



Terrorist Constituencies in Terrorist– State Conflicts: The Debate on the Use of Violence Among Irish Nationalists and West Germany’s Radical Left in the Mid-1970s

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Media reports following the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015 and the Brussels bombings of 22 March 2016 gave significant attention to the sympathisers and supporters of the actual perpetrators. The terrorists’ connection to Molenbeek, a troubled neighbourhood in Brussels, combined with the inability of the police to locate one of the suspects who was hiding there, provoked journalists to write about the terrorists’ ‘societal surround’¹: people who have a certain social connection to the

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perpetrators and who in this case had supposedly enabled the atrocities.² Several Dutch newspapers, for instance, informed their readers about the support provided by the social ‘layers’ around the jihadists, ‘if only so as they might find a place to stay’.³

This degree of attention to the environment that the terrorists launched their attacks from, echoed the response to similar cases such as the London bombings of 7 July 2005. At that time, the authorities and the media had quickly directed their gaze to the Beeston suburb of Leeds in Northern England, home of three of the four perpetrators of this first act of ‘home-grown’ Islamist terrorism on European soil.⁴ And when, thirty years before, in the 1970s, West Germany was hit by terrorist acts of the left-wing Red Army Faction (*Rote Armee Fraktion* aka Baader Meinhof Group), media and politicians blamed the entire radical left from which the RAF had emerged. In total disregard for their heterogeneous character and internecine political debates, these surroundings were narrowly defined as the *Umfeld* (environment) of the terrorists and many of the people involved were accused of being RAF sympathisers. The German state institutions reacted to this association between terrorists and society by weaving a wide and rather indiscriminate web of surveillance that in principal covered all the fringe parties, clubs, communes, underground media, and other initiatives of the radical left.⁵

As such this is not a surprising response. In the process of tracking terrorists down and preventing further attacks, it has been the standard procedure of police and security services to chart their interactions with family members, friends, and associates. Much like they routinely survey the environment of for instance drug dealers and other ‘ordinary’ criminals. What is surprising, however, is that historically journalists, politicians, and indeed academics have always paid limited attention to the environment of terrorists despite it seemingly playing such a central role. Their focus has generally been on the actual terrorists: their individual trajectory towards political violence, the small-group dynamics of terrorist cells and their interactions with security institutions of the states they fight.

This is detrimental to our understanding of the way terrorists function in a democratic society. Through their methods and aims, terrorists challenge the existing democratic order and its underpinning assumptions. Implicitly, through their actions, as well as explicitly, through their justification, they posit certain concepts of legitimacy and justice as foundations of an alternative system of popular or people’s power. Thus, although their use or threat of violence sets them apart from purely political opposition, they are just one specific category of the ‘adversaries

of democracy' this volume discusses. Similar to other such groupings, they are engaged in a form of communication (partly violent) in which both the terrorists and the state try to convince the rest of society, as a whole and in its various social, political, cultural, and ethnic segments, of the validity of their contrasting concepts of democracy. It will be shown here that in that process the definition of democracy also becomes reformulated and redefined.

This chapter will focus on that section of society, that can be termed the 'terrorist constituency': those who share certain views about the ideal structure of society with a terrorist organisation and who are *potentially* receptive to its ideology and the messages implicit in its acts. The terrorists consider them their first audience, a rich resource of practical and moral support there to be exploited. The state and—as demonstrated above—the media instead often consider them simply as a threat to be contained. It is precisely the struggle between terrorists and the state over this first audience that is very helpful in understanding the dilemmas democracies face when confronted with fundamental opposition. Moreover, as this chapter maintains, coming to terms with the role of terrorist constituencies in terrorist-state conflicts is also essential to explain the dynamics surrounding terrorism in open democratic societies.

TERRORIST CONSTITUENCIES

Although this chapter intends to explore new avenues of analysis, there are other researchers who have dealt with the environments of terrorists before. In a groundbreaking comparative study of terrorist-state confrontations in 1970s' Italy and West Germany, published in 1995, the Italian sociologist Donatella Della Porta showed how organised violence was rooted in broader, generally non-violent social movements.⁶ A few years later, her German colleague Peter Waldmann was one of the first to point out that terrorists, through their declarations and acts of violence, not only aim to spread anxiety and terror, but also strive to garner sympathy from certain groups for whom they claim to be fighting and with whom they identify.⁷ In a similar vein, Canadian criminologist Ronald Crelinsten stressed the importance of not just looking at the terrorist group, but also 'at those people, groups, communities or institutions – whether subnational, national, international or transnational – with which the group interacts'.⁸ Only by doing this, Irish terrorism expert Louise Richardson has argued, can we take into account that terrorists

need people around them that not just provide new recruits and deliver all sorts of practical assistance but also function as a crucial resource of justifications for their struggle.⁹ Without what German philologist Jan Phillip Reemtsma called ‘a nod of recognition’ and respect from this societal surround, they will find it hard to sustain their efforts.¹⁰ Stefan Malthaner, a German sociologist collaborating with Waldmann, took this a step further by arguing that terrorists derive normative standards from this group and consider its judgement of their behaviour relevant for their thinking and practice.¹¹

Several terrorism researchers have thus tried to raise awareness of the fact that terrorists ‘have constituencies, within which they seek both legitimacy and control’.¹² Nevertheless, many questions as to membership of these constituencies, the roles they play during terrorism crises and the ways they experience them remain unanswered. In a joint effort to conceptualise the ‘supportive environment of terrorist groups’, Waldmann and Malthaner have pleaded for a narrow focus on those who are in direct contact with the perpetrators, i.e. their immediate comrades, helpers, friends and sometimes family members. They call this environment the ‘radical milieu’.¹³ Both sociologists are not blind to the role played by the terrorists’ ‘broader social and political movements or ethnic/religious communities from which they emerge’, but in their research they choose to focus on the direct ‘relationships and interactions between armed groups and [their] social environment’. Moreover, they narrow this down to the ‘radical’ part, those who ‘approve or use violence’. In their eyes, violence is the radical milieu’s ‘constitutive and defining feature’.¹⁴

As a research strategy, focusing on the direct supportive environment has the advantage that it enables researchers to concentrate on a clearly defined population. However, it carries considerable disadvantages as well. By putting violence at the centre of the radical milieu Waldmann and Malthaner arbitrarily obscure other elements that might also reveal common identities and common enmities between terrorists and larger segments of society. They neglect the possibility that terrorists aim to win legitimacy in broad societal spheres on the basis of these commonalities. In the 1970s, the RAF for instance could always appeal to the experiences of alternative lifestyles and corresponding confrontations with state representatives shared by many West German youth. Although many of them had doubts about the armed struggle, they encouraged the terrorists to continue because their criticism of the West German

establishment (and the USA-led Western world) echoed much of what the RAF said in its declarations. Waldmann and Malthaner miss out on this important psychological factor that might help to explain why terrorists in the face of military defeat still often carry on their fight for many years. In theoretical terms, their narrow perspective on the environment as a resource of recruits and practical assistance comes at the price of downplaying the workings of the environment as a resource of justifications of the struggle.

To come to a deeper understanding of the way terrorists function in a democratic society and affect the conceptions of democracy, the focus therefore has to be on a wider section of society, this chapter's 'terrorist constituency', the *potential* supporters of a terrorist group. Although the term constituency, to refer to the wider societal surround of terrorist groups, has been loosely used before, it has not yet been operationalised. To overcome the drawbacks of earlier attempts we broaden the definition to include groups and individuals that have no direct connections to what is called the hardcore of a terrorist movement, but are nevertheless considered by the terrorists, by others, such as state authorities and the media, and potentially also by themselves to be the terrorists' first audience. This calls for research strategies that remain open to the dynamic demarcation of the social boundaries involved. Using this perspective, we honour the fact that terrorists (or militants) usually are part of broader social movements. Terrorist groups remain part of the 'social movement families' from which they emerged. Even after they go underground they remain physically, emotionally, mentally, and ideologically bound to them. The constituency perspective enables us to grasp the processes that uphold and strengthen the idea of fighting a legitimate struggle as well as the mechanisms of practical support and recruitment, and puts terrorism into its historical, social, and political context.¹⁵

The way these constituencies act in and react to a terrorist-state conflict is the central topic of this chapter, as a way to explore how people respond when democratic institutions are sidelined as a means to achieve political objectives. Terrorist constituencies have so far generally been treated as a homogenous and somewhat inert mass.¹⁶ In our view, which is informed by the idea of the 'movement family', the constituency is, however, not an amorphous group which responds simply to stimuli from the outside. Instead, it consists of a broad array of groups and individuals and has an internal dynamic of social and political organisation and competition. The terrorist-state conflict may only be one of

a number of issues that determine a constituency's internal dynamics. In other words, in order to understand the reactions within a certain radical community to the acts and statements of terrorists and the state, we have to study these internal dynamics.¹⁷

The constituency in this context is not an association of which one can become a registered member, but is a social construction, negotiated through ongoing public debate.¹⁸ In as far as researchers have studied constituencies, they have tried to overcome the challenge of these fluid boundaries by distinguishing types of constituency members on the basis of the measure of their support for the terrorists. This has often been visualised in models with three or more concentric circles around a small nucleus of actual terrorists.¹⁹ The problem with this approach is that it places the terrorists, and not the constituency, at the centre, thereby disregarding its role as an actor in its own right with its own internal dynamics. It is nevertheless helpful to distinguish categories of actors, taking into account their status within the constituency. In accordance to how social movement researchers often typecast categories of activists, this chapter will differentiate between three groups based on the role they take themselves in the discussions inspired by the terrorist–state confrontation: silent contributors, minor contributors, and leading voices.

Silent contributors mostly act out their position by participating in demonstrations or functioning as the audience in the discussions. They thus profess their support or opposition without explicitly introducing their own arguments. Such public reaction to the attempts to impose a specific narrative by those involved is difficult to measure except in a quantitative manner by determining the number of people involved in protests. In contrast, minor contributors do articulate their opinion in an effort to influence the discussions. They are represented here by looking at letters to the editor in newspapers, chants during demonstrations, and interviews with ordinary people. Leading voices is our term for those figures who had authority within the constituency and who regularly intervened in its discussions through giving speeches or writing longer contributions in which they articulate their position.

Through analysing the expressions of all people with these three roles, we aim to understand how they responded to terrorism crises. This can be traced by analysing the *discussions* within the constituency and focusing on two fundamental elements. The first relates to the question of whether members and groups within a constituency consider the terrorist

aims to be *legitimate*, i.e. in accordance with their political objectives, norms, and values. In a sense whether what happens is commensurate with their conception of democracy. The second relates to the question of whether they consider the terrorist strategy to be *expedient*, i.e. practical and opportune. This is an important distinction because as for instance most Irish nationalist would support the objective of a united independent Ireland, only a certain section of them would find it acceptable that violence would be used to obtain this objective. Support for both these elements fluctuate over time and therefore provide important measures of the potential of terrorist movements to survive.

Although discussions within the terrorist constituency have an independent dynamic, they are of course largely informed by the *actions and statements* of the terrorists, on the one hand, and of government agencies, on the other. Therefore, the analysis of how terrorist constituencies position themselves in terrorism crises should begin with an account of the ways both the terrorists and the state *framed* their confrontation. How did these antagonists put forward their argument in speech and action? What concepts of democracy resounded therein and how were these related to their claim to play legitimate roles in the conflict. Moreover, it should be noted that both speech acts and other actions do not generally come to the constituency directly but are mediated by newspapers and various other media. The framing of these actions and statements in the media and the way both the terrorists and the state tried to influence this, therefore, should be an important separate element of analysis, to be studied before turning to the actual discussions in the constituency.²⁰

To assess the role of the terrorist constituency this chapter presents two case studies, the first on the Irish nationalist community and the confrontation between the Provisional IRA and the British and Irish governments and the second on West Germany's radical left and the confrontation between the Red Army Faction and the Federal Republic of Germany. These cases represent two distinctly different types of modern terrorism: the Provisional IRA belongs to the category of 'ethnonationalist' terrorism, the RAF to that of 'social-revolutionary' terrorism. This has important implications, because, as has been recently shown,²¹ ethnonationalist terrorists generally find it easier to become embedded in a larger community that transcends class divisions and shares a broad sense of identity and communal grievances (often against an outsider-enemy), whereas social-revolutionary terrorists are forced to build up networks

between dispersed pockets of society, based on bonds of social class or self-chosen counter-cultural or radical-political identities. There is a corresponding distinction in the counter-terrorist communication of state agencies in both cases. Moreover, the source material studied for both cases is affected by these differences: the Irish case allows for the use of general news media including those directly associated with the IRA, whereas the German case forces the historian to take a look at subcultural publications of the radical left and various ego-documents, which to some extent affects the comparative analysis of the terrorist constituency perspective presented here.

One of the elements of the terrorist–state conflict in (Northern-) Ireland and West Germany that generated most discussion in society were the trials of terrorist suspects, in particular when hunger strikes were used as a political weapon. The treatment of prisoners potentially challenged the democratic legitimacy of the state and generated much debate. To focus this analysis, this chapter will therefore concentrate on a small number of such events in the early 1970s. To make the analysis more concrete it looks at the extent to which the terrorists and the government were effective in influencing the discussions by raising *attention* to their framing of events. The analysis of both cases is structured in the same way: first we look at the framing of the confrontation by the terrorists, the state, and the media, and after that we analyse the reactions by the three categories of constituency members mentioned above: silent contributors, minor contributors, and leading voices in the constituency. In the conclusion, the usefulness of taking constituencies as the central focus will be evaluated on the basis of this small-scale investigation as well as how notions of democracy become redefined in the conflict between democracies and violent adversaries.

THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUENCY OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA

The campaign of the IRA, aiming to unite Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland, which commenced in 1969, originated in a non-violent protest movement striving to end the disadvantaged position Catholics held in Northern Ireland despite its formal democratic structures. This civil rights movement, formally established in 1967, was met by a violent reaction from Protestant loyalists resulting in growing communal violence. The lack of protection for catholic civilians from security forces allowed the IRA to position itself as a protective force. After communal

violence was brought under control, the IRA began an all-out campaign aimed at forcing Britain to disengage from Northern Ireland, leading to an increasingly violent conflict, in which hundreds of bombings and thousands of shooting incidents took place, killing 480 people at its peak in 1972 alone.²² Although slowly tapering off in intensity after that, the conflict only ended in 1998 with the political compromise embodied in the Good Friday Agreement.

This study analyses the way the terrorist constituency in Ireland reacted in the early years of the conflict, to two influential court cases and concomitant hunger strikes, one in Northern Ireland and one in the Republic of Ireland. The analysis is complicated by the involvement of multiple actors on both sides. Although there are two or even three 'states' involved, if one includes Northern Ireland next to Britain and Ireland, the constituency that the Provisional IRA related to is essentially drawn from the entire island of Ireland, covering the territory of the state they aspire to. This approach can therefore be justified on the basis of taking the constituency as the starting point of this analysis.

These cases represent two pivotal examples of changes in government policy towards the IRA, which generated a relatively large amount of public reaction and thus allow for an analysis of the responses of all parties involved. The first concerns the trial and hunger strike of leading Belfast Republicans William McKee and Francis Card which took place in Northern Ireland and began on 16 May 1971. This was particularly significant as the first high profile example of the new British state policy to imprison leading Republicans using the legal system. The second involves the trial of the then-Chief of Staff of the IRA, Sean MacStiofáin, which started in Dublin on 25 November 1972. The high public profile of MacStiofáin ensured a large public response crucial to the possibility of analysing the constituency's reaction.

Republican Framing

Irish Republicans were keenly aware of the potential and importance of the constituency, as they made every effort to mobilise them by putting forward their interpretation of events. They did so through their own newspapers and by trying to get mainstream papers to pick up on their views. This could be through a press release or by organising small demonstrations. At the second remand hearing for William McKee and Francis Card who had been arrested in Northern Ireland, a dozen men

carrying placards which read ‘State repression’ protested outside the court building.²³ One of the main elements of the Republican narrative became an injustice frame. Following what they considered to be very harsh sentences, they claimed these betrayed anti-Irish prejudices and hatred and were ‘similar to the shooting of the sepoys from the barrels of cannons because they too defied the Empire in defence of freedom’.²⁴ The IRA’s political wing, Sinn Fein, even called upon the legal profession to protest vigorously against the attempt to subvert the cause of justice. People should ‘recoil in revulsion’, they argued, if the state could pick up any person while looking around for evidence to justify the arrest.²⁵

In Sean MacStiofáin’s case, which took place in the Republic of Ireland, Republicans asserted that the arrest and trial had no legal basis but were initiated on behest of the British. Their own newspaper, *Republican News*, opened its front page with the headline ‘Lynch acts at Heath’s Orders’, arguing that the Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) Jack Lynch had been instructed by the British prime minister Edward Heath: ‘Herod Heath has called for a head on a plate. Saoirse Lynch will tell him the victim is already imprisoned’.²⁶ The newspaper even referred to the Taoiseach as a Quisling.²⁷ This framing was directly connected to the attempt to mobilise support for their campaign among the entire nationalist constituency. In response to the events surrounding the court case in the Republic, Sinn Fein leader Daithi O Connail optimistically argued: ‘We are going to bring this government down and we will not finish until we do so’.²⁸

Nevertheless, the movement was aware of its limitations. Nationalist in Northern Ireland felt the consequences of the political conflict on a daily basis, and a large part of them supported the IRA. In the Republic, however, a majority supported the legitimacy of the drive for a united Ireland but very few would agree with the expediency of the use of physical force. Taking this on board, the imprisoned leader of the IRA had a message read out in which he called for peaceful protest in the South, essentially using its democratic structures, but to take the fight to the North, where they asserted democracy could not function as a consequence of the arbitrary boundary drawn through the Irish constituency.²⁹ During the protest meeting, the IRA called for discipline and restraint, telling the protesters that ‘the government would love the media to be able to report that a crowd of hooligans and hoodlums came up from O’Connell Street [in Dublin] and desecrated a hospital’.³⁰

State Framing

The British and Irish governments were far less aware of the importance of keeping the terrorists' constituency on their side. Within the context of widespread violence in Northern Ireland, the authorities hardly felt a need to react to a single court case, even if it concerned leading IRA men. This was somewhat different in southern Ireland, where the trial had a major impact. It was nevertheless difficult for the government to develop a sophisticated counter-narrative. The main element of their strategy was to highlight the threat the IRA posed to law and order. They did so primarily through the use of large-scale security measures surrounding the court cases and the associated protest meetings.

MacStiofáin, who had gone on a hunger and thirst strike, was brought to the hospital after his conviction, which was protected like a fortress in anticipation of widespread protests; surrounded by 150 policemen, with another 600 soldiers kept in readiness.³¹ Considering the nationalist background of the major political parties in the state the Irish Government was in a difficult position. They took further measures, including the controversial sacking of the RTE Authority, which supervised the running of the public broadcasting service. The authority had allowed the broadcast of an interview with MacStiofáin, which had been the cause of his arrest. In a more covert manner, the government put out stories that the defendant was breaking his thirst strike by taking water, to counter the sympathy generated by the reports on his physical suffering. The government found it hard to counter the claim that the IRA was doing more to bring about a united Ireland than they were. Instead they focused on the expediency of the maintenance of the rule of law, which implicitly made the point the IRA was an illegitimate organisation. The Taoiseach argued that the defendant could not be released even if he was going to die on hunger strike:

Nothing can be gained by continuing the hunger strike in an attempt to frustrate the course of justice. If a member of such an organisation, and especially a self-confessed leader, could secure his release from prison through resort to a hunger or thirst strike, the inevitable consequence would be that not only he but all his associates would be effectively above the law of the land and free to act as they choose and would be seen to be so. This is so for the obvious reason that other prisoners, now or in the future, need only adopt the same tactics to ensure that they, too, would

be released. Accordingly, the issue in the present case is nothing less than whether Parliament, Government, the courts and the law are all to surrender to an unlawful organisation.³²

In an attempt to undermine the Republican's democratic credentials, he further stated he was confident that even if the defendant died trouble would only come from the IRA, not from the people.³³

Mediation

To get the message across, both the IRA and the respective states were largely dependent on the media, which all put their own version of events out. To access debates within the terrorist constituency a cross section of newspapers which represent nationalist opinion of all shades has been used here, as well as some British newspapers to follow the reaction there. Although reporting quite neutrally on the arguments of the two sides, all papers put their own gloss over it. Sometimes simply by varying the amount of attention they gave to the issue, but also by giving their own reaction to the arguments presented. The southern government supporting *Irish Press*, for instance, agreed that the sentence in the Northern case was 'unexpectedly heavy' and added that they detected a mood of dismay and despondency in Republican circles in the North but nevertheless expected a reaction from them.³⁴

Because intensive discussions had taken place between the British and Irish governments, the *Guardian* gave credence to the Republican claim that the IRA leader had been arrested in the Republic as a result of British pressure: 'Each move by the Irish Government has been followed by discussions with the British leaders, which has created in the minds of Irish Republicans the suspicion that, to say the least, actions and talks have somehow been connected'.³⁵ They speculated on the public impact of his hunger strike. Many who would not normally sympathise with the IRA, the paper suspected, would be moved by a hunger strike.³⁶ The fervently nationalist Irish local newspaper *The Kerryman* also picked up on the Republican narrative and criticised the positive reaction in English newspapers to the actions of the Irish government. This was portrayed as an attempt to keep control over the South and aid the British in doing the same in the North. It was rare, it argued, for the British press to be so positive about Ireland, particularly in support of legislation they would never accept in their own country: 'But then in ultra-British terms, we were always just wogs anyway'.³⁷

Similar interpretations were made in relation to government action. The *Guardian* argued that the arrest and an attendant minor wave of extraditions of IRA suspects to the North was nothing more than a PR exercise, to show the British government and the Unionists of Belfast that the Irish Government had done everything they could to 'rid the Republic of the IRA menace and cooperate with the British'.³⁸ It also warned against the emotional reaction by the Irish to the plight of a hunger striker. The position the man had 'voluntarily placed himself [in] will arouse human pity. But it is not a cause for criticising Mr. Lynch's government, which cannot allow the methods of a Gandhi to be used for the objectives of a Franco'.³⁹

Silent Contributors

At this level, there was no apparent public reaction to the case tried in Northern Ireland, probably due to the context of violence and tension that was a staple of everyday life. However, that did not mean there was no support for the IRA. The two defendants were apprehended after a short car chase. During the pursuit, they had called upon bystanders to block the road and stop the police. Some of them did that, and the police car was held up temporarily. The escape car was later found a few streets away, empty, with the doors open. When the police tried to investigate it, they were actually forced to withdraw by a threatening crowd.⁴⁰

This relative silence stood in contrast to the trial of the IRA leader in Dublin which generated a large public response. Large swathes of the populace—not just active nationalists but also public bodies such as trade unions, sports clubs, and the Catholic Church—were apparently receptive to criticism of the government's lack of action in relation to the creation of a united Ireland. After the arrest, there were many small-scale protests throughout the country, as well as a picket on the Irish embassy in London and the Bridewell police station in Dublin.⁴¹ The verdict itself generated a huge response. There were scuffles outside the courtroom and 7000 people protested outside the Mater Hospital in Dublin where the defendant was brought afterwards.⁴² The next day 2000 people, headed by masked men, marched through the rain in Dublin carrying a coffin draped in the tricolour with the inscription 'Justice is dead'. The following days there were protests from trade union officials, the Socialist Workers Movement, the National Graves Association, and a branch of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), while some short strikes broke

out in various companies, and pickets were staged.⁴³ Dockers and Ford plant employees in Cork, as well as hundreds of workers in Monaghan, walked out in protest, and in Tralee most businesses, including banks, were closed. The physical consequences of the hunger and thirst strike also generated sympathy among the population, as witnessed by demands for a release on humanitarian grounds. MacStiofáin was even visited in hospital by the sitting archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Dermot Ryan, and his predecessor, Dr. John Charles McQuaid.⁴⁴ Although impressive, the scale of protest in Ireland was insufficient to bring the country to a standstill. Indicating that relatively large groups in the constituency went along with the Republican framing, but not to the extent they were willing to accept the absence of democratic legitimacy and bring down the government as Sinn Féin had called for.

Interestingly, this case contrary to the one on Card and McKee also generated a public reaction in the North. On the night of his arrest, there were riots in (London-)Derry which lasted for more than two hours. After the sentencing 'a crowd incensed by the arrest' attacked the police, who responded by firing rubber bullets and CS tear gas grenades.⁴⁵ Reaction to the hunger strike was mixed. In Belfast, there was very little public response as: 'Martyrs appear out of fashion in the city ... his behaviour, to many, appeared a needless sacrifice.'⁴⁶ There were more positive responses elsewhere. A hundred people went on hunger strike in Andersonstown and others picketed RUC stations.⁴⁷

Minor Contributors

Minor voices in the debate were plentiful but merely articulated the general feelings expressed in demonstrations generated by these cases. The arrests in Northern Ireland did not produce much public debate but it was reported that there was much talk in Republican areas that the security forces were carrying out a policy of virtual internment: arresting known suspects and holding them, thereby hoping to capture the ring-leaders of the IRA.⁴⁸ In the Dublin case there were many voices to be heard, including an immediate response after the verdict when shouts of 'British traitor' were directed at the judge from the public gallery. One man, accused him of fighting a war for the English, and threw a handful of coins.⁴⁹ At the demonstrations outside, people simply chanted: 'We want Sean out' and a black coffin with 'Justice is dead' was again carried around. Outside Dublin resolutions were passed by trade unions and

GAA clubs, petitions signed and masses were said calling for his release.⁵⁰ The papers reported that ‘Republicans in the North see the arrest as the betrayal of their cause by the authorities in the South, and many nationalists are convinced that the Dublin Government and police are working to the instructions of the British’.⁵¹

In the following days, numerous demonstrations and demands for MacStiofáin’s release were reported in and also outside Ireland. Republicans attributed the strong reactions to the apparent absence of justice in the trial, but many involved in the protests argued they protested on humanitarian grounds and for the issue of press freedom.⁵² Resolutions were passed in Ireland by local authorities often with the support of the government party, branches of political parties, sports clubs, and schools. The teaching staff of Presentation Secondary School in Cashel held a prayer meeting in church and put out a statement saying that ‘they upheld the principle of truth, justice, and freedom and could therefore not accept that any Irishmen in 1972 should be allowed to die on hunger strike for those principles by the consent of our government’.⁵³

Leading Voices

In both cases, leading activists not directly associated with republicanism came out in support of the narrative put out by the IRA. Opposition members, civil rights activists, and trade unionists were willing to share a platform with prominent Republicans.⁵⁴ At meetings organised by Sinn Fein in Belfast, speakers and placards referred to the case as based on ‘thrumped [sic] up charges’. Frank Gogarty, the vice-chairman of the non-violent Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, also credited the accusation that the men had been framed by Scotland Yard detectives.⁵⁵ At a similar meeting in Dublin following the arrest there, the civil rights leader Aidan Corrigan proclaimed that the defendant had done more for Irish freedom and unity than the governing party, Fianna Fáil, which claimed to be *the* Republican party, had done in fifty years. Corrigan called him the man most maligned in Ireland by press, radio, and television, a man who had brought down the unionist government in Northern Ireland and deserved to stand proudly beside Jomo Kenyatta⁵⁶ and Desmond Greaves⁵⁷ as the leader of a great guerrilla movement.⁵⁸

The largest Irish trade union, the ITGWU, sent a telegram to the Irish president asking for clemency, and a few days after the arrest the

most famous English university debating society, the Oxford Union, voted in favour of a reunification of Ireland. During the debate, attended by the Irish Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, John Hume, the new leader of the SDLP (the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party of Northern Ireland), and Roy Bradford, a former Unionist minister, appeals were also voiced for MacStiofáin's release.⁵⁹ The Republican interpretation was also given a measure of credence in the Irish parliament, the Dáil, in particular by Sean Sherwin, a deputy of the governing Fianna Fáil party, who repeatedly raised the issue of the defendants' plight. On 29 November, he read out a petition signed by 13,867 people, presented to him by a group of Derry women. It protested against the setting up of military courts, the introduction of repressive legislation and the imprisonment of Irish men and women at the bidding of the British government. Sherwin concurred. As far as he was concerned it was a lie to argue, as both the government and the opposition did, that the IRA was a threat to the Irish state. It was only a threat to the security of what he called the Six County Area, which, he implied, was a good thing. Far from being a threat to the Irish, MacStiofáin was enemy no. 1 for the British; his arrest was on the instruction of their government.⁶⁰

WEST GERMANY'S RADICAL LEFT AND THE RAF

Between 1970 and 1998, the RAF confronted the (West) German state. A social-revolutionary terrorist or 'urban guerrilla' group, the RAF began as an offspring of the protest movement of the late 1960s. Main members of the so-called first generation were acclaimed left-wing journalist Ulrike Meinhof, the movement's prominent lawyer *cum* activist Horst Mahler, and the radical couple Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin, already convicted of arson in two department stores in Frankfurt in 1968. In its first two years, the RAF was mainly occupied with the logistics of building an underground organisation, and producing several lengthy brochures claiming to be the vanguard for all of West Germany's radical left. In May 1972, the RAF launched its first campaign of political violence: six bomb attacks throughout the Federal Republic spread over several weeks left four dead and about seventy wounded. A month after this 'triumph', however, police had arrested all leaders.⁶¹

Then events took an unexpected turn, as most members of the RAF started a prison struggle involving collective hunger strikes. This resulted in a solidarity campaign within the left-wing constituency and

extended the RAF's political significance. This chapter will focus on the RAF's third and longest collective hunger strike that lasted from 13 September 1974 until 5 February 1975, and especially on the death, on 9 November 1975, of one of its imprisoned members, Holger Meins, after two months of self-starvation. Members of a terrorist group close to the RAF responded a day later with a revenge killing of a West Berlin judge, Günther von Drenkmann. These deaths caused an uproar in West German society, comparable to the upheavals in Ireland and Northern Ireland caused by the IRA's hunger strike campaigns discussed above.

RAF Framing

According to Leith Passmore, the leading academic on the subject, the RAF was actually inspired by earlier IRA hunger strikes, which had resulted in the granting of political status to the prisoners. Internally, the RAF leadership considered collective hunger strikes a vital instrument to uphold the organisation's structure among (imprisoned) members and to maintain some control over them. Externally, they were meant to reinforce the accusation that the state was holding the prisoners from the RAF in an extreme form of solitary confinement that amounted to torture through isolation (*Isolationsfölder*).⁶² Through the prison struggle and their performance at trials the RAF tried to support their claim that existing democracy was in fact a mere screen for a US-led Western counter-insurgency strategy against the left as a whole. In contrast, it portrayed itself as a leaderless collective of complete equals, an unbeatable 'hydra' and living proof of the viability of activist democracy.⁶³

After the first hunger strike, in late 1972, the RAF leadership expanded this basic narrative and sought an ever-wider audience for it. Their lawyers played an essential role in this process, creating an intricate communication system, 'das info', between the imprisoned members themselves and between the prisoners and their supporters on the outside.⁶⁴ During the RAF's second hunger strike, between May and June 1973, a national teach-in of so-called (*Anti-*)*Folterkomitees* (Committees against Torture)—special solidarity committees initiated by the RAF's lawyers and encompassing some 450 activists in 23 West German cities—strengthened the campaign's base and created a host of propaganda material.⁶⁵ More than a year later, at the end of 1974, a volume of texts was published, documenting the first two years of the prison struggle. This also contained one of Ulrike Meinhof's most powerful contributions:

a text, supposedly written in solitary confinement, in which she related her mental state at the time:

the feeling your head's exploding [...] –
 the feeling that spine marrow is being forced up into your brain, –
 the feeling that your brain's slowly wrinkling, like dried fruit perhaps.⁶⁶

With their narrative complete, information channels in place and support groups in operation by early 1974, the RAF leadership decided to step up the confrontation. Baader prepared his fellow-inmates for a third starvation campaign and wrote: 'I think this time, we won't stop the hunger strike. This means [some of our] people will die'.⁶⁷ It is unclear whether the supporters outside were aware of this escalation; it would have undermined the self-portrayal as victims inherent in the RAF narrative. Nevertheless, the willingness to sacrifice co-fighters was central to the third collective hunger strike that started on 13 September 1974, half a year after Baader had set the tone.

State Framing

Since the mid-1960s, the West German state had portrayed fundamental opposition to the Federal Republic's political system by the radical (student) left as illegitimate, especially when it involved militant forms of protest. After the war, West Germany had begun to consider itself a 'militant democracy', analogous to the ideas social scientists Karl Loewenstein and Karl Mannheim had formulated in the 1930s. As a result, the West German state became invested and one could argue somewhat obsessed by the task to actively secure the 'liberal-democratic basic order'.⁶⁸ In the early 1970s, when the RAF emerged on the scene, authorities on local, state, and federal levels introduced stricter laws and tougher police and intelligence practices that not only targeted terrorism in particular but extremism in general, especially on the left.⁶⁹ Two elements of this policy stood out. For one, the RAF were generally portrayed as 'violent anarchists', prone to use violence for its own sake—not an uncommon government reaction to terrorism. More than other Western European countries, however, West German politicians chose to involve the general public in a 'political-spiritual confrontation' with the terrorists. Partly because of the Nazi past, they considered it their duty to involve the population in the defence of parliamentary democracy and therefore

engineered a large-scale political education campaign.⁷⁰ In a sense, this meant that establishment representatives took the RAF's challenge to their authority very seriously and thereby, counter-productively, boosted the RAF's societal impact and—ironically—its political significance.

The RAF prison struggle further complicated the challenge to the authorities. Besides denying the accusations of 'isolation torture', they also tried to obstruct the information channels created by the lawyers. In reaction, some liberal voices in Germany and abroad protested against the restriction of legal rights. This also reflected a novel way of thinking about what makes a democracy militant. The liberals felt that fundamental opposition, at least when from the left, was as essential a safeguard against fascism as a vigilant state. In fact, many thought radical groups might even be what the caged canary is to a miner: an early warning system against the authoritarian proto-fascist tendencies inherent in all state bureaucracies. The morally charged issue of force-feeding prisoners on hunger strike consequently led to particularly heated debates. Whereas in the media, liberal voices were heard a lot, in parliament a state-centred thinking was still dominant. From the opposition benches in the Federal Diet, Christian Democrat Karl Carstens, for instance, asked if one could rightfully restrain a prisoner 'who with a clear mind has decided to take his own life through starvation of doing so by using violent means'. Another Christian Democrat wondered whether one should burden the taxpayer with the costs of the special 'astronaut food' administered in the procedure. Federal Justice Minister Hans-Jochen Vogel, a Social Democrat, however, maintained that the state was obliged by law 'to protect the life and physical integrity' of people in its power, even if this, in the extreme, meant force-feeding them.⁷¹

Mediation

The press briefings and demonstrations the lawyers and committee activists organised and the resulting clashes with the authorities, created media events that brought the RAF frame to wider audiences and challenged the state and its interpretation of the struggle. Still, during the third hunger strike, media reporting was initially lacklustre. It only came into full swing after Meins had died and West Berlin judge von Drenkmann was murdered. On the evening of Meins's death, in an interview on *Tagesschau*, the most important national news show on West German television, Meins's lawyer Siegfried Haag not only blamed

the prison physician for his client's death, but also the judges presiding over the trial against RAF leaders.⁷²

With that the propaganda aspect of the hunger strike took effect and over the following months the RAF prison struggle became a recurring theme in West German media. How keen the media were to publicise the RAF became clear when the popular weekly *Stern* showed a picture of Meins lying in state, extremely thin and with a wild beard. Many were reminded of pictures of Che Guevara's body exhibited to the press after he was killed in Bolivia in 1967 and some even thought of Jesus Christ after the crucifixion—both highly emotive references that triggered sympathy and plastered over the memory of the man of violence Meins had been.⁷³ At the end of January 1975, the RAF had another media breakthrough, when West Germany's most widely read news weekly *Der Spiegel* published an interview with its imprisoned leadership.⁷⁴ RAF lawyer Klaus Croissant had arranged this: he had handed the prisoners a list of questions and they had typed up responses that *Der Spiegel* printed. Croissant probably also negotiated a substantial 'publication fee'.⁷⁵

Media attention had already peaked earlier, when Croissant, prodded by his clients, managed to arrange a visit by Jean-Paul Sartre to Baader. On 4 December 1974, the famous French philosopher and political publicist made a one-day trip to the Stuttgart-Stammheim prison, where he had an hour-long conversation with the RAF leader and afterwards held a press conference attended by an array of journalists and cameramen.⁷⁶ It was a carefully staged event, demonstrating Croissant's organisational finesse as RAF's main PR functionary. Every newspaper in Germany and many abroad broadcasted Sartre's strong corroboration of the RAF narrative of isolation torture.⁷⁷ The intellectual authority of the French *philosoph* was a big boon to the RAF campaign. It may also have helped Croissant with another project: the founding, on 14 December 1974 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, of an international committee of lawyers defending the RAF prisoners against 'oppression' by the West German state.⁷⁸

The question remains whether the media attention actually helped the RAF to get its message across. At least, it is clear that the general public was well aware of Meins's tragic fate. The popular polling institute Allensbach established that 97% of a representative sample of West Germans aged sixteen and older had heard of his case. This, however, did not mean that people bought into the RAF narrative. Asked whether state institutions had failed, only a small minority of 13% agreed, while three-quarters of those questioned did not blame the authorities for

Meins's death. Still, among the youngest, those aged 16–29, a larger proportion of people (20%) were critical of state institutions.⁷⁹

Silent Contributors

Since the latter was precisely the age group the RAF most wanted to win over to its narrative, the hunger strike might to some extent have had the desired effect. Another indication of this is the impressive mobilisation of support for the hunger strike campaign that followed the death of Meins. In a circular letter for the internal 'info' bulletin, West Berlin RAF lawyer Hans-Christian Ströbele described this mobilisation as similar to that in the late 1960s, the heyday of student protests. There were daily protest meetings at both West Berlin universities, some of them attracting 1000–2000 attendees. Apart from that, 6500–10,000 leftist activists from nearly all political subcultures expressed their anger publicly in a march through the city and 5000–6000 of them assembled at a conference at the Technical University where they unanimously called upon the minister of Justice to stop 'isolation torture'.⁸⁰

In sum, solidarity with the RAF was widespread, even when occasionally there was also fierce criticism of its tactics. This was not only a West Berlin affair. On 18 November 1974, when Meins was buried in Hamburg, hundreds of RAF sympathisers marched to the Hamburg-Stellingen graveyard.⁸¹ Figures in a report on extremism published by the Federal Ministry for Domestic Affairs in 1974 seem to confirm the extent of active support for the RAF after Meins's death. It counted a total of 12,000 individuals taking part in 80 separate protest actions.⁸² Moreover, it is clear that some of these active supporters went a step further. For somebody like Susanne Albrecht, Meins's death was the final push towards membership of the RAF. Now that protests had no effect, it was time to force the state to improve prison conditions, she told herself. 'We cannot allow more prisoners to lose their lives here'.⁸³

Minor Contributors

Traces of the debates within West Germany's highly heterogeneous left-wing alternative milieu and the arguments exchanged therein can be found in the many pamphlets and brochures, published irregularly and often anonymous by individuals and groups, and in the many periodicals circulated at the time. Several of the orthodox communist (mostly

Maoist) parties, jointly comprising tens of thousands of members, published a weekly newspaper.⁸⁴ Their counterparts, the undogmatic, Spontaneist groups, in short: *Spontis*, smaller in numbers and more militant, published their own stencilled underground-style leaflets, such as West Berlin's *Info-BUG*. Radical university intellectuals had their magazines as well, such as *Der Lange Marsch*, which was mainly produced by social scientists at the Otto Suhr Institute of West Berlin's Free University.

A declaration by Joscha Schmierer, leader of the Kommunistenbund Westdeutschland (KBW, Communist Federation of West Germany) was typical of the orthodox communists. He took a mixed position, motivated in part, probably, by the wish to use the RAF campaign as an added argument for KBW's own revolutionary agenda. Although his party did not condone the strategy and tactics of the RAF at all, Schmierer called the hunger strike 'justified' and he supported the struggle against 'isolation detention'. However, talk about murder did not sit well with him. 'Holger Meins was no helpless victim of the bourgeois justice system. Holger Meins died in struggle with the enemy, a struggle that he entered willingly and in which he had consciously put his life at stake', Schmierer said. This argument reflects the Maoist idea of democracy as well-organised collective activism against oppression of the people. Implicitly referring to von Drenkmann's murder, Schmierer advised against acts of revenge against representatives of the law. Instead one had to take the demands of the prison campaign to the workers and the masses.⁸⁵

Unlike Schmierer's carefully calibrated comments, the reactions on the Sponti side showed the shock effect of Meins's death. An article by 'some comrades' from Frankfurt's *Revolutionärer Kampf* (Revolutionary Struggle) clearly expressed their feeling of guilt when they lamented their earlier lack of action on behalf of the incarcerated RAF members. Of course, the RAF with its lack of openness was partly blamed, but the Spontis felt they should have been more aware of what had been at stake: the RAF's fate was in fact representative of the fate that threatened all leftists. This indicates that at least this part of the RAF narrative had fallen on fertile ground. Indeed, the fact that the libertarian Spontis felt rather caged in by West Germany's ordered democracy and sought autonomous zones for their own lifestyles, made them vulnerable to the RAF ideology. 'The comrades of the RAF had taken up the challenge: their life and death hunger strike was their last instrument to

regain “normal” prisoners’ rights, to create a new base, to live and to fight’. In response, the Spontis suggested foremost to denunciate ‘torture’ through militant protests, but also through working together with liberal bourgeois institutions and individuals. Only in this way—in the Marxist terms they used: only by profiting from the internal divisions within the ruling bourgeoisie—could the maltreatment of RAF prisoners be stopped. In this light, von Drenkmann’s murder was ‘no positive contribution to the fight against isolation torture, because it had worsened the conditions for the fight’.⁸⁶

Der Lange Marsch group was far more critical of the RAF. Their name of course referred to 1960s’ Berlin student leader Rudi Dutschke’s appeal to his fellow-activists to take ‘the long march through the institutions’ as an alternative to revolution. His was a strategy to enlighten and mobilise the masses through new forms of deliberative participatory democracy that also included ongoing transparent self-reflection. In contrast to the Spontis, the editors of *Der Lange Marsch* did not feel much guilt about their earlier lack of actual support for the prisoners. Because of the RAF’s self-inflicted political isolation and of the internal divisions of the left, only ‘solidarity with the victims’ of the detention system was possible. It was hard to demand, however, that the authorities would simply respect fundamental human rights when the RAF and many others on the left did not seem genuinely interested in these rights. Because of this, leftist protest against inhumane prison conditions ‘[to] a high degree [...] lacked credibility’.⁸⁷ For a short moment, *Der Lange Marsch* argued, the death of Meins had presented a unique opportunity to overcome these difficulties. Judge von Drenkmann’s murder, however, had spoiled it all. Right-wing media and politicians had immediately grabbed their chance to stifle liberal commentators who had first pleaded for better prison conditions and now found themselves associated with murder. In other words: ‘The murder of Drenkmann could not have come at a better time for the counter-revolution’. Moreover, the killing stood for such a different view of what socialism entailed that it scared nearly everyone away, including the workers who would flock to authoritarian politicians on the right.⁸⁸

Leading Voices

The scope of this chapter only allows for an impression of the leading voices in the debate on the left triggered by Meins’s death. A liberal

voice of significant moral authority was the author Heinrich Böll, winner of the 1972 Nobel prize for literature. Earlier, he had controversially pleaded for clemency towards Meinhof and demanded respect for the rule of law, even when dealing with left-wing terrorists. Later, in 1974, Böll was so utterly disgusted by the murder of von Drenkmann that he strongly criticised the killers and those on the left who subsequently called for solidarity with the RAF.⁸⁹ A more elaborate response came from social psychologist Peter Brückner of Hanover Technical University. From the late 1960s Brückner had been an intellectual mentor to the radical left, enjoying some popularity within student circles. He shared much of the distrust towards official West German democracy that the Spontis voiced as well; in fact, he may well have inspired them through a widely read critique of Western democracy that he published in 1967.⁹⁰ Brückner was a typical representative of those advocating critical solidarity towards the RAF. On the one hand, he criticised their choice to wage armed struggle while a German revolutionary mass movement was still nowhere to be found. On the other, he refused to distance himself from the comrades in arms, making a similar distinction between legitimacy and expediency as many Irish nationalists showed. In late 1970 he had even given shelter to a fugitive Ulrike Meinhof, which nearly cost him his job as professor two years later when the police found out. In 1975, together with his partner Barbara Sichtermann, he wrote a highly critical analysis of the RAF hunger strike strategy, which doubled as a warning to those on the left who felt compelled to join the armed struggle. The hunger strike, they wrote,

is meant to cause polarization: especially on the West German left – it aims to separate those who in the eyes of the RAF ruin everything they touch, the damned liberals and the opportunistic pigs, from those from whose midst the RAF hope to recruit their co-fighters or successors.⁹¹

Seen in this light, the hunger strikes were less non-violent as they seemed, Brückner and Sichtermann warned. In fact, they were ‘a call to arms’.⁹²

Overall, Rudi Dutschke, who had been the most prominent face of West German student protest in the 1960s, provides the most intriguing example of a leading voice reacting to the hunger strike campaign of 1974–1975. Although he had toyed with the idea of ‘armed struggle’ almost ten years before, Dutschke had come to disapprove of the

method, not least because for revolutionaries going ‘underground’ meant isolating themselves from the masses. Moreover, as a strategy, hunger strike appalled him. In a 1977 diary entry he even called it ‘suicide’, a way to evade one’s responsibility to really confront power.⁹³ Nevertheless, he held to a position of ‘critical solidarity’ towards the RAF and openly criticised the situation behind bars. Hearing of Meins’s death, Dutschke reacted very emotionally, as again his diary testifies: ‘Now another one has fallen, H.M. died in prison’.⁹⁴ Ten days later, accompanied by RAF lawyer Otto Schily, Dutschke witnessed the burial. Standing at Meins’s grave, he suddenly raised his fist and exclaimed: ‘Holger, the struggle continues!’ It was a media spectacle that was easily misinterpreted as a straightforward show of support for the RAF. In a letter to *Der Spiegel*, Dutschke explained that he had just meant to stress the need to continue the struggle for the oppressed.⁹⁵ In another open letter to a newspaper he also condemned the murder of von Drenkmann; there was nothing to justify the killing of this ‘antifascist-social-democrat’ judge.⁹⁶ At the same time, Dutschke paid a very private visit to RAF member Jan Carl Raspe in his cell. Although the prisoner verbally attacked him, Dutschke still felt a bond. He remained set on convincing Raspe and the other RAF members to return to other ways of revolutionary politics. Another visit to Raspe was however denied, because Dutschke was considered a RAF supporter by the state after the scene at Meins’s burial.⁹⁷

CONCLUSION

Our aim in this chapter was to explore the role of the environment of terrorists in terrorist–state conflicts and how it can help us understand democracy’s dilemmas when facing adversaries. Our critical evaluation of the way the societal surround of terrorists has so far been studied, concluded that it had not received the level of attention that would fit its importance in the survival of terrorist organisations. Moreover, some researchers who realise its importance, have taken a rather narrow view of the terrorist environment, which has led to a one-sided focus on its function as a supplier of direct practical support and new recruits, while downplaying its workings as a resource of justification for the struggle. Regarding the societal and political dynamics around terrorism such research seems to miss the crucial point that terrorists challenge ruling concepts of democracies and posit alternatives to them. To overcome

this, we presented a broader conceptualisation of the environment that we termed the terrorist constituency, covering all those who share certain views about the ideal structure of society with a terrorist organisation and who are *potentially* receptive to its ideology and the messages implicit in its acts. This then led us to outline a practical exploration of the concept through comparative research of two comparable, simultaneous cases, the Irish nationalist community and the IRA and the German radical left and the RAF.

What can be concluded based on these two limited case studies about the role of the constituency in the terrorist–state conflict and the clash of competing concepts of democracy in terrorist–state conflicts? Firstly, it has become clear that the two antagonists in both cases were very well aware of the importance of the constituency. In front of these first audiences all made the case through their symbolic acts and their concrete words to have the better claim on being the legitimate representatives of the people. The terrorists, however, made more of an effort to influence their first audience than the states that generally tried to evade the political argument. The IRA in particular paid a lot of attention to influencing the broader perception of events. The media in this case played a relatively neutral role, generally transmitting events and the arguments of both sides fairly objectively. However, it is clear they also tried to affect the interpretation of events by the constituency.⁹⁸

In comparison, the RAF, with its leadership in prison, was more reliant on others to spread its narrative. It held great sway over lawyers and activists, but had a harder time controlling the perception of events by its wider constituency. Apart from that, it tried to reach liberal-minded Germans by staging media events, such as around Meins's death or the Sartre visit. Although it cannot be proven that these had any additional impact on the radical left, the mainstream media were eager to report on such events and, as opinion polls show, by doing this they projected the RAF into nearly every West German household. At such times the state narrative threatened to be drowned out by the RAF framing. In general, however, this was balanced out by a general disinterest in the discussion of prison conditions and by a tendency to give equal voice to declarations and opinions of West German officials.

The debates within the constituency seem to have been clearly determined by the societal context and this in turn had a lot to do with the prevailing opinion on the state of democracy. In the Irish case, the IRA actually challenged two societies. In Northern Ireland, the legitimacy of

the struggle was hardly an issue within the constituency, but a majority still rejected the expediency of the use of force. Nevertheless, many leading activists not associated with republicanism and other less vocal elements within the constituency were willing to associate themselves openly with the cause of the prisoners and thus with republicanism. The expediency question was thus not a fundamental issue even for those who rejected the use of force. To some extent this also applied to the more narrowly defined radical left in West Germany. In the Republic, the situation was comparable to that in the North but different in relation to the expediency question. Although the legitimacy of the objectives of the IRA were not widely disputed, there was only a very small group of people who really supported the armed struggle. The state was therefore much better able to use its law and order argument, even in cases where the injustice frame and the accusation that the state was acting at the bidding of the British State had convinced many. The expediency was thus not widely accepted in contrast to the situation in Northern Ireland.

In West Germany, the overall goal of a social and political revolution had many subscribers on the left, but most sympathisers and supporters only spoke out in favour of the RAF in protest against their treatment in prison. Just a handful of those who took to the streets actually supported the underground organisation in its armed struggle. Many left-wing periodicals and several of the leading voices copied at least parts of the RAF's narrative, but they were far more ambivalent about their urban guerrilla strategy. In fact, as in the Republic of Ireland, most within the constituency rejected the expediency of taking up arms against the state. Moreover, the statements by Brückner and Dutschke even doubted the morality of ever using violence for political purposes, although they did not rule it out completely.

At first glance, similarities between the ideas of the RAF and the concepts of democracy behind reactions of their environment may seem to indicate an influence of the terrorists on the constituency. It is however far more likely that their shared background in 1960s protest culture and the continual exchange within the ensuing 'movement family' of the 1970s are the cause of that parallel thinking. Carefully analysed, the concepts of democracy underlying most reactions were clearly more promising with regard to eventual integration of this milieu in non-violent, pluralist politics than the state dared to believe. Regarding the RAF, the conclusion should therefore be that they succeeded in raising *attention* to their plight and their narrative of suppression and resistance, but

largely failed to *capitalise* on this for a further boost in their popularity and influence. Still, the handful of activists that were triggered by the hunger strikes to join them, already sufficed to grant the RAF a second lifespan through a new generation of terrorists.

The IRA, although it succeeded fairly well in the initial phases in mobilising support for the defendants, did not convince the masses in Ireland either. In the long run, however, they were helped by these cases in generating widespread sympathy, in particular among the population in the Irish Republic. The portrayal of the state as unfair in its treatment of Republicans appears to have struck a chord with the populace, thereby maintaining a potential base of support for the objectives and, to some extent, even for the methods used by the Republicans. It is however hard to distinguish between support for either the objectives or means of the IRA from the sympathy which was generated among more neutral observers for the plight of people on hunger strike or apparently subject of state repression.

Although just a preliminary result based on a selective set of sources, the case studies presented here suggest that the way terrorist constituencies respond to a terrorist–state conflict plays an important role in the development of conflict. The state as well as terrorist movements pay a lot of attention to generating support among a wide section of the terrorist constituency for the legitimacy and to some extent to the expediency of their position. Through the framing of their plight in terms that the terrorist constituency is receptive to, terrorists deliberately try to influence its interpretation of the conflict. The extent to which in particular terrorist movements are successful in generating support in this manner is clearly an important factor in their ability to sustain the fight, both in finding the personal and material support but also in finding justification for it.

Although we have seen that it is much easier for such movements to get attention for their position than for the state, it appears to be very difficult to translate that in actual support. Leading activists are often willing to lend credence to their position, while minor contributors provide ammunition and groups of silent contributors engage in street protests, but in most of these activities the emphasis lies on expressions of sympathy with the plight and overall goals of terrorists rather than support for their fight. It is important to note, however, that the extent to which the authorities confuse these can actually exacerbate the situation.

The behaviour of both sides and also the successes of all parties involved can therefore only be truly understood if the response in this constituency becomes part of the analysis. Setting these developments centre stage and using a broader concept of the constituency, including not just those giving active support but all those who potentially agree with the objectives of the terrorists, enriches our knowledge of terrorist-state confrontations with the societal and political context in a degree of nuance that has hitherto been largely ignored. Although just a first step in getting to grips with the heterogeneity of terrorist constituencies, putting the debate within the constituency centre stage and distinguishing between three kinds of contributors has overall proved effective. It clearly helped to shed light on the efforts of various people within the constituencies of the IRA and the RAF to maintain their own conceptions of democracy and political agendas while the terrorist-state conflict raged on. We can conclude that further study of what goes on in the constituencies holds the promise of a better understanding which may help us explain the lifespan of terrorist movements. Moreover, it may even enable us to recognise voices within terrorist constituencies that support the legitimacy of the terrorists' objectives but oppose the expediency of the strategy of armed struggle and thus provide an inroad for establishing a different non-violent form of dialogue with them.

NOTES

1. Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy. Containing the Threat* (New York 2006), 69.
2. Ian Traynor, 'Molenbeek: The Brussels Borough Becoming Known as Europe's Jihadi Central', *The Guardian*, 15 November 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/15/molenbeek-the-brussels-borough-in-the-spotlight-after-paris-attacks> (accessed 28 December 2015).
3. Andreas Kouwenhoven and Kees Versteegh, 'Verstop jij even die tas met geld. Sympathisanten [Say, Hide This Money Bag. Sympathisers]', *NRC Handelsblad*, 28 November 2015.
4. Manni Crone and Martin Harrow, 'Homegrown Terrorism in the West, 1989-2008', *DIIS Working Paper* 2010:30 (Copenhagen 2010), 4-22, there 6.
5. Jacco Pekelder, 'From Militancy to Democracy? The Radical Left in West Germany in the 1970s', in Joris Gijsenbergh, Saskia Hollander, Tim

- Houwen, and Wim de Jong (eds.), *Creative Crises of Democracy* (Brussels etc. 2012), 309–330, there 309–311.
6. Donatella Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge 1995).
 7. Peter Waldmann, *Terrorismus. Provokation der Macht* (Munich 1998), 10; ‘The Radical Community: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Background of ETA, IRA, and Hezbollah’, in J. Victoroff (ed.), *Tangled Roots: Social and Psychological Factors in the Genesis of Terrorism* (Amsterdam 2006), 133–146. See also: the definition of terrorism in, Alex P. Schmid (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (London and New York 2011), 86.
 8. Ronald D. Crelinsten, ‘Analysing Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism: A Communication Model’, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14:2 (2002), 77–122, there 78.
 9. Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, 69. See also: Audrey Kurth Cronin, *Ending Terrorism: Lessons for Defeating al-Qaeda*, Adelphi Paper 394 (London 2008), 15–17.
 10. Jan Philipp Reemtsma, ‘Vorwort’, in Wolfgang Kraushaar, Karin Wieland, and Jan Philipp Reemtsma, *Rudi Dutschke, Andreas Baader und die RAF* (Hamburg 2005), 10–11.
 11. Stefan Malthaner, ‘Terroristische Bewegungen und ihre Bezugsgruppen. Anvisierte Sympathisanten und tatsächliche Unterstützer’, in Peter Waldmann (ed.), *Determinanten des Terrorismus* (Weilerswist 2005), 85–138, there 85. See also: Tamotsu Shibutani, ‘Reference Groups as Perspectives’, in Herbert H. Hyman and Eleanor Singer (eds.), *Readings in Reference Group Theory and Research* (New York 1968), 103–113.
 12. Brendan O’Leary and Andrew Silke, ‘Conclusion: Understanding and Ending Persistent Conflicts: Bridging Research and Policy’, in Marianne Heiberg, Brendan O’Leary, and John Tirman (eds.), *Terror, Insurgency, and the State: Ending Protracted Conflicts* (Philadelphia, PA 2007), 387–426, there 398.
 13. Peter Waldmann and Stefan Malthaner (eds.), *Radikale Milieus: Das soziale Umfeld terroristischer Gruppen* (Frankfurt am Main 2012).
 14. Waldmann and Malthaner maintain that the direct environment is the main resource for moral and political support as well, but the literature they use to support this points at broad communities instead of the small radical milieus they envisage. See: Peter Waldmann and Stefan Malthaner, ‘The Radical Milieu: Conceptualizing the Supportive Environments of Terrorist Groups’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37 (2014), 979–998, there 982–983.
 15. Cf. Jeroen Gunning, ‘Social Movement Theory and the Study of Terrorism’, in Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, and Jeroen Gunning

- (eds.), *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda* (London and New York 2009), 156–177, there 160–163.
16. This applies particularly to the relative deprivation theory of Ted Gurr and the resource-mobilization theory of Charles Tilly but can also be seen in the political-process approach of Doug McAdam. Ted R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton 1970); Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, MA 1978); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930–1970* (Chicago 1982). See also: Christopher Hewitt, *Consequences of Political Violence* (Dartmouth 1993).
 17. A strain in modern terrorism research therefore stresses the importance of the ‘propaganda dimension of counter-terrorism’. Cf. Ronald D. Crelinsten and Alex P. Schmid, ‘Western Responses to Terrorism: A Twenty-Five Year Balance Sheet’, in David C. Rapoport (ed.), *Terrorism: Critical Concepts in Political Science* (London 2006), 272–274. See also: Michael Ignatieff, *The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror* (Princeton 2004), 105–111.
 18. Cf. Michael T. Hannan, László Pólos, and Glenn R. Carroll, *Logics of Organization Theory: Audiences, Codes, and Ecologies* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford 2007), 31; W. Richard Scott, *Organization: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems* (Upper Saddle River 2003), 185–188.
 19. Cf. eight categories identified in: Dieter Claessens and Karin de Aha, ‘Das Milieu der Westberliner “scene” und die “Bewegung 2. Juni”’, in Wanda von Baeyer-Katte, Dieter Claessens, Hubert Feger, and Friedhelm Neidhart, *Gruppenprozesse. Analysen zum Terrorismus 3* (Opladen 1982), 18–81, there 55–58.
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27. *Ibid.*
28. *Irish Times*, 27 November 1972; *The Observer*, 26 November 1972; *Irish Independent*, 26 November 1972; *Guardian*, 22 + 27 November 1972; *Irish Press*, 27 November 1972; *An Phoblacht*, 26 November 1972; *Irish Times*, 20 November 1972.
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32. Dáil Éireann, vol. 264, 28 November 1972. Private Notice Question: Condition of Prisoner.
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34. *Irish Press*, 17 June 1971.
35. *Guardian*, 27 November 1972.
36. *Guardian*, 22 November 1972; *Sunday Independent*, 26 November 1972.
37. *Kerryman*, 2 December 1972. See also: *Republican News*, 15 December 1972.
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39. *Guardian*, 27 November 1972; *Sunday Independent*, 10 December 1972; *Irish Independent*, 29 + 30 December 1972.
40. *Irish Times*, 14 May 1971 and 17 June 1971; *Irish Press*, 17 June 1971.
41. *Irish Times*, 21–27 November 1972. See also: *Republican News*, 24 November 1972; *The Guardian*, 20 November 1972; *Irish Press*, 21 November 1972.

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51. *The Guardian*, 20 November 1972; *Irish Press*, 21 November 1972; *Irish Times*, 21–27 November 1972. See also: *Republican News*, 24 November 1972.
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53. *Irish Times*, 28 December 1972; *Irish Independent*, 1 December 1972; *Connacht Sentinel*, 1 December 1972; *Guardian*, 1 December 1972 + 29 January 1973; *Munster Sentinel*, 1 December 1972; *Anglo-Celt*, 1 December 1972; *Kerryman*, 2 December 1972; *Irish Independent*, 2, 29 + 30 December 1972; *Anglo-Celt*, 8 December 1972; *Nenagh Guardian*, 9 December 1972.
54. *Irish Times*, 27 November 1972; *The Observer*, 26 November 1972; *Irish Independent*, 26 November 1972.
55. *Irish Times*, 26 June 1971; *Irish Press*, 31 May 1971.
56. The first prime minister of independent Kenya.
57. A prominent Irish activist and socialist.

58. *Irish Times*, 21 November 1972. Similar sentiments were expressed by Bernadette Devlin in the House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates*, 23 November 1972, vol. 846, 1530–1557.
59. *Irish Times*, 24 November 1972.
60. Dáil Éireann Debates, 29 November 1972, vol. 264, Offences against the State (Amendment), Bill, 1972: Second Stage.
61. See: Jacco Pekelder, ‘Historisering van de RAF. Geschiedschrijving over dertig jaar links Duits terrorisme’, *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 119:2 (2006), 196–217.
62. Leith Passmore, ‘The Art of Hunger: Self-Starvation in the Red Army Faction’, *German History* 27:1 (2009), 32–59, there 32–33, 43. See also: idem, *Ulrike Meinhof and the Red Army Faction: Performing Terrorism* (New York 2011), 61–82. More information on this IRA hunger strike: Jacqueline Dana, ‘The Granting of Special Category Status, 1972’, http://www.hungerstrikes.org/background/special_status.html (accessed 20 January 2017).
63. Jacco Pekelder and Klaus Weinbauer, ‘Germany Confronts the Baader-Meinhof Group: The Stammheim Trial (1975–1977) and Its Legacies’, in Beatrice de Graaf and Alex P. Schmid (eds.), *Terrorists on Trial: A Performative Perspective* (Leiden 2016), 231–309, there 252–253.
64. Pieter H. Bakker Schut (ed.), *das info. Briefe der Gefangenen aus der RAF 1973–1977* (Kiel 1987); Olaf Gähje, ‘Das “info”-System der RAF von 1973 bis 1977 in sprachwissenschaftlicher Perspektive’, in Wolfgang Kraushaar (ed.), *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus* (Hamburg 2006), 714–733.
65. Butz Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum. Die Geschichte Der RAF* (Berlin 2004), 314. Particularly widely distributed was a special issue of the influential left-wing intellectual magazine *Kursbuch*, 31; *Folter in der BRD. Zur Situation der Politischen Gefangenen* [Torture in the FRG: About the Situation of the Political Prisoners], n.d. [1973].
66. *Der Kampf gegen die Vernichtungshaft* (Komitees gegen Folter an politischen Gefangenen in der BRD 1974), 201–202; translation from: Sarah Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism: Language, Violence, and Identity* (Rochester, NY 2009), 152–153.
67. Alfred Klaus, *Aktivitäten und Verhalten inhaftierter Terroristen* (Bonn 1983), 141.
68. Dominik Rigoll, ‘Streit um die Streitbare Demokratie. Ein Rückblick auf die Anfangsjahrzehnte der Bundesrepublik’, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 32–33 (2017), 40–45.
69. This indiscriminate targeting of radicals was of course strongly informed by the experience of the demise of Weimar democracy and the rise of

- the Nazi movement before 1933. See: Karrin Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany* (Cambridge 2012).
70. One example is the state sponsored publication: *Der Baader-Meinhof-Report. Dokumente – Analysen – Zusammenhänge. Aus den Akten des Bundeskriminalamtes, der ‘Sonderkommission, Bonn’ und dem Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* (Mainz 1972). See: Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy*, 126–127.
 71. Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 318.
 72. *Ibid.*, 320–321.
 73. Christoph Riederer, *Die RAF und die Folterdebatte der 1970er Jahre* (Wiesbaden 2014), 212–213.
 74. “‘Wir werden in den Durststreik treten’ SPIEGEL-Fragen an Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, Gudrun Ensslin und Jan-Carl Raspe’, *Der Spiegel*, 20 January 1975, 52–57.
 75. Klaus Croissant, Report, 12 January 1975, on the negotiations leading to the interview in *Der Spiegel*, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, RAF Collection (hereafter: HIS/RAF), Kl.V/037, 010.
 76. See the elaborate description, in Günter Riederer, *Sartre in Stammheim*, Spuren 100 (Marbach am Neckar 2013).
 77. Klaus Croissant, Report, 3 November 1974, on his conversation with Sartre in his Paris apartment on the same day, HIS/RAF, RA 01/009, 001. Note that Sartre’s visit to Stammheim thus was arranged prior to Meins’s death.
 78. Jacco Pekelder, ‘The RAF Solidarity Movement from a European Perspective’, in Martin Klimke, Jacco Pekelder, and Joachim Scharloth (eds.), *Between Prague Spring and French May: Opposition and Revolt in Europe, 1960–1980* (Oxford and New York 2011), 251–266, there 257–258.
 79. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (ed.), *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie*, vol. Band VI, 1974–1976 (Vienna etc. n.d.), 94.
 80. Hans-Christian Ströbele, Letter, 16 November 1974, HIS/RAF, RA, J/002, 012.
 81. Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 322.
 82. Der Bundesminister des Innern, Referat Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, *Verfassungsschutz ’74, Betrifft Nr. 23: Öffentlichkeitsarbeit des Bundesministeriums* (Bonn 1975), 106.
 83. Peters, *Tödlicher Irrtum*, 322–323.
 84. The most important were *Roter Morgen* (KPD/ML), *Rote Fahne* (KPD), and *Kommunistische Volkszeitung* (KBW).
 85. Joscha Schmierer, ‘Die Isolations- und Vernichtungshaft muss weg! Der Hungerstreik der Häftlinge ist gerecht’, *Kommunistische Volkszeitung* 24 (1974), 3.

86. 'Isolationshaft ist Mord', in *'Holger, der Kampf geht weiter!' Dokumente und Beiträge zum Konzept Stadtguerilla*. Gegendrucke, 1 (Gaiganz 1975), 137–145, there 137–140 (originally printed in the monthly *Wir wollen alles!* 22 November 1974).
87. A statement by the editors in a special edition documenting several of the speeches held at the conference 'Against special treatment of political prisoners' at West Berlin's Technical University on 16 November 1974 and a teach-in at the Free University the day before: 'Zwischen allen Stühlen', *Der Lange Marsch*, 14 December 1974, 2–4, there 2–3.
88. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
89. Heinrich Böll quoted, in 'Todesfälle eingeplant?', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 November 1974.
90. Johannes Agnoli and Peter Brückner, *Die Transformation der Demokratie* (Berlin 1967).
91. Peter Brückner and Barbara Sichtermann, 'Die Verknastung der sozialen Welt. Versuche über die RAF', in Peter Brückner, *Über die Gewalt. Sechs Aufsätze zur Rolle der Gewalt in der Entstehung und Zerstörung sozialer Systeme* (West Berlin 1979), 67–109, there 72. The original article appeared in 1975 in the West Berlin radical intellectual magazine *Schwarze Protokolle*.
92. *Ibidem*.
93. As quoted in Michaela Karl, *Rudi Dutschke. Revolutionär ohne Revolution* (Frankfurt am Main 2003), 446.
94. Rudi Dutschke, *Leben*, in Gretchen Dutschke (ed.), 346.
95. Rudi Dutschke, 'Letter to the Editor', *Der Spiegel*, 25 November 1974.
96. Rudi Dutschke, 'Letter to the Editor', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 December 1974, quoted in Karl, *Rudi Dutschke*, 446.
97. Karl, *Rudi Dutschke*, 446, 448; correspondence between Rudi Dutschke and Jan Carl Raspe after Meins's death, December 15, 1974, RA, J/002, 013, HIS.
98. Joost Augusteijn, "'Is There Any Justice in This Country?'" The IRA on Trial in the 1970s', in Beatrice de Graaf and Alex P. Schmid (eds.), *Terrorists on Trial: A Performative Perspective* (Leiden 2016), 173–230.