

variables. England's air strategy against Germany was not based on the democratic illusion that Hitler's power depended on the German people; rather, it was designed to destroy the country's productive machinery by terrorizing and disorganizing its labour force. Furthermore, industrialization goes hand in hand with the development of the division of labour and greater interdependence between the various segments of society. The more complex a social organization is, the more extensive the repercussions caused by the destruction of one of its elements.

Finally, the development of terrorism is linked with the development of the information media. The choice of a terrorist strategy is very often related to an exaggerated conception of the importance of the psychological aspects of conflicts. Terrorism is a form of expression and demonstration as well as a means of rational action, and societies in which information is disseminated widely and rapidly are a particularly favourable environment for it.

International control

This brief analysis gives an indication of the problems faced, if not by the international community as a whole at least by a part of it, as a result of the development of international insurrectional terrorism. We noted earlier that the ability of a society to resist terrorism depends to a large extent on the cohesiveness of its organization. The existence of numerous jurisdictions is in itself a cause of division and lack of cohesiveness. The existence of sanctuary states, the diversity of legislations, the contradiction that may exist for some states between their long-term interest in combating terrorism and their short-term interest in extricating themselves from difficult situations at the smallest possible expense are all elements that tend to favour the development of international terrorism. The struggle against terrorism, like the struggle against inflation or pollution, has become "an internal world policy problem" that tends to defy solution because the world is divided into states.

Not all states are equally susceptible to terrorism. The most susceptible are the most highly-industrialized countries. These possess the most complex societies, and their governments exert only incomplete control over the opinions and movements of their nationals and over the dissemination of information. If a group of Lettish nationalists took some hostages in Riga to put pressure on the Soviet Government, it is very likely that no one in the U.S.S.R. or

elsewhere would ever hear anything about it; this effectively discourages any such action. On the other hand, the economically-advanced and politically-pluralist countries of the West are also those that carry out the largest exchange of goods and people among themselves and with the rest of the world. This increases the problem of the discrepancy between the interdependence of societies and the independence of states.

In order to explain the development of international terrorism, and possibly find a solution to it, it is more important to analyse the factors that foster it in certain societies than to investigate the specific causes of a particular terrorist campaign. Terrorism as a method of combat is not restricted to any one type of political objective. The recent history of Northern Ireland has shown that the Protestants can be as effective at terrorism as the Catholics. If the Middle East conflict were to end with the demands of the Palestinians being met — that is, with the disappearance of Israel as a state —, we can be sure that the population of that country would reveal a sufficiently high potential for political fanaticism and enough military know-how to replace the current anti-Israeli terrorism with an anti-Palestinian terrorism that would represent at least as great a danger and would operate in roughly the same areas.

The problem of the struggle against international terrorism is one of dissuasion. It is not a question of eliminating terrorism, either by destroying the terrorists or by meeting their demands. For developed, pluralist societies, the answer lies in equipping themselves with the means of controlling this phenomenon to make it so difficult and unprofitable that its practitioners will resort to other courses of action.

If the states concerned succeed in defining a common policy, it will be possible to achieve such control at the lowest possible cost to political pluralism. If, on the other hand, international terrorist actions multiply and no coherent policy is available to cope with the situation, the state could turn to reckless methods of repressive terrorism. If the latter are accompanied by a deterioration in the international economic situation, this could lead to a profound transformation of pluralist political regimes in the direction of authoritarianism. One thing is certain about the outcome of such a change: it would not be consistent with the hopes either of those who would like to see a more effective campaign against terrorism or of those who find some revolutionary virtues in it.

*Ability to resist
a function
of cohesiveness*