an impact on the behaviour of the political elite.

One of the most noticeable differences between these crises concerns the chronology of events and the point during the electoral campaign at which each crisis peaked. In the case of the 1940 election, the world, or at least the better part of the northern hemisphere, might have been at war but the US was still not a belligerent although its stakes in the conflict were anything but trivial. The peak of the crisis – i.e. the Japanese attack of Pear Harbor – took place more than a year after the presidential election, and the US until then had been relatively shielded from the events unfolding in Europe. In the case of the 1948 election, the climax of the crisis – i.e. the Berlin Blockade – took place during one of the most crucial moment of the campaign, namely the Republican convention. Finally, in the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the 'Thirteen Days' crisis unfolded late in the campaign and ended a mere nine days before election day.

1.2.2.1. Roosevelt and the isolationists

By the time the campaign for the 1940 presidential election got underway, most of the Western world was already at war. Even though the United States tried to remain neutral, the Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt who was seeking an unprecedented third mandate told the Congress in January 1940 that "the time is long past when any political party or

any particular group can curry or capture public favor by labeling itself the peace party" (Divine 1974, 5). More than anyone, Roosevelt understood that the events unfolding in Europe would determine the outcome of the election (Divine 1974, 5). As Robert Divine remarks "any dramatic turn in the conflict was likely to rally the nation behind his leadership, while a continued stalemate would help the Republicans, who focused on domestic discontent" (Divine 1974, 5).

Throughout 1940 Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie, the main contender for the Republican nomination, were openly debating whether or not the US should enter the conflict. Roosevelt was favouring a more interventionist role despite the fact that public opinion was clearly leaning towards the isolationists of whom Willkie was one of the leading, albeit unlikely, figures (Gaubatz 1999, 70-78).[21] Willkie, unlike other Republicans such as Thomas Dewey, believed it was imperative that the United States did not directly or indirectly become involve in the war, yet he did not go as far as presidential hopeful Robert Taft who considered that US involvement would be more dangerous for democracy at home than a Nazi victory in Europe (Divine 1974, 15-16). In other words, Willkie was an *isolationist* but not an *insulationist*. After the start of the German blitzkrieg in May 1940, he called for "anything short of war" to help France and England, and later on declared that these two countries were "our first line of defense against Hitler" (Divine 1974, 19). Willkie's rhetoric struck a chord with an American public opinion reluctant to get involved militarily in Europe but still keen on providing assistance to the beleaguered nations of France and Great Britain. His standing in the polls made him a clear favourite for the Republican nomination. Yet in order to clinch it,

[21] The isolationists were not the only ones to oppose US meddling into European affairs. Noninterventionists and pacifists had also joined the opposition although not for the exact same reasons.

Willkie had to appear less 'interventionist' than Roosevelt and reassure the isolationists in his party. He did just that in the week before the convention, reminding his audiences throughout the country that he would not send soldiers to Europe (Divine 1974, 20). From then on, although sharing many of Roosevelt's interventionist ideas, Willkie would present himself as the isolationist candidate.

If anything the movement against intervention was growing. The percentage of people opposed to a war against Germany grew from 83 percent before the invasion of Poland in September 1939 to 94 percent after (Gaubatz 1999, 72). In addition, the interventionist vs. antiwar divide cut across the partisan cleavage. Roosevelt's resolve was particularly tested by West and Midwest isolationists, many of which were Republicans ready to vote in favour of the Democratic incumbent and his New Deal program provided he backtracked on his decision to intervene on the international scene (Gaubatz 1999, 70).

The political elite was not warming to Roosevelt's interventionist plan either. Already in 1935, the Senate passed the first of the Neutrality Acts by 79 votes in favour and 2 against (Gaubatz 1999, 71). Eventually both the Congress and the public became less isolationist – for instance the prohibition on arms sale was lifted – but a clear majority remained opposed to sending the army and the navy anywhere close to the frontline.[22] In fact, Burton Wheeler and other Democratic isolationists threatened to create a third party unless Roosevelt declared himself opposed to intervention (Gaubatz 1999, 73). Even after the May 1940 blitzkrieg during which the Nazi war machine overpowered its European adversaries like mere lead soldiers in a child's playground,

[22] According to a Gallup poll taken in May 1940, two-thirds of interviewees preferred a candidate willing to assist England and France in anyway possible as long as the army and navy would not be sent into battle (Divine 1974, 8).

Roosevelt was still unable to push forward his plans for intervention. Instead, FDR had to content himself with a plan to beef up the national defence (one billion dollars in emergency defence appropriations), a move which drew massive support from both interventionists and isolationists in Congress (Divine 1974, 9).

Although Roosevelt was unable to push forth his interventionist plan, the German invasion of Europe played to its advantage in the electoral race. *Time* magazine even boldly declared that "the Republican Party was the first US casualty in World War II" (Divine 1974, 10). Polls were indicating that a clear majority would vote for Roosevelt but that an even larger majority was opposed to intervention unless the country was attacked (Divine 1974, 11). Eventually, unable to secure the backing of the elite and of public opinion, and unwilling to risk breaking up his New Deal coalition, Roosevelt decided to adopt the isolationist position of Willkie so as not to hurt his chances of winning the November election. Gaubatz (1999, 74) remarks that "as the election drew nearer through October 1940, there were escalations in antiwar rhetoric by both candidates" with Roosevelt declaring during a public speech: "I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars". Electoral considerations had finally convinced Roosevelt to publicly turn around.

Despite the growing tension in Europe, the US was not under threat. The context was still peaceful. With no clear and present danger, foreign policy could be debated just like any other issue. Willkie projected himself as more isolationist than he really was thereby forcing Roosevelt to put on hold his interventionist agenda until after the election. Clearly Willkie and the Republicans did not feel the urge to rally around their

president and allow him to choose his preferred course of action. However, had Roosevelt and Willkie been on the campaign trail in the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor a year later, the question of America's entry into war would likely not have been disputed. By December 7, 1941, this 'day of infamy', the Washington political elite rallied around its President like an army behind its commander-in-chief.

1.2.2.2. Dewey and the Berlin Crisis

For the Republicans, the US presidential campaign of 1948 was the first since Herbert Hoover's in 1928 for which their candidate – in this case Thomas Dewey – was the clear favourite to win the election. Having won the 1946 midterm elections, members of the Grand Old Party were convinced that the White House was within their grasp. For his part Harry Truman, the incumbent, still had to convince the Democrats that he rather than Ike Eisenhower should be their candidate. To make matters worse, in the spring of 1948 his approval rating in the Gallup poll reached an all-time low with 32 percent (Divine 1974, 188).

The campaign was fought primarily over foreign policy, which according to polls was the number one problem facing the country (Ramsay 2004, 19). A slight majority of Americans also believed that the Republicans were the best choice to conduct their foreign policy (Ramsay 2004, 19). As a consequence, Dewey repeatedly attacked Truman's record on the international front, notably regarding the fate of Eastern Europe (Ramsay 2004, 18). Dewey notably lambasted the Truman administration for having "delivered" 200 million Europeans into Stalin's hands (Divine 1974, 189). Polls also

indicated that almost three-quarters of respondents felt that the United States was "too soft" with the Soviets (Divine 1974, 200).

On June 23, 1948, the day Dewey received the Republican nomination, the Soviet Union closed the corridor linking West Germany and Berlin, creating the first great crisis of the Cold War and what at the time *Newsweek* called "the greatest diplomatic crisis in American history" (Lemelin 2001, 51). The Soviets' bold move was a reaction to western plans of creating an independent West German entity. At the Potsdam Conference in 1945, the Soviet Union and the Western powers agreed on the division of Germany and Berlin into four zones of occupation, which would remain part of the same political entity. When the US and its Western allies realized that the deal reached with the Soviets was unworkable, they decided to merge their zones and create a West German entity. The Berlin blockade was an attempt by the Soviets to prevent their former allies to proceed with their plan (Lodge and Shlaim 1979, 52).

Despite leading in the polls, Dewey faced a difficult choice: carry on the attacks against Truman's perceived mismanagement of foreign policy issues, or rally around Truman 'the president' during a severe crisis.[23] For his part Truman declared that "foreign policy should be the policy of the whole Nation and not the policy of one party or the other (…). Partisanship should stop as the water's edge" (Divine 1974, 219). Congress lost little time in giving Truman the support he needed as both Democrats and Republicans approved the airlift announced on June 30 (Lodge and Shlaim 1979, 75). Charles Eaton, the Republican chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, underlined the necessity for the US to remain in Berlin:

[23] The Democrats were blamed for their failure to obtain secure access rights to Berlin at the Potsdam conference (Divine 1974, 224).

> "If the United States should withdraw, it would remove any confidence in us as world leaders. It would be more of a fateful calamity to mankind than Munich was. It would be a signal to the world that we intend to turn over everything to the dictatorship of Russia" (Lodge and Shlaim 1979, 75).

In the end Dewey decided that recognizing the legal ambiguity of Berlin's status brought about by the mismanagement of the White House would only play in the hands of Stalin and legitimize his claims, and instead decided that the Berlin Blockade would not be made into an electoral issue (Ramsay 2004, 19). With the fate of his country's foreign policy in the balance, Dewey declared:

> "The present duty of Americans is not to be divided by past lapses but to unite to surmount present danger (…). We shall not allow domestic partisan irritations to divert us from indispensable unity" (Divine 1974, 225).

Truman went on to win the election. Dewey for the sake of his country had indeed "snatched defeat from the jaws of victory" (Ramsay 2004, 21). Despite an electoral victory in sight, the national interest of the US proved in the end too much to brush aside. "The fear of war" as noted by Robert Divine "rallied the people around Truman's leadership" (1974, 226).[24]

[24] To be sure other factors played a role in Truman's victory. Harold Gullan (1998) suggests that internal conflicts within the Republican Party as well as Dewey's excessive cautiousness worked in Truman's favor. Gullan also points out that the Democrats outspent the Republicans throughout the campaign. Yet the Democratic Party was itself divided (Lemelin 2001). Henry Wallace who had been FDR's vice-president for four years and later on Secretary of Commerce under Truman decided to run for president on a third-party ticket. In addition, 35 Democratic delegates from Mississippi and Alabama left the party to support Strom Thurmond's presidential bid.

1.2.2.3. JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis

Perhaps more than the two crises described above, the events of October 1962 were seen as severely jeopardizing the national interest of the US (and potentially countless other countries) and threatening the survival of millions in what Timothy McKeown describes as "our closest brush with thermonuclear war" (2000, 70). Graham Allison sombrely remarks:

> "For thirteen days of October 1962, there was a higher probability that more human lives would end suddenly than ever before in history. Had the worst occurred, the death of 100 million Americans, over 100 million Russians, and millions of Europeans as well would make previous natural calamities and inhumanities appear insignificant. Given the probability of disaster – which President Kennedy estimated as 'between 1 out of 3 and even' – our escape seems awesome." (1969, 689)

Ever since Fidel Castro had seized power in January 1959 Cuba was a pressing concern for the US administration and a sore point for Kennedy who had greenlighted the fiasco that would be the CIA operation at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. Yet during the fall of 1962 Kennedy had other things on his mind. Congressional elections were looming and although the Democrats controlled both the Senate (65-35) and the House of Representatives (263-174), a working majority was often missing notably because House committees were in the hand of conservatives from the South, and in the Senate southern Democrats often opposed Kennedy (Paterson and Brophy 1986). As pointed out by Paterson and Brophy "the president and his aides eagerly looked to the forthcoming elections to produce a more sympathetic Congress" (1986, 88). Yet midterm elections up to that point had almost always been unfavourable to the incumbent's party. Republicans were thus expecting to gain seats in both assemblies and perhaps even become the majority party in the House (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 91). However, throughout the

first ten months of 1962 the Democratic Party retained a lead in the Gallup polls on voters' preferences – i.e. the Democrats enjoyed a 20 points margin on the Republicans in January 1962 but only an 11 points margin in early November (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 92). Democrats were also perceived as more capable than Republicans to handle national problems (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 93). Yet Kennedy's record with regards to Cuba remained problematic with a Louis Harris poll showing a majority of interviewees disapproving the President's actions (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 93). Not surprisingly the Republicans tried to make Cuba the main issue of the congressional campaign, whereas the Democrats were trying to focus the debate on Medicare (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 94). The Republican opposition, it should be pointed out, was critical of the Kennedy administration's handling of Cuba even before the October Crisis. Essentially, Republicans were arguing that the missiles installed by the Soviets on the island had an offensive purpose, whereas Kennedy described them as defensive or short-range and thus unable to reach the US (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 95). In any event, the Republican opposition in Congress argued that the US could not stay inactive and had to resort to either a blockade or an invasion of Cuba (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 95). In an attempt to appease the hawks, Kennedy declared at a press conference held on September 13 that he would do whatever needed to be done to protect the security of the country (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 96). Even though the president did not adopt their strategy, the Republicans had succeeded in promoting Cuba as one of the top issues of the campaign.

The crisis reached a climax on October 16 when the president was informed that photographs taken by a US spy plane two days before revealed the presence of surface-to-surface missiles – i.e. for offensive purpose – on the Caribbean island. With elections a

mere three weeks away, President Kennedy had to take into account the forceful alternatives put forth by the hawkish Republicans and the preferences of public opinion, which according to polls favoured doing something while avoiding the use of force (McKeown 2000, 72). The week that followed can best be described as a long brainstorming session involving members of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (better known as ExCom). In light of the massive amount of material (notably primary documents) available, Paterson and Brophy conclude that "politics was very seldom discussed and did not determine the choice of the naval blockade" (1986, 100).[25] The most ardent critic of Kennedy on Cuba, Senator Kenneth Keating, was not invited to offer his ideas. During that fateful week Kennedy carried on campaigning across the country, revealing nothing about the extent of the crisis to the public, proof enough for Paterson and Brophy that Kennedy did not play politics with Cuba. Most of the political elite was not aware of the reconnaissance photographs and of the extent of the crisis. As a result criticism, notably from Republican politicians, continued.

The situation changed dramatically after the full extent of the crisis was revealed to the world on October 22 during a television address. Kennedy announced a "strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba" and gave Khrushchev an ultimatum, asking the Soviet leader to "halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace" (Allison 1969, 704). Republicans by and large sided with Kennedy, and Keating himself declared that the President had "taken Cuba out of politics" (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 106). Throughout

[25] Was Kennedy influenced by domestic politics? Clearly the subject was mentioned during meetings and Kennedy was keeping a close watch on the opinion polls (Paterson and Brophy 1986, McKeown 2000). McGeorge Bundy later acknowledged that congressional pressure did influence the President (McKeown 2000, 79).

the remainder of the crisis the Kennedy administration worked at creating a bipartisan consensus by notably bringing top Republicans in foreign-policy meetings (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 106). As pointed out by McKeown, "given the pronounced public support for the blockade compared to more violent options, the blockade was the ideal response in terms of gratifying public opinion" (2000, 74). At the same time, this option was strong enough to appease the hawks and other warmongers roaming on Capitol Hill. Even the media rallied around the flag following the announcement of the embargo (Kern, Levering and Levering 1983).

By October 29, the White House had reached an agreement with the Soviets, essentially putting an end to the crisis. With a week left before the election, the Republicans went again on the offensive and renewed their attacks against the incumbent arguing that Kennedy's policy left a communist country and a military ally of the Soviet Union in the United States' back garden. Even worse, by promising Nikita Khrutshev not to invade Cuba, Kennedy had in the eyes of the Republican Party essentially renounced the Monroe Doctrine (Paterson and Brophy 1986, 107).[26]

The November 6 election did not significantly modify the Congress. The Republicans gained two seats in the House, where the Democrats retained the majority, and lost four seats in the Senate. Paterson and Brophy conclude that the Missile Crisis did not change the course of the election:

> "The crisis helped some Democrats and hurt some Democrats; it buoyed some Republicans and weakened some Republicans. In many instances Cuba was not even a conspicuous campaign issue. The historian cannot identify one election in 1962 decided by voter reaction to the missile crisis – not a single outcome where the Cuban issue made the difference

[26] The Monroe Doctrine issued on December 2, 1823, stated that European powers were no longer allowed to meddle in the affairs of American countries, thereby making Latin America Washington's exclusive sphere of influence.

> between victory and defeat. The results of the House and the Senate races, in other words, are best explained by the mix of other factors (…): personalities and their public images; local politics; domestic issues; reapportionment and gerrymandering; superior Democratic Party registration; and the nature of the 1960 election." (1986, 118).

Yet for a week (between October 22 and October 29) the Republicans by and large ceased their attacks against Kennedy. It was neither the most heartfelt nor the longest rally around the flag but it did halt the Republican momentum. More importantly, it gave Kennedy an opportunity to demonstrate his leadership in the worst of times. Although he did not choose the hawks' preferred course of action (a more forceful response), Republican critics were silenced two weeks before voters were called to the polls.

Conclusion

Party politics does not always revolve around electoral objectives. In fact, one would be tempted to share Juliet Lodge and Avi Shlaim's remark that "the greater the perceived probability of war, the greater is the freedom of key decision-makers from domestic constraints" (1979, 74). Of course the value of the above set of historical examples is limited in several ways: only one country (and one political system) is taken into account and the timeframe is relatively narrow. More importantly the selected events, because of their implications, represent cases where foreign policy events are most likely to influence the parties. It goes without saying that party behaviour during less intense crises must be less influenced by events outside the borders. In many ways this is what the first case study points out. In 1940 the United States are just a 'neutral' bystander in the European military conflict, and political elites can look upon foreign policy as just another issue, albeit the most important one, in the presidential campaign. In 1956 a

similar situation presented itself in the United Kingdom when Gamal Abdel Nasser decided to nationalize the Suez Canal. Anthony Eden, the conservative Prime Minister, decided to seize back the canal through a military operation involving France and Israel. However, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition – i.e. the Labour Party – backed by a majority of the public opinion decided to oppose this intervention. The Conservative Party was itself split between those advocating an even tougher policy towards Egypt and those siding with Labour. This unequivocal position on the part of the Labour Party reinforced Nasser's as well as the US government's determination to oppose the British-led invasion and precipitated the failure of the operation. The crisis despite its implications (mainly economic) did not threaten the United Kingdom though it dismantled further an Empire that had become too much of a burden anyway. The loss of Suez was more a symbolic loss, that of a vanishing supremacy. As a result, Labour felt no qualm about opposing the government, particularly with public opinion very much against intervention.

The last two cases (Berlin Blockade and Cuban Missile Crisis) reveal a very different logic, particularly in the case of the 1948 election. Here despite a looming election and an open road to victory the opposition chose the national interest over the electoral interest. The loss of Berlin would have dealt a severe blow to the United States and its allies and would have put the next president (Dewey or Truman) in a difficult position. The Missile Crisis of 1962 is another proof that when the going gets tough the tougher will rally. To be sure the rally only lasted a week but it ended a mere eight days before the election. Had the Republican Party only had its best electoral interest in mind it would simply not have stopped its attacks against Kennedy, not for a week, not even for an hour.

The idea of a shift from ordinary politics to extraordinary politics when the national security is threatened seems particularly relevant with regards to terrorism. The threat might be of a different scale but as Michel Wieviorka and David Gordon White point out:

> "A terrorist movement at its height operates like a magnet, drawing attention to itself well beyond its terrorist acts per se. Overheating in the media, panic in the corridors of power, empty-handedness in the police and intelligence services, miscarriages in the halls of justice, and the human drama of victims and their families all combine to reinforce the image of the terrorist as an all-powerful figure. Conversely, disinterest reigns as soon as an incident has passed, and our memories are hardly jogged when we see these same terrorist actors, now portrayed as miserable figures, at the conclusion of an escapade" (2004, xxix).

If foreign policy crises can temporarily push electoral preoccupations aside and activate what Adam Smith (2006) calls the 'patriotic imperative' then presumably the same holds for terrorist crises. The question then is one of trade-off between partisan interests and the national interest, a question to which I will return later. First we turn our attention to terrorism, an ancient phenomenon but a relatively recent field of study.

Chapter 2

Politics and Terrorism

"When the Patriot Act was passed, smoke was still coming out of the rubble of the Pentagon and the twin towers. We rushed in order to provide some comfort to the people of the United States. It was a huge mistake" (Buth Otter, Republican Representative from Idaho, August 17, 2003)

Introduction

If as Clausewitz famously wrote war is a "continuation of politics by other means" then so must be terrorism, which as Bruce Hoffman puts it, is "fundamentally and inherently political" (Hoffman 2006, 2).[27] From its onset in Mesopotamia more than 4,000 years ago terrorism has been used to achieve political objectives – whether those of empires, states or groups of individuals – affecting in the process the lives of many and in some cases altering the course of history. And yet, terrorism as a distinct field of study is relatively young. The discipline really emerged in the early 1970s. Since then the phenomenon has been dissected and explored through many different angles. Oddly enough its effects on party politics have been until very recently largely ignored. A worrying gap in the literature to say the least, especially when one considers that terrorism is in effect an attempt to alter the political decisions taken by parties and their elites, that is a negation of party politics.

The following section is divided into four parts. Section one briefly describes the evolution of terrorism throughout history. Section two offers an appraisal of the recent evolution of terrorism in the world. The third section discusses terrorism as a concept and identifies differences with other forms of political violence. Finally, section four offers a review of the literature on terrorism and on its interplay with politics.

[27] In fact, Weinberg and Pedhazur (2003) point out that parties, notably in Tsarist Russia, resorted to terrorism to bring about political changes.

2.1. An ancient phenomenon

Human violence is ageless. It is a permanent feature of human behaviour. As novelist and historian Ronald Wright (2004, 31) remarked, “we [humans] are at best the heirs of many ruthless victories and at worst the heirs of genocide. We may well be descended from humans who repeatedly exterminated rival humans – culminating in the suspicious death of our Neanderthal cousins some 30,000 years ago”. Yet terrorism is an altogether different form of violence. It is different from genocide and different from the primeval and permanent terror that came to characterize the life of our early ancestors. It is different from other types of violence, notably those associated with the organized crime, that deliberately seek to terrorize in order to achieve their goals. Terrorism is in essence political; it is about power and can therefore only occur in hierarchical societies.

Terrorism first emerged around 2,000 B.C. in the first known hierarchical communities: the Empire of Sargon and the Assyrian Empire. There the governing elites instrumentalized terror to subdue their subjects. As pointed out by Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin in their *Histoire du Terrorisme*, “[La terreur devient] dans les sociétés despotiques qui forment la majeure partie de la trame de l’histoire, l’instrument de la servitude, le garant de la soumission de la multitude” (2004, 9). What Thomas Thornton (1964) aptly called “enforcement terrorism” was first and foremost a means of governance for despots and autocrats, but also at times for liberals and democrats. Indeed what Michael Walzer has termed “war terrorism”, that is the “effort [by democrats and autocrats alike] to kill civilians in such large numbers that their government is forced to surrender” – such as the bombings of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Coventry and Dresden during

the Second World War – has been the single most murderous terror campaign of the 20th century (2002, 5).

Notwithstanding transnational state-sponsored terrorism, which some governments still rely on, enforcement terrorism has receded dramatically over the past 50 years owing in large part to the democratization process under way in many parts of the world.[28] However, let us remind ourselves that state terrorism has claimed over the course of history countless number of lives, in any case far more than non-state terrorism.[29] The 'Reign of Terror' in its most brutal version has blurred the distinction between state terrorism and genocide.[30]

Today terrorism is first and foremost associated with sub-state actors. The first documented acts of terrorism by non-state entities, or group terrorism as it is often referred to, took place in the Roman province of Palestine in the fifth century B.C.. However, not until the late 19th century did group terrorism really challenge the political establishment.

It began with the 'anarchist wave', which first appeared in Tsarist Russia in the 1880s before spreading to the rest of Europe (Rapoport 2004). Carlo Pisacane wrote at the time that "ideas result from deeds, not the latter from the former" adding that "the people will not be free when they are educated, but educated when they are free", hence the expression 'propaganda by the deed' first coined by Peter Kropotkin (quoted in

---

[28] Hrair Dekmejian distinguishes state-sponsored terrorism with domestic targets (i.e. enforcement terrorism) from state-sponsored terrorism with transnational targets which he defines as "the projection of coercive force overtly or covertly across territorial boundaries in order to annex territory, establish friendly regimes, subvert unfriendly regimes, assassinate or capture enemy leaders, or destroy terrorist bases and cells" (2007, 14).

[29] According to David Rapoport (1984), the Thuggee (in the Indian subcontinent) might have been the most murderous terrorist group of all time, killing about half-million people over the course of four centuries.

[30] Rudolf Rummel (1994, 15) estimates that over 169 million people have been killed by their own governments from 1900 to 1987.

Hoffman 2006, 5). The belief amongst anarchists such as Albert Parsons was that dynamite “made all men equal and therefore free” (quoted in Townshend 2002, 25). Violence was meant to draw attention to their cause and educate the people so that ultimately they would support the revolution. Narodnaya Volya (i.e. People’s Will), the best known of these Russian groups, targeted exclusively symbols of the state and representatives of the Tsar, and was particularly careful not to spread innocent blood. But as this phenomenon spread to Western Europe, the Balkans and Asia, this discriminate approach soon vanished. By the 1880s the Skirmishers in Ireland had already killed and injured innocents (Hoffman 2006). A few years later Émile Henry, one of the most notorious anarchists turned terrorist of his time, declared during his trial “Il n’y a pas d’innocents!”. Terrorism had entered a new era.

The anarchist wave all but disappeared at the beginning of the 20th century and was soon replaced by an ‘anti-colonial wave’ which lasted from the 1920s to the 1960s. Terrorism was used by movements of national liberation as a strategy to wear down the colonizing forces. Throughout this period, it became an important aspect of low-intensity conflicts fought throughout Africa and Asia. Wars of liberation were fought primarily outside the urban areas, and thus guerrilla warfare was still the preferred method for these movements.[31] Yet terrorism represented a mean to bring the conflict into the cities controlled by the adversary (Chaliand and Blin 2004, 236). Terrorism, as a strategy of liberation, was particularly successful in Palestine during the British mandate, Cyprus and Algeria.

By the 1970s a social-revolutionary brand of terrorism that aimed at overturning the capitalist order appeared with groups such as the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF) in

[31] The difference between guerrilla and terrorism is discussed later in this chapter.

Germany or Brigate Rosse (BR) in Italy. Here again as was the case with the previous anarchist wave, acts of violence were meant to awaken the people (Chaliand and Blin 2004, 260). These radical activists targeted politicians and prominent businessmen, usually through assassination or kidnapping. The situation was particularly tense in Italy where literally hundreds of these radical groups wrought havoc to the country (a situation made even worse by the terrorist activities of right-wing groups). The 'years of lead' culminated in the kidnapping and subsequent murder of former Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978, and the killing of 84 people in an explosion at the Bologna railway station in 1980 (this one by right-wing terrorists).[32] Meanwhile, groups such as the Rote Armee Fraktion (a.k.a. Baader-Meinhof gang) and Bewegung Zwei Juni (B2J) in Germany, the Weathermen in the US, and Action Directe (AD) in France were conducting similar operations although on a smaller scale than their Italian counterparts.

Red terrorism all but died out at the end of the 1980s, but the 'nationalist-separatist wave' spearheaded by groups such as al Fatah, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and Euskadi ta Askatasuna (ETA), which had emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, proved far more resilient. In fact, PIRA and its splinter groups could trace back their ancestry to the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood active in the 1850s (Townshend 2002, 77). Most of these groups were able to sustain their activities thanks to a relatively large support within parts of the population (and even abroad with the help of

---

[32] The expression 'years of lead' refers to a German movie entitled *Die Bleierne Zeit* that tells the story of the Ensslin sisters, one of whom decided to join the Rote Armee Fraktion. The movie was directed by Margarethe von Trotta and came out in 1981. The expression *bleierne Zeit* originally came from a Friedrich Hölderlin poem entitled *Der Gang aufs Land*. Trotta used the expression as a metaphor to describe the circumstances in which the Ensslin sisters grew up in the 1950s, namely a defeated Germany leaving under a 'lead sky'. The expression was then translated into other languages (notably *anni di piombo* in Italy where the movie was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival) and came to describe the use of bullets by left wing and right wing terrorists in the seventies. See notably an interview with Margarethe von Trotta in *Der Tagesspiegel*: http://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/art772,2246677

the diasporas and other sympathizers). Illustrating the notion that terrorism is a continuation of politics, many of these groups carried out their activities in parallel to those of legal political representatives of the cause. In the case of Ulster, the existence of a political entity (i.e. Sinn Féin), representing the more moderate advocates of the Irish republican cause, proved a crucial factor in ending years of terror.

The 'religious wave', which many see beginning with the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1979), is the latest manifestation of modern terrorism. Yet in all fairness this brand of terrorism is older than the previous waves mentioned above. Terrorist acts perpetrated in the name of a religion have been recorded as far back as antiquity (e.g. the Zealots). None of the three monotheist religion is blameless. Today, the 'religious wave' refers primarily to jihadists or radical Islamic terrorists, yet covers other types of religious fundamentalism as well: Christian (particularly anti-abortionists), Jewish, Sikh, etc. Jerrold Post (2005, 620) remarks that unlike social-revolutionary and national-separatist terrorists, many fundamentalists are "not constrained by Western reaction" and are thus ready to cause heavy casualties. Yet religion is often just a pretext hiding a political objective. Terrorism, regardless of the claims issued by its perpetrators, is always about political power. The multiple attacks in New York, Madrid and London were not the result of a clash of civilization but rather an attempt by some to export the civil war taking place within Islam outside the confines of the Ummah. It is likely that by striking at the heart of America's economic and military power, al Qaeda was trying to get rid of the reigning Hashemite in Saudi Arabia (David and Gagnon 2007, 14).

The coming of age of group terrorism takes place in the early 1970s, a period when according to Brian Jenkins, a long-time observer of the terrorist phenomenon:

> "jet air travel gave terrorists worldwide mobility. The development of radio, television, and communication satellites gave them almost instantaneous access to a global audience. The increasing availability of weapons and explosives made it easy to arm, while the vulnerabilities inherent in our modern-technology-dependent society, from electrical pylons to Boeing 747s, provided ample targets" (2001, 321).

Modern terrorism remains an instrument of coercion to achieve political goals but its methods have evolved. The availability of more lethal weapons coupled with logic reminiscent of early anarchists such as Émile Louis – "There are no innocents!" – has increased substantially the death toll. Whereas terrorists used to rely on the attack of symbols to publicize their cause and rally their supporters they are now more murderous, even at times genocidal. Sean MacBride and Michael Collins – both historical figures of the IRA – took pride in preserving the lives of innocents and civilians (Leiser 1977, 39-40). And when an explosion killed 28 people in Omagh, Ulster, in 1998, the real IRA issued a public apology claiming it had warned the authorities of the attack.[33] Likewise, ETA was keen to distance itself from the March 11, 2004, attacks that claimed the lives of 191 people by quickly issuing a statement denying its implication in the attack.[34] Terrorism is not all blood and threat of more blood. To successfully spread their political message, terrorist groups need to sway part of the public opinion in their favour, and to do that they will often try to 'control' the damage caused by their attack by issuing warning to the authorities and informing them of their next target.[35] The relative restraint of such groups seems lost on the al Qaedas of this world for which carnage seems to be

---

[33] See details on BBC News Online dated August 18, 1998: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/events/northern_ireland/focus/153629.stm See also, James Dingley, "The Bombing of Omagh, 15 August 1998: The Bombers, Their Tactics, Strategy, and Purpose Behind the Incident", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 24(6): 451 – 465.

[34] For details: http://www.arte-tv.com/fr/histoire-societe/archives/Madrid_2C_20un_20an_20apr_C3_A8s/rappel_20des_20faits/805266.html

[35] In the case of the Omagh attack a warning was given to the police a few minutes before the explosion. The warning (intentionally or unintentionally) gave contradicting information as to exactly which part of a shopping street in Omagh was targeted. Tragically the police evacuated the wrong end of the street.

the avowed operational objective, although this is a disputed claim. Brian Jenkins offers a chilling perspective on terrorism at the start of the 21st century:

> "[The] new breed of terrorists [is] less constrained by the fear of alienating perceived constituents or angering the public. Some of the notions that I once offered about self-imposed constraints on terrorist behaviour appear to be eroding as terrorists move away from political agendas and into realms where they are convinced that they have the mandate of God. Large-scale, indiscriminate violence is the reality of today's terrorism" (2001, 324).

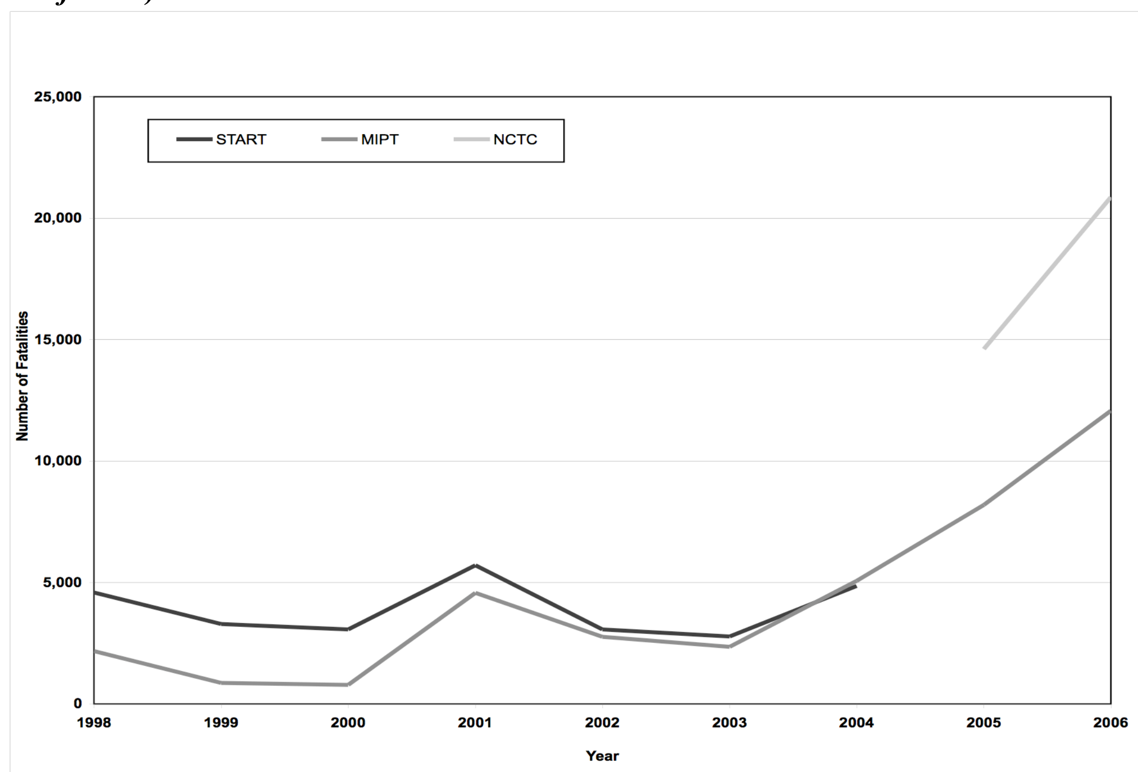
2.2. A phenomenon on the rise?

Is terrorism in the world, particularly in the Western world, on the rise? Are there more casualties today than there were 5 or 10 years ago? In other words, how acute is the problem? The answer to these questions is a complex one. Statistics on terrorism have been in the past few years confusing and contradictory (David and Gagnon 2007, 3). Much like the definition of terrorism – discussed in the following section – the interpretation of the evolution of terrorism has become politicized, particularly in an age when a global 'war on terror' is being waged. Experts using the same datasets and analyzing the same figures on global terror will draw different conclusions. This controversy is essentially the result of a disagreement as to what should and should not be considered a terrorist act and thus be included in datasets recording this type of event. As such the definition of terrorism and the interpretation of statistics on this phenomenon are closely linked.

For instance, figures released by the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) of the US State Department indicate that the number of terrorist attacks worldwide as well as the number of people killed in these attacks has increased tremendously over the last

few years. These trends, as shown in figure 1, are confirmed by figures from two other well-respected data sources, namely those of the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) and of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). The NCTC database indicates that from 2005 to 2006 the number of fatalities caused by terrorist attacks has increased by 41 percent (from 14,618 fatalities in 2005 to 20,573 in 2006). For its part, the MIPT database shows an increase of around 450 percent from 1998 to 2006, whereas the START database reports an increase of 75 percent for 2004 alone.[36]

Figure 1. Global fatalities from terrorism, 1998 – 2006 (from the *Human Security Brief 2007*)

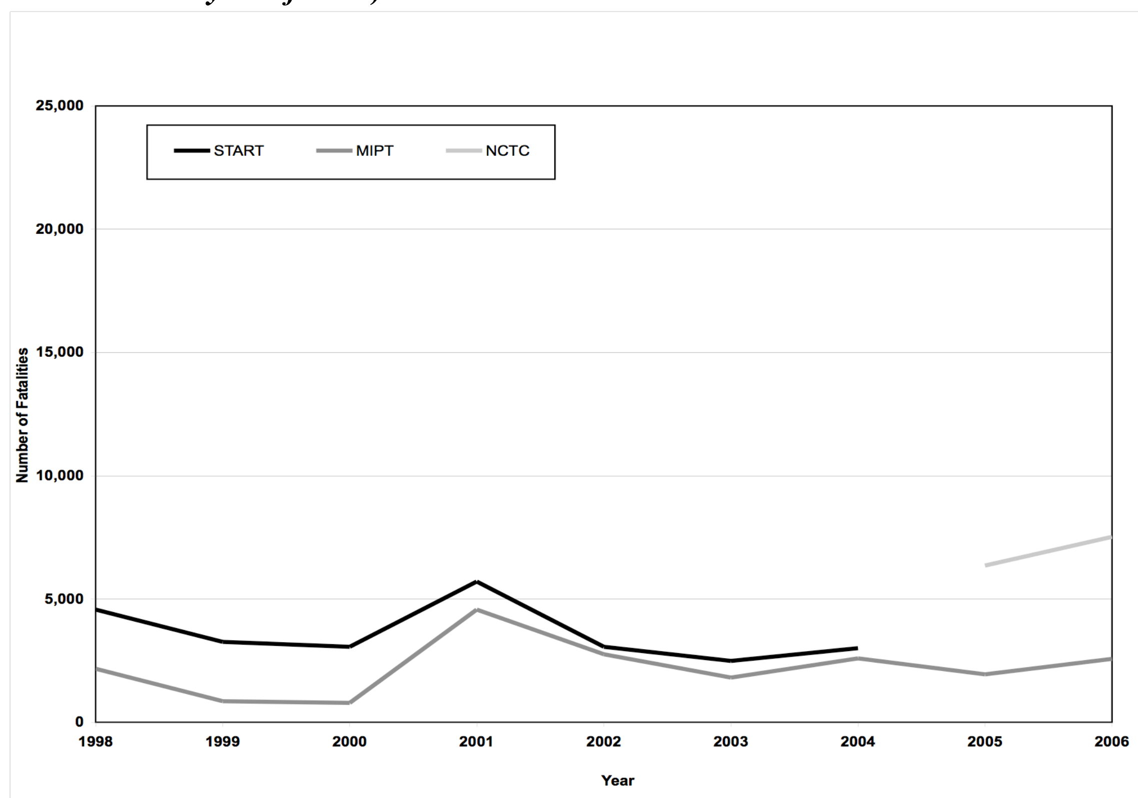


Sources: MIPT – NCTC – START

[36] All of these figures are presented in the *Human Security Brief* available at http://www.humansecuritybrief.info/hsb07_chapter1.pdf.

This interpretation of these figures has been contested, most notably by researchers at the Vancouver-based Human Security Project.[37] According to them, the increase witnessed by others is largely attributable to the massive increase of civilian casualties following the US-led military invasion of Iraq in 2003. Once we exclude Iraq from the dataset, the worldwide trend of fatalities caused by terrorism is decreasing (see figure 2). The estimate from the Human Security Project, based on the three above-mentioned datasets, is that the number of fatalities in the world caused by terrorist attacks has decreased by 40 percent since 2001.

Figure 2. Global fatalities from terrorism 1998 – 2006, excluding Iraq (from the *Human Security Brief 2007*)



Sources: MIPT – NCTC – START

[37] See http://www.humansecuritybrief.info/hsb07_chapter1.pdf

For 2006, NCTC puts the share of Iraq for terrorist fatalities worldwide at 64 percent and MIPT puts it at 79 percent. Experts at Human Security Project argue that "describing the intentional killing of civilians in civil wars as 'terrorism' is both unusual and somewhat controversial". In fact, in their view the majority of civilians killed in Iraq since 2003 are better described as victims of insurgencies and victims of the war. As such, they are very much comparable to other victims of civil wars in the recent past, whether in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bosnia or Guatemala to name but a few. In those countries, as in Iraq now, the murder of these civilians was "intentional, politically motivated, and perpetrated by non-state groups", yet it was rarely if ever described as terrorist at the time.

The overlap between acts of terrorism and large-scale political violence such as civil war makes it difficult to assess the current situation and decide whether or not terrorism is indeed progressing as claimed by NCTC. There is certainly a case for arguing that figures on Iraq tend to distort the picture on global terrorism, and that if we treat the killings occurring in Iraq as instances of war crime or even genocide, then we might be able to conclude that terrorism worldwide is receding rather than increasing. Yet figures published by another organization, namely Europol, show that in recent years terrorism in the European Union has been increasing considerably.[38] The figures for the nine

---

[38] See the *2008 EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report* at: http://www.europol.europa.eu/publications/EU_Terrorism_Situation_and_Trend_Report_TE-SAT/TESAT2008.pdf

countries taking part in this yearly survey of terrorist activities indicate that from 2006 to 2007 the total number of reported attacks has risen by 24 percent.[39]

The majority of attacks occurring in the European Union were, according to Europol, perpetrated by separatist groups operating in Spain and France. Instances of Islamic terrorism were very limited. However, globally terrorism by jihadist groups has been on the rise. Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank (2007) argue that the average yearly incidence of jihadist-led terrorist attacks in the world has increased by more than 600 percent since the beginning of the US-led military intervention in Iraq.[40] Even by removing Iraq and Afghanistan from the analysis, they still find a 35 percent increase in the number of jihadist attacks in the world.

A limitation on the availability of data makes it difficult to determine trends in terrorist activities over longer periods of time. According to the RAND Corporation international terrorism grew throughout the seventies and eighties (from a hundred attacks in 1968 to roughly 450 twenty years later), declined during the nineties before rising again at the start of the new millennium (David and Gagnon, 5). The latest figures however would seem to indicate that international terrorism has been declining over the past couple of years. Likewise, the number of victims caused by international terrorism peaked several times during the eighties and nineties before declining. Subsequently, the high death toll caused by the multiple attacks of 9/11 has of course distorted the trend. Domestic terrorism on the other hand has been increasing sharply over the past six years,

---

[39] Europol compiles failed, foiled and successfully executed attacks in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom.
[40] Their analysis is based on the MIPT dataset. Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank, “The Iraq Effect: War Has Increased Terrorism Sevenfold Worldwide”, *Mother Jones*, March 1, 2007.

an upsurge which coincides with the beginning of the US-led military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (David and Gagnon 2007, 5).

Relatively speaking terrorism remains a limited threat. John Mueller points out that "the total number of people killed since 9/11 by al Qaeda or 'al Qaeda-like' operatives outside of Afghanistan and Iraq is not much higher than the number of people who drown in bathtubs in the United States in a single year, and that the lifetime chance of an American being killed by international terrorism is about one in 80,000 – about the same chance of being killed by a comet or a meteor" (Mueller 2006).[41] What is also clear is that the risk of a CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear) terrorist attack has been blown out of proportion and is in fact very small (Mueller 2007; 2008). John Mueller (2008) estimates the odds of terrorists actually setting off a nuclear bomb at a mind-boggling one over 3.5 billion.

Whether global terrorism is rising is still unclear and depends on how inclusive our definition of terrorism is. What is clear however is that the terrorist threat has not yet been contained let alone eliminated and still remains a thorn in the side of many countries, notably those studied in this thesis.

2.3. A conceptual quagmire

Terrorism is a common occurrence, if not in our immediate surroundings, then at least in our 'imagined community'. The phenomenon is inescapable. Not one day goes by without news of carnage somewhere in the world. More than eight years after the tragic events of 9/11, the images of the two Manhattan giants crumbling down to the ground are

[41] www.foreignaffairs.org/20060901facomment85501/john-mueller/is-there-still-a-terrorist-threat.html

still haunting our collective memory – although sadly for some 'rejoicing' might be a more appropriate term. They have penetrated our consciousness, reminding us of our mortality and of the vulnerability of our open societies. Who has not once felt unease while boarding a commercial airplane? And yet we find it hard to describe this phenomenon, let alone define it. Despite massive media coverage and countless books on the topic we are still not closer to agreeing on what terrorism is. Experts and academic scholars within the field have yet to find a consensus.

Finding a definition of terrorism is crucial for this study, for until I do, I cannot select terrorist incidents and thus carry out a quantitative and qualitative analysis on the political parties' reaction to this phenomenon. Finding a universally acceptable definition is however not my objective. What is of interest for this particular project is how Western politicians are likely to perceive terrorism, which may or may not be how others across the world perceive this same phenomenon. Equally important is the necessity to distinguish terrorism from other types of violence, which sometimes are construed as terrorist in nature. After all the aim of this project is to study the reaction of elites to terrorism, not to guerrilla, insurgency or any other manifestations of violence.

2.3.1. A blurred meaning

As Jonathan Barker remarks "the walk on the ugly side [of politics] is fraught with emotion" (2002, 9). To some extent our failure to agree on a set of words to describe a phenomenon as common as terrorism is attributable to emotions. The debate has certainly generated over the years more heat than light. What is required then is a dispassionate analysis. Unfortunately more often than not, pundits, journalists, politicians and even

sometimes scholars seem unable or unwilling to think about terrorism in a clearheaded and genuinely impartial way. Yet emotions are just part of the story. Ultimately, our failure to agree on a common ground lies in the fact that terrorism is time and culture bound, and more importantly political.

Terrorism is a subjective concept like many others in social sciences. Its meaning changes across time, across land and across cultures. As the old adage goes: "one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter".[42] One could add, with the necessary precautions, that some of today's terrorists are the heirs to yesterdays' freedom fighters. There are certainly a number of troubling similarities between certain existing groups of terrorists and activists of yesteryears, which history books reverently and deservedly describe as resistant. The vantage point is here crucial. Mine is that of Western mainstream political elites.

Everything about terrorism is political, even its very definition. It is a pejorative term easily manipulated to discredit a political opponent. The problem is as much defining terrorism as agreeing on who fits the description of a terrorist. The first modern terrorists (i.e. Narodnaya Volya in Russia) accepted to be labelled as terrorists. The term carried with it a certain prestige, that of selfless have-nots fighting the 'good' fight against the haves. Nowadays few would readily accept this damning label and would rather be called insurgents or rebels.[43] The T-word, as Brigitte Nacos (2007) calls it, is a loaded term. Richard Rubenstein (1987, 17-18) pointedly remarks that to "call an act of political violence terrorist is not merely to describe it but to judge it (…) nobody wants to

[42] An axiom which has not been lost on certain international media outlets. The BBC World Service, for example, never uses the word terrorist for any group or individual.

[43] Exceptions exists, in 2002 the al Aqsa brigades declared that being called a terrorist group by the US government was actually an honor.

be called a terrorist; terrorism is what the other side is up to". As a result perpetrators of violence have had to look for more appropriate synonyms. The Ku Klux Klan, for instance, described its actions as "resistance to Reconstruction" or "vigilantism" (Kronenwetter 2004, vii).

Recent developments have rendered the task of defining terrorism even more difficult. Bruce Hoffman (2006, 1) points out that "virtually any especially abhorrent act of violence perceived as directed against society – whether it involves the activities of antigovernment dissidents or governments themselves, organized crime syndicates, common criminals, rioting mobs, people engaged in militant protest, individual psychotics, or lone extortionists – is often labeled terrorism". This confusion has been fuelled, particularly in the post 9/11 period, by a Manichean rhetoric of victims versus terrorists. In this battle for the moral high ground the other one, belligerent or mere ideological opponent, is often labelled terrorist. In the process, the distinction between militant, combatant, activist, resistant or insurgent has been lost. It does not come as a surprise then when Walter Laqueur (2004, 232), one of the foremost experts in the study of terrorism, remarks that "after thirty years of hard labor there is still no generally agreed definition of terrorism".[44]

[44] Some 20 years before, Laqueur had even abandoned the idea of defining terrorism (Laqueur 1977).

2.3.2. A plethora of definitions

Depending on the context and on the framework of analysis different aspects of terrorism can come to the forefront (see Schmid 2004). Terrorism is an instrument of political strategy, but terrorism can also be seen as a crime, a perspective used for instance by the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism. Its Convention states:

> Any person commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention [i.e. terrorist offence] if that person, by any means, unlawfully and intentionally causes: death or serious bodily injury to any person; or serious damage to public or private property (…) (quoted in Schmid 2004, 199).

In fact, Schmid points out that most countries consider acts of terrorism first and foremost as criminal offences (2004, 198).

A plethora of definitions have emerged over the years, all stressing different aspects. This is particularly the case in the US where different branches and agencies of the same government use different definitions to suit their particular needs and priorities. Thus, the State Department defines terrorism as:

> Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience (quoted in Dekmejian 2007, 17).[45]

Note that the State Department emphasizes 'noncombatant targets' (which includes civilians and off-duty military personnel) as a way of protecting US nationals abroad. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), for its part, defines terrorism as:

> The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (quoted in Dekmekian 2007, 17).

---

[45] Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(d).

Here the emphasis is on the unlawful nature of terrorism – a characteristic particularly suited to a crime-solving agency such as the FBI. A similar definition is used by the Department of Defense, which in addition underlines the religious or ideological objectives of the terrorists. Finally, the Department of Homeland Security defines terrorism as:

> Any activity that involves an act that:
> is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; and (…) must also 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 (Hoffman 2006, 31).

The focus is here on acts that can cripple the country's infrastructures.

The European Union for its part considers that terrorist acts are offences committed with the aim of:

> (i) seriously intimidating a population, or
> (ii) unduly compelling a Government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing an act, or
> (iii) seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.[46]

This sample of definitions demonstrates that terrorism is more than just an act of political violence; it is a tool for policymakers.

In its simplest expression "terrorism is a form of violent strategy used to alter the freedom of choice of others" (Paust 1977, 79). Michael Walzer sees in these acts the "deliberate killing of innocent people, at random, in order to spread fear through a whole population and force the hand of its political leaders" (2002, 79). Likewise, Raymond

---

[46] Council Common Position of December 27, 2001, on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

Aron underlines the psychological dimension of terrorism, which he defines as an instrument of pressure designed to bend the will of an adversary by inflicting psychological damages that far surpass its purely physical results (quoted in Chaliand and Blin 2004, 17). These are just a few examples in an ever increasing list of definitions.

From this intellectual maelstrom, two definitions stand out, both the result of compilations of existing definitions. The first one, put forth by Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman (1988), is the outcome of a questionnaire filled by more than 100 scholars and in which respondents were asked to define what they understand by terrorism. Out of the 20 conceptual elements identified throughout these definitions, the authors chose the 16 that came up most frequently in the answers. The condensed definition that they obtained is the following:

> Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat – and violence – based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main target (audiences), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought. (Schmid and Jongman 1988, 28)

This conceptual mosaic is not flawless. For instance, why should terrorism be characterized by "repeated violent action"? What about isolated acts of violence? Are they any less terrorist? Moreover, are we to understand that assassination is never a terrorist act?

The second definition is also the result of a compilation. The logic used is similar to the one used by Schmid and Jongman but rather than analyzing answers to a

questionnaire, Leonard Weinberg, Ami Pedhazur and Sivan Hirsch-Hoefler (2004) examine 73 definitions of terrorism found in 55 articles published by three academic journals – *Terrorism*, *Terrorism and Political Violence* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* - and produce a definition based on the elements of convergence between their text analysis on the one hand, and the analysis of the Schmid-Jongman questionnaire on the other. The result is far more concise:

> Terrorism is a politically motivated tactic involving the threat or use of force or violence in which the pursuit of publicity plays a significant role. (Weinberg, Pedhazur and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004, 782)

This consensual definition leaves aside any reference to the psychological aspect of terrorism as well as the difference between combatants and non-combatants. To be fair, the authors themselves acknowledge the limits of such a definition and use the exercise primarily as a way of underlining the risks inherent in seeking too large a consensus.[47]

Other scholars argue that what makes an act of political violence terrorist are its targets. Traditionally terrorists have targeted symbols of the state (including its 'flesh and bone' representatives), of the economic system, or of religious and ethnical groups. Yet, since the end of the 19th century the gun sight has been directed more and more on civilians and innocent bystanders. Boaz Ganor (1998), for example, defines terrorism as "the intentional use of, or threat to use violence against civilians or against civilian targets, in order to attain political aims".

Lately many definitions have referred to non-combatants rather than just civilians, the idea being to include militaries as potential victims. Michael Walzer (2006) suggests

[47] Rather than agreeing on what should be included in a definition, Jean-Marc Sorel suggests to focus on what is not worth incorporating in a definition. In his view "it does not seem useful to specify the type of political aim, the means used or to qualify the nature of the perpetrators (by country, group, individual); they are already qualified by their objective, which is to spread terror" (Sorel 2003: 371).

that only acts intentionally directed against non-combatants are terrorist. However, soldiers but also representatives of the government are according to Walzer combatants. Following this line of reasoning, Walzer (2006) is telling us that had it not been for the presence of non-combatants aboard the plane that crashed into the Pentagon on 9/11 this attack – but obviously not the other ones that happened on that day – would not have been terrorist. The question concerning the status of soldiers or civil servants, although legitimate, creates more problems. Indeed, should one consider the assassination by ETA of a municipal councillor in a small Spanish town as a terrorist act or as an act of war against the Spanish government? What of the assassination of a retired soldier or of a soldier on leave? And what of an explosion in a public place that indiscriminately kills passersby? Such an attack could be or could not be terrorist depending on who happens to be there at the time of the blast.

In fact, what really matters to terrorists is often not the direct target but the target audience. In his anarchist newspaper *Freiheit* Johann Most, a late 19th century anarchist, reveals a logic that has not aged since. The terrorist, he argues, must capture the public's imagination through the use of outrageous violence (see Garrison 2004). "Target a few in a way that claims the attention of many" is the terrorist motto (Crenshaw 1995, 4). The role of the media is here crucial and some scholars have underlined the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and media. Schmid and de Graaf (1982, 4) for instance suggest that "an act of terrorism is in reality an act of communication". Put differently, terrorism relies on the spreading of fear, and the media are incremental in that process, their role very much that of merchants of fear. In a fiercely competitive news market, blood and drama will attract attention (Nacos 2007, 38). Media allow terrorism "to be

everywhere but physically nowhere" remarks Ranstorp (2007, 2). As Nacos (2000, 175) points out "without massive news coverage the terrorist act would resemble the proverbial tree falling in the forest: if no one learned of an incident, it would be as if it had not occurred". Wilkinson (2001, 177) shares a similar view and points out that "terrorism by its very nature is a psychological weapon which depends upon communicating a threat to a wider society". An unreported terrorist act is still terrorist in so far as it kills or injures in an attempt to coerce but it will not affect people's life, just the immediate victims and witnesses. If the news does not spread then there is no fear and no coercion is possible. Put somewhat differently, the primary objective of a terrorist is not to kill but to get his or her message through. If the message does not get through then the act loses its purpose.[48]

The argument that terrorism is a media construct gains currency when one sees to what extent more blood and more threat is rewarded by more attention. For instance, Nacos (2007, 189) observed that in the US increases in terror alerts were reported in lead stories, unlike rollbacks which more often than not were ignored. Nacos (2007, 190) also observes that following terrorist threats or threat assessments by decision makers, news media and particularly television networks tend to magnify threats thereby increasing the concerns and fears of the public and elevating the approval ratings of the president. As Sloan reminds us, the old adage "if it bleeds, it leads" applies more than ever in the electronic age (Sloan 2005, 141). Television has allowed terrorists to go much further than Sun Tzu's motto "Kill one person and frighten a thousand" by literally killing thousands and frightening millions.

---

[48] See in particular the account by Michael J. Kelly of the hostage crisis at the Turkish embassy in Ottawa in 1985 (in Rosenthal et al. 1989).

Media outlets it seems act very much as a "force multiplier" (Sloan 2005, 136). Ultimately, the media decides whether or not an incident or an act of violence deserves to be labelled as terrorist or even reported. In effect then as Philip Jenkins (2003, ix) remarks terrorism is "socially constructed (…) the concept is shaped by social and political processes, by bureaucratic needs and media structures".

These days many incidents pass as terrorist, yet we can only speak of terrorism when a specific political intent is involved. This is never clear. Jenkins (2003, 6-7) gives the example of Egypt Air flight 990 which crashed near Nantucket, Massachusetts, in 1999 killing all 217 passengers and crew onboard. Shortly before the crash as the plane was diving the co-pilot Gameel al-Batouti repeated in Arabic "I put my trust in God". Was he simply repeating this phrase in a moment of extreme stress as he was trying to solve the technical problem at hand? In which case the crash was accidental. Was he committing suicide as a result of depression? In which case the crash was criminal. Or was he, as some people have argued, carrying out a plan to intentionally crash the plane for political reasons (some high-level Egyptian officials were onboard)? In which case the incident was terrorist in nature.[49] The media covered all three possibilities over the course of the investigation. In the end the accidental thesis was confirmed. Yet the terrorist thesis lingered on for some time after.

---

[49] *The Guardian* reported that more than 30 Egyptian military officers were onboard including two brigadier-generals. *The Guardian* November 2, 1999.

2.3.3. The vantage point

Wanton act for some, act of heroic resistance for others, the perception of terrorism varies inevitably from one social and historical context to another. Its semantic ambiguity is thus inescapable. Its perpetrator is at the same time martyr and criminal, saviour and murderer. The quest for a widely accepted definition is near impossible.

The vantage point is crucial. The semantic ambiguity of the word terrorism does not affect this project too much because what is of interest here is the reaction of western mainstream parties and elites to acts of political violence that they themselves perceive as unequivocally terrorist.[50] Most of the above-mentioned definitions share this western vantage point. By and large they define terrorism as a politically motivated criminal strategy used by sub-national groups to intimidate governments and populations, and limit their freedom of choice by physically striking a few in order to scare many. The existing differences are often subtle ones, such as the one that distinguishes non-combatants from civilians, yet the search for a universal and timeless definition is futile. More importantly, even if one were to stumble on a universal definition, there would still be disagreement as to whom or which group should be labelled terrorist. After all much of the debate hinges on what we view as a legitimate recourse to violence, the tendency being to view illegitimate use of violence as terrorist.

In the end, the choice of a definition for this study is linked to the choice of a database for the analysis. Thus inevitably conceptual considerations must accommodate operational considerations. The definition chosen for this project is the one used by the

---

[50] This being said, more radical elites just like their constituencies might have a different view. They might have a different understanding of terrorism and consider it as a legitimate act of political defiance.

Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB) – the dataset used to create the database introduced in chapter 4:

> Terrorism is violence, or the threat of violence, calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm. These acts are designed to coerce others into actions they would not otherwise undertake, or refrain from actions they desired to take. All terrorist acts are crimes. Many would also be violation of the rules of war if a state of war existed. This violence or threat of violence is generally directed against civilian targets. The motives of all terrorists are political, and terrorist actions are generally carried out in a way that will achieve maximum publicity. Unlike other criminal acts, terrorists often claim credit for their acts. Finally, terrorist acts are intended to produce effects beyond the immediate physical damage of the cause, having long-term psychological repercussions on a particular target audience. The fear created by terrorists may be intended to cause people to exaggerate the strengths of the terrorist and the importance of the cause, to provoke governmental overreaction, to discourage dissent, or simply to intimidate and thereby enforce compliance with their demands.

Yes, this definition is imposed, and it is for a lack of a better word part of the package. But for reasons that will become clearer in chapter four, the database to which this definition is attached is by far the best option on the market for this study. Yet beyond operational considerations, the TKB definition is suitable from a conceptual point of view. It incorporates most of the characteristics of terrorism discussed previously: it is a political act which aims at coercing and spreading fear by achieving maximum publicity. Interestingly, and unlike many other definitions seen previously, this one underlines the fact that terrorism might provoke “governmental overreaction” and “discourage dissent”. In all fairness, this definition might be slightly too inclusive and too imprecise in some instances. For example, the use of the suffixes ‘many’, ‘generally’ and ‘may’ demonstrates a certain ambiguity. Yet compared to most definitions used to create other databases, this one although not particularly concise is in fact less inclusive. The TKB

definition is for instance more discriminate than the one used by the Global Terrorism Database (GTD – formerly known as the Pinkerton database) which defines terrorism as:

> The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation.

The TKB definition is also less confusing than the one used by 'Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data' (TWEED) which defines terrorism in the following way:

> As an act of terrorism is counted an act that has inflicted personal injury, or attacks against material targets (property) if the act is of a nature that could have led to personal injury or in another way would have a noticeable impact on an audience, while at the same time the act was committed to direct demands of or raise attention from others than those immediately inflicted with personal or material injury.

Finally the TKB stands on its own unlike the one used by WITS which explicitly relies on the definitions of other types of political violence to delineate the conceptual boundaries of terrorism:

> Terrorism occurs when groups or individuals acting on political motivation deliberately or recklessly attack civilians/non-combatants or their property and the attack does not fall into another special category of political violence, such as crime, rioting, or tribal violence.

Crucially the TKB definition leaves place for interpretation. In many instances, acts of political violence are not necessarily as clear-cut as one would hope for. The TKB definition allows for borderline cases, such as those taking place during a war, to be reviewed separately. In fact, a committee of experts (including renowned specialists such as Bruce Hoffman) is in charge of deciding whether borderline and ambiguous cases should be included in the TKB database. If anything, such a definition ensures a better data gathering process. Thus this definition meets both the need for conceptual rigor and

operational flexibility and is therefore well suited for this study.[51]

2.3.4. How terrorism differs from other forms of political violence

The discussion of terrorism would not be complete without an effort at distinguishing it from other forms of political violence. Indeed, if anything the concept of terrorism has become too inclusive. It has become an umbrella definition for all sorts of violent behaviours and actions, sometimes only remotely related to any kind of political struggle.

Terrorism is distinct from other types of violence such as criminal violence although both do on occasions overlap as in the case of narcoterrorism. Criminals might be using violence as a means to an end, and in the process use similar methods, but their purpose is different. Criminals look for personal gains and could not care less about changing the political system (Hoffman 2006, 37).

Terrorism is also different from genocide. It is different in magnitude but more importantly in intent. If terrorism aims at coercing a group of people, genocide simply aims at wiping out a people whether they represent a class, an ethnic group or a religious community. Perpetrators of genocide do not give an option or a choice to their victims, nor do they try to intimidate people into submission. Unlike terrorists they do not strike people at random. The carnage has no message attached to it for the aim is to leave no survivors. To be sure not all mass murders are genocidal. The 'Reign of Terror' imposed on France by the Jacobins revolutionaries claimed approximately 17,000 victims but the

---

[51] In addition to this definition, the Terrorism Knowledge Base offers a list of potential targets: Abortion Related, Airports & Airlines, Business, Diplomatic, Educational Institutions, Food or Water Supply, Government, Journalists & Media, Maritime, Military, NGO, Other, Police, Private Citizens & Property, Religious Figures/Institutions, Telecommunication, Terrorists, Tourists, Transportation, Unknown, Utilities.

aim was not to wipe out a group of people, though aristocrats were particularly targeted, it was to impose a new political system. *La grande terreur* was meant to force people into submitting to the newly created republic. In theory, everyone who embraced the idea of the Revolution was safe. No matter the scale of atrocities, the Revolution "retained a distinct and perilous political logic: the notion that violence could change political attitudes" (Townshend 2002, 41). Nazism on the other hand ruled out any possibility for their victims to change their attitude. Townshend remarks that "Nazism required not political, religious, or ideological, but biological uniformity – and this lay outside the realm of political adaptation" (2002, 44). Unlike the Jacobins, the Nazi were aiming at a different purification process, "the purity pursued here was not of virtue but of blood" (Townshend 2002, 44).

Terrorism is also a tactic. As such it is different from other tactics and methods such as guerrilla, which involves larger groups of individuals operating as military units that can take on regular military forces, seize territories and exercise limited sovereignty over an area and its population (Hoffman 2006, 35). Likewise, insurgency has its own particularities. As well as conducting irregular military operations like guerrillas, insurgents try to gain popular support notably through the use of propaganda (Hoffman 2006, 35). Terrorists, for their part, "do not function in the open as armed units, generally do not attempt to seize or hold territory, deliberately avoid engaging enemy military forces in combat, are constrained both numerically and logistically from undertaking concerted mass political mobilization efforts, and exercise no direct control or governance over a populace at either the local or the national level" (Hoffman 2006, 35). To be fair, the difference between terrorism and guerrilla is not always clear especially

when the two overlap as when a terrorist group evolves into a guerrilla organization like the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka did (Dekmejian 2007, 16). In this case, terrorism and guerrilla represent two methods of struggle that can be used simultaneously in different settings.

Finally, terrorism is also different from conventional warfare although both might occur at the same time. Terrorism and war might be politics by other means, but terrorism is not war by other means. Clausewitz argued that war requires "the collision of two living forces" (quoted in Townshend 2002, 7), which is not the case with terrorism. Townshend points to a difference in their operational logic: "War is ultimately coercive, terrorism is impressive. War is physical, terrorism is mental" (Townshend 2002, 15).

Terrorism, as Charles Tilly (2004, 12) remarked, might not be "a single causally coherent phenomenon" but it has distinctive features. Terrorism is both a type of violence and a tactic of combat. Terrorism is not gratuitous and aimless violence, but violence with a political purpose albeit not always a clear one. It is, as Michael Walzer noted, "a political strategy selected from among a range of options" (2002, 5).

2.4. A recent field of study

Despite being an ancient phenomenon, the study of terrorism is recent. It emerged as a subfield of conflict studies in the early 1970s with works by J. Bowyer Bell (1970; 1975; 1978), David Rapoport (1971; 1984), Paul Wilkinson (1974; 1977), Brian Jenkins (1975), Walter Laqueur (1977), Martha Crenshaw (1978; 1981), Leonard Weinberg (1979; 1986) and later on Alex Schmid (1982; 1988), Jerrold Post (1984), Bruce Hoffman (1984) and Walter Reich (1990) to name some of the most prominent specialists. Most of these

pioneers came from other areas of social sciences and sometimes from entirely different disciplines or professions: Crenshaw, Bell and Laqueur had worked previously on conflict studies, but Jenkins had been a military and Post and Reich psychiatrists. The first forays into terrorism as a field of study have been a reflection of this wide array of expertise. Yet ever since these early years, "the science of terror", as Andrew Silke puts it, "has been conducted in the cracks and crevices which lie between the large academic disciplines" (2004, 1). Neither solely a subfield of political science nor one of criminology, terrorism studies still struggle to establish themselves as a distinct discipline. However, the development of journals and research centers dedicated to the study of terrorism has helped consolidate a niche between more established fields and subfields of social sciences.[52]

Many aspects of terrorism remain understudied, sometimes even altogether ignored. Silke laments that much of the scholarly output on the subject of terrorism is "dross, repetitive and ill-informed", an echo to Brian Jenkins' comments in the aftermath of 9/11 that "we are deluged with material but still know too little" (Silke 2004, 2). To my knowledge, this is particularly the case with the impact of terrorism on political parties and elites. This is not to say there have not been some brave efforts produced over the years, but none of them have set out to study the behaviour of political parties during terrorist crises in a systematic and comparative way. I will come back to this shortly after first reviewing some of the more important works on terrorism.

[52] To date there are three peer-reviewed journals publishing articles on terrorism: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, and *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. Published in French *Cultures et Conflits* includes from time to time articles on terrorism. The Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St Andrews, one of the oldest research center dedicated to the study of terrorism, was established in 1994.

2.4.1. The state of the discipline

Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman's imposing *Political Terrorism* (1988) represents a stepping-stone in the study of terrorism.[53] Written before terrorism became fancy beyond certain academic circles, it presents the state of research as of the late 1980s, a feat which given the exponential multiplication of monographs and articles on the topic since then would be near impossible to reproduce today.[54] By the end of the 1980s Schmid and Jongman had identified only 32 experts on terrorism. As Edna Reid (1997) later remarked, this "indicates a static environment; the same hypotheses, definitions and theories continued to be analyzed, assimilated, published, cited, and eventually retrieved".[55] Of course since then the pool of researchers has increased considerably and the scope and methods of research have expanded somewhat.

Schmid and Jongman's typology of terrorism research separates the field into macro-studies that look at the historical dimension of the phenomenon and in particular its origins and its sociological/political causes, and micro-studies that focus on psychological aspects, prevention, terrorist strategies and countermeasures. The latter category includes studies on governmental responses to terrorism and in particular crisis management. However, nothing specific on parties and elite behaviour appears in Schmid and Jongman's opus. In fact, not until later in the 1990s did research on the effects of terrorism on institutions, and vice versa, take off. The relationship between democracy

---

[53] Originally published in 1984.

[54] And yet Alex Schmid, Albert Jongman and Eric Price are currently working on an updated version of *Political Terrorism*, a *tour de force* that should become a de-facto reference for terrorism studies (Handbook of Terrorism Research, forthcoming in 2009).

[55] Reid herself had identified only 24 scholars whom she qualified as high or moderate producers of articles or books on the subject of terrorism. Most other authors were just passing through this field of research, which is not to say that their production was any less valuable than scholars who have a long-term commitment to the discipline.

and terrorism in particular spurred an entire literature with many arguing that democracies represent a fertile ground for terrorism (Stohl 1988; Eubank and Weinberg 1994; 2001; Weinberg and Eubank 1998; Wilkinson 2001; Li 2005; Chaliand and Blin 2004) and some stressing the resilience of democratic structures (Wardlaw 1994; Eyerman 1998).

The need to understand the roots of terrorism features prominently in the literature (Crenshaw 1981; Reich 1990; Howard 1992; Wieviorka 2004; Bjorgo 2005; Abadie 2006), the received wisdom being for a long time that poverty, oppression and low education cause terrorism (see Krueger and Maleckova 2003, Berrebi 2007 and Krueger 2007 for a rebuttal of this argument). Others researched the psychological dynamics of terrorism and often underlined the ordinary nature of terrorists (Ferracuti 1983; Post 1984; 1987; 2005; 2007; McCauley and Segal 1987; Reich 1990; Silke 2003; Pape 2003; 2005).

From the onset scholars have been keen to shed light on particular terrorist movements whether nationalist/separatist, revolutionary, neo-fascist, religious or international/transnational. Much has been written over the years on the IRA and terrorism in Northern Ireland (Bell 1970; 1993; Bishop and Mallie 1987; Cunningham 1991; Smith 1995; Taylor 1997) and on ETA and Basque separatism (Clark 1984; Sullivan 1988; Moruzzi and Boulaert 1988; Douglass and Zulaika 1990; obviously numerous books and articles in Spanish have also been published).[56] The terrorist activities of left-wing and right-wing groups particularly during the 1970s and 1980s have spurred an impressive literature (Weinberg and Eubank 1987; Meade 1990; Drake

---

[56] Many other similar movements have been adequately covered, for instance the Front de Libération du Québec (Fournier 1998; Leroux 2002; Tetley 2007 to name a few) or Zionist groups such as the Stern Gang (Heller 1995) or the Irgun (Clarke 1981).

1995; Sommier 2000; Giovagnoli 2005 on Italy; Hess et al. 1988; Rabert 1995; Aust 1998; Kraushaar 2006 on Germany; Della Porta and Rucht 1995 on Italy and Germany; Hamon and Marchand 1986; Dartnell 1995 on France; Bjorgo 1995 on the far right).[57] More exotic forms of terrorism such as ecoterrorism (Lee 1995 on the group Earth First; Arnold 1997) and animals' rights activists (Jasper and Nelkin 1992) have also received some scholarly attention.

The interplay between religion and terrorism represents one of the main avenues of research. Obviously the events of 9/11 have been incremental in filling up library shelves with monographs and articles dealing with Islamic fundamentalism in general and al Qaeda, the Taliban, Hezbollah or Hamas in particular (see notably Gunaratna 2002; Esposito 2002; Burke 2003; Guidère and Morgan 2007; Zaki 2007; Samaan 2007). Here the objective is as much understanding the roots of Jihad, notably sociological and psychological, as analyzing the organizational and operational structures of these groups and networks (Sageman 2004; 2008; Vidino and Emerson 2005; Nesser 2006). Yet the literature on religious terrorism is neither new nor limited to jihadist movements. David Rapoport's seminal article 'Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions' was published in 1984 and Mark Juergensmeyer's *Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* in 1992 (see also Marty and Appleby 1995 on fundamentalism across religions; Baird-Windle and Bader 2001 on Christian anti-abortion terrorism; Lifton 2000 on the Japanese sect Aum Shinrikyo; Sprinzak 1998 on Jewish terrorism; Karpin and Friedman 1998 on the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin). Years before al Qaeda's *fait d'arme* scholars were publishing on Islamic fundamentalism (Taheri 1987; Kramer 1990 on

---

[57] Michel Wieviorka's *Société et terrorisme* (1988, also published in English as *The Making of Terrorism* 2004) is particularly interesting as it covers various European, Middle Eastern and international groups.

Hezbollah; Khelladi 1992 on Algeria; Kepel 1993 on Egypt) and international terrorism (Oots 1986; Kegley 1990).

The turn of the century brought to the forefront new dimensions and new threats – notably Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) – for which the expression "new terrorism" was soon coined (Laqueur 1999). Yet much like intelligence agencies, most scholars failed to anticipate the events of 9/11. In retrospect, a number of events occurring in the 1990s from the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993 to the targeting of US embassies in Africa in 1998 hinted as to where the attention should be focused. But in the end, much more was said and written about millenarian groups and the fear of major actions surrounding Y2K than about al Qaeda and Bin Laden. As Bruce Hoffman points out:

> "Until 9/11 (…) the conventional wisdom was that terrorists would abjure from carrying out mass casualty attacks using conventional weapons and would shun CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear) weapons simply because there was little reason for them to kill *en masse* when the death of a handful of persons often sufficed" (Hoffman in Silke 2004, xvii).

As a result of the events of 9/11 the publication of books and peer-reviewed articles on terrorism is booming. Recently *The Guardian* reported that every six hours a new book on terrorism is published – and this is just for titles in English.[58] In fact, the great majority of all books ever written on terrorism – perhaps as much as 90 percent – have been written after 9/11.[59] As for articles, the social science citation index indicates that there were a little over 100 articles related to terrorism published in 2001. By 2002 this figure was multiplied by three, and in 2007 about 2,300 citations were recorded.[60]

[58] Source: *The Guardian* on July 3, 2007.
[59] Source: *The Guardian* on July 3, 2007.
[60] Source: *The Guardian* on May 13, 2008.

The task of reviewing such a literature much like Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman did in the mid-eighties appears daunting.[61]

The post 9/11 period has witnessed a renewed interest for suicide terrorism, even though this tactic is relatively ancient, and has spurred a debate on the extent of the role played by religion (Merari 1990; Bloom 2005; Pape 2005; Gambetta 2006; Pedazhur 2006). There is also a renewed and at times exaggerated interest for dubious catastrophic scenarios including weapons of mass destruction (WMD), notably nuclear devices, falling in the wrong hands. The perceived threat of WMD was already tackled by B.J. Berkowitz et al. in *Superviolence: The Civil Threat of Mass Destruction Weapons* (1972), and in 1976 Brian Jenkins asked 'Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?' (more recently Roberts 1997; Tucker 2000; Hills 2002; Allison 2004; see Mueller 2005; 2007; 2008 for a critical view). The post 9/11 period has also seen the publication of numerous studies on the economic impact of terrorism (notably Abadie and Gardeazabal 2003; Chen and Siems 2004; Enders and Sandler 2006).

Finally, counterterrorism and antiterrorism have always represented two particularly popular lines of research both before and after 9/11 (Hewitt 1984; Wolf 1989; Crenshaw 1989; Schmid and Crelinsten 1993; Howard and Sawyer 2004; Crank and Gregor 2005). This literature also raises a series of normative questions such as trade-offs between civil liberties and national security (Wilkinson 2001; Parker 2007; Holmes 2007). The seemingly ever increasing preeminence of prescriptive works on counterterrorism and antiterror legislation is a reflection of a discipline that today exists

[61] Schmid and Jongman remarked then that roughly 6,000 books and peer-reviewed articles dealt with one or the other aspect of terrorism.

largely outside of academia, in organizations and think tanks financed by governmental agencies.

2.4.2. Party politics and electoral behaviour in a terrorist context

So far the state of research on the interplay between terrorism and party politics is particularly disappointing. A large and relevant body of literature simply does not exist. Passing and superficial remarks or assumptions are unfortunately the rule. Some works (e.g. Charters 1994) have looked at the institutional context of terrorism but stopped short of actually studying the interaction between party politics and terrorism. Adrian Guelke and Jim Smyth's (1992) account of the electoral process in Northern Ireland during the 1980s was a welcomed exception, as was Michael Cunningham's *British Government policy in Northern Ireland*, which described the 'spirit of accord' that prevailed between the two main parties on Ulster-related terrorism. Particularly noteworthy is also David Rapoport and Leonard Weinberg's *The Democratic Experience and Political Violence*, which underlines the often overlooked link between elections and violence (2001). Similarly, Leonard Weinberg and Ami Pedahzur's classical *Political Parties and Terrorist Groups* (2003) reminds us that the difference between political parties and terrorist organizations is not as important as one would think, and that parties have been known to engage at times in non-electoral activities and rely on violence to reach their objectives.[62]

Although 9/11 led to a burgeoning of publications in the field of terrorism studies, a research output on the implications of terrorism on domestic politics, let alone on party

[62] This remark applies particularly to autocratic regimes where the absence of electoral processes compels political parties to rely on other means to further their liberal ideals.

politics, was still conspicuously absent. In a notable exception Holmes and Gutiérrez de Piñeres (2002) showed how Alberto Fujimori had bolstered public support for his program of economic stabilization by bringing terrorism in Peru under control. Elsewhere, Jacobson (2003) argued that terrorism influenced voters' choice at the 2002 US mid-term elections.

The literature on the effects of terrorism on domestic politics took off in the aftermath of the attacks on Madrid's transportation system in 2004. Rarely before, if ever, had a terrorist attack of such magnitude been carried out so close to a national election. The implications on Spanish politics were almost instantaneous as the socialist party (PSOE) was able in the eleventh hour to overcome its deficit in the poll to claim an electoral victory. Thereafter the impact of terrorism on electoral campaigns and election results generated a number of studies with for instance Garfinkel (2004) suggesting that the threat of terrorism influences political competition, and Montalvo (2006) demonstrating that the Madrid bombings had a substantial impact on the election results by notably bringing to the polls people who had not voted previously. Spanish politics and the attacks of March 11 remained the flavour of the day with studies by Chari (2004), Colomer (2005), van Biezen (2005), Bali (2007), and Olmeda (2008). Others looked at the impact of the 'war on terror' on US politics. Campbell (2005) in particular argued that Bush's 2004 reelection was closer than expected because of a declining public support for the military operation in Iraq. For their part, Oates and Postelnicu (2005) demonstrated how both US and Russian political elites tried to instrumentalize the issue of terrorism for their electoral benefit during the 2004 round of elections.

Others like Berrebi and Klor (2006) have looked at the behaviour of Israeli parties during terrorist crises and have suggested, among others, that the level of terrorism influences electoral results, and vice versa. In their latest article on Israeli politics, Berrebi and Klor (2008) argue that terrorist attacks occurring within three months of an election increase support for parties on the right of the political spectrum.

Despite this burgeoning literature, comparative studies on the effects of terrorism on the domestic political game have been scarce. George Kassimeris' collective effort *Playing Politics with Terrorism* (2007) has shed light on the interplay between politics and terrorism in several countries but has done so without the benefit of a unified framework of analysis that would have allowed for cross-country comparisons. More recently Indridason (2008) in a study on 17 Western countries has argued that terrorist activity influences the formation of coalition governments.

Finally this round-up of the state of research would not be complete without a reference to the literature on crisis management, which over the years has produced some very interesting studies on governmental reaction to terrorism and other related crises (Rosenthal et al. 1989; and more recently Boin et al. 2005; 2008). However the focus of these works is more on government's handling of affairs during critical times and not so much on party politics and non-governmental political elites. Moreover terrorist attacks are just one of many sorts of crises (man-made or natural) used to illustrate the reaction of governments.

Conclusion

Terrorism is a political act as potent today as it was 4,000 years ago when tyrants used it as an instrument of coercion. Relied upon by states and sub-state actors alike, terrorism has brought down empires, triggered wars, and led to millions of deaths. Its impact on our societies is inescapable, and so is its impact on politics. For what is terrorism but a negation of the peaceful practice of democracy. Terrorist groups are the exact opposite of what political parties stand for. They seek to bypass the processes of representative democracy by coercing rather than by convincing. And yet our understanding of the impact of terrorism on the domestic political game has not improved markedly since the pioneering days of terrorism studies.

To be sure, the attacks of 9/11 in the US and 3/11 in Spain have transformed terrorism studies by bringing into the discipline much needed input from scholars working in other fields. Yet, whereas there is an information overload on certain aspects of terrorism, there is too little on other aspects. It is particularly striking that so much is published on counterterrorism (notably with regards to civil liberties), yet so little is written on the effects of terrorism on political parties and their elites. At the end of the day, those political elites are in charge of responding to terror and devise counterterrorist legislations. Understanding how terrorism affects their behaviour as politicians, legislators and decision-makers is therefore crucial. My own modest effort is an attempt at analyzing whether terrorism (domestic and international) changes the way party politics operates, and in particular whether it brings governmental elites and opposition elites closer, the implication being that a rapprochement between these two sets of actors can have an impact on the response to terror, and in particular on counterterrorist

legislation, but also on electoral outcomes. Do parties and elites rally around the flag or rail against the government in times of crises? This central question, which has been touched upon in chapter one with regards to foreign policy crises, is addressed this time in the context of terrorist crises.

Chapter 3

In the Shadow of the Flag: Patriotic Imperative vs. Partisan Interest

"L'amour de la patrie est la première vertue de l'homme civilisé" (Napoléon Bonaparte, *Maximes et Pensées*)

"On ne dispute pas sur des cadavres, c'est vrai; on ne se dissoute pas sur des cadavres, c'est encore vrai. Mais il faut faire en sorte qu'ils ne se multiplient pas. Sinon la politique est fondée à s'en emparer" (Philippe Boucher, *Le Monde*)

Introduction

On September 14, 2001, atop rubbles of concretes and mangled steel in what would be known from now on as Ground Zero, President Bush grabbed a bull horn and addressed a crowd of rescuers amid chants of "USA! USA!". The words pronounced by the President mattered little. Here at Ground Zero Bush, the incidental president, became commander-in-chief of a nation at 'war'. The American people were invited to pray for the lost ones and support the troops. As for the US Congress, all it could do was stand still in the shadow of the flag and hope for a short war.[63] A week later Bush declared: "The war will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated".[64]

In his study of consociationalism Arend Lijphart (1968; 1969) suggested that external threats provide political elites with an incentive to cooperate across partisan cleavages. Historical examples of this type abound, not just in the US, and tend to suggest that in times of uncertainty rallying around the government or the head of state is a common reflex. Yet examples to the contrary exist as well. The various ways in which elites and public opinions across the world reacted to the impending military invasion of Iraq in 2003 by US-led coalition forces are a case in point. Unfortunately, if an important literature exists on the behaviour of elites and public opinions during foreign policy crises, little has been written on the behaviour of parties during terrorist crises. Thus, one is left to wonder whether the aftermath of 9/11 is atypical or not.

[63] According to the *Washington Post*, Wal-Mart sold 88,000 US flags on September 12, 2001, up from 6,400 flags sold on the same day a year before. *Washington Post*, September 13, 2001.
[64] *The New York Times*, September 20, 2001.

The following chapter begins by a discussion of what constitutes a rally around the flag. I proceed by reviewing the two main contentions on why and how rallies develop. I then discuss how political elites, media and public opinion might affect each other's reaction during critical times. In the second section, I discuss the notion of the patriotic imperative and how it might take precedence over the partisan interest, and I put forth my first hypothesis. The third and final section introduces the magnitude-repetition model, identifies key variables likely to influence the reaction of political elites to acts of terrorism, and presents a series of hypotheses.

3.1. The rally-around-the-flag phenomenon

Put simply, a rally around the flag is a very large movement of public support in favour of a government or whoever might be holding the executive power. Such a popular movement generally aims at defending the country in the face of adversity, a sort of *levée en masse* reminiscent only in spirit of this formidable army of ragged *sans-culotte* that coalesced in Valmy to defend the soon to be proclaimed Republic.[65] In the following section I discuss the rallying phenomenon and differentiate it from other forms of support. I then look at why and how rallies develop. Finally, I assess the influence of political elites during critical times.

---

[65] Although there are rallies in support of other types of community (e.g. religious communities), we will consider in this thesis only rallies around the flag, that is in support of the state – i.e. its symbols or representatives.

3.1.1. Rallies and other forms of public support

As witnessed in the aftermath of 9/11, rallies around the flag are a powerful phenomenon that can literally bring party politics to a standstill and severely limit for a period the flow of criticism coming from mainstream political elites and media outlets. However, the concept of rally is still often misunderstood and misused by scholars and pundits alike. Surges in approval ratings of the president or the head of the government in particular are often seen as *bona fide* rallies when in fact they might only reflect a higher degree of appreciation within parts of the general population.[66] As a result, rallies around the flag are often seen as one-dimensional forces arising within the population and revealed by opinion polls. What constitutes a rally is then a matter of interpretation as to how steep – i.e. in terms of percentage points – the surge in the approval rating needs to be.

Approval ratings are just part of the story. Rallies cannot simply be equated with instant plebiscites in the polls and must encompass other dimensions as well. Evidently the support must be massive but it must also come from different segments of society. It is my contention that a rally around the flag definition should incorporate this multidimensional aspect. Tentatively I define a rally as a movement of widespread support in favour of the government within the mainstream political elite – crucially from the opposition parties – an equally widespread support within the general population, and last but not least a support from most media outlets.[67] Obviously what qualifies as 'widespread support' is arbitrary, particularly with three indicators involved, and is

[66] Marc J. Hetherington and Michael Nelson, for instance, describe a rally effect as "the sudden and substantial increase in public approval of the president that occurs in response to certain kinds of dramatic international events involving the United States" (2003, 37). Cindy Kam and Jennifer Ramos, for their part, state that "rally events refer to a dramatic upsurge in presidential approval, triggered by an international crisis" (2008, 620).

[67] I present here a conceptual definition. I will present in the methodological chapter an operational definition better suited to the gathering of data.

discussed at more length at the end of this section when I try to disentangle the interplay between media, elites and general population. The point, however, is that a rally should encompass more than just favourable public opinion polls.

This being said, we would not expect the support to be even across the full spectrum of a society's groups and subgroups. Someone, somewhere, is always going to disagree and refuse to join the rally no matter how severe the crisis is.[68] Radicals and fringe elites, in particular, might have a different response reflecting a different political agenda. And yet, there are throughout history instances of near complete support for a government. The inception of major wars obviously provides the incentive to rally, even for radicals. A well-known example is that of the French and German socialists in the run up to World War I, who despite their initial reluctance to support a 'bourgeois' war eventually rallied around the flag – what the French called *union sacrée* – just days before the armies received their marching orders (Eley 2002).

3.1.2. Why rally? Two competing explanations

John Mathews (1919, 213) in a pioneering article on political parties' attitudes during military conflicts remarked shortly after the end of the First World War that "one effect of war upon the party system (…) is to bring about, at least for a time, a relatively greater stability of party control, if not complete quiescence of partisanship, either through coalition or through cessation of party opposition, or both". He concluded, however, that this union of political elites and parties was neither perfect nor durable:

---

[68] Phil Scraton (ed.) presents a patchwork of dissenting voices on the events of 9/11 and their aftermath in *Beyond September 11: An Anthology of Dissent* (2002).

> "While there may be practical unanimity upon the question of entering the war, there is more likelihood of a difference developing in the reaction of the parties toward the questions involved in the method of prosecuting it and of terminating it" (Mathews 1919, 214).

Whilst the capacity of wars and diplomatic crises to trigger rallies has been acknowledged by many scholars (Polsby 1964; Waltz 1967; Mueller 1973; MacKuen 1983; Ostrom and Simon 1985; Brody 1991; Oneal and Bryan 1995; Hymans 2005; and many others), there is far less agreement as to how and why this rallying process comes about. Two main explanations have emerged over the years: the 'patriotic reflex' interpretation put forth by John Mueller (1973), and the 'opinion leadership' explanation put forth by Richard Brody (1991).

3.1.2.1. The patriotic reflex

Although he was not the first one to detect a propensity amongst people to rally in times of crisis, John Mueller was the first to go beyond the passing remark and to offer systematic insight into the phenomenon. To be fair, Mueller's seminal work *War, Presidents and Public Opinion* dealt with more than just rallies, and his contribution to understanding political behaviour is far more extensive than that. His reflections on rallies were part of a larger study on the causes of the downward trend of presidential popularity in the US – rallies being studied as a case of temporary upturn.

Mueller (1973, 209) suggests that people will rally around the flag in the wake of specific, dramatic and sharply focused international events directly involving the US and its president.[69] They will do so in the hope of maximizing their nation's prospect in the

[69] Since then most studies on rallies around the flag have focused exclusively on the United States of America.

crisis at hand. According to Mueller, six types of events have the potential to trigger rallies: sudden US military interventions abroad such as the Bay of Pigs (1961), major military operations in ongoing wars like the Tet Offensive (1968), major diplomatic developments such as the 1948 Berlin Blockade or the announcement of the Truman Doctrine (1947), dramatic technological developments like the launch of Sputnik (1957), meetings between the American president and his Soviet counterpart, and the start of each presidential term.

Interestingly, international terrorism was not listed as a potential catalyst. Yet terrorist attacks certainly fit the above description of events likely to trigger rallies, and it seems obvious that international terrorism could be added to Mueller's list of events alongside major military or diplomatic crises. Mueller's omission was likely due to the fact that in the early 1970s – i.e. the aforementioned *War, Presidents and Public Opinion* was published in 1973 – international terrorism was still in its nascent phase and not yet a major security concern for the White House. The attack by the Palestinian organization Black September at the Munich Olympic Games had literally just happened and US citizens were still relatively safe within their own borders.[70]

Mueller also excludes domestic crises, which in his view are more "likely to exacerbate internal divisions" (1973, 209). In addition, Mueller considers that only sudden events can trigger rallies, whereas the impact of gradual changes on public attitudes is likely to be diffused. Obviously economic recessions and chronic environmental degradations lack the suddenness of a declaration of war, but one could argue that even the most sudden foreign policy events often unfold over longer periods

[70] Munich stands out for the sheer audacity of the act, which insured an instant and by the minute international coverage of the hostage crisis. However, already in the 1940s and 1950s actions by groups such as Irgun, the Stern Gang and the FLN had drawn worldwide attention through similar strategies.

before they reach a breaking point. This being said, the argument of suddenness is far more compelling than the one about domestic events. Domestic events such as the death of a political figure, or more joyful moments such as celebrations can trigger rallies just like international events.[71]

Mueller's pioneering work has spurred a host of studies based on the assumption that public support varies depending on how events unfold on the battlefield – i.e. on the number of casualties. Essentially, the 'casualty hypothesis' holds that the more battle-deaths there are, the less people will support their government (Gartner and Segura 1998; Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler 2006; Karol and Miguel 2007). In the end, the general population will rally if the benefits of a successful war are perceived as greater than the costs.

The patriotic reflex explanation has attracted a fair amount of criticism over the years, notably for its inability to account for the fact that not all specific, dramatic, and sharply focused international events trigger rallies or have similar impacts on the president's approval ratings (see in particular Kernell 1975; Lee 1977). Still, hardly anyone would dispute the fact that elites' behaviour in such critical times is closely linked to the severity of the event. Mueller, however, stops short of explaining the process by which different groups of people will overcome their disagreements, perhaps even their enmity or distrust, to rally in support of their leader. In fact, he does not distinguish between the reaction of the political elite and that of the general population. In his view,

---

[71] Following France's triumph in the 1998 football World Cup President Jacques Chirac gained 15 points of popularity overnight – from 53 percent to 68 percent of respondents approving his action (www.ipsos.fr). Whether this constitutes a full-fledged rally is doubtful. Despite joining in the celebration the opposing elite certainly did not rally.

the rally is essentially the result of a patriotic reflex that encompasses all segments of society – i.e. decision-makers, opinion leaders, and ordinary citizens alike.[72]

3.1.2.2. The opinion leadership explanation

Richard Brody fills the theoretical gap left by the patriotic explanation by adopting a different line of reasoning. Instead of looking at what kind of events triggers rallies in the first place, Brody focuses his attention on how rallies develop or rather how criticism of the government is subdued (Brody and Shapiro 1989; Brody 1991). Like Jong R. Lee (1977) and Karlyn Keene (1980) before him, Brody attempts to account for the puzzling fact that Americans, by and large, seem to rally around their presidents following major international events "regardless of the success or failure of the U.S. policy", while at the same time explaining the few instances when they do not rally (Brody 1991, 53). A rally when things go well and the president is a positive force seems natural, but what of rallies in support of faulty policies and blatant mismanagement by the executive branch of the government?

Unlike Mueller, Brody makes a distinction between different actors of public life, namely the political elite, the media and the general population. Brody suggests that in times of crisis, "when events are breaking at an unusually rapid pace, when the administration [i.e. the White House] has a virtual monopoly of information about the situation, opposition political leaders tend to refrain from comment or to make cautiously

[72] Psychological theories provide some insights into the behavior of people during trying times and suggest, for instance, that members of a group are likely to be more cohesive when facing a common threat (Huddy 2003), notably a terrorist threat (Landau et al. 2004). Landau et al. suggest that "heightened concerns about mortality should intensify the appeal of charismatic leaders" (2004, 1136).

supportive statement" (1991, 63).[73] This restraint on the part of opposition elites is explained to some extent by a natural tendency to be supportive of the president when American interests abroad are at stake – Mueller's thesis. However, Brody insists that the decision of opposition elites to hold back is above all a consequence of being out of the loop – presumably only top White House officials are in it – and not having the necessary information to criticize the government. What this means is that during foreign policy crises the opposition is not able to provide the media with critical views on the government and its handling of the crisis. In turn, the media cannot use its traditional sources within the opposition elite to offer balanced news. At the end of the line, this absence of criticism projects an image of a government doing a fine job and thus encourages the general population to rally as well. This situation prevails until the opposition elite makes such countervailing evaluation of the government's handling of affairs available to the media, and they in turn make it available to the general population.

Bruce Russett follows a similar line of reasoning and argues that "some of their [the leaders] best opportunities to insulate their actions from domestic politics occur in the realm of foreign and national security policy" (1990, 9). Russett remarks that "much foreign policy is literally and figuratively distant from most citizens; its interpretation is thus particularly subject to selective release of information and careful media presentation – a prime candidate for symbolic politics" (1990, 34). Cindy Kam et al., for their part, suggest that "political sophistication is likely to shape which citizens hear elite messages and to what extent they resist or accept them" (2004, 23). The argument, based on John Zaller's Reception-Acceptance model (1992), suggests that rallies will be largest amongst moderately politically aware individuals. Similarly, Adam Berinsky (2007)

[73] It is worth underlying the fact that Brody considers remaining silent a sign of support.

suggests that people, notably poorly informed ones, will take cues from the elite and that if they choose to support their government it is not because the war appears successful but because their elites chose to rally. Berinsky argues that the 'elite cue' theory explains why the mass public remained supportive of the US government all through the Second World War even though casualties increased markedly from 1944 to April 1945.[74]

Others have been more critical of Brody's thesis. Matthew Baum (2002) in particular finds that elite support for the president – especially from the opposition party – while perhaps necessary, is not a sufficient condition for a rally. More recently, Baum and Groeling (2004) have gone as far as suggesting that elites do not in fact suspend partisan attacks in times of crises. Lian and Oneal (1993) argued similarly that there was no consistent rally effect following the use by the President of military force. Others have pointed out that Brody's understanding of the rallying phenomenon is incomplete; the argument being that the support offered by the opposition elite is often nothing more than a reaction to the popular mood (Hetherington and Nelson 2003). In other words, the mechanism is circular; the elite avoids criticizing the president because it believes public opinion is backing him.

Finally, at a contextual level, Robert Entman (2006) suggests that since the end of the Cold War events taking place on the international scene have become more ambiguous and culturally less congruent, making it difficult for the White House to frame foreign policy news the way it wants. In other words, ambiguity opens space for dissent. However, Entman (2006, 18) argues that during culturally congruent crises such as the multiple attacks of 9/11, elites, media and public will fall into line. Norris, Kern and Just

[74] Despite being a resolute opponent of Mueller's 'event response' theory, Berinsky still acknowledges that some cataclysmic events such as 9/11 and the attack on Pearl Harbor can directly influence public opinion.

suggest that "in times of shared crisis, a sense of threat often means that journalists freely offer their collaboration. Even if journalists seek opposing views on government war policies, they are constrained by their dependence on government success in order to write the news" (2003, 296). Moreover "even if politicians and journalists have doubts or disagreements, they will probably suppress explicit criticism out of concern for damaging public morale or fear of public backlash" (Norris et al. 2003, 298).

3.1.2.3. Patriotic leadership?

William Baker and John Oneal (2001) conducted an assessment of both theoretical approaches and concluded that the opinion leadership model accounted more accurately for the phenomenon than the 'patriotic reflex' model. In their view, "the public does not rally in response to crises in and of themselves, but rather to the president's handling and presentation of events (…)" (2001, 682). Cindy Kam and Jennifer Ramos (2008) reached a different and more nuanced conclusion by analyzing the evolution of public support for president Bush in the aftermath of 9/11. In their view "rallies occur not just as a consequence of elite discourse (Brody 1991), but also as a consequence of patriotism – through renewed emphasis on national identity brought on by presidential rhetoric" (Kam and Ramos 2008, 641).[75]

Although they start from different premises, Mueller and Brody's views are not necessarily incompatible with one another. For instance, Jacques Hymans (2005) adopts

[75] It is worth noting that others have distanced themselves from Brody's and Mueller's interpretations, stressing notably the importance of individual-level dynamics. For instance, Sigelman and Conover study of public opinion during the Iranian hostage crisis indicates that support of the President (in this case Jimmy Carter) is enhanced "if one holds a favorable personal image of the President, if one's own policy preferences are congruent with the President's actions, and if one belongs to the President's party" (1981: 303).

an approach midway between the patriotic and opinion leadership explanations by suggesting that four conditions are necessary for a rally to occur: a major international event or a disaster, mass patriotism, a substantial coverage by the media with a national framing, and the expectation on the part of public opinion that the country will prevail and come out of the crisis successful. In particular, Hymans considers that a rally cannot appear unless the feeling of belonging to a country is stronger amongst citizens than partisan feelings, and the framing and priming is orchestrated by the elite.[76]

Brody (2002) himself recently acknowledged that following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, leaders of the Democratic Party decided at first to support President Bush because of patriotic considerations. Commenting on the events of 9/11, Brody declared:

> "It is likely that future analyses of the rally following the attacks on the towers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon will also find that patriotism and opinion leadership affected public support for President Bush" (2002, 6-7).

Evidently neither Mueller nor Brody took specific interest in the impact of terrorism on political elites, yet their works do offer clues as to how these elites might react to terrorism. The implications of terrorism for the national interest suggest a priori that this form of political violence offers a fertile ground for rallies. Terrorism ticks the same boxes as military and diplomatic crises. To paraphrase Mueller, it is dramatic – often more so than far away military crises or opaque diplomatic disputes – it is usually specific, it is sudden and as a matter of national security it necessarily involves the president or head of the government. As for Brody's argument that in times of crisis

---

[76] Hymans suggests that the large number of rallies taking place in the US during the past 60 years is due in part to the fact that the US is a superpower and that its citizens have come to expect success whenever the US might is tested.

when events break at an unusual rapid pace the government has a monopoly of information and the opposition is muted, it is particularly well suited to terrorist events, which by nature unfold swiftly. In fact, terrorist attacks are far more sudden than foreign policy crises that can develop over months if not years. As a result of this time compression, elites must react in an instant. Opposition elites, in particular, do not have the luxury of time to appraise the situation and cannot for instance rely on polls to assess the public's reaction to the event. Nor do they have necessarily an easy and by the minute access to classified information without which criticisms of the government remains difficult.

3.1.3. Elites, media and public opinion: who leads the pack?

Rallies around the flag in times of foreign policy crises are frequent but they are also ephemeral and not always characterized by massive surges in the popularity of the President. What is particularly noteworthy is that scholars have often chosen to consider rallies around the flag and spikes in approval ratings – i.e. of the President – as one and the same (Hetherington and Nelson 2003; Kam and Ramos 2008). Yet whereas a sudden surge in approval ratings can indicate the presence of a rally around the president within the general population, it does not necessarily indicate a rally within the political elite. Nor is it absolutely clear whether one follows from the other, though Brody goes some way into explaining how the two might interact.

Both George Herbert Walker Bush and his son provide an interesting case in point. In 1991 during the first Gulf War the elder Bush enjoyed an 83 percent approval

rating in the poll, up from 59 percent before the launch of Operation Desert Storm.[77] His son would enjoy a similar albeit slightly less impressive rise in his approval rating in the midst of the second Gulf War – from 58 percent before the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom to 71 percent after the start of the war.[78] The two presidents would however receive a markedly different support from the Senate. Whereas 77 senators against 23 voted in favour of military action against Iraq in 2002, only 53 senators against 47 approved the use of force some ten years before.

Beyond the semantic, what distinguishes a rally from a mere show of support remains debatable. How much of a surge should there be in the polls? How many members of Congress or any assembly of representatives should support the president or the government? Admittedly each and everyone can come up with thresholds. Perhaps the answers to these questions are better left to spin-doctors. Let us simply acknowledge the fact that rallies are of different size and magnitude, and that public opinion and political elites will not necessarily offer a similar support.

Crucial, however, is the behaviour of mainstream opposition parties. Whereas surges in approval ratings are not uncommon, support from opposition elites is a rare occurrence. After all, the confrontation between the government and the opposition is an essential aspect of party politics, a sort of default mode for elites. A show of support from the opposition elite, when it does happen, has therefore tremendous symbolic and political value, particularly if as suggested by Brody the elite's behaviour determines that of the general population. Hence the importance of understanding the mechanism by which the political elite ceases, at least temporarily, to criticize the government.

---

[77] Source: *Gallup Polls*, January 3-6 and January 17-20, 1991.
[78] Source: *Gallup Polls*, March 14-15 and March 22-23, 2003.

Brody's contribution to understanding elite behaviour in the midst of fast-breaking international crises underlines the importance of the flow and distribution of information between different set of actors – i.e. government, opposition, media, and public opinion. One of the essential points raised by Brody is that when a crisis erupts elites need to react fast, a point made particularly clear in Charles F. Hermann's definition of a crisis as:

> "a situation that (1) threatens high-priority goals of the decision-making unit, (2) restricts the amount of time available for response before the decision is transformed, and (3) surprises the members of the decision-making unit by its occurrence" (Vasquez 1996, 192).

Despite this time constraint governmental elites have an edge. By controlling the flow of information the government is able, at least temporarily, to entice the support of the other actors, crucially that of the opposition. In other words, *ceteris paribus*, crisis situations favour the government by essentially making it difficult for elites and media to dissent.

Evidently there are different degrees of threat, time constraints and amount of surprise depending on the type of crisis. Yet, as pointed out by Boin et al., "serious threats that do not pose immediate problems – think of climate change or future pension deficits – do not induce a widespread sense of crises" (2005, 3). Terrorism, unlike global warming, poses an immediate problem and does not allow for much time to react. Brody's argument is here particularly relevant. By controlling the availability of sensitive information the government is able to acquire the support of the opposition, the media and of course the general public.

The emergence of a rally depends on a chain of reactions between governmental elites, opposition elites, media outlets and public opinion. The question raised by Brody

is whether the reaction of one of these groups sets in motion the reaction of the other ones and ultimately triggers a rally. To be fair others suggest that the mechanism is circular and that much like a driver looking in his rear-view mirror before taking a decision, the government will first evaluate the mood of the population. Kull and Ramsay, for instance, argue that policymakers and elites are constrained by their perception or misperception of what the public deems acceptable (in Nacos et al. 2000, 95). The 'leaders follow masses' theory is based on the assumption that "societal interests shape the behavior of governments and therefore of states, because rational politicians adapt to the interests of society in order to assure reelection and stay in power" (Schuster and Maier 2006, 228; see also Risse-Kappen 1991). In other words, the government acts as a "transmission belt" (Moravcsik 1997, 518). John F. Kennedy's attitude during the 1962 Cuba Missile Crisis is a case in point. He chose to follow public opinion, which according to polls conducted at the time by Gallup was slightly in favour of tough actions against Fidel Castro's regime. In addition the Senate – including the opposition – was also favouring a tough approach. With elections looming, JFK chose the blockade and saw his job-rating rise sharply (Russett 1995, 36).[79] In that case, however, the crises lasted a couple of weeks and JFK could afford to wait for polls to come in.

Then again public opinion no matter how vocal it is on issues of foreign policy will not always be able to impact foreign policy. The 2003 invasion of Iraq is a case in point. Most governments that gave their support to the US military plan did so amidst popular backing for a peaceful solution.

---

[79] US Presidents have a tendency to follow the public, particularly during election periods, but they become less responsive outside this period (Nacos et al. 2000, 231-234).

The question of who leads and who follows during critical times is complex. However contrary to foreign policy crises that can unfold over weeks, terrorist attacks are sudden. Governmental elites and opposition elites must react in an instant. The time-constraint means that the opposition has little time to appraise the situation and gather enough information. Thus siding with the government represents the most likely reaction, at least in the short-run. The same holds for the media. Initially background and in-depth information, notably on the perpetrators, might not be available. The media are dependent on what the government feeds them. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) suggest that they can influence the public in matters of foreign and security policy, and all things related to symbolic politics, but that they cannot on their own change attitudes. During tense periods such as terrorist crises, journalists are also likely to back the government in order to preserve their privileged relationship with the government or simply to avoid being accused of disloyalty (Norris et al. 2003).[80]

The debate is complex and far from over but there are reasons to believe that during terrorist crises the elite is leading the pack (at least in the short-run), and the media and general population are bandwagoning. Unable to access crucial information the opposition is likely to support the government and thereby trigger a rally within other segments of society.

Next we turn to the likely determinant of elite behaviour in critical times, namely the national interest.

---

[80] Norris et al. quote two journalists of the *New York Times* who reported the following in an article published by their journal two days after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: “Some reporters investigating claims against Iraq said they felt no compunction to poke holes in the administration’s case because they did not find it to be so off base. Many reported being in the same position as the administration: confident that Mr. Hussein is hiding weapons of mass destruction but unable to definitively prove it.” Jim Rutenberg and Robin Toner, ‘Critics Say Coverage Helped Lead to War’ *New York Times*, March 22, 2003.

3.2. The patriotic imperative

The rational choice school of thought posits that party behaviour reflects a preference or possibly a combination of preferences between basically three objectives: vote-seeking, office-seeking and policy-seeking. Yet historical examples, notably some presented earlier in the text (see chapter 1), suggest that these preferences apply only to ordinary times. Critical or extraordinary times generally make these electoral objectives less prevalent in the minds of our elites and give rise to another concern, namely the *raison d'État*. Faced with a foreign policy crisis, the political elite must then decide whether to think in terms of what is best for its party or best for the country, which might not necessarily be one and the same, particularly for opposition elites. Yet time and again mainstream political elites rally in support of their government, even if only for a brief period of time, to defend the national interest. We are reminded here of Edmund Burke's definition of parties: "a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest". Yet despite its capacity to bring down political cleavages and rally people, the notion of the national interest remains elusive. We all have an idea of what it means but would be hard-pressed to define it in precise terms.

The national interest is first and foremost a concept used by proponents of the realist school of thought in international relations to make sense of foreign policy making in an environment that is anarchic and conflictual by nature, and in which countries are in a permanent state of insecurity (Smouts, Battistella and Vennesson 2003). The national interest is influenced by the cultural context and political traditions, and thus each country is likely to have a slightly different take on what its national interest is (Morgenthau in Vasquez 1996). Yet there is a common denominator, at least among

countries sharing similar cultures and values, which Hans Morgenthau (Vasquez 1996, 147-148) captures in the following excerpt:

> "In a world where a number of sovereign nations compete with and oppose each other for power, the foreign policies of all nations must necessarily refer to their survival as their minimum requirements. Thus all nations do what they cannot help but do: protect their physical, political, and external identity against encroachments by other nations (…). Taken in isolation, the determination of its content in a concrete situation is relatively simple; for it encompasses the integrity of the nation's territory, of its political institutions, and of its culture"

Morgenthau goes on to suggest that "bipartisanship in foreign policy, especially in times of war, has been most easily achieved in the promotion of these minimum requirements of the national interest" (in Velasquez 1996, 148). Mueller (1973, 209) makes a similar point when he describes the type of event likely to bring political elites (and the general public) together. Clearly, most of the events Mueller refers to (e.g. Berlin 1948, the first Soviet atomic test, Cuba 1962) would fall under the category 'threats on physical, political, and external identity' of the United States (and other countries for that matter).[81]

The notion of national interest and more exactly of threats thereon conjures up images of tanks crossing borders, saber-rattling rhetoric by foreign leaders, or the occasional and more entertaining shoe-banging at the United Nations' General Assembly. Yet obviously the national interest encompasses other threats besides those related to foreign policy crises. Shortly before becoming President Bush's National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice remarked that the national interest in the post-Cold War era must encompass conventional and unconventional threats, notably terrorism (Rice 2000).

[81] The realist take on the national interest has been criticized by liberal thinkers for whom the concept is a changing one because it depends on which societal actors are prevalent at any one time, and on their capacity to impose their view of the national interest at the state level (Smouts et al. 2003: 283). The constructivists, for their part, even suggest that the national interest is defined by norms and values shared by states on the international scene rather than by elites in each state (Smouts et al 2003: 283-284; see also Finnemore 1996).

Obviously the very idea that terrorism can threaten the survival of a state is still hard to fathom. Far-fetched scenarios involving the use of nuclear devices by terrorist groups have perhaps clouded our judgment one way or the other. Let us however bear in mind that the Tupamaros hardly relied on any fancy weapons to bring down democracy in Uruguay.[82]

Terrorism might not necessarily threaten the territorial integrity or the existence of democratic institutions, but it is a negation of the state's authority and monopoly of violence on its own territory. After all, homeland security is first and foremost about securing the borders and the territory against terrorist actions. As pointed out by David and Gagnon "le terrorisme a (ré)insufflé à la question sécuritaire une dimension territoriale" (2007, 1).[83]

More importantly still, terrorism encroaches on people's daily life. I refer here in particular to what Amitai Etzioni calls the 'Primacy of Life', that "is the recognition that all people have an interest in and right to security, understood to include freedom from deadly violence, maiming, and torture" (2007, 1). Put differently, the national interest encompasses a human security dimension as well, namely:

> "The condition under which most people, most of the time, are able to go about their lives, venture onto the street, work, study, and participate in public life (politics included), without acute fear of being killed or injured – without being terrorized" (Etzioni 2007: 2).

The security of a state is what makes it possible for its citizens to pursue their private interests (Smouts et al. 2003). Thus, political elites are likely to consider that the national interest encompasses terrorist threats as much as diplomatic and military threats.

---

[82] Of course paradoxically the military junta that took over the power did so to 'protect' the nation from the Tupamaros.

[83] Terrorism reasserted the territorial dimension of national security (my translation).

If and when the national security and more precisely the 'Primacy of Life' is being threatened, the patriotic imperative is likely to overpower the partisan spirit.

The frequent occurrence of rallies around the flag following military or diplomatic crises suggests that a comparable phenomenon is likely to take place within mainstream political elites following acts of terror. The logic should be similar. Political elites will stick together when the nation is under attack or is facing a threat. Crises threatening the interest of a country should not offer much room for manoeuvre. Parties are likely to think in terms of the national interest and thus offer a unified front. Hence the first hypothesis:

H1: Acts of terrorism cause mainstream opposition parties to rally in support of the government.

3.3. The magnitude-repetition model

Not all diplomatic or military crises trigger rallies and arguably the same is true for terrorist crises. The support given by the opposition to the government is not automatic and depends on a series of factors. I suggest that in the case of terrorist attacks, the reaction of the political elite depends to a large extent on two variables: the magnitude of the terrorist act in terms of fatalities, and the repetition of these acts over time. The magnitude-repetition model presented below is then completed by a number of secondary variables likely to influence party and elite behaviour. Each primary and secondary variable presented below introduces a new hypothesis on the reaction of political elites to terrorist acts.

3.3.1. Casualties and trends

Doughery and Pfaltzgraff remind us that “it is difficult to give operational meaning to the concept of national interest” (1981, 125). Obviously not all terrorist acts result in a genuine menace on human security. Whereas human tragedy is always a likely outcome of any terrorist action, more often than not the end result will rarely lift an eyebrow amongst politicians. The impact on human security and on the ability of people to go about their life must be manifest to elicit a reaction. The number of fatalities, much like battle-deaths in war, is a particularly relevant indication of how serious the terrorist crisis is and one to which political elites are likely to pay attention.

Terrorism is a tragedy, and the human tragedy is quintessential to the way elites and other segments of society react. Terrorism is what Mark Juergensmeyer calls “performance violence” (2002, 3), an act of communication meant to impress upon the public. The more lives are threatened or taken, the more people are impressed and the deeper the crisis.

Acts of terrorism are essentially rated according to their destructiveness or lethality. Media are particularly sensitive to this aspect, with tabloids and quality newspapers alike splashing their first page with deaths counts, and news networks doing very much the same with their news banners. Societies, at least in the Western world, have come to evaluate the newsworthiness of terrorist attacks by the numbers of victims, which after all is the way most catastrophes are evaluated. The total number of casualties is then a proxy for the severity of the attack. In fact, the literature on conflict often considers casualties as the most salient cost of conflict. Thus the impact of casualty rates and casualty trends on political behaviour and decision-making is nothing new.

Essentially, the longer and deadlier the crisis becomes, the less people are ready to support their government (Gartner and Segura 1998; Gartner, Segura and Barratt 2004; Boettcher and Cobb 2006; Gartner 2008). The rate at which bodies of US soldiers were flown out of Vietnam accounts to a large extent for the growing unpopularity of the war and the decision to cease America's involvement in that particular conflict (Mueller 1973; Zaller 1992). The same remark applies for the present military operation in Iraq (Gartner 2008).

A similar logic is likely to apply to terrorist crises. The response of mainstream political elites to acts of terror should depend to a large extent on two variables: the magnitude of the act (measured through the number of fatalities) and the repetition of terror acts (measured through the number of previous terrorist events). For instance, opposition parties and elites should be less inclined to openly criticize the government when an event has high casualty rates. In those cases, one would expect parties to think in terms of the national interest rather than particular interests, and thus offer a unified front. However, the magnitude of the crisis is just part of the story. Just like the duration of a military conflict affects the behaviour of elites, we expect the repetition of terror acts to have a significant influence on elites' behaviour. Those in charge of governing the country are expected to limit the occurrence of terror acts. If they fail, those in the opposition who wish to replace them in government will likely criticize them. The duration of the crisis, that is the failure to end the crisis, will activate the partisan (electoral) interest and encourage opposition parties to break away from the rally. Put differently, rallies have an expiry date. Mainstream opposition parties will likely be patient when the government faces its first terrorist acts and therefore be supportive.

However, this support will fade if acts of terror keep repeating themselves. In other words, more fatalities can mean less support if there is a multiplication of acts. The magnitude-repetition model suggests the two following hypotheses:

H2: Political parties and elites are more likely to rally around the flag as the terrorist act causes a larger number of fatalities.

H3: The repeated occurrence of acts of terror under a same government (and same mandate) makes a rally around the flag less likely.[84]

3.3.2. Rallying around the state

Although the magnitude and repetition variables might account to a large extent for the reaction of the mainstream political elites, other secondary variables are likely to play a role as well. First amongst these potentially influential variables is the target of the attack, particularly when the gun sight is pointed at a representative of the state. Obviously corporatism beyond political cleavages might render members of the political elite particularly sensitive to acts aiming one of theirs and as a result more susceptible to rally.

If rallying around the flag essentially means rallying around its symbols and representatives then political elites will likely rally promptly when one of their own is targeted because of his or her position within the state apparatus (government officials, police officers, mayors, and other civil servants). One of the main reasons for rallying

[84] This hypothesis implies that each new government or each government starting a new mandate will be given a clean sheet and will not necessarily be held responsible for the homeland security failures of the previous government.

under such circumstances is the risk of being perceived as disloyal to the country if one abstains from rallying. When a terrorist hides a bomb in a public place his or her intention might be to kill as many bystanders as possible, but his actual target is the wider public, those bewildered and frightened television viewers or newspapers readers. With attacks on public officials and other representatives of the state, the logic is slightly different. Here too terrorists attempt to scare many, but their choice of a state target reveals another objective, namely demonstrate that they can target leaving embodiments of the state and what it stands for (i.e. order and rule of law). Put differently, terrorists are not able to conquer land or aim at the territorial integrity of a state, but they can strike at the 'flesh and blood' embodiment of the state. An act aimed at such a symbol challenges the government's authority and especially its monopoly of physical force on the national territory.

The necessity to appear loyal should be particularly strong when the state is targeted, as disloyalty or perceived disloyalty to the country in times of crises can be severely reprimanded by the voters. For instance, Regens, Gaddie and Lockerbie (1995) demonstrated that members of Congress who voted against America's entry into the First World War had a lower probability to be reelected than those who voted in favour.[85]

The fourth hypothesis follows:

H4: *Ceteris paribus, terrorist acts aimed at symbols of the state are more likely to trigger a rally around the flag.*

---

[85] For a long time political dissent was a criminal offense in the United States in times of war. The 1918 Sedition Act outlawed "conspiracy to publish disloyal material intended to obstruct the war and cause contempt for the government of the United States" (Stone 2004, 139).

3.3.3. The threat from within vs. the threat from abroad

If the target matters, then arguably the identity of the perpetrators could also influence the reaction of the political elite. Attacks coming from abroad could be perceived as more threatening for the national interest than attacks originating from within. In particular, the political elite might perceive such an attack as not only a menace on human security but also as a threat on the national interest in the traditional realist sense of the word. The likelihood that terrorists originating from abroad might be supported financially and logistically by foreign states can only reinforce the sense of threat. Moreover, terrorist acts perpetrated by foreigners might be perceived as targeting the country as a whole, hence making it difficult for political elites to openly disagree with one another. Acts committed by home-grown terrorists on the other hand might exacerbate existing divisions within the political elite (e.g. disputes might surface if the terrorists are ideologically 'closer' to one or the other party). This suggests the following hypothesis:

H5: *When confronting a terrorist attack originating from abroad (or perceived as such) the mainstream elite is more likely to rally.*

3.3.4. Rallying around the hawks?

If the identity of the perpetrators influence the behaviour of the political elite, the reverse could be true as well. In particular, the party in power might influence terrorist activities. The terrorists could avoid committing acts when the party with the toughest antiterrorist approach is in government. By concentrating their activities when the party with the

softest approach is in power, the terrorists might be able to create disunion within the elite and encourage those with a tougher approach to criticize the government for being too lax. For instance, Claude Berrebi and Esteban Klor (2008) argue that in Israel the occurrence of terrorism increases popular support for right-wing parties. Berrebi and Klor (2006) also found that the level of terrorism in Israel is higher when the Left is in power. Therefore, it appears possible that in certain cases terror organizations choose the timing and location of an attack because of the expected reaction of the elite.

Some studies suggest that right-wing parties are more hawkish than their left-wing counterparts (Budge and Hofferbert 1990), while others have suggested that the rally effect will be probably strongest for tough actions (Russett 1990). For instance, in the US the Republican Party has often been regarded by public opinion as better able to deal with issues of national security than the Democratic Party.[86] In 1986, during Reagan's presidency, 56 percent of Americans trusted the Republicans to do a better job in dealing with terrorism, whereas only 25 percent trusted the Democrats more (Nacos 2007, 187).[87] The immediate post 9/11 period revealed a similar trend with 57 percent of Americans trusting the Republican party to do a better job at handling terrorism and only 15 percent

---

[86] Party ideologies affect the conduct of the state (Hibbs 1977; Schmidt 1996; Alesina et al. 1997; Boix 1998). However, the 'parties-do-matter' hypothesis is concerned above all with the influence of parties on public policy, notably with regard to socio-economic issues (Schmidt 1996 for a good review; see also Downs 1957; Sartori 1976; Budge and Robertson 1987; Blais, Blake and Dion 1993). Parties from the Right are more likely to support market-oriented policies, whereas parties from the Left are more likely to favour state intervention. Similarly, social-democratic parties tend to spend more on foreign aid (Thérien and Noël 2000). As for foreign policy, Schuster and Maier (2006, 233) remark that in Western Europe "the party affiliation of a government seems to be a good indicator of how a country behaved during the Iraq crisis". For instance, out of the six European Union members that joined the US led coalition, five were governed by center-right parties (see also Noël and Thérien 2008).

[87] Petrocik (1996) reports similar differences on national defense, with 68 percent trusting the Republicans and 17 percent trusting the Democrats. Interestingly enough, the GOP is not necessarily doing a better job and is certainly not always tough against terrorists – Reagan for instance pulled out US troops from Lebanon after the 1983 attacks that killed several hundred marines (Nacos 2007, 188). Reagan also negotiated with Iran the liberation of hostages held by the Hezbollah in exchange for secret arms shipment (Nacos 2007, 188). Nacos suggests that the Democrats are perhaps still paying for Jimmy Carter's mishandling of the hostage crisis in Teheran (Nacos 2007, 188).

trusting the Democrats more (Nacos 2007, 187).[88] Yet recently the gap has narrowed with only 40 percent trusting the GOP in May 2006 and 35 percent trusting the Democrats (Nacos 2007, 187).[89]

In essence, what we have is a right-wing ownership of security related issues. The idea is that on some issues parties are more credible than others (Damore 2004). Parties on the right of the political spectrum are perceived as more capable of dealing with issues of national and public security, whereas parties on the left are perceived as having more credibility on social and environmental issues. According to the theory of issue-ownership, parties and their candidates put forward issues on which they appear more credible than their political adversaries. Voters then use issue-ownership as a cue to evaluate parties.[90] This being said, reputations are not frozen and can evolve. Parties can try to steal an issue – what David Damore (2004) calls 'issue-trespassing' – just like when Bill Clinton successfully took away from the Republicans the issue of crime during his first presidential campaign (see Holian 2004).[91]

---

[88] According to a January 2002 poll.

[89] A similar trend is being observed elsewhere in the world: in Israel Likud has a better reputation on security issues than Labor (Berrebi and Klor 2006); same in the United Kingdom where the Tories enjoyed for a long time the same kind of reputation (Budge and Farlie 1983), although recently the Labour Party might have taken over the role of the hawkish party (Oborne 2007); likewise in France where Jacques Chirac (right-wing) was seen as the best candidate to deal with terrorism during the 2002 presidential campaign (Mayer and Tiberj 2004).

[90] Reputation is not enough to convince a voter. Eric Bélanger and Bonnie Meguid (2005) suggest that issue-ownership affect the vote only when the voter considers the issue to be relevant. For instance, Nadeau, Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte (2001) point out that more Canadians voted for the Liberal party when it was perceived as more competent on issues such as job creation and national unity.

[91] We can still expect inertia to influence behavior. Downs in particular argues that parties are obliged by electoral competition to have consistent policy positions over time (Downs 1957, 103-109). This being said electoral competition can drive parties to make certain types of promises and all the while make sure that they remain consistent (Downs 1957, 103-109). Leaders who do not follow the type of policy advocated by their supporters run the risk of losing support. Warwick (1992) shows that this is happening as far as economic policies are concerned. At the same time, Downs suggests that parties in a two-party system will converge towards the center to maximize votes, a process which should favor issue-trespassing.

These days, terrorism and security issues are of course a hot commodity on the political and electoral market. Among the policy benefits that voters seek and leaders can promise is security, which of course parties will want to advertise as one of their paramount concern when seeking votes. Berrebi and Klor (2006) have demonstrated that during the period 1991-2003, the Israeli Labour party was forced to be tougher in its policies than Likud, precisely because the latter was perceived by the population as better qualified to deal with terrorism. Thus left-wing parties, in particular, might be tempted to appear more credible on issues pertaining to national security by adopting a tougher stance. If both right-wing and left-wing parties adopt similar approaches, the likelihood of a disagreement over the handling of terrorism might diminish. As a result, a right-wing opposition should find it more difficult to criticize a left-wing government for being too soft. This suggests the following hypothesis:

H6: Rallies are not less likely when the Left is in power.[92]

3.3.5. Railing against the mainstream elite

So far I have taken into consideration mainstream parties only. But what of radical parties and fringe elites? Do they have a different rationale when it comes to partisan interests vs. national interest? The American left, particularly its intellectuals, were quick to point out that the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as symbols of capitalism and modern warfare got what they deserved (Weinberg and Eubank 2008). Even Reverend Pat Robertson, a conservative Southern Baptist and hardly Chomsky's soul mate, was

[92] This hypothesis clearly rests on the assumption that issue-trespassing is taking place with regards to terrorism and national security.

initially as critical as Gore Vidal and co., though for entirely different reasons – i.e. Robertson saw the attacks as a sign of God's displeasure with American 'sins' such as abortion and gay marriage (Weinberg and Eubank 2008).

Much like the socialists of yesteryears who railed against the bourgeoisie's penchant for war, today's radical elites are likely to follow a different logic than their mainstream counterparts. It is not at all impossible that they will seize the opportunity created by terrorist attacks to criticize not only the government but also the whole political system. Unlike mainstream elites, radical elites are unlikely to be deterred by the prospect of looking disloyal to the state. Hence my seventh hypothesis:

H7: Radical parties do not rally around the flag following acts of terror and are on the contrary outspoken in their criticism towards the government.

3.3.6. The 9/11 effect

The events of 9/11 have profoundly influenced international affairs in the past eight years. But to what extent has it influenced domestic politics in the US and in European countries? Following the fateful events of 9/11, political elites across the Western world rallied in support of the US president.[93] Of course this feeling of compassion subsided rapidly, yet 9/11 left a scar, and more than before national unity might be perceived as crucial in the struggle against terrorism. Mainstream opposition elites might feel that they now have less room for manoeuvre than prior to 9/11, and that in order to avoid being lambasted as disloyal to the country they must rally. This suggests the final hypothesis:

---

[93] Jean-Marie Colombani, chief editor of *Le Monde,* famously declared on the front-page of his newspaper: 'Nous sommes tous Américains!'.

H8: Mainstream parties have a greater probability of rallying in the post 9/11 period.

Conclusion

The present chapter challenges the notion that the behaviour of political parties is always determined by partisan interests and the electoral agenda, by suggesting that during dramatic events when the national interest is being threatened, the patriotic imperative might prove too much to brush aside, particularly for mainstream opposition parties. The rally-around-the-flag phenomenon is traditionally associated with events such as military and diplomatic crises. I argue here that during terrorist crises the need to defend the security of its citizens is a powerful incentive for the elite to support the government. The magnitude-repetition model suggests that elites will be likely influenced by the magnitude of the attack and the repetition of terrorist acts. I also suggest that secondary variables, such as the target of the attack or the origin of the perpetrators, are also likely to influence the reaction.

Next, I take up the advice of Michael Shermer that "there is only one surefire method of proper pattern recognition, and that is science" by describing in the following chapter the data and method of analysis used to test my hypotheses.

Chapter 4

Methodology

> "Cold blooded mass murder requires cold-blooded analysis, the careful selection of words to convey precise meaning uncluttered by emotional rhetoric" (Brian Jenkins, *The Organization Men*)

Introduction

Ariel Merari once remarked that "terrorism is a study area which is very easy to approach but very difficult to cope with in a scientific sense" (in Schmid and Jongman 1988, 179). Of particular concern to him was the lack of "precise and extensive factual knowledge" necessary for any kind of scientific inquiry into the field of terrorism. The first extensive databases on terrorist events – the Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services (PGIS) database and the RAND database – were launched in the early 1970s but were until very recently available only to a select few (corporate customers for PGIS and affiliated researchers for RAND). This meant that a majority of studies on terrorism had to be qualitative. For instance, from 1995 to 1999 only about 3 percent of research papers published in the two main journals on terrorism – *Terrorism and Political Violence* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* – used inferential analysis of data, while another 15 percent included descriptive statistics (Silke 2002). In comparison, over the same time frame 86 percent of papers published in forensic psychology and 60 percent of those published in criminology used either inferential or descriptive statistics (Silke 2002). Fortunately, an increasing number of freely accessible databases on terrorist events means that statistical analyses are now easier to produce.

My own research is based on a two-step approach integrating quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. At the core of this study is an original dataset on terrorist events and the reaction of political elites to them. The purpose of the quantitative analysis is to establish through both descriptive and inferential statistics a pattern of behaviour amongst mainstream political elites, and indicate whether these trends and findings can

be generalized outside of the sample. The qualitative approach is then used to complement, notably through in-depth case studies, and nuance the statistical findings.

Section one of the following chapter describes the scope of the research. In section two, I discuss how the data source for terrorist events was selected, and in section three which sources have been selected for the reaction of elites. I then proceed, in section four, with a description of how the database was put together and in particular how the reaction of the elite was coded. Finally, in the last section I detail what I hope to achieve through this two-step approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.

4.1. Scope of research

The study of the reaction of political parties and their elites to terrorism implies certain restrictions. First of all, political parties must be free to oppose their government. The rally, if they choose to rally, can therefore not be forced upon them by the government or any other authority. The choice to rally must always be theirs. Thus, the selected countries must be stable democracies. Autocracies, even those operating under the veil of democratic institutions or single-party regime, cannot be considered. Second of all, terrorism must be nothing new for the selected countries, for there is no point in studying the reaction to terrorism if the phenomenon is absent or of such low-intensity that it remains unnoticed by the elites. Finally, these countries must be relatively peaceful and cannot be in the midst of a civil war or any other enduring military crisis. In other words, ordinary politics as defined in chapter one must be the rule. These restrictions mean that neither Israel nor Russia or India were included in this study. In addition, the information

on the reaction of the elite (see below) had to be available and in a language understood by the author of this thesis.

Taking into account these restrictions, the countries selected were the following: France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. These countries have been stable democracies and the political parties free to oppose their government at least for the past 25 years.[94] Although terrorism might have been a more acute phenomenon in recent years in some countries (e.g. Spain) than in others (e.g. Germany), it remains a recurring problem for all of them.

Finally, this study is also limited in time. Of particular concern was the need to avoid any overlap with the Cold War, a period which could have influenced the reaction of political elites. For instance, the Soviet Union and its allies were often blamed for providing support to terrorist groups, notably Palestinian groups and West European groups. Among others, Claire Sterling in *The Terror Network* (1981) fuelled this notion that Russia conspired to destroy the West through an international network of terrorists. Although proofs of this support are murky at best, it is not improbable that certain segments of the political elite, particularly right-wing politicians, gave credence to this accusation. As a result, the period under scrutiny will be stretching from the end of the Cold War in 1990 to 2006.[95]

---

[94] See notably their rankings at www.freedomhouse.org in terms of political rights and civil liberties.
[95] With the exception of the qualitative analysis which will cover the period 1980 to 2006.

4.2. Selecting a database for terrorist events

An increasing number of databases on terrorism are available (most of them freely accessible online). However, none of them provide information on the reaction of political elites to terrorist events. Thus the dataset necessary for this project had to be created by using an already existing database of terrorist incidents and adding the data on the reaction of political elites.

The selection of a database on terrorist events is a delicate matter not the least because a great deal of what is included in it depends on what the original developer considered to be terrorist in nature and intent. Thus, by choosing a certain database we also accept the definition of terrorism that comes with it (see chapter 2). The definition used will in turn have an impact on the number of observations that are being recorded. Ideally a large N is preferable but a dataset that is too inclusive is also less desirable as it tends to include cases that might only be remotely connected to terrorist activities (e.g. criminal activities and street protest). The objective remains the study of the reaction to terrorism, not to political violence in general.

At the time the data collection process for this project started, several databases on terrorist events existed, each with their own strengths and weaknesses (see annex A for a summary of options). After careful examination of what several databases had to offer, the Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB) developed by the RAND Corporation in cooperation with the Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) was selected. The TKB emerged from a database of terrorist events developed and maintained by a team of researchers at the RAND Corporation from the early 1970s onwards, amongst them respected scholars such as Brian Jenkins and Bruce

Hoffman. This terrorism chronology was used until the end of the 1990s exclusively by RAND experts, but in 2001 the project was given a new impulse by a grant from the MIPT. The resulting MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base is divided into two datasets:

- The RAND Terrorism Chronology for incidents collected between 1968 and 1997 includes cases of international terrorism that is acts perpetrated by individuals coming from abroad to strike their target, domestic targets associated with a foreign state, or attacks on airline passengers or equipment.
- The RAND-MIPT Terrorism Incident Database, which records domestic and international terrorist incidents from 1998 onwards. Domestic terrorism is here defined as incidents perpetrated by local nationals against a purely domestic target.

The TKB was constructed on the premise that not every act related to political violence should be regarded as terrorist and that “terrorism is defined by the nature of the act, not by the identity of the perpetrators”.[96] This means that a criminal act perpetrated by a known terrorist organization would not have found its place in the database. Equally important, an exchange of fire between a terrorist organization and a regular army would not have been considered terrorist.[97]

In 2004 the TKB was launched online as a free and open source database providing data and related information on close to 30,000 terrorist incidents across the world since 1968. Unfortunately this remarkable research tool was discontinued on

---

[96] See www.mipt.org/TKB.asp

[97] The MIPT website gives the example of an exchange of fire between al Fatah and the Israeli Defense Forces in border areas between Israel and the Occupied Territories. However, an attack such as the one against the USS Cole in Yemen would be considered terrorist.

March 31, 2008, after the US Department of Homeland Security, which oversaw its funding, decided that the money would be better spent elsewhere.

A number of other databases were available at the time the collection process started. They differed notably in the size of the N. The largest database – the Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services (PGIS) database – reported over 67,000 incidents for the period 1970-1997 (Lafree and Dugan 2007). In comparison the RAND-MIPT database (TKB) had close to 30,000 incidents and ITERATE and TWEED about 10,000 each. To a large extent this difference in the number of observations is a result of the definition of terrorism used in gathering incidents (see annex A). PGIS, for instance, defines terrorism as "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation" (Lafree and Dugan 2007). This wider definition reflects the original purpose of the Pinkerton database which was to provide risk assessment to companies, hence the need to incorporate too much rather than too little. For instance, PGIS includes attacks on property as well as acts of violence during demonstrations.

Recently the Pinkerton database has been taken over and computerized by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland – available online as the Global Terrorism Database (GTD).[98] GTD1, which covers the period 1970 to 1997 (not 1993)[99], defines terrorism using almost the same wording as Pinkerton (except for the part in italics) namely as "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence *by a non-state actor* to attain a political,

[98] Since TKB ceased its operations, elements of its database are in the process of being merged with the Global Terrorism Database.
[99] Data for the year 1993 have been lost during the transfer of the original hard copies of the Pinkerton database.

economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation", whereas GTD2, which covers the period 1998 until 2009, has no set definition and uses a "configurable approach covering several definitions of terrorism".[100]

Among other databases worthy of attention is the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events better known under its acronym ITERATE. This database is widely used – it includes over 10,000 incidents (1968 to 2004) – but does not incorporate cases of domestic terrorism. The Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data or TWEED covers a far broader period (from 1950 to 2004) but does so only for domestic incidents occurring in 18 West European countries. Other databases such as the Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS), Triton, or 'La base de données sur les actes terroristes' are far more limited in their scope, in the period they cover, or their accessibility.

TKB is not flawless but none of these databases are, its main flaw being the absence of information on the reaction of political elites, which of course none of the other databases include. I selected TKB first of all because it is based on a clear definition, which distinguishes for instance terrorist acts from other acts of political violence. Second of all, it provides comprehensive data for all of the five countries selected for this study and over the period 1990-2006. In addition, for each terrorist act a wealth of information is available (target, perpetrators, etc.) and its content is constantly updated (and corrected when necessary). Finally, it has been created and maintained by scholars and for a scholarly purpose, unlike other databases that served commercial interests.

---

[100] See www.start.umd.edu/data/gtd/gtd1_and gtd2.asp

4.3. Selecting a data source for reactions

Neither TKB nor any other existing databases on terrorist events include information on the reaction of political elites. This information is however available in most major media outlets such as national and international newspapers. Choosing media outlets as a source is not only practical but also logical in view of the symbiosis that exists between terrorism and media.

Political elites' reactions to terrorist acts have been gathered using national newspapers. For each of the five countries chosen for this study one national newspaper has been selected, namely: *Le Monde* for France, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* for Germany, *El Pais* for Spain, *The Times* for the United Kingdom, and *The New York Times* for the United States. These five newspapers are renowned and respected sources of information, thus concerns with their impartiality and accuracy in reporting (e.g. factual errors) should be minimal. It should be noted that reactions reported by these newspapers are often based on press releases from the parties themselves (usually via press agencies). Furthermore, in order to avoid reporting bias, opinion editorials have not been taken into account. Finally, a limited review of other leading national newspapers in France and the US has been carried out in order to further verify that reactions are reported accurately and check for any discrepancies. The analysis of the coverage of thirty randomly selected terrorist events (15 in France and 15 in the United States) in the database by four additional newspapers – *Washington Post* and *USA Today* for the United States; *Libération* and *Le Figaro* for France - indicates that the coverage of the elite's reaction is very similar to that of the selected papers – i.e. *Le Monde* and *The New York Times*. All

these newspapers seem to report essentially the same reactions, even though their interpretation of these reactions sometimes differs.

4.4. Creating the database

After limiting the countries and period under consideration another limitation had to be set in, namely the magnitude of the terrorist events. Indeed a preliminary survey revealed that most low magnitude incidents, that is those causing a minimal number of wounded, simply did not register on the media radar and did not elicit any reaction at all from the political elite.[101] Including these acts would have brought no valuable information and would have lengthened considerably the process of data gathering. Thus it was decided that acts that had caused no fatalities and wounded less than six people would not be included in the database.[102] In addition, only acts perpetrated on the national territory were taken into account. For instance, an IRA attack against a British military barrack in Germany would show up in the database – provided it injured at least 6 people – but only for Germany, not for the United Kingdom. In all, the database comprises 192 terrorist events.

In chapter three, I defined, tentatively, a rally around the flag as:

> A movement of widespread support in favour of the government within the mainstream political elite – crucially from the opposition parties – an

[101] It should be pointed out that TKB relies on a much larger pool of sources to gather observations (newspapers, governmental agencies such as the CIA, etc.). Thus it is not at all surprising if on occasions reactions to a terrorist event do not appear in the newspapers selected for this study but are recorded by TKB. An organization like the CIA is likely to keep track of incidents that will not necessarily be deemed newsworthy by a national newspaper. For instance, an attack wounding one person might not make it into a national newspaper but might be recorded by a governmental agency in charge of keeping track of all violent actions.

[102] The TKB website, when it still existed, allowed to search the dataset by casualties. The lowest casualty group was comprising acts that had injured 1 to 5 people, hence the threshold chosen for this project.

> equally widespread support within the general population, and last but not least a support from most media outlets.

This conceptual definition refers to a massive rally amongst the political elite, the media, and public opinion. Yet it does not help determine what qualifies as a rally within the political elite. Thus, what we need here is an operational definition for rallies within the elite. For the purpose of this study a rally around the flag within the political elite is said to exist,

> whenever the mainstream opposition parties support the government. This support can either be explicit – i.e. support made public by a spokesperson or a leading figure of the opposition – or implicit – i.e. silence implies consent. A rally involves at best a truce in party politics – i.e. total support of the government – and at the very least an absence of criticism on the part of mainstream parties as far as the government's reaction to the act of terror and to the issue of national security is concerned.[103] In order to constitute a rally, this support must last a minimum of five consecutive days following the terrorist event.

I assume like Richard Brody (1991) that silence implies consent. In other words, if the elite remains silent I consider it as an instance of rallying.[104] Silence might not have the symbolic weight of a public declaration of support but nonetheless it indicates that the opposition does not intend to argue with the government. Silence might be motivated by reluctant support or a need to appear loyal, but it is still a sign of support. Parties always have the choice to remain critical and signal their disagreement with how the government handles national security related issues such as terrorism. The absence of criticism, that is a deliberate decision by the opposition to stay mute and to break from traditional partisan politics, is in itself sufficiently unusual to be considered as a show of support. Although different from a jingoistic rally, silence represents consent, a sign that a common purpose,

---

[103] In the aftermath of a terrorist attack, the issue of national security is often so prevalent that other issues are temporarily disregarded.
[104] In that case the newspaper reports the act but the elite does not react publicly to it.

in that case the national interest, must prevail.[105] Even in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 not all members of the US Congress chose to voice their support of the government, many simply decided to stay mute and avoid partisan politics for the good of the country. In other words, regardless of whether the support is explicit or implicit, what really matters is that political criticism is subdued.[106]

Put somewhat differently then, there is a rally when none of the mainstream opposition party either through a leading figure or spokesperson blames the government for the act or makes public criticism of its handling of national security. Furthermore the decision to focus on the first five days following an act is not arbitrary. Indeed, preliminary research suggested that elites react very soon after the event, sometimes only a few hours after the attack took place, and that the bulk of reactions to an act of terror appear during the five-day period that follows the act. Important terrorist acts will typically fall off the front pages of the newspapers by the third of fourth day. By the fifth day, parties have taken a stance and are either supporting the government or being critical. Of course rallies have an expiry date but studying the duration of rallies is not the objective of this thesis. [107]

For each act recorded in the database I carried out a content analysis of elite discourse. I looked at how mainstream political parties reacted and determined whether

---

[105] The tenth edition of the *Oxford Dictionary* offers the following definition of a rally: bring or come together for concerted action.

[106] Similarly Cunningham (1991, 245) in his book on British government policy in Ulster defines bipartisanship (a phenomenon akin to a rally) as “the tendency of the party in opposition to support or, slightly differently, not to oppose the policy of the government towards Ireland”.

[107] The reaction might evolve afterwards notably in light of new information, but what we are looking at in this study is how elites behave in the heat of the moment. A number of studies have been looking beyond the initial stages of crises and looked at the duration of rallies: Brody (1991), Callaghan and Virtanen (1993), Lian and Oneal (1993), Kam and Ramos (2008) to name a few. Kam and Ramos (2008) suggest that at first patriotism and national in-group identification triggers and maintains support for the president, but that eventually partisan identities will give rise to criticism of the president.

there was criticism from the opposition, expressed either by a spokesperson or a leading figure of the party (isolated criticisms from backbenchers where not taken into account). In other words, I have not been looking for explicit declaration of support but for explicit criticism. Furthermore, since the present study deals exclusively with the reaction of political elites at the national or federal level (and their support or lack thereof for the government), criticisms voiced by political representatives at the provincial, regional or local level were not taken into account. Criticisms from trade union leaders were not taken into consideration either.[108]

In order to have an idea of how the mainstream opposition behaves in the absence of terrorism, I have also compiled the reactions of political elites five days prior each of the terrorist attack included in the database. The proximity to the terrorist act means that all variables in the comparison group (except for those related to the terrorist act itself) are the same. Yet one should remember that this thesis is concerned primarily with party behaviour during critical times. Thus this compilation of reactions prior to a terrorist attack (or what I have called elsewhere ordinary times) is just meant to give some kind of benchmark and allow some simple comparison. The dynamics of behaviour are likely to be very different. For instance, silence in the five-day period prior to the act does not have necessarily the same meaning as during the five-day period after the act. Perhaps the silence of the elite before the attack is due to some other reason (e.g. summer break in

[108] The decision to use a dichotomous variable (support or no support) rather than a gradation in support (e.g. strong support, mild support, weak support, no support, or strong criticisms, mild criticisms, etc.) was a consequence of a lack of detailed information on the reaction of political elites. In order to create such a scale I would need to have access to the reactions of many more front-benchers and backbenchers. An ideal system would be one were the reaction of each member of parliament, member of government, and other prominent politicians would be coded. An instance of strong support would be one were 95% of respondents support the government over a certain period of time. Ideally such a gradation system would allow to give more weight to prominent figures such as ministers and less to backbenchers. Needless to say that such an endeavour, if at all possible, would necessitate far more time and resources than what was available for this thesis.

parliament, absence of events worth debating about, etc.). Whereas in the aftermath of a terrorist act the issue of national security is likely to be prevalent (sometimes to the point of being the only issue discussed by the elite), during a 'normal' period national security will be just one issue amongst many others.

4.5. Treatment of data

The database is used to conduct quantitative analyses and produce both descriptive and inferential statistics. I then use a qualitative approach to analyze cases that diverge from an ideal-type magnitude-repetition model – i.e. cases when the elite responds unexpectedly to the two main variables (magnitude and repetition).

4.5.1. The quantitative analysis

The extent of the rallying phenomenon during terrorist crises (hypothesis 1), both overall and in each of the five countries under consideration, is measured through univariate descriptive statistics. The other hypotheses (with the exception of hypothesis 7 on radical parties) are tested using univariate descriptive statistics on the effects of the following variables: magnitude (hypothesis 2), repetition (hypothesis 3), target (hypothesis 4), perpetrators (hypothesis 5), right-wing/left-wing (hypothesis 6), and 9/11 (hypothesis 8).

The hypotheses are then tested jointly using the following logistic regression model to assess the likelihood of witnessing a rally – i.e. that of having no criticism towards the government – in the five days following the attacks:

$\text{Log}(p/(1-p)) = \alpha + \beta_1 * First5Attacks + \beta_2 * Magnitude + \beta_3 * Pact + \beta_4 * Crisis + \beta_5 * Domestic + \beta_6 * Post9/11 + \beta_7 * France + \beta_8 * UK + \beta_9 * Spain$

where p is the probability of having a rally.

Variables used in the model include:

First 5 Attacks, which takes value 1 if the attack is one of the first five under the current government, and 0 otherwise; [109]

Magnitude, which takes value 0 if there were two deaths or less involved in the attack (but at least six injured) and value 1 if there were three fatalities or more; [110]

Pact (Spain), which takes value 1 if the attack took place in Spain during the period covered by the Spanish antiterrorist pact – i.e. between December 2000 and March 2004 – and 0 otherwise;[111]

Crisis, which takes value 1 if the attack happened during a period of diplomatic crisis or military conflict for the country under attack, and 0 otherwise;[112]

Domestic, a variable taking value 1 if the group claiming the attack (or perceived as having perpetrated the attack) is a domestic group, and 0 otherwise. Domestic groups

[109] Since the original RAND dataset for the period 1990 to 1997 does not include all the domestic acts (only those related to international terrorism are included) I created an alternative repetition variable that also accounts for other domestic acts over the period 1990-1998. These data, which are only added for the repetition variable, were imported from the Global Terrorism Database. Two international acts that occurred in Germany did not appear in the TKB and were thus added. Of course, the definition used by GTB is more inclusive than the one used by TKB but broadly compatible.

[110] The database does not take into consideration acts of terror that have caused no fatalities and less than six injuries. A preliminary survey of these low magnitude incidents in the newspapers used to determine the reaction indicates that they simply do not register on the media radar and do not elicit any reaction from the political elite. Including these acts would have brought no valuable information and would have lengthened considerably the process of data gathering.

[111] The conservative PP governed during the period covered by the pact. In December 2000, the two main political parties (the conservative PP in government since 1995, and the socialist PSOE) signed an antiterrorist pact whereby they agreed to support one another in the fight against terror. 'El pacto de Estado por la libertades y contra el terrorismo' was announced on 9 December 2000, and signed four days later. *El Pais* December 9, 2000, and December 13, 2000.

[112] Crises include notably the First Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm), the NATO operation in Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

encountered in the dataset are almost exclusively separatist groups; they include the IRA, INLA, RIRA, CIRA (groups which operated mostly in the UK), ETA (operating mostly in Spain), as well as Corsican, Basque and Breton separatist groups (operating in France); and

Post 9/11, which takes value 1 if the attack took place before September 11, 2001, and 0 if it took place afterwards (September 12, 2001, or after).

I use binary controls for the three countries for which sufficient data is available:

France takes value 1 if the attack took place in France and value 0 otherwise;

Spain takes value 1 if the attack took place in Spain and value 0 otherwise; and

UK takes value 1 if the attack took place in the UK and value 0 otherwise.

4.5.2. The qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis will focus on two sets of cases: deviant or outlier cases, that is cases where the reaction of the mainstream political elite did not conform to expectation with regard to magnitude and repetition; and cases outside of the period studied in the quantitative chapter. This approach makes it possible to uncover other variables. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett remind us that "statistical analysis can help identify outliers or deviant cases, and case studies can then investigate why these cases are deviant, perhaps leading to the identification of omitted variables" (2005, 35). In order to determine which cases are deviant I create an ideal-type model based on the magnitude-repetition model presented earlier on, and which rests on the assumption that the behaviour of mainstream political elites depends primarily on two variables – i.e. magnitude and repetition of terrorist acts. It implies four different scenarios (see table I):

1. Low repetition and high magnitude: the opposition is expected to **support** the government.
2. High repetition and high magnitude: the opposition is expected to offer **no support** to the government.
3. High repetition and low magnitude: the opposition is **likely to support** the government though the high repetition might give it an incentive to criticize the government particularly since the number of casualties is low.
4. Low repetition and low magnitude: **no reaction** from the opposition or from the government is expected, and the media are unlikely to report the act. In other words, the terrorist act simply does not register on the radar.

Table I. The impact of magnitude and repetition on the reaction of the opposition

	Low Magnitude	High Magnitude
High Repetition	Likely Support	No Support
Low Repetition	No Reaction	Support

Of course this ideal-type model is not a carbon copy of the reality but rather a simplified schematic of how mainstream political elites are likely to react in the event of a terrorist attack.

Of particular interest in this chapter are instances that do not conform to the ideal-type model (e.g. event X scored high in terms of magnitude and low in terms of repetition but failed to trigger a rally). In order to determine which cases conform or do not

conform to the ideal-type model, I assign a threshold for the magnitude variable and another one for the repetition variable. I rely here on the thresholds used in the logistic regression presented above whereby:

- Two fatalities or less is considered an instance of *low magnitude*, whereas three fatalities or more is considered a case of *high magnitude*.
- When five acts in a row or more occurred before the act being considered for analysis we consider it an instance of *high repetition*, and if four acts or less occurred before we consider it an instance of *low repetition*.

Obviously the division is slightly arbitrary but I need a cut off point.

The qualitative analysis and case studies serve many purposes. As pointed out by George and Bennett, case studies have the "ability to accommodate complex causal relations such as equifinality, complex interactions effects, and path dependency" (2005, 22). A qualitative approach makes it possible to analyze the effect of other variables which could not be tested in the in the statistical analysis. Furthermore a qualitative approach, particularly the use of detailed case studies, makes it possible to analyze the interaction between government and opposition and the evolution of their attitude, and assess the extent of the rally (e.g. public support from the opposition or silent support). This approach makes it also possible to broaden the range of observations by analyzing the reaction to events outside the selected period. Historical depth can provide useful insights, particularly if there is an element of path dependency. Finally, through this approach, I intend to test hypothesis seven and address the role of radical elites. In the end, the qualitative analysis might confirm most of the statistical results, but it might also nuance some of these results.

This analysis will focus exclusively on France and its experience with terrorism from 1980 to 2006. The decision to select France rather than any of the other four countries studied previously is three-fold: France has had by far the most wide-ranging experience in terms of diversity of terrorist groups (revolutionaries, separatists, religious, etc.); the ideological cleavage between right-wing and left-wing parties is broad; and radical parties and elites are a force to reckon with.

Finally, the qualitative analysis is based on a larger pool of newspapers and magazines, namely: *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Le Figaro*, *Les Échos*, *L'Humanité*, *Le Parisien*, *Le Journal du dimanche*, *L'Express*, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

Conclusion

The dual methodological approach advocated in this chapter is not meant to compare the merits of the quantitative method versus those of the qualitative method. On the contrary, both methods are viewed as complementary. Statistics can suggest trends in behaviour, evaluate the explanatory power of variables, and confirm or refute certain postulated relationships. The qualitative approach, as envisaged in this thesis, is meant to uncover other explanatory variables, analyze complex processes rather than just end results, and evaluate the validity of hypotheses that could not be tested using statistics (I refer here in particular to the behaviour of radical elites).

Chapter 5

Quantitative Analysis

"The powers in charge keep us in a perpetual state of fear, keep us in a continuous stampede of patriotic fervor with the cry of grave national emergency. Always there has been some terrible evil to gobble us up if we did not blindly rally behind it by furnishing the exorbitant sums demanded. Yet, in retrospect, these disasters seem never to have happened, seem never to have been quite real" (General Douglas MacArthur)

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to expose patterns in the behaviour of elites during terrorist crises. In particular, I look at the rallying rate across countries and at the univariate effects of the magnitude and repetition variables. I also examine a host of secondary variables such as the ideological position of the party in power – i.e. right-wing or left-wing – the 9/11 effect, and the impact of international and domestic terrorism. Then, I analyze all variables jointly through a logistic regression and summarize the sensitivity analyses that were used to test the robustness of the model. Finally, I provide a specific analysis for each of the five countries selected for this study.

5.1. Results

The population of the dataset amounts to 192 cases of terrorist attacks.[113] A number of terrorist acts (22 percent) do not register on the media radar and do not initiate any public reactions on the part of the spokespeople or leaders of the mainstream parties (see table II). Part of the explanation for the lack of interest (and of coverage) for certain terrorist acts lies with their magnitude in terms of fatalities. Terrorist acts with low human costs are unlikely to elicit much interest from media outlets, unless they involve public figures such as presidents or members of governments in which case they might become more 'newsworthy'. On the other hand, acts causing three fatalities or more in this database are almost never ignored by the selected newspapers (table III). Another explanation points to the type of target. Attacks against state targets are reported 91 percent of the time by

[113] However due to the unavailability of information on the reaction of German political elites between 1990 and January 1993, this figure is down to 181.

our newspapers, but only 72 percent of the time for attacks on other targets.[114] Finally, country specific reporting attitudes may also play a role. France and Spain exhibit larger reporting numbers with respectively 89 percent and 98 percent of all terrorist acts reported in the selected newspapers. In comparison, rates in the other three countries range from 55 percent for Germany and 57 percent for the United Kingdom to 68 percent for the United States. To some extent the high reporting rate for Spain is to be expected in a country where terrorism, particularly Basque-related terrorism, has been at the centre stage of public life for the better part of the last 40 years. Germany on the other hand has been relatively spared in the last 15 years by the horror of terrorism, consequently its media might have been less interested in pursuing terrorist-related stories.

As postulated in hypothesis 1, political elites tend not to criticize their government in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. More precisely, table II shows that following reported acts of terrorism, political elites have been critical of the government only 16 percent of the time (or rallied 84 percent of the time). It is worth reminding that this 84 percent rallying rate includes cases when the elite remained silent throughout the five-day period under scrutiny and did not explicitly support the government. As argued previously, silence might not imply a massive and enthusiastic rally, yet by putting its criticisms on hold the opposition does indicate that it supports the government. This point is made more apparent by the striking difference between the behaviour of the political elite after the attack and before the attack. Table II suggests that in ‘normal’ periods (during the five-day period before the terrorist act) political elites in the five countries criticize the government 67 percent of the time (compared to 16 percent after an attack). Prior to attacks, the elite is particularly critical in the United States (82 percent) and Spain (76

[114] This difference is significant at the 5 percent level.

percent), whereas it is relatively less disapproving in the United Kingdom (53 percent). This suggests that the advent of terrorism has an impact on the attitude of parties. Yet as I remarked in chapter four, these are two very distinctive periods. The comparison provides merely an idea of the contrast. But it is inherently difficult to compare an ‘ordinary’ period to an ‘extraordinary’ one. The rules of behaviour are not the same, and the nature of the political debate itself changes dramatically. Thus I am reluctant to read too much in this statistical difference.

Table II also reveals that in the aftermath of a terrorist act, French and Spanish political elites tend to rally relatively less often than their German, American and British counterparts with respectively 22 percent and 21 percent of reported attacks with criticisms. The context might account for this difference. Spain and France are experiencing more reported acts of terror than Germany or the United States. As a result, opposition parties in those two countries might be less patient towards their government.[115] The fact that the French and Spanish presses cover terrorism so abundantly makes it also easier for political elites in these two countries to be more critical (this issue never vanishes, making it easier for elites to discuss it).

[115] The UK is dealing with a number of reported attacks similar to that of France, but most of them tend to occur in Ulster rather than in the streets of London or Manchester. Additionally, unlike what takes place in France the British political elite usually relies on a bipartisan approach to tackle terrorism.

Table II. The rallying phenomenon

Country	Total Number of Attacks	Criticism Prior to the Attack (%)[1]	Number of Newspaper[2] Reported[3] Attacks (%)		Number of Reported Attacks With Criticism (%)	
France	36	64%	32	89%	7	22%
Germany [4]	11	73%	6	55%	0	0%
Spain	59	76%	58	98%	12	21%
Spain - no Pact [5]	33	82%	32	97%	11	34%
United Kingdom	53	53%	30	57%	2	7%
United States	22	82%	15	68%	1	7%
Total [6]	181	67%	141	78%	22	16%

Notes:
1 For each terrorist act, the occurrence of criticism from mainstream parties was evaluated during the 5 days preceding the attack for comparison purposes.
2 Newspapers used to define media reporting are *Le Monde* for France, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* for Germany, *El Pais* for Spain, *The Times* for the United Kingdom, and *The New York Times* for the United States of America.
3 Factors affecting newspapers reporting include targets (state targets are reported 91% of times versus 72% for other targets) and size of the attacks (acts with more than 2 victims are almost never ignored in the media in the
4 The sample for Germany is restricted to attacks taking place after January 1, 1993 due to limited public access to newspaper archives.
5 Spain - no Pact uses only attacks occuring outside of the antiterrorist pact period (December 2000 to March 2004) during which governing and opposing parties (respectively PP and PSOE) agreed to present a unified front towards terrorists.
6 Total statistics use France, Germany, Spain, UK and USA.

5.1.1. The magnitude effect

Findings are supportive of hypothesis 2. The magnitude of the terrorist act (i.e. number of fatalities) plays an important role in the reaction of the mainstream political elite. Essentially the more fatalities there are, the more rallies and fewer criticisms there are. Table III shows that 87 percent of all terror acts causing three fatalities or more trigger a rally in support of the government, whereas amongst attacks causing less than three fatalities, only 58 percent elicit support for the government. Moreover, giving credence to the motto ‘if it bleeds it leads’, 28 percent of attacks causing less than three deaths are ignored by the media altogether, whereas only 7 percent of terrorist acts causing three fatalities or more are not reported by the media. Amongst media reported attacks only, 80 percent of the attacks with less than three fatalities resulted in rallies, versus 93 percent

for attacks causing three deaths or more. It should also be noted that most attacks are of a relatively low magnitude (mean and median by countries).

Table III. The magnitude effect

Number[1] of Attacks (%)	Less Than 3 Fatalities		3 Fatalities or More	
Attacks not Reported in the Press	39	(28%)	1	(7%)
Attacks Without Rally - Criticism	20	(14%)	1	(7%)
Attacks With Rally - no Criticism	81	(58%)	13	(87%)
Total	140	(100%)	15	(100%)

Notes:

[1] Attacks in Spain during the antiterrorist pact period are not included in this analysis in order to control for the artificial rallying effect of the pact.

5.1.2. The repetition effect

As proposed in hypothesis 3, terrorism can represent a severe test of resilience for a population, but it is also very much a test of aptitude for those in government. If the government cannot maintain order and security, the political opposition will grow impatient and increasingly critical. Table IV supports this hypothesis and indicates that following the first three terrorist acts, opposition parties have always supported their government (100 percent rallying rate), but that they were less inclined to do so when the acts kept on repeating themselves. After attack number 8 and beyond that, the rallying rate drops to 75 percent. This suggests that the opposition is monitoring the government's performance and success in the fight against terror. The repetition of attacks makes it possible for an opposition party to criticize its government without having to fear too much about being labelled as disloyal to its country.

Table IV. The repetition effect

Frequency of Attacks [1]	0-3	4-7	8 or more
Attacks Leading to Rallies / Total Number of Attacks [2]	28 / 28	17 / 20	48 / 64
Percentage of Rallies	100%	85%	75%

Notes:

[1] Number of attacks under the same government (and same mandate).

[2] Attacks in Spain during the antiterroristpact period are not included in this analysis in order to control for the artificial rallying effect of the pact.

5.1.3. The target effect

Findings do not support hypothesis 4. The bull's-eye has been placed on representatives of the state in 31 percent of the cases (see table V). However, contrary to expectation, aggregate data for the five countries do not seem to indicate that more rallies occur when the state is targeted by the terrorists. On the contrary, the rallying rate is at 70 percent when the state is hit and at 86 percent when other targets are struck. Hypothesis 4 still holds for France and the United States where attacks on symbols of the state trigger more rallies (respectively 83 percent and 100 percent) than attacks on other targets (77 percent and 92 percent). This result might not be surprising since France is the embodiment of a centralized state. One would expect French political elites to strongly condemn attacks on its symbols or representatives, or at the very least to refrain from criticizing those in charge of the state. However, the United States do not exactly share this Jacobin tradition and yet rally massively around their leaders when the state is targeted.[116]

[116] A caveat must be introduced here as the quantity of observations for the USA is fairly limited in this respect.

Table V. The target effect

Country	Total Number of Attacks	Number of Attacks with State[1] Targets (%)		% Reported Attacks With Rally	
				State Targets	Other Targets
France	36	7	19%	83%	77%
Germany[2]	22	3	14%	N/A	100%
Spain	59	38	64%	78%	81%
Spain - no Pact[3]	33	20	61%	58%	77%
United Kingdom	9	1	11%	100%	100%
United Kingdom - Ulster	44	7	16%	75%	95%
United States	22	3	14%	100%	92%
Total[4]	192	59	31%	70%	86%

Notes:

[1] State targets include government, military and police targets.

[2] Information regarding rallies is limited to the eleven attacks taking place after January 1, 1993 for the Germany sample due to limited public access to newspaper archives. The total number of attacks and number of attacks with state targets however include all attacks in Germany during the period covered (1990-2006).

[3] Spain - no Pact uses only attacks occuring outside of the antiterrorist pact period (December 2000 to March 2004) during which governing and opposing parties (respectively PP and PSOE) agreed to present a unified front towards terrorists.

[4] Total statistics use France, Germany, Spain, UK, UK - Ulster and the USA for total number of attacks and number of attacks with state targets. Statistics regarding percentages of attacks with rallies however use only attacks outside of the pact period in Spain to control for its rallying effect.

5.1.4. The right-wing effect

Findings are supportive of hypothesis 6. Over the period 1990-2006, right-wing parties and left-wing parties were in government almost an equal number of years. [117] In the database, 55 percent of the attacks occurred under a right-wing government. Overall, right-wing parties did not benefit from more rallies (or less criticisms) when they were in government (see table VI). In fact, the rallying rate for the Right and the Left is remarkably similar. The rallying rate around right-wing governments was 84 percent, one percent point less than for left-wing governments. However, one should be careful in interpreting these overall results as the number of attacks under right-wing governments

[117] Left and Right have been in power 8 years each in France, Spain, Germany and the United States. In the United Kingdom the Left has been in power slightly longer (9 years) than the Right (7 years).

differs markedly from one country to the other. In addition, right-wing parties in France, the United Kingdom and the United States benefited from more rallies than their left-wing counterparts, whereas in Spain the Left benefited from more rallies.

Table VI. The right-wing effect

Country	Total Number of Attacks	Number of Attacks with Right-Wing Party[1] in Government (%)		% Reported Attacks With Rally	
				Right	Left
France	36	18	50%	93%	67%
Germany[2]	11	9	82%	100%	100%
Spain	59	54	92%	77%	100%
Spain - no Pact[3]	33	28	85%	59%	100%
United Kingdom[4]	53	7	13%	100%	93%
United States	22	11	50%	100%	88%
Total[5]	181	99	55%	84%	85%

Notes:
[1] Right-wing Parties include RPR (and then UMP) and UDF for France; CDU-CSU for Germany; PP for Spain; the Conservative Party for the United Kingdom; and the Republican Party for the United States.
[2] Information regarding rallies is limited to the eleven attacks taking place after January 1, 1993 for the Germany sample due to limited public access to newspaper archives.
[3] Spain - no Pact uses only attacks occuring outside of the antiterrorist pact.
[4] Ulster included.
[5] Total statistics use France, Germany, Spain, UK and the USA for total number of attacks and number of attacks with state targets. Statistics regarding percentages of attacks with rallies however use only attacks outside of the pact period in Spain to control for its rallying effect.

5.1.5. The 9/11 effect

Findings are also supportive of hypothesis 8. The average yearly number of attacks prior to 9/11 was 23.5 (see table VII).[118] In the period that followed 9/11, the average number of attacks for our five countries dropped to 8.2 per year. More importantly still, the rallying rate followed a different trend. In the period before 9/11 there were 77 percent of reported attacks with rally, whereas in the period that followed 9/11 the percentage of rallying increased to 94 percent. This trend is particularly impressive for France and

[118] The 9/11 effect is based on observations between 1998 and 10 September 2001 for the first part (to avoid confounding due to the higher proportion of international attacks in the database prior to 1998), and 11 September 2001 and 2006 for the second part.

Spain where the rallying rate increased by respectively 45 points and 16 points. These figures suggest that political elites felt more compelled to unite after the events of 9/11. Of course, 9/11 was unique by most accounts but these results seem to indicate that the effects of large terrorist crises can cross borders. Both the magnitude of this attack and the perceived proximity of the targeted country and its victims (culturally if not necessarily geographically) probably played an essential role.

Table VII. The 9/11 effect

Country	Total Number of Attacks (>1998)	Average Yearly Number of Attacks		% Reported Attacks With Rally	
		Pre 9/11[1]	Post 9/11	Pre 9/11[1]	Post 9/11
France	17	2.9	1.1	55%	100%
Germany[2]	2	0.5	0.0	100%	100%
Spain	57	10.1	3.6	73%	89%
Spain - no Pact[3]	31	6.1	1.5	55%	88%
United Kingdom	2	0.3	0.2	100%	100%
United Kingdom - Ulster	41	8.3	1.9	90%	100%
United States	12	1.3	1.3	100%	100%
Total[4]	131	23.5	8.2	77%	94%

Notes:

1 The pre 9/11 statistics are based on the 1998-2001 period to avoid confounding due to the higher proportion of international attacks in the database prior to 1998. The post 9/11 statistics correspond to the 2001-2006 period.

2 Information regarding rallies is limited to the eleven attacks taking place after January 1, 1993, for the Germany sample due to limited public access to newspaper archives.

3 Spain - no Pact uses only attacks occuring outside of the antiterrorist pact period.

4 Total statistics use France, Germany, Spain, U.K., U.K - Ulster and the U.S.A. for total number of attacks and number of attacks with state targets. Statistics regarding percentages of attacks with rallies however use only attacks outside of the pact period to control for the rallying effect of the pact.

5.1.6. The international terrorism effect

Table VIII suggests, as hypothesized, that political elites are less critical of their government when the attack is perpetrated by a group originating from abroad than when the act is caused by a domestic group. As I pointed out before, a foreign threat is likely to trigger the same defensive mechanism regardless of whether the threat is military, diplomatic or terrorist. The fact that attacks perpetrated by terrorists originating from

within generate more criticism could also be linked to the duration of the crisis. Domestic groups have often been carrying out their terror campaign for longer periods than groups from the outside. Thus, cases of domestic terrorism (particularly for groups whose *raison d'être* is secession of part of the national territory) can be perceived by members of the elite as security issues that have been dragging on for too long and have not been adequately managed by those in government.

Table VIII. The international terrorism effect

Number[1] of Attacks (%)	Domestic		International		Unknown	
Attacks not Reported in the Press	11	(14%)	3	(14%)	26	(49%)
Attacks Without Rally - Criticism	17	(21%)	2	(9%)	2	(4%)
Attacks With Rally - no Criticism	52	(65%)	17	(77%)	25	(47%)
Total	80	(100%)	22	(100%)	53	(100%)

Notes:

[1] Attacks in Spain during the antiterrorist pact period are not included in this analysis in order to control for the artificial rallying effect of the pact.

5.2. Multivariate analysis

A logistic regression is used to jointly model the impact of the repetition and magnitude of attacks on the likelihood of witnessing a rally – i.e. that of having no open criticism towards the government – in the five days following these attacks. This analysis also controls for the unifying effect of the Spanish pact, whereby the two main parties pledged to support one another in the fight against terrorism, and that of diplomatic and military crises. The type of group perpetrating the attack is also accounted for, thereby providing a control for domestic terrorism. I also include controls for the effect of 9/11, and country effects.

Results shown in table IX confirm that the repetition of acts significantly increases the chances of open criticism towards the government regardless of the magnitude.[119] For events taking place after the initial five, probability of dissention are increased by roughly 22 percentage points compared to the first five events.

The magnitude of the act is, as expected, a unifying factor. As acts cause more victims, rallies are more likely to be observed. An attack causing three fatalities or more translates into an approximate 16 percentage points increase in the probability of witnessing a rally compared to attacks with two fatalities or less.

The unifying effect of the Spanish pact is important and statistically significant, as one would expect. Acts taking place in Spain during the corresponding period result in a probability of open criticism that is reduced by more than 21 percentage points compared to acts observed during regular times.

The probability of rally is 15 percent less when the group claiming the act is a domestic group. Diplomatic or military crises, as well as the 9/11 effect are not statistically significantly correlated with the probability of a rally, although both coefficients are positive as expected.

Various robustness checks were performed. Results remained qualitatively the same for potential alternate specifications of the model, including removing country controls, restricting the time period and varying the cut-off points for the magnitude and repetition variables. Conclusions were also stable when removing controls that were not statistically significant, or adding a control variable indicating whether the government

[119] Since the original TKB dataset did not include all domestic incidents, observations from the START database (GTD) were used to measure more accurately the number of events (domestic and international) taking place over a given period of time.

was criticized in the five-day period preceding the attack (not statistically significant either).

Table IX. Factors affecting the probability of rally

Variable[1]	Parameter Estimate	Probability Change[2]	*p-value*
Intercept	1.48	-	0.27
First 5 Attacks	3.66	22.1%	0.003
Pact (Spain)	3.34	21.5%	0.004
Magnitude	1.6	16.0%	0.045
Domestic	-1.9	-15.4%	0.03
Post 9/11	1.23	9.9%	0.24
Crisis	0.22	2.0%	0.89
France	-1.61	-16.2%	0.21
UK	1.3	10.7%	0.34
Spain	-1.21	-11.9%	0.32

Notes:

[1] The repetition variable (First 5 Attacks) takes value 1 if the attack was one of the first 5 and value 0 if the attack was number 6 or more. The pact (Spain) variable takes value 1 if there was a pact and value 0 if there was no pact. The magnitude variable takes value 0 if there were 2 deaths or less involved in the attack (but at least 6 injured) and value 1 if there were 3 fatalities or more. The domestic variable takes value 1 if the attack was perpetrated by a domestic group and value 0 otherwise. The post 9/11 variable takes value 1 if the attack took place before 9/11 and value 0 if it took place afterwards. The crisis variable takes value 1 if there was a major military or diplomatic crisis at the time of the attack and value 0 otherwise. The France variable takes value 1 if the attack took place in France and value 0 otherwise. The UK variable takes value 1 if the attack took place in the UK and value 0 otherwise. Finally, the Spain variable takes value 1 if the attack took place in Spain and value 0 otherwise.

[2] Changes in the probability of a rally are marginal effects calculated from the regression estimates by measuring the average simulated impact of a change in the relevant variable across all observations.

[3] N=141. Model fit: Likelihood ratio test was statistically significant at the 0.0001 level. R-Square=24%. Adjusted (Nagelkerke) R-Square=42%. C Statistic=87%.

5.3. Country specific reports

5.3.1. Spain

Of the five countries included in this study, Spain is the one with the highest number of recorded events, the highest percentage of reported events (2 percent of terror acts were not reported by *El Pais*), and the lowest rallying rate (66 percent). Even when including the period covered by the antiterrorist pact, whereby the PSOE (socialists) pledged to

support the conservative government (PP) in its fight against Basque terrorism, the overall rallying rate was just 79 percent.[120] Part of it has to do with the fact that terrorism has become an electoral issue over which the main parties try to gain the upper hand. The attempt by the conservative government of José Maria Aznar to blame ETA for the March 2004 bombings of commuter trains in Madrid just days before the legislative elections is a case in point.

Most attacks in Spain are directed at state targets, far more than in the other four countries (61 percent outside the pact compared to 19 percent in France and even less elsewhere). This is of course due in large part to ETA, which traditionally targets people representing the Spanish state. The rallying rate following attacks against the state is the lowest (58 percent when there is no pact) of all five countries. Even during the period covered by the antiterrorist pact the rate was only 78 percent.

The Partido Popular (PP), which was in power for most of the acts included in the dataset, did not benefit from more rallies than the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), on the contrary. In fact, with a rallying rate of 59 percent outside of the pact, the PP had the lowest rallying rate of all right-wing parties in the study.

Finally like the other four countries, Spain experienced more rallies in the post 9/11 period (89 percent) than it did before (73 percent).

[120] The PSOE was in power until 1996 when the PP took over. The PSOE returned to power in 2004.

5.3.2. France

France has with Spain the lowest rallying rate (78 percent). Although it has experienced less terror acts between 1990 and 2006 than Spain or the United Kingdom, France has been targeted by a more diverse range of terror groups than her two European neighbours. The French political elite has been particularly prompt to rally when symbols of the state were targeted (83 percent).[121]

The right-wing effect is particularly strong in France. The French Right and the French Left have experienced the exact same number of attacks when in power but right-wing governments have enjoyed far more rallies than their left-wing counterparts (93 percent of reported attacks with rally for the Right; 67 percent for the Left). To some extent this difference might be due to the perceived permissiveness of the Left and to the traditional ownership of security related issues by right-wing parties.[122]

Finally the 9/11 effect has been especially impressive in France with a rallying rate going up from 55 percent prior to 9/11 to 100 percent afterwards.

5.3.3. Germany

Terrorist activities since 1990 have been less intense in Germany than in any of the other four countries included in this study. With the exception of a 1996 arson attack on a refugees hostel in Lübeck, which killed 10 and injured another 38, most attacks claimed two fatalities or less (many causing only injuries). Most of these terrorist acts were either

[121] The Socialist party (PS) was in power until 1993 when the right-wing UDF and RPR took over. In 1997 a left-wing coalition led by the PS was elected and remained in power until 2002. The right-wing UMP (previously RPR) has governed since then.
[122] The French case is covered extensively in the next chapter.

racially motivated or perpetrated by people with no clear political cause (except for the Kurdish activists) and were as such borderline cases. Faced with low intensity terrorism with sometimes unclear messages, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* and the German political elite have usually ignored those attacks.[123] Only 55 percent of terrorist acts were reported, leading to a rallying rate of 100 percent. Overall, the small number of observations for Germany makes it difficult to establish patterns of behaviour.

5.3.4. The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has both the lowest percentage of reported events (less than 60 percent), and one of the highest rallying rate (93 percent). The fact that the opposition is rarely critical following attacks can be explained by the bipartisan approach to terrorism.[124] In other words, the relative agreement of the main parties on the aims and methods to deal with terrorists (mostly Ulster related terrorism) ensures a more or less constant support from the parliamentary opposition.

The Right (i.e. the Conservative Party) has benefited during its years in power from the complete support of the opposition (Labour and Liberal Democrats), whereas Labour has enjoyed a slightly lesser rallying rate (93 percent). Finally the post-9/11 period has witnessed an increase in the rallying rate (from 90 percent prior to 100 percent after).

---

[123] The CDU/CSU (right-wing) and its coalition partner – FDP (centre-right) – were in power from 1982 to 1998. The SPD (left-wing) and its coalition partner – Grüne (ecologist) – governed from 1998 to 2005. After the 2005 election a grand coalition (CDU-SPD) took over.

[124] See notably Cunningham (2001). The Conservative Party was in power until 1997 whereupon the Labour Party took over.

5.3.5. The United States of America

Despite the horrific events of 9/11, terrorist attacks are rare, at least amongst those causing a minimum of six injured (the limit set for being recorded in the database). There were between 1990 and 2006 twenty-two attacks of at least this magnitude (the second lowest tally among countries selected for this study). These attacks were committed by a wide variety of groups ranging from Christian extremists to militias, white supremacists, and Islamic extremists.

Rallying around the president in times of international crises is common and so is rallying around the president during a terrorist crisis (93 percent of rallying rate). However, only 68 percent of terrorist attacks are reported in *The New York Times*. Democrats and Republicans were in power for the exact same number of terrorist events, however the latter benefited from a complete support (100 percent rallying rate), whereas the Democrats had an 88 percent rallying rate in their favour. Unfortunately, the 9/11 effect cannot be assessed as all terrorist acts taking place in the USA after 1998 triggered rallies.[125]

Conclusion

Rallying around the flag following terrorist acts is frequent among the political elites of the five countries covered by this study though more so in some (Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States) than in others (France and Spain). Overall, the results show that the repetition of acts of terror is a strong factor affecting parties' responses to

[125] Since the TKB database was incomplete with regards to domestic acts taking place prior to 1998, I chose to compare the period 1998-2001 to post-2001. The United States had a Republican administration until 1992 when the Democrats took over. The Republicans returned to power in 2000.

terrorist acts, as repetition is more likely to prompt criticism. The magnitude of the act is also associated with a rallying effect as larger attacks are more likely to result in a unified front across parties. Mainstream political elites are also more likely to rally when a group originating from abroad perpetrates the terrorist act. Finally, the existence of a formal anti-terrorist pact between the parties, such as the one that existed in Spain, increases the likelihood of rallies.

The results reported here are both limited in time (since 1990) and scope (five countries) but indicate at the very least a tendency among mainstream parties and elites to be less critical of the government in the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

The following qualitative study focuses on the dynamics of elite behaviour during terrorist crises in France, a country where parties rally comparatively less often than in the other four countries.

Chapter 6

Case Studies

"In the blinding flash of exploding bombs, the contours of political parties and the dividing lines of the class struggle disappear without a trace" (Leon Trotsky, *Bankruptcy*)

Introduction

The statistical analysis conducted in chapter five has revealed several important trends in the reaction of mainstream political parties to acts of terrorism. Two variables in particular stand out: the magnitude of the attack in terms of fatalities, and the number of terrorist acts prior to the act under consideration. Results suggest that mainstream opposition elites are less inclined to criticize their government in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack that claims many victims, as long as the occurrence of terror acts is limited. The statistical significance and explanatory power of these two variables fits well with the casualty hypothesis developed by other scholars with regards to public support for wars and military operations. Yet it does not mean that other influencing factors are not at work as well. For instance, an electoral context could shed light on the behaviour of political parties whose *raison d'être* is a priori to win elections, although the national interest might be the guiding principle in troubled periods.

The qualitative analysis presented in this chapter is an attempt to bring into consideration a host of other variables that could not be included in the statistical model. A qualitative analysis, and in particular case studies, makes it possible to detail the reactions of the political elite by analyzing the interaction between the government and its opposition. Indeed, the statistical analysis cannot capture the dynamic of the political debate, nor can it capture the extent of a rally. Are we in the presence of a weak support from the mainstream opposition parties, or do we have a full-blown jingoistic rally that has taken over the country as a whole? Admittedly, determining the extent of a rally is difficult if not impossible mainly because exhaustive data on the behaviour of all segments and sub-segments of society (general population, media, elites, etc.) are not

available. Yet one can try to understand the prevalent mood amongst the elite and within society. Finally, in this chapter the period under consideration is extended so as to shed light on how terrorism impacted elites prior to 1990. It is not at all unlikely that what occurred prior to 1990 – in terms of terrorist activities and responses to it or on other levels – determines to some extent the reaction of political elites afterwards.

Put somewhat differently, we acknowledge that the magnitude and repetition variables do not necessarily tell the whole story and that other variables can help make sense of parties' reactions in critical times.

In addition, in this chapter I look beyond the mainstream political elite to analyze the behaviour of fringe parties and radical elites. My interest in these parties is twofold. First of all these parties, which do not necessarily share the same objectives as their mainstream counterparts, might not necessarily support their government in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. Second of all, their behaviour might influence the reaction of mainstream parties.

The following analysis will focus on two sets of cases: selected cases from the period 1980-1990 (based on five criteria detailed further on), and deviant cases where the reaction of the mainstream political elite did not conform to theoretical expectations based on magnitude and repetition. In order to determine which cases do not conform to expectation I create an ideal-type model which I present in section four.

This chapter focuses exclusively on France. In many ways French experience with terrorism is unique, not because it is particularly different from that of the other four countries studied in this research, but rather because France has had over the last 70 years the most wide ranging experience of terrorism or terrorist related activities of them all:

state-terrorism under the Vichy Government (1940-1945); guerrilla warfare during the Second World War[126]; anti-colonial terrorism across its overseas empire, and notably during the Algerian War (1954-1962); the closely related ethnic-separatist terrorism; revolutionary terrorism; and finally the latest avatar, transnational terrorism particularly in its jihadist form.[127]

In addition, unlike the British with the IRA or the Spaniards with ETA, French experience with terrorism is not associated with a particular type of terror, let alone a particular terrorist organization. Equally important, terrorism has been recurrent without being a constant threat. France unlike Spain (or the United Kingdom in Ulster) has not faced an almost constant terror campaign for a prolonged period of time, nor does it have the same casualty rate as its Iberian neighbour. In other words, terrorism has not become an unending issue of the kind that could possibly distort the way party politics is conducted.

Finally, France with its wide array of political sensibilities provides the possibility to analyze the impact of variables such as the ideological divide between Left and Right, and the reaction of radical and fringe elites.

This chapter begins with an overview of the terrorist groups that have been active in France during the last 30 years. Section two gives a similar overview of French political parties over the same period of time. Section three presents an analysis of parties' reactions to terrorist attacks during the so-called *années de plomb* or years of

[126] I am not equating resistance to terrorism but merely pointing out that the experience of occupation could affect the way certain terrorist groups are perceived by the French political elite.

[127] Obviously many other types of terrorism have existed or still exist in France: reactionary terrorism most notably from the OAS (Organisation de l'armée secrète) during the later stages of the conflict in Algeria; but also ecoterrorism or cyberterrorism.

lead. Finally, section four analyses reactions to terrorist attacks during the period 1990-2006, and in particular cases that diverge from the ideal-type model.

6.1. Terrorism in France

Over the last four decades, three types of terrorist groups have been prevalent in France: separatists, revolutionaries, and 'international' terrorists.[128] The following sections aims at describing these groups and the threat they posed to the French state throughout their period of activities.

6.1.1. Separatists and autonomists

One of the most inexorable forms of terrorism against the French state has come from separatist or autonomist groups operating in Corsica, and on a smaller scale in the Basque Country, in Brittany, and in the overseas French territories.[129]

6.1.1.1. Corsican terrorism

First amongst separatist groups in terms of resilience and resources are the Corsican groups, many of which are splinter groups from the Front de Libération Nationale de la Corse (FLNC). Initially the first Corsican activists were autonomists seeking more land for local farmers, and opposing the development of mass tourism on the island. However,

[128] As of 2005 estimates were that 358 people were imprisoned in France for terrorist-related activities (Sanchez 2008). Among them 159 were Basque separatists, 76 were Corsican nationalists and 94 were Islamists.
[129] Of course the idea of more autonomy, let alone full-fledged independence, has always been anathema in a centralized country like France, even in the current post-Jacobin period.

early setbacks and heavy handed response from the authorities opened the door to more radical groups advocating the independence of Corsica through the use of force. The FLNC was formed in 1976 to claim back the Corsican territory from the French state and became thereafter the standard-bearer for all separatists. Their slogan 'la valise ou le cercueil' – the suitcase or the coffin – left no doubt as to what their intentions were.[130]

During its 'opening act' on May 5, 1976, the FLNC perpetrated 16 acts in one night. This type of operation also known as 'nuit bleue' would become a trademark for Corsican groups. Most of these attacks were aimed at administrative buildings, and private properties and resorts owned by 'continentals' – i.e. non-Corsicans. Targeted buildings were usually vacant at the time of the attacks and thus casualties were kept low. Yet there have been exceptions, particularly as far as representatives of the French state are concerned.[131] By the early 1980s the attacks had become almost daily or nightly routines. In 1982 Corsican terrorists perpetrated 800 attacks of which 99 in a single night. Although most operations were carried out on the island, the terrorists did venture on the mainland on a few occasions, most notably on May 31, 1979, when the FLNC struck 22 targets in Paris in one night.

In March 1992, the nationalists obtained around 25 percent at the local elections, yet most Corsicans were becoming disillusioned with the terrorist groups.[132] At first these groups had been seemingly fighting a battle for the Corsicans (more land for the locals,

---

[130] Quoted in *La Croix* January 15, 2008. Autonomists for their part remained opposed to the use of violence.

[131] On April 16, 1981 shortly after the arrival of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing at Ajaccio airport, an explosion killed one and injured 8 people. In 1983 the secretary general of the department of Haute-Corse was shot down by the FLNC.

[132] The separatist movement is also represented by political parties and associations, some of which act as legal representatives of the terrorist groups. Unione Naziunale regroups several parties among them Corsica Nazione Indipendente (independantists) and Partitu di a Nazione Corsa (autonomists) and has 8 seats in the current Assembly of Corsisa.

less resorts on the coast) but by the 1990s the difference between the nationalist struggle and outright banditry or vendetta had become particularly slim. The extortion, notably through the revolutionary tax, and the killings were conjuring up images of mafia-like organizations, and the worsening reputation of the island particularly abroad was putting the tourist industry in jeopardy.[133]

The assassination of Prefect Claude Erignac on February 6, 1998, served as a wake-up call for the population and the political elite both on the island and on the mainland. Shortly after the murder of Erignac, the government of socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin stepped up its efforts to reach a political solution. As a show of good will most clandestine nationalist organizations announced a cease-fire. In July 2000, the Assembly of Corsica approved the Jospin plan – known as the 'processus de Matignon' – to give the islanders more legislative power and promote the Corsican language. However, this plan provoked tensions notably within the Jospin-led government. By August 2000 Jean-Pierre Chevènement, Minister of Interior, had resigned accusing the government of threatening the integrity of the French state. Meanwhile, President Jacques Chirac opposed the transfer of legislative power to the Corsican assembly arguing that this was tantamount to transforming the unitary French Republic into a 'federation of regions'.[134] The plan was eventually accepted by the National Assembly following some heated debates.[135]

In a referendum held in July 2003, 51 percent of Corsicans chose to reject the proposed new territorial assembly – a plan which had received the support of all

---

[133] See Pizam and Smith (2000) for the impact of terrorism on tourism.
[134] During this period the right-wing Chirac shared the executive power with the left-wing Jospin (a period known as *cohabitation*). For a chronology of events see : www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/dossier/corse
[135] Eventually the Conseil Constitutionnel declared the transfer of legislative power unconstitutional.

nationalist groups – a clear sign that a majority of residents are opposed to more autonomy, let alone sovereignty. Figures on the number of Corsicans supporting full independence are hard to come by, but some have projected it to be around 20 percent of the island's population – about 200,000 of its inhabitants (Sanchez 2008).

Terrorism in Corsica never reached the intensity of terrorism in Ulster or in Spain. As a result, casualties have always been kept at a relatively low level. Still, as of 2003 the FLNC had been responsible for more that 10,000 acts, claiming in the process the lives of 220 people and injuring thousands more (Gregory 2003). The latest figures indicate that the number of incidents is decreasing (from 235 acts in 2006 to 180 in 2007).[136]

6.1.1.2. Basque terrorism

Though nowhere close in terms of operational capacity and political weight to the FLNC, let alone to their 'brothers in arms' of ETA south of the border, the Basque separatists of Iparretarrak (IK) – i.e. 'those of the north' – have been at times lethal and disruptive since their creation in 1973. Between 1975 and 1988, when its leader Philippe Bidard was arrested, Iparretarrak committed more than 50 attacks killing in the process four people – all from the police or *gendarmerie* – injuring hundreds more and damaging countless buildings and homes (Gregory 2003). Much like the Corsican separatists, IK targeted above all the French state and the tourist industry. Its objectives were essentially twofold: the defence of the Basque language, and the self-determination of the Basque people (Moruzzi and Boulaert 1988). Throughout the 1980s IK provided logistical support and refuge to members of ETA. However, ever since the arrests of its main leaders at the end

[136] *Le Figaro* January 9, 2008.

of the 1980s, the organization has been dormant, though it did resurface on occasion at the end of the 1990s and beginning of 2000.[137] Electorally, the independentists have never received more than 5 or 7 percent of the vote (Moruzzi and Boulaert 1988).

6.1.1.3. Breton terrorism

The least known of the main separatist organizations fighting against the French state is also the oldest. The Front de Libération de la Bretagne (FLB) was created in 1964 and its military branch, the Armée Révolutionnaire Bretonne (ARB), in 1971. The ARB never engaged in the sort of operation that could spill blood, and targeted instead mainly infrastructures – most notably the regional office of former Prime Minister Lionel Jospin in 1999. They did, however, unintentionally kill the manager of a MacDonald's restaurant in April 2000. As a response to this tragic event a number of prominent separatists asked the ARB to cease its activities. Denis Riou, an imprisoned activist, summed up the mood amongst separatists by declaring that if the people of Brittany have been led to fear the ARB then this organization has failed in its mission.[138] Until then the ARB had been supported by some and tolerated by others only in so far as it did not arm, let alone kill anyone.[139]

---

[137] In February 2007 Philippe Bidart was freed.
[138] *Le Monde* May 9, 2000.
[139] *L'Express* April, 27 2000.

6.1.1.4. Caribbean and New Caledonian terrorism

The decolonization process was completed by the early 1960s. Yet France retained a number of overseas territories – *les confettis de l'empire* – notably in the Caribbean and the Pacific where supporters of independence undertook terrorist activities in a last attempt to oust the French state. During the 1970s and early 1980s these groups carried out bombings in the Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, as well as in French Guyana. However, by the late 1980s police operations and political accommodations put an end to these activities (Gregory 2003). A similar process took place in New Caledonia where the Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS) was trying to loosen the French grip. The FLNKS, which benefited from the operational and financial backing of Libya and the Corsican FLNC through the 1980s, was able to obtain a political autonomy deal from Paris (Gregory 2003). Although less murderous and destructive than the FLNC, the FLNKS campaign ended in a bloodbath in 1988 following a hostage crisis that left 20 dead.

6.1.2. Revolutionaries and reactionaries

In parallel to the separatist threat, French authorities dealt from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s with a revolutionary brand of terrorism targeted mainly at the state and the capitalist establishment. This revolutionary terrorism had taken Western Europe by storm and became particularly intense in Italy and Germany with the infamous Brigate Rosse

(BR) in the former, and Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF) and Bewegung Zwei Juni (B2J) in the latter.[140]

In France, Action Directe (AD) became the standard-bearer for what was also known as Euroterrorism. Action Directe targeted as much the French state as its perceived ally, corporate business. Amongst its most infamous *fait d'armes* are the assassinations at point-blank of General René Audran in January 1985 and Renault Chairman George Besse in November 1986. Yet Action Directe's resources and manpower remained small in comparison to that of Brigate Rosse and the Rote Armee Fraktion. Despite this limited operational capacity, members of Action Directe were still able to strike at the headquarters of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and of Interpol. By 1981, AD had already split into four different groups operating under different names, some working on the international scene notably with the RAF or the Belgian Cellules Communistes Combattantes (CCC), some focusing on domestic targets. In the end, the movement proved far less durable than the Corsican FLNC. Particularly problematic was its social and intellectual depth, or lack thereof (Chaliand and Blin 2004). The organization never received the kind of support – albeit limited – enjoyed by other similar groups in Italy and Germany. Throughout the 1980s, Action Directe relied increasingly on bank robberies to finance its activities. By the end of the decade its last members were arrested and imprisoned, generally for life.

Reactionary and neo-fascist groups such as the Faisceaux Nationalistes Européens (FNE) and the Fédération d'Action Nationale et Européenne (FANE) have caused far less

[140] This was a worldwide groupuscular phenomenon with revolutionary chapters in the USA (the Weathermen and the Symbionese Liberation Army), in Japan (the Japanese Red Army), in Belgium (les Cellules Communistes Combattantes), etc. In Italy this brand of terrorism was responsible for 12,690 incidents between 1969 and 1980, killing 362 people and injuring another 4,524 (Townshend 2002).

nuisance, particularly in comparison to similar organizations in countries such as Italy and Germany where right-wing extremists have carried out particularly murderous operations.[141] Their actions have never reached the intensity of those of the Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS) during the Algerian war. Amateurish and logistically incapable of threatening the French state, these gangs have made the headlines by either desacralizing cemeteries (usually Jewish tombs) or setting fire to centers for North-African guest workers. More recently on July 14, 2004, Maxime Brunerie, a young neo-Nazi, attempted to kill President Chirac during a military parade on the Champs-Élysées.

6.1.3. International groups

France's colonial past as well as its meddling in international affairs, particularly in the Middle East, has been an unrelenting source of terrorist activities within its borders or against its interests and citizens abroad.

For much of the 1970s and 1980s, the most acute problem came from pro-Palestinian activists. No stranger to the Arab-Israeli conflict, France became a destination of choice for Arab terrorists particularly after de Gaulle resuscitated France's *politique arabe* in an attempt to reclaim the position of influence it had lost in the Middle East following the Suez crisis in 1956. Chief amongst these groups operating on French soil was the Lebanese-Palestinian Comité de Solidarité avec les Prisonniers Politiques Arabes et du Proche-Orient (CSPPA), which targeted both Israeli and French individuals and interests, the latter as a mean to force the liberation of Arab prisoners detained in French

---

[141] The bombing of the Bologna train station known as the *Strage di Bologna* (Bologna Massacre) killed 86 people on August 2, 1980. On September 26, 1980, an explosion killed 13 people at the Munich Oktoberfest.

jails on account of terrorist offences (Gregory 2003). The CSPPA targeted among others the high-speed train between Paris and Marseille and the Eiffel Tower (both of which failed). In September 1986, the CSPPA set the streets of Paris ablaze with five bombings in the space of ten days, killing nine passersby and wounding more than 160 others. Meanwhile French nationals were also targeted abroad either through assassinations or kidnapping.[142]

Palestinian terrorism in France disappeared shortly after the 1986 wave of attacks but was soon replaced by Algerian terrorism. Having sided with the ruling Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) party in Algeria in an attempt to quell the Islamic upsurge – the Front Islamique de Salut (FIS) was on its way to winning a majority of votes at the December 1991 general election – the French government soon faced a new terrorist threat aimed at ending its meddling in Algerian affairs. The islamists' cause was taken over by former FIS members who formed in 1992 the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA). Over the following decade, the GIA became infamous for its murderous acts in Algeria where more than 50,000 people lost their lives.

The GIA's first *fait d'armes* against France took place on December 24, 1994, with the hijacking of an Air France Airbus en route from Algiers to Paris. The hostage takers killed three passengers before French police forces stormed the plane in Marseille, killing in the process all members of the commando.[143] The hijacking was followed a few months later by a wave of attacks reminiscent of the one that had hit Paris in 1986. By the

[142] On October 23, 1983, a suicide operation (likely organized by the Hezbollah) killed 58 soldiers stationed in Beirut. Hours later 241 US soldiers perished nearby following a similar attack.

[143] The tally would have been far worse had the GIA activists been able to carry out their initial plan, which was either to crash the plane against the Eiffel Tower or blow it up over Paris.

end of October 1995 the bombings (mainly in Paris but also in Lyon) had claimed the lives of 10 people and had injured close to 300 more.

Other groups or individuals have imported their conflicts in France over the last 25 years, notably the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) whose most tragic *fait d'armes* killed 8 and wounded 60 when a bomb exploded at Orly airport (1983), the Iranian secret services, and the infamous Carlos the Jackal. Although often cited by Bin Laden as a target, France has been relatively spared by al Qaeda operatives.[144]

Overall France has been targeted over the past 30 years by a wide variety of terrorist groups. Homegrown organisations such as the Corsican FLNC or the far-left Action Directe have been active over longer periods than most foreign groups operating on the French territory, but attacks by the latter have usually been far more lethal.

French political parties have thus been confronted to terrorism on a regular basis.

6.2. Political parties in France

It is generally accepted that the terms Left and Right in politics originate from the French Revolution (1789-1794). Initially this typology reflected the seating plan within the newly created National Assembly, with those favouring the *ancien régime* and the king seated on the right side of the hemicycle, and those keen on limiting the powers of the monarch seated on the left. Although the meaning of Left and Right has changed over the centuries, the current seating plan still reflects basic ideological differences with on the

[144] In 2000, an attack against the Strasbourg Christmas Market by terrorists close to al Qaeda was foiled at the last minute. It should be noted that al Qaeda had developed ties with Algerian jihadists and notably members of the GIA during the 1990s.

left side what Andrew Knapp and Vincent Wright (2006) call the 'Party of movement' and on the right side the 'Party of order'.[145] Historically speaking the 'Party of movement' embraced values such as secularism and social justice, whereas the 'Party of order' looked at social reforms with scepticism, shared many of the values defended by the Catholic Church and believed in strong political leadership (Knapp and Wright 2006). The difference between Left and Right has now shifted towards socio-economic considerations, yet despite this enduring cleavage France never had a bipartisan system.

The following section aims at presenting the main political forces in France over the last 30 years and underline their stance on terrorism and national security. I first start with mainstream parties (Left and Right), and then proceed with radical and fringe parties.

6.2.1. Mainstream parties

6.2.1.1. The Parti Socialiste

The Parti Socialiste (PS) was created in 1971 on the old remnants of the once Marxist Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO). Over the next decade, and with François Mitterrand at its helm, the PS slowly supplanted the Parti Communiste (PC) as the main political force on the left side of the political spectrum. In 1981, for the first time under the Fifth Republic, the presidential election was won by a left-wing candidate, namely Mitterrand. Many on the Right were bewildered by Mitterrand's victory, he who a mere 17 years before had denounced the Fifth Republic as de Gaulle's ploy to carry out

---

[145] Two expressions originally coined by French political scientist François Goguel.

a *coup d'État permanent*. Adding insult to injury for the Gaullists, Mitterrand appointed four members of the communist party – de Gaulle's nemesis – to his government.

Although François Mitterrand remained President of the Republic until 1995, he was forced to share power with right-wing governments on two occasions following socialist defeats at legislative elections (1986-1988 and 1993-1995). These periods known as *cohabitation* were both marked by intense terrorist activities.

Initially the socialists were brought to power to "break with capitalism" and implement far reaching reforms based on a "Keynesian dash for growth" (Frears 1991, 73). Humanism was the order of the day and quickly led to a series of symbolic measures, such as the abolition of the death penalty. The 110 measures on which Mitterrand had been campaigning in 1981 had a distinctively pacifist feel with, among other proposals, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan (the first measure in this list), peace in the Middle East, progressive disarmament of the Western and Eastern blocs, and an end to nuclear dissemination.[146] Yet, with the socialists barely a year in power Realpolitik made a flashing return to the top of the agenda. After abandoning their Keynesian stimulus plan, Mitterrand went back on a number of foreign policy related promises, notably concerning weapons sales and the installation of US Pershing missiles on European soil. The participation of French military forces to the US-led Operation Desert Storm in 1991 further demonstrated that Mitterrand was no dove, even though some of his closest political allies within the socialist party were reluctant to follow a hawkish policy.[147]

---

[146] See www.lours.org/default.asp?pid=307

[147] Jean-Pierre Chevènement, unwilling to see France participate in Operation Desert Storm, resigned from his position of Minister of Defence shortly before the start of the military operation. It should be noted, however, that Mitterrand sparred no efforts in trying to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough during the crisis.

With regards to terrorism, the socialists made a series of gestures sympathetic to certain former activists. For instance, shortly after Mitterrand's election the government passed a law granting amnesty that led to the liberation of two leaders of Action Directe.[148] In 1985, Mitterrand went still further by establishing what would be known henceforth as the 'Doctrine Mitterrand', namely a pledge not to extradite former left-wing Italian terrorists and members of Brigate Rosse.[149] During that same year the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure (DGSE)[150] sank the *Rainbow Warrior*, flagship of the organization Greenpeace, in order to prevent its crew from reaching French Polynesia where nuclear tests were carried out.[151] The socialist government, it appeared, had greenlighted the use of terrorism to protect the interest of the country.[152]

6.2.1.2. The Rassemblement pour la République

The Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) was founded in 1976 to rekindle the Gaullist movement, regain leadership of the Right that had fallen in the hands of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (see below), and offer support to Jacques Chirac in the electoral campaigns that lay ahead (Knapp and Right 2006). Ideologically the *gaullisme chiraquien* resulted at first in an "aggressive, populist, anti-European, anti-free-market rhetoric" and towards the mid-1980s in an "aggressive pro-free-market rhetoric" amidst internal disagreement on the issue of Europe (Knapp and Right 2006, 226).

---

[148] www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/action-directe-rouillan-parle-et-pourrait-se-voir-prive-de-sa-semi-liberte_579389.html
[149] www.mitterrand.org/La-France-I-Italie-face-a-la.html
[150] DGSE are a branch of the French secret service and are in charge of gathering intelligence outside French borders.
[151] One person was killed by the explosion.
[152] Minister of Defense Charles Hernu resigned in the aftermath of the crisis.

After an initial bout as Prime minister (1974-1976) under President Giscard d'Estaing, Jacques Chirac returned to the Hôtel Matignon (the official residency of French Prime ministers) in 1986 after a right-wing victory (RPR and UDF) at the legislative elections. During this first period of *cohabitation* Chirac's government tried to undo some of the more symbolic measures decided by the socialists, notably by privatizing some previously nationalized companies, but was frustrated by President Mitterrand's refusal to ratify some of these policies.[153]

The RPR, which had been very critical of the socialists' handling of terrorism earlier in the decade, was soon tested by a terrorist campaign carried out by Palestinian activists, which claimed the lives of nine people in September 1986. Shortly thereafter, Claude Besse, president of the state-owned carmaker Renault, was shot dead by members of Action Directe. During this period, several French citizens were abducted in Lebanon. Though most of them were eventually freed, the question remains whether the negotiation entailed some kind of financial retribution.[154] Chirac ended his last mandate as Prime Minister with a heavy-handed policy in New-Caledonia where 18 independentists were killed during an operation by French special forces to free hostages (Gregory 2003).

The RPR returned to power between 1993 and 1995 though this time with Édouard Balladur in the Prime Minister's seat. Balladur's mandate was marked by several terrorist acts perpetrated by Algerian jihadists. On a more symbolic level, Carlos the Jackal who had masterminded several terrorist attacks throughout the world in the 1980s was arrested by French police in Sudan.

---

[153] A second cohabitation took place between 1993 and 1995. This time the right-wing government was led by Édouard Balladur (RPR).

[154] The abductions were linked to the French support to Iraq in its war against Iran.

In 1995 upon becoming President, Chirac faced a particularly intense wave of attacks perpetrated by Algerian terrorists, and in the end was widely praised for dealing effectively with this particular threat and for dismantling its operational base (Gregory 2003).

6.2.1.3. The Union pour la Démocratie Française

The Union pour la Démocratie Française (UDF) was founded in 1978 to support Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's reelection bid and counter Chirac's rising influence within the Right. In the event, the UDF relinquished its dominant position within the Right, though its distinctive pro-European stance made it more of a center-right political force anyway. The UDF took part alongside the RPR in each of the first two *cohabitation* governments and again in each right-wing governments under Chirac's presidency (1995-2007)[155] and Sarkozy's presidency (2007-present)[156].

Perhaps wary of endangering its *politique arabe* Giscard d'Estaing's government proved less resolute with Palestinian terrorists than with left-wing radicals.[157] In January 1977 after just ten days of detention, Giscard authorized the release of known terrorist Abu Daoud despite his involvement in the operation against the Israeli delegation at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich (Gregory 2003). Similarly his government offered a safe passage to Iraq to CSPPA activists responsible for taking hostages at the Orly airport (Gregory 2003).

---

[155] The UDF returned in the opposition after the victory of the *gauche plurielle* (PS and other left-wing parties) at the 1997 legislatives elections.
[156] The UDF was dissolved into two political parties following the 2007 presidential elections : Modem and Nouveau Centre.
[157] Two Action Directe activists, Nathalie Menignon and Jean-Marc Rouillan, were arrested in November 1980 only to be freed a few months later after Mitterrand's victory over Giscard d'Estaing at the presidential election.

Finally, it was Giscard's government that set up the *Plan Vigipirate* in 1978. This national emergency plan is intended for exceptional crises such as terrorist crises, and involves coordinated operations by the army, the gendarmerie and other police forces to protect public and sensitive sites such as airports, railway stations and nuclear power plants (Gregory 2003).

6.2.2. Radical parties

After more than thirty years in the opposition, the Parti Communiste (PC) returned to power in 1981, albeit in a junior role, and embraced most of the policies advocated by the Parti Socialiste, particularly its leniency towards left-wing activists. By 1984 however the communists had left the government only to return in 1997 following another socialist victory. The PC, which represented close to a quarter of the electorate at the end of the 1970s, fell below the 10 percent mark in the 1990s. Throughout these years the PCF has maintained a rather permissive stance with regards to terrorism.

As for the Front National (FN), its first electoral breakthrough came in the early 1980s. The far-right party led by Jean-Marie Le Pen became known for a tough rhetoric on crime and terrorism (insisting for instance that the death penalty be reinstated for terrorists). Following the 1986 legislative elections the FN obtained 30 seats in the National Assembly.[158] Though the party lost most of these seats two years later, the FN remained a force to be reckoned with whether at local elections or at presidential elections. The FN popularity peaked in 2002 when Jean-Marie Le Pen reached the second

[158] A proportionnal representation system was used for the 1986 election in place of the traditionnal two-round majority system. This change accounts to a large extent for the FN's performance.

round of the presidential election after making security the number one issue during the campaign.

Although right-wing parties and in particular the RPR might have had the ownership of the twin issues of national security and terrorism, it is fair to say that right-wing governments were at times as permissive with terrorists as left-wing governments. The socialists might have been more lenient with leftist radicals but the RPR and UDF hardly set the example with terrorists originating from the Middle East. In fact, Walter Laqueur in the *Age of Terrorism* considered France to be the "most permissive" of all West European countries in its handlings of terrorist groups (1999, 289). Yet whatever the strategy used, Shaun Gregory (2003) remarks that both left-wing and right-wing governments succeeded in eradicating the jihadist menace by defeating the GIA and preventing further attacks.

We now turn to the period 1980-1990 and examine how both the Left and the Right handled various terrorist crises.

6.3. The 'Years of Lead'

The expression 'years of lead' – for the French *années de plomb* – came to describe the peak of left-wing and right-wing terrorism in Western Europe throughout the 1970s and early 1980s.[159] Yet whereas the phenomenon was particularly acute in Italy and Germany, France's experience was noticeably different although equally ruthless. From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, France became the target of various domestic groups

[159] See footnote 32 for the origin of the expression.

(revolutionaries, separatists, etc.) but also foreign-based groups originating mainly from Palestine, Lebanon, Iran and Armenia. Assassinations of public figures, shootings in public places and explosions in busy streets became familiar.

The following section presents a series of case studies covering the most important attacks, namely: the explosion rue Copernic (1980), the wave of attacks between March and September 1982, the wave of attacks in September 1986, and the assassination of Georges Besse (1986). This selection of cases is based on five criteria: the magnitude of the attack, the repetition of attacks, the type of target, the identity of perpetrators, and the party in power. In other words, I have selected the attacks with the highest fallout in terms of victims but also made sure to include attacks and wave of attacks with different targets (from civil servants to passersby), perpetrated by different groups (domestic and international). Finally, this selection includes acts taking place during periods with right-wing and left-wing governments. In so doing, I am able to analyze the impact of five key variables on the reactions of elites, both mainstream and radical. Furthermore, the international context of that particular decade (Cold War and tension in the Middle East) provides an interesting background to the decision-making process and behaviour of French political elites. Finally this analysis provides useful insights for understanding what happened during the 1990 to 2006 period.

For each case study presented in this section (and in the remainder of chapter six) I follow the same procedure. The first part gives an account of the event and describes the political situation at the time of the attack. The second part indicates what the magnitude-repetition model suggests will happen, details the reaction of both mainstream and radical elites, and compares it to what the model predicted (see table X for a summary).

Table X. Expected and actual reaction of the mainstream opposition based on the magnitude-repetition model (selected cases – period 1980-1990)

Case	Magnitude	Repetition	Expected Outcome	Actual Outcome
Explosion in rue Copernic – linked first to neo-Nazis and then Abu Nidal (1980)	High	High	No Support	No Support
Wave of attacks – linked to Middle Eastern Groups (1982)	1st attack: High	Low	Support	Support
	2nd attack: Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
	3rd attack: High	High	No Support	No Support
	4th attack: Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Wave of attacks – linked to the CSPPA (1986)	1st attack: Low	High	Likely Support	Support
	2nd attack: Low	High	Likely Support	Support
	3rd attack: Low	High	Likely Support	Support
	4th attack: Low	High	Likely Support	Support
	5th attack: High	High	No Support	Support
Assassination of Besse – linked to Action Directe (1986)	Low	High	Likely Support	Support

Case study one: Explosion in rue Copernic (October 3, 1980)

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

On October 3, 1980, at the end of the afternoon a bomb exploded in front of a Paris synagogue killing four people and injuring another 22. The tragedy could have been far worse had the commando been able to implement their original plan which was to place the device inside the premises where more than 300 worshipers were attending a religious service on the eve of Shabbat. However the presence of a security guard led the terrorists to dispose of the bomb outside of the synagogue. Responsibility for the attack was claimed straight away by the Faisceaux Nationalistes Européens (FNE), a far-right group

linked to the Fédération d'Action Nationale et Européenne (FANE), which had been dissolved by the French government a month before the attack. Marc Fredriksen, former leader of the defunct FANE, quickly issued a press-release disclaiming responsibility for the act. However the attack rue Copernic followed a host of anti-Semitic attacks in France and across Europe, notably in Bologna where 84 perished on August 2, 1980, and Munich where 12 died on September 27, 1980. As a result, dozens of people within neo-Nazi circles were arrested in the days that followed.

In the following week, *Le Monde* – and most other French newspapers – maintained throughout their editorials and articles that the attack had been the work of far-right terrorists. Eventually, as the police investigation proceeded, the blame shifted towards Abu Nidal – at the time a "hired gun" for Syria, Iraq, and Libya – whose prime purpose was to make money out of terrorist activities (Hoffman 2006, 259). The French authorities identified later on five Palestinians as prime suspects.[160] However in the heat of the moment and in the days that followed, the reaction from the elite as well as from the main media outlets was based on the assumption that the attack was the work of neo-Nazis.

At the time President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was in the last year of his seven-year mandate. Presidential elections were scheduled six months later and reelection was far from certain for the incumbent. Although the right-wing coalition had been victorious at the 1978 legislative elections, Giscard's party (the center-right UDF) came in only second behind the Gaullist RPR led by Jacques Chirac – Giscard d'Estaing's former

---

[160] Abu Nidal's last known *fait d'armes* took place on January 17, 1980, when a Palestinian activist was gunned down (an act which Abu Nidal never officially claimed).

Prime Minister.[161] The opposition between UDF and RPR turned especially sour when Chirac claimed that the UDF was “le parti de l’étranger” – i.e. meaning both the party from abroad and the foreigner’s party – a clear attack on Giscard’s pro-European policies. The split between the two right-wing parties was confirmed in the following weeks when the RPR representatives in the National Assembly repeatedly refused to vote in favour of governmental bills. Meanwhile the situation on the left of the political divide was becoming heated again. The socialists (PS) and the communists (PC) after briefly allying themselves returned to their old rivalry with the latter accusing the former of taking a “virage à droite” – i.e. conservative turn.

The end of Giscard’s mandate was marred by foreign policy crises and controversial decisions, such as the sanctuary offered to Imam Khomeini shortly before his return to Iran to lead the Islamic Revolution, and the government’s mild criticism of Moscow following the invasion of Afghanistan.[162] The economic situation was even worse with the second oil crisis pushing inflation and unemployment rates up.

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

The explosion rue Copernic was an instance of high magnitude and high repetition. Therefore, the magnitude-repetition model leads us to expect criticisms from mainstream opposition parties. Radical parties for their part are expected to criticize both the government and mainstream opposition parties.

[161] The UDF regained some momentum when it finished first in the European elections of June 10, 1979.
[162] France was one of the few Western countries that did not boycott the summer Olympic Games held in Moscow in 1980. On a more personal note, in October 1979 a French newspaper accused Giscard of having received diamonds as a ‘present’ from Bokassa, at the time dictator of the Central African Republic.

Leaders of the Jewish community in France were the first ones to react to the attack and thereby set the tone. They deplored the tameness of the authorities and the indifference of those in charge of governing the country.[163] *Le Monde* took a similar stance and in a front-page editorial blamed the state for its permissiveness – *complaisance* – and for being too lenient with far-right extremism.[164]

The opposition was quick to capitalize on the controversy surrounding the perceived permissiveness of the government. François Mitterrand (leader of the Parti Socialiste) underlined the fact that this terrorist act was part of a long series of similar acts.[165] He bemoaned in particular the impotence of the government and its inability to take into account the warnings. On a more personal level, Mitterrand pointed out that far-right activists had been working as security agents for Giscard d'Estaing during the 1974 presidential campaign and had subsequently won seats in the National Assembly under the banner of the UDF. Mitterrand's point was that Giscard needed the far-right to govern and therefore was not at liberty to strike at neo-fascist groups when needed. In a similar vein, Gaston Defferre (leader of the socialist group at the National Assembly) remarked that by minimizing the danger posed by far-right extremists the government would never be able to control them.[166] By October 7 (four days after the explosion rue Copernic), the socialists asked for Christian Bonnet's resignation as Minister of the Interior.

---

[163] Alain de Rothschild, president of the Consistoire Central Israélite de France and the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France spoke of "la passivité des pouvoirs publics et l'indifférence de nos gouvernants" – i.e. the passivity of public authorities and the indifference of those governing us (this translation as well as the other ones appearing in the text or in footnotes are mine). *Le Monde* October 5, 1980.

[164] Philippe Boucher, author of the editorial, spoke of "laisser sur son sol croître la folie, s'épanouir l'horreur" – i.e. letting madness grow on our land, and horror bloom. *Le Monde* October 5, 1980.

[165] *Le Monde* October 5, 1980.

[166] *Le Monde* October 5, 1980.

Michel Pinton (spokesperson for the UDF) deplored the attempt by the socialist opposition to politicize the issue. Unfortunately for the government, criticisms were also voiced within conservative ranks and in particular amongst Gaullists.[167] Bernard Pons (secretary general of the RPR) asked the government to finally realize that the danger posed by right-wing extremists is real. Michel Debré (de Gaulle's former Prime Minister) was far less subtle and criticized the government for its hesitations and its lack of audacity. Chirac for his part refrained from openly criticizing the government.

Surprisingly, radical parties did not seize the opportunity created by the attack to strongly criticize the government or the political system. George Marchais (secretary general of the Parti Communiste) merely issued a mildly critical statement asking the government to finally take all measures necessary to arrest and condemn the criminals and asked that a debate on terrorism be organized in the National Assembly.[168]

Jean-Marie Le Pen (leader of the Front national) also refrained from criticizing the government. However, he used the opportunity to redirect the blame on the communists, claiming that this criminal act was part of a strategy of provocation that could only benefit communist subversion.[169] In particular, Le Pen accused the KGB of wanting to destabilize the West.[170] He also remarked that repeated warnings on a renewal of the Nazi scare would only deflect attention from the imminent Soviet invasion of Poland and from the various political scandals in France, notably those involving Giscard d'Estaing and Marchais.[171] Elsewhere Le Pen used the opportunity to restate two key points in his

[167] *Le Monde* October 7, 1980.
[168] *Le Monde* October 7, 1980.
[169] Other far right groups simply declared their indignation without hinting at any communist-led conspiracy.
[170] *Le Monde* October 7, 1980.
[171] "Pendant qu'on crie à la résurgence de la baudruche nazie, on passe sous sience [sic] les crimes politiques du K.G.B., les préparatifs d'invasion de la Pologne ou encore les scandales permanents de la vie

electoral platform, namely the need to reestablish severe controls at the border, and the necessity to reinstate the death penalty against terrorists.

As an instance of high magnitude (four people killed) and more importantly high repetition (this was the latest in a long list of terrorist attacks), it does not come as a surprise that the opposition was critical of the government in the aftermath of the explosion rue Copernic. Mitterrand himself made sure to remind everyone that this was the latest in a long series of attacks. In that respect, the magnitude-repetition model withstands the test. Yet to be fair, a number of other factors made sure that the Left and even part of the Right would avoid the rally. First of all, the act was perceived (wrongly as it eventually turned out) as part of a wave of far-right attacks which the government had failed to stop – *Le Monde* put the number of anti-Semitic attacks in France at about 120 since 1975. This could only reinforce the feeling that the government was not handling the right-wing threat well enough. In addition, the reaction of the main Jewish organizations, echoed by the press, fuelled public dissatisfaction and resulted in several demonstrations across the country. As often in the aftermath of deadly attacks, a rally in support of the victim quickly developed. Thus the socialists but also the Gaullists were able to join the chorus of disapproval. The government, for its part, was unable to control the flow of information and impose its own framing on the events. Whether or not a rally would have been triggered had the perpetrators been correctly identified remains

politique française, notamment l'affaire des diamants de Giscard et les nouveaux rebondissements de l'affaire Marchais" – i.e. While some scream at the resurgence of the Nazi scare, one forgets the political crimes committed by the KGB, the preparations to invade Poland and the never-ending scandals involving French politicians, notably President Giscard and head of the French Communist Party Georges Marchais. *Le Monde* October 7, 1980.

impossible to determine. Yet we do know from the statistical analysis conducted in the previous chapter that attacks originating abroad are more likely to trigger rallies.

The electoral variable cannot be discounted either. With a presidential election a mere six months away, the political elite had an opportunity to strike at the incumbent. More importantly they could do so without any fear of their loyalty to the nation being questioned. After all the wave of criticism towards the permissiveness of the government with right-wing fanatics was coming from all political directions and all quarters of civil society. Interestingly, a right-wing government was criticized for being too soft on terror.

What was perhaps more surprising was the behaviour of the main radical parties – i.e. Parti Communiste and Front National – neither of which were particularly critical of the government, certainly not more than mainstream parties. One of the reasons for this apparent leniency might have to do with the fact that criticizing the government could have been perceived as siding with the rest of the mainstream elite. There was clearly nothing to be gained at being more critical than the rest of the opposition. With elections less than six months away, the communists were keen to distance themselves from the socialists. The Front National for its part could hardly side with the critics and ask that the government be ruthless with far-right activists, many of which were sympathizers or even members of the FN.[172] On the contrary, Le Pen found it more profitable to deflect the blame towards the communists at home and abroad, and to demand a reinstatement of capital punishment against terrorists.

In the end the high number of casualties coupled with the (mis)perception that this was the latest in a long list of acts committed by far-right terrorists left the government

---

[172] Although Le Pen had already made a name for himself, notably as a member of the Poujadist movement in the 1960s, the FN was still 'groupuscular' and had not yet gained a noticeable electoral support.

little chance to escape the crisis unscathed, particularly with presidential elections barely six months away.

Case study two: Wave of attacks between March and September 1982

1) Account of the events and description of the political situation

Between the months of March and September 1982 a wave of attacks hit France killing 12 people and injuring over 200. The first attack, an explosion in one of the coaches of the Paris-Toulouse train, took place on March 29. Five passengers were killed and another 27 wounded. Ilyich Ramirez Sanchez better known under his alias 'Carlos' was blamed for the attack although no official claim was issued. The second attack took place on April 22 and targeted the office of Lebanese newspaper *Al Watan Al Arabi* (i.e. The Arab Nation) rue Marbeuf in Paris. The explosion killed one person and injured another 64. Syrian secret services were blamed for the attack on this pro-Iraqi publication.[173] On August 9, six people were killed rue des Rosiers in Paris and another 22 were wounded. At the time, the shooting was thought to be the work of Abu Nidal or possibly Action Directe.[174] Finally, on September 17 an explosion near Lycée Carnot in Paris claimed no life but injured 91 passersby. Although these attacks were thought to be linked to Middle Eastern groups, the eclectic nature of terrorist groups operating in France at the time made it difficult to blame one organization or the other.

[173] Through this attack, Syria was trying among others to force France to abandon its pro-Iraqi policy.
[174] Other attacks of lesser magnitude had taken place between the explosion rue Marbeuf and the shooting rue des Rosiers: an explosion on July 20 place Saint-Michel (15 wounded), and three attacks by Action Directe at the beginning of August.

After more than 23 years in opposition the Left was finally back in power. François Mitterrand (PS) had beaten his archrival Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (UDF) in May 1981 to become the Fifth Republic's first socialist President. A month later a landslide victory at the legislative elections gave the socialists a majority of seats at the National Assembly. For the Right, who had been in power since May 1958, the defeat was bitter, particularly for the Gaullist party (RPR) of Jacques Chirac who considered the Fifth republic their creation. To add insult to injury, Mitterrand and most of the elite on the Left of the political divide had been initially bitterly opposed to the new constitution, which many of them viewed as autocratic and dangerous for democracy. Thus many right-wing politicians felt that Mitterrand did not deserve the extensive power bestowed upon him by a constitution he rejected so forcefully. Worse still for the Right was the inclusion of four communists in the government of Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy.

Keeping with electoral promises made during the campaign the socialists undertook major reforms, amongst them the nationalization (after a long-drawn-out battle in parliament that ended shortly before the attack on the Paris-Toulouse train) of five of the largest French industrial groups, 39 banks and two financial companies; the transfer of substantial power to regional councils; and the abolition of the death penalty. However by early 1982, economic setbacks were already putting the socialist plan for a 'new society' in peril. The revival of the economy through Keynesian inspired policies never materialized and increased massively the budget deficit, the public debt and the trade balance deficit (Becker 2003, 193). As a result the French currency underwent a series of devaluations. Meanwhile the inflation rate remained high (14.1 percent between March 1981 and March 1982), notably in comparison to other European countries, and the

unemployment rate was rising inexorably.[175] By June 1982 the government had abandoned its bold plan and was going back to the measures of austerity they had vowed never to use. As a consequence of this economic downturn, the approval ratings of both President Mitterrand and his Prime Minister decreased from respectively 74 and 71 percent in June 1981 to 57 and 58 percent in December 1981 (Becker 2003, 194).[176] By September 1982 the popularity of the President had plummeted even lower with 42 percent satisfied of his actions and 45 percent dissatisfied (Becker 2003, 194). This decline was confirmed at the beginning of 1982 when the socialists lost three seats to the right-wing opposition following legislative by-elections (Becker 2003, 194). This string of electoral setbacks carried on with a major defeat for the Left at the cantonal elections in March 1982.[177]

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

According to the magnitude-repetition model the elite should have supported the government in the aftermath of the first attack (high magnitude and low repetition). Thereafter, the high repetition suggest a likely support following the second and fourth attack (both low magnitude attacks), and no support following the third attack (high magnitude).

The first attack – an explosion aboard the train linking Paris and Toulouse – was not at first perceived as terrorist in nature. Even though 'Carlos' was mentioned in the news

[175] There were 1,6 million unemployed in March 1981 and over 2 million in March 1983 (Becker 2003, 193).
[176] According to polls carried out by SOFRES.
[177] The Left lost more than hundred seats in the departmental assemblies as well as the presidency of 8 conseil généraux (Becker 2003, 194). Each department has a conseil general, the equivalent of a departmental government.

reports because of an ultimatum he had given to the French government days before the explosion, other scenarios were put forth in the media (e.g. gangsters or autonomists transporting explosives).[178] Within a few days a host of organizations claimed responsibility for the explosion: several far-right groups (amongst them an organization asking for the exclusion of the communist from the government), far-left groups and Carlos himself.

Initially the elite was slow to react to what was essentially the first major attack since Mitterrand's election. Christian Bonnet (UDF) himself, whose resignation from the Ministry of the Interior had been demanded by the socialists less than two years before (see case study one), declared that terrorism was not a new phenomenon and that it would be unfair to lay the blame for recent terrorist activities on any particular government.[179] Besides, the absence of serious claims created a murky situation, and making sense of what had happened rather difficult. In addition, the particularly dense flow of events on the international scene – intensification of the war between Iran and Iraq, and invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentinean troops – deflected part of the elite's attention.

The second attack elicited far more reactions from the opposition. Chirac (RPR) merely asked the government to endow the security forces with the necessary resources to combat terrorism, but Bernard Pons (secretary general of the RPR) went on the offensive accusing the government of letting people known for their connections with terrorist organizations free and of failing to take action despite knowing the whereabouts

---

[178] *Le Monde* March 31, 1982. Carlos had asked the government to release his close friend Magdalena Kopp.

[179] *Le Monde* April 2, 1982. Yet Bonnet did express concerns at some of the appointments made by the socialist government within the police forces.

of those responsible for the attacks.[180] Even more critical yet, the UDF declared that the 'socialist-communist' government had neglected the warnings it received from the opposition and shut its eyes on the rise of insecurity and violence, and concluded: "We were expecting actions, all we had were new victims".[181]

Criticisms were also widespread within right-wing leaning newspapers. Max Clos in *Le Figaro* claimed that the government was too permissive and thus responsible for the crisis; Pierre Charpy in *La Lettre de la Nation* asked for the dismissal of Claude Cheysson (Minister of Foreign Affairs), Gaston Defferre (Minister of the Interior) and Robert Badinter (Minister of Justice).

Surprisingly the government refused to respond to these criticisms and accusations of carelessness, and simply indicated that using this drama for political gains was indecent.[182]

During the following days criticisms against the government continued with the same level of intensity. Senator Charles Pasqua (one of the leading figure of the RPR) and Jacques Toubon (close adviser to Chirac) claimed that terrorist groups were creeping in France, and accused the government of supporting violent organizations in other countries.[183] Chirac for his part commented on the government's lack of resolve to tackle the security problem.[184] However, the most damning criticism yet was voiced by Claude Labbé (president of the RPR group in the National Assembly) who declared:

---

[180] *Le Monde* April 23, 1982.
[181] "On était en droit d'attendre des actes, on n'a eu que de nouvelles victimes" *Le Monde* April 23, 1982.
[182] *Le Monde* April 24, 1982.
[183] *Le Monde* April 27, 1982.
[184] "La sécurité procède d'une volonté et celle-ci est de plus en plus absente de l'esprit de nos gouvernants. J'en ai appelé au président de la République pour qu'il prenne enfin conscience des exigences de la sécurité de nos concitoyens" – i.e. "Security must be willed, and this will is more and more lacking in the minds of those governing us. I called upon the President of the Republic to finally realize what the security of our fellow citizens requires". *Le Monde* April 29, 1982.

> "Je le dis avec solennité et une certaine brutalité, nous avons à demander à ces dirigeants de partir. C'est notre rôle d'opposants. Qu'ils s'en aillent, ce sont des incapables."[185]

In response to the uproar provoked by this declaration within socialist ranks, Bernard Pons (RPR) remarked that though the declaration was excessive in its form, it did indicate a concern about the way the government had handled the national security so far.[186] A few days later Bonnet and Labbé called again for the Prime Minister's resignation, openly condemning what they considered to be a "rotten intellectual circle" within the Parisian left, a group of "conscientious objectors".[187]

The socialists through Georges Sarre expressed dismay at the use (or abuse) by the Right of the terrorist issue for political gains:

> "Je plains les hommes de droite qui, par souci d'exploitation politique n'ont pas hésité à faire des déclarations intolérables et abjectes contre le gouvernement de la République (…) La vérité est claire. Vous êtes animés par une véritable rage de détruire. Seule la revanche électorale, la reconquête du pouvoir vous intéressent".[188]

Claude Labbé (RPR) who launched the initial verbal attack maintained his declaration and even questioned the legitimacy of the socialist president:

> "Je ne considère pas que nous soyons véritablement dans une situation d'alternance. En se proclamant dès le jour de son accession à l'Élysée, président socialiste, François Mitterrand a commis une lourde faute et limité sa capacité à être reconnu comme président de tous les Français. En s'engageant dans une politique de bouleversement généralisé et ne correspondant pas vraiment au sentiment d'une large majorité de Français,

---

[185] "I say this with solemnity and a certain brutality, we must ask those in charge of governing to leave. This is our role as opponents. Let them go, they are useless". *Le Monde* April 29, 1982.
[186] *Le Monde* April 30, 1982.
[187] "Moisissure d'une certaine société parisienne et d'objecteurs de conscience" *Le Monde* May 3, 1982.
[188] "I pity those on the Right who in order to make a political gain did not hesitate to make intolerable and abject declarations against the government of the Republic (…) The truth is plain. You are spurred on by a genuine rage to destroy. You only seek an electoral revenge, and to reclaim your lost power". *Le Monde* April 28, 1982.

> le gouvernement n'a pas respecté cette continuité du pouvoir par laquelle se définit l'alternance".[189]

Labbé and others were not just voicing criticisms but literally indicting the President and declaring him unfit to run the country.

Faced with mounting accusations of permissiveness, the Left remained for the most part stoic, although Gaston Defferre (Minister of the Interior) accused the Right of negligence when it was in power, reminding public opinion that right-wing governments had in the past released known terrorists.[190]

On August 8, more than three months after the explosion rue Marbeuf, Paris was again hit by terrorists. The shooting was aimed directly at the Jewish community and occurred at a time of extreme tension in the Middle East, in particular in Lebanon where an Israeli military operation was underway. Less than two years after the attack rue Copernic, the Jewish community set again the tone (see case study one). Mitterrand who shortly before the shooting had become the first French President to set foot in Israel on an official visit, was given a chilling welcome by the residents while visiting rue des Rosiers to pay his respects to the victims. The booing that greeted Mitterrand was reminiscent of Giscard's cold reception in the aftermath of the terrorist attack rue Copernic.

The UDF and the RPR renewed their criticisms of the government's alleged laissez-faire with regards to terrorist activities.[191] This time, however, criticisms towards

---

[189] "I do not consider that we are really in a situation where the Left has the power. By claiming on day one of his mandate to be a socialist President, François Mitterrand committed a major blunder and limited his capacity to be recognized as the President of all French people. By embarking on a programme of major disruptions that are not in accordance with what a majority of French people want, the government did not respect the continuity of power that defines periods when government changes hand". *Le Monde* May 2, 1982.

[190] Japanese terrorist Furyukata Muraya and Palestinian terrorist Abu Daoud. *Le Monde* May 2, 1982.

[191] *Le Monde* August 11, 1982.

the government remained limited, in large part because many felt that France was being wrongfully accused of anti-Semitism by the Israeli government. Menachem Begin (Prime Minister of Israel), in particular had brought up the possibility to ask French Jews to organize their collective defence if the French state failed to protect them. Rejecting any accusations of anti-Semitism, right-wing leaning newspaper *Le Figaro* declared:

> "Nous ne pouvons pas accepter que la France, fût-elle socialiste (…) soit accusée en tant que France de sentiments antisémites (…). Désigner le président de la République, un homme qui a été légitimement élu par une majorité des Français – même si nous pensons qu'il s'agissait là d'une de ces aberrations à laquelle l'histoire condamne, hélas, de temps en temps tous les peuples – comme l'instigateur, voire le complice, du massacre de la rue des Rosiers, c'est là une accusation ignoble que rien ne peut excuser à nos yeux."[192]

Bernard Pons (RPR) remarked that in view of the many casualties caused by the last attack it would be scandalous to try and take advantage of this act for political gains.[193] However, yet again the rally failed to materialize as once more the UDF issued criticisms of the government's handling of affairs. The government's perceived negligence with regard to security matters was again stigmatized. More surprisingly, Jean-Claude Gaudin (president of the UDF group in the National Assembly) asked the socialist government to cease its anti-Israeli stance. Others within the opposition argued that the socialists were making France a target for international terrorism, and underlined the weakening of justice and police under the socialist government.[194]

---

[192] "We cannot accept that France, albeit a socialist France (…) is accused of being antisemitic (…). To designate the President of the Republic, a man who has been legitimately elected by a majority of French people – even though we think that this was an aberration – as the instigator, even the accomplice, of the massacre rue des Rosiers, is a vile accusation that nothing can justify". *Le Figaro* August 11, 1982.

[193] "Il y a eu des morts et des blessés très graves. Il serait scandaleux d'essayer d'exploiter politiquement cet attentat". *Le Monde* August 12, 1982.

[194] *Le Monde* August 12, 1982. Other recent attacks included the assassinations of Israeli diplomat Yacov Barsimantov and of the PLO deputy director in Paris.

The fourth and final attack took place on September 17 and was thought to be the work of the Fraction Armée Révolutionnaire Libanaise (FARL), a Palestinian group based in Lebanon. Although the explosion did not cause any fatalities over 90 people were injured, and the proximity of a school nearby raised serious concerns, particularly as several of the victims were teenagers. Although milder, the criticisms still underlined the perceived inadequacy of the government's response. Jean Lecanuet (president of the UDF) complained that the government talked a lot but failed to act decisively. For his part, former Prime Minister Raymond Barre (UDF) was far more incisive and claimed that the socialists had set terrorists free and had weakened the capacity of France to respond to terrorism.[195] Others criticized the socialists for governing with what they perceived to be anti-Israeli communists.[196] Chirac, as usual, was far less aggressive and as Mayor of Paris simply asked for a meeting with Mitterrand to discuss counterterrorist measures.[197] It should be noted that ever since his defeat at the presidential election former President Giscard d'Estaing remained on the sideline and refrained from making any public comments on the attacks. Jacques Chirac had therefore become the de facto leader of the right-wing opposition.

Despite being again in the line of fire, the government did not respond to the accusations of carelessness. Prime Minister Mauroy simply pointed out that unlike Germany or Italy, France was facing a brand of terrorism originating from abroad.[198]

Throughout the crisis the communists remained supportive of the government, demanding only a severe response against the terrorists.[199] This support was manifest

---

[195] *Le Monde* September 19, 1982.
[196] *Le Monde* September 19, 1982.
[197] *Le Monde* September 19, 1982. As Mayor of Paris, Chirac asked for the immediate hiring of 3,000 more police personnel.
[198] *Le Monde* September 19, 1982.

following the third attack when the Communist Party decided to postpone a planned demonstration against the Israeli intervention in Lebanon, and instead condemned vigorously the shooting rue des Rosiers.

The Front National, for its part, went on the offensive against the government. Le Pen blamed the recent attacks on the presence of the "subversive" communists in the government and on the passive complicity of their socialist allies.[200] Towards the end of the crisis, the FN raised again the spectre of an international conspiracy, arguing that the terrorists were on Moscow's payroll, and that France was slowly descending into chaos.[201] The Front National also claimed that the government's policies with regards to immigration, asylum seekers, border controls (or lack thereof) and death penalty were favouring the rise of terrorist activities on French soil.[202]

The magnitude-repetition model explains to a large extent why the mainstream elite rallied in support of the government following the first attack (high magnitude and low repetition). The right-wing opposition parties recognized that the government could hardly be blamed for what was essentially the government's first major terrorist crisis. In addition, the lack of certainty as to who had carried out the attack made it all the more difficult for the opposition to criticize the government. The attack also coincided with the unfolding of two international crises with potentially serious implications for France – i.e. the invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentinean troops, and a major Iranian victory at

---

[199] *Le Monde* April 1 and 24, 1982.
[200] *Le Monde* August 11, 1982.
[201] "Le processus de libanisation de la France s'accroît à une allure vertigineuse (…) Les limites de notre patience sont atteintes" – i.e. "The process of lebanisation of France grows at a dizzying pace (…) Our patience has reached its limit". *Le Monde* September 19, 1982.
[202] *Le Monde* August 14, 1982.

the expense of the Iraqi army. The French political elite was thus less likely to show disagreement on matters pertaining to the security of the country.

If the model proved conclusive for the first attack, it fails to explain why a rally did not materialize following the second attack. The low magnitude and high repetition made the support likely, and yet the opposition chose to be critical of the government. In all fairness, the attack was just a pretext for many within the opposition to lash out at the government. Ever since the election of Mitterrand, prominent figures within the RPR and UDF felt that the Left did not deserve to be in government and had no real legitimacy. In their view, Mitterrand had forfeited his right to lead the Republic after claiming to be a socialist president. More importantly, the Right called into question the moral values of the Left and asked whether the government had what it takes to lead the country through a terrorist crisis, hence the call by some for the government to step down. 'The socialists lack the resolve necessary under this stressful times, they are doves, we need hawks' was the consensus amongst many right-wing politicians. Personal agendas cannot be discounted either, as when Christian Bonnet asked the Prime Minister to step down, merely two years after being himself targeted by the socialists in similar circumstances.

The model is conclusive for the third attack (high magnitude and high repetition), which resulted in additional criticisms. After being so critical following the second attack, the opposition could hardly rally whole heartedly around the government. Yet the right-wing parties (particularly the RPR) were more lenient this time around. Accusations of France being an anti-Semite country convinced part of the Right to tone down its criticisms. Menachem Begin's threat to call for French Jews to defend themselves clearly

gave the political elite a common purpose. Yet many within the Right, particularly within the UDF, remained critical of the government's perceived permissiveness.

The fourth and final attack (low magnitude and high repetition) was an instance where support was likely. Yet part of the Right carried on criticizing the government. As was the case throughout this wave of attacks, the RPR remained less critical than its right-wing partner (UDF). The UDF and Giscard d'Estaing had been the main victims of the socialist victory in 1981, hence perhaps their hostility towards the government. For his part, Chirac (RPR) refrained from going on the offensive. Rising tension in Lebanon with the entry of Israeli forces in West Beirut, and the ensuing massacre of Sabra and Chatila probably helped mellow the debate somewhat. Yet with municipal elections looming and the 'rentrée politique' in full swing (a period traditionally known for its heated debates) the Right had every intention of remaining critical of the government.

The communists for their part played the role of faithful coalition partners and constantly rallied to the support of the socialist majority. The Front National's reaction on the other hand was more consistent with expectations with regards to radical parties. Le Pen instrumentalized the crisis by blaming the socialists and their communist allies and by using the opportunity to present his electoral platform (death penalty, tougher immigration laws, etc.).

In the end the magnitude-repetition model proved conclusive for two of the four attacks. More importantly partisan and electoral politics played an important role and influenced the behaviour of the opposition, particularly after the second attack. Prominent right-wing politicians, considering that Mitterrand had no legitimacy to occupy the position once held by Charles de Gaulle, resented the presence of a socialist at the Élysée

Palace and were simply unwilling to rally around this controversial figure regardless of the situation. In all fairness, the socialists had set a precedent by being particularly vindictive of Giscard d'Estaing's government in the aftermath of the attack rue Copernic (see case study one).

Case study three: Wave of attacks of September 1986

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

Between September 8 and 17, 1986, Paris was hit by a series of five explosions that set ablaze streets, department stores and subway trains killing nine people and wounding another 163, making it the worst wave of terrorist attacks in the capital since the events of 1982. All of these attacks were linked to the Comité de Solidarité avec les Prisonniers Politiques Arabes et du Proche-Orient (CSPPA), an organization set up following the imprisonment in France of Georges Ibrahim Abdallah leader of the Fractions Armées Révolutionnaires Libanaises (FARL) for complicity in the murders of an American and an Israeli diplomat.[203] At the time France was targeted not just by international groups but also by home-grown terrorists such as Action Directe. As a result terrorism became a prevalent issue during the 1986 campaign for the legislative elections, with attacks occurring on March 17 (a day after the election) and on March 20 (two days after the appointment of Jacques Chirac as Prime Minister).[204]

---

[203] FARL, a Palestinian organization created in 1979, was based in Lebanon. Its objectives were two-fold : creating a Palestinian state, and ousting French, American and Israeli forces from Lebanon.

[204] Upon receiving news of the latest attack, newly appointed Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua famously declared that his government would "terrorize the terrorists". *Le Monde* March 22, 1986. In addition, by September 1986, eight French nationals were held hostage in Lebanon.

Turmoil in the streets was followed by constitutional turmoil when for the first time under the Fifth Republic, a President and a Prime Minister from different sides of the political divide, namely François Mitterrand (PS) and Jacques Chirac (RPR), were forced to share the executive power. A *cohabitation* became unavoidable following the socialists' narrow defeat at the March 1986 legislative elections. Adding to the feeling of unrest was the controversy surrounding Mitterrand's decision to switch from a majority runoff system to a proportional one, a decision which essentially handed the far-right Front National an unprecedented 35 deputies in the National Assembly (as much as the Communist Party which for its part was reaching a new low).

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

The magnitude-repetition model leads us to expect a likely support following the four initial attacks (each of them low magnitude and high repetition) and criticisms following the last attack (high magnitude and high repetition). However, considering the chronological proximity of these attacks – nine days separating the first and fifth attack – and the overlapping of reactions, a more logical approach might be to consider these attacks collectively rather than individually. The first attack on September 8 might still be considered separately, but the remaining ones (September 12, 14, 15, 17) are too clustered to disentangle the effects of repetition. In that case, the model predicts a likely support following the first attack, and criticisms following the remaining four attacks.

Following the attack of September 8 the socialist opposition lost no time to rally around the government. Lionel Jospin (head of the Socialist Party) declared that the national community had to come together and the political forces had to display their will to

overcome this challenge.[205] Likewise, Laurent Fabius (Chirac's predecessor in the Prime Minister's seat) gave his successor his complete support:

> "J'approuve tout à fait l'attitude [du premier ministre]. L'attitude de toute la population, de toutes les formations politiques, doit être de soutenir l'action de nos responsables. Pour ma part, c'est ce que je ferai."[206]

Despite a heated debate on some of the reforms proposed by the new government (e.g. gerrymandering or *redécoupage électoral*) the call for union was by and large respected. The example was set by none other than President Mitterrand who made his support for his right-wing Prime Minister public. Edouard Alphandery from the UDF summed up the state of mind of many of his colleagues left and right by declaring:

> "Nous n'allons pas chipoter le gouvernement sur les limites de cantons, alors que des bombes explosent; les gens ne comprendraient pas qu'on embête le gouvernement avec cela".[207]

Yet some within the Right felt the need to avoid a domestic backlash for the attack and preserve the reputation of the Right on issues of national security by claiming that the socialists were responsible for the crisis.[208] The socialists did not counter back and simply asked for decency and an end to the controversy that they themselves had by and large

---

[205] "Face à ce terrorisme odieux et lâche, la communauté nationale doit se souder et l'ensemble des forces politiques affirmer leur determination face au défi qui est lancé à la France" – i.e. "Faced with this odious and cowardly terrorism, the national community must come together and all political forces must assert their resolve to overcome this challenge". *Le Monde* September 10, 1986.

[206] "I approve the Prime Minister's attitude. The entire population, as well as all political parties must back those in charge of governing the country. For my part, I will support them". *Le Monde* September 10, 1986.

[207] "We will not bicker with the government over the limits of counties while bombs are exploding ; the people would not understand it". *Le Monde* September 12, 1986.

[208] Jacques Toubon (secretary general of the RPR) declared: "Les socialistes, soit par idéologie, soit par faiblesse, avaient été complaisants à l'égard d'organisations étrangères qui portent une responsabilité dans les attentats terroristes" – i.e. "The socialists, either because of ideology or because of weakness, were permissive with foreign organizations bearing a responsibility in these terrorits acts". Albin Chalandon (Minister of Justice) for his part lamented that France had become a sanctuary for terrorists. Some within the majority believed that the socialist government had agreed to the liberation of Georges Ibrahim Abdallah in exchange for the release of Gilles Peyroles (a diplomat taken hostage in Beirut) but eventually rescinded their offer when they realized that Abdallah was a much bigger fish than anticipated. *Le Monde* September 11, 1986.

avoided. In fact, the socialist opposition seemed eager to maintain the rally and declared once more that this was a time when the nation had to demonstrate its unity.[209] As a result, the relative truce between the government and the opposition was maintained after the second attack on September 12 (41 people wounded).

After a third and fourth attack on September 14 and 15 killed three people and wounded more than 50, Mitterrand reiterated his earlier call for unity by declaring that the fight against terrorism concerned the whole nation, and by giving his support to a host of anti-terrorist measures proposed by the government: visa requirement for nationals from outside the European community, increased border controls by the army, and 'secret actions' against terrorists or those helping them.[210] Again the socialists gave their full support merely insisting that these measures should respect people's rights:

> "Le Parti socialiste a toujours souligné que la question du terrorisme ne devait pas être le prétexte d'une polémique intérieure (…) Il ne faut pas diviser la communauté nationale au moment où elle doit manifester sa solidarité face à des agressions qui visent à faire pression sur la France. Les citoyens attendent du gouvernement qu'il fasse preuve d'esprit de responsabilité et de fermeté dans l'action tout en respectant l'État de droit".[211]

---

[209] The executive bureau of the PS declared: "L'heure n'est pas à la vindicte politicienne. Les difficultés que rencontre aujourd'hui la droite au pouvoir pour assurer la sécurité devraient l'inciter à plus de cohérence et de décence. Les propos de MM. Pasqua, Toubon, Peyrefitte et Chalandon sont non seulement injustifiés, mais indignes. Ils mettent en cause la cohésion de la nation au moment ou la communauté nationale doit manifester sa solidarité" – i.e. "This is not the time for political accusations. The difficulties encountered by the right-wing government to ensure national security should encourage it to be more coherent and decent. The declarations of Pasqua, Toubon, Peyrefitte and Chalandon are not only unjustified, but also disgraceful. They jeopardize the unity of the nation at a time when the national community must demonstrate its solidarity". To be fair, Roland Dumas (former Minister of Foreign Affairs) blamed the RPR for the recent attack. *Le Monde* September 12, 1986.

[210] "La lutte contre le terrorisme est l'affaire de la nation tout entière" – i.e. "The fight against terrorism concerns the entire nation". *Le Monde* September 16, 1986.

[211] "The Socialist Party has always made it clear that the terrorist issue should not be a pretext for domestic controversy (…) One should not divide the national community at a time when it must demonstrate its solidarity in the face of aggressions that aim at coercing France. The citizens expect the government to be responsible and resolute in its action while respecting the rule of law". *Le Monde* September 16, 1986.

Yet former Prime Minister Mauroy who had been severely criticized by the right-wing opposition in 1982 (see case study two) deplored the Right's inability to adopt a similar attitude of national concord.[212]

The explosion at the Tati department store, which killed six people and injured more than 50 on September 17 (a mere nine days after the initial strike), was the last of the series.[213] Again some prominent right-wing politicians blamed the Left for their handling of affairs in the past, and again the Left replied that this was not a time for polemics.[214] Jospin (PS), still supportive of the government, argued that in order to enhance the cohesion of the political elite, the opposition parties should not be left out of the loop on matters pertaining to the crisis.[215] As a show of good will, Chirac agreed to meet the parliamentary leaders of all groups, including the PC and FN.[216] Following the meeting all parties expressed their support for the government with the exception of the Front National, which demanded the appointment of a government of public safety.[217] Despite reiterating his support and his call for national unity several time throughout the crisis, Jospin warned the Right about giving out lessons on how to handle terrorist crises.[218]

The wave of attacks coincided with a significant rise in the popularity of Chirac and Mitterrand, with 47 percent of respondents approving the actions of the Prime

---

[212] *Le Monde* September 16, 1986.
[213] The following day the French military attaché was gunned down in Beirut.
[214] *Le Monde* September 19, 1986.
[215] *Le Monde* September 19, 1986.
[216] "Les circonstances exigent que tous les représentants de la nation apportent leur contribution à la lutte qui est engagée" – i.e. "Circumstance require that all of the nation's representatives contribute to the ongoing struggle". *Le Monde* September 20, 1986.
[217] *Le Monde* September 20, 1986.
[218] "Nous ne sommes pas venu pour nous prêter à une quelconque récupération politique, mais pour contribuer à souder la communauté nationale" – i.e. "We did not come here for political considerations, but to help bring together the national community". *Le Monde* September 21-22, 1986 and *Le Monde* September 23, 1986.

Minister at the end of September (up from 40 percent in August 1986) and 57 percent approving the actions of the President (up from 51 percent).[219] Nevertheless throughout the crisis Chirac appeared as the stronger of the two heads of the executive, and as the de facto President.[220] As *Le Monde* remarked, Mitterrand who was known for his hands-on attitude in times of crisis was now leaving his Prime Minister in charge:

> "C'est le premier ministre qui se pose aujourd'hui en garant de l'unité nationale, celui autour duquel se cristallisent l'unité nationale, la solidarité du pays, de la classe politique et des gouvernements étrangers (…) [Chirac] apparaît aujourd'hui, dans le couple exécutif, comme celui qui exerce la réalité et la totalité du pouvoir".[221]

As an ultimate sign of appeasement and in order to preserve the national unity, Mitterrand decided after months of heated debates on the proposed project of *redécoupage électoral* – i.e. gerrymandering – to postpone his decision for after the crisis.[222]

The radical parties were far less supportive than their mainstream counterparts. Georges Marchais (leader of the Communist Party) condemned the first attack vigorously but did not explicitly support the government.[223] By the second attack, Marchais was railing against the government's anti-terrorist measures, which he claimed were only a pretext for racist campaigns and an attempt to limit individual liberties. Furthermore Marchais considered that the confusion between war and terrorism only served to legitimate the arms race and acts of war committed by Israel and the USA.[224] Alain Krivine, leader of the trotskist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), shared a

---

[219] *Le Journal du dimanche* September 21, 1986. Source : IFOP.
[220] Chirac notably canceled an official visit to Canada whereas Mitterrand maintained his visit to Indonesia.
[221] "Today the Prime Minister garantees the national unity, he is the figure around which people rally and to whom the political elite and foreign governments show their solidarity (…) Within the executive couple, Chirac appears today as the one who holds all the power". *Le Monde* September 18, 1986.
[222] *Le Monde* September 25, 1986.
[223] *Le Monde* September 10, 1986.
[224] *Le Monde* September 16, 1986.

similar opinion and considered that these attacks allowed the government to pass measures endangering civil liberties.[225]

As in 1982, the FN remained opposed to any kind of rally, but suggested that it would accept to join a government of public safety:

> "Le Front national ne pourra jamais adhérer à un consensus fondé sur des rodomontades et une série de petites mesures prises à la sauvette (..) Nous n'avons pas confiance dans M. Chirac pour mettre en œuvre une politique efficace de lutte contre le terrorisme. Seule la constitution d'un gouvernement de salut public, incluant le Front national, et s'appuyant ainsi sur une véritable majorité, pourrait prendre les mesures concrètes qu'impose la guerre qui nous a été déclarée." (Jean-Pierre Stirbois, secretary general of the FN).[226]

Already in March 1986, shortly after the legislative elections, Le Pen had ridiculed the teary condemnations of the "gang of four" (i.e. PS, PC, RPR, UDF) which he found ineffectual.[227] By September Le Pen was particularly critical of the anti-terrorist measures, which he considered dated, mediocre and inefficient.[228] In his view, these attacks were acts of war and required the reestablishment of the death penalty.[229] Interestingly, a poll conducted at the beginning of the crisis confirmed Le Pen's rising support notably on issues of security and justice (29 percent approved his stance on those issues in October 1985; 34 percent did so at the beginning of the September 1986 crisis).[230]

---

[225] "Loin de terroriser l'impérialisme, ces attentats terrorisent la population prise en otage" – i.e. "Far from terrorizing the imperialism, these attacks terrorize the population held hostage". *Le Monde* 16 September 16, 1986.

[226] "The Front National will never adhere to a consensus based on saber-rattling and a series of half measures taken in a hurry (…) We do not trust Chirac to implement an effective anti-terrorism policy. The only way to take the necessary measures to fight this war would be to set up a government of public safety including the Front National and backed by a real majority". *Le Monde* September 24, 1986.

[227] "[C'est une] action de guerre qui ne saurait se satisfaire des homélies larmoyantes habituelles aux politiciens de la bande des quatre" – i.e. "This act of war demands more than the traditionnal teary homilies with which politicians from the gang of four are accustomed to". *Le Monde* March 22, 1986.

[228] *Le Monde* September 16, 1986.

[229] *Le Monde* September 10, 1986.

[230] *Le Monde* September 25, 1986. Source: SOFRES (September 8-9).

The analysis of this particular case study within the established theoretical framework presents two important challenges. First, the line that separates the government from the opposition is blurred. Though in the opposition, the socialists still have one of their own at the highest echelon of the state and therefore still share part of the executive power, particularly with regards to matters of national security (traditionally the domain of the President). Even the National Assembly is almost evenly split with the right-wing parties having only a majority of two seats. Second, the series of attacks take place over a relatively short period of time (nine days) making it particularly difficult to disentangle the reactions.

Throughout the crisis, the socialist 'opposition' demonstrated its readiness to support the government. In that respect the model, which predicted a likely support for the first four attacks, is conclusive. Yet this truce in party politics was only relative as the right-wing 'majority' never showed a real desire to rally alongside the socialists. In fact members of the RPR and UDF repeatedly blamed the socialists for the situation. However none of the major figures of the government criticized the socialists. More importantly, the Prime Minister avoided the controversy and never criticized publicly the opposition or President Mitterrand. On the contrary, the two heads of the executive cooperated with one another throughout the crisis.

The high occurrence of attacks since the return to power of the Right could have been interpreted by the socialists as a sign that the government was not handling national security well, hence encouraging the opposition to be critical. Yet the opposition (and the media) knew full well that the group responsible for this series of attacks (i.e. CSPPA/FARL) had already committed several terrorist acts on the French territory

before the March legislative elections. Both the Right and the Left shared a common responsibility with regards to French foreign policy in the Middle East. Under these circumstances the socialist opposition could hardly afford to criticize the government. Besides, foreign policy is traditionally the domain of the President (even during periods of cohabitation). Any criticism of the government could have been perceived as a criticism of Mitterrand.

Criticisms coming from the RPR and the UDF only served one purpose it seems, namely protect and maintain their ownership of the national security issue, particularly with senatorial elections due at the end of September.[231] The series of measures taken in the aftermath of the second attack served to reassure the people but also reestablish the Right's credibility. In the event, the Right gained seats in the Senate and the socialists lost a few.

The attitude of some right-wing politicians also confirms a recurrent unwillingness to side with the socialists under any circumstances, a pattern of behaviour already noticeable in 1982 (see case study two). The fact that the Left was not anymore in power in 1986 mattered little to some within the Right who still resented the election of a socialist president. Accusations of permissiveness also served to delegitimize Mitterrand.

Radical parties behaved as expected. The communists despite being critical of any form of terrorism were even more critical of the government's reaction and what they perceived to be a curtailment of basic civil liberties. For its part the Front National, as it had done before under similar circumstances, used the events of September to put forth its electoral program (a pro-FN demonstration was organized in Paris amid chants of "Le

---

[231] The socialist government set free a number of members of Action Directe and offered a sanctuary for former activists of the Italian Brigate Rosse.

Pen Président!') and criticize the RPR for failing to live up to its promises. The assault on the RPR's ownership of security related issues could not be clearer.

Case study four: Assassination of Georges Besse (November 17, 1986)

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

Two months after the series of attacks masterminded by the CSPPA ended, Action Directe committed its most infamous fait d'armes, the murder of Georges Besse, CEO of the state-owned car manufacturer Renault.[232] George Besse was the second high ranking official to be assassinated by Action Directe after General René Audran who had fallen victim to them in 1985.

The political situation was very similar to the one described in the previous case, with one important difference, after letting Chirac take the center stage following his electoral victory Mitterrand was trying to regain the upper-hand. As a consequence the *cohabitation* with Chirac and his right-wing government became tenser.

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

The model suggests that following this act of terror (low magnitude and high repetition) the opposition was likely to support the government. Yet beyond the model, the identity of the target (representative of the state) favoured a rally.

[232] The press argued that Action Directe which had not been in the spotlight for some time, had waited for the CSPPA to be finished with its own attacks.

Mitterrand, again abroad on an official visit, asked all political forces to unite in the fight against terrorism.[233] From Chirac to Jospin, the political elite paid its respect to a man who gave his career to public service.[234] The elite was undeniably in shock, yet aside from the traditional marks of respect, it was politics as usual. However, on November 19 following an intervention by Le Pen (FN) at the National Assembly during which the far-right leader asked the government for more actions and less rhetoric, Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua replied by blaming once more the socialists for their carelessness and permissiveness with terrorism, and reminding everyone in the assembly that the socialists had released over 300 members of the Italian Red Brigade.[235] Yet for the most part, the political elite remained silent on matters pertaining to national security. By November 21 *Le Monde* stopped running articles on the murder of Besse. The order of the day was the rising tension between Mitterrand and Chirac.[236]

Despite being labelled an anti-capitalist terrorist organization, the far left had no empathy for Action Directe's latest operation. The Communist Party condemned the assassination vigorously and *L'Humanité*, the party's newspaper, remarked that the blood of a CEO will not solve the class struggle.[237] Even more meaningful under the circumstances was the reaction of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), a trade union close to the Communist Party, which declared that this act of violence was against everything this union was standing for. As a sign of respect, the CGT called off a

[233] *Le Monde* November 19, 1986.
[234] *Le Monde* November 19, 1986.
[235] *Le Monde* November 21, 1986.
[236] "La cohabitation entre M. Mitterrand et M. Chirac est entrée dans une phase de concurrence quotidienne" – i.e. "The cohabitation between Mitterrand and Chirac has now entered a phase of daily competition". *Le Monde* November 21, 1986.
[237] "Le sang d'un PDG dans un caniveau ne règle pas les problèmes de la lutte des classes" – i.e. "The blood of a CEO in a gutter does not solve issues of class struggle". *Le Monde* November 18, 1986.

demonstration planned against the restructuring plan designed by Besse shortly before his death and which would have laid off numerous factory workers at the Renault plants.[238]

For his part, Le Pen traditionally very critical of the mainstream parties in similar circumstances asked for a national union against terrorists.[239]

By and large the French political elite behaved as expected following the assassination of Claude Besse, with expressions of sympathy coming from all sides of the political spectrum, even from the far-left and the far-right. As hypothesized in a previous chapter, the murder of a well-known and well-respected agent of the state hardly represented an opportunity to criticize the government. However the lingering resentment of part of the Right vis-à-vis the Left led a prominent member of Chirac's government to once more lambast the socialists for being too permissive with terrorists. Interestingly enough, this criticism of the socialist legacy came in response to a similar critique directed by the leader of the Front National at Chirac's government, further confirming that the credibility of the Right on national security was a particularly sensitive subject-matter. Yet by November 1986 the French political elite had grown weary of terrorist acts, and the controversy did not last.

---

[238] *Le Monde* November 19, 1986.
[239] *Le Monde* November 19, 1986.

6.4. The period 1990-2006 reconsidered

The previous section has tested the validity of the magnitude-repetition model for a selection of terrorist attacks not included in the database. By and large the model withstood the test, and the analysis of four case studies supports the claim that both the magnitude and repetition variables are linked to the decision to support or be critical of the government. Yet these two variables represent only part of the story. Other contextual factors such as foreign affairs and the electoral timetable have an effect on party behaviour too, even in the midst of a terrorist crisis. More importantly, the analysis suggests that party behaviour (at least in France) might be influenced by more general political considerations, such as the perceived legitimacy (or lack thereof) of the government and head of state. To some extent the behaviour of political elites is also determined by previous attitudes under similar circumstances. Thus taking into considerations the reaction to past events might shed light on subsequent behaviour. These four case studies are therefore particularly informative for the period under consideration, namely 1990-2006.

The following analysis focuses on cases where the reaction of the mainstream political elite did not conform to expectations, that is cases where the magnitude and repetition variables did not seem to influence their behaviour. On the basis of the typology presented in chapter four (see table I) 20 terrorist acts taking place in France over the period 1990-2006 do not conform to the ideal-type model (see table XI). They can be classified into five groups:

1. The ideal-type model predicts that the opposition is **likely to support** the government: in reality the opposition **did not support** the government (6 cases).
2. The ideal-type model predicts **no support**; in reality the opposition gave the government its **support** (1 case).
3. The ideal-type model predicts **no reaction**; in reality the opposition gave the government its **support** (10 cases).
4. The ideal-type model predicts **no reaction**; in reality the opposition **did not support** the government (1 case).
5. The ideal-type model predicts that the opposition is **likely to support** the government; in reality there was **no reaction** (2 cases).

The prediction and outcome for each case is summarized in table XI. Each category is analyzed separately as I try to uncover which variables might account for the observed divergence from the model. It should be noted that there is not a single case where the model wrongly predicts support. I also ask why the opposition chose to support the government when both the low magnitude and high repetition (likely support) gave the opposition perhaps more leeway to criticize the government.[240]

[240] There a 13 acts falling into this category.

Table XI. Expected and actual reaction of the mainstream opposition based on the magnitude-repetition model (divergent cases – period 1990-2006)

Case	Magnitude	Repetition	Expected Outcome	Actual Outcome
Assassination of Bakhtiar and his secretary – linked to agents of the Iranian government (1991)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Explosion at subway station Musée-d'Orsay – linked to the GIA (1995)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Explosion at a Gendarmerie in Borgo – linked to Corsican separatists (2001)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Assassination of Santoni – linked to Corsican separatists (2001)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Assassination of two people – linked to Corsican separatists (2001)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Assassination – linked to Corsican separatists (2001)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Support
Explosion at subway station Port-Royal – linked to the GIA (1996)	High	High	No Support	Support
Assassination of an Iranian opposition leader – linked to agents of the Iranian government (1990)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Shootings aimed at North African immigrants – linked to the far-right (1994)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Assassination of Sahraoui – linked to the GIA (1995)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Assassination of Erignac – linked to Corsican separatists (1998)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Explosions in Ajaccio – linked to Corsican separatists (1999)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Explosion at a McDonald's Restaurant – linked to the ARB (2000)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Assassination – linked to Corsican separatists (2000)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Explosions in Nice – linked to Corsican separatists (2003)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Assassination – linked to Corsican separatists (2003)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Explosion at the Indonesian embassy in Paris – linked to an Islamic group (2004)	Low	Low	No Reaction	Support
Assassination of Rossi and his bodyguard – linked to Corsican separatists (2001)	Low	Low	No Reaction	No Support
Explosion at a Turkish cultural center – linked to the PKK (1995)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Reaction
Assassination – linked to agents of the Iranian government (1995)	Low	High	Likely Support	No Reaction

6.4.1. No support instead of likely support

Amongst acts combining a low magnitude in terms of fatalities with a high number of previous attacks, six did not conform to expectations and elicited criticisms. The repetition of attacks (all of them were preceded by at least 6 terrorist events) might have played a role. Patience in some of these cases might have been running thin, particularly with regard to the situation in Corsica where four of these six attacks took place. The debate on Corsica had gradually heated up following the assassination of Prefect Erignac (detailed in case study six). The 'Jospin plan' further fuelled the debate and by the summer and fall of 2001 (when these four attacks took place) the French political elite was more divided than ever.[241] Even after a large explosive detonated outside a gendarmerie in Borgo on July 23, 2001 (injuring 22 gendarmes) the opposition refused to back the government. In fact, the group that claimed the attack fuelled the debate even more by accusing the French 'colonial' state of deceiving the Corsican people with its pseudo-plan to give away more powers to the islanders. Criticisms were voiced as much by the Right as by parties from the Left.[242] And when a month later François Santoni, a separatist opposed to the 'Jospin plan', was gunned down by a rival faction both the RPR and UDF blamed the government for its inability to maintain order in Corsica and force terrorists to lay down the arms.[243]

The following case study is a further illustration that political elites react not only to the terrorist event but also to the management or perceived mismanagement of the crisis by the government.

---

[241] Other attacks of lesser magnitude took place throughout the summer and only worsened the perception that the Corsican problem was spinning out of control.
[242] *Le Monde* July 27, 2001
[243] *Libération* August 18, 2001.

Case study five: Explosion in a subway train near the station Musée-d'Orsay in Paris (October 17, 1995)

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

By the end of October 1995 France had gone through what was arguably one of the worst waves of terrorist attacks to hit the country since the Second World War. The series of attacks masterminded by Algerian terrorists had started in early July and had claimed ten lives and wounded over 200 people. One last explosion (the eighth since the beginning of the crisis) aboard a subway train during morning rush hour would injure another 29 people.[244]

After two failed attempts Jacques Chirac (RPR) had been elected President in May 1995, two months before the series of attacks started.[245] More importantly, after 14 years in opposition – interrupted by two brief spells in *cohabitation* – the Right was once again in charge of both the executive and legislative branch of the state, with Prime Minister Alain Juppé (RPR) heading a right/center-right coalition made up of the RPR and UDF. The Socialist Party which had lost the 1993 legislative elections in dramatic fashion retaining only 68 seats – hence the second *cohabitation* – remained the main opposition party in parliament. However by October 1995, the traditional honeymoon period had run its course and public dissatisfaction with the government was growing, eventually triggering massive demonstrations throughout France.

---

[244] Another two terrorist acts were foiled and did not cause any casualties.
[245] In the second round of the presidential election Chirac had defeated Lionel Jospin (PS).

After a long and murderous summer during which the left-wing opposition never once failed to rally to the support of the government, a certain weariness was taking hold of the political elite. Signs of impatience towards the government's inability to put a stop to the attacks were becoming more ominous, notably amongst backbenchers. More importantly, just a few days before the explosion near the Quai d'Orsay (incidentally the headquarters of French diplomacy), President Chirac was vehemently criticized by the opposition for scheduling a meeting with Algerian President Liamine Zéroual the week after during a United Nations summit in New York. Many within the opposition feared that this meeting would demonstrate even further that France was meddling in Algerian affairs and signal that the French government had thrown its weight in favour of the incumbent for the upcoming Algerian presidential election.[246]

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

As an instance of low magnitude and high repetition, support for the government was likely. In fact if the opposition's recent behaviour was any indication this outcome appeared even more likely as the leading figures in the Socialist Party had not failed to rally once following the previous seven attacks. Yet in the midst of the controversy surrounding the Chirac-Zéroual meeting, the latest attack could also further embolden those critical of the government's policy towards Algeria.

Prime Minister Juppé reacted swiftly to the news of the latest attack and addressed the deputies present at the National Assembly mere hours after the explosion. His intentions

[246] Jospin regretted the meeting and explained that in view of the current terrorist crisis France ought not to be seen as a contradicting actor. *Libération* October 18, 1995.

it seems were to raise the flag and ask the opposition to rally around it, much like they did after each attack since the start of the crisis three months before. After a brief opening address in which Philippe Séguin (RPR), president of the National Assembly, announced the unanimous condemnation of the attack by all deputies[247], Juppé declared:

> "J'en appelle à la solidarité de tous. Je veux remercier les responsables de toutes les formations politiques qui, depuis le début de cette crise, ont fait preuve, dans leurs réactions, d'un esprit de responsabilité (…). Il est dans la vie d'une nation des circonstances où les citoyens rassemblés doivent faire face tous ensemble aux défis qui pourraient mettre en jeu les intérêts supérieurs du pays".[248]

Mindful of the existing controversy, Juppé reminded the deputies that the meeting between Chirac and Zéroual was not a sign of support for one of the candidates, but merely an indication that Algeria's difficulties could only be resolved through dialogue.

Juppé's appeal was initially successful and managed to dampen down criticisms. The opposition displayed both its solidarity with the government and its respect for the victims. Addressing the deputies after the Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius (president of the socialist group in the National Assembly) rallied unambiguously:

> "Je voudrais, M. le Premier ministre, tirant les leçons de l'expérience que nous avons nous-mêmes connue, sachant par ailleurs les divergences qui peuvent nous opposer, vous dire que dans ces moment-là, nous souhaitons, au-delà de toute divergence, faire prévaloir la solidarité nationale dans la lutte contre des violences inadmissibles."[249]

---

[247] "Je suis sûr de me faire l'interprète de la représentation nationale unanime pour dénoncer solennellement des méthodes ignobles qu'aucune cause ni aucune passion ne saurait expliquer" – i.e. "I am sure to speak for everyone in the National Assembly when I solemnly denounce this vile methods that nothing could ever explain". *Le Monde* October 19, 1995.

[248] "I call upon the solidarity of everyone. I want to thank the leaders of all political parties who since the beginning of this crisis have shown through their actions a spirit of responsibility (..). There are times in the life of a nation when the citizens gather to face together challenges that could jeopardize the country's supreme interests". *Libération* October 18, 1995.

[249] "I would like, Mr. Prime Minister, bearing in mind lessons from the past, and being fully aware of the disagreements that exist between us, to tell you that during moments such as this one we wish, beyond all disagreements, to see national solidarity prevail in the struggle against this unacceptable violence". *Libération* October 18, 1995.

Lionel Jospin, although less eloquently than Fabius, asked for the complete solidarity of the national community.[250] François Hollande (spokesperson of the PS) remarked that the PS had voiced its doubts about the meeting between Chirac and Zéroual but that today, faced with a new attack, the socialists should not say anything that could prove dangerous for the national community.[251] This display of solidarity was concluded by Michel Péricard, speaking for the RPR, who predictably declared that in moments such as this our union behind the Prime Minister and the President is the only one that counts.[252]

This unity was again on display when Prime Minister Juppé and the leaders of all parliamentary groups met to discuss the situation. Yet backbenchers were still voicing their scepticism with regard to the Chirac-Zéroual meeting,[253] and former socialist Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy came out publicly against this meeting.[254]

By the following day (two days after the terrorist attack) the unified front was already collapsing. Jospin insisted again that Chirac should not be meeting with Zéroual.[255] Soon after, the leader of the socialist group in the Senate as well as other prominent socialists followed suit expressing similar concerns.[256] Meanwhile other leading socialists such as former ministers Claude Cheysson and Jean-Pierre

---

[250] *Le Parisien* October 18, 1995.
[251] "Nous avons exprimé, il y a quelques jours, nos doutes. Aujourd'hui, face à cet attentat, nous ne voulons rien dire qui puisse alimenter en quoi que ce soit un processus qui serait dangereux pour notre communauté" – i.e. "We have expressed a few days ago our doubts. Today, following this attack, we do not want to say anything that could in any way sustain a process that could be dangerous for our community". *Libération* October 18, 1995.
[252] "En ces moments, seule compte notre union derrière vous et derrière le président de la République" – i.e. "During these times, our support of the government and of the President of the Republic is the only one that counts". *Le Monde* October 19, 1995.
[253] *Libération* October 18, 1995
[254] *Le Monde* October 19, 1995.
[255] *Les Échos* October 19, 1995.
[256] *Le Monde* October 20, 1995.

Chevènement expressed their disagreement with their colleagues arguing that a meeting between two heads of state was not abnormal.[257]

The meeting became even more of a controversial issue after a London-based Saudi financed newspaper, *Asharq Al Awsat*, reported that in exchange for the end of their terrorist campaign, the GIA had allegedly asked the French government to cancel the meeting between the two presidents.[258] Some within the RPR claimed that by opposing the meeting the socialists were submitting to the terrorists.[259] Finally two days before the meeting was due, the Algerian authorities decided to cancel it, providing the socialists with even more ammunitions to criticize the government. Fabius who less than a week before had received a round of applause from the right-wing deputies for his support declared that the government's handling of this affair (i.e. the Chirac-Zéroual meeting) was the epitome of bad decision-making.[260]

As it had done previously during this crisis (see case study seven) the Communist Party decided to back the government pointing out through Alain Bocquet (leader of the communist group in the National Assembly) that democrats must join their forces to defeat terrorism.[261] With regards to the Chirac-Zéroual meeting, Robert Hue (secretary general of the communist party) claimed that there was nothing wrong about heads of state meeting one another, adding that France's policy could not be changed under the pressure of terrorists.[262]

---

[257] *Le Monde* October 20, 1995.
[258] This was one of four alleged exigencies. *Le Monde* October 20, 1995.
[259] *Le Monde* October 20, 1995.
[260] "[Ce qui a] commencé par une maladresse (…) s'est terminée par un camouflet. C'est l'exemple de ce qu'il ne faut pas faire" – i.e. "What started with a blunder (…) has ended with an affront. This is the example of what should not be done". *Le Monde* Octobre 24, 1995.
[261] *Les Echos* October 18, 1995.
[262] *Le Monde* October 20, 1995.

The Front National for its part remained on the offensive blaming the government for trying to deliberately implicate France in the Algerian conflict,[263] and claiming that contrary to declarations made by members of the government terrorism was on the rise.[264] After the cancellation of the Chirac-Zéroual meeting, the Front National through Bruno Mégret (number two in the party hierarchy) declared that Chirac had not only ridiculed and humiliated France, but also proven his incompetence.[265]

The magnitude-repetition model, in view of the above declarations, is inconclusive. The likely support predicted by the model came through initially but despite sympathetic declarations by prominent opposition leaders the rally did not last more than a couple of days. This initial support as well as the auspicious behaviour of the opposition throughout the crisis suggest that the socialists were not becoming impatient with the government. In fact the repetition variable was probably not a factor in the decision by prominent left-wing figures to break away from the rally. After all the GIA-led terrorist campaign was perpetrated in retaliation to an Algerian policy shared by left-wing and right-wing governments alike.[266] French meddling in Algerian affairs was a collective responsibility. Thus apart from the Front National, none of the parties blamed the government for its inability to end the attacks. The rally ended because prominent members of the Left felt that Chirac's meeting with Zéroual was ill-timed and ill-advised considering the ongoing crisis. The controversy and in particular the abrupt decision by Algerian authorities to cancel the meeting presented the socialists with an opportunity to criticize the

---

[263] *Libération* October 18, 1995.
[264] *Le Monde* October 19, 1995.
[265] *Le Monde* Octobre 24, 1995.
[266] In fact, the decision to side with the Algerian government to snatch the electoral victory out of the FIS jaw was taken by François Mitterrand (PS) in the early 1990s.

government for its lack of judgment without being perceived as disloyal to the country. Thus the key factor in ending the rally was not the duration of the crisis (or the repetition of attacks), much less the magnitude, but rather a basic disagreement as to how to handle relations with Algeria. To be sure, the difficulties experienced elsewhere by the government (notably with regard to the economy) and its growing unpopularity within the population were of course conducive to criticisms of its handling of foreign affairs.

The Front National as it had done previously used the opportunity to ridicule the RPR on its own turf (i.e. national security). In addition, the identity of the terrorists played into the hands of a party bent on curbing immigration from North Africa. For its part, the Communist Party behaved unexpectedly. Not only did the party refrain from criticizing Juppé's right-wing government, but they were openly supportive throughout the crisis and even backed Chirac's decision to meet with Zéroual. To some extent this surprising behaviour was part of a wider strategy whereby the communists would try to offer constructive rather than systematic criticisms, which meant siding with the government on occasions. Besides the party had decided to give Chirac the benefit of the doubt during his first few months in office (see further analysis of the communist behaviour during this series of attacks in case study seven).[267]

[267] Throughout the campaign for the 1995 presidential election, Jacques Chirac had buit momentum by promising to address, once elected, what he called "la fracture sociale", namely the increasing social gap between what former Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin would later refer to as "la France d'en haut" and "la France d'en bas" – i.e. upper-France and lower-France.

6.4.2. Support instead of no support

The explosion at subway station Port-Royal in Paris on December 3, 1996, provided a unique and intriguing case with a rally occurring despite the magnitude-repetition model predicting otherwise. The attack, which killed four and injured another 128 people, was preceded by 25 other terrorist acts all happening during Alain Juppé's term as Prime Minister. Both high magnitude and high repetition were conducive to criticisms of the right-wing government, yet instead the opposition gave its support. Former socialist Prime Minister Laurent Fabius received a round of applause from right-wing MPs by declaring at the National Assembly:

> "Nous avons toujours soutenu les actions des pouvoirs publics qui visaient à lutter contre ce fléau, et nous avons récusé toute exploitation politicienne. Il en sera de même aujourd'hui." [268]

Another socialist leader, Jospin, remarked in similar fashion that the socialists must work to bring the population together.[269] François Bayrou (UDF) and Jean-François Mansel (RPR), for their part, declared that this moment called for all French people to rally behind the President.[270]

---

[268] "We have always backed anti-terrorist actions taken by the authorities, and we have rejected any political exploitation. We will not behave any differently today". *Le Monde* December 4, 1996.

[269] "Notre seule attitude en tant que force de progrès c'est de continuer à souder la population et à repousser les actes terroristes" – i.e. "Our only conviction as a force of progress is to carry on bringing the population together and pushing back terrorism". *Libération* December 4, 1996.

[270] "C'est le moment pour les Français de marquer leur solidarité et de faire preuve de la même entente et de la même capacité de se réunir derrière le président de la République, qui est en charge aujourd'hui de la sécurité et de l'unité de la France" – i.e. "The moment has come for French people to express their solidarity and to demonstrate their capacity to rally around the President of the Republic, who today is in charge of the security and unity of France" (F. Bayrou). "Nous saluons la rapidité et la détermination avec laquelle le président de la République s'est adressé à nos compatriotes et nous les appelons, dans ces circonstances, à se rassembler autour de lui" – i.e. "We salute the swiftness and determination with which the President of the Republic addressed our fellow citizens, and we ask them under these circumstances to rally around him" (J-F. Mancel). *Le Monde* December 5, 1996.

The communists gave a limited and essentially silent support by expressing through their leader Robert Hue their utmost indignation.[271] However, the Front National as usual went on the offensive and denounced the inconsequence and weakness of an inept government.[272]

More than a year after France was hit by a wave of attacks orchestrated by the GIA (see case studies five and seven), this was obviously a severe setback for the government, particularly at a time when President Chirac and Prime Minister Juppé were facing constant criticisms for their decision to embark on a policy of economic austerity to meet the criteria set by the European Commission for the entry into the Euro zone. With an unemployment rate rising, and a President and a Prime Minister at their lowest in the polls, the government was particularly weak and thus an easy prey for opposition parties. Yet surprisingly the socialists avoided criticizing a government that was growing unpopular by the day and decided to be openly supportive.

The socialists' attitude is less puzzling if one considers the magnitude and the sheer atrocity of the attack (four dead and 128 wounded), which made it one of the worst terrorist acts in recent decades in terms of overall casualties (fatalities and wounded). Did the magnitude variable offset the effects of the high number of previous attacks? This is clearly an interesting working hypothesis. It implies that a large number of victims might trigger a rally, regardless of whether fatalities are numerous, and regardless of the

---

[271] *Les Echos* December 4, 1996.

[272] "Une nouvelle fois, des citoyens innocents ont payé de leur vie l'inconséquence et la faiblesse d'un gouvernement incapable. Les propos lénifiants d'un Jacques Chirac accablé sont dérisoires au regard des actes criminels qui se multiplient sur notre territoire (…). Aucun commanditaire des attentats terroristes de ces dernières années n'a réellement été trouvé et châtié. La France n'a pas besoin de fermeté dans les mots mais dans les actes" – i.e. "Again innocents have paid with their life the inconsequence and weakness of a useless government. Jacques Chirac's pathetic declaration is ridiculous un view of the ongoing series of criminal acts taking place on our territory (…). None of those behind these recent terrorist attacks have been found and punished. France does not need tough words but tough acts". *Le Monde* December 5, 1996.

duration of the crisis and the number of previous attacks.[273] This would suggest that deaths as well as wounded should possibly be factored into a magnitude index. The explosion at station Port-Royal was meant to kill as many people as possible. Although many escaped with their lives the threat to national security must have been obvious to most members of the political elite, hence their unequivocal support of the government.

The French political elite was also working under the assumption that this latest attack was the work of Algerian jihadists, possibly even of members of the GIA, a group responsible for the 1995 series of attacks. As mentioned previously, Left and Right shared responsibility for French meddling in Algerian affairs and were thus unlikely to criticize one another for what was arguably a byproduct of this meddling. In any case, the socialists had little to gain by criticizing the government over its handling of terrorism. The cost of being perceived as unsympathetic to the many victims and even disloyal in the face of an external threat was not inexistent. The government was in enough trouble as it was, digging its own grave by pursuing widely unpopular economic policies.

The Front National on the other hand was at liberty to criticize this failed Algerian policy and call into question the government's credibility on matters of national security, unlike the Communist Party which, as it had done throughout the 1995 wave of attacks, refrained from criticizing the government.

[273] Other attacks that caused many wounded (see case study five) did not have similar outcomes which suggests that fatalities are still central to the concept of magnitude. The number of wounded at Port-Royal was of course off the charts. The database indicates that attacks occuring in Spain and resulting in high numbers of wounded triggered rallies as well: 53 wounded (no deaths) on July 20, 1996; 60 wounded (no deaths) on November 6, 2001; 42 wounded (no deaths) on February 9, 2005. ETA was blamed for all three attacks.

6.4.3. Support instead of no reaction

Terrorist attacks of low magnitude, much like foiled attacks, are unlikely to be reported by the media, let alone trigger any kind of rally.[274] Obviously this is only a general rule and certain acts of low magnitude will resonate enough to register on the media radar and elicit a political response. Between 1990 and 2006 ten such acts triggered a rally, although the ideal-type model predicted that there should be no reaction at all.

A number of reasons can account for this outcome. The first explanation rests yet again on a wider definition of magnitude, one that includes fatalities but also wounded. The previous sub-section raised this very possibility pointing out that a high tally of wounded could signal an elevated threat to national security and therefore have the same effect on the political elite as a high number of fatalities. Out of the ten acts mentioned above, three injured between 8 and 16 people. The perpetrators most certainly intended to kill as many as possible, thus the potential number of deaths that these explosions could have caused is here more relevant than the actual number of victims. *Le Monde* certainly treated these attacks like any other high magnitude attack, with a front-page and in depth coverage. As the motto goes “if it bleeds it leads”, not “if it kills it leads”. Faced with destruction and mutilation, mainstream political elites are likely to react by rallying, even if no one died as a result of the attack.

Another explanation for this atypical outcome points to the target. Three out of the ten terrorist acts were aimed at representatives of the state and thus, as suggested by the statistical analysis, more likely to result in support for the government. The assassination

---

[274] This is why I left out of the dataset acts of terrorism that claimed no lives and injured 5 people or less, as preliminary survey indicated that acts causing such a low number of casualties (and no fatalities) were most often ignored by the media.

of Claude Erignac, discussed in details below, is a particularly enlightening example. In fact, the attack on a state's representative need not be particularly 'successful' to elicit support. The failed assassination attempt on President Jacques Chirac on July 14, 2004 is a case in point. The incident involving a lone amateurish gunman was sufficient to trigger a wave of sympathy – albeit a limited one – even though Chirac was not injured and never in any danger of being hurt.[275] Yet the combination of the target (head of state), the date (Bastille day) and the location (Champs-Élysées) – three powerful symbols for the French Republic – made it impossible for any politician on either side of the political divide (even amongst radical elites) not to express their support.

The impact of the target and identity of the victim is apparent in another case involving an attack on guest workers from Africa, which provoked uproar and indignation within political parties. Attacks against minorities – particularly ethnic, religious and linguistic – can represent fertile grounds for rallies, even though one must wonder whether in these particular cases support is given to the government or to the victims themselves.

[275] Both far-right leaders Jean-Marie Le Pen (FN) and Bruno Mégret (MNR) condemned the act. Mégret, president of the MNR – of which Maxime Brunerie, the shooter, was a member – wrote to Chirac expressing his "vive emotion" – i.e. "profound emotion" – and his sympathy, telling the president he was shocked of the risk this terrorist act brought upon Chirac and the institution he represents. *Le Monde* July 17, 2002. The socialist through François Holland expressed their solidarity with Chirac, and declared that by targeting the president the would-be assassin had targeted the Republic. *Libération* July 16, 2002. Similar concerns and expressions of sympathy were voiced by other socialist leaders, notably the mayor of Paris and the president of the socialist group at the national assembly.

Case study six: The assassination of Claude Erignac (February 6, 1998)

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

On the evening of February 6, 1998, shortly before joining his wife at a concert in Ajaccio, Claude Erignac (prefect of Corsica) was gunned down at point blank on a sidewalk. Erignac, who had chosen not to have bodyguards with him, succumbed immediately. Corsican nationalists were blamed right away for the assassination.

For the third time under the Fifth Republic, France is governed by a President and a Prime Minister from different sides of the political divide. However unlike the two previous *cohabitations*, this time a President from the right-wing RPR, Jacques Chirac, is sharing power with a left-wing government headed by Prime Minister Lionel Jospin (PS).[276] In addition, whereas the two previous *cohabitations* had occurred at the end of the President's seven-year tenure, this third *cohabitation* started relatively early in the President's mandate and would go on for another five years until the next legislative election in 2002.

The Socialist Party had more seats than any other party but was still short of the absolute majority in the National Assembly. As a result, Lionel Jospin was forced to govern with coalition partners, notably the Communist Party and the Greens. Much to the surprise of pundits and political analysts the *cohabitation* was running relatively smoothly, and both Jacques Chirac and Lionel Jospin enjoyed relatively high approval

[276] From 1986 to 1988 and 1993 to 1995 François Mitterrand (Parti Socialiste) 'cohabited' with respectively Jacques Chirac (RPR) and Édouard Balladur (RPR).

ratings in the polls (Becker 2003). The assassination of Erignac was the first serious act of terrorism since the socialists' return to power.

2) Expectations, reactions, and implications for the model

According to the magnitude-repetition model, the assassination of Prefect Erignac (low magnitude and low repetition) should have elicited no reaction from the political elite, and yet it resulted in one of the largest rallies in recent years.

Since 1975 the French state had been targeted several times by Corsican separatists, but never before had one of these factions succeeded in murdering such a high-ranking official, indeed the highest ranked civil servant on the island. In an indication of how serious this attack was perceived by the higher echelon of the government, President Chirac reacted in person, rather than through his spokesperson, to the assassination. Solemnly, on the front steps of the Élysée Palace, Chirac declared to the press that the assassination of a representative of the state was a barbarous act of extreme gravity and without precedent in French history.[277] Echoing Chirac's statement, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin declared soon after that the nation as a whole had been hit, and that the state had to present a unified front.[278] Other majority leaders reacted in similar fashion.

[277] "L'assassinat du représentant de l'État en Corse est un acte barbare d'une extrême gravité et sans précédent dans notre histoire" – i.e. "The assassination of a representative of the state in Corsica is a barbarous act of extreme gravity and without precedent in our history". *Le Monde* February 8, 1998.
[278] "Cet acte inqualifiable et abject, en frappant le représentant de l'État atteint la nation toute entière" – i.e. "By stricking the representative of the state, this despicable act affects the entire nation". *Le Monde* February 8, 1998. "Nous aurons besoin de l'unité absolue de l'État" – i.e. "We will need the state to be completely united". *Le Monde* February 13, 1998.

Laurent Fabius (PS), president of the National Assembly, called for the strongest possible condemnation by the national community.[279]

The mainstream opposition was unanimous in its condemnation. Philippe Séguin (president of the RPR) declared that the state must chase after the assassins in order to defend the Republic and preserve national unity.[280] Adding his voice to the chorus, former Prime Minister Alain Juppé insisted on the necessity to come together as a nation to guarantee Corsica's civil peace. François Bayrou in the name of the UDF (center right) declared that such an event must rally people beyond political cleavages.[281]

The rally amongst mainstream elites was complete, with the three main parties calling explicitly on everyone to unite.

A week after the tragic event, during a ceremony organized in Ajaccio and attended by leaders of the Left and the Right, Chirac declared:

> "C'est la France unanime, c'est la France debout, par-delà les différences, par-delà les clivages politiques, que nous représentons ici (…) La France est une et indivisible".[282]

A similar unanimity was displayed the following day during question period at the National Assembly.[283]

The only dissenting voice on the Left came from Michel Charasse – former minister under Mitterrand and a renowned loose cannon – who declared that in the last 30 years the state and the Republic had not been doing their job and were effectively the true

---

[279] "C'est à la République qu'on a voulu porter un coup. Ce crime odieux appelle la réprobation la plus totale de l'ensemble de la communauté nationale" – i.e. "The Republic has been targeted. This odious crime calls for the absolute disapproval by the entire national community". *Le Monde* February 8, 1998.
[280] *Le Figaro* February 7, 1998.
[281] "L'assassinat d'un préfet est un acte d'une portée symbolique si lourde qu'elle doit tous nous réunir" – i.e. "The assassination of a prefect is an act of such symbolic value that it must bring us all together". *Le Monde* February 10, 1998.
[282] "Beyond our differences, beyond political cleavages, we represent a unanimous France, a France standing tall. France is one and indivisible". *Le Monde* February 11, 1998.
[283] *Le Monde* February 12, 1998.

assassins of Claude Erignac.[284] For his part Jean-Louis Debré (RPR), former Minister of the Interior, criticized Jospin for not sending more police forces on the island. However, both Charasse and Debré were by then minor players in French politics with no real impact on the political debate.

The two main radical parties reacted in noticeably different ways. Robert Hue (leader of the Communist Party) declared that the Republic had been targeted and that the entire national community had to denounce this odious crime.[285] Whereas Jean-Marie Le Pen, who incidentally was not invited to the ceremony in Ajaccio (unlike Robert Hue), voiced strong criticism at the political elite declaring that the assassination was proof that the social fabric of the nation was falling apart and disorder was on the rise.[286] He concluded by accusing the different governments (left and right) of connivance with the Corsican terrorists.

What is particularly interesting about the reaction to this terrorist act is that the distinction between opposition and majority was blurred once again.[287] The RPR and UDF (right and center right) were the main opposition parties in the lower house but still retained a sizeable share of the executive power through President Chirac. Thus both the socialists and their right-wing opposition stood to gain from a rally. As it turned out, the Left call for unity was reciprocated by the Right. In addition, the very nature of *cohabitation* made a rally more likely, regardless of the specificities of the terrorist act, the unwritten rule

[284] *Le Monde* February 10, 1998.
[285] *Le Monde* February 8, 1998.
[286] *Le Figaro* February 9, 1998.
[287] See case studies three and four.

being that on matters of foreign affairs and security policy a cohabitation government speaks with one voice.[288]

The breadth of the rally in terms of support across the political spectrum is also a consequence of the inclusiveness of the coalition government led by Jospin. Despite having the largest number of MPs, the socialists governed with five junior partners in what has been termed a *majorité plurielle*.[289] To be fair, these parties' commitment to the government was at times questionable (many programmatic differences and even incompatibilities existed within this plural majority, notably between the ecologists and communists). Yet this tragic event provided an opportunity to project an image of cohesion within government.

Both the Right and the Left had over the years been unable to deal with Corsican nationalists and put an end to terrorism on the island. Thus none of them was really in a position to voice any criticism. The rhetoric across the board was similar and did not oppose hawks to doves. Softer and tougher approaches had been tried over the years by left-wing and right-wing governments to little avail. Jospin, for instance, declared that negotiation was no longer an option: "il n'y a rien à négocier en Corse" – i.e. "there is nothing to negotiate".[290] In addition, the relatively short period of time (i.e. eight month) during which the Jospin government was in power prior to the assassination of Erignac made any criticism from the Right unlikely.

The shortcoming of the magnitude-repetition model is absolutely not surprising under these circumstances. The French political elite has always been quick to rally

[288] In 1986, the opposition (socialists) was by and large supporting the government.
[289] This governmental alliance lasted from 1997 to 2002 and included five parties : Parti Socialiste, Parti Communiste, Parti Radical de Gauche, Les Verts, and Le Mouvement des Citoyens.
[290] *Le Monde* February 13, 1998.

whenever the state was targeted (see table V), a likely outcome in a country where the Jacobin *tradition* is still very strong. To be fair, the rally was perhaps not so much around the government as around the Republic and what it stands for. The need to uphold the authority of the state and defend its territorial integrity was here the overriding concern, even for the Communist Party, which let us not forget was part of the governing coalition. Yet this is exactly what prompted Le Pen (FN) to criticize the political elite and discredit its record with regards to Corsica. The Front National had little to gain from rallying alongside Chirac (Le Pen's sworn enemy), and its ideological nemesis of the far-left, and little to lose from underlying the inability of the Left and the Right to solve the Corsican problem once and for all. Whereas all parties seemed to behave in the best interest of the state, the Front National behaved in its best electoral interest and cared little for the patriotic imperative.

6.4.4. No support instead of no reaction

The assumption so far has been that attacks characterized by low magnitude and low repetition would not trigger any reaction one way or the other, the rationale being that the low number of victims did not represent a particularly worrisome threat on the national security, whereas the low number of previous attacks did not signal any governmental shortcoming in the handling of national security. Yet the assassination on August 7, 2000, of a nationalist and his bodyguard in Corsica (low magnitude and low repetition) prompted criticisms from the opposition.[291]

[291] Since the assassination of Erignac terrorist activities on the island were of a relatively low magnitude (never more than five wounded).

As in 1998 when Prefect Erignac was killed, France was still governed by a left-leaning coalition government led by Lionel Jospin. However by August 2000 the power-sharing between Chirac and his socialist Prime Minister was not running as smoothly as it did two years before. The governmental coalition itself was experiencing some turbulence, and with municipal elections just a few months away many of the junior partners in the government were keen to distance themselves from the socialists. The Prime Minister's preferred course of action on Corsica (i.e. negotiation with the nationalists) gave them the opportunity they were looking for.

The Right as well as part of the Left opposed Jospin's idea of giving Corsicans greater governing power on the ground that it would set a dangerous precedent for the country. President Chirac himself was critical of the plan. More importantly Jean-Pierre Chevènement (Minister of the Interior since 1997 and leader of the Mouvement des Citoyens) resigned shortly after Rossi's assassination arguing that the end of violence should have been a precondition for negotiations with the nationalists. Likewise Patrick Devedjian (spokesperson of the RPR) stigmatized the negotiation process underway between the government and Corsican nationalists, claiming that it amounted to a concession to violence.[292] Others further to the right such as Charles Pasqua and his recently created anti-European Rassemblement pour la France (RPF) demanded that a state of emergency be declared in Corsica. Le Pen (FN), for his part, accused the government of having committed a crime by holding talks with criminal extremists (i.e.

[292] *Le Monde* August 9, 2000.

nationalists).[293] Mégret (MNR) argued similarly that Jospin was undermining the nation with too much Europe and now too much autonomy for some.[294]

The assassination of Rossi in itself did not warrant any special attention. Murders of this type are unfortunately common occurrences in Corsica and usually do not raise so much as an eyebrow within political elites in Paris. Yet on that occasion with elections nearing and the government's strategy being particularly controversial, parties left and right had every reason to be critical. The view that the government was stuck in a dead-end alley was again what prompted political elites to be critical following another series of attacks on the island a year later.[295]

6.4.5. No reaction instead of likely support

Terrorist groups are often competing for the media's attention in an attempt to draw the attention of political elites to their cause. Traditionally the higher the threat posed by a specific group, the greater the media exposure (see notably Nacos 2007). Thus if two or more groups operate at the same time, media outlets are likely to give a larger coverage to the one causing more disruption. This was notably the case in 1995 during the infamous wave of attacks masterminded by the GIA, which overshadowed the activities of other terrorist groups such as the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK). Amid the horror caused by the GIA operations, an attack by members of the PKK against a Turkish cultural center, which 'only' injured six people, failed to elicit any reaction from the

[293] *Le Monde* August 9, 2000.
[294] Bruno Mégret had left the Front National in 1999 and created a new far-right party (Mouvement National Republicain).
[295] See section 6.4.1.

political elite. Similarly, the assassination of an Iranian national was ignored by the French political elite altogether.[296]

If terrorism is "performance violence" as suggested by Mark Juergensmeyer (2002, 3) than clearly the PKK was surpassed by the GIA.[297] As pointed out in case study four, Action Directe, mindful of the competition, had probably waited for the CSPPA to end its series of attacks in Paris before murdering Georges Besse in November 1986.

We now turn to a series of terrorist acts which, unlike the cases studied in the preceding sections, do not diverge from the magnitude-repetition model but still raise a few questions.

6.4.6. Likely support

So far rallies around the flag have been associated with terrorist acts of high magnitude and low repetition. But what of the 13 acts which scored relatively high on the repetition scale and low on the magnitude scale and prompted the opposition to support the government. Although the support was likely according to the magnitude-repetition model, the opposition given the repetition of attacks could have criticized the government for its inability to put an end to the attacks.

Rallies in three of these cases can perhaps best be explained by the fact that they were part of the 1995 wave of GIA-led attacks. As mentioned previously, such waves are likely perceived by political elites as one major crisis rather than a succession of incidents. In other words, the repetition variable becomes relatively inconsequential

---

[296] These attacks were not reported in *Le Monde* or in any of the other national newspapers and magazine used for the qualitative analysis.

[297] It is possible that the Iranian national was killed (probably by Iran's secret services) during this eventful summer so as to cause a minimum of controversy in the French media.

during waves and therefore governments are less likely to be criticized by the opposition (see case study seven below).

Case study seven: Explosion on Avenue Friedland (August 17, 1995)

1) Account of the event and description of the political situation

A gas canister bomb filled with nails and bolts and planted in a trash bin on Avenue Friedland, near the Arc de Triomphe, exploded at the end of a summer afternoon injuring 17 persons, including four children. The Algerian GIA-Commandement Général claimed responsibility for the bombing, which was linked to a series of terrorist attacks, notably an explosion at subway station Saint-Michel three weeks before that killed seven people. Elites were thus reacting on the assumption that this attack was part of a wave of attacks perpetrated by the same terrorist organization.[298]

The situation is very similar to the one described in case study five, with the RPR and UDF in power, and the Socialist Party in the opposition. By then the new government was already on high alert owing to other terrorist acts linked to Algerian extremists. On top of these pressing national security concerns, the government was facing international condemnation for announcing its decision to carry out nuclear tests in the Pacific.

[298] From July to November 1995, ten attacks linked to the same group were carried out in France (see case study five).

2) Reactions and implications for the model

The reaction of the government was swift. Prime Minister Alain Juppé was present at the scene just an hour after the explosion with a hands-on attitude that marked a noticeable change from the government's immediate reaction following the explosion at Saint-Michel three weeks before.[299]

Support for the government was massive. Predictably the RPR, through its secretary general, indicated it had complete trust in the government's ability to face this violence.[300] More importantly, Jean Glavany (one of the leaders of the PS) declared that the socialists intended to demonstrate their sense of responsibility by supporting the government in its fight against terrorism.[301]

No dissenting voice from the mainstream political elite surfaced during the week that followed. Lionel Jospin (PS), who had been defeated by Chirac in the second round of the presidential election a few months before, did utter a few criticisms but none of them were directed at the government's response to terrorism. In fact, Jospin unambiguously declared that the national community should be united against the terrorist threat. *Le Monde* spoke of an "esprit républicain" – i.e. "a republican spirit". However, Jospin was keen to remind everyone that back in 1982 when France was hit by a similar wave of terrorist attacks, the Right had failed to rally around the socialist

---

[299] Michel Debré's (Minister of the Interior at the time) over-emotional handling of the situation outside the subway station of Saint-Michel had projected an image of a frail government clearly overtaken by the events.

[300] *Le Monde* August 19, 1995.

[301] "[Les socialistes] entendent témoigner du plus grand sens des responsabilités et soutiennent le gouvernement dans tout ce qu'il entreprendra pour lutter efficacement contre le terrorisme" – i.e. "The socialists intend to display the highest sense of responsibility and support the government in whatever it will do to fight terrorism effectively". *Le Monde* August 19, 1995.

government.[302] Jospin's own willingness to support the government was in fact not infinite, and he lost little time to remind his socialist colleagues that they had a duty to oppose the government on other issues.[303] He stigmatized in particular the economic conservatism of Chirac and his rhetoric of social exclusion.

None of the radical parties broke the apparent unity of the political elite. Robert Hue (head of the Communist Party) declared that such odious acts can only trigger a unanimous condemnation, adding that the victims could count on the complete solidarity of the French communists.[304] For his part, Jean-Marie Le Pen (leader of the Front National) was less polemical than on other occasions though he declared that once more the French people were taken hostage in a conflict to which they were fundamentally strangers.[305]

By the end of August 1995, it was clear for both elite and public opinion that France was under attack by a resolute group of terrorists most likely associated with the GIA.[306] This was not just a repetition of unconnected or loosely connected acts, this was a wave of attacks orchestrated by the same group over a narrow time period. Rather than separate occurrences this was in effect a two-month long crisis. Thus it is likely that the number of previous attacks did not influence the reaction. The repetition effect was also offset by the fact that Alain Juppé's conservative government had been in power for less than three

[302] "Aujourd'hui, nous sommes responsables et solidaires. J'espère que nos adversaires sauront s'en souvenir quand nous serons à nouveau au gouvernement" – i.e. "Today we are responsible and united. I hope that our adversaries will remember this when we return to power". *Le Monde* August 22, 1995. The 1982 wave of attacks is analyzed in case study two.
[303] He spoke of "a devoir d'opposition, de renouvellement, de propositions" – i.e. "a duty to oppose, to renew, to propose". *Le Monde* August 22, 1995.
[304] *Le Monde* August 19, 1995.
[305] " (…) des conflits qui lui sont fondamentalement étrangers". *Le Monde* August 22, 1995.
[306] *Le Monde* reported on August 21 that the investigating officers were convinced that this act was part of a series of attacks planned and perpetrated by the same group (likely linked to the GIA). *Le Monde* August 21, 1995.

months when the attacks started. This short timeframe made it difficult for the opposition to blame the government for any shortcoming in the fight against terror. In other words, the government received the benefit of the doubt.

It is also likely that the French political elite chose to rally around the victims as much as around the government. The presence of children among the victims only heightened the necessity for opposition leaders to show their solidarity. This need to project an image of responsibility and compassion probably also accounts for the behaviour of radical parties such as the Front National, which toned down its traditional rhetoric of blame. The communists, for their part, were particularly keen to be seen as supportive of the government (see also case study five). A member of the national comity reasoned that a purely negative attitude towards President Chirac would not make the Communist Party win anything. Their reaction was part of a larger strategy of constructive opposition aimed at differentiating themselves from the Socialist Party and giving Chirac the benefit of the doubt.[307]

Yet despite unanimous support, Jospin made a point to remind everyone that the Right had opted out of the rally in 1982 and suggested that the rally was conditional on the Right reciprocating the next time a socialist government faced a similar situation. Eventually Jospin signalled that this was a limited rally and that being critical on other aspects of the government's handling of affairs, in particular with regard to the economy, was very much a duty for the opposition.

---

[307] *L'Humanité* June 5, 1995.

Conclusion

This chapter confirms by and large the validity of the magnitude-repetition model but also identifies several other key variables, some of which can offset the effects that magnitude and repetition have on the behaviour of political elites. The qualitative analysis contributes to our understanding of the reaction of political elites in seven important ways.

First, several of the cases analysed in this chapter (e.g. the explosion at subway station Port-Royal) suggest that the magnitude of an attack does not depend solely on the number of fatalities but also on the number of wounded. To be sure, this remark only applies to attacks causing a large number of wounded (tentatively put at twenty or more). Yet it reinforces the perception that the number of victims (fatalities or wounded) represents a good proxy for the level of threat on the national security.

Second, the qualitative analysis suggests that a caveat must be introduced with regards to the effects of the repetition variable. The recurrence of attacks can signal a suboptimal handling of affairs by the government and thus prompt the opposition to be critical. Corsica is a case in point.[308] However, the repetition variable becomes less of an issue with waves of attacks (e.g. GIA orchestrated attacks in 1995) as the political elite is more likely to perceive these terrorist acts a continuous crisis instead of a succession of crises. In other words, under these particular circumstances the opposition is likely to be more patient with the government.

Third, the analysis conducted in this chapter confirms that in France, at least, the political reaction is determined to some extent by the identity of the target. As

[308] The disagreement on the best strategy with regards to Corsican nationalists was of course an aggravating factor.

hypothesized earlier on, attacks against representatives of the state are more likely to elicit a rally, particularly when the victims are high ranking officials (e.g. assassinations of Besse and Erignac), although the support in these cases might be intended for the Republic as a whole rather than the government itself.

Fourth, the qualitative analysis confirms that the identity of the perpetrators will on occasion influence the reaction of political elites, as when neo-Nazi groups were accused (by mistake as it turned out) of setting off a bomb in the vicinity of a synagogue. The socialists were able to criticize the right-wing government for its perceived permissiveness with far-right fanatics who had been responsible for a string of attacks in France and across Europe. The RPR and UDF would reciprocate a few years later pointing out the leniency of Mitterrand with far-left terrorists. However the socialists and the conservatives found it more difficult to criticize one another over Middle-Eastern (and to a lesser extent Corsican) terrorism for which the responsibility was shared. Interestingly, the 1982 wave of attacks suggests that political elites will find it harder to criticize the government if the identity of the culprit is unknown.

Fifth, this chapter further demonstrates that contextual variables are invariably crucial in understanding the behaviour of political elites. Foreign affairs can bring the parties together (e.g. Begin’s criticisms in the aftermath of the shooting rue des Rosiers) or on the contrary fuel criticisms (e.g. disagreement over the Chirac-Zéroual meeting). The proximity of electoral contests is also likely to affect the behaviour of parties (e.g. Mitterrand accusing Giscard of being permissive with terrorists a few months before the presidential election).

Sixth, the case studies indicate that history matters and that political events, whether or not related to terrorism, can influence behaviour in the wake of terrorist attacks even years after their occurrence. French political elites, although no stranger to political feuding, have regularly rallied in support of the government throughout the 1990s and thereafter. The 1980s, however, were a different story. The lingering resentment caused by the election of François Mitterrand in 1981 led many prominent right-wing politicians to question the legitimacy of a socialist president thereby creating an acrimonious atmosphere not conducive to rallies. Rather than abate, these criticisms became particularly fierce during terrorist crises. The *cohabitation* period resulted in an unforeseen scenario, namely the refusal by the governing right-wing coalition of the opposition's support. Behind this rather bizarre attitude was perhaps an attempt to salvage the Right's reputation on the issue of national security, particularly with an ever more threatening Le Pen. Years later the Left would make it a point to rally around right-wing governments while reminding everyone that under similar circumstances the right had failed to support left-wing governments.

Finally, this chapter suggest that the behaviour of radical parties is not as predictable as hypothesized earlier on.[309] To a large extent the Front National behaved as expected, namely railing against the government and all other parties of the establishment (i.e. PS, PCF, RPR and UDF). The FN remained a Downsian party in the worst of times, using each terrorist act as an opportunity to formulate policies (e.g. curbing immigration and reinstating the death penalty) to win elections (see Downs 1957, 28). In other words, the Front National never once lost sight of its electoral interest and never once showed

[309] Hypothesis seven suggested that radical parties would not rally around the flag following acts of terror and would on the contrary be outspoken in their criticism towards the government.

any inclination to favour the national interest. The Communist Party on the other hand rallied almost every time (particularly from the 1990s onward), whether around left-wing or right-wing governments. To be fair, the communists were part of several governmental coalitions and thus unlikely to turn against their own partners. Their strategy might have been motivated by the necessity to appear less radical and more responsible at a time when the party was declining and looking for political allies.

Broadly speaking chapter six confirms the validity of the magnitude-repetition model, yet it is only an ideal-type model and as such remains limited in its scope. The qualitative analysis suggests ways of improving it by notably integrating variables such as the type of target and the identity of the perpetrators. Ideally the magnitude in terms of fatalities should be replaced by a magnitude index based on the number of fatalities and wounded. Finally the repetition variable should also be amended to take account of waves of attacks.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

“Fear is the foundation of most governments; but it is so sordid and brutal a passion, and renders men in whose breasts it predominates so stupid and miserable, that Americans will not be likely to approve of any political institution which is founded on it” (John Adams, President of the United States 1797-1801)

Having reached at long last the closing stages of this inquiry into the logic of political behaviour in times of terror, I find it tempting to agree with John Adams. Then as now, fear might well be the foundation of most governments, a claim made all the more compelling in the aftermath of 9/11 as Americans rallied *en masse* around their president amid warnings of more terror to come. As a seemingly endless cycle of terror alerts began, many succumbed to what John Adams termed a "sordid and brutal passion" and entered in a frenzy of patriotism. Meanwhile, the political elite in Washington, moved by a similar combination of fear and devotion to the nation, and in some cases blatant political opportunism, gave the Bush administration all the necessary leeway to wage a war which the president assured us would only end with the demise of nothing less than terrorism itself. With political debates on Capitol Hill virtually halted for several weeks, party politics became the first collateral damage of the war on terror.

To be sure, not all acts of terror impact party politics to the extent 9/11 did. Yet the effect of terrorism on party politics can never be stressed enough, for terrorism is nothing less than the repudiation of party politics. Regardless of who the immediate targets are, the gun sight is always pointed towards the legitimate holders of powers, which in representative democracies are the parties. Terrorism is about political ascendency, and from the terrorists' point of view parties stand in their way, as evidenced in one of the inaugural acts of modern terrorism when Auguste Valliant threw a bomb into the hemicycle of the French National Assembly.

In the end, political parties are at once the prime targets of terrorists and the first line of defence against terrorism through their ability to legislate and govern (e.g. pass and implement antiterror bills). Understanding how political parties and their elites

behave during terrorist crises – the objective of this thesis – is therefore anything but trivial. Following a summary of my research and of the main results, I present a series of substantive and methodological implications. I conclude by suggesting avenues of research and offering a final remark.

7.1. What have we learned?

Chapter one introduced the notions of ordinary and extraordinary politics, and underlined the innate tension within each political party between the need to defend particular interests while at the same time remaining mindful of the national interest. In particular, I pointed out that the electoral rationale put forth by Downs (1957) and his successors could not necessarily make sense of party behaviour during extraordinary times, that is times when the national interest is threatened. Although the Western world is relatively more peaceful now than it was a half-century ago, military and diplomatic crises are still recurring phenomena, making it unlikely for party elites to ignore them and focus solely on electoral objectives. Three case studies presented at the end of the chapter suggest that the national interest matters for parties, and that political elites are likely to rally around the flag when the threat is perceived as imminent.

Chapter two presented the paradox that is terrorism: an ancient phenomenon that scholars have only recently begun to study, a common occurrence that we find impossible to define. I remarked that despite the obvious implications of terrorism on party politics and electoral politics, studies on the effects of terrorist activities on parties and elections are scarce.

Chapter three began with a discussion of what rallies around the flag are and how they come about in the context of foreign policy crises. I presented both the 'patriotic reflex' explanation put forth by John Mueller (1973), which centers on the type of events likely to trigger rallies, and the 'opinion leadership' explanation put forth by Richard Brody (1991), which focuses on the control of sensitive information by the government. I argued that Mueller and Brody's views were particularly relevant to the study of parties' reactions to terrorist acts, and hinted that terrorist crises, much like diplomatic and military crises, were likely to trigger rallies around the flag. I then presented the magnitude-repetition model for analysing the reaction of parties. I argued that the magnitude of the attacks in terms of fatalities and the repetition of attacks were likely to be the two main explanatory variables, and could either activate the patriotic imperative and trigger a rally, or activate the partisan instinct and lead to criticisms of the government. I then presented a series of hypotheses based on these two variables and a host of secondary variables.

Chapter four presented the methodology used to analyse the reaction of political elites to terrorism in five countries (France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and across nearly two decades, and the database created for that purpose. I introduced an approach combining both quantitative and qualitative analyses, which would allow to determine broad behavioural trends while at the same time detailing the reaction through case studies.

Chapters five and six presented results of respectively the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The findings – based in large part on the eight hypotheses presented in chapter three – are the following:

Mainstream opposition parties rally around the flag following terrorist attacks

The overwhelming majority of terrorist acts analyzed in this thesis triggered rallies. To be more precise, mainstream political parties have not been critical of their government's handling of terrorism and national security related issues in 84 percent of the cases included in the dataset (up from 33 percent during non-terrorist periods). These findings suggest that the patriotic imperative, rather than the partisan interest, determines party behaviour when the national security is threatened. Furthermore, these results suggest that party politics becomes less conflictual in the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks. However, a couple of caveats must be introduced. First, this finding only applies to the five-day period that follows the attacks and thus any conclusion for the longer term would be premature. Second, results vary from one country to the other. Whereas German, British and American mainstream political elites very rarely criticized their governments in the aftermath of terrorist attacks, French and Spanish political elites were slightly more vindictive.

Mainstream opposition parties are more likely to rally when the terrorist act causes a larger number of casualties

The number of victims – referred in this study as the magnitude – represents a strong predictor of party behaviour. Relatively high numbers of fatalities or wounded underline the gravity of the crisis and the threat on national security, making a rally all the more likely. Attacks of lesser magnitude on the other hand are more likely to be ignored by the political elites.

The recurrence of terrorist attacks makes a rally less likely

Governments are expected to limit the occurrence of terrorist acts. Failure to do so is an indication that those in charge of governing the country are not handling national security well, and will encourage opposition parties to be critical. However, political elites are likely to be more patient and forgiving when the government faces a series of attacks perpetrated over a relatively short-time period by the same group. Such a wave of attacks tends to be perceived as one major crisis – thereby making the threat to national security more obvious – rather than a succession of crises.

In general, political elites are not more likely to rally when a representative or representatives of the state are victim of terrorist attacks

By and large governments cannot expect opposition parties to be more supportive when an agent of the state is targeted by terrorists. However this remark does not apply to French political elites which, perhaps as a result of the prevailing *Jacobin* political tradition, are more likely to rally under these circumstances (particularly when high ranking officials are targeted).

International terrorism is more likely to trigger a rally than domestic terrorism

Terrorist attacks originating from abroad are likely to be perceived as particularly threatening to national security and thus encourage political elites to present a unified front. In other words, international terrorism triggers the same reaction as conventional threats on national security (e.g. military conflicts). When facing domestic terrorism, opposition parties can criticize the government's handling of affairs without necessarily running the risk of being accused of siding with a foreign foe. To be fair, domestic

terrorism is usually associated with longer lasting terrorist campaigns (e.g. FLNC, IRA, ETA, BR, RAF) than international terrorism, and therefore tends to give opposition parties more reasons to criticize the government's failure to handle a recurring security problem.

Since the events of 9/11 political parties are more likely to support their government after terrorist attacks

The multiple attacks of 9/11 had an impact not just on American party politics but also in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom where political elites are now more likely to rally around the flag than before that fateful September day. A heightened sense of urgency with regards to national security and the realization that some terrorist groups operating today (e.g. jihadists) do not refrain from large-scale attacks are a probable explanation as to why now more than ever terrorism is likely to initiate rallies.

In general right-wing governments are not more likely to benefit from rallies after terrorist attacks than left-wing governments

Despite their reputation for being too soft with regards to terrorism, left-wing parties are not criticized more by opposition parties in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. However the situation varies from one country to the other (e.g. in Spain the Left benefits from more rallies than in the other four countries) and overtime (e.g. in France left-wing governments were heavily criticized throughout the eighties for being too permissive but less in the nineties).

Far-right parties are almost always critical of their political adversaries in the aftermath of terrorist attacks

This finding is based on an analysis of the behaviour of the Front National (FN) and the Mouvement National Républicain (MNR) and is thus only valid for France. Not only have these two parties been repeatedly critical of the French government (right-wing and left-wing alike) but their criticisms have also been directed at other parties in the opposition, notably the far-left. In addition, the FN and MNR have regularly used the opportunity created by terrorist attacks to put forth segments of their electoral program (e.g. reinstatement of the death penalty). To a large extent this was part of a strategy to discredit the main right-wing parties and take over from them the ownership of the national security issue. Interestingly, criticisms by far-right elites can provoke a reaction by mainstream elites and stir up controversy between the government and the main opposition party.

The far-left almost always supports the government after terrorist attacks

This finding is based on an analysis of the behaviour of the Parti Communiste (PC) and is thus only valid for France. Unlike the far-right, the PC has been in government two times during the period studied. However even during its years in opposition, the PC was always prompt to support left-wing and right-wing governments alike, sometimes in the most explicit manner. This unexpected behaviour was to a large extent strategic and aimed at finding political allies and differentiating itself from other left-wing parties in a period of continuing electoral decline.

The presence of a formal antiterrorist pact increases the likelihood of a rally

The period during which the two main Spanish parties formerly agreed to support one another in the fight against Basque terrorism resulted in a noticeably higher percentage of rallies. In retrospect, this antiterrorist pact seemed effective only as long as the conservatives were in power and only as long as terrorism remained linked to ETA. Furthermore, the particularly high rallying rate in the United Kingdom suggests that the existing informal agreement between the main parties at Westminster is also likely to favour rallies.

Rallying around the flag can be an electoral strategy

The last two findings suggest that rallying can be strategic. Obviously it can be a strategy to defeat a terrorist group by projecting an image of unity throughout the political elite. Recent history is replete with instances when the patriotic imperative has led opposition parties to support the government rather than seek electoral objectives. Yet rallying can also be an electoral strategy. Indeed if terrorism can represent an opportunity for the opposition to rail against the government – instead of becoming a rallying issue, the crisis becomes a disputed issue – it can also represent an opportunity to make electoral gains by rallying. In other words, defending the interest of the nation becomes part of the electoral rationale. The French Communist Party (PC) is a case in point as it repeatedly joined rallies, even in support of right-wing governments, in an attempt to halt its electoral decline and project an image of responsibility during critical situations. Finally, the behaviour of the French Socialist Party (PS) throughout much of the period under consideration also seems to indicate a willingness to rally with right-wing governments in

order to set an example and promote consensus during critical periods. Rallying after all is first and foremost a collective strategy to overcome a crisis.

To be fair, other variables could influence the dynamic of behaviour during terrorist crises. In particular, contextual variables such as foreign policy crises and elections seem to affect the behaviour. Diplomatic and military crises tend to favour rallies but have on occasion stirred domestic controversies thereby ending the rallies. Electoral campaigns on the other hand seem unfavourable to rallies. Finally, the case studies suggest that lingering resentments during transition periods, such as the one linked to an electoral defeat, can affect elite behaviour and prevent certain individuals from rallying.

This study contributes to our understanding of party behaviour by demonstrating that party politics is not only about electoral and partisan objectives, but also about the national interest. These results suggest that there is an emergency behaviour and a routine behaviour, and that the former will be activated whenever the country is perceived as being under threat. Yet rallies are fragile and the Downsian rationale always lurks behind the patriotic imperative ready to cease the opportunity created by terrorism.

7.2. Substantive implications

Through this dissertation I have tried, to paraphrase Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman, to be a 'student of combustion' and to understand how the terrorist fire spreads into politics. I have also tried to contribute to our understanding of party politics during critical times, and see to what extent political elites are likely to promote by their joint endeavours the

national interest valued by Edmund Burke rather than defend their own specific and partisan interest.

The first implication which I wish to underline is that research on party behaviour, and indeed electoral behaviour in general, would benefit from becoming more context sensitive, rather than relying too much on the *ceteris paribus* expedient. The political context changes, constantly, at home and abroad. National and international crises, whether or not related to terrorism, matter and should be taken into account by those of us studying the dynamics of party and elite behaviour. In other words, the Downsian party cannot always be taken for granted. The electoral rationale is bounded and cannot account for party behaviour each time. Other rationales such as the *raison d'État* play a role.

If students of party and electoral behaviour should take into account the context in which domestic political actors evolve more often, scholars working on the response to terror should be mindful of how terror impacts party politics. In the end, the response to terrorism is in the hands of these parties and their elites. It is therefore crucial to understand how terrorism affects their behaviour. One could venture to say that high magnitude terror is likely to facilitate the passage of anti-terror bills whereas the high recurrence of terrorist acts will be more likely to impede the passage of laws as it creates dissent within the political elite.

The third implication follows from the previous one. Terrorism is likely to have repercussions not just on the response to terror, but more generally on the functioning of representative democracies. Terrorist acts of higher magnitude, which considering the current trend are unfortunately increasingly likely, could lead to more domestic political

consensus, whereas the repetition of acts of terror could lead to more conflictual exchanges between parties, and crucially between the government and the opposition. This research should add to the ongoing reflection on the effects of terrorism on the quality of democracy. The tragic example set by the Uruguayan elite in the face of the Tupamaros-led terrorist campaign in the early 1970s should serve as a reminder that parties, and the democratic structure they uphold, can crumble down just as easily as any mastodon of steel and concrete.

These implications all point towards the necessity to know more about rallies around the flag. To be sure, our knowledge of rallies has greatly benefited from the works of John Mueller (1973) and Richard Brody (1991), to name just the two pioneering figures, and this research tends to validate as much the patriotic interpretation as the opinion leadership explanation. Yet despite the large body of research on rallies, we still know too little on the effects of rallies on the political game.

7.3. Methodological implications

Just like Adam Przeworski I consider myself a "methodological opportunist" who will use what he considers to be the best method for the work at hand, whether quantitative or qualitative (in Kohli et al. 1996, 16). Yet I am increasingly convinced that an approach combining and even integrating both methods is not only possible but advisable. Of course I am not a precursor and others before me have chosen to take this ecumenical path, yet I feel that we are still too hesitant to make that step.

The quantitative method I used was based on both descriptive and inferential statistics and allowed me to test variables and identify behavioural trends. Based on these

results I was then able to identify outliers, that is divergent cases that did not fit neatly into the categories of my magnitude-repetition model. The qualitative analysis allowed me – through in-depth case studies – to uncover additional variables and account for the divergence observed previously. It also allowed me to reinforce certain conclusions and nuance others. The process does not have to end here and can lead to a new round of statistical analysis, and so forth. One method serves the other one.

The absence of a ready-to-use-and-analyse database is often cited as a reason for avoiding the quantitative approach, yet a dearth of databases in certain fields of social sciences should not be an insurmountable challenge that stands in the way of statistical inquiry. This thesis is a case in point. Terrorism studies are not blessed by an abundance of relevant databases, and the sort of dataset I needed combining terrorist activities and political reactions did not exist. Thus if I wanted to use a methodology integrating statistics and qualitative analysis, I had to create that database by expanding an existing dataset of terrorist events and adding the missing information. The data was there for me to collect, notably through time consuming content analysis of newspapers (in four languages). The process was also a unique way to immerse myself into the subject-matter of my thesis.

7.4. Avenues of research

The interplay between terrorism and politics has existed for centuries, and yet studies on the interaction between terrorism, party politics and electoral behaviour only started in earnest in recent years. It is fair to say that much remains to be done. Based on this doctoral dissertation, I envisage four avenues of research.

First, the impact of terrorism on countries other than established democracies needs to be addressed. In particular, we need to look at how political elites in authoritarian regimes and newly established democracies react to terrorist attacks. It is doubtful that terrorism affects elite behaviour in autocracies the way it affects elite behaviour in open societies. Obviously under autocratic forms of government the opposition will have far less leeway, if any, than its democratic counterparts, and might actually be the prime instigator of terrorist activities. In some cases, the fear of repression might prompt regime opponents to rally around the flag. Yet the opposition is more likely to view terrorism as an opportunity to reach its political objectives by undermining the existing regime. Evidently, a wide array of regimes fit into the category of autocratic, with some tolerating a limited opposition and others rejecting any form of disagreement. I would suggest that with more repressive regimes, the opposition has little to lose and is therefore more likely to criticize even further the government during terrorist crises. Of equal interest is the reaction to terrorism in countries undergoing a transition towards a democratic form of government. Here again elites are likely to play politics with terrorism. Those who stand to lose most under the new regime – such as members or supporters of the former regime – might be less inclined to rally around the government when terrorists strike and are therefore likely to impede the transition process.

Second, the impact of terrorism on intra-party dynamics, whether in established or new democracies, needs to be explored further. In particular, we need to understand whether terrorism favours consensus within parties or whether it leads to disagreement and even fragmentation of the party system. This dissertation suggests that the reaction within certain parties might not always be homogeneous and might for instance oppose

doves to hawks. This tension is notably illustrated in France by the debate on Corsica, which created a rift within the French left in 2000 and led the then Minister of Interior, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, to leave the government following a wave of attacks perpetrated by the separatists. Similarly, the British Labour Party split over the decision to send troops to Iraq as part of the war on terror and led Robin Cook to resign from his position as Leader of the House of Commons in 2003. Any number of reasons could account for this type of behaviour, but these two examples suggest that the decision to leave a party or quit a position of authority is linked to political ideology.

Third, the question of diffusion and habit-forming needs to be addressed. We know from the findings presented in this thesis that political elites across the five countries studied here were more inclined to rally after the events of 9/11. What this suggests among others is that political elites from different countries who share a similar experience with terrorism adopt a similar reaction. In particular, since 9/11 western elites might find it more difficult to avoid rallying in the aftermath of an attack perpetrated by Islamic terrorists. We need to examine other terrorist waves (euroterrorism, nationalist-separatists, etc.) and determine whether a pattern of behaviour emerged there to.

Finally, a comparative analysis of the impact of different types of crises on party politics and elite behaviour needs to be conducted. Domestic politics might be usually associated with peaceful times, but a fair amount of it takes place during and in the aftermath of extraordinary events such as military conflicts, diplomatic crises, terrorist attacks and natural catastrophes (earthquakes, hurricanes, floodings, etc.). Some groundbreaking work has already been done on crisis and postcrisis politics (Boin et al. 2005; 2008) but a specific effort must be made towards understanding how these crises

affect party politics, notably in the longer term. In particular we must ask ourselves whether behaviour during critical times affects the conduct of politics during ordinary times, for instance by rendering it less conflictual. The question of the impact of terrorism on party politics and elite behaviour is of course closely linked to that of the effects of terrorism on voting behaviour and electoral results (see the pioneering works of Berrebi and Klor 2006; 2008; Montalvo 2007). In the end we need to recognize that context matters and that politics during extraordinary times deserves far more scholarly attention than what it is accustomed to.

7.5. Final remark

As I write these last words I cannot but think of my last glimpse of the World Trade Center while onboard a ferry to Staten Island, surrounded by commuters enjoying the late afternoon sun on the deck. That was on September 10, 2001. I suspect that for some of them this was their last ever sunset. For the rest of us who made it through at least another day, it was a cruel reminder that the world in which we live in is never as appeased as it seems. For me, a member of generation x, born not only on the right side of the twentieth century, but on the right side of this otherwise still troubled planet, September 11 was a frightening glance into the everyday horror that had befallen some of my European relatives a mere sixty years before. Buildings crumbling down on thousands of civilians, blank stares and frightened attitudes where before there was laughter and insouciance, and the feeling that this calamity did not belong to this time and place, an anachronism if ever there was one. In the midst of it all, I must admit to have lost some of my bearings. Yes we were all Americans on that day, and I do not suppose

that political affiliations and past debates mattered at all for some time after that. We shared a tragedy and had somehow become similar, no longer diverse.

Today as I reminisce over this experience I wonder what will happen if large-scale terrorism were to become our common lot, if high-yield weapons were to fall into the wrong hands, would we rally and freeze into a permanent state of terror?

Bibliographie

Ouvrages et articles scientifiques

Abadie, Alberto. 2006. “Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism”. *The American Economic Review* 96(2): 50-56.

Abadie, Alberto and Javier Gardeazabal. 2003. “The Economic Costs of Conflict: A Case Study of the Basque Country”. *American Economic Review* 93(1): 113-132.

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Aldrich, John and Richard Niemi. 1990. “The Sixth American Party System: The 1960s Realignment and the Candidate-centered Parties”. *Duke University Working Paper in American Politics* 107.

Alesina, Alberto, Nouriel Roubini and Gerald Cohen. 1997. *Political Cycle and the Macroeconomy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Allison, Graham. 2004. *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*. New York: Times Books.

Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow. 1999. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Reading: Longman.

Allison, Graham. 1969. “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis”. *American Political Science Review* 63(3): 689-718.

Arnold, Ron. 1997. *Ecoterror: The Violent Agenda to save Nature*. Free Enterprise Press.

Aust, Stefan. 1998. *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex*. Goldmann.

Axelrod, Robert. 1970. *Conflict of Interest*. Chicago: Markham.

Baird-Windle, Patricia and Eleanor Bader, eds. 2001. *Targets of Hatred: Anti-Abortion Terrorism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Baker, William and John Oneal. 2001. "Patriotism or Opinion Leadership? The Nature and Origins of the 'Rally 'Round the Flag' Effect". *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(5): 661-687.

Bali, Valentina. 2007. "Terror and Elections: Lessons from Spain". *Electoral Studies* 26(3): 669-687.

Barker, Jonathan. 2002. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Global Terrorism*. Norton & Company.

Baum, Matthew. 2002. "The Constituent Foundations of the Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon". *International Studies Quarterly* 46: 263-298.

Baum, Matthew and Tim Groeling. 2004. "Crossing the Water's Edge: Elite Rhetoric, Media Coverage and the Rally-around-the-Flag Phenomenon, 1979-2003". Presentation, American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 2-5.

Becker, Jean-Jacques. 2003. *Histoire politique de la France depuis 1945*. Paris: Armand Colin.

Bélanger, Éric and Bonnie Meguid. 2005. "Issue Salience, Issue Ownership and Issue-Based Vote Choice: Evidence from Canada". Presentation, Canadian Political Science Association, London, June 2-4.

Bell, J. Bowyer. 1993. *The Irish Troubles: A Generation of Violence, 1967-1992*. New York: St. Martin's.

Bell, J. Bowyer. 1978. *A Time of Terror*. New York: Basic Books.

Bell, J. Bowyer. 1975. *Transnational Terror*. Washington: American Enterprise Institute.

Bell, J. Bowyer. 1970. *The Secret Army: A History of the IRA*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Bergen, Peter and Paul Cruickshank. 2007. "The Iraq Effect: War Has Increased Terrorism Sevenfold Worldwide". Online. www.motherjones.com (accessed on June 8, 2008).

Berinsky, Adam. 2007. "Assuming the Costs of War: Events, Elites, and American Public Support for Military Conflict". *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 975-997.

Berkowitz, B.J. 1972. *Superviolence: The Civil Threat of Mass Destruction Weapons*. Santa Barbara: ADCON Corporation.

Berrebi, Claude. 2007. "Evidence About the Link Between Education, Poverty and Terrorism Among Palestinians". *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 13(1).

Berrebi, Claude and Esteban Klor. 2008. "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate". *American Political Science Review* 102: 279-301.

Berrebi, Claude and Esteban Klor. 2006. "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcome: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(6): 899-925.

Bishop, P. and E. Mallie. 1987. *The Provisionnal IRA*. London: Heinemann.

Bjørgo, Tore. 2005. *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myth, Reality and Ways Forward*. Routledge.

Bjørgo, Tore. 1995. *Terror from the Extreme Right*. Frank Cass.

Blais, André, Donald Blake and Stéphane Dion. 1993. "Do Parties Make a Difference? Parties and the Size of Government in Liberal Democracies". *American Journal of Political Science* 37(1): 40-62.

Bloom, Mia. 2005. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Boettcher, William and Michael Cobb. 2006. "Echoes of Vietnam? Casualty Framing and Public Perceptions of Success and Failure in Iraq". *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(6): 831-854.

Boin, Arjen, Allan McConnell and Paul t' Hart. 2008. *Governing After Crisis: The Politics of Investigation, Accountability and Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boin, Arjen, Paul 't Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius. 2005. *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership under Pressure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boix, Carles. 1998. *Political Parties, Growth and Equality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brecher, Michael, Philip Potter and Anne-Marie Durocher, eds. 2002. *International Political Earthquakes*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Broder, David. 1972. *The Party's Over: The Failure of Politics in America*. New York: Harper and Row.

Brody, Richard. 2002. "The American People and President Bush". *The Forum* 1(1): 1-8.

Brody, Richard. 1991. *Assessing the President: The Media, Elite Opinion, and Public Support*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Brody, Richard and Catherine Shapiro. 1989. "Policy Failure and Public Support: The Iran-Contra Affair and Public Assessment of President Reagan". *Political Behavior* 11(4): 353-369.

Brown, Michael, Sean Lynn-Jones and Steven Miller, eds. 1996. *Debating the Democratic Peace*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Budge, Ian and Richard Hofferbert. 1990. "Mandates and Policy Outputs: U.S. Party Platforms and Federal Expenditures". *American Political Science Review* 84(1): 111-131.

Budge, Ian and David Robertson. 1987. "Do Parties Differ and How? Comparative Discriminant and Factor Analyses". In Ian Budge, David Robertson and Derek Hearl, ed., *Ideology, Strategy and Party Change. Spatial Analyses of Post-War Election Programmes in 19 Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 387-416.

Budge, Ian and Michael Laver. 1986. "Office Seeking and Policy Pursuit in Coalition Theory". *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 11(4): 485-506.

Budge, Ian and Dennis Farlie. 1983. *Explaining and Predicting Elections*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Burke, Jason. 2003. *Al-Qa'eda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*. London: Taurus.

Callaghan, Karen and Simo Virtanen. 1993. "Revised Models of the 'Rally Phenomenon': The Case of the Carter Presidency". *Journal of Politics* 55(3): 756-764.

Campbell, James. 2005. "Why Bush Won the Presidential Election of 2004: Incumbency, Ideology, Terrorism, and Turnout". *Political Science Quarterly* 120(2): 219-241.

Carlsnaes, Walter, Thomas Risse-Kappen and Beth Simmons, eds. 2002. *Handbook of International Relations*. London: Sage.

Cassese, Antonio. 1989. *Terrorism, Politics and Law: The Achille Lauro Affair*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chaliand, Gérard and Arnaud Blin. 2004. *Histoire du terrorisme*. Paris: Bayard.

Chari, Raj. 2004. “The 2004 Spanish Election: Terrorism as a Catalyst for Change?”. *West European Politics* 27(5): 954-963.

Charters, David, ed. 1994. *The Deadly Sin of Terrorism: Its Effect on Democracy and Civil Liberty in Six Countries*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Chen, Andrew and Thomas Siems. 2004. “The Effects of Terrorism on Global Capital Markets”. *European Journal of Political Economy* 20(2): 463-478.

Chomsky, Noam. 2001. *9/11*. Open Media/Seven Stories Press.

Clark, Robert. 1984. *The Basque Insurgents: ETA, 1952-1980*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Clarke, Thurston. 1981. *By Blood and Fire: The Attack on the King David Hotel*. Putnam.

Colomer, Josep. 2004. “The General Election in Spain, March 2004”. Electoral Studies 24(1): 149-156.

Crank, John and Patricia Gregor. 2005. *Counter-Terrorism After 9/11: Justice, Security and Ethics Reconsidered*. Lexisnexis / Matthew Bender.

Crenshaw, Martha, ed. 1995. *Terrorism in Context*. University Park: Penn State Press.

Crenshaw, Martha. 1989. *Terrorism and International Cooperation*. New York: Institute for East-West Security Studies.

Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. “The Causes of Terrorism”. *Comparative Politics* 13(4): 379-399.

Crenshaw, Martha. 1978. *Revolutionary Terrorism: the FLN in Algeria, 1954-1962*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press.

Crotty, William. 2001. *The State of Democracy in America*. Washington: Georgetown University Press

Crozier, Michel, Samuel Huntington and Joji Watanuki. 1975. *The Crisis of Democracy*. New York: New York University Press.

Cunningham, Michael. 1991. *British Government Policy in Northern Ireland 1969-89*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg, eds. 2002. *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Damore, David. 2004. "The Dynamics of Issue Ownership in Presidential Campaigns". *Political Research Quarterly* 57(3): 391-397.

Dartnell, Michael. 1995. *Action Directe: Ultra-left Terrorism in France, 1979-1987*. London: Frank Cass.

David, Charles-Philippe and Benoît Gagnon, eds. 2007. *Repenser le terrorisme: concepts, acteurs et réponses*. Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval.

Davis, Richard. 2005. *Politics Online. Blogs, Chatrooms, and Discussion Groups in American Democracy*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Davis, Richard. 1999. *The Web of Politics. The Internet's Impact on the American Political System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dekmejian, Hrair. 2007. *Spectrum of Terror*. Washington: CQ Press.

Della Porta, Donatella and Dieter Rucht. 1995. "Left-Libertarian Movements in Context: A Comparison of Italy and West Germany, 1965-1990". In Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans, eds., *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dingley, James. 2001. "The Bombing of Omagh, 15 August 1998: The Bombers, Their Tactics, Strategy, and Purpose Behind the Incident". *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24(6): 451-465.

Divine, Robert. 1974. *Foreign Policy and US Presidential Elections, 1940-1948*. New Viewpoints.

Dougherty, James and Robert Pfaltzgraff. 1981. *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*. New York: Harper & Row.

Douglass, William and Joseba Zulaika. 1990. "On the Interpretation of Terrorist Violence: ETA and the Basque Political Process". *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32(2): 238-257.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Drake, Richard. 1995. *The Aldo Moro Murder Case*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Eldersveld, Samuel. 1966. "Social Conflict, Political Parties and Democracy". In William Crotty, Donald Freeman and Douglas Gatlin, eds., *Political Parties and Political Behavior*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Eley, Geoff. 2002. *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Enders, Walter and Todd Sandler. 2006. *The Political Economy of Terrorism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Entman, Robert. 2006. *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Esposito, John. 2002. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Etzioni, Amitai. 2007. *Security First: For a Muscular, Moral Foreign Policy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Eubank, William and Leonard Weinberg. 2001. "Terrorism and Democracy: Perpetrators and Victims". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13(1): 155-164.

Eubank, William and Leonard Weinberg. 1994. "Does Democracy Encourage Terrorism?". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 6(4): 417-435.

Evans, Peter, Harold Jacobson and Robert Putnam, eds. 1993. *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Eyerman, Joe. 1998. "Terrorism and Democratic States: Soft Targets or Accessible Systems". *International Interactions* 24(2): 151-170.

Ferracuti, F. 1983. "Psychiatric Aspects of Italian Left Wing and Right Wing Terrorism". Presentation, VII World Congress of Psychiatry, Vienna.

Finnemore, Martha. 1996. *National Interests in International Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Fiorina, Morris. 1995. "Rational Choice and the New (?) Institutionalism". *Polity* 9: 107-115.

Fournier, Louis. 1984. *FLQ, histoire d'un mouvement clandestin*. Montréal: Michel Brûlé.

Frears, John. 1991. *Parties and Voters in France*. London: Hurst.

Fuchs, Dieter and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. 1990. "The Left-Right Schema". In MK Jennings, Jan W van Deth, SH Barnes, Dieter Fuchs, FJ Heunks and Ronald

Inglehart, eds., *Continuities in Political Action*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 203-234.

Gambetta, Diego. 2006. *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ganor, Boaz. 1998. "Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist Another Man's Freedom Fighter?". *The Institute for Counter-Terrorism*. Online. www.ict.org.il/Article/define.htm (accessed on February 6, 2006).

Garfinkel, Michelle. 2004. "Global Threats and the Domestic Struggle for Power". *European Journal of Political Economy* 20(2): 495-508.

Garrison, Arthur. 2004. "Defining Terrorism: Philosophy of the Bomb, Propaganda by the Deed and Change Through Fear and Violence". *Criminal Justice Studies* 17(3): 259-279.

Gartner, Scott Sigmund. 2008. "The Multiple Effects of Casualties on Public Support for War: An Experimental Approach". *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 95-106.

Gartner, Scott Sigmund and Gary Segura. 1998. "War, Casualties and Public Opinion". *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(3): 278-300.

Gartner, Scott Sigmund, Gary Segura and Bethany Barratt. 2004. "Casualties, Positions and Senate Elections in the Vietnam War". *Political Research Quarterly* 53(3): 467-77.

Gaubatz, Kurt. 1999. *Elections and War: The Electoral Incentive in the Democratic Politics of War and Peace*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Gelpi, Christopher, Peter Feaver and Jason Reifler. 2006. "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq". *International Security* 30: 7-46.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Giovagnoli, Agostino. 2005. *Il caso Moro: una tragedia repubblicana*. Bologna: Il mulino.

Gleditsch, Nils, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg and Havard Strand. 2002. “Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset”. *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5): 615-637.

Gourevitch, Peter. 1978. “The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics”. *International Organization* 32(4): 881-912.

Gregory, Shaun. 2003. “France and the War on Terrorism”. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15(1): 124-147.

Guelke, Adrian and Jim Smyth. 1992. “The Ballot Bomb: Terrorism and the Electoral Process in Northern Ireland”. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4(2): 103-124.

Guidère, Mathieu and Nicole Morgan. 2007. *Le Manuel de recrutement d’Al-Qaïda*. Paris: Seuil.

Guilmartin, Eugenia. 2004. “Terrorist Attacks and Presidential Approval from 1949-2002”. Presentation, American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 2-5.

Gullan, Harold. 1998. *The Upset that Wasn’t: Harry S. Truman and the Crucial Election of 1948*. Chicago: Ivan R Dee.

Gunaratna, Rohan. 2002. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*. New York: Berkley Book.

Hall, Peter and Rosemary Taylor. 1996. “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism”. *Political Studies* 44: 936-957.

Hamon, Alain and Jean-Charles Marchand. 1986. *Action directe: du terrorisme français à l'euroterrorisme*. Paris: Seuil.

Haubrich, Dirk. 2006. "Modern Politics in an Age of Global Terrorism: New Challenges for Domestic Public Policy". *Political Studies* 54: 399-423.

Heller, Joseph. 1995. *The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics, and Terror, 1940-1949*. London: Routledge.

Hermann, Charles. 1996. "International Crisis as a Situational Variable". In John Vasquez, ed., *Classics of International Relations*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 191-199.

Hess, Henner, Martin Moerings, Dieter Pass, Sebastian Scheerer and Heinz Steinert. 1988. *Angriff auf das Herz des Staates*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Hetherington, Marc and Michael Nelson. 2003. "Anatomy of a Rally Effect: George W. Bush and the War on Terrorism". *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36(1): 37-44.

Hewitt, C. 1984. *Effectiveness of Anti-Terrorist Policies*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Hibbs, Douglas. 1977. "Political Parties and Macroeconomic Policy". *American Political Science Review* 71(4): 1467-1487.

Hills, Alice. 2002. "Responding to Catastrophic Terrorism". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 25(4): 245-261.

Hoffman, Bruce. 2006. *Inside Terrorism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hoffman, Bruce. 1984. "Right-Wing Terrorism in Europe". *Conflict* 5(3).

Holian, David. 2004. "He's Stealing My Issues! Clinton's Crime Rhetoric and the Dynamics of Issue Ownership". *Political Behavior* 26(2): 95-124.

Holmes, Jennifer S. and Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres. 2002. "Sources of Fujimori's Popularity: Neo-liberal Reform or Ending Terrorism". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14(4): 93-112.

Holmes, Stephen. 2007. *The Matador's Cape: America's Reckless Response to Terror*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Howard, Lawrence, ed. 1992. *Terrorism: Roots, Impact, Responses*. Westport: Praeger.

Howard, Russell and Reid Sawyer. 2004. *Defeating Terrorism: Shaping the New Security Environment*. McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.

Huckshorn, Robert. 1984. *Political Parties in America*. Monterey: Brooks/Cole.

Huddy, Leonie. 2003. "Group Membership, Ingroup Loyalty, and Political Cohesion". In David Sears, Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 511-558.

Huntington, Samuel. 1981. *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Hymans, Jacques. 2005. "Why Rally? Reexamining the Theoretical Bases for the Rally Round the Flag Effect". Presentation, American Political Science Association, Washington, September 1-4.

Indridason, Indridi. 2008. "Does Terrorism Influence Domestic Politics? Coalition Formation and Terrorist Incidents". *Journal of Peace Research* 45(2): 241-259.

Iyengar, Shanto and Donald Kinder. 1987. *News that Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jacobson, Gary. 2003. "Terror, Terrain, and Turnout: Explaining the 2002 Midterm Elections". *Political Science Quarterly* 118(1): 1-22.

Jasper, J. and D. Nelkin. 1992. *The Animal Rights Crusade: The Growth of a Moral Protest*. New York: Free Press.

Jenkins, Brian. 2001. "Terrorism and Beyond: a 21st Century Perspective". *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24: 321-327.

Jenkins, Brian. 2001. "The Organization Men : Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack". In James Hoge and Gideon Rose, eds., *How Did This Happen? Terrorism and the New War*. Oxford: Public Affairs, 1-14.

Jenkins, Brian. 1975. *International Terrorism*. Los Angeles: Crescent Publications.

Jenkins, Brian. 1975. *Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?*. Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation.

Jenkins, Philip. 2003. *Images of Terror: What We Can and Can't Know About Terrorism*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Johnson, Paul. 1993. "The Seven Deadly Sins of Terrorism". In Henry H. Han, ed., *Terrorism and Political Violence: Limits and Possibilities of Legal Control*. New York: Oceana, 189-195.

Juergensmeyer, Mark. 2002. "Terror as Deadly Theater". *Oklahoma City Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism*. Online. www.terrorisminfo.mipt.org (accessed on October 7, 2008).

Juergensmeyer, Mark. 1992. *Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World*. London: Routledge.

Kam, Cindy, David Greenwald and Jennifer Ramos. 2004. "Who Leaves the Rally? Explaining Declines in Presidential Approval Following Round the Flag Events". Presentation, American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 2-5.

Kam, Cindy and Jennifer Ramos. 2008. “Joining and Leaving the Rally: Understanding the Surge and Decline in Presidential Approval Following 9/11”. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(4): 619-650.

Karol, David and Edward Miguel. 2007. “The Electoral Cost of War: Iraq Casualties and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election”. *Journal of Politics* 69(3): 633-648.

Karpin, Michael and Ina Friedman. 1998. *Murder in the Name of God: The Plot to Kill Yitzhak Rabin*. Metropolitan Books.

Kassimeris, George. 2008. *Playing Politics With Terrorism, A User’s Guide.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Katz, Richard and William Crotty, eds. 2006. *Handbook of Party Politics*. London: Sage.

Keene, Karlyn. 1980. “Rally ‘Round the President”. *Public Opinion* 3(1): 28-29.

Kegley, Charles. 1990. *International Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Kelly, M.J. 1989. “The Seizure of the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa: Managing Terrorism and the Media”. In Uriel Rosenthal, Michael T. Charles and Paul ‘t Hart, eds., *Coping with Crises – The Management of Disasters, Riots and Terrorism*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas.

Keman, Hans. 1982. Securing the Safety of the Nation-State. In Francis G. Catles, ed., *The Impact of Parties: Politics and Policies in Democratic Capitalist States*. London: Sage, 177-221.

Keohane, Robert and Helen Milner, eds. 1996. *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kepel, G. 1993. *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kern, Montague, Patricia Levering and Ralph Levering. 1983. *The Kennedy Crisis: The Press, the Presidency, and Foreign Policy*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Kernell, S. 1975. *Presidential Popularity and Electoral Preferences: A Model of Short Term Political Change*. Berkeley: University of California.

Key, V.O. 1964. *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*. New York: Crowell.

Khelladi, A. 1992. *Algérie: Les Islamistes face au pouvoir*. Alger: Alfa.

Knapp, Andrew and Vincent Wright. 2006. *The Government and Politics of France*. London: Routledge.

Kohli, Atul, Peter Evans, Peter Katzenstein, Adam Przeworski, Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, James Scott and Theda Skocpol. 1995. “The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium”. *World Politics* 48(1): 1-49.

Kramer, Martin. 1990. ‘The Moral Logic of Hizballah’. In Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 131-157.

Kraushaar, Wolfgang, ed. 2006. *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*. Hamburg: HIS Verlages.

Kronenwetter, Michael. 2004. *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Krueger, Alan. 2007. *What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Krueger, Alan and Jitka Maleckova. 2003. “Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(4): 119-144.

Kydd, Andrew and Barbara F. Walter. 2002. “Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence”. *International Organization* 56(2): 263-296.

Lafree, Gary and Laura Dugan. 2007. “Introducing the Global Terrorism Database”. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19: 181-204.

Lai, Brian and Ruth Melkonian-Hoover. 2005. “Democratic Progress and Regress: The Effect of Parties on the Transitions of States to and Away from Democracy”. *Political Research Quarterly* 58(4): 551-564.

Landau, Mark, Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg, Florette Cohen, Tom Pyszczynski, Jamie Arndt, Claude Miller, Daniel Ogilvie and Alison Cook. 2004. “Deliver us From Evil: The Effects of Mortality Salience and Reminders of 9/11 on Support for President George W. Bush”. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 30(9): 1136-1150.

Laqueur, Walter. 2004. *No End to War: Terrorism in The Twenty-First Century*. New York: Continuum.

Laqueur, Walter. 1999. *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Laqueur, Walter. 1999. *The Age of Terrorism*. Transaction.

Laqueur, Walter. 1977. *Terrorism*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Lee, Jong R. 1977. “Rallying ‘Round the Flag: Foreign Policy Events and Presidential Popularity”. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 7: 252-256.

Lee, Martha. 1995. *Earth First! Environmental Apocalypse*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Leiser, Burton. 1977. “Terrorism, Guerrilla Warfare, and International Morality”. *Stanford Journal of International Studies* 12: 39-65.

Lemelin, Bernard. 2001. “The U.S. Presidential Election of 1948: The Causes of Truman’s ‘Astonishing’ Victory”. *Revue française d’études américaines* 87(1): 38-61.

Leroux, Manon. 2002. *Les silences d’octobre*. Montréal: VLB.

Li, Quan. 2005. “Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(2): 278-297.

Lian, Bradley and John Oneal. 1993. “Presidents, the Use of Military Force, and Public Opinion”. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37(2): 277-300.

Lifton, Robert. 2000. “Destroying the World to Save It”. In Boris Drozdek and John Wilson, eds., *Voices of Trauma: Treating Psychological Trauma Across Cultures*. New York: Springer, 59-86.

Lijphart, Arend. 1984. *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lijphart, Arend. 1969. “Consociational Democracy”. *World Politics* 21(2): 207-225.

Lijphart, Arend. 1968. “Typologies of Democratic Systems”. *Comparative Political Studies* 1(1): 3-44.

Lipset, Seymour and Stein Rokkan. 1967. *Party systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Persperctives*. New York: The Free Press.

Lodge, Juliet and Avi Shlaim. 1979. “The U.S. and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-1949”. In Michael Brecher, ed., *Studies in Crisis Behavior*. New Brunswick: Transaction, 51-80.

MacKuen, Michael. 1983. “Political Drama, Economic Conditions, and the Dynamics of Presidential Popularity”. *American Journal of Political Science* 27: 165-192.

Marty, Martin and Scott Appleby, eds. 1995. *Fundamentalism Comprehended*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mathews, John. 1919. "Political Parties and the War". *The American Political Science Review* 13(2): 213-228.

Mayer, Nonna and Vincent Tiberj. 2004. "Do Issues Matter? Law and Order in the 2002 French Presidential Election". In Michael Lewis-Beck, ed., *The French Voter: Before and After the 2002 Elections*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 33-46.

McCauley, C. and M. Segal. 1987. "Social Psychology of Terrorist Groups". In C. Hendrick, ed., *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations: Review of Personality and Social Psychology*. Newbury Park: Sage, 231-256.

McKeown, Timothy J. 2000. "The Cuban Missile Crisis and Politics as Usual". *Journal of Politics* 62: 70-87.

Meade, Robert. 1990. *Red Brigades: The Story of Italian Terrorism*. New York: Macmillan.

Merari, Ariel. 1990. "The Readiness to Kill and Die: Suicide Terrorism in the Middle East". In Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 192-207.

Milner, Henry. 2002. *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work*. Hanover: University Press of New England.

Montalvo, José. 2006. "Voting After the Bombing: Can Terrorist Attacks Change the Outcome of Democratic Elections?" UPF Department of Economics Working Paper.

Moravcsik, Andrew. 1997. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics". *International Organization* 51(4): 513-553.

Morgenthau, Hans. 1996. “Another ‘Great Debate’: The National Interest of the United States”. In John Vasquez, ed., *Classics of International Relations*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 147-149

Moruzzi, Jean-François and Emmanuel Boulaert. 1988. *Iparretarrak: Séparatisme et terrorisme en pays basque français*. Paris: Plon.

Mueller, John. 2008. “The Atomic Terrorist: Assessing the Likelihood”. Presentation, Program on International Security Policy, University of Chicago, January 15, 2008.

Mueller, John. 2007. “Reactions and Overreactions to Terrorism: The Atomic Obsession”. Presentation, American Political Science Association, Chicago, August 30 - September 2.

Mueller, John. 2006. “Is There Still a Terrorist Threat?: The Myth of the Omnipresent Enemy”. *Foreign Affairs* 85(5).

Mueller, John. 2005. “Terrorism and the Dynamics of Threat Exaggeration”. Presentation, American Political Science Association, Washington, September 1-4.

Mueller, John. 1973. *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Müller, Harald and Thomas Risse-Kapen. 1993. “From the Outside In and from the Inside Out: International Relations, Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy”. In David Skidmore and Valerie Hudson, eds., *The Limits of State Autonomy: Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*. Boulder: Westview Press, 25-48.

Nacos, Brigitte. 2007. *Mass-Mediated Terrorism: The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Nacos, Brigitte, Robert Shapiro and Pierangelo Isernia, eds. 2000. *Decisionmaking in a Glass House: Mass Media, Public Opinion, and American and European Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Nacos, Brigitte. 2000. "Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism". *Current History*, April 2000.

Nadeau, Richard, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil and Neil Nevitte. 2001. "Perceptions of Party Competence in the 1997 Election". In Hugh G. Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, eds. *Party Politics in Canada*. Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 413-430.

Nesser, Petter. 2008. "Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994-2007: Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31(10): 924-946.

Noël, Alain and Jean-Philippe Thérien. 2008. *Left and Right in Global Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Norris, Pippa, Montague Kern and Marion Just. 2003. *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government, and the Public*. London: Routledge.

Oates, Sarah and Monica Postelnicu. 2005. "Citizen or Comrade? Terrorist Threat in Election Campaigns in Russia and the U.S." Presentation, American Political Science Association, Washington, September 1-4.

Oborne, Peter. 2008. "The Use and Abuse of Terror: The Construction of a False Narrative on the Domestic Terror Threat". In George Kassimeris, ed., *Playing Politics with Terrorism: A User's Guide*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Olmeda, José. 2008. "A Reversal of Fortune: Blame Games and Framing Contests After the 3/11 Terrorist Attacks in Madrid". In Arjen Boin, Allan McConnell and Paul t' Hart, eds., *Governing After Crisis: The Politics of Investigation, Accountability and Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 62-84.

Oneal, John and Anna Lillian Bryan. 1995. "The Rally 'Round the Flag Effect in U.S. Foreign Policy Crises, 1950-1985". *Political Behavior* 17(4): 379-401.

Oots, KL. 1986. *A Political Organization Approach to Transnational Terrorism*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press.

Ostrom, C. W. and D. Simon. 1985. "Promise and Performance: A Dynamic Model of Presidential Popularity". *American Political Science Review* 79: 334-358.

Pape, Robert. 2005. *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. New York: Random House.

Pape, Robert. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism". *American Political Science Review* 97(3): 343-361.

Parker, Tom. 2007. "Fighting an Antaean Enemy: How Democratic States Unintentionally Sustain the Terrorist Movements They Oppose". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19(2): 155-179.

Paterson, Thomas and William Brophy. 1986. "October Missiles and November Elections: The Cuban Missile Crisis and American Politics, 1962". *The Journal of American History* 73(1): 87-119.

Paust, Jordan. 1977. "Response to Terrorism: A Prologue to Decision Concerning Private Measures of Sanction". *Stanford Journal of International Studies* 12.

Pedhazur, Ami. 2006. *Root Causes of Suicide Terrorism: The Globalization of Martyrdom*. London: Routledge.

Petrocik, John. 1996. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study". *American Journal of Political Science* 40(3): 825-850.

Pizam, A. and G. Smith. 2000. “Tourism and Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis of Major Terrorist Acts and Their Impact on Tourism Destinations”. *Tourism Economics* 6(2): 123-138.

Polsby, Nelson. 1964. *Congress and the Presidency*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Post, Jerrold. 2007. *The Mind of the Terrorist*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Post, Jerrold. 2005. “When Hatred is Bred in the Bone: Psycho-cultural Foundations of Contemporary Terrorism”. *Political Psychology* 26(4): 615-636.

Post, Jerrold. 1987. “Rewarding Fire with Fire: Effects of Retaliation on Terrorist Group Dynamics”. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 10(1): 23-35.

Post, Jerrold, 1984. “Notes on a Psychodynamic Theory of Terrorist Behavior”. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 7(2): 241-256.

Putnam, Robert. 1988. “Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games”. *International Organization* 42(3): pp. 427-460.

Rabert, Bernhard. 1995. *Links und Rechtsterrorismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1970 bis heute*. Bonn: Bernard & Graefe.

Ramsay, Kristopher. 2004. “Politics at the Water’s Edge: Crisis Bargaining and Electoral Competition”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(4): 459-486.

Ranstorp, Magnus. 2007. *Mapping Terrorism Research*. London: Routledge.

Rapoport, David. 2004. “The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism”. In Audrey Cronin and James Ludes, eds., *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*. Washington: Georgetown University Press, 46-73.

Rapoport, David and Leonard Weinberg. 2001. *The Democratic Experience and Political Violence*. London: Routledge.

Rapoport, David. 1984. "Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions". *American Political Science Review* 78(3): 668-672.

Rapoport, David. 1971. *Assassination and Terrorism*. Toronto: CBD.

Regens, James, Ronald Gaddie and Brad Lockerbie. 1995. "The Electoral Consequences of Voting to Declare War". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39(1): 168-182.

Reich, Walter. 1990. *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reid, Edna. 1997. "Evolution of a Body of Knowledge: An Analysis of Terrorism Research". *Information Processing and Management* 33(1).

Reiter, Dan and Allan Stam. 2002. *Democracies at War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rice, Condoleezza. 2000. "Promoting the National Interest". *Foreign Affairs* 79(1): 45-62.

Riker, W. 1962. *The Theory of Political Coalitions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Risse-Kappen, Thomas. 1991. "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies". *World Politics* 43:479-512.

Roberts, Brad, ed. *Terrorism With Chemical and Biological Terrorism: Calibrating Risks and Responses*. Alexandria, VA: Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute.

Robertson, D. 1976. "Surrogates for Party Identification in the Rational Choice Framework". In Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe and Dennis Farlie, eds., *Party Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition*. London: Wiley, 365-382.

Rosenthal, Uriel, Michael T. Charles and Paul 't Hart. 1989. *Coping with Crises – The Management of Disasters, Riots and Terrorism*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas.

Rubenstein, Richard. 1987. *Alchemists of Revolution – Terrorism in the Modern World*. New York: Basic Books.

Rummel, Rudolf. 1994. *Death by Government: Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1900*. New Brunswick: Transaction.

Russett, Bruce. 1990. *Controlling the Sword: The Democratic Governance of National Security*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sageman, Marc. 2008. *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sageman, Marc. 2004. *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Samaan, Jean-Loup. 2007. *Les métamorphoses du Hezbollah*. Paris: Karthala.

Sanchez, Alejandro. 2008. "Corsica: France's Petite Security Problem". *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31: 655-664.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1976. *Party and Party Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schattschneider, E.E. 1942. *Party Government: American Government in Action*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart.

Schlesinger, Joseph. 1991. *Political Parties and the Winning of Office*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Schmid, Alex. 2004. "Frameworks for Conceptualising Terrorism". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16(2): 197-221.

Schmid, Alex and Ronald Crelinsten, eds. 1993. *Western Responses to Terrorism*. London: Routledge.

Schmid, Alex and Albert Jongman. 1988. *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Litterature*. New Brunswick: Transaction Books.

Schmid, Alex and Janny de Graaf. 1982. *Violence as Communication: Insurgent Terrorism and the Western News Media*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Schmidt, Manfred. 1996. "When Parties Matter: A Review of the Possibilities and Limits of Partisan Influence on Public Policy". *European Journal of Political Research* 30: 155-183.

Schultz, Kenneth. 1998. "Domestic Opposition and Signalling in International Crises". *American Political Science Review* 92(4): 829-844.

Schuster, Jürgen and Herbert Maier. 2006. "The Rift: Explaining Europe's Divergent Iraq Policies in the Run-Up of the American-Led War on Iraq". *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2(3):223-244.

Scraton, Phil. 2002. *Beyond September 11: An Anthology of Dissent*. London: Pluto Press.

Sigelman, Lee and Pamela Johnston. 1981. "The Dynamics of Presidential Support During International Conflict Situations: The Iranian Hostage Crisis". *Political Behavior* 3(4): 303-318.

Silke, Andrew. 2004, ed. *Research on Terrorism. Trends, Achievements and Failures*. London: Frank Cass.

Silke, Andrew, ed. 2003. *Terrorists, Victims and Society: Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences*. Wiley

Silke, Andrew. 2002. "The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13(4): 1-14.

Sloan, Stephen. 2005. “Terrorism and the Media: The Need to Place the Threat in Context”. In Quentin Michel, ed., *Terrorism: Cross Analysis*. Bruxelles: P.I.E.-Peter Lang.

Smith, Adam. 2006. *No Party Now*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, Michael. 1995. *Fighting for Ireland?: The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement*. London: Routledge.

Smouts, Marie-Claude, Dario Battistella and Pascal Vennesson. 2003. *Dictionnaire des relations internationales*. Paris: Dalloz.

Sommier, Isabelle. 2000. “Repentir et dissociation: la fin des années de plomb en Italie?”. *Cultures et Conflits* 40(4): 43-61.

Sorel, Jean-Marc. 2003. “Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against Its Financing”. *European Journal of International Law* 14(2): 365-378.

Sprinzak, Ehud. 1998. “Extremism and Violence in Israel: The Crisis of Messianic Politics”. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 555: 114-126.

Steinmo, Sven. 2001. “The New Institutionalism”. In Barry Clarck and Joe Foweraker, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought*. London: Routledge.

Sterling, Claire. 1981. *The Terror Network*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Stohl, Michael, ed. 1988. *The Politics of Terrorism*. New York: Marcel Dekker.

Stone, Geoffrey. 2004. *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime From the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism*. New York: Norton.

Strøm, Kaare and Wolfgang Müller. 1999. “Political Parties and Hard Choices”. In Wolfgang Müller and Kaare Strøm, eds., *Policy, Office or Votes?: How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-35.

Strøm, Kaare. 1990. “A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties”. *American Journal of Political Science* 34(2): 565-598.

Sullivan, John. 1988. *ETA and Basque Nationalism*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Taheri, A. 1987. *Holy Terror: The Inside Story of Islamic Terrorism*. Hutchinson.

Talmon, Jacob L. 1952. *The Rise of Totalitarian Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Taylor, Peter. 1997. *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*. TV Books.

Taylor, Lily Ross. 1949. *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tetley, William. 2007. *The October Crisis, 1970: An Insider’s View*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Thérien, Jean-Philippe and Alain Noel. 2000. “Political Parties and Foreign Aid”. *American Political Science Review* 94(1): 151-162.

Thornton, Thomas B. 1964. “Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation”. In Harry Eckstein, eds., *Internal War*. New York: Free Press, 71-91.

Tilly, Charles. 2004. “Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists”. *Sociological Theory* 22(1): 5-13.

Townshend, Charles. 2002. *Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tucker, Jonathan. 2000. *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Van Biezen, Ingrid. 2005. "Terrorism and Democratic Legitimacy: Conflicting Interpretations of the Spanish Elections". *Mediterranean Politics* 10(1): 99-108.

Vidino, Lorenzo and Steven Emerson. 2006. *Al Qaeda in Europe: The New Battleground of International Jihad*. Amherst: Prometheus Books.

Waltz, Kenneth. 1967. "Electoral Punishment and Foreign Policy Crisis". In James Rosenau, ed., *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy*. New York: The Free Press.

Waltz, Kenneth. 1959. *Man, the State and War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Walzer, Michael. 2002. "Five Questions About Terrorism". *Dissent* 49(1): 5-16.

Walzer, Michael and Jean-Marc Flükiger. 2006. "A Discussion with Michael Walzer". Online. www.*terrorism.net* (accessed February 15, 2007).

Wardlaw, Grant. 1994. "The Democratic Framework". In David Charters, ed., *The Deadly Sin of Terrorism: Its Effect on Democracy and Civil Liberty in Six Countries*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 5-11.

Warwick, Paul. 1992. "Ideological Diversity and Government Survival in Western European Parliamentary Democracies". *Comparative Political Studies* 25(3): 332-361.

Wattenberg, Martin. 1990. *The Decline of American Political Parties*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Weinberg, Leonard. 1986. "The Violent Life: An Analysis of Left and Right Wing Terrorism in Italy". In Peter Merkl, ed., *Political Violence and Terror*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 145-167.

Weinberg, Leonard. 1979. "Patterns of Neo-Fascist Violence in Italian Politics". *Terrorism* 2(3): 231-259.

Weinberg, Leonard and Ami Pedahzur. 2003. *Political Parties and Terrorist Groups*. London: Routledge.

Weinberg, Leonard, Ami Pedahzur and Sivan Hirsch-Hoeffler. 2004. "The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16(4): 777-794.

Weinberg, Leonard and William Eubank. 2008. "A Nested Game: Playing Politics with Terrorism in the United States". In George Kassimeris, ed., *Playing Politics With Terrorism, A User's Guide*. New York: Columbia University Press, 157-175.

Weinberg, Leonard and William Eubank. 1998. "Terrorism and Democracy: What Recent Events Disclose". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 10(1): 108-118.

Weinberg, Leonard and William Eubank. 1987. *Rise and Fall of Italian Terrorism*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Weingast, Barry. 2002. "Self-Enforcing Constitutions". Working Paper, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

White, John. 2006. "What is a Political Party?". In Richard Katz and William Crotty, eds., *Handbook of Party Politics*. London: Sage.

Wieviorka, Michel and David Gordon White. 2004. *The Making of Terrorism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wilkinson, Paul. 2001. *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Wilkinson, Paul. 1977. *Terrorism and the Liberal State*. New York: John Wiley.

Wilkinson, Paul. 1974. *Political Terrorism*. New York: John Wiley.

Wolf, JB. 1989. *Antiterrorist Iniatives*. New York: Plenum Press.

Wright, Ronald. 2004. *A Short History of Progress*. New York: Carrol and Graph.

Zaki, Chebab. 2007. *Inside Hamas. The Untold Story of Militants, Martyrs and Spies*. London: Tauris.

Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Presse

El Pais

Frankfurter Allgemeine

L'Express

L'Humanité

La Croix

Le Figaro

Le Journal du dimanche

Le Monde

Le Nouvel Observateur

Le Parisien

Le Point

Les Échos

Libération

The Guardian

The New York Times

The Times

USA Today

Washington Post

Documents gouvernementaux

European Union Council Common Position of December 27, 2001, on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

House Committee on the Judiciary, *Administration's Draft Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001*, 107th Congress, 1st session, September 24, 2001, 2.

House Committee on the Judiciary, *Administration's Draft Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001*, 107th Congress, 1st session, September 24, 2001, Part II, 1.

Annexe A: Comparative table of databases on terrorist events

Database	Period Covered	Observations (N)	Domestic International	Definition
Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB)	1968 – 2006	About 30,000	Domestic & International	Terrorism is violence, or the threat of violence, calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm. These acts are designed to coerce others into actions they would not otherwise undertake, or refrain from actions they desired to take. All terrorist acts are crimes. Many would also be violation of the rules of war if a state of war existed. This violence or threat of violence is generally directed against civilian targets. The motives of all terrorists are political, and terrorist actions are generally carried out in a way that will achieve maximum publicity. Unlike other criminal acts, terrorists often claim credit for their acts. Finally, terrorist acts are intended to produce effects beyond the immediate physical damage of the cause, having long-term psychological repercussions on a particular target audience. The fear created by terrorists may be intended to cause people to exaggerate the strengths of the terrorist and the importance of the cause, to provoke governmental overreaction, to discourage dissent, or simply to intimidate and thereby enforce compliance with their demands.
Global Terrorism Database (GTD)[310]	1970 – 2004 GTD 1 (from 1970 to 1997)[311] GTD 2 (from 1998 to 2004)	About 80,000	Domestic & International	GTD 1: The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation. GTD 2: No set definition; configurable approach covering several definitions of terrorism.

[310] Not available at the time the project started.
[311] The year 1993 is missing.

International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE)	1968 – 2004	About 10,000	International	N/A
Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data (TWEED)	1950 - 2004	About 10,000	Domestic (18 West European countries)	As an act of terrorism is counted an act that has inflicted personal injury, or attacks against material targets (property) if the act is of a nature that could have led to personal injury or in another way would have a noticeable impact on an audience, while at the same time the act was committed to direct demands of or raise attention from others than those immediately inflicted with personal or material injury.
Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS)	2004 – 2005	N/A	Domestic & International	Terrorism occurs when groups or individuals acting on political motivation deliberately or recklessly attack civilians/non-combatants or their property and the attack does not fall into another special category of political violence, such as crime, rioting, or tribal violence.
Triton (restricted access)	2000 - present	N/A	N/A	N/A
La base de données sur les actes terroristes	1965 - 2003	About 1,500	France	N/A