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Published online: 22 Jan 2015.

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A Bloodless Guerrilla Warfare: Why U.S. White Leftists Renounced Violence Against People During the 1970s

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Between 1968 and the late 1970s, a significant number of U.S. white leftist groups escalated their protest to armed struggle. After experimenting briefly with violence, they opted for low-intensity armed propaganda that targeted property and avoided hurting people. By contrast, European leftist groups and anti-colonial organizations in the U.S. made extensive use of antipersonnel violence. Why did U.S. leftists eschew attacks against civilians? Scholarship does not explain this case, as it focuses either on the internal dynamics of a single group or on structural variables. Conversely, this article addresses this question through a historical reconstruction and a multilevel analysis. The research identifies the critique and ensuing de-solidarization by the radical milieu as the main factor accounting for the restraint of violence. This article demonstrates that the radical milieu censored and isolated armed groups as soon as they escalated and began to endanger human lives. Therefore, in order to safeguard the solidarity pact with their constituencies, violent fringes moderated their repertoires of action. This article employs primary sources and original interviews with militants to support this claim and to assess the relevance of three concurrent factors: the trauma generated by the "townhouse incident," the deterrence by law enforcement, and the militants' socio-economic background.

Keywords Black Panthers, de-escalation of violence, leftist violence, New Left, nonviolence, policing of protest, radical milieu, radicalization, Symbionese Liberation Army, terrorism, violence against people, Weatherman, Weather Underground Organization

Introduction

On March 6, 1970, an explosion struck at the heart of Manhattan, turning a Greenwich Village townhouse into a heap of smoking ruins. Three members of Weatherman, assembling an explosive device in the basement, died incinerated.

The end of the dream of an armed leftist revolution in the U.S. is conventionally associated with this episode.[1] As a matter of fact, Weatherman, together with all white leftist vanguards, engaged in low-intensity armed propaganda that avoided

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violence against people. Attacks targeting property, preceded by warning calls to clear the buildings, became their favorite repertoire of action.

According to estimates, between 1968 and 1982 U.S. leftist militants carried out 670 bombings and arsons, 30 robberies, and 26 shootings. These actions resulted in 66 people injured. But in only a few cases did leftists plan to hit them. Out of 8 confirmed fatalities, only one was a premeditated murder; the others were either unintentional victims of bombings (1) or people shot during robberies or at police stops (6).[2]

This rather peaceful outcome of the social struggles of the 1960s has rarely been questioned. Yet, there are at least three reasons why this restraint of violence is an empirical puzzle, deserving further investigation and more systematic scrutiny.

First, between 1968 and the late 1970s, a sizeable number of white leftist groups organized themselves as guerrilla units. Within the collectives, militants trained with firearms and explosives and were educated as zealous revolutionaries. They were ideologically and technically ready to engage in murderous actions. Yet, respect for human life was adopted as a quite rigorous code of conduct.

Second, this moderation was observed during a period of resurgent political violence in the U.S. After thirty years of "liberal consensus," unrest on college campuses, race riots, and street confrontations were on the rise. The Vietnam War fostered rage and frustration, disseminating violent repertoires. U.S. white leftists also acted in solidarity with the anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles. They lionized the black liberation movement; yet, organizations such as the Black Panthers (BP) engaged in self-defense and retaliatory violence against people. Similarly, white leftists acclaimed other minorities' revolutionary fringes, such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Puerto Rican *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional* (FALN); however, these groups were armed and killed political enemies.

Third, U.S. militants acted as a part of a global post-1968 revolutionary movement. Like other Western leftists, they advocated the principles of Marxism-Leninism—often confusedly interpreted and combined with elements of the anarchist tradition—and were inspired by Chinese and Cuban revolutions. They embraced the widely circulating *foco* theory that stressed the importance of exemplary violence even in absence of a mass revolutionary front. As in Europe, their ranks counted mostly middle-class students; they had the same vilified targets—capitalism, imperialism, authoritarianism—and shared a sense of urgency, feeling the imminence of a revolution. Yet, the U.S. can be ranked among the Western democratic countries less severely hit by leftist violence. Indeed, contrary to what happened in Italy or in West Germany, where leftist armed fringes extensively targeted personalities embodying the injustice of the system, attacks on U.S. soil almost never involved human beings.[3]

Research Design

Why did U.S. leftists systematically eschew political assassinations, kidnappings, attacks against civilians, physical violence against law enforcement agents, and other acts endangering people? This article seeks to answer this question through a fine-grained historical reconstruction and a multilevel analysis. In so doing, it attempts to dynamically integrate micro, meso, and macro dimensions: a) individual pathways; b) group dynamics; c) interactions between groups and their radical milieu, and between groups and law enforcement agencies.

The research identifies the critique and ensuing de-solidarization by the radical milieu as the main factor accounting for the restraint of violent repertoires. The paper employs historical documents and a set of oral testimonies to support this claim and to assess the relevance of the three main concurrent factors: a) the trauma generated by the townhouse incident; b) the deterrence by law enforcement; c) the militants' socio-economic background.

The paper adopts Malthaner and Waldmann's definition of "radical milieu" to denote the segment of the population sympathizing with armed groups and sharing experiences, frameworks of interpretation, and political goals with them. The radical milieu usually supports violent groups morally and logistically by virtue of a social network and a solidarity pact.[4] Armed groups provide a vanguard struggling on the front line and fostering the revolutionary process. In exchange, the radical milieu offers symbolic and material resources: on one hand, psychological support, public endorsements, and moral justifications, and on the other hand, financial aid, logistical help, and recruits.

Armed groups derive "normative standards" from the radical milieu and "consider its judgment about their behavior relevant." More specifically, the fact that violent organizations see themselves as representing this population and fight on their behalf "gives meaning and legitimacy" to both their program and their chosen means.[5] Hence, the role of the radical milieu is assumed to be decisive in shaping armed militants' behavior and groups' tactical choices. Importantly, not only the immediate supportive environment, but also the wider communities that militants claim to represent—called "reference groups"—influence the conduct of violent actors.

The term violence, unless otherwise specified, is employed to indicate the deliberate infliction of damage on property or individuals for political purposes. However, this paper refers to "antipersonnel violence"[6] versus violence against property, emphasizing the qualitative difference between the exertion of physical force against objects or, conversely, against human beings.

The present work is mostly based on qualitative primary sources: original documents developed by leftist groups, reports drawn up by law enforcement agencies, and a set of 17 semi-structured interviews, personally conducted with militants who engaged in violence-prone fringes.[7] Although the sample of interviewees is not truly representative of the revolutionary spectrum, I believe along with Horgan that even a concise number of idiosyncratic accounts can be useful in tracing more general pathways.[8]

Weatherman became a catchall name of U.S. armed leftist groups. However, it was far from being alone in the revolutionary trip. Across the country, as of 1968, a still unclear number of collectives flourished, militarized, and planned armed struggle. Some of them conducted several attacks and eventually de-escalated; some others dissolved before accomplishing their first violent actions. One group disbanded following its first lethal attack. After an initial wave between 1968 and 1971, leftist organizations regained momentum a few years later (1974–early 1980s) when a second cycle emerged. The original antiwar claim was commonly abandoned, in favor of generic anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-racist propaganda. A specific interest for political prisoners' rights and freedom also spread.

To improve our understanding of the dynamics of the whole revolutionary galaxy and to extend the findings to a more general level, this research takes into account 15 major organizations: Brandeis group, George Jackson Brigade (GJB),

May 19th Communist Organization (M19CO), Melville's group, New Year's Gang (NYG), New World Liberation Front (NWLF), Red Armed Panthers, Revolutionary Army, Revolutionary Union, Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), The Crazies, United Freedom Front (UFF), Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers (UAWMF), Venceremos, and Weather Underground Organization (WUO), commonly known as Weatherman. This analysis explicitly excludes non-white revolutionary groups, because of their heterogeneity vis-à-vis white leftist organizations, in terms of grievances, socio-economic background, and legal guarantees.

The article proceeds as follows. First, it draws attention to the literature gap about the restraint of antipersonnel violence. Then, the paper uncovers the process of critique and de-solidarization by the radical milieu. In particular, after tracing the radical milieu's boundaries, the article explores its reaction to violence and the ensuing isolation of armed fringes. Lastly, the paper shows that the three concurrent factors had only a secondary impact over the moderation of repertoires.

A Case of De-Escalation of Violence

Conflict studies literature, when it deals with the processes of de-escalation of violence, generally investigates the factors that push and pull individuals to leave terrorist organizations[9] or explains why terrorist campaigns decline and groups disband.[10] The case of militarized groups that resolve to avoid physical harm against people, while still using violent repertoires, is largely overlooked. Such a tactic—alternative to both indiscriminate attacks and nonviolence—is taken into consideration only in a few studies and awaits further empirical investigation.[11] Yet, an analysis of leftists' choice to calibrate violence holds a broader theoretical interest, with regards not only to the processes of de-escalation and de-radicalization, but also to the relational dimension of armed groups and their sympathetic communities.

Scholarship on U.S. radicalism generally does not dwell on the restraint of violence, focusing instead on the extremism of the New Left.[12] Insiders' accounts and memoires, in the rare instances when they deal with the moderation of repertoires, tend to overemphasize the townhouse incident and its sobering effect that supposedly inhibited all groups from using violence against people.[13] The other factors that could have contributed to make individuals and organizations more likely to de-escalate are generally unexplored. Partially filling this literature gap, Varon proposes an insightful comparison between the WUO and the German Red Army Faction in which he addresses the question of the different outcomes in terms of antipersonnel violence in the two countries. Nevertheless, Varon's analysis does not provide a direct answer, stressing both the ethical value of Weatherman's choice and the positive effects of the mild repression in the U.S. (if compared to West Germany).[14]

Cross-national comparisons of "terrorist violence" tend to explain variations with structural preconditions and provide insights on the logic of violence restraint in only a few cases. Katzenstein acknowledges that the reasons why U.S. militants drew back from "a full-scale campaign of violence" are "still too complex to unravel" and discusses instead a variety of factors that presented differences across countries.[15] Sánchez-Cuenca shows, with quantitative data, a strong association between past dictatorships and revolutionary violence.[16] Similarly, Engene finds statistical evidence that European ideological terrorism was correlated to macro-level indicators, e.g., human rights, democracy, and economic growth.[17]

From these findings, one can infer that a country such as the U.S. did not offer the context for a violent escalation. However, highly aggregated analyses overlook the fact that revolutionary violence in the U.S. actually escalated and they cannot explain the mechanisms through which groups and individuals eventually adopted this constrained behavior.

The Key Factor: The Critique and De-Solidarization by the Radical Milieu

The Influence of the Radical Milieu

Leftist armed groups referred to and fought on behalf of a multifaceted radical milieu, which included the student and antiwar movement, the working class, the black liberation movement, the minorities' movements (e.g., American Indians and Puerto Ricans), and the international anti-U.S. forces (*in primis*, North Vietnamese and Cubans). These communities included sympathizers, militants with looser commitment to the revolution, and allies fighting the same opponent. Most of the violent groups I take into account initially enjoyed a good relationship with their milieu. However, when armed militants raised the stakes, targeting people or not caring about the human costs of their attacks, the milieu expressed criticism, withdrew (or threatened to withdraw) its public support, and revoked (or threatened to revoke) its private aid. The timing and the extent of this process varied according to both the strength of the ties and the perceived dangerousness of violent actions. Later, two different pathways followed.

Some violent groups, by revising and moderating their repertoires, partially regained the radical milieu's support. The two major organizations—the WUO and the SLA—reflected this first trajectory. Both of them restructured their organizations with the explicit aim to keep the radical milieu and underground militants in sync. In 1975, the WUO established the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, an aboveground network devoted to sustain the Weathermen, by gathering mass consensus and reconnecting with the anti-colonial and working-class movements. The SLA disappeared under the blow of state repression, but some of its surviving forces started operating under the banner of the New World Liberation Front. The NWLF, extremely concerned about feedback and criticism of aboveground militants, designated a legal organization, the Bay Area Research Collective, for keeping the interaction with the radical milieu alive.[18] Hence, both groups discovered the benefits of a violent yet bloodless propaganda.

Some other groups, in contrast, were rapidly disbanded by law enforcement agencies. Therefore, they could not de-escalate and recover the bonds with their milieu. Yet, the radical milieu, by stigmatizing the negative examples of senseless violence, was crucial in restraining antipersonnel attacks at a more general level. For instance, the New Year's Gang, after killing an innocent man with the bombing of the Army Math Research Center in Madison, received harsh criticism and lost the romantic aura that it had previously enjoyed among students. Chased by police, the group vanished abroad, but the leftist milieu blamed it to the point that "instead of inspiring copycat bombings," the NYG's murderous action "had been followed by a general retreat from violence, not only locally but all across the country."[19]

Isolation as Perceived by Armed Militants

The majority of the interviewees felt a deep sense of isolation as soon as they progressed in their escalation toward antipersonnel violence.[20] Jonathan Lerner,

a Weatherman's militant in New York, vividly remembers this feeling and the fact that criticism and estrangement were initially denied inside the group. However, after the first attacks, the external constraint grew; "the larger network of supporters, friends, and comrades that were watching from the outside, still in academy or in school, or little older, may be with kids, said 'What are you doing? This is crazy. You have to back up.'"[21] Mark Rudd, one of Weatherman's leaders, recalls that he understood this alienation after the demonstrations of May 1970:

> I realized that the mass movement was about to get even bigger. And we weren't a part of it. We were not even in relation with it. . . . I got the realization while I was sitting on a bench in a park in Philadelphia, reading a newspaper. A half a mile away, there were thousands of people demonstrating. And I couldn't go.[22]

If material resources were never completely lacking—the Weathermen, for example, could rely on their affluent families and friends for money and safe houses[23]—political and psychological isolation had more significant consequences for all groups. It exposed the disconnect between armed militants' willingness to escalate further and the very skeptical attitude of their milieu. In other words, this cognitive dissonance represented a way to realize that clandestine factions were not in tune with the political *Zeitgeist*. Thus, armed militants came to the rational conclusion that violence against people, given the conditions, was a losing strategy. Significantly, most of the testimonies today stress this relational dimension. Antipersonnel violence—says James Kilgore, a member of the SLA—"was out-of-sync." Osha Neumann, who was in the UAWM, specifies, "It was not effective for political mobilization." Ed Mead, part of the George Jackson Brigade, similarly adds, "It wouldn't have sparked any uprising." "It did not really further the objective of win over hearts and minds," admits Laura Whitehorn who joined the May 19th Communist Organization. Michael Klonsky—one of the National Secretaries of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) who did not follow the Weathermen, opting instead for working class and community organizing—echoes the same concept: "It made no sense." "When you want to organize people you can't use violence against them."[24]

The Student and Antiwar Movement

While armed groups approached the line of antipersonnel violence, the student and antiwar movement increasingly criticized their actions.

The so-called Days of Rage represented the beginning of this process. Weatherman organized its first national demonstration in Chicago on October 8–11, 1969. "Bring the war home" was the rallying cry, which implied the onset of a war against white supremacy, capitalism, and fascism. Participants wore helmets and were armed with Molotov cocktails and metal bars. They blew up the statue in Haymarket Square, ravaged several shops and bank windows in the Financial District, and engaged in full-contact fights against policemen. On both sides, dozens were hospitalized. The violence of the confrontation was unprecedented and the Days of Rage marked a further step toward the threshold of antipersonnel violence. A few voices praised the Weathermen for their courage. But the demonstration attracted only a few hundred militants—the organizers expected to gather thousands of people—and

participation by local radicals was completely lacking. The influential Marxist antiwar newsweekly *Guardian* launched a campaign to condemn the "tragedy of the Weatherman line." For weeks, the magazine criticized the "low grade, camp version of *Bonnie and Clyde*" and praised the rest of the movement for its "revolutionary wisdom to stay away" and boycott the "adventurism."[25]

After the townhouse explosion in March 1970, despite the initial uncertainty about the event, a chorus of critics progressively rose. The *Guardian* condemned the "individual terrorism," labeling it as an "act of frustration."[26] Tom Hayden, one of the founding fathers of the movement, who had previously supported Weatherman, wrote on *Ramparts*:

> To us revolution was like birth: blood is inevitable, but the purpose of the act is to create life, not to glorify blood. Yet to the Weathermen bloodshed as such was "great." . . . Their violence was structured and artificial, because in their heads they were part of the Third World. They were alienated from their own roots.[27]

Even the *Berkeley Tribe*, initially supporting the armed struggle, in the course of 1970 started questioning leftists' bombs and sabotage because they "can simultaneously discredit and retard revolution." What mattered most—the *Tribe* explained—was "the attitude developed among the people." "The Vietnamese experience shows that sabotage as a politically isolated act quickly turned against the revolutionary forces." In conclusion, "if good-hearted revolutionary fools plan bombings which harm the people then they must be denounced and opposed . . . . The revolutionary's value of human life has to be made distinct from the Capitalist society's property ethic."[28] Even the bombings of the Electric Circus discotheque in New York City and the UC Berkeley library, although victimless, were labeled as "terrorist attacks" and rejected because "the anti-personnel and low-level political nature of these attacks do not contribute to the disruption of the repressive machinery."[29]

Later on, other articles condemned the growing "isolation and apartness" of armed fringes from the mass movement, and the risks of "unnecessary deaths," that could have occurred as a result of the incautious bombings.[30] Harsh criticism was also expressed in the aftermath of the murder of a policeman in Berkeley, even though the perpetrator was unknown.[31] Following the bombing of the Army Math Research Center in Madison by the New Year's Gang, the disapproval of life-threatening methods grew.[32] Some voices within the movement were even admitting their own guilt: "It is OUR responsibility, the senseless miming of 'off the pig' & 'pick up the gun' without a proper understanding of what it all means. . . . There must be a clear distinction between banditry and guerrilla warfare."[33]

Criticism continued during the second half of the 1970s. For instance, many readers' letters to the leftist magazine *Orca* explicitly questioned the narrow focus on armed struggle.[34] Mead admitted that the George Jackson Brigade "freaked out the left community,"

> The left—points out Mead—was of no help in terms of material support. . . . Not only the group not received a word of public or private support, but they were the habitual victim of verbal abuse by the general left. The left was fighting the Brigade even harder than the government.[35]

The Symbionese Liberation Army, probably the most reckless among leftist groups, suffered an even broader process of isolation within the student and antiwar movement. After killing black school superintendent Marcus Foster—the only confirmed intentional victim of U.S. white revolutionaries—the SLA alienated the majority of its radical milieu.[36] Several members of the "Symbionese federation" collectively resigned right after the assassination and publicly condemned the SLA. "By resorting to abstract violence"—they affirmed—"the SLA not only separated itself from the rest of the revolutionary movement, but became the example to avoid, the stereotype of the mad terrorist."[37] Even within California penitentiaries, where the SLA was born and enjoyed some initial solidarity, isolation materialized soon.[38] The WUO, although publicly sustaining the group's campaigns, always criticized its senseless assassination.[39] Significantly, Kilgore confirms that Weatherman refused to provide any material help to the SLA, when the latter was in serious trouble.[40]

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the antiwar branch of the movement, dominated by nonviolent currents, kept its distance from leftist bombers. David Dellinger, an influential radical pacifist, recalls meeting some of Weatherman's leaders after the Days of Rage. He confronted them with the blind destruction he had observed with disgust in Chicago, but the Weathermen's despair—Dellinger admits—was still too deep to abandon their escalation after only "one confused battle."[41] Likewise, Walter Teague, co-founder of the Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, remembers attempting to discourage some Weathermen from pursuing their dangerous attacks, during meetings at the New York Methodist Church.[42] Even people who departed from nonviolence, such as the popular Catholic priest and peace activist Daniel Berrigan, criticized the escalation. In October 1970, Berrigan sent a letter to the Weathermen trying to dissuade them from using antipersonnel violence:

> If the people are not the main issue, there is simply no main issue and you and I are fooling ourselves.... The mark of inhuman treatment of humans is a mark that also hovers over us. It is the mark of a beast, whether its insignia is the militancy or the movement.[43]

The Resiliency of the Movement's Background

During the late 1960s, large sections of the student and antiwar movement began questioning the effectiveness of nonviolence and the morality of pacifism. Revolutionary expectations, the brutality of the racial conflicts, the harshness of law enforcement, and the frustration over the pursuit of the Vietnam War blended together and nurtured the anger. By rejecting their elders' values, young radicals discussed the necessity of resorting to violence not only as a self-defense tactic but also as a means of liberation. Following Fanon's teachings, many believed that violence could only be erased by an act of violence.[44] White leftists also rediscovered violent abolitionist John Brown and praised him as a national hero. Movies such as *The Battle of Algiers*, which celebrated the anti-colonial urban guerrilla, or *If . . .* that featured a schoolboys' insurrection culminating with a bloody firefight, stirred their fantasies.[45] Even hippy leader Abbie Hoffman affirmed that, "Young people should begin the task of training themselves to be armed fighters."[46] Importantly, armed groups themselves contributed to fostering the movement's violent radicalization

through constant and aggressive ideological propaganda via communiqués, leaflets, magazines, and assemblies.[47]

Nonetheless, this infatuation for revolutionary violence was ephemeral. This cohort surrounding armed groups shared a background of cultural references and previous experiences that operated as antibodies against their own radicalization. Their political socialization developed by combining the lessons of Charles Wright Mills, Albert Camus, and Herbert Marcuse with the moral examples of Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, while the Beats drove their attention toward the American "spiritual crisis." During the early 1960s, a large number of young leftists became community organizers, educators, boycotters, and passive resisters. Many of them joined the SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee) or the CORE (Congress for Racial Equality).[48] In the name of solidarity and nonviolence, leftists participated in the southern black struggle—starting with the Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964—and disseminated its repertoires among white students.[49] Antimilitarism and pacifism inspired their first mass mobilizations against war and nuclear weapons. Many were involved in SDS's campus activities because they were fascinated by the Port Huron Statement, which praised generosity, love, and brotherhood, while condemning violence as "abhorrent."[50]

The legacy of these experiences, to use Foner's words, reflected "the democratic ethos of American life"[51] and was consistent with an enduring tradition of "nonviolence."[52] It entailed a few core values that sharply contrasted with the violent craze— first, the "humanism" and the battle against the "reification" of people; second, the propensity for inclusion and moral suasion; third, the pragmatism and the tendency to organize campaigns around specific issues, together with the rejection of revolutionary abstractions and dogmatisms; finally, the idea of not replicating the opponents' inhumanity, coupled with the conception that the scope of political action is implicit in its methods.[53]

As soon as the violent escalation was materially perceived, this section of the radical milieu rapidly recovered its deep-rooted background, argued against violence, and put pressure on armed groups.

The Working Class

A deep connection between working class and leftist revolutionary groups never materialized, thus radical workers represented more a reference group than a supportive social environment. Indeed, during the summer of 1969, Weatherman developed the so-called "action projects" to enlist working-class youths into the revolution. The organization sent groups of militants to several low-income neighborhoods of industrial cities. But the working-class kids reacted coldly, sometimes engaged in fistfights against leftists, and eventually rejected the offer to join the group.[54] Likewise, blue-collar workers remained unreceptive to revolutionary messages, considered as romantic talk, and were hardly interested in "smashing the state." Moreover, most working-class people tolerated the Vietnam War or at least supported their sons at the front line. In 1970, the Hard Hats Riot in New York clearly indicated that leftist and working-class positions were almost irreconcilable. Construction workers proved to be violently hostile to young antiwar protesters, beating up hundreds of them in a huge melee.[55] There is some evidence of working class support for the GJB and the NWLF, with accounts of specific targets (power

stations, police, landlords' houses).[56] But this appreciation was sporadic, motivated by local grievances, and conditional on their non-injury policy.

By contrast, in the same period, working-class radicalism took the form of grassroots community organizing. In blue-collar and Appalachian migrant neighborhoods, such as Uptown Chicago, alternative white leftist groups developed, adopting a "long-term approach," refusing both ideological dogmatism and gunslinger rhetoric.[57] During the Days of Rage, groups such as the Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYMII),[58] the Black Panthers, and the Young Lords[59] organized separate meetings in order to not blend with the Weathermen. When several Weathermen were arrested within a RYMII rally, RYMII militants refused to offer any help.[60] More predictable, but still without any hesitation, was the Socialist and Communist parties' critique of violent radicalism, which was condemned as "ineffective and inopportune."[61]

The Black Liberation Movement

With a few exceptions, the black movement's attitude toward white leftists' escalation of violence was either critical or indifferent. Although Weatherman and other groups designated the Panthers as the vanguard of the revolution, the relationship between black and white radicalism was "strained."[62] Cathy Wilkerson, a member of the WUO, defined it as "troubled, inconsistent, and characterized by growing distrust."[63] In particular, the black milieu did not question the legitimacy of revolutionary violence nor the necessity to strike the "power structure," but treated with contempt the idealistic attitude of white revolutionaries, "petty-bourgeois students" who wanted to "carry the socialist revolution through alone without the support of the white working class."[64] The Panthers were also worried about the repression that, triggered by white leftists' attacks, could have fallen back on black militants.[65] Despite the fact that Panthers' co-founder Huey Newton and, later, the Panther 21 defendants, endorsed Weathermen's violence,[66] the black movement in general de-solidarized with the most contentious white groups. Therefore, as WUO's militant Susan Stern synthesized, "It was hard to follow a vanguard who despised you."[67]

In July 1969, when the Black Panthers called for a United Front Against Fascism—a campaign for the community control of police—white leftists did not join it. The latter were worried about the use of legal tactics and disappointed because the BP seemed to step back from armed struggle. Panthers' chief of staff, David Hilliard, declared on that occasion that, among white revolutionaries, the BP respected only the unarmed Young Patriots.[68]

Fred Hampton's critique of the Weathermen's tactics during the Days of Rage was a serious blow for white revolutionaries. Hampton, the deputy chairman of the BP's Illinois chapter, described the Weathermen that ravaged Chicago as "anarchistic, opportunistic, adventuristic, and Custeristic."[69] Later, when the SLA killed Marcus Foster, the Panthers labeled the murder as "a crime against the people" and severely condemned it.[70]

Ultimately, as Barber suggests, white militants glorified a black vanguard that "did not exist in the social reality of black people." White armed fringes, quite paradoxically, "sought to school the Panthers in the meaning, strategy, and tactics of black liberation and revolution."[71] In response, the Panthers did not consider white

leftist groups as authentic revolutionaries and harshly criticized their "racist" and "fascist" attempts to tutor black radicals.[72]

International and Domestic Allies

The North Vietnamese and the Cuban anti-U.S. forces disapproved of leftists' violent tactics and eventually withdrew their "certification,"[73] enhancing political and psychological isolation.

Leftist groups were in direct contact with the North Vietnamese and met their representatives in Cuba and Eastern Europe. However, internationalist ties never fully developed.[74] As Michael Spiegel (SDS National Secretary and later in the WUO) recalls, the North Vietnamese became progressively critical. They had asked for a mass movement and large demonstrations to support their efforts against the U.S. occupation. Instead, white violent fringes isolated themselves, thereby jeopardizing the unity of the antiwar front.[75] In the same vein, Eleanor Raskin, another Weatherman's militant and director of the U.S. delegation that met the North Vietnamese in 1969, remembers the lesson they drew from the encounter: mass involvement and unification of the movement, "instead of bickering over sectarian divisions."[76]

Similarly, student leftist leaders held several meetings with Cuban representatives at the UN Mission in New York and travelled to Havana. Committed to building a "revolutionary conscience," Weatherman organized the first Venceremos Brigade in November 1969 and sent a group of U.S. volunteers to Cuba to join the sugarcane harvest. After the second trip in February 1970, however, the Weathermen—by then underground—lost connections with the Cubans and therefore control of the initiative.[77] Rudd recalls that he realized at the time that Cubans thought the Weathermen were "crazy" and that was "pretty important" in the reconsideration of their tactics.[78]

The interaction between armed groups and their domestic allies was not successful either. The American Indian Movement, for instance, was particularly bothered by the SLA's attempt to involve Indians in the ransom distribution, after the kidnapping of Patty Hearst.[79] As AIM leader and co-founder Dennis Banks wrote, they told the press that the members of the SLA were "punks" and they did not want to be associated with that action. Banks even assisted the FBI and the Hearst family in their efforts to recover Patty. Eventually, he broadcasted a message to the SLA, making it clear that the AIM did not endorse the kidnapping "as a way to cure social ills," and asked them to free the prisoner.[80]

The Political Context

The political context was crucial in influencing the radical milieu's orientation and in reducing its size, precisely when it was necessary to infuse motivation about the feasibility of the revolution and to keep guerrilla spirit alive.

First, in the U.S. the decline of ideological militancy started soon after its inception, that is around 1970–1971. The rapid diffusion of feminist, environmentalist, and antinuclear issues contributed to shifting attention away from imperialism and revolution.[81] This process relocated activists' interests toward more private concerns and grass-roots practices, while feminist voices were explicitly taking a stance against violence. It is possible that this factor presented a reverse causality, so that the frustration regarding an out-of-reach revolution steered activists' efforts toward

other priorities. Nevertheless, violence rapidly appeared to be out of touch with reality. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, one of the founders of the Women's Liberation Movement and leader of the Red Armed Panthers, after a year underground published a statement repudiating leftist organizations' strategy of violence and sectarianism. Instead, she proposed a working-class based movement, which federated African-American, Latino, and women's organizations.[82] Similarly, Jane Alpert, after participating in her boyfriend's—Sam Melville—campaign of bombings in Manhattan, published a resonant manifesto condemning armed struggle as "inherently male."[83]

Second, the growing consensus that the war represented a "colossal mistake," the end of the draft, and the gradual withdrawal from Vietnam significantly fostered the demobilization process. Indeed, the antiwar protest was increasingly dominated by moderate sections of public opinion, and younger people, less concerned about their own involvement in the battlefield, progressively abandoned the movement. It became clear that the large opposition to the war had distorted the perception of the radical milieu's dimension; armed groups relied upon an area of approval largely inflated by this specific issue.[84]

The Townhouse Trauma

According to conventional explanations, the townhouse incident had such a sobering effect that it forced a reconsideration of white armed groups' tactics and means, guiding them toward safer attacks against property.

There is no doubt that the townhouse incident represented a watershed. The deaths of three comrades profoundly struck the Weathermen and a portion of the student movement; distress and fear were paralyzing. Shortly after, Weathermen's stories made the national headlines, and some of their names were included on the FBI's Most Wanted list. The "tragedy" epitomized a political failure and encouraged a critical debate over the direction of the just-begun strategy. The outcome of this process was the shift toward symbolic actions. The conversion was publicly announced with a communiqué, issued in December 1970. In the document, the Weathermen affirmed that the townhouse forever destroyed their belief "that armed struggle [was] the only real revolutionary struggle" and acknowledged the "military error," that is the tendency "to consider only bombings and picking up the gun as revolutionary, with the glorification of the heavier the better."[85] Yet, the linearity of this de-escalation process and its extent are both questionable.

First, individual de-escalation rhythms were not always synchronized with the townhouse trauma.[86] A majority, led by Bernardine Dohrn, the most charismatic leader, became convinced that murderous actions were counterproductive, but a minority faction was still persuaded that antipersonnel violence was necessary in order to intensify the struggle.[87] For instance, one of the leaders, John Jacobs, still believed in the necessity of assassinations even after the tragedy of Manhattan. Similarly, Mark Rudd shared Jacobs' view and admits that, in the day-after atmosphere, "no one dared question the basic strategy." "I remember thinking the *cliché*. If you fall off a horse, the best thing to do is to get back on." Within a week, he organized a day of therapeutic shooting practice for the surviving members of the collective.[88] It is worth noting that, after the townhouse incident and a few days before the public announcement of de-escalation, Weatherman issued another communiqué that threatened violent actions against people without pre-emptive alerts.[89]

Second, if the incident represented a way to get in touch with the reality of death and the risks of extremism for some, for other militants around the country it had an opposite effect, encouraging better technical training, more skillful assembling of devices, and safer planning of attacks.[90]

Third, how to make sense of the general restraint of violence that characterized—with a few exceptions—all U.S. leftist groups? Nothing suggests that other armed organizations established a few years after the incident were substantially influenced by the Weathermen's trauma. And, obviously, it is impossible to determine any impact over the groups operating before the 1970 incident. For instance, in New York City, the armed cell led by Sam Melville followed the same de-escalation pathway of Weatherman, several months before the townhouse explosion. Its first attack on July 1969, a bombing of the Marine Midland Bank, left 17 people injured. After this bloody onset and after a lot of criticism, all of Melville's attacks targeted only property and carefully avoided casualties.[91] Outside the Weathermen's cohort, testimonies rarely mention the townhouse incident. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz clearly states, "It did not affect us literally at all."[92]

In conclusion, the townhouse was an exogenous shock and a catalyzing agent, able to elicit a discussion and a strategic reconsideration. However, its importance, with regard to the whole leftist galaxy, was limited.

The Deterrence by Law Enforcement

I unpack the outcome of law enforcement along two dimensions: a) the measures directly targeting armed militants; b) the influence over the radical milieu. In so doing, I argue that direct counterterrorism actions against armed militants had contrasting, and eventually narrow, consequences over the de-escalation process. Vice versa, law enforcement frightened and demoralized the radical milieu. Therefore, by this latter indirect action, state agencies contributed to inhibiting violence.

Contrasting Effects on Armed Militants

Sources are ambivalent in relating the effects of law enforcement over armed militants. On one hand, the majority of protagonists claim that they did not restrain their violence because of the scare of repression.[93] Rather, they suggest that law enforcement fostered their escalation. Some recount that they were blinded by the high level of repression and, as a result, they thought that a "total war" could only be faced with more violence.[94] The murder of Clark and Hampton by the FBI and Chicago police,[95] together with the Kent State killings by the National Guard, are always recalled as clinchers in the processes of escalation. "In the growing atmosphere of surveillance and danger"—wrote Dunbar-Ortiz—"the necessity to develop a clandestine structure began to seem like the only way to continue our work."[96] Others hold that "once you take a revolutionary stand," the risks are fatally accepted. Repression, remembers Wilkerson, was considered as a permanent characteristic in the U.S.; "as soon as you push a bit, the state reacts."[97] Mead had been in jail before joining the GJB and therefore was not even scared, because he was "used to suffering from state repression."[98] Kilgore remembers that "[they] knew from the beginning that [they] would either die or spend the rest of [their] lives in prison."[99]

On the other hand, one might speculate that *ex-post* testimonies minimize the pervasiveness of law enforcement. As Wilkerson self-critically admits, they perhaps

obliterate the "scare of repression."[100] Certainly, they remove from memory that many FBI informants infiltrated armed groups, that some acted as *agents provocateurs*, and some others facilitated the capture of clandestine militants.[101] Between 1970 and 1980, the names of 11 white leftists appeared on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List, over a total of 68 new entries.[102] Testimonies also rarely mention the internal selection process that Weatherman was forced to conduct in 1970, in order to avoid infiltrations.[103] Overall, evidence shows that the WUO, albeit successfully underground, was infiltrated, the New Year's Gang, sought by police and the FBI, rapidly disintegrated, the Brandeis group gave up arms after early arrests and FBI pressure, Melville's group was disbanded by an FBI undercover agent, the Revolutionary Army was dismantled before acting, and the same held true for The Crazies, the Revolutionary Union and Venceremos, which were deeply infiltrated. The SLA was constantly hunted and lost its core membership because of a SWAT intervention.

Other examples demonstrate this ambivalence. It is common knowledge that the COINTELPRO—the FBI counterintelligence program against domestic dissent—targeted white leftist groups for at least three years (1968–1971). The methods employed included psychological warfare, disinformation, harassment, illegal wiretappings, incitement of internal conflicts, infiltration, and provocation. As a result, radical groups were damaged and worn out.[104] However, sociologist Cunningham, by analyzing FBI memos, stressed the inefficacy of the majority of COINTELPRO actions and concluded that leftists were not at the mercy of the Bureau.[105] For instance, the Weathermen even held bogus meetings on sabotage and explosives to attract FBI agents, or explicitly misinformed agents who wiretapped their phones.[106]

At the judicial level, trials succeeded in weakening militants, raising suspicions, and draining economic and psychological resources. Internal documents indicate that the Weathermen had to grapple with "judicial persecution."[107] In November 1969, 23 Weathermen were arrested in Boston on spurious attempted murder charges. In the same period, Chicago red squads intimidated and arrested members of the local collective.[108] The Nixon administration initiated a series of "conspiracy trials" against radical leaders. Federal Grand Juries, in April and July 1970, indicted respectively 12 and 13 Weathermen.[109] Nonetheless, the majority of the charges were dismissed because they were built on manufactured or illegally obtained proof. As a result, sentences were light and failed to act as deterrents.

Finally, white armed factions received preferential treatment compared to black revolutionary groups. The latter were considered number one enemies of national security, and their more explicitly violent methods made them easier to neutralize. The harshness of policing against the Black Panthers, that even included selective assassinations, has been widely demonstrated. With the exception of the Los Angeles siege against the Symbionese Liberation Army—where 6 members of the group were killed in a TV broadcasted shootout—white leftists were never targeted in this way, and they were aware of this license. Spiegel, a lawyer's son who graduated from Harvard, recalls:

> We knew that they could do that against black people.... If they had done it to people like me, the reaction of America as a whole would have been different. As crazy as we were, we were still the children of middle-class people.[110]

In conclusion, evidence is too elusive to establish whether the effect of direct law enforcement measures was predominantly sobering or radicalizing. Conversely, law enforcement was able to constrain violence by virtue of an indirect influence.

Indirect Sobering Effects

Contrary to armed militants who made the choice of clandestine struggle, above-ground organizers and sympathizers undeniably feared police relentlessness and FBI surveillance. Indeed, between 1968 and the early 1970s, the policing of protest against the movement was firm and often harsh.

To mention only a few examples, during the 1968 Columbia occupation, police arrested around 700 people, and 148 were injured in the collateral clashes.[111] That same year in Chicago, police beat protesters so violently, injuring more than 1,000, that the Walker Report branded the intervention a "police riot," stressing the disproportionate reaction and the unjustified provocations.[112] According to estimates, in the course of the first fifteen days of May 1970, more than 1,800 people were arrested for antiwar protests.[113]

The strength of police forces during public demonstrations was considerable and employed with an explicit deterrent function. For instance, in May 1969, during the confrontations around the People's Park in Berkeley, California, Governor Reagan requested the intervention of 3,000 national guardsmen. Firing teargas canisters from helicopters, they killed a bystander and blinded a protester.[114] Between 1969 and 1972, law enforcement agencies shot and killed 13 students on campus or near universities.[115]

At the intelligence level, the movement was targeted not only by the COINTEL-PRO, but also by several CIA operations (Mail Opening, Project RESISTANCE, and Operation CHAOS), gathering information and mapping leftists' foreign connections. Operation CHAOS alone, between 1967 and 1974, monitored 7,200 citizens and 100 political groups.[116]

As a result, the extensive law enforcement action fuelled the so-called "pig-paranoia," brought innocent people to courts, and exhausted energies. Evidence shows that this "chilling effect" was particularly widespread within the university milieu, where students were concerned about the consequences of political engagement on their professional careers.[117] The Kent State killings filled a huge number of students with indignation, but the lesson was unmistakable: "the government would go to any lengths, including killing, to repress the forces working for significant change in America, and from now on death had to be considered part of the stakes of student protest."[118] The repression, confirms Michael Novick, a radical who was briefly affiliated with Weatherman, "resulted in the political isolation and demoralization of a revolutionary trend among white youth." The generational disconnect grew very rapidly, as the 1970s progressed, and "those who maintained their commitment, advocating or defending revolutionary violence, became increasingly isolated."[119] The WUO itself, in *Prairie Fire*, the group's most mature political manifesto, clearly acknowledged that the repression against the movement by intimidation, espionage, grand juries, long trials, and selected murders, "temporarily succeed[ed] in creating a climate of distrust and suspicion on the left."[120]

The "White Middle-Class Privilege"

Literature often discusses the connections between poverty, education, and terrorism. Even if several studies clearly showed that any link is indirect, problematic, and probably weak,[121] there is still no consensus and the specific question of the correlation between antipersonnel violence and socio-economic status is often

mentioned in U.S. militants' testimonies. Therefore, a related hypothesis can be formulated: "white middle-class privilege," to use leftists' formula, prevented militants from killing or injuring people because such behavior was alien to their education, social background, and culture.

We lack fully reliable data on the socio-economic profile of U.S. white leftists. However, there is no question as to the prevalence of college-educated middle-class or upper middle-class youths among these groups. This does not signify a uniform social profile, but it indicates a tendency that literature quantifies as follows: more than 67% of leftist armed militants completed college and more than 85% of them had a father with a white-collar or professional occupation.[122]

Indeed, some testimonies highlight how their upbringing and social environment made violence extraneous and somehow fearful. "In families like mine"—explains Laura Whitehorn—"having a fight meant only having a dispute. It was a privilege. I realized that in prison, when I have seen that a fight is so brutal."[123] Protagonists often explain how much they were "emotionally unprepared for real violence." Osha Neumann—Marcuse's stepson, coming from an affluent milieu—recalls various street-fighting situations in which he felt "paralyzed by fear."[124] "We were chickenshit," condenses Mark Rudd.[125]

As a matter of fact, armed groups constantly complained about the "pacifying effect" of the "white-skin privileges." In their view, "middle-class people are brought up with the notion that violence is only physical, and that fighting or shooting are bad." So, it was necessary to convince them that "there is a violence worse than armed violence; and it can be seen in the ghettoes, in the rural south, in the villages of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[126] As Wilkerson specifies, both a "dehumanizing process" and a "theoretical justification" were necessary for taking up arms, something that "if you are poor, under the gun yourself, you don't need."[127]

Moreover, once a few of them decided to make the leap and engage in violence, they had to exercise in order to toughen themselves. To reach solidarity with Third World revolutionaries, leftists had to purge their lives of the comforts that inhibited political militancy, and they tried to achieve it through physical training, firearms practice, and new outfits.[128] The diffusion and the fascination for guns among white militants was, to some extent, part of a gut check. "It was to see how far we could go for ourselves," remembers Ron Fliegelman, who engaged in Weatherman.[129] Indeed, when the de-escalation happened, a "great relief" was perceived, as if they were "taking off a costume, a suit of arms."[130]

Although a range of testimonies suggests that the "white middle-class" factor was relevant in restraining violence, I argue that socio-economic status was not a key determinant for at least three reasons. First, the "pacifying effect" of white middle-class origins was essentially an ideological by-product. Leftists' urge to rid themselves of comforts and become acquainted with violence was not directly correlated to their social profile. Rather, it was a political way to reframe the common "fear of not being able to meet the terrible obligations of combat" and, ultimately, the innate human resistance toward killing.[131]

Second, evidence shows that people coming from affluent backgrounds were well represented among the most reckless groups. The Black Liberation Army, a multiracial Black Panthers' spin-off responsible for several casualties, is a good example.[132] The same holds true for the Symbionese Liberation Army, which was a largely middle-class cluster.[133]

Third, within the leftist galaxy there were violent groups, such as the George Jackson Brigade and the United Freedom Front, whose social composition was almost entirely working-class.[134] Yet, these armed formations respected the same constrained behavior, trying to avoid victims.

Conclusion

This paper offers empirical evidence that the containment of violence was the result of an adaptive process, associated with one key factor, the criticism and ensuing de-solidarization by the radical milieu vis-à-vis antipersonnel violence. The research demonstrates that this segment of the population systematically censored armed groups as soon as they attempted to escalate, targeting people or not caring about the human costs of their attacks. Hence, in order to safeguard the solidarity pact, violent organizations were forced to adjust and moderate their repertoires. Armed groups did not reject violence *per se*, but refused tactics and means that appeared counterproductive and dangerous. The process of de-escalation was gradual and developed through trial and error. However, both the critique of antipersonnel violence and the moderation of repertoires were rapid and widespread enough to avoid a potentially heavy death toll. Hence, the interaction between leftist milieu and armed groups prevented the spiraling pattern—described by della Porta in terms of "action militarization," "ideological encapsulation," and "militant enclosure"—that commonly leads underground cells to violent escalation.[135] The radical milieu limited the cognitive closure toward external reality, encouraged the acknowledgement of mistakes, and helped to construct alternative strategies employing different technologies of protest. Ultimately, the milieu appeared much more sensitive than armed groups to cultural and political shifting dynamics and acted as a mediator of these exogenous influences.

Contrary to conventional explanations, the article also shows that the correlation between the townhouse incident and the de-escalation of U.S. leftist groups was spurious and indirect. The explosion and the subsequent trauma created a space of self-reflection and reassessment. But their relevance outside the Weathermen's cohort was limited.

Furthermore, the research demonstrates that direct law enforcement measures against armed militants had contrasting and eventually narrow consequences over the de-escalation process. However, the firm (and sometimes repressive) policing of protest frightened and demoralized the radical milieu, indirectly contributing to the restraint of violent groups. Importantly, the critical dialogue between armed fringes and their sympathetic communities chronologically overlapped with the law enforcement campaigns. As a consequence, this coincidence further enhanced the radical milieu's normative power.

In addition, this paper illustrates that the socio-economic background of militants, although quite homogeneous among white leftists, remains an unreliable predictor of moderation. Similarly, psychological and moral barriers against extreme forms of violence—never mentioned in protagonists' accounts—appear to be very secondary. Therefore, the restraint of violence did not result from the ethical or ideological rejection of some values; it was a behavioral distancing from a specific *modus operandi* that showed rising dangers and declining utility. This finding also supports the argument—frequently discussed in the literature[136]—that de-escalation, at least initially, is often unrelated to de-radicalization.

In sum, the restraint of violence stemmed from a pragmatic (re)evaluation, aimed at complying with external pressures. Hence, environmental conditions appear to be particularly relevant, corroborating the argument that de-escalation is a context-bound phenomenon.[137]

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987), 400–402.

2. Author's elaboration of Hewitt's dataset. The death toll does not include the unsolved cases and the militants dead during attacks. Hewitt's survey, although a conservative estimate, can be considered the most careful at our disposal. In contrast, statistics supplied by federal and local law enforcement agencies do not cover the entire period and they are too aggregated, i.e., the ideological matrix is often unclear. The same can be said for FBI data. START dataset is useful for crosschecking, but it presents some duplicates and it is sometimes inaccurate. See Christopher Hewitt, *Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005); U.S. Senate, *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government, 1970), part 24, 5341–5342; FBI Annual Reports (1970–1980); http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/.

3. Yonah Alexander and Dennis A. Pluchinsky, *Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), 28–32.

4. Stefan Malthaner and Peter Waldmann, "The Radical Milieu: Conceptualizing the Supportive Social Environment of Terrorist Groups," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37, no. 12 (2014): 979–998.

5. Stefan Malthaner, *Mobilizing the Faithful: Militant Islamist Groups and their Constituencies* (New York: Campus Verlag, 2011), 39–40.

6. Within the political documents of the time, it was the most commonly employed expression to indicate violence against people.

7. Kit Bakke (November 25, 2012), Rita "Bo" Brown (January 12, 2013), Lyndon Comstock (July 30, 2013), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (November 26, 2012), Ronald Fliegelman (January 15, 2013), James Kilgore (February 22, 2013), Michael Klonsky (December 11, 2012), Jonathan Lerner (December 12, 2012 and January 15, 2013), Roger Lippman (November 18, 2012), Ed Mead (December 5, 2012), Osha Neumann (November 28, 2012), Michael Novick (November 19, 2012), Mark Rudd (January 15, 2013), Michael Spiegel (January 19, 2013), Carola Von Hoffmannstahl-Solomonoff (January 11, 2013), Laura Whitehorn (January 8, 2013), Cathlyn Platt Wilkerson (December 3, 2012).

8. John Horgan, *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

9. Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan, eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Fernando Reinares, "Exit From Terrorism: A Qualitative Empirical Study on Disengagement and Deradicalization Among Members of ETA," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23, no. 5 (2011): 780–803.

10. Jeffrey I. Ross and Ted R. Gurr, "Why Terrorism Subsides: A Comparative Study of Canada and the United States," *Comparative Politics* 21, no. 4 (1989): 405–426; Beatrice de

Graaf and Leena Malkki, ''Killing it Softly? Explaining the Early Demise of Left-Wing Terrorism in the Netherlands,'' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22, no. 4 (2010): 623–640.

11. Martha Crenshaw, ''Why Violence Is Rejected or Renounced: A Case Study of Oppositional Terrorism,'' in Thomas A. Gregor, ed., *A Natural History of Peace* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996), 249–272; Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, ''Dilettantes, Ideologues, and the Weak: Terrorists Who Don't Kill,'' *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25, no. 3 (2008): 244–263.

12. Ehud Sprinzak, ''The Psychopolitical Formation of Extreme Left Terrorism in a Democracy: The Case of the Weathermen,'' in Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 1990), 65–85.

13. See for instance Bill Ayers, *Fugitive Days* (Boston: Beacon, 2001), 227–230; William L. O'Neill, *The New Left: A History* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2001), 43.

14. Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

15. Peter J. Katzenstein, *Left-Wing Violence and State Response: United States, Germany, Italy and Japan, 1960s–1990s* (Ithaca, NY: Institute for European Studies, 1998), 11.

16. Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, ''Revolutionary Dreams and Terrorist Violence in the Developed World: Explaining Country Variation,'' *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 5 (2009): 687–706.

17. Jan O. Engene, *Terrorism in Western Europe: Explaining the Trends Since 1950* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2004).

18. ''Critique From the Overground,'' *Dragon*, August, 1975; ''NWLF Responds,'' *Dragon*, August, 1975.

19. Tom Bates, *Rads: The 1970 Bombing of the Army Math Research Center at the University of Wisconsin and Its Aftermath* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 55.

20. Bakke, Whitehorn, and Wilkerson interviews (see note 7 above).

21. Lerner interview (see note 7 above).

22. Rudd interview (see note 7 above).

23. Bernardine Dohrn, ''When Hope and History Rhyme,'' in Bernardine Dohrn, Bill Ayers, and Jeff Jones, eds., *Sing a Battle Song: The Revolutionary Poetry, Statements and Communiqués of the Weather Underground 1970–1974* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2006), 1–20.

24. Kilgore, Neumann, Mead, Whitehorn, and Klonsky interviews (see note 7 above).

25. Greg Calvert, ''Libertarian View Point,'' *Guardian*, October 11, 1969; ''Hurricane or hot air?'' *Guardian*, October 18, 1969.

26. ''Individual terrorism?'' *Guardian* (March 21, 1970).

27. Tom Hayden, ''The Trial,'' *Ramparts* (July 1970).

28. ''By God, What We Need Is a Little Responsible Terrorism,'' *Berkeley Tribe* (March 27–April 3, 1970).

29. ''What is Revolutionary Violence?'' *Berkeley Tribe*, March 27–April 3, 1970.

30. ''Notes to the Underground,'' *Berkeley Tribe*, June 12–19, 1970.

31. On August 1970, policeman Ronald Tsukamoto was killed, after he stopped a motorcycle rider and engaged in a discussion about Vietnam.

32. ''Life against death,'' *Berkeley Tribe*, September 23–October 2, 1970.

33. ''Why not Tsukamoto?'' *Berkeley Tribe*, August 28–September 4, 1970.

34. ''Letters,'' *Orca*, winter 1977–78.

35. Ed Mead, *The Theory and Practice of Armed Struggle in the Northwest* (Unpublished manuscript, 1980).

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37. ''Ex-Symbionese send letter to the people,'' *Berkeley Barb*, February 22–28, 1974.

38. Eric Cummins, *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

39. ''Bernardine Sends Weather Report on SLA Action,'' *Berkeley Barb*, March 1–7, 1974.

40. Kilgore interview (see note 7 above).

41. David T. Dellinger, *More Power Than We Know: The People's Movement Toward Democracy* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1975), 150–151.

42. Interview with the author (January 30, 2013).

43. Daniel Berrigan, "Letter to the Weathermen," in Harrison E. Salisbury, ed., *The Eloquence of Protest: Voices of the 70 s* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 13–18.

44. Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

45. Von Hoffmannstahl-Solomonoff interview (see note 7 above).

46. Michael Carliner, "Abbie Says Get a Gun!" *Madison Kaleidoskope* (June 17, 1970).

47. Cf. for example "Violence & Pigs," *SDS new left notes – the fire next time* (August 1969).

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50. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds., *"Takin' it to the streets": A Sixties Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 50–61.

51. See Eric Foner's foreword in Timothy P. McCarthy and John McMillian, eds., *The Radical Reader: A Documentary History of the American Radical Tradition* (New York: New Press, 2003), xi–xii.

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53. Massimo Teodori, ed., *The New Left: A Documentary History* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969).

54. U.S. House of Representatives, *Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: "Students for a Democratic Society"* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government, 1970), 120.

55. Homer Bigart, "War Foes Here Attacked by Construction Workers," *The New York Times*, May 9, 1970, 1.

56. Brown and Mead interviews (see note 7 above).

57. Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists, Urban Race Rebels, and Black Power: Community Organizing in Radical Times* (New York: Melville House, 2011).

58. RYMII, similarly to Weatherman, was an SDS splinter group. However, it was working-class oriented and committed to community organizing.

59. The Young Lords was a Puerto Rican nationalist group.

60. Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), 609–610.

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62. Fliegelman interview (see note 7 above).

63. Cathy Wilkerson, *Flying Close to the Sun: My Life and Times as a Weatherman* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007), 286.

64. "Sds: A Need for Revolutionary Line," *The Black Panther*, October 18, 1969.

65. "Building Fascism in America," *The Black Panther*, March 28, 1970.

66. Eldridge Cleaver, "On The Weathermen," *Berkeley Tribe*, November 7–13, 1969; "Open Letter: Panther 21 to Weatherman," *Berkeley Tribe*, February 12–19, 1971.

67. Susan Stern, *With the Weathermen: The Personal Journal of a Revolutionary Woman* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 67.

68. U.S. House of Representatives (see note 54 above), 113.

69. Harold Jacobs, ed., *Weatherman* (New York: Ramparts, 1970), 207.

70. "Who Killed Marcus Foster?" *The Black Panther*, November 17, 1973.

71. David Barber, "Leading the Vanguard: White New Leftists School the Panthers on Black Revolution," in Jama Lazerow and Yohuru Williams, eds., *In Search of the Black Panther Party: New Perspectives on a Revolutionary Movement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 223–250.

72. "Our Enemy's friends are also our enemies," *The Black Panther*, August 9, 1969.

73. Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

74. Mary Hershberger, *Traveling to Vietnam: American Peace Activists and the War* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 67.

75. Spiegel interview (see note 7 above).

76. Thai Jones, *A Radical Line: From the Labor Movement to the Weather Underground* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 172.

77. FBI, *Foreign Influence – Weather Underground Organization*, 1976, part 1.

78. Rudd interview (see note 7 above).

79. The SLA kidnapped Patricia Hearst on February 4, 1974, and initially asked for a 50 million dollar ransom. After a negotiation, the SLA obtained from Patty's family a food distribution for people in need. Cf. U.S. Senate, *Revolutionary Activities Within the United States: The American Indian Movement* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government, 1976).

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82. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "The Movement and the Working Class," *NO MORE FUN AND GAMES* (1972).

83. Jane Alpert, "Mother-Right: A New Feminist Theory," *Ms.*, August, 1973.

84. Whitehorn and Novick interviews (see note 7 above).

85. "New Morning Changing Weather," *Berkeley Tribe*, December 17–24, 1970.

86. It is confirmed by Comstock and Rudd interviews (see note 7 above).

87. Jeff Jones, "From Weather to Climate," in Dohrn et al. (see note 23 above), 43–50.

88. Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life with SDS and the Weathermen* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 196 and 206.

89. "8," *Berkeley Tribe*, December 4–11, 1970.

90. "Tragic Heroes," *Berkeley Tribe*, March 13–20, 1970; "Playing with Dynamite, safety first," *Madison Kaleidoskope*, May 5, 1970.

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