

TERRORISM IN THE COLD WAR

State Support in Eastern Europe
and the Soviet Sphere of Influence

Reg.-Nr.

M-Abt. I

XVIII 2754/74

I

Beginn

3. Okt. 1974

Beendet

Archiv-Nr.

Band-Nr.

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Edited by

Adrian Hänni, Thomas Riegler and Przemyslaw Gasztold

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
LONDON • NEW YORK • OXFORD • NEW DELHI • SYDNEY

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK
1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA
29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland

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First published in Great Britain 2021
This edition published in 2022

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN: HB: 978-0-7556-0023-6
PB: 978-0-7556-3656-3
ePDF: 978-0-7556-0025-0
eBook: 978-0-7556-0024-3

Typeset by Deanta Global Publishing Services, Chennai, India

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

STATE SUPPORT FOR TERRORIST ACTORS IN THE COLD WAR – MYTHS AND REALITY (PART 1)

Adrian Hänni

Accounts of the relationships between states and terrorist organizations¹ in the Cold War era have long been shaped by speculation, a lack of primary sources and even conspiracy theories. The scholarship on the issue goes back to the Cold War era itself and, in fact, has been shaped by the Cold War beyond the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the East–West conflict.

In the last few years, however, things have evolved rapidly. Several original research projects for a wide range of states, areas and time periods, which are based on archival documents, have shed new light on the relations between government actors and terrorists. The new body of research demonstrates that these relationships were not only much more ambiguous, complex and multilayered than much of the older literature had suggested but also, in fact, crucial for the understanding of global political history during the Cold War era.

By offering the reader new insights into state involvement with terrorist organizations, this book aims to present the current state of research, provide a preliminary assessment and blaze a path for further studies. The contributions focus on the European states on both sides of the Iron Curtain – with some excursions into the Middle East, the Americas, East Asia and South Asia – during the 1970s and 1980s. This period seems to be ideal to study the relations between state and terrorist actors, considering that in those two decades almost every major terrorist organization had some ties to at least one supportive government.²

State involvement seems to be a relevant factor for assessing today's terrorist threats as well. Chris Quillen concludes that, compared to groups without relations to state actors, 'state-sponsored terrorists would appear both more able and more willing to kill in large numbers.'³ Moreover, as Bruce Hoffman recognized in 2006 in his classic book *Inside Terrorism*, 'Today, state sponsorship of terrorism continues unabated.'⁴ As Daniel Byman argued convincingly, state actors often attempt to use jihadist militants engaged in terrorist violence 'to bolster allied regimes, weaken rivals, and placate opinion at home. Many more states simply tolerate their activity to avoid alienating powerful domestic constituencies or because they pay no

political or diplomatic price for their support.⁵ Without this active or passive state support, Byman claims, groups like the Islamic State would have been far weaker.

Interviews with several dozen defectors from the Islamic State, conducted by a team of researchers led by Anne Speckhard, seem to confirm this judgement as they detail mutual support and deals between the Islamic State and Syrian state actors.⁶ Moreover, Abu Mansour al-Maghrebi, who apparently acted as the group's informal ambassador to Turkey, describes a 'diplomacy where both sides benefit' with the NATO country. According to al-Maghrebi, negotiations between 'ISIS diplomats' and Turkish intelligence led to political deals, in which the Islamic State agreed to refrain from attacks within Turkey, and to conduct proxy attacks against Kurdish forces, in return for water supplies and medical support, including the treatment of wounded fighters in Turkish hospitals.⁷ While this evidence of a secret deal between Turkey's National Intelligence Organization and the Islamic State still needs to be corroborated by additional source material, the apparent deal strikingly resembles some of the agreements that Eastern and Western states made with terrorist organizations during the Cold War.

The Yemeni government under President Ali Saleh, in turn, has apparently struck a deal with violent jihadists in its country, allowing them to travel to Iraq after 2003 to join the insurgency in return for their renunciation of attacks at home. Regional expert Gregory Johnsen described this understanding as a 'tacit non-aggression pact'.⁸ There is convincing evidence that the Yemeni government later allowed Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to renew itself in the late 2000s, in order to exploit the group as a 'scarecrow' to obtain international support, especially from the United States, and to use it against the regime's domestic opponents.⁹ Even the war in Afghanistan has been shaped and sustained by the support provided to the Taliban and the Haqqani network by state actors, especially Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI).¹⁰

These examples show that understanding cooperative state-terrorism relations remains a highly relevant subject for scholars and policymakers. A historical approach, as it is pursued in this book, allows for an examination based on archival documents and a rigid analysis of the primary source material. Such standards are necessary to investigate a topic that has too often been shrouded in rumours, disinformation and even conspiracy theories, as the following introduction will demonstrate.

Cold War myths

Between the late 1970s and the second half of the 1980s, numerous publications appeared on the subject of state involvement in the violent acts of terrorist groups. This first body of research focused mainly on 'state sponsorship' of terrorism as a type of covert warfare and interpreted terrorist actors as 'proxies', 'surrogates' or 'subcontractors' of state actors. At the same time, governments on both sides of the Iron Curtain frequently accused each other of sponsoring, if not directing, the various international terrorist organizations.

In early 1981, the incoming Reagan administration used 'terrorism' essentially as a synonym for communism and started employing the idea of Soviet-directed international terrorism as an ideological construct to build a new domestic consensus to relaunch the Cold War and return to a more interventionist foreign policy challenging the Soviet Union.¹¹ In a canonical article in the January issue of *Commentary*, Jeane Kirkpatrick, the new ambassador to the United Nations, proposed the idea of Soviet-directed terrorism in Latin America as an opportunity to reinterpret the East–West conflict in ideological terms, reconstruct the Soviet Union as the present danger, and bring back the lost fear of communism. That way, Kirkpatrick argued, a political basis for a military build-up, foreign interventions – and, more specifically, military and economic aid for dictatorships in Latin America – could be created on the domestic front.¹² At the same time, Harvard professor Richard Pipes, who joined the NSC staff, outlined 'international terrorism' as a discursive power strategy for the Reagan administration. Pipes recommended that the new government exposed as widely as possible the Soviet Union's support for terrorism 'because terrorism is a handy and relatively cheap weapon in their arsenal to destroy Western societies.'¹³

When the new NSC principals came together with key figures of the intelligence community for a first meeting in the White House on 24 January 1981 to discuss the threat posed by terrorism, Secretary of State Alexander Haig claimed that the roots of all 'state-sponsored terrorism' were without a doubt in the Soviet Union.¹⁴ Four days later Haig went public: at his first press conference as Secretary of State, he announced that 'terrorism' would be the top priority of the administration's foreign policy and explained the paradigm shift by claiming that the Soviets were supporting international terrorism.¹⁵ Other principals of the Reagan administration, such as National Security Advisor Richard Allen and the president himself, soon asserted publicly that 'international terrorism' was directed by the Soviet Union as a Cold War weapon to undermine Western democracies.¹⁶ The same image was evoked repeatedly in much-noticed Senate hearings and through the Reagan administration's public diplomacy efforts.¹⁷

The administration's rhetoric was mirrored in terrorism research. In early 1981, the American journalist Claire Sterling published *The Terror Network*. According to the bestseller, which received vast attention from major US media, the Soviet-controlled network consisted of about 140 terrorist groups from fifty different countries. The global conspiracy included the Red Army Faction (RAF), the Red Brigades, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), 'Carlos the Jackal' and the Libyan strongman Muammar al-Gaddafi. The KGB trained, financed, and equipped the terrorists and employed the groups as 'elite battalions in a worldwide Army of Communist Combat' to destabilize and, if possible, dismantle the West's democratic societies.¹⁸

In the following years, numerous books and studies argued along the lines of Sterling that 'international terrorism' was controlled by the Soviet Union.¹⁹ *The Terror Network* was one of the most cited works in terrorism research during the 1980s,²⁰ and the reverberations of the conspiracy theory have hardly fallen silent in the years after the Cold War came to a close. As late as 2007, the German

scholar Michael Ploetz claimed that ‘the analysis of Soviet grand strategy proves that the support for terrorism and right-wing extremism was an inherent part’ of the offensive ‘with which Brezhnev’s politburo wanted to win the system rivalry’ and to destroy bourgeois society. According to this Soviet plan, Ploetz claimed, left-wing terrorist organizations such as the RAF, the Red Brigades, and Action Directe were supposed to act as a vanguard.²¹

On the other hand, a mirror-symmetric conspiratorial narrative about ‘international terrorism’ was put forward by pro-Soviet intelligence services, a global network of communist propaganda fronts and sympathizers, as well as left-wing activists and intellectuals in the West. According to this myth, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other Western intelligence services were the masterminds orchestrating international terrorism, especially right-wing political violence.²² In this vein, left-wing milieus regularly saw right-wing terrorist attacks as part of a conspiracy between right-wing militants, the security services of their countries and often the CIA. Especially in Italy, the left claimed that right-wing terrorism was part of a plot tolerated or even actively supported by Italian state authorities to block the socialists and communists from gaining power and to establish an authoritarian regime. The CIA was believed to be the real ‘puppet master’ behind this alleged conspiracy against Italy.²³ The post-Cold War legacy of such narratives are some of the more conspiratorial accounts of ‘Gladio’, which insinuated that the *stay-behind* structures established in most non-socialist states in Europe after the Second World War had formed a terrorist network coordinated by NATO and the CIA.²⁴ This book provides a factual analysis of the Gladio case by Thomas Riegler.

An exemplary, and highly symbolic, example of the parallel but diametrically opposed propagandistic efforts is the literature on the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II. On 13 May 1981, the Turkish assassin and former Grey Wolves militant Mehmet Ali Agca shot and severely wounded the pontiff on the Vatican’s St Peter’s Square. In the following years, intelligence services, propagandists and scholars on both sides of the Iron Curtain blamed their respective Cold War enemy for the terrorist attack. The Western narrative of the Bulgarian Connection, claiming that the Bulgarian intelligence service and the KGB had directed Agca to kill the pope who had been seen as a threat to communist rule in Poland,²⁵ was soon challenged by an Eastern narrative, fuelled by disinformation of East German and Bulgarian intelligence services, that alleged that the CIA had orchestrated the assassination attempt in order to implicate Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.²⁶ There is, so far, no convincing evidence for state support for the papal assassination plot. To the contrary, the available archival source material very strongly suggests that neither the East Bloc intelligence services nor the CIA directed the attack.²⁷

Another remarkable characteristic of the narratives about KGB or CIA control of international terrorism is that they were fuelled to a large degree by disinformation and forgeries of Eastern and Western intelligence services, manufactured during the second half of the 1970s and thereafter. The most significant Soviet forgery of this campaign is probably the so-called ‘Field Manual

30-31B' that attributes left-wing terrorism around the world to US intelligence operations. The purported US military manual, which was widely published in Europe from 1976 on, was particularly used to justify claims of US involvement in far-left terrorism in Europe, and especially in Italy, as part of the 'strategy of tension'.²⁸ On the other hand, intelligence services of NATO countries such as the Italian Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare (SISMI), the French Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage (SDECE) and the CIA repeatedly planted disinformation about the Warsaw Pact countries' support for individual terrorist groups, or even Soviet control of 'international terrorism' as such, in European media outlets and in publications of select research institutes.²⁹ Some of these articles and reports were then recycled and put together by Sterling in *The Terror Network*.³⁰

Beyond the myths

As the available archival documents – many of which became publicly accessible only during the last couple of years – clearly demonstrate, neither the intelligence services of the Eastern bloc nor those of the NATO countries controlled a large number of international terrorist organizations or even a global terror network. Nor did they use terrorist groups as proxies as part of an offensive plan for victory in the East–West conflict and for global domination. The reality is much more complex. A new body of research, represented by the articles in this book, shows that the relations between state and terrorist actors were much more ambiguous and multilayered than much of the older literature suggested based on rumours, myths or even conspiracy narratives.

The Soviet Union

During the Cold War 'international terrorism' was not a monolithic network or even a communist conspiracy masterminded by the Soviet Union to destabilize Western democracies. The Soviet Union indeed supported a number of terrorist organizations. For the most part, however, Soviet intelligence services did not directly support groups that mainly or exclusively operated with terrorist tactics. The US intelligence community was aware as early as summer 1986 that the Soviets 'appear to avoid all direct contact with transnational terrorist groups such as the Carlos Apparatus and the Abu Nidal Group' and that 'Moscow evidently disapproves of the nihilistic new-left terrorists of Western Europe typified by the Red Army Faction (RAF) of West Germany, Action Directe of France, and the Communist Combatant Cells of Belgium and has no apparent contacts with them'.³¹

The most prominent example of Soviet support for a group that engaged in international terrorist violence was probably the KGB's involvement with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and especially with its External Operations (PFLP-EO, later PFLP-Special Operation Group [SOG]). The leader of this Palestinian splinter group, which was responsible for some of

the most spectacular international terrorist attacks in the late 1960s and 1970s, was Wadi Haddad, a co-founder of the PFLP. Apparently, the KGB started collaborating with Haddad as early as 1968, and the Soviet intelligence service eventually recruited him formally as agent *Natsionalist* in May 1970. Thereafter, the KGB provided Haddad's group with significant amounts of weapons, money and training for several years.³²

In return for this support, the KGB tasked the PFLP-EO in 1970 to abduct a high-ranking CIA operative in Beirut in order to extract intelligence – as Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez describe in great detail in this book based on newly accessible documents. But Haddad's organization eventually refused to commit such 'non-terrorist' abductions for the KGB, demonstrating its freedom of action. According to the Israeli journalist Ronen Bergman, however, the PFLP-EO eliminated Soviet defectors for the KGB, which was eager to avoid being publicly associated with such 'wet jobs' in the West.³³ Overall, the Soviet support for the PFLP was hardly part of an offensive terrorist strategy against the West. Already in 1971, Fedor Mortin, the head of the KGB's First Chief Directorate, responsible for the collaboration with Haddad, made it plain that 'it seems more expedient to more actively exploit "Natsionalist" and his militants for bold operations aimed *only* directly at Israel'.³⁴

After Haddad died in early 1978, the PFLP-SOG split and the KGB subsequently proved unable to recruit a suitable replacement within the more radical Palestinian factions.³⁵ In the 1980s, the Soviet Union continued to give some support, especially weapons and training, to various armed Palestinian groups, some of which were engaged in terrorist violence. Tellingly, however, the militants who received most military and other forms of training during that decade were members of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the most doctrinaire Marxist of the Palestinian groups – and among the least active in international terrorism.³⁶

The Israeli professor Galia Golan wrote in her history of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the PLO in 1980: 'Palestinian terrorism was generally – though not always – perceived by the Soviets as counterproductive'.³⁷ Certainly, the Soviets have time and again tried to use their contacts and leverage their perceived or real influence to restrain extremist factions within the Palestinian movement, to dissuade them from launching terrorist attacks outside the Middle East and to urge them to work towards a political solution of the conflict.³⁸ An example is the significant pressure the Soviet leadership at times put on the PLO to accept United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which among other things would have recognized Israel's right to exist in peace.³⁹ A US intelligence document from 1986 unambiguously states that the Soviets had urged Palestinian groups under Moscow's influence to stop when they conducted transnational terrorist campaigns. According to the recently declassified National Intelligence Estimate, the Soviet Union's disapproval of Palestinian hijackings and other terrorist tactics outside of Israel and the occupied territories had the effect that the Soviets even suspended their support of the PFLP at one point during the 1970s because of the group's involvement in international terrorism. The CIA

concluded that since then ‘the concern that the Soviets would cut off aid again may have been a factor in dissuading the PFLP from resuming its international terrorist activities.’⁴⁰

Furthermore, the support for Palestinian terrorist groups did not lead to Soviet control. The relationship between the KGB and Wadi Haddad illustrates this fact, considering that the PFLP-EO repeatedly refused to execute operations demanded by Soviet intelligence as payback for its support.⁴¹ Jeffrey Bale accordingly concludes that ‘it would be absurd to characterize the PLO as a whole, or even entire radical factions within it, as little more than the terrorist agents, surrogates, or proxies of the KGB.’⁴² This judgement is consonant with Thomas Riegler’s assessment of the relationship between the KGB and terrorist actors more broadly. The historian Riegler argues that the Soviet role did not amount to actual control of terrorism: ‘The groups maintained their autonomy and were no extensions of Soviet foreign policy.’⁴³

The available source material suggests that since the beginning of the 1980s, direct Soviet support to terrorist groups or even the use of terrorism for political purposes abroad seems to have been limited to a few minor cases. The activities reports of the KGB, submitted annually to the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) by the chairman of the KGB, mention no cooperation with terrorist groups. To the contrary, in the early 1980s the various terrorist organizations are listed, besides the United States, China and domestic dissidents, as the main enemies of the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ These documents clearly indicate that, at least in the final decade of the Cold War, the KGB regarded these terrorist actors more as a threat than as the spearhead of communist world revolution.

The socialist states in Eastern Europe

The Soviet Union’s satellite states in Eastern Europe and their relations with terrorist actors were a somewhat different matter. Any discussion needs to start with three basic distinctions regarding state, terrorist actor and time:

- (1) There was no joint ‘Warsaw Pact’ approach towards terrorist organizations. The policies and actions of individual states, which maintained their own agreements, dealings and cooperation with terrorist actors, varied widely. On the one hand, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), likely the most extensive supporter of terrorist actors in Eastern Europe, provided military training and weapons to various armed Palestinian groups such as the PFLP, the DFLP and the PFLP-General Command (GC).⁴⁵ Its Ministry for State Security (MfS, commonly known as Stasi) further provided sanctuary to some of the most notorious and deadliest terrorist groups in the West: the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO) and the Carlos group. Some ANO members also received ideological education, and a few of its cadres were even provided with limited military training.⁴⁶ Moreover, in the early 1980s the GDR granted asylum to ten RAF dropouts, on the condition that they

permanently renounced terrorism. Several active RAF members received weapons and explosives training in the GDR, and the MfS periodically exchanged intelligence with the West German left-wing terrorists.⁴⁷

On the other hand, Bulgaria's involvement with terrorist actors seems to have been limited to a passive (and in some instances temporary) toleration of a number of terrorist organizations such as ANO and the Carlos group and, potentially, using some of these groups as intermediaries for weapons deals between Bulgarian state-owned arms manufacturers and Middle Eastern buyers.⁴⁸ Additionally, scholars should keep in mind that while different Eastern European states pursued different, often autonomous, policies towards terrorist organizations, different actors within the socialist state structures – for example, foreign, domestic and military intelligence services; foreign ministries; police services; government and party leaders – sometimes also pursued different approaches and interests towards a given terrorist actor.

- (2) Not surprisingly, the relations of a particular socialist state with the various terrorist organizations, even those who were seemingly aligned ideologically or strategically with the state actor, varied widely. Romania, for example, actually used the Carlos group for violent operations. Its intelligence service, the Securitate, tasked 'the Jackal' with attacks on Romanian exiles, including the bombing of Radio Free Europe (RFE) in Munich in February 1981. In return, the Securitate provided active support by equipping the Carlos group with foreign passports, a safe house, a bank account, access to training centres and even large amounts of weapons and explosives.⁴⁹ On the other hand, Romanian authorities never closed an agreement with ANO, despite Abu Nidal's efforts towards this end. Instead of providing sanctuary or even support to ANO members, they did not spare them from being arrested. As a result, among other violent and non-violent reactions, ANO carried out a rocket attack on the Romanian Embassy in Beirut in November 1986.⁵⁰
- (3) The relations between states and terrorist actors have for the most part been problematic, fraught with distrust and friction. Accordingly, these individual relationships have a history. They evolved and transformed, often radically, over time. To give only one illustrating example: as far as can be judged based on the available source material (which is quite vast on this subject and has been analysed extensively), the active support that the MfS provided to the RAF, already described earlier, was effectively restricted to the three years from 1980 until 1982, out of the approximately two decades that the GDR and the RAF coexisted.

Before 1980, the MfS' support seems to have been limited to allowing RAF members to transit to the GDR, either to evade manhunts by the West German police or to visit Palestinian camps in the Middle East, in exchange for information. In the 1970s, the MfS had declined requests for more far-reaching support by both the first and the second generation of the RAF: the first time in 1970, when Ulrike Meinhof wanted to close a deal allowing her

group to use the territory of the GDR to plan operations in West Berlin; the second time in 1979, when leading members of the second generation were probing for support in East Berlin. The eventual short-lived cooperation of the early 1980s broke down again as early as 1983/84.⁵¹ While a simple listing of the various forms of support the MfS provided to the RAF – military training, intelligence, sanctuary – might, indeed, indicate a major role of the East German secret service in the RAF's terrorist violence, a historical 'timeline analysis' of the relationship suggests that the 'unholy cooperation' may have had little impact or significance, as Tobias Wunschik concluded.⁵²

Besides these important distinctions, there are a few general findings regarding the Eastern European states and their relations with terrorist actors. State support from Warsaw Pact intelligence agencies was in most cases not essential for the survival of the sponsored terrorist groups. The terrorist actors pursued their own interests and political goals. Occasionally, they even manipulated their international 'state sponsors' to these ends.⁵³ The direction of influence in these state-terrorism relations has, therefore, not always been unambiguous. Some left-wing terrorist groups such as the Red Brigades also seem to have consistently refused cooperation with any Soviet bloc state.⁵⁴ Further, in the majority of cases support for terrorist actors likely occurred without Soviet guidance and was therefore the result of more or less independently reached decisions within the smaller socialist countries.

Another intriguing and myth-busting finding that applies to several Eastern European states is how overwhelmed or even incompetent some of their supposedly all-powerful security services turned out to be when they were challenged by the presence of terrorist actors. Exemplarily, the Czech security services were taken by surprise by Carlos' initial visits and, despite considerable efforts, were unable to prevent him from entering the country thereafter. Although the hotel selection for foreign visitors to Prague was quite limited at the time, it used to take the Czech intelligence services several days to find out that 'the Jackal' had been staying at the Hotel Intercontinental.⁵⁵ The Yugoslav domestic intelligence service, in turn, did not realize for years that the Carlos group had been establishing a base in Yugoslavia, which it used for weapons transfers and to prepare for operations in Western Europe, until Carlos' lieutenant Johannes Weinrich knocked on their door one summer's day in 1983.⁵⁶

The good access to historical archives in Eastern Europe and the research undertaken based on their records allow us today to identify a small number of core motives for state support. These motives were certainly not the driving force of every single instance of state sponsorship. Ideology, for example, sometimes certainly played a role as well. Yet they are quintessential to understanding why state actors in the Soviet bloc supported transnational terrorist actors in most of the significant cases.

- (1) *Domestic security*: The destabilization of Western democracies, or even the expansion of the communist sphere of influence into the First World,

was hardly ever a decisive motive. Far from constituting an aggressive furtherance of world revolution (as Sterling and many others have claimed), the relations with terrorist actors were of a rather defensive character. The East European security services regarded many of the organizations as a potential threat to their own countries and genuinely feared a spill over of the terrorist violence behind the Iron Curtain. The cooperation with these groups thus constituted an, implicit or explicit, trade of limited support for non-aggression. Paradigmatically, the CIA recognized in a major analysis of Yugoslavia's terrorism ties in March 1986 that 'Belgrade also seems motivated by concerns for its own internal security. It has long been worried about terrorist attacks both in the country and against its interests abroad [...]. Belgrade probably calculates that it can prevent attacks on Yugoslav territory by some groups [...] by cooperating with them.'⁵⁷ In some cases, this motive was reflected in specific secret agreements between East European intelligence services and terrorist groups. Examples are the deals between Polish military intelligence⁵⁸ and ANO in 1979 and between the MfS and ANO in 1982.⁵⁹ Even in those very rare cases in which an East European intelligence service used a terrorist actor as a proxy for violent attacks, the target seems to have been domestic opposition to the socialist regime, not a foreign state or public.⁶⁰ The most prominent case is the Securitate's cooperation with Carlos to attack Romanian exiles in the early 1980s.⁶¹ Accordingly, the status quo-oriented state support by the socialist regimes in East Europe was qualitatively a very different phenomenon than some of the state support provided by Middle Eastern regimes.

- (2) *Intelligence*: The interest to gain intelligence has been a crucial factor driving decisions to support terrorist organizations for basically all socialist states. Its significance can therefore hardly be overestimated. This may not come so much as a surprise if one considers that the dealing with terrorist actors was the task of intelligence agencies, whose most fundamental objective is to collect intelligence. On one hand, providing sanctuary or active support put intelligence services in a better position for surveilling terrorist organizations as well as recruiting informants. The MfS, for example, ran six agents alone within the ranks or the entourage of ANO.⁶² Probably even more important, support for terrorist groups allowed the security services to demand intelligence as a quid pro quo. Certain terrorist groups were in a position to deliver extremely valuable information, for example, on terrorist groups that were considered a threat to the state sponsor, on political developments in the Middle East, on rival groups or on military installations of NATO countries. According to Christopher Andrew's analysis of the Mitrokhin archive, even the KGB's attempt to make contact with the Provisional IRA in 1977 was motivated by the hope of gaining useful information on British intelligence operations.⁶³ The KGB's relation with Wadi Haddad and his PFLP-EO likewise had a major intelligence gathering element, as Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez impressively demonstrate in this book.

- (3) *Commercial interests*: In several instances, another important factor was the usefulness of terrorist groups as intermediaries in weapons deals between state-owned arms manufacturers in the socialist states and mainly Middle Eastern buyers (both states and non-state armed groups). Major examples of such 'terrorist brokers' were ANO and the Turkish Grey Wolves.⁶⁴ The Middle Eastern clientele paid for the large amount of weapons in dollars – contrary to the socialist sister states in the Comecon,⁶⁵ which paid their bills in roubles – thereby bringing some badly needed strong currency into the East European countries. Analysing the case of Poland, Przemyslaw Gasztold accordingly concluded that money, not ideology, was the decisive factor for Polish relations with international terrorism.⁶⁶ Besides the arms trade, another motive to cooperate with terrorist organizations was that these actors could provide access to embargoed goods, especially Western electronics and weapons.⁶⁷ Polish military intelligence required such deliveries even from ANO in their 1979 secret agreement and was able to acquire Argentinian-made Edda submachine guns and special ammunition for use in airplanes through the terrorist group. ANO also acquired sophisticated electronics from Swiss companies for their Polish hosts.⁶⁸ In 1986, at the peak of its international terrorist violence, the same organization helped the GDR to obtain 100 state-of-the-art Enfield anti-riot weapons from the UK – arms that could be used against domestic opponents of the regime.⁶⁹ More generally, East European states supported Middle Eastern (especially Palestinian) terrorist actors in order to advance or maintain good economic standings among Arab states.⁷⁰
- (4) *Diplomatic influence/recognition*: Although less significant than the motives described earlier, a further recurring driver is the 'constructive' potential of state support in the foreign policy arena, as opposed to the 'destructive' aims (e.g. frustrating particular policies, destabilizing or weakening a foreign state and so on) pursued through terrorist violence. 'Constructive' objectives included attempts to advance diplomatic or economic relations with states that had been sympathetic to the cause of the supported terrorist groups, or generally to strengthen the state supporter's political influence in a specific community of states. Illuminating examples are the GDR and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). For the GDR, its strong interest in diplomatic recognition in (as well as the further development of economic relations with) the Arab world was a moving cause to support armed Palestinian groups at the turn of the 1960s.⁷¹ The desire of Tito's Yugoslavia to strengthen its influence among member states of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was a decisive factor even in its decision to support armed organizations that engaged in terrorist violence.⁷² Following the same rationale, in 1983, the Yugoslav domestic intelligence service decided not to extradite Carlos's lieutenant Johannes Weinrich, because such an act would possibly have compromised the Yugoslav policy in the NAM.⁷³

Another long-held myth was that the Soviet bloc remained free of the international terrorist violence from the 1960s through the 1980s.⁷⁴ While the number of incidents was, indeed, much larger in Western Europe, the articles in this volume clearly show that several terrorist groups, not seldom acting as proxies for state actors, committed attacks in Eastern Europe and worldwide against representations of socialist states, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, targeting the socialist regimes. Croatian émigré nationalist groups, which fought for the destruction of socialist Yugoslavia and the foundation of an independent Croatian nation state, were not only among the first to globalize their operations but also among the most active terrorist organizations in the 1960s and the 1970s. Over one ten-year period, Croatian terrorists averaged one attack every five weeks, including more than fifty assassinations or assassination attempts, forty bombings and two aircraft hijackings.⁷⁵

The terrorist campaigns by the Shia groups Amal, Hezbollah and Dawa against Hungarian targets are another illustrating example. In the same vein that Iran and Syria used Hezbollah as a terrorist proxy to influence the regional policies of the United States, France and Israel, the Iranian regime also exploited Shia terrorist groups to target Hungary. The most dramatic incidents of a series of attacks against diplomatic and business properties were an assault on the Hungarian Embassy in Aden in January 1987 and the bombing of the central office of Hungarian Airlines in Kuwait in May 1987. The apparent objective of the Iranian state sponsors was to intimidate socialist countries that had been giving significant aid to Iraq. And just like the direction of Hezbollah against the United States, France and Israel proved highly successful, Iran seems to have obtained some results with its terrorist proxy strategy against the socialist states: at the turn of 1987, Hungary started delivering war material to Iran.⁷⁶

In any case, fears of terrorist violence were by no means restricted to the West. East European countries like Hungary massively expanded their own counterterrorism apparatus in the last decade of the Cold War, as Balázs Orbán-Schwarzkopf analyses in his contribution to this book.⁷⁷ Bernd Schäfer, in turn, shows in his article that by the late 1980s even the regime of North Korea was so paranoically afraid of terrorist attacks that the hermit country engaged in an unprecedented international 'counterterrorism' intelligence cooperation with Warsaw Pact states, particularly with the East German MfS.

The articles in the first volume illuminate the complex, multilayered and ambiguous set of relations that the socialist states in Eastern Europe maintained with terrorist actors, providing sanctuary and various forms of support to a number of groups, rejecting cooperation with others and finding themselves among the targets of terrorist organizations.

Notes

- 1 In this article, 'terrorism' signifies the use or threat of political violence by non-state actors aimed to influence, usually by instilling fear, a target audience beyond the

- direct victims of the violence. An individual, group, organization, etc. is classified as a 'terrorist' actor, when it makes considerable use of terrorist violence. The author is aware that the use of the labels 'terrorist', 'terrorist organization', 'terrorist attack' etc. is problematic as there is no definition shared by a majority of scholars. For a discussion see, for example, Alex P. Schmid (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (London: Routledge, 2011), 39–157. Additionally, critical terrorism scholars have made a good argument that 'terrorism' is largely a social construct and that the use of the 'terrorist' label serves strategic functions. For an overview see Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smith and Jeroen Gunning (eds.), *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda* (London: Routledge, 2009); David Miller, Jessie Blackbourn, Helen Dexter and Rani Dhanda (eds.), *Critical Terrorism Studies since 11 September 2001: What Has Been Learned?* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Richard Jackson (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Critical Terrorism Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).
- 2 Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1.
 - 3 Chris Quillen, A Historical Analysis of Mass Casualty Bombers, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 25/5 (2002), 285.
 - 4 Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 263.
 - 5 Daniel Byman, How States Exploit Jihadist Foreign Fighters, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 41/12 (2018), 931–45.
 - 6 Anne Speckhard and Ahmet S. Yayla, *ISIS Defectors: Inside Stories of the Terrorist Caliphate* (McLean, VA: Advances Press, 2016); Anne Speckhard and Ahmet S. Yayla, ISIS Revenues Include Sales of Oil to the al-Assad Regime, *ICSVE Brief Reports*, 27 April 2016, <https://www.icsve.org/isiss-revenues-include-sales-of-oil-to-the-al-assad-regime> (accessed 1 January 2020). Links and cooperation between the Islamic State and Syrian intelligence services are also documented in Islamic State files discovered in Syria. See Christoph Reuter, The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State, *Der Spiegel*, 18 April 2015, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html> (accessed 1 January 2020).
 - 7 Anne Speckhard and Ardian Shajkocvi, The ISIS Ambassador to Turkey, *Homeland Security Today*, 19 March 2019, <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/the-isis-ambassador-to-turkey> (accessed 1 January 2020).
 - 8 Glenn Greenwald and Gregory Johnsen, Salon Radio Transcript: Gregory Johnsen, *Salon*, 24 December 2009, http://www.salon.com/2009/12/24/gjohnsen_transcript (accessed 1 January 2020).
 - 9 Victoria Clark, *Yemen: Dancing on the Heads of Snakes* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars: The World Is a Battlefield* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2013); Larry Attree, *Blown Back: Lessons from Counter-terror, Stabilisation and Statebuilding in Yemen*, Saferworld, January 2016, especially 11, 37–8.
 - 10 Adrian Hänni and Lukas Hegi, Pakistanischer Pate: Der Geheimdienst Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) und die afghanischen Taliban, 2002–2010, *Journal for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies* 5/1 (2011), 46–60; Steve Coll, *Directorate S: The C.I.A. and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Penguin Books, 2018).
 - 11 Adrian Hänni, *Terrorismus als Konstrukt: Schwarze Propaganda, politische Bedrohungsängste und der Krieg gegen den Terrorismus in Reagans Amerika* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 2018), 167–245.

- 12 Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. Security & Latin America, *Commentary* 71/1 (1981), 29–40.
- 13 Cited in Philip Geyelin, The Reigning White House Soviet Scholar, *Washington Post*, 12 February 1981, A19.
- 14 On the meeting see Timothy Naftali, *Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism* (New York: Basic Books 2005), 118–20; Joseph E. Persico, *Casey: From the OSS to the CIA* (New York: Viking, 1990), 220; David C. Martin and John Walcott, *Best Laid Plans: The Inside Story of America's War against Terrorism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 45–7; Bob Woodward, *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA, 1981–1987* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 92–3. For a list of the participants see 'Richard V. Allen, Meeting with Interagency Working Committee on Terrorism', 24 January 1981, in George Bush Library, College Station, TX, Bush Vice Presidential Records, National Security Affairs, 'Terrorism [1 of 9]'
- 15 Excerpts from Haig's Remarks at First News Conference as Secretary of State, *New York Times*, 29 January 1981, A10.
- 16 Hänni, *Terrorismus als Konstrukt*, 175–85, 231–7.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 212–31.
- 18 Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981).
- 19 See, especially, Samuel T. Francis, *The Soviet Strategy of Terror* (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, 1981); Herbert Romerstein, *Soviet Support for International Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Foundation for Democratic Education, 1981); Neil C. Livingstone, *The War against Terrorism* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1982); Ray S. Cline and Yonah Alexander, *Terrorism: The Soviet Connection* (New York: Crane Russak, 1984); Roberta Goren, *The Soviet Union and Terrorism* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984), edited by Jillian Becker, the director of the *British Institute for the Study of Terrorism* (IST); Jillian Becker, *The Soviet Connection: State Sponsorship of Terrorism* (London: Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, 1985); and Desmond McForan, *The World Held Hostage: The War Waged by International Terrorism* (London: Oak-Tree Books, 1986). See also Jan Sejna, *We Will Bury You: The Soviet Plan for the Subversion of the West by the Highest-Ranking Communist Ever to Defect* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1982); Brian Crozier, Drew Middleton and Jeremy Murray-Brown, *This War Called Peace* (London: Sherwood Press, 1984); and Michael A. Ledeen, *Grave New World: The Superpower Crisis of the 1980s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- 20 Edna F. Reid, Terrorism Research and the Diffusion of Ideas, *Knowledge, Technology & Policy* 6/1 (1993), 17–37.
- 21 Michael Ploetz, Mit RAF, Roten Brigaden und Action Directe: Terrorismus und Rechtsextremismus in der Strategie von SED und KpdSU, *Zeitschrift des Forschungsverbundes SED-Staat* 22 (2007), 144.
- 22 See, especially, Boris Svetov et al., *International Terrorism and the CIA: Documents, Eyewitness Reports, Facts* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1983); Yu Pankov (ed.), *Political Terrorism: An Indictment of Imperialism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1983); and Vitaly Chernyavsky, *The CIA in the Dock: Soviet Journalists on International Terrorism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1983). Viktor V. Vitiuk, *Leftist Terrorism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985), even claimed that the CIA secretly directed left-wing terrorism. The Soviet regime apparently produced a White Paper implicating the CIA in international terrorism as early as spring 1981. See 'Staff Meeting Minutes', Memorandum for the Record, CIA, 1 April 1981, 2, in CREST, CIA General Records, 84B00130R, Box 6, Folder 1, Document No. 398–9.

- 23 A discussion of the conspiracy theories on the involvement of the US government in terrorism in Italy between the late 1960s and the 1980s is provided by Tobias Hof, U.S. Involvement in Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in Italy, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), Lexington, Kentucky, 19–21 June 2014.
- 24 See, among other books, Daniele Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe* (London: Cass, 2005); Regine Igel, *Terrorjahre: Die dunkle Seite der CIA in Italien* (München: Herbig, 2006).
- 25 See, especially, Claire Sterling, The Plot to Murder the Pope, *Reader's Digest*, September 1982, 71–84; Claire Sterling, *The Time of the Assassins* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983); Paul B. Henze, *The Plot to Kill the Pope* (New York: Scribner, 1983). The narrative of the Bulgarian Connection has since been revived from time to time, most recently in a book by Paul Kengor, *A Pope and a President: John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and the Extraordinary Untold Story of the 20th Century* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2017). For a critical discussion of the Bulgarian Connection, see Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead, *The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection* (New York: Sheridan Square Publications, 1986).
- 26 See, for example, Iona Andronov, *On the Wolf's Track* (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1983); Iona Andronov, *The Triple Plot* (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1984); Ivan Palchev, *The Assassination Attempt against the Pope and the Roots of Terrorism* (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1985); as well as Eduard Kovalev and Igor Sedykh, 'Bulgarian Connection': *CIA & Co. on the Outcome of the Antonov Trial* (Moscow: Novosti, 1986). On the disinformation campaign by Bulgarian State Security and the MfS implicating Western intelligence services in the plot to kill the pope, see Christopher Nehring, *Die Zusammenarbeit der DDR-Auslandsaufklärung mit der Aufklärung der Volksrepublik Bulgarien: Regionalfilialen des KGB?* PhD dissertation, Heidelberg University, 2016, 220–32.
- 27 See, for example, the article by Jordan Baev in this book; Nehring, *Zusammenarbeit der DDR-Auslandsaufklärung mit der Aufklärung der Volksrepublik Bulgarien*, 220–32; as well as Evtim Kostadinov (ed.), *International Terrorism in the Bulgarian State Security Files*, Documentary Volume (Electronic Edition), The Committee on Disclosing the Documents and Announcing Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Army (CDDAABCSBNAF), 2011, <https://comdos.bg/%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%88%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%20%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%8F/mezhduarodniyat-terorizam> (accessed 1 January 2020). A recent primary source-based study by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance reached a different conclusion, claiming that Bulgarian special service agents played key roles in the plot through their participation in the preparation for the assassination attempt. See Michal Skwara and Andrzej Grajewski, *Agca nie byt sam: Wokot udziatu komunistycznych stuzb specjalnych w zamachu na Jana Pawla II* (Katowice: Instytut Gosc Media, 2015).
- 28 'Soviet Covert Action (The Forgery Offensive)', Hearings before the Subcommittee on Oversight of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, House of Representatives, 96th Congress, 2nd Session, 6 and 19 February 1980 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 190–246; Soviet Disinformation during Periods of Relaxed East-West Tensions, Appendix to *Soviet Active Measures in the Era of Glasnost: A Report to Congress by the United States Information Agency*, March 1988, available at <http://insidethecoldwar.org/sites/default/files/documents/Soviet%20Act>

- ive%20Measures%20in%20the%20Era%20of%20Glasnot%20March%201988.pdf (accessed 1 January 2020).
- 29 These disinformation operations are documented in great detail by Hänni, *Terrorismus als Konstrukt*, 117–65.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, 95–165.
 - 31 The Soviet Bloc Role in International Terrorism and Revolutionary Violence, National Intelligence Estimate 11/2-86, August 1986, 15, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90T00155R000200050001-6.pdf> (accessed 1 January 2020).
 - 32 See, especially, the article by Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez in this book. See also Christopher Andrew and Vasilii Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 380; and Letter from Yuri Andropov to Leonid Brezhnev, No. 1071-A/OB, 23 April 1974, published in Vladimir Boukovsky, *Jugement a Moscou: Un dissident dans les archives du Kremlin* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1995), as well as online by Julia Zaks and Leonid Chernikhov, <http://bukovsky-archives.net/pdfs/terr-wd/plo75a.pdf> (accessed 1 January 2020).
 - 33 Ronen Bergman, *Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations* (Random House: New York, 2018), 196. On the KGB's targeting of intelligence defectors in general, see Adrian Hänni and Miguel Grossmann, *Death to Traitors? The Pursuit of Intelligence Defectors from the Soviet Union to the Putin Era, Intelligence and National Security* 35/3 (2020), 403–23.
 - 34 Doc. 164/1430, Report by Fedor Mortin, 24.6.1971, Typescript of Notes by Vasilii Mitrokhin, 80–1, in Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, UK, The Papers of Vasilii Mitrokhin, MITN 2/24, Envelope K24: Near and Middle East. Emphasis added.
 - 35 Christopher Andrew and Vasilii Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 246–55. In 1974, the KGB had recruited a second agent in the PFLP leadership, Ahmad Mahmud Samman (codenamed 'Vasit'). Like Haddad, he died in 1978.
 - 36 The Soviet Bloc Role in International Terrorism and Revolutionary Violence, National Intelligence Estimate 11/2-86, 21.
 - 37 Galia Golan, *The Soviet Union and the Palestine Liberation Organization: An Uneasy Alliance* (New York: Praeger, 1980), 211.
 - 38 On the history of the Soviet–PLO relationship, see Roland Dannreuther, *The Soviet Union and the PLO* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998); Golan, *The Soviet Union and the Palestine Liberation Organization*; Galia Golan, *Moscow and the PLO: The Ups and Downs of a Complex Relationship*, in Moshe Ma'oz and Avraham Sela (eds.), *The PLO and Israel: From Armed Conflict to Political Solution, 1964–1994* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 121–40.
 - 39 'Current PLO Position on 242; Soviet and Arab Advice to PLO on 242, Secret Intelligence Information Cable, Directorate of Operations, CIA, 20 August 1977, in President Carter and the Role of Intelligence in the Camp David Accords Collection, Document No. 527b88eb993294098d517722. See also Lutz Maeke, *DDR und PLO: Die Palästinalpolitik des SED-Staates* (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2017), 159–61.
 - 40 The Soviet Bloc Role in International Terrorism and Revolutionary Violence, National Intelligence Estimate 11/2-86, 15, 19–21. As Tobias Wunschik shows in his contribution to this book, the MfS of the GDR likewise made attempts to steer the actions of some Palestinian terrorist groups towards the 'political struggle', and in May 1986 East Berlin intended to ask Arafat to use his authority so that no Palestinian terrorist attacks would be executed.