

ON VIOLENCE IN GENERAL
And terrorism in particular *

by

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1. Introduction: The multiplicity of violence.

To talk about violence is a little bit like talking about disease in general: one knows one is touching something important, that is very complicated, that it is easy to moralize and difficult to come up with diagnosis, prognosis, not to mention a cure, a therapy, or the best of all: preventive therapy. But having said this there is also a very important dissimilarity between the two fields: whereas in the theory of diseases we have learnt to make typologies of diseases, and typologies of causes of diseases, with a complex relationship between the list of causes and the list of pathological effects, we are still at a much more primitive stage in the theory of violence. Although there may not be so much of the old tendency to see violence as a unitary phenomenon, one type only, there is still a tendency to ask for the cause of violence. Some authors find it in the particular structure of the human brain,¹⁾ others in the lack of instinct protection, still others would look for some residual instincts in man, particularly relating to territorial possessiveness; then there is the whole range of explanations stemming from individual psychology, from social psychology and from more macro-oriented social sciences.

I have found it more useful to start in the other end: not asking for causes, but asking for effects' for types of violence. A theory of violence should be victim-oriented, not method-oriented.²⁾ And the victims we are concerned with are human beings who suffer. I shall use a broad definition of violence as any avoidable suffering in human beings, whether it is caused by actions of other human beings (direct violence) or somehow the result of the workings of social structures (structural violence).³⁾ "Suffering" may not be the best term: a better expression might be "avoidable reduction in human self-realization",⁴⁾ leaving it very open what this might mean in

various cultures, in various points in geographical space, in various points in historical time. More particularly, four types of violence will be distinguished: Violence proper, meaning violence to the human body; poverty/misery which is more likely to be related to social structure than to any conscious deliberate infliction of suffering by other human beings; violence in the sense of alienation, of loss of identity; and violence in the sense of repression, of loss of freedom, particularly freedom of choice. Thus, the total violence would hurt and harm multilate both body and soul. It would add poverty and misery and lack of closeness to anything meaningful to the individual to bodily violence and lack of freedom. In other words, total violence is what we find today practised in totalitarian societies in the form of concentration camps, prisons and other institutions, repressing people and alienating them from anything they want to be close to, in a state of perpetual misery, often adding bodily torture to the other forms of violence. 5)

There are important relationships between these types of violence: just as a disease can cause another disease through general deterioration of the body, one type of violence may make a society more vulnerable to the other types. Thus, there is the classical (but certainly not proven) theory that misery breeds direct violence; and the more plausible theory that alienation breeds direct violence. 6) Through patterns of alienation direct compassion is broken down, society is run as a long-distance rather than a short-distance society, and mechanisms that have protected people from harming each other bodily, even killing each other are eroded away. 7) Similarly there is a linkage between repression and misery: in a society marked by repression a structure that inflicts misery even on the majority might be more viable, over generations, even centuries. Direct violence may be used to establish societies with high levels of repression and misery, and they might breed direct violence in return, as an effort to overcome this phenomenon. Thus, the old adage "violence breeds violence" would in general hold not only for each type of violence, but also between the various types of violence. 8)

In all of this there is a paradox for modern, rich, small societies like New Zealand or for that matter Norway. For all practical purposes we have been able to abolish misery and have extended freedoms to the entire population in a considerable number of fields: in choice of spouse, place to live, occupation; the freedom of thought, of impression and expression; the freedom of movement, of association and organization; the freedom of consumer behaviour - all of these within limitations for sure, and more extended to some classes than to others, but rarely entirely denied to major sections of the population. Why then, should we have an upsurge in direct violence? ⁹⁾ And why, then, should we at the same time have an increase in mental diseases? ¹⁰⁾ Both problems have been bothering New Zealand's society to the best of my knowledge, and it is tempting to explore the possible relations between these phenomena.

One linkage may be provided here by the concept of alienation, "Long-distance society". The concept is as problematic as "disease" and "violence", so this may be a clear case of trying to explain the obscure by means of something even more obscure. However, if a person loses some kind of fundamental contact with the environment, with other people, with society as a whole, with nature, in the sense that it all appears abstract, as remote objects to be handled and manipulated rather than as something live and warm, near and emotional, would it then be so strange if this phenomenon should relate both to psychological disturbances and to violent, social disturbances? ¹¹⁾ There could even be triangular reinforcing relations here: alienation leading to soft, not yet socially unacceptable psychologically aberrations, these in turn leading to violence, violence leading to despair, anxiety, fear of closeness which in turn would lead to, or be identical with, more alienation. Inject then into this the kind of lack of contact with one's own self that may be the result of the other types of alienation, not to mention the type of alienation that stems from routinized and boring work with no direct personal relation to the work product, and a sense of meaninglessness with life might be the obvious consequence. ¹²⁾ Violence offers an answer here: it is an

outlet for activity, for short-term meaningfulness, in a sense a healthy sign, e.g. among ghetto youths deprived of practically all other possibilities of experiencing togetherness with others in a team¹³⁾ (in connection with violence usually referred to as a gang), deriving meaning from short-term successes, not from long-term uncertain promises of career success. In short, is it to be expected that one can construct a society like the society we have without implications of the kind mentioned? Or put differently: could it be that our economic well-being and our freedom have been bought at a price in terms of violence and alienation that ultimately might serve to reduce the amount of freedom we have gained, in efforts to control the violence, and also to reduce the economic well-being because there is a limit to how well alienated robots really can "deliver the goods"?¹⁴⁾

To explore this more deeply more aspects of contemporary "modern" society will have to be explored. And this will be the topic of the presentation, ending with the conclusion that there may be some fortunate, if unexpected compatibility between certain steps modern, rich societies will have to take to cope with the objective international situation and the internal crises in our societies as expressed in terms of violence and alienation.

2. On social structures, close and distant.

To go more deeply into this, let us now conceive of societies as made up of two types of structures; an "alpha structure" which is what above is called long-distance society, and a "beta structure" which is based more on closeness.¹⁵⁾ The family, the friendship group, the small traditional village may be examples of the latter; the structure of modern bureaucracies, corporations and universities of the former. Societies have various mixtures of these two, from societies that are very loosely connected sets of beta units, usually relatively self-sufficient, to societies where these units have (almost) dissolved and strong alpha structures dominate. The process that "took Europe out of the Middle Ages"¹⁶⁾ and into its present phase is the long story of

how alpha gradually was built, on an ever larger scale, between state and capital, later on joined by the universities and research institutions in general, ultimately bursting through national borders into world-encompassing structures. In this process the small units had to suffer. Relatively self-sufficient villages can today only be found in the most remote, marginal corners; friendship groups are probably more fluid than before, and as to the family: not only are the ties of the extended family vanishing. The "nuclear family" (rather clumsy sociologese for the couple with their offspring) is also dissolving and not only through separation and divorce of the parents, but also through a process whereby parents and children become mutually irrelevant to each other at an ever earlier stage.¹⁷⁾ Thus, it may look as if parents increasingly give up raising their children in any moral sense,¹⁸⁾ hoping that schools, associations, and "society" will somehow take care of the job. Incidentally, for this tremendous social transformation to take place, a technology based on non-animal energy and machines for production and more and more effective forms of transportation and communication were necessary, but hardly sufficient causes. There also had to be an ethos, a mentality defining these huge and vertical structures as somehow right, modern, natural, normal. 19)

Today that mentality is supplied to all of us through a theory of "development", curiously enough shared by liberal and marxist thinking,²⁰⁾ according to which not only industrialization, but also large scale structures are normal and indeed desirable aspects of the process we are in. One may debate, fight, even die for the "correct" ratio between private (corporate) and state (bureaucratic) ownership of means of production; a minor factor, it would seem, relative to the consensus so far that big is modern, small is outdated, archaic, traditional.²¹⁾ As a consequence marriages came about by "mating" cards in computers, leaving the matching process to huge marriage firms; Christmas cakes are supplied by the supermarket rather than by Mother baking them, vacations come in convenient pre-arranged packages, etc. - everybody can supply his and her minor vacations of the same basic theme. Those to the left will tend to be critical of corporate bigness, those to the right of state bigness; either will tend rather

optimistically to assume that if one could get rid of the other type, the wrong type of bigness, then the type one favors will prove harmless. But this position is certainly not born out by present day experience from countries where the state is very strong and corporal capital is weak (Soviet Union, Eastern Europe), or where corporate capital is very strong and the state relatively weak (United States?). Rather, what is here called an alpha structure is more or less the same - vertical, fragmenting, segmenting - whether its embodiment is state or corporate.

3. Two types of direct violence.

The problem, then, is exactly how this effects patterns of violence in modern societies, this time sticking to more conventional conceptions of violence, particularly the violence that kills, and kills directly. Let us distinguish, however, between two cases: violence against persons, and violence against organizations, particularly against the state and against corporations. The latter is usually referred to as "political violence", because the violent act is seen as instrumental to some kind of societal change. The former is referred to as "crime"; bodily harm is made use of as access to money or other objects, for the purpose of revenge, for sexual gratification. Just as the old distinctions ~~between~~ crimes against property, against the human body, for sexual purposes, and white collar crimes are not very good as an empirical typology because they may be combined in a single act, the distinction between violence against persons and against organizations is also problematic. Needless to say, the "terrorist" also gets personal gratification, and even if he is politically aconscious: he may gain gratification from the professionally well executed act of violence, for instance.²²⁾ And, conversely: the present author learnt when serving half a year in a Norwegian prison as a conscientious objector in the 1950s how "ordinary" prisoners saw their crimes, usually against property, as small battles, badly coordinated, poorly executed, in a long and uphill fight against society: "by now they must understand how desperate my situation is!".²³⁾ There were visions of how criminal acts

might proliferate and accumulate - like strikes in one of the marxist catastrophe visions into a general strike - into a state of general lawlessness. "And then", I would ask - "what happens?" - and the answers usually became very vague. Of course, if the answers had not become vague, that person would probably either have been a successful enough criminal not to be caught, or a politician, maybe belonging to an "extremist" group. Nevertheless, the distinction is a useful one as long as one is willing to assume that in a single act of violence there may be components of either type, and that human motivations usually are mixed, not as singleminded as social science typologies might make us believe.

4. Conditions for violence against persons.

Under what conditions, then, do we get violence against persons? Maybe the best way of answering would be to start by rephrasing the question: why is it that we do not have more violence in society that we have? Why is it that we do not have, in fact, the famous condition described by Thomas Hobbes, the war of all against all, the society where life is nasty, brutish and short? If we assume that all human beings are out to get anything, or at least something, why is there not more violence? Partly because people, many people, in many societies can get quite a lot without violence, partly because there are strong countervailing forces - and mainly because society has mechanisms that at the same time regulate what people can get and inhibit against violence - under certain conditions.

One of the leading social scientists of this century, Russian born Pitirim Sorokin who worked most of his productive life in the United States, used to distinguish between three types of interpersonal relations that at the same time constitute types of power: familistic, contractual, and coersive. The former works in close social relations, is very normative, moral, takes in the whole personality, does not ask for reward or punishment but simply is, like the mother-child relation from which the father probably is learning. There is an element of

compassion which also is an important part of the human potential in spite of or in addition to the tremendous potential for intra-species violence the recently much maligned homo sapiens is known to possess.²⁴⁾ In all probability a major factor underlying this compassion is the fact that newborn humans not only are helpless, but they also remain helpless for a rather long period so that patterns of care have to develop for the species to survive.

However, it cannot be assumed that a factor of compassion can extend from the normal human being much beyond a relatively limited group to the whole nation or the whole world except when extraordinary circumstances (a war, a natural catastrophe) "make out of all of us one big family". Compassion usually suffers steep declines where there are social borders: the edges of the family/clan/group; or at least of the ethnic group/race. I think this should be considered normal in human beings: we are like that, our capacity for empathy, for co-suffering and co-joy with others far away from or very different from ourselves simply is limited and will probably remain so. In fact, two thousand years of teaching of Christianity, a religion dedicated to universal compassion (because "we are all one in Jesus Christ") has not succeeded in universalizing compassion. It has probably ~~only succeeded~~ in introducing some more borderlines in the community of humankind at which compassion suddenly stops, and those at the other side are seen as considerably less than human. At any rate, human experience seems to be that it is possible for human beings to live together in "familistic" (beta) relationships, in relatively small units where most people know each other directly or by at most one step (through one other person), and with very little internal violence; partly because of the positive factor of compassion, partly because of the negative, controlling influence of norms, from oneself (the fear of bad conscience) and from others (the fear of punishment, particularly in the form of disapproval from the people one respects, even love, most). In short: compassion + guilt + shame, in various proportions, constitute good bulwarks against the tide, even flood of violence that now may be threatening our societies.

One basic factor underlying all of this, and partly reflected in the term Sorokin chose, "familistic", is the idea of non-substitutability. In a family the members are only substitutable with great pains: one may lose a child in an accident and adopt another (or the child may lose a parent and get a step-parent); one may remarry after divorce - but there is usually much suffering involved. It is very different from changing a colleague at work or from what is found in a busdriver/passenger or mailman/mail receiver relationship. In these relationships, typical of long distance, alpha type society, there is a very high level of substitutability: changes in persons may be accompanied by surprise, but hardly by suffering (or rather, if there is suffering involved, then this is a sign that a familistic element has crept into an otherwise contractual relationship).

All that has been said also applies to crime in general and to violence in particular. In close social relationships violence certainly also may occur, when the factors mentioned do not work sufficiently well. But when violence strikes, it will have a very specific, non-substitutable target. The crimes of passion belong here: the passion stems from the closeness of the relationship, the crime from the frustration when the relationship does not work out. A triangle loaded with jealousy may lead to violence very different from the rapist who kills his victim; in the former it is quite clear who will be the target(s), in the latter there is a very high level of substitutability - it is directed against women as such. For that reason recent feminist analyses of rape ²⁵⁾ as a relation of dominance and violence "between the two sexes", as opposed to "between the two persons" involved, seems very correct. But it is also a depersonalized, a-human relation typical of our social formation. There is also inpenological theory some recognition of this difference: even if the penalty meted out for a murder should be the same in the non-substitutable and the substitutable cases, the danger of recidivism is obviously much higher in the latter. Crimes of passion are to some extent excused.

In the Weber-Parsons tradition in sociology two other word-pairs have played a considerable role: "universalistic vs. particularistic" and "diffuse vs. specific".²⁶⁾ The former corresponds roughly to our "non-substitutable vs. substitutable", for in a universalistic relationship other people are treated alike, according to objective criteria, not according to one's own particular relationship to them. The latter has to do with how much of the other person is brought into the relationship, whether it is "single-stranded" (specific) or "multi-stranded" (diffuse) as anthropologists may say. Obviously, in general non-substitutable relationships will develop more easily the more the other person is taken in, i.e. the more diffuse the relationship. But a familistic relationship represents some kind of qualitative jump, it is not merely a question of adding more qualities in one's perception of the other. One may get to know somebody more and more, yet the transition into friendship/love or enmity/hatred brings in something qualitatively different.

Schematically, the concepts relate as follows:

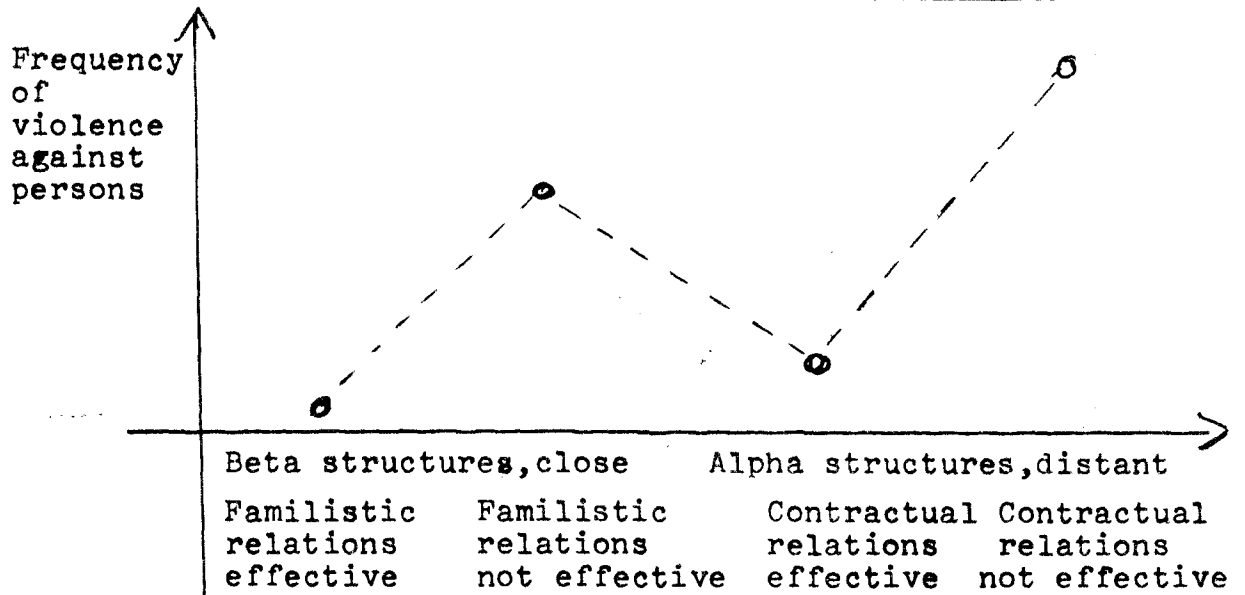
| | |
|---|--|
| <u>particularistic</u> (non-substitutable) | <u>universalistic</u> (substitutable) |
| <u>diffuse</u> (many-stranded) | FAMILISTIC (Beta, closeness) |
| <u>specific</u> (single-stranded) | CONTRACTUAL (Alpha, distance) |

Thus, in alpha structures there are also ways of getting what one wants, but they are more specifically defined, and obtained in more universalistically defined relations. In short, they are contractual; the logic of the social relationship is different. One basic problem is now, that through contractual relations material things can be obtained; money and the market being the mechanisms through which the universalistic/specific logic of the society are upheld and reinforced. But this is not so good for non-material gratification - love cannot be bought for money, the adage says.

Moreover, the expansive nature of alpha structures will also whet appetites of all of us for more and more of the

material things, so the idea of trying to get, by extra - contractual methods, what one cannot get contractually comes easily. It is very naive to believe that this idea would come most easily to those who get least under contract, in other words to the lowest income groups, not to mention those even below contractual relations. Appetites may be proportionate to what one has, not to what one needs. Moreover, the mechanisms inhibiting criminal behavior may be more operative lower down in society, for reasons to be explored below, except at the very lowest, most marginalized, incohesive levels. Consequently, white collar crimes may be much more important to society than blue collar crimes. That the system hits the latter more is an obvious consequence of the fact that laws are made by, and legal institutions are staffed by, people with white rather than blue collars.

Let us now try to summarize what has been said so far in the S-curve hypothesis of increasing violence:



The best protection against violence is the closely woven beta structure. This does not mean that family life is all that non-violent. After all, child-beating and wife-beating are well known phenomena - but they should be taken as signs that the relationship is not familistic, that there are elements that inhibit compassion from developing, for instance. Moreover, there is not only the beating of children "in cold blood", but also "hot blood" violence, as mentioned above. Nonetheless, the violence levels are low relative to what is known from "modern" society.²⁷⁾

In alpha structures the protection against violence is more fragile, volatile, vulnerable. It works as long as it works. But contractual relations are not the material out of which guilt and shame (or, more precisely, in order to have a deterrent effect: the anticipated pain of guilt and shame) are made. And it is certainly not the material out of which compassion is formed. Hence, modern society is based on a very doubtful hypothesis: that compassion+guilt+shame can be built in one setting, presumably the family, and then transferred to, down upon so to speak, in another setting, in schools, at work, in society at large. Why is there so little crime in villages, in the countryside in general? Because the morale building context is also the one which one works, lives in general - it is not only because of higher visibility in the closer milieu. The Spanish vergüenza is what one may feel infracting a norm coming from those near by, family, kin, neighbours - not from pinching a tool in the workshop or misappropriating some funds in an anonymously run company. It is not enough to be a norm-receiver when the norm-senders are far away.²⁸⁾

Why do crime rates seem to be so much lower in Japan than in the Western industrialized world in spite of the fact that an assembly line looks fairly much the same in both places? Because the Japanese have understood to some extent how to combine "traditional" and "modern" elements, not only in the sense of having them co-exist, side by side, but in the sense of creating a new type: the universalistic/diffuse combination.²⁹⁾ In a Japanese company highly objective rules exist defining relationships, e.g. rules of seniority. But the relationship is much more diffuse than in the West, the company relates to many more aspects of the life of the employees, e.g. that of finding a spouse, of acting as a go-between, of presiding over the wedding. The word "family" or "one big family" is often used in this connection and brings out the obvious: this is the setting that makes the morale-building and the working life context coincide to the point that the Japanese may even behave "better" in work context than in a family context. Something of the same may

also apply to the People's Commune Chinese, but it is to be expected that under the present post-Mao regime a transformation from universalistic/diffuse to universalistic/specific will take place, with consequent rise in crime rates.³⁰⁾

At this point, then, let us bring in the factor so far not touched at all: coercion, or, if one prefers that term; punishment (including for deterrence, the threat of punishment). The term actually stands for a sequence of processes, such as law-making; detection-mechanisms; adjudication (comparing validated detection reports with validated rules); administration of sanctions; and review of the entire process. The social logic of this scheme is more compatible with alpha than with beta dominated society: centralized law-making, relatively centralized law-enforcement and a high level of division of labor built into the entire scheme. The system itself is based on contractual more than on familistic relations - although many efforts, and important efforts, are made to build the law-enforcing agent (the policeman) into the city neighbourhood by giving him a broader range of activities than detection and apprehension. In the village the policeman is usually more effective the more he is a part of the village collectively and can draw on reservoirs of anticipated shame, not only fear of punishment. The price paid in terms of corruption and amigo'ism is probably a minor one relative to the gains.

According to this type of thinking there should be a relation of mutual reinforcement between the growth of the alpha structure and the growth of coercion as an institution of crime control. On the other hand, the transition from familistic to contractual relationship both increases the motivation, and decreases the softer impediments against crime in general and violence in particular, as described above. The growth of large-scale cities provides settings rich in mutually substitutable victims. Murders in triangles of jealousy may continue; violence inside the well functioning family continues to be low (but there may be fewer well functioning families); violence in friendship groups is low (and there may be more of them); violence in a well

functioning job relation is low; but violence in the anonymity and substitutability of society at large soars to unknown heights, certainly also stimulated by the learning models provided by mass media (and particularly by TV because it is the most effective pedagogically).³¹⁾ A typical case is the violence committed against taxi drivers: the (usually juvenile) delinquent who commits these atrocious crimes, often for very little money, have nothing against that particular taxi driver, only something in favor of his money and the thrill of crime. There is total substitutability, an enactment of the logic of alienation in an alienated society. At a deeper level, however, one might also talk about the drive for a less alienated relation and of the violent act as a desperate, perverted effort to come closer to somebody, in some way. Thus, one would expect this type of violence to be committed by individuals very poor in social relations, except, of course the relations built in order to engage in criminal activity.

The response to increasing criminality is, predictably, increasing efforts at coercing the citizens into being law-abiding by strengthening any or all of the links in the punishment chain described above. There will be moves in favor of more and stricter laws, of a stronger machinery for detection and apprehension, of earlier adjudication, of more heavy punishment meted out to more people, of less review of the entire process. The problem with all these measures is obvious: they build neither compassion, nor guilt, nor shame. In and by themselves they serve to strengthen the alpha component in society, adding an authoritarian, coercive touch to the contractual undertone; all the time at the expense of the familistic elements. In doing so the fine fibers of ligaments out of which law-abiding, or better, morale-abiding, behavior is made are being destroyed further. The policeman, the court and all the others in the legal institutions or sector of society are evaluated in a very utilitarian light: how do I avoid being detected by the policeman, being apprehended, being sentenced by the court, being punished - -. The institutions do not exude morality, do not inspire shame or guilt. As a matter of fact, and a rather important fact: there is not even a contractual relation with them, a do ut des, a quid pro quo (althouth it is fascinating to see how this element is becoming a part of law enforcement

in the most contractual of all societies, the United States, through the deals made between the criminal and the police/court officials: "you testify against others, and we shall not pursue your case further" - a pattern no doubt also found elsewhere, but not so explicitly, so contractually). ³²⁾

In general the law enforcement institution is seen as exactly that, as an institution in society rather than of society. Predictably, it will lead to efforts among criminals to beat the institution, and the logic is very similar to that of an arms race: each side watches the growth in efficiency of the other side and concludes that it has to do something similar in order to (re)gain the upper hand. The more sophisticated the techniques of the one, the more sophisticated the techniques of the other. Just as for the arms race there is a delicate and not well understood margin between the Scylla of too little law enforcement machinery (as seen when the police is on strike³³⁾) and the Charybdis of too much (as seen in societies where there is virtual warfare between police and criminals). In general it looks as if this margin or "window" (if, indeed, there is a positive window anywhere: the window may be negative) is being overstepped quickly, moving towards ever higher levels of internal law enforcement machinery, and that was the point we were trying to make.

5. Conditions for violence against organizations.

Let us then move on to the second type: violence against organizations, or political violence, today known as "terrorism", and, for short, let us use that term. Why should there be aⁿ increase in terrorist violence today? Why does it come right now, when we "never had it so good?" Two factors seem to be particularly important in any effort to try to come to grips with this problem, maybe three.

First, with beta pushed ever further back and alpha predominating there will be a communication problem in society. The structure is too large, too vertical, too complicated - not for problems and conflict to be articulated - that is always possible in a society which harbors so much freedom of

expression in its mass media and its political bodies³³⁾ - but for problems and conflicts to be resolved with a speed commensurate with the speed to which people living in these societies have become accustomed. Terrorism is a sign from the interior of these societies that something, among it communication, does not function well. There are obvious cases such as the fight for liberation for national minorities (the Palestinian case) and less obvious, in the sense of less clear-cut, cases such as the increasing political violence in the German, Italian and Japanese societies:³⁴⁾ less clear-cut because it is less clear what the goal is. An independent new nation state is easily understood by those who fight for it and by those who resist; a classless society remains unclear simply because there is no clear-cut model around. Thus, it is hard to believe that people really, in the long run, will continue sacrificing their lives in order to have business run more by state bureaucrats and less by "private" interests. But, however this may be, there is a problem somewhere, and it is wise not to assume that the problem is merely located in the psychology of the individual terrorists.

Second, with increasing centralization of society the societies not only become more centralized and more difficult to change because of size and rigidity; they also become more vulnerable. Political power is concentrated in few persons in the state or corporation machineries, energy power in few centres - a well directed abduction and a well placed bomb may have more impact in paralyzing bureaucracies and corporations, and in energy supplies, than in less centralized social formations. The black-outs in New York are good examples here, and so is the abduction and ultimate killing of a key Italian politician Easter 1978.³⁵⁾ Of course, there are other Italian politicians, but the symbolic significance is nonetheless considerable. It is a strike against the core of the state, and the symbolic value rests precisely in the character of the victim as being non-substitutable - it is not simply any politician but one who embodies the system more than most. The vulnerability rests with this circumstance also - some politicians tend to become virtually indispensable in large scale systems by virtue of their experience and the

secrets and confidence vested in them. Compare this to a highly decentralized system, a country consisting of numerous small beta units, each one with its own sets of politicians and energy supply system - each one perhaps somewhat vulnerable to such practices, but then the others will survive.

Thus, the structure produces both motivation albeit often of a very diffuse nature, a desire to cry and shout one's protests to the heavens, and a strategy: "hit at the vulnerable brain centers of the system; they may be well hidden and protected but once damaged, the pay-off in terms of system paralysis is considerable". And to this, then, should be added a possible third factor hinted at above: the way in which the system itself produces contexts that are highly relevant economically, socially and politically but not morally - and consequently not protected by compassion, guilt or shame. Terrorism draws on the same basic material as ordinary crime, but it would be a basic mistake to define the terrorists as ordinary criminals however much they may cooperate with some of them because they need their professionalism in some of the technicalities.

Who are the terrorists? Of course they are from the upper ranges of society.³⁶⁾ Other segments of society may also want change, but not of society, only in society so that they get more power and more opportunity to enjoy the privileges built into the social structure. They are not through with that social formation;³⁷⁾ they have only had enough of being dominated and exploited which goes far towards explaining why they do so easily accept ideologies that reproduce inequality under other formulas, more promising for themselves. Many of the terrorists may be of this type, and to the extent they are intellectuals thus may be hoping for a social order where education will count more and capital less, for instance. But for others the total formation has to be changed, giving birth to a new social order - they have seen it all (not the least in the lives of their parents) and found it wanting. They are through with it.

In addition to this there is another factor: they almost have to be intellectuals, or at least to have a solid

intellectual kernel.³⁸⁾ They need theories to guide them in the understanding of modern society, and in order to locate what is, presumably, its most vulnerable points. Above all, they have to be intellectuals in order to believe that societies are changed through such acts³⁹⁾ - or, perhaps more than intellectuals, they have to be almost mystics to believe that out of the ashes they might conceivably create by some well directed hits at the centers of modern society Bird Phoenix might arise. More particularly, to believe that out of the fascism easily generated by destroying contemporary social or liberal democratic society some kind of socialist or anarchist utopia will arise requires a faith bordering the mystical. A much more realistic prediction would be that out of fascism comes even more fascism - particularly since a fascist social order can be seen as little but an authoritarian version of the alpha structures already characterizing our society. But who said intellectuals are realistic?

Just as for crime and violence against persons it may be predicted that violence against organizations - political violence - will be accompanied by and reinforced by increasing the "forces of law and order". As a matter of fact, the analogy with an arms race will be even more appropriate for the simple reason that on the other side, the non-law-abiding side, there are no longer ordinary criminals who accept the goals of society (ever more material goods), but not the rules of the game as to how to achieve it. On the other side are highly intelligent, well-trained people, in full command of social resources including styles of behavior, ways of talking and acting. A lower middle class police force, socially and educationally, used to dealing with a lower class clientele of blue collar criminals, suddenly has to deal with upper middle class terrorists, their superiors in a disagreeable number of contexts. Hence, not so strange that they are remarkably inept at dealing with them with conventional police methods, even when practiced at a large scale. Consequently, it is to be expected that society will mobilize more counterforce, and particularly more intelligence in both senses of that word - and since that presumably is available in the military, increasing militarization of the fight against terrorism is to be expected.⁴⁰⁾ This, in turn, will make the society more like the society the terrorists say they are fighting

against, thus making their doctrine less weird.

In short, the conclusion is about the same as for violence against persons: the violence is caused by a certain social structure; to counteract the violence, measures are made use of that reinforce that structure further; as a consequence we are on the upward rise of a spiral of actio-reactio escalation. How far this can continue is difficult to say, but the relatively safe prediction would be that increasing proportions of the society will engage in law-breaking and law-enforcement; or in deviant behavior and its control. Obviously, if that proportion becomes too high, society enters a pathological state. Possibly, later generations will say that some of our most "modern" societies have already entered that stage.⁴¹⁾

6. Conclusion.

What, then, would be a course of action with a more bright prognosis attached to it? Given the present analysis the answer to that type of question is obvious: strengthen beta structures, weaken or modify the alpha structures; recreate patterns of closeness, for short.⁴²⁾ There is a concrete example: the "free city" of Christiania in the very center of Copenhagen, to a large extent populated by "drug addicts and juvenile delinquents" as the detractors of giant social experiment, based on the peaceful occupation of unused military barracks would express it.⁴³⁾ However, this is not the place to enter into any of the details in that connection; suffice it only to emphasize that new patterns of closeness may only structurally be similar to what we already know from history, they do not have to be identical. It is not a question of recreating the extended family or even the nuclear family of the past; that would probably be meaningless anyhow. Conviviality may be based on other factors than consanguinity as the communes tend to show; but then it should also be pointed out that they tend to be more shortlived than a family.⁴⁴⁾ Or, is it rather that the biological family has so dominated our vision of what closeness may mean that we cannot abstract sufficiently away from it to get at what is essential? After all, the family is a very powerful source of morale and morality building in spite of the fact that we do not choose most of the

other family members. We can pick spouses and friends according to personality, but children we only make; and the children certainly do not choose their parents. Thus, conviviality based on more freedom of choice might conceivably stand a better chance, although the freedom of choice may also imply the freedom of rejection (just as the freedom to divorce was an obvious consequence of freedom of choice of spouse as opposed to marriage contracts drawn up by parents and others).

In conclusion let it only be pointed out that our societies - modern, industrialized, democratic - may have to recreate patterns of closeness whether they want it or not, and not as a response to increasing violence. Of course, the latter may also play a role: neighbors may come together inventing mechanisms of defense against the perpetrators of violence; they may even leave cities and find refuge in a countryside less saturated with objects for the enrichment of those who commit violence against persons, or less saturated with targets that pay off for those who commit political violence. These defense mechanisms would already entail a certain decentralization, but this is not so much what we have in mind.

Rather, we have in mind decentralization, or recentrali-zation as it is better referred to, as a response to the economic restructuring currently taking place in the world (we refuse to refer to it as a "crisis", for what is crisis to one may so often be promise to another). The big state and corporate structures built in modern societies also owe their size to their actual and potential use far beyond national borders, in intergovernmental and transnational cooperation. But this presupposes a lot from the rest of the world, particularly that not all parts of it are capable of doing the same. Even more particularly: it presupposes a large Third World willing to serve inferior roles in the international division of labor. But it is precisely this international division of labor that is undergoing basic change, with a number of countries that some years ago played very marginal roles today starting as exporters of industrial products. It may be objected that the profits still to a

large extent accrue to the First World, but that is only a transition phase. The basic point is that these countries, like Japan did, are going to make a substantial dent into the trade hegemony of the First World, pushing the First World back to more reasonable shares in world production, turn-over and consumption of raw materials. The resulting imbalance between productive capacity and effective demand on the world market, given this transformation will sooner or later, through phases of unemployment, possibly also war to regain lost positions and to create demand through destructions, have to end up with social formations less dominated by industrialism and mass over-production relative to First World demand. Under such circumstances societies based on a much higher level of self-reliance, including local self-reliance may be recreated in the West - the first signs already being there ("the green wave").

As likely, or more likely some might say, however, would be a development in an increasingly fascist direction, which in that case would receive inspiration from increasing internal violence of the two types described and increasing external pressure for some kind of economic roll-back, as a necessary and logical sequel to the political-military roll-back known as the decolonization of the 1960s.

So, there we are, faced with considerable dilemmas. And we have not even mentioned the other symptoms of a social formation approaching the end of its potentials: the world trends towards increasing numbers of people living in misery, increasing international violence, repression in various parts of the world, not to mention the increase in mental diseases. In short, the total violence mentioned in the introduction seems to be on the increase. Economic well-being and freedom of choice are still privileges for relatively small parts of humankind; islands in an ocean of violence, misery, repression and alienation, often found tightly interwoven with these phenomena. Direct violence against persons and against the society are parts of these phenomena, but they are crucial aspects of them. Solutions or processes that tend to decrease these forms of violence may well at the same time have important bearing on the other forms of social ills. So, the rest of our century will call on all our ~~imagination~~ imagination and creativity - there are giant tasks to be done.

N O T E S

* Paper prepared for the New Zealand Law Society Convention, Auckland, 31 March, 1978.

1. Arthur Koestler has published an article all around the world around this theme, as usual very convincingly written, There is only one difficulty with the Koestler thesis: it is about human beings as a whole, about homo sapiens. It does not explain why there are such variations among societies, and within societies over time, not to mention why there are such variations among human beings and in human beings over time. What such theories actually tell us is mainly that there is a potential for violence and a capacity for violence in human beings, not the rather important where, who, when and why.
2. However, a general fascination with the perpetrator of violence and his or her tools has often overshadowed the more humanitarian concern with the victim, and has had a profound influence on criminological thinking.
3. This distinction was first made by the present author in the article "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research", Journal of Peace Research 1969, No.3; also in Essays in Peace Research, Vol. I, Copenhagen, Ejlers, 1975 pp. 109-134.
4. "Violence is here defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, in what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance". Ibid, p. 111.
5. Thus, if one wants to know what peace is, some insight can be obtained from prisons, concentration camps and similar institutions used by depressive regimes. However, it should be added that peace is not simply the negation of these forms of violence, it has also a positive connotation more open to imagination and constructive thought and practice.
6. And this is also a theory that has been presented for the present convention of the New Zealand Law Society, in the paper by Dr. R.H. Culpan, "Violence". He does not use the word alienation, but he says: "A great part of these traditional structures have disintegrated in today's society. Father has often been demoted to a cog in a machine and his influence replaced by the media and by peers. One by one, mother's tasks have been taken away from her by domestic appliances and by social agencies, forcing her to embark on a life-long and often hopeless quest for a new role".
7. It is enough to think of the possibility of long-distance killing to realize the significance of this point; it should only be remembered that the long distance is not necessarily that between the B52 pilot and the South-East Asian peasant, measured in feet, but the distance between a young thug and a taxi driver, measured in anonymity units.

8. In this way the theory of violence becomes self-contained: it is not only a typology of forms of violence, but also a theory of causal relations between them.
9. This upsurge in direct violence is very well documented for the case of New Zealand in the paper presented for this convention of the New Zealand Law Society by Mr. R.J. Walton, Deputy Commissioner, New Zealand Police, "The Extent and Growth of Violent Offending in New Zealand Society: The Police View-point". Thus, "the overall growth in violent offending over that 15 years period (1962-1976) was 171,3% (p. 1). However, his graph 4, "Serious Violent Offending" shows an increase of 217% for the same period.
10. Statistics on mental diseases are always problematic, all I can say at this point is that the problem was on everybody's mind and all over the newspapers during my own brief visit to New Zealand June 1977.
11. Of course, one would always find that some of the violence is committed by people who are also mentally disturbed; extreme alcoholism being one type of more or less voluntarily induced, and more or less transient, mental disturbance. Walton, footnote 9 above, refers to a research paper "Criminal Violence" by Morris J. Kun on all persons convicted of violent crimes between 1 January 1975 and 30 June 1975, and found that "48% of all convicted assault offenders were affected by alcohol at the time of the offence". However, from this it does not follow that "alcoholism is the cause of violence". It might be much more fruitful to pursue the idea that there could be a third factor causing both of them, making the relation between the two spurious. Such hypothesis are difficult to prove or disprove statistically, however.
12. The book by S. Terkel, Working, New York, 1974, is an excellent 700 pages account, based on in-depth interviews, of how utterly boring and alienating work in "modern" society can be.
13. The reader is invited to make his or her list of what constitutes "identity", and may be surprised to see how many items on that list are fulfilled in a delinquent gang - on the assumption that human beings will always experience more identity with those close to them than with distant abstractions such as the State, the Government, the Society.
14. And this would be at the basis of any theory of overdeveloped society: impressive, but long-distance structures and an abundance of material goods are there, but they stand in the way of short-distance society, closeness, and in the way of non-material types of satisfaction.
15. For an elaboration of these concepts, see Johan Galtung, "On the Poverty of Ideology, on Alpha and Beta and their many Combinations", paper for the sub-project "Visions of Desirable Societies," Goals Processes and Indicators of Development Project, United Nations University.
16. On this there is very much consensus among historians: that process had to do with the creation of large-scale structures.

17. In other words, horizontal divorce between parents and children may be much more important as a sign of breakdown of the family than vertical divorce between the parents. Perhaps the least studied category would be "vertical divorce" between siblings - to what extent are siblings removed from each other to the point of total irrelevance by the structures of modern society? In short, it may be that the expression in sociologese "nuclear family" is not so bad after all: there is some similarity to the fission of a nucleus in the process over time!
18. Amitai Etzioni is repeatedly making this point - a rather important one. With the general assumption of the welfare state that "the state will somehow take care of it" one should not be astonished if people contribute less voluntary assistance during natural disasters or somehow assume that raising of children will also ultimately be taken care of by the state, if not at school, at least and ultimately in youth prisons or youth camps (today's functional equivalent of putting the young boys into the army or on board a ship to beat some discipline into them?).
19. And this ethos certainly exists - it seems to be close to the western concept of development. For more on this, see Johan Galtung, Tore Heiestad, Erik Rudeng, "On the last 2500 Years of Western History, And Some Remarks on the Coming 500", Chapter 13, Vol.13, The New Cambridge Modern History, pp. 318-361, forthcoming 1979.
20. For the similarity between marxism and liberalism in that regard, see Johan Galtung, "Two Ways of being Western: Some Similarities between Marxism and Liberalism", papers, Chair in Conflict and Peace Research, University of Oslo, 1978.
21. In that respect, comparing the United States and the Soviet Union, this consensus between liberalism and marxism seems to be so much more important than many of the similarities between them. And this is rather significant in the current ideological situation since so many people seem to feel that one either has to be one or the other, there is no third alternative. This, of course, is wrong: the Youth Revolte of the late 1960s, now perhaps in a more passive phase, bear testimony to a considerable interest in a third alternative where small units will play much more of a role.
22. In one of the more interesting articles on German terrorism, an interview with one of them in Der Spiegel, 7. August 1978 ("Ich habe blindwütig daran geglaubt") the professional proficiency underlying these acts of violence becomes very prominent.
23. This was very much my own experience with fellow inmates in a Norwegian prison where I was "doing time" as a conscientious objector in Oslo six months during the winter 1954-55 - reported in my book Fengselssamfunnet: Et Forsøk på Analyse, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1959. Personally I had thought that this was more a vision of the politically conscious prison inmate, the way I saw myself. It proved to be visions shared by very many of them, or at least a language in which their grievances against society were expressed.

24. Koestler, for instance in his article in the Italian L'Espresso, "Quel serpente che ci striscia nel cranio" is very pessimistic in this regard (19 February 1978, pp.86-97) However, the comments made in footnote 1 above are still relevant: there must also be many other factors at work, perhaps some of those factors are more amenable to change than the structure of the human brain.
25. Of course, the collective expression of rape as a weapon is most clear in cases of war; evidently many officers seem to think that it is the prerogative of their soldiers that they should be let loose on the unprotected women in a conquered country. Or, could it rather be that this is the reward held out to the soldiers for doing the most dirty and dangerous work of war, the officers being the administrators, reserving for themselves sex under less primitive conditions, but at the army's expense? For an analysis of the role of rape in connection with occupation, see Malaya Upside-down, by Chin Kee Onn, Federal Publications, Singapore, 1976, chapter 2, "Rape". (The title of chapter 1 is "Confusion" and of chapter 3 "Looting and Robbery"). The reference, of course, is to the Japanese occupation of 1942-45.
26. For an analysis of all these terms, see Johan Galtung, Members of Two Worlds, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1971, chapter 2; particularly the footnotes.
27. In earlier phases of western history the idea of original sin was important, as also the idea that they could be beaten out of children. Children were private property, the father was not accountable to anybody, they could be evaluated in terms of economic utility and be preserved if the utility were high, be spanked to death if the utility were low.
28. This point cannot be made often enough: there is a difference between an abstract norm and a norm associated with a concrete norm-sender, even a sender to whom the receiver has a very positive, emotional relationship. Maybe we should even not use the same term "norm" in the two cases, maybe that only adds to the confusion?
29. Nowhere is this so well described as in James Abegglen classic, The Japanese Factory, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1957.
30. The universalistic/diffuse relationship in Japan is paternalistic, based on the "concern" of the factory and the managers' for the total personality of the worker. In a Chinese Peoples' Commune it is in principle more horizontal, everybody's concern with everybody, and all aspects of everybody. In both societies the movement is probably in the direction of higher individual mobility, but in order to detach the individual from a Japanese factory/company or a Chinese Commune there has to be a change from a diffuse to a more specific orientation. The rest of the story we probably know: there will be more individual mobility, but also rising crime rates because of the detachment of the individual from the protective cocoon of the company or commune.

31. There may be one institution that is even more instructive and effective pedagogically than TV: participation in a war. In the very carefully researched study by Dane Archer and Rosemary Gartner, "Violent Acts and Violent Times: A Comparative Approach to Postwar Homicide Rates", American Sociological Review 1976, pp. 937-963, it is shown that New Zealand underwent a substantial increase in homicide, in fact the highest of all the nations sampled, when the post second world war period is compared with the period before that war. The authors examine a number of possible explanatory theories, and come up with the "legitimation of violence model, which predicts post war increases as a result of the pervasive wartime presence of officially sanctioned killing" (p. 960). The present author is inclined to attach more significance to general trends in modern, more or less overdeveloped societies than to the influence of wars, but this may also have been one factor.
32. In recent times it also looks as if a publishing contract with an important company could enter the relation so that a complex deal between defendant, prosecutor, publishing company and possibly also the defence lawyer might be an important part of the machinery of adjudication.
33. To my knowledge there is no study contrasting the role of a strike by the police in highly alienating long-distance contexts such as big cities and more close, short-distance communities - a study of that type would be interesting.
34. Why these three societies, the Axis powers of the Second World War? Does it have something to do with the unfulfilled aspirations behind their belligerent activities, is it due to a common factor that makes for fascism on the one hand and these phenomena on the other, or is there no relation at all? There is probably some relation, for instance the tendency among some people to believe that violence can be a cause of fundamental social change if directed against well chosen people. For this to be useful as an hypothesis it is not necessary that the terrorists themselves believe in such theories, they may engage in the violence for totally different reasons, such as personal gratification. But for the phenomenon to be taken sufficiently seriously by a sufficient number of people to constitute a structure and a process within the society, an ethos of the type mentioned might be a third background factor.
35. We have probably far from seen the end of the Aldo Moro story. Thus, we do not know what kind of secrets he seems to have betrayed to his captors, nor do we know to what extent Moro himself was in a process of accepting some of the ideological positions of his captors. A journalist who interviewed the head of that section of the police in Rome, in a private communication to the present author, reported the head of the police to say that "we cannot afford to catch him alive" - the press agency for which she was working refused to publish that report.
36. This is of course not true of all of them, but particularly of the leaders - upper middle class background, themselves students, more often than not of sociology. Some day one might conclude that the US sociology of the 1950s carries some of the responsibility for being so structure-blind, so

devoid of any serious effort to discuss social classes and their relations that a sociology exaggerating in the other direction simply had to emerge.

36. This is a basic theme in Johan Galtung, Tore Heiestad, Erik Rudeng, "On the Decline and Fall of Empires: the Roman Empire and Western Imperialism Compared", Papers, Chair in Conflict and Peace Research, University of Oslo, 1978. - New social formations are likely to emerge at the behest of disillusioned elites through with their own society, rather than with those at the bottom or outside that society, eager to get into positions of power and privilege.
38. For a war against occupying forces no intellectuals are needed, the enemy is easy to identify, the goal is clear. For action against a social structure where the enemy is not so ~~easy~~ to identify and ~~the goal~~ far from clear, much theory would be needed to make up for this lack of clarity.
39. For an analysis of this type of belief, see Johan Galtung, "Deductive Thinking and Political Practice: An Essay on Teutonic Intellectual Style", Papers on Methodology, Essays in Methodology, Vol. II, Eilers, Copenhagen 1978, chapter 8.
40. Italy went much further in this direction during the search for Aldo Moro than did West Germany in its search for Hans-Martin Schleyer. However, in either country it can probably be assumed that paramilitary units of the type that acted in Mogadiscio have been active for a long time and will increase in significance.
41. For some data, the Johan Galtung and Monica Wemegah "Overdevelopment and the Alternative Ways of Life in Rich Countries", Paper for sub-project "Alternative Ways of Life", Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development Project, United Nations University, Geneva, might be useful.
42. For a more detailed analysis of several ways in which alpha and beta structures may combine, in more happy combinations than found today, see the paper referred to in footnote 15 above.
43. There is a paper on the Christiania experiment "Dominant Ways of life in Denmark," presented for the sub-project "Alternative Ways of Life", Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development Project, UNU, Geneva, at Cartigny 21-24 April 1978.
44. However, even if a commune goes under its members may ~~go to~~ other communes elsewhere - for that reason it is difficult to say how short or long-lived a commune is. For an analysis of this, see Johan Galtung, Self-Reliance and Global Inter-Dependence, Ottawa, Canadian International Development Agency, 1978: particularly chapter 2 "Poor Countries vs. Rich, Poor People vs. Rich: Whom will the New International Economic Order Benefit?".