

# **COUNTERTERRORISM: PUNJAB A CASE STUDY**

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Several explanations emphasizing historical events have been advanced to explain the rise of Sikh terrorism. However, there has been little use of theories/models or quantitative empirical data to explain both the rise and decline of the Sikh terrorist movement. This thesis adapts Corrado's nomothetic anti-state terrorism model in order to explain the rise and decline of Sikh anti-state terrorism. It also incorporates empirical data to explain long term trends in Sikh violence. As well, this thesis modifies Corrado's counterterrorism model in order to increase its conceptual scope. Finally, several counterterrorism variables are identified as crucial to reducing terrorist violence. The new model is heavily influenced by counterterrorism measures implemented by the Indian government and security forces during the Punjab conflict. This new counterterrorism model identifies concrete steps that various levels of government or agencies can implement in order to prevent the rise of anti-state terrorism or reduce terrorist violence.

## **DEDICATION**

Over one's life only a limited number of individuals have a significant impact upon an individual's life. I would like to thank my parents for their endless support and love. My parents who left their homeland to pursue a better life have accomplished a great deal in Canada. To my sister, my role model since childhood. We have faced many joys and many sorrows, only we will understand. To my wife, your warm smile and embrace keeps me going everyday. To my friends your critical thought and genuine support has been greatly appreciated.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>AISSF</b>	All India Sikh Student Federation
<b>AISSF (G)</b>	All India Sikh Student Federation Gurjit Faction
<b>Akali Dal (L)</b>	Akali Dal Longowal
<b>ALR</b>	Automatic Loading Rifles
<b>ASR</b>	Anandpur Sahib Resolution
<b>BJP</b>	Bhartiya Janata Party
<b>BK</b>	Babbar Khalsa
<b>BTF</b>	Bhindranwale Tiger Force
<b>BTFK</b>	Bhindranwale Tiger Force Khalistan
<b>BSF</b>	Border Security Forces
<b>CIA</b>	Central Intelligence Agency
<b>Congress (I)</b>	Congress Indira- Party led by Indira Gandhi
<b>CRPF</b>	Central Reserve Police Force
<b>DGB</b>	Ditch Combines
<b>DR</b>	Dashmesh Regiment
<b>HYV</b>	High Yielding Variety
<b>INC</b>	Indian National Congress
<b>ISI</b>	Inter Service Intelligence
<b>ISYF</b>	International Sikh Youth Federation
<b>KAF</b>	Khalistan Armed Forces
<b>KCF</b>	Khalistan Commando Force
<b>KLF</b>	Khalistan Liberation Force
<b>LMG</b>	Light Machine Guns
<b>NSA</b>	National Security Act (1980)
<b>QRT</b>	Quick Response Team
<b>RPG</b>	Rocket Propelled Grenades

<b>SGPC</b>	Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandak Committee
<b>TADA</b>	Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>WSO</b>	World Sikh Organization

## INTRODUCTION

During the 1980s, the state of Punjab, in India, the birthplace of the Sikh religion, was engulfed in one of the bloodiest terrorist conflicts the world has ever seen. The decade-long conflict between Sikh nationalists and Indian authorities resulted in 25,000 innocent civilians, Indian security personnel, and Sikh terrorists being killed (Singh, 1996). The objective of the thesis is to explain the factors that led to the rise and fall of anti-state terrorism in Punjab within the context of Corrado's anti-state terrorism model. Specific emphasis is given to Corrado's counterterrorism hypotheses.

I selected the Punjab as a case study because of the theoretically distinctive characteristics this terrorist conflict possessed. The conflict in Punjab was unique because the terrorist campaign rose relatively quickly within a 2-year period, continued to grow exponentially over several years, and then declined rapidly within a year. Punjab is also an interesting case study because it is one of the most prosperous and economically advanced states in the Indian union. Despite this prosperity, the Sikhs of the Punjab were deeply discontented with the Indian federal government, a discontent that had extremely violent undercurrents (Shiva, 1991). Another factor that attracted my interest is that during India's 35 years of independence until 1982, it had never faced such a violent and sustained campaign of terrorism from a minority population. Historically, India, with its numerous religious, linguistic, and class distinctions had relatively successfully resolved political disputes and avoided sustained violence among its various minority populations. In the next section, a general overview will be provided of the most substantive

explanations of why anti-state terrorism arose in the early 1980s in the state of Punjab.

## **Ideographic Theories of Sikh Anti-State Terrorism**

### **Green Revolution**

There is considerable research explaining the rise of anti-state terrorism in Punjab. Four major perspectives will be discussed here briefly. Vandana Shiva (1991) views the violence in Punjab in the 1980s primarily as an unforeseen by-product of the Green Revolution. The Green Revolution involved the introduction of sophisticated farming techniques and technology into less industrially advanced nations in order to increase food grain yields. Green Revolution farming is capital intensive and is best suited for farmers with large land holdings. The farming technique involves farmers planting high-yield varieties (HYV) of seeds and supplementing their growth with the application of certain types of products including fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, large amounts of water, and farming equipment. Shiva (1991) hypothesizes that the Green Revolution fundamentally destabilized critically important social relationships in the Punjab farming community and the way the majority of farmers interacted with economic institutions. She maintains that, prior to the Green Revolution, cultivators and farmers were generally self-sufficient because they required very few supplementary agricultural products such as genetically modified seeds produced by multi-national corporations, fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, and expensive farm machinery like water pumps, harvesters, and threshers. The farmers were also largely independent of financial support from the Indian government and selling their products in the world markets (Shiva, 1991). Farming essentially involved simple manual labour and selling products to local markets. During the Green Revolution, farming techniques in the mid 1960s underwent revolutionary change. The individual farmer became dependent on the federal government, which controlled “agricultural policy, finance, credit, inputs, and prices of agricultural

commodities” (Shiva, 1991: 23).

Regarding this radical change in farming practices, Shiva (1991) asserts that, between 1970 and the early 1980s, there was a dramatic increase in the input prices required by the Green Revolution, and a subsequent decrease in the price paid for the resulting agricultural products. Consequently, reduced incomes resulted in many small farmers forfeiting their land. They were unable to make sufficient profits to live adequately and repay loans. Shiva also maintains that these deteriorating economic conditions and the failure of the Indian government to respond to this economic crisis caused many dispossessed farmer to resort to anti-state terrorism. This violence was seen as the only way to force the Indian government to change economic policies. The subsequent violent political conflict developed an ethnic identity because a majority of the farmers in the Punjab were of the Sikh religion. In contrast, members of the central Indian government were overwhelmingly of the Hindu religion. The long-standing view held by many Punjabi Sikhs was that the new Green Revolution economics were another example of the discriminatory policies of the Hindu government. Shiva asserts that this religious animosity intensified the viciousness of Sikh anti-state terrorism.

### **Sikh Fundamentalism**

Whereas Shiva emphasizes the economic basis of Sikh anti-state terrorism, other theorists claim that the rise of Sikh fundamentalism was the primary cause. Harjot Oberoi (1990) focuses on the importance of the influence of Sant<sup>1</sup> Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, an extreme Sikh fundamentalist, and his fanatical religious followers. According to Oberoi, the Bhindranwale political religious movement arose in a period unusually opportune for such a radical movement. Punjab was going through drastic changes economically in the 70s and early 80s. A large segment of the Sikh farming

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<sup>1</sup> The term *Sant* translated into English means “holy man” and is assigned to individuals deemed to have a great deal of religious knowledge.

population had become economically marginalized and many believed their economic plight was being ignored politically. The Sikh culture was also undergoing dramatic changes, with traditional beliefs being replaced by Western values. Social diseases like alcoholism, smoking, and drug addiction were reaching epidemic proportions among the Sikh population. Oberoi maintains that disenfranchised Sikhs turned to the teachings of Sikh fundamentalist Sant Bhindranwale for guidance and for an explanation for their dire economic social conditions. Bhindranwale attributed the problems of the Sikh population to “religious depravity among the Sikhs and the ever increasing Hindu domination over the Sikhs” (Oberoi, 1990: 267). He strongly believed the Sikh population had strayed away from the main tenets of the Sikh faith and were being punished accordingly. Bhindranwale also resented the Hindu federal government for abusing its political power by repressing Sikhs economically and attempting to assimilate them into Hinduism.

According to Oberoi (1990), Bhindranwale envisioned two solutions to the dire circumstances of the Sikh population. First, he demanded that all Sikhs in Punjab participate in a violent religious revolution against the Hindu-dominated federal government. The objective of the religious revolution would be the establishment of an autonomous Sikh state (i.e., Khalistan), independent of Hindu influence. The new state of Khalistan would be governed by Sikh theology and would be ruled by Sikhs. Bhindranwale believed that only through the creation of this religious state would Sikhs finally be free from the exploitation and social inequalities perpetuated by the Hindu Indian government. Khalistan would allow Sikhs to practise their unique religion, language, and cultural traditions in harmony and would allow these to flourish under the protection of the Sikh state.

Second, Bhindranwale exhorted Sikhs to practise their religion with greater vigour. He wanted all Sikhs to adopt the five outward symbols (*kirpan, kara, kanga, kes, katcha*) of the Khalsa (the Sikh brotherhood) and required them to take *amrit* (the Sikh

baptism ceremony)<sup>2</sup>. Sikhs also needed to modify their behaviour and practices in order to ensure consistency with the teaching of the gurus and the Granth Sahib (the Sikh holy book). Bhindranwale believed that if individuals lived the lifestyle the Sikh gurus had taught, their social and economic conditions would improve. In pursuit of this Sikh utopia, Bhindranwale launched a campaign of anti-state terrorism in 1980 against the Indian government. This campaign was continued by his fanatical followers for nine years after Bhindranwale was killed in 1984 in the Golden Temple by the Indian army. Oberoi attributes the anti-state terrorist conflict in Punjab to Sikh fundamentalist Bhindranwale and his fanatical religious followers.

### **Akali Dal**

Noboto (1994) and Purewal (2000) have attributed the terrorist violence in Punjab to the political aspirations of the Akali Dal political party movement to attain and maintain political power at the state level. The Akali Dal as a political entity arose in pre-independence India in 1920. Its goal was to safeguard the religious rights of the Sikh population. Historically, the Akali Dal consistently fought to protect Sikh religious, economic, and political interests. However, in the early 1970s, the make-up of the Akali Dal changed drastically with a majority of party elite and followers being composed of rich Jat Sikh farmers who had benefited from the Green Revolution. Prior to this, Akali Dal leadership and members were largely rural peasant Sikh farmers. Purewal (2000) argues that with the shift in party make-up, there was also a subsequent change in party objectives. Because a majority of the party's leaders and supporters owned large agricultural holdings and owned or were stakeholders in numerous agro-industries, they had a vested interest in Punjab. As a result, when the Akali Dal were in power at the state level, they implemented agricultural policies that benefited them economically and

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<sup>2</sup> *Kirpan* refers to a dagger worn by baptized Sikhs. *Kara* is a steel bracelet worn on the wrist to remind individuals to not participate in immoral acts. *Kanga* is a hair brush used for grooming, *Kes* refers to uncut hair, and *Katcha* refers to long cotton shorts.



entrenched their economic status. The policies they implemented included providing higher subsidies to farmers, reducing irrigation rates, increasing procurement prices, and financing the expansion of agro industries. In addition, when they held political offices, the Akali Dal used their position to access public resources (e.g., co-operative banks, federal transfer payments, and state taxes) to finance personal purchases and expand their financial empires (Purewal, 2000). Thus, the interests of the general Sikh population were ignored by the Akali Dal in favour of obtaining the economic goals of the wealthy party elite and their supporters.

According to Noboto (1994) and Purewal (2000), the problem for the Akali Dal occurred whenever the rival Congress (I) party formed the state government. Congress (I) party supporters were largely Hindu, urban-based, industrial elites. Given their support base, the Congress (I) party did not implement policies favourable to the agricultural sector. Thus, the main political rivals of the Akali Dal put the economic success of the agricultural sector in jeopardy. In order to regain political power, the Akali Dal, according to Noboto, developed a dangerous political strategy that exploited communal divisions between Sikhs and Hindus. The Akali Dal's objective in inflaming ethnic differences was to get Sikhs to vote communally and thereby regain political power to protect their economic interests. Their political strategy also involved accepting extreme Sikh terrorist organizations, including Bhindranwale, into the party. In this way, they hoped to gain political support from the followers of these extreme religious organizations. The Akali Dal also supported and encouraged religious violence by these organizations. They believed religious violence would exacerbate divisions between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab, convincing Sikhs to vote for the Akali Dal in future elections. Purewal and Noboto thus attribute terrorism in Punjab to the Akali Dal's adopting of a communal political strategy and incorporating violent Sikh fundamentalist organizations into the party to attain their political and economic objectives.

## **Indian Federalism**

In contrast to Noboto and Purewal, Sathyamurthy (1985) attributes the terrorist campaign in the Punjab to the Indian federal government's promotion of their version of Indian nationalism. Since India's inception, the Indian federal government has pursued a policy of constructing a strong national identity among all Indians to ensure national unity. It has fought vigorously to remove strong loyalties of individuals to their unique regional, ethnic, and linguistic identities because of perceived threats to national unity. These policies have been largely aimed at peripheral states where ethnic differences are prevalent. Sathyamurthy argues that India's national identity has largely come to encompass individuals adopting Hinduism as their national identity. Minority populations who embrace Hinduism or adopt the religion of the majority are more likely to be accepted in Indian society and treated as equals than those minority populations who continue to practise their unique faiths. Also, in attempts to ensure national unity, the government has worked hard to concentrate political and economic decision-making power in the hands of the federal government. The Indian federal government reasons that the less autonomy provided to the states, the less likely they are to pursue or promote a "separate ethnic identity or state" (Sathyamurthy, 1985: 180).

Sathyamurthy maintains that this strategy failed when many peripheral state governments began to perceive Indian nationalism as a threat to their unique ethnic identities. Despite the efforts of the central government, many state governments demanded greater political and economic autonomy. State government saw the centralization of political and economic power as a tool used by the Hindu imperialist government to assimilate them. A number of non-Hindu state governments organized massive agitations by their constituents to show dissatisfaction with perceived assimilation strategies and demanded greater autonomy in order to protect minority rights. The central government's response was to repress all opposition by ethnic

minority state governments or minority populations with the use of physical force or legislation. In response to this repression, many minority populations constructed terrorist organizations that were willing to use armed conflict against the repressive central government and its assimilation strategy.

Sathyamurthy argues that ethnic backlash against Indian nationalism is what occurred in Punjab during the 1980s. A segment of the Sikh population believed that the Hindu-dominated central government was attempting to assimilate them. Many Sikhs placed their political support behind the Sikh political party, the Akali Dal. The Akali Dal for many years led communal agitations against the federal government in order to protect the religious, political, and economic rights of the Sikhs. When the Indian federal government's repression continued unabated in the early 1980s and the Sikh political voice, the Akali Dal, was removed forcefully from state power, a number of Sikh terrorist organizations arose to combat perceived Hindu repression and assimilation.

## **Theoretical Weaknesses**

There are clearly several theories, and a significant amount of debate, about what the precipitating factors were that led to anti-state terrorism. It will be maintained in this thesis that there are two fundamental weaknesses in the above theories. First, most explanations emphasize a single historical event as the cause of Sikh anti-state terrorism. This historical emphasis rarely includes the utilization of general theories or models of anti-state terrorism. Explanations, therefore, are almost exclusively ideographic rather than nomothetic. By ideographic I mean the focus on a single variable to explain anti-state terrorism in Punjab and the failure of explanations to examine the interplay of forces and events. There is no attempt to either deduce hypotheses from general theories or induce hypotheses from the specific historical events in the Punjab. This ideographic limitation makes it difficult to assess the relative importance of specific historical events versus long-term trends throughout India and developing nations with similar anti-state

terrorism movements. The second major limitation of these theories is the absence of quantitative empirical data that would allow for a more systematic assessment of the variables involving the rise and decline of anti-state terrorism.

## **Research Objective and Hypothesis**

I will adopt Corrado's nomothetic anti-state terrorism model to explain the rise and decline of anti-state terrorism using a theory. His model includes a set of 10 inter-linked propositions. However, I will conduct a closer examination of Hypothesis V of Corrado's model, which examines the role of an effective counterterrorism response in repressing anti-state terrorist violence. Although Corrado's counterterrorism model is applicable to the Punjab conflict, it needs to be modified to increase its predictive ability and address other theoretical shortcomings. The advantage of Corrado's anti-state terrorism model in relation to Punjab is its complexity. The major weakness of the research up to this point has been the failure by theorists to recognize that terrorism in Punjab was the result of a number of interrelated variables. Many theorists have only given credence to a limited number of variables and have failed to understand the wide array of factors that influence terrorism. In contrast, Corrado's anti-state terrorism model includes a complete range of variables, such as economic and political factors, ideology, historical events, and rational motives, all of which have been derived from an examination of anti-state terrorist movements globally and during different economic development stages (i.e., agrarian, industrial, and post-industrial). It will be argued that Corrado's model, specifically the counterterrorism variable, more adequately explains the rise and fall of anti-state terrorism in Punjab. In effect, with the hypothesized conditions favourable to the rise of anti-state terrorism existing in Punjab, terrorist incidents were extremely high. Conversely, when the conditions were not present, terrorism declined accordingly.

My thesis will provide, for the first time, an empirical explanation for the rise and

fall of anti-state terrorism in Punjab, India, within the context of counterterrorism measures implemented. My thesis will be divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents Corrado's model of anti-state terrorism and summarizes the ten hypotheses Corrado proposes as leading to anti-state terrorism. In Chapter 2, the methodology for collecting and analyzing the data for the thesis will be described. Chapter 3 provides an historical analysis of political factors contributing to the rise and decline of terrorism in Punjab. Chapter 4 discusses legislative measures implemented to repress Sikh terrorism, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. Chapter 5 discusses, in detail, counterterrorism measures implemented by security agencies to combat Sikh anti-state terrorism and which strategic changes led to an effective counterterrorism strategy by Indian security forces by 1993. Chapter 6 examines the influence of Pakistan on the Punjab conflict and how the reduction of foreign support through the implementation of effective counterterrorism measures led, in part, to the decline of Sikh anti-state terrorism. Chapter 7 discusses the role of foreign Sikh individuals or Sikh organizations in the Punjab conflict and how the reduction of foreign support led to the decline of Sikh terrorism. Finally, Chapter 8 provides an elaborate model to explain what steps government and security agencies must implement in order to prevent anti-state terrorism and what counterterrorism measures need to be implemented to reduce an already existing terrorist conflict. The implications of my findings are generalizable to other terrorist conflicts in the world.

## **CHAPTER 1: CORRADO'S ANTI-STATE TERRORISM MODEL**

As discussed earlier, Corrado's (2001) model of anti-state terrorism is applicable to a study of the Punjab because it is broad enough in scope to encompass all of the major historical factors present in this anti-state terrorist case. A brief overview of the model will illustrate its theoretical comprehensiveness. I will be utilizing Dr. Corrado's definition of anti-state terrorism. Corrado defines anti-state terrorism as an act against the state that involves "systematic violence is politically motivated, intention of violence is to cause extreme fear in an audience that is distinct from the immediate victim of the violence, and perpetrators act in clandestine manner" (Corrado, 2001: 4). The first three hypotheses of Corrado's model highlight the economic conditions that are likely to lead individuals to participate in anti-state terrorism:

**Hypothesis I:** The likelihood of anti-state terrorism is greater when there is greater discrepancy between the economic goals of a given society and the means to achieve these goals.

**Hypothesis II:** Anti-state terrorism is less likely to occur in countries with a more equitable distribution of wealth.

**Hypothesis III:** Anti-state terrorism is less likely to occur in relation to the degree of economic dependency experienced by the state. (Corrado, 2001: 51)

The first three hypotheses of Corrado's model address economic factors. The first hypothesis states that anti-state terrorism is more likely to occur when there is a discrepancy between the economic goals of society and the means to achieve those goals. It will be maintained that a discrepancy between economic goals and means to achieve these goals was evident in Punjab during the 1970s and 1980s. As a result of high Green

Revolution farming costs, a significant segment of Sikh farmers had difficulties in maintaining a decent standard of living and many were forced into bankruptcy. Many farmers who lost their land holdings were unable to find employment in the other sectors of the economy. In addition, during this period, recent university graduates found it difficult to obtain employment in the industrial sector. These poor economic conditions created a large, disgruntled segment of the population who were unable to achieve their economic goals due to a lack of employment opportunities. Thus, there was a discrepancy between what people expected economically from society and what they could achieve.

Hypothesis II argues that anti-state terrorism is more likely to occur when wealth is distributed unequally. This condition was also present in Punjab during the 1980s, when economic wealth, as measured in land holdings, was concentrated in the hands of a few economic elite. The Green Revolution had led many small farms into bankruptcy and their land holdings were acquired by large landowners. At the same time, it produced a consolidation of land holdings with the top 25% to 30% of the Punjab population owning 75% to 80% of the total cultivable land (Oberoi, 1990).

Hypothesis III states that anti-state terrorism is more prevalent when there is a high degree of internal dependency. This economic condition was also present in Punjab during the 1980s, with two groups of distinct cultural economic elites attempting to maintain their control or obtain control of the mode of production and maintain their specific economic interests. When in power, the Congress (I) party, supported by elite Hindu industrialists, pursued an economic agenda and implemented policies favourable to the industrial sector. This policy led to the consolidation of wealth and power within this specific sector of the economy and promoted the use of repressive activities by government agencies against members of the public who criticized the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few privileged elite.

In the case of Punjab, the Sikh population led by the Akali Dal party, which

represented the interests primarily of the agricultural sector, became critical of perceived economic repression by the central Hindu government and its industrial elite support base. In order to rectify this imbalance, a large segment of disenfranchised rural Sikhs participating in the agricultural sector utilized anti-state terror in order to correct these economic injustices. However, the Akali Dal, when in power at the state level, also tended to implement political and economic policies that would increase wealth among its party elite and also consolidate political and economic power within the hands of dominant players in the agricultural sector. These economic policies of the Akali Dal led to greater disenfranchisement of rural Sikh farmers and Hindu and Sikh industrialists residing in Punjab. This perceived economic inequality, perpetuated by a Sikh political entity, contributed to the rise of Sikh terrorism (Noboto, 1994).

**Hypothesis IV(i):** A history of political repression increases the likelihood of sustained anti-state terrorism.

**Hypothesis IV (ii):** Given the presence of other significant variables, the likelihood of anti-state terrorism in First World democracies will be greater than in Third World countries. (Corrado, 2001: 52)

Both of the above two hypotheses focus on political factors that perpetuate anti-state terrorism. Hypothesis IV (i) argues that anti-state terrorism is usually an extreme response to political repression (Corrado, 2001). This hypothesis is an accurate portrayal of political injustices the residents of Punjab were exposed to during the Punjab conflict. On two occasions, the state government of Punjab was removed from power by the federal government through the use of the “Presidents Rule”, which the Indian constitution allowed the government to invoke in case of emergencies. The federal government abused this provision to remove Punjab state governments that it deemed a political threat (e.g., in the case of the Akali Dal) (Purewal, 2000). As a result of being governed under President’s Rule, the Punjab did not have democratic elections for extended periods of time. The President’s Rule authorized operational and political



control of the state to the federal government. The Indian government used this power to set up puppet state governments to carry out their political and economic objectives. The Sikh population consistently denounced these state regimes as being undemocratic and perpetrating economic and political injustices against the Sikh population.

Hypothesis IV (ii) would not apply to the Punjab conflict, as India is not a First World democracy. However, this hypothesis is incorrect in its assumptions as it associates economic development with the level of democracy. India, although not as economically advanced as other First World nations, possesses well-developed, long-standing democratic institutions and procedures. The Sikh population in Punjab also had legitimate concerns pertaining to economic conditions, structure of government, and social policies implemented by the state. Many of the grievances Sikhs raised during the conflict are very similar to grievances brought forward by anti-state terrorist organizations in First World democracies.

**Hypothesis V:** The likelihood of terrorism increases to the degree that the state lacks a coherent and effective counter-terrorism strategy (Corrado, 2001: 53).

Hypothesis V deals with counter-insurgency measures and proposes that anti-state terrorism is more likely when national governments have failed to implement strong counterterrorism strategies to diffuse terrorist campaigns in their infancy. Initially, neither the Indian nor the Punjab governments had effective legislative, political, or law enforcement counterterrorism responses to deal with acts of terrorism. The violence led by Sant Bhindranwale and his terrorist organizations, Dashmesh Regiment and Dal Khalsa, went unabated for numerous years.

**Hypothesis VI:** The likelihood of sustained anti-state terrorism increases as terrorist groups become more complex and hierarchal (Corrado, 2001: 54).

Hypothesis VI proposes that a terrorist group will be more successful in its anti-

state terrorist campaign when its command structure becomes well defined and it develops an adequate support structure for carrying out terrorist violence. This hypothesis precisely describes the transformation of terrorist organizations in the Punjab conflict. Many of the initial terrorist organizations in the conflict were uncoordinated and poorly organized. However, by the mid 1980s, a number of Sikh terrorist organizations (i.e., Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF), Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), Babbar Khalsa, and Bhindranwale Tiger Force (BTF)) developed a hierarchical command structure similar to a military hierarchy. Many of these organizations were extremely well funded by a network of domestic and international supporters. Local supporters also provided logistical support. Over time, the terrorist attacks became well coordinated between groups to ensure maximum impact and fear.

**Hypothesis VII:** The chances of sustained anti-state terrorism increases as the level of ethnic solidarity and a history of persecution increases (Corrado, 2001: 55).

In Hypothesis VII, Corrado argues that anti-state terrorism is more likely to occur when high levels of ethnic solidarity and a history of persecution exist. For hundreds of years, the Sikh population in the Punjab have espoused their religious, linguistic, cultural, and historical solidarity as a group. Sikhs have consistently argued that as an ethnic group, they are vastly different from the Hindu majority in India. Sikhs continuously requested that the Indian government recognize their religious distinctiveness in the Constitution and implement policies that would protect their distinct ethnicity. The Sikhs also emphasized the continuous religious, political, and economic persecution they suffered from the time of the Moghul Empire (1500s) to the present Hindu-dominated federal government. Many Sikhs believed that only the creation of an independent Sikh state, ruled by a Sikh political party, would prevent ethnic persecution.

**Hypothesis VIII:** The chances of sustained anti-state terrorism increase in relation to the level of ideological commitment among individuals who oppose the government (Corrado, 2001: 55).

Hypothesis VIII argues that for a terrorist campaign to be successful and have longevity, it must be steeped in a strong ideology that justifies violent action against a government. The Punjab conflict also possessed this characteristic, with the violence being embedded in religious and ethnic nationalist ideology. The violence perpetrated by many Sikh terrorist organizations was largely justified by citing religious doctrines, such as, for example, the Granth Sahib (Sikh Holy Book) and other holy scriptures written by the Sikh gurus. Many Sikh terrorists believed that these religious scriptures gave them the right to protect the Sikh faith from assimilation with the use of violence (Shiva, 1991). The Punjab conflict was also steeped in Sikh nationalism with many individuals calling for the creation of a separate independent Sikh state (Khalistan). This new Sikh state, it was believed, would prevent the social, economic, and political persecution Sikhs were exposed to by the Hindu majority in India.

**Hypothesis IX (i):** The likelihood of anti-state terrorism increases with the number of acts of state terrorism that are recognized as being oppressive or repressive by groups in conflict with the state.

**Hypothesis IX (ii):** Anti-state terrorism is more likely to occur during times of widespread civil conflict (Corrado, 2001: 55)

Hypotheses IX (i & ii) deal with events and conflicts. Corrado proposes that anti-state terrorism is more likely to occur when domestic or international conflicts encourage individuals to take up arms. Also, the more actions groups in conflict with the state perceive as repressive, the more likely they will believe terrorism is necessary strategy to combat these injustices. The conditions outlined in the aforementioned hypotheses existed and contributed to the ongoing terrorist violence in Punjab. For example, many Sikh terrorist organizations cited numerous state actions as repressive. Other examples used by militants included the Indian army's storming and desecration of the Golden

Temple (the Sikhs' holiest shrine in Amritsar) in an attempt to flush out Sikh militants; the lack of a judicial inquiry into the 1984 New Delhi riots, where 3,000 innocent Sikhs were murdered by Hindu mobs; and the failure of the Indian government to implement the Rajiv-Longowal Accord <sup>3</sup> (1985), which would have addressed the grievances of the Sikh population in Punjab. Many Sikh terrorist groups were also dismayed by the Indian government's heavy-handed tactics in repressing the terrorist violence (Singh, 1997).

In reference to Hypothesis IX (ii), during the 1980s, the Indian government was also engaged in civil conflicts in a number of peripheral states. In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian government was embroiled in a guerrilla conflict with Muslim separatists who wanted Kashmir to become an independent Islamic nation. In Assam, Assamese university students were violently agitating for the removal of Bengali immigrants (Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh) by the Indian government. The Assamese students believed Bengali immigrants were encroaching on Assamese culture and needed to be removed in order to prevent cultural disintegration. Also, the Indian government in Gujarat was attempting to control communal violence between Muslims and Hindus. Thus, during the 1980s, there were a number of violent conflicts occurring simultaneously that may indirectly have influenced the Punjab conflict.

**Hypothesis X:** The likelihood of anti-state terrorism increases with the number of people who believe that violence is a more effective strategy than its alternatives in achieving a political objective (Corrado, 2001: 56)

The final hypothesis maintains that terrorism is utilized by individuals who have rationally chosen violent, over non-violent, means to bring about political change or achieve political goals. During the Punjab conflict, a number of Sikh terrorist organizations argued that political dialogue was unfruitful and that all political options

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<sup>3</sup> Rajiv- Longowal Accord (1985) was an agreement signed by the Indian Federal government led by the Congress Party and the main Sikh political party, the Akali Dal. The agreement set out political, economic, social, and religious changes the India government would implement in return for the reduction of Sikh terrorist violence. However, the accord did not come to fruition as both sides were incapable of implementing agreed upon measures and/or reforms.

had been exhausted. Many terrorist organizations believed that the only way they could bring about political change and prevent the Hindu government from repressing Sikhs was through the use of violence.

Corrado's model of anti-state terrorism highlights many of the major factors that contributed to the terrorist conflict in Punjab. In the next chapter, a historical analysis will be provided examining the political factors that contributed to the rise of Sikh anti-state terrorism and the political counterterrorism measures implemented by the Indian government to repress violence. Emphasis is given to the primary political parties and actors in the Punjab conflict, the Akali Dal, and the Congress party. These political parties had a direct influence on the emergence of Sikh terrorism.

## **CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In addressing the hypothesis outlined in Corrado's anti-state terrorism, I will be utilizing quantitative data to address Hypothesis V (counterterrorism variable) only. Hypothesis 1 to 4 and 6 through 10 will not be addressed due to thesis length requirements. Nonetheless, the analysis of the historical literature and summary of the Punjab conflict indirectly references some of these other hypotheses and demonstrates whether conditions the hypotheses propose were present. The use of quantitative data is not available to address these hypotheses.

### **Sources of Data**

Hypothesis V of the anti-state terrorism model highlights the implementation of a coherent and effective counterterrorism strategy by the state. In order to address this hypothesis, data series have been obtained from two sources. The first source of counterterrorism information comes from a pre-existing public data set compiled by the South Asia terrorism portal. This organization constructs databases for research and analysis for anti-state terrorist movements in South Asia. The director of this organization is KPS Gill, the former Chief of the Punjab police, who was in charge of repressing Sikh terrorism in Punjab during the latter half of the conflict. The data gathered by this organization is specific to incidents of terrorism within Punjab and provides official data compiled by security agencies during the length of the conflict. The second source of data is an annual publication; "Statistical Abstracts of Punjab", compiled by the Economic and Statistical Organization in Punjab, India. This organization is the

economic advisor to the government of Punjab. Their publications highlight the nature and extent of various socio-economic conditions in Punjab. The publications provide a number of key economic indicators in summary form and are compiled in the same manner on an annual basis to allow for comparison.

The “Statistical Abstracts of Punjab”, the economic data they contain, and the South Asia terrorism portal data set are considered to be an archival measure because the statistical data are in the form of “hard copy” records (Palys, 1997: 218). Archival data is a secondary form of data because, when initially compiled, the data were prepared for a vastly different audience and for a different purpose (Palys, 1997). Thus, this is one of the major disadvantages of archival data because the initial purpose of the statistical data is very different from the present use of explaining the rise and decline of anti-state terrorism in Punjab (Palys, 1997). A second disadvantage of archival data is that one must be careful of possible amendments in how data series are collected/recorded and how they are defined (Palys, 1997). The advantage of archival data is as an unobtrusive measure which is not influenced by reactivity (Palys, 1997). The second major advantage of an archival measure is that it allows for longitudinal analysis which is key for the present thesis (Palys, 1997).

## **Data Analysis**

In addressing Hypothesis V, a number of important counterterrorism-related data series will be selected from the “Statistical Abstracts of Punjab” and the South Asia terrorism portal and will be applied to time series analysis. Time series analysis involves a “collection of univariate data” that tends to be recorded regularly in successive and equally spaced time intervals (Griffiths, 1998: 74). A continuous time series analysis will be utilized because a majority of the key counterterrorism indicators or variables have been measured on an annual pre-determined basis and at regularly spaced intervals

(Griffiths, 1998). The purpose of using time series analysis in addressing Hypothesis V is that it allows for detecting “patterns of change” in variables over time (Griffiths, 1998: 74). This allows for the detection of overall trends, in particular counterterrorism variables, which could explain the rise and decline of anti-state terrorism in Punjab.



### **CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PUNJAB CONFLICT**

In nations afflicted by anti-state terrorism, the executive branch of government plays an important role in responding to terrorist violence. Decisions made by the executive branch on how to respond to terrorist violence influences whether there will be an escalation or de-escalation of a conflict. In the case of the Indian government's role in the Punjab conflict, a number of inappropriate political decisions led to the rise of Sikh terrorism. Implementation of a flawed political strategy, political parties' willingness to incorporate terrorist organizations to achieve objectives, failed bi-party treaty negotiations, and political indecisiveness about how to resolve the conflict were all factors that contributed to the rise of Sikh terrorism. After a decade of conflict, however, the Indian government succeeded in implementing an appropriate political strategy designed to reduce Sikh terrorism, facilitating a resolution to the Punjab conflict. The Indian government's commitment to law and order and their willingness to use security forces appropriately was a major factor in repressing Sikh terrorism during the latter half of the movement. The discussion below primarily describes the political factors contributing to the rise of Sikh anti-state terrorism and provides a brief analysis of political events that facilitated the repression of Sikh terrorism.

## **Sikh History**

In order to understand the Sikh terrorist movement from 1977 to 1995, one must be aware of the historical, political, and social factors that influenced the Punjab conflict. Since the inception of the Sikh faith in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Sikhs in Northern India were a persecuted population. This persecution emanated from intolerance by the more dominant and established religious populations in the region (Muslims and Hindus). These established faiths either failed to recognize Sikhism as a distinct religion or perceived the religion as a threat (Oberoi, 1990). The inability of these religious communities to recognize Sikhism as a distinct religion was primarily because of the faith's origins. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, created the faith in order to address the shortcomings of the other dominant religions of the period. Many followers of the Sikh faith were converts from these two religious populations. Followers of Hinduism and Islam continued to see Sikhism as a breakaway radical sect, but with close ties to their faiths. The Hindus and Muslims saw re-conversion as a means of reintegrating Sikhs back into their original faith. Persistent persecution of the Sikhs led to their developing a minority complex. This mindset created a population that fiercely defended its religious independence and was willing to use physical measures to maintain its unique faith and culture.

### **Sikhism 1300 to 1950**

From 1300 to 1799, the Sikh population in Northern India was persecuted by the Moghul Empire, the Muslim governors of Lahore, and the Afghan invaders who committed a number of atrocities against the Sikhs. The Sikh population was repressed extensively under the Moghul Empire which perceived Sikhs as a militant religious sect

and a direct threat to their governance (Mohan, 1991). Under the Moghul reign, a number of Sikh gurus were executed.

The by-product of this continuous persecution was a fundamental change in the Sikh faith: It became more militaristic over time. Sikhs were no longer willing to be oppressed and became increasingly willing to use physical force to preserve their faith. The Sikh gurus instilled a notion among their followers that there could be no distinction between politics and religion; the two were considered synonymous (Mohan, 1991). Sikh governance was perceived as essential to protecting and preserving the faith. This notion of preservation and self-governance was entrenched between 1799 and 1850, when Sikhs established an independent Sikh state governed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The state extended from the hill regions of Afghanistan in the west to the mountains of Himachal Pradesh in the east and as far south as the present day state of Haryana. During this period, Sikhs enjoyed a degree of stability and peace not seen for centuries.

In 1850, the British annexed Punjab and a new era of instability for Sikhs began. During British rule, the Sikh faith went through a dramatic transformation and was exposed to a host of challenging situations that threatened its existence. With British rule came the introduction of Christianity into Punjab. The threat of Christianity was minimal as the British did not attempt to forcefully convert the Sikh population (Mohan, 1991). Nonetheless, a fear of assimilation grew as Christian missions were introduced in the region and members of the church began to preach Christian tenets to the public. During this period, there was also a dramatic increase in the Hindu “revivalist movement” led by Arya Samaj (Malik, 1986). Arya Samaj was attempting to convert Sikhs back into mainstream Hinduism.

By the mid 1800s, in response to assimilation fears, a number of Sikh “sectarian groups”, Singh Sabhas and later Tat Khalsa (the true Khalsa) evolved (Malik, 1986). The objective of these movements was to reinvigorate the religion with a sense of purpose, spread the teachings of the Sikh gurus among the general public in Punjab, entrench commitment among Sikh followers to the faith, and clearly establish the major tenets and boundaries of Sikhism (Mohan, 1991). Constructing a distinct identity for Sikhs was seen as imperative for its preservation as it decreased the likelihood of assimilation. In order to achieve this objective, the Singh Sabha movement implemented a host of measures, such as the establishment of religious schools to disseminate knowledge and socialize “Sikh children into the history, values, and norms of behaviour associated with Sikhism” (Malik, 1986: 347). The Singh Sabhas also organized religious prayers and utilized roaming “upadeshaks” (preachers) in the rural countryside to educate individuals about their faith (Mohan, 1986: 136). Emphasis was also given to persuading Sikhs to maintain their unique outer characteristics of the five khalsa symbols (kes, kara, katcha, kanga, kirpan).

Another central objective of the Singh Sabha movement was regaining control of Sikh temples in Punjab, which were operated and controlled by private owners. Control of Sikh temples was imperative as the ability of any religion to control key institutions that disseminate spiritual and worldly knowledge is important for the preservation and spread of the faith. In comparison to religious institutions in Western civilizations, culture Sikh temples play a dual role for their congregations in imparting both spiritual and worldly knowledge. Worldly knowledge refers to preachers relaying stories about social affairs and their interpretation of social events to parishioners. Sikh temples in

Punjab also serve as educational institutions because many families, who are unable to afford public school fees, send their child to these institutions to acquire an education. Religious scholars in temples have an active audience, to whom they can impart religious and worldly knowledge, impacting how individuals perceive and interact with the environment around them.

During the early 1900s, Tat Khalsa and groups of reformers within the Singh Sabha movement led a sustained agitation to persuade the British government to transfer control and power of temples to the Sikh community (Mohan, 1991). In 1921, after years of agitation, militant Tat Khalsa reformers formed the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak committee (SGPC). The SGPC became the central institution responsible for reclaiming Sikh Gurdwaras (temples), and once this objective was achieved, the SGPC would manage and control all Sikh temples in Punjab. During this period, the SGPC created a spin-off organization known as the Shiromani Akali Dal (i.e., army of God), “a centralized body to direct the activities of Akali Jathas or band of agitators” (Mohan, 1991: 137). The Akali Jathas were authorized by the Shiromani Akali Dal to use physical force as a tactic to occupy and reclaim Sikh Gurdwaras.

By 1925, the Tat Khalsa reform movement successfully persuaded the British, through violent agitations, to enact the Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrine Bill. The bill gave legislative authority for the operational control and management of all “Sikh religious institutions” to the Sikh community (Mohan, 1991: 137). The bill also clarified the definition of a Sikh as “a person who solemnly asserted that he believed in the Sikh faith, believed in the Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus, and that had no other religion” (Mohan, 1991:137). The Singh Sabha and, later, the Tat Khalsa movement had achieved

their objectives; the central institution of the Sikh faith, the Gurdwara, was now under the control of the Sikh community and could be used to preserve the faith. The reform movement was also successful in establishing a unique Sikh identity and drawing a “communal boundary between themselves and the Hindu community” (Mohan, 1991: 137).

Between 1930 and 1950, a host of regional and national events drastically altered the lives of the Sikhs in Punjab. Arguably, the seeds of Sikh political and social discontent were sown in this period, with the greatest impact being realized in the late 1970s. During the 1930s, India was going through rapid social change, and political discontent against British imperial rule was rampant. This period was characterized by two relatively distinct, but interrelated, movements. At the state or provincial level across India, individuals were organizing massive protests and using physical violence to gain greater autonomy from British rule. These smaller state movements were also participating in a larger national movement agitating for the right of the whole Indian population to govern themselves and for the establishment of an autonomous state. In order to ensure the success of both movements, large religious populations within individual states established formal understandings of cooperation, ensuring a united voice for making political demands.

In the case of Punjab, the two largest religious populations, the Hindus and Muslims, came to an agreement to coordinate agitations and project a common political voice. They also reached political agreement that mandated proportional representation (50% of seats) between the two groups in the Punjab legislative council once state autonomy was achieved. This arrangement between the two dominant religious

populations alarmed the Sikhs in Punjab. Master Tara Singh, leader of the Akali Dal, a political entity that emerged from the Singh Sabha and Tat Khalsa movement, voiced his discontent with this arrangement (Mohan, 1991). The Akali Dal argued that Sikhs must also have separate communal representation within the legislative council to ensure that Sikh interests were not neglected. The Akali Dal demanded that one third of elected seats and political appointments in Punjab be reserved for Sikhs. Master Tara Singh, “warned his coreligionists that the Hindus and Muslims had engaged in a conspiracy to trample down the Sikhs, and that the Sikhs do not wish to replace the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy by a Hindu and Muslim bureaucracy” (Mohan, 1991: 138). Fear of assimilation and cultural disintegration was the central theme of Akali Dal opposition.

In 1935, the India Act was passed by the British parliament granting state autonomy. This act led to an 85-member Punjab legislative council being formed. Through political negotiation, the Akali Dal were successful in obtaining nine seats to be elected exclusively by a Sikh electorate, thus ensuring a political voice to protect their interests (Mohan, 1991).

In the 1940s, the Sikhs were confronted with another crisis. The significant Muslim population in northern India demanded a new independent state to be governed exclusively by Muslims. This new state was seen as essential for the preservation of the Muslim faith and for safeguarding the religious and political interests of that population. This demand alarmed the minority Sikh population because the establishment of a Muslim state and partition of India would involve the division of Punjab, the Sikhs’ cultural homeland, and, hence, the division of the Sikh population into two states (Mohan, 1991). The Akali Dal voiced their discontent with the possible partition and put

forward two political scenarios that they deemed acceptable. Akali Dal leader Master Tara Singh initially advocated for a united India in order to prevent the division of Punjab and the Sikh population. The Akali Dal were also inclined to accept the division of India into two nations (i.e., Pakistan and India), but only if Sikhs would be given an independent province or state with the choice to amalgamate with either nation (Mohan, 1991).

In 1947, India was partitioned and the state of Punjab was divided among two separate nations. A massive exchange of religious populations occurred with Sikhs and Hindus in Western Punjab fleeing to India and Muslims emigrating from east Punjab to Pakistan. The failure of the British government, the Muslim League, and the Congress Party to take into account the demands and plight of Sikhs produced a high level of animosity among the Sikh population. This animosity translated into increased support for the Akali Dal and demand for an autonomous Sikh Punjab.

### **Post-Independence Sikh Politics (1950 to 1980)**

#### **Akali Dal Party (1950 to 1975)**

In post-independence India, the Akali Dal, led by Master Tara Singh, altered their political strategy for gaining a separate state for Sikhs. The Akali Dal became more vocal in their discontent with the status quo, organized political rallies, and courted arrest in order to achieve their objective. This new strategy and sense of urgency was fuelled by fears within the Akali Dal that India, now a secular state, would not allow for “communal political representation” (Mohan, 1991: 141). A perception existed that secularism and its underlying value system based on Western ideals would “conspire to undermine religious orthodoxy among Sikhs and lead to the abandonment of the Khalsa



symbols” (Mohan, 1991: 141). Thus, India and its newly adopted secular system were perceived as an impediment to Sikh sovereignty and a means to accelerate cultural disintegration.

Prior to independence, the Indian National Congress Party had promised various ethnic and religious groups that once India had established sovereignty, it would reorganize state borders along linguistic lines. This political promise was made to garner support from various religious factions for the national sovereignty movement. The Akali Dal, sensing an opportunity to achieve statehood, submitted a request to have all Punjabi-speaking areas unified creating a “unilingual” state where Punjabi culture, language, and the Sikh religion would flourish (Mohan, 1991: 142). In 1955, the State Reorganization Committee accepted re-alignment of various other states on linguistic lines, but Sikh demands for a unilingual Punjab were ignored. The States Reorganization Committee rejected the Akali Dal request for a separate Punjab Suba (i.e., Sikh majority state) reasoning that the Akali Dal request was communal in nature and ideologically driven by theology (Mohan, 1991). These principles did not conform to the secular nature of the Indian state and also challenged the “unity” of the newly formed nation.

After consistent agitation by the Akali Dal in Punjab, geo-political changes with neighbouring nations, and dramatic political changes at the national level with the appointment of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister, a decision was made to accept the division of Punjab into Punjabi-speaking and Hindi-speaking areas in 1966. This decision was also influenced by a change in Akali Dal leadership when Master Tara Singh was replaced by Sant Fateh Singh, a more moderate leader who did not emphasize or promote Sikh separatism in communal terms (Chima, 1997; Teleford, 1992). Sant

Fateh Singh was more diplomatic and requested a Sikh majority state based on linguistic and not communal terms.

In 1966, the Punjab State Reorganization Bill was passed with Hindi-speaking areas of Punjab being detached to form a new state. Haryana and other Hindi-speaking areas were amalgamated with the neighbouring state of Himachal Pradesh (Mohan, 1991: 143). The Akali Dal had finally achieved their objective of the creation of a “Sikh majority state”, with Sikhs composing 54% of the population (Mohan, 1991: 143). The Akali Dal believed that with the creation of the new Punjab, they finally had a state where Sikh religious, cultural, and language rights would be preserved and flourish. However, in subsequent years, the Akali Dal as a political entity went through a dramatic transformation with the objective of cultural and religious preservation taking a secondary role to the individual aspirations of a select few privileged party elite.

With territorial aspirations achieved, the Akali Dal shifted its focus to obtaining political power in the newly created state of Punjab. Their quest for political power was not driven by concerns for religious and cultural self-preservation, but rather by the financial aspirations of a few members (Gill, 1997). The majority of Akali leadership, members, and followers came from the Jat Sikh class. Jat Sikhs were largely rural farmers who owned a majority of the agricultural land in Punjab and contributed heavily to the state’s largest industry. With the establishment of a Sikh Punjab, many of the affluent landowners in the party believed that if they could control political power, they could access state financial resources to promote their agricultural interests and increase their own wealth.

During the inaugural Punjab state election campaign (1966), the Akali Dal overtly campaigned under the banner of a Sikh political party whose primary interest was to preserve Sikh institutions and culture, prevent religious persecution and discrimination, and promote the interests of all Sikhs in Punjab. However, internal policies of the Akali Dal were vastly different with the focus largely on economic policies to be implemented once they were in power. The overt political platform of the Akali Dal in 1967 had a strong undertone of communal rhetoric and was successful in assisting the party form a minority government, in coalition with a Hindu nationalist party (Jan Sangh) (Teleford, 1992). The Akali Dal alliance with a nationalist Hindu party negatively impacted their image and reputation in the Sikh community. A Sikh political entity that had previously been highly critical of Hindu repression, the Akali Dal were now willing to form a strategic alliance with the Hindus in order to obtain governance (Oberoi, 1990).

With the Akali Dal leading the Punjab government from 1967 to 1970, political elites within the party implemented a host of agricultural policies to further their own economic interests (Gill, 1997). Policies focused largely on investing in the infrastructure on such projects as roads, an electrical grid, and water canals, all of which were imperative for a successful agricultural sector. State money was used to finance loans to assist farmers and to purchase agricultural products like farm equipment, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, and other necessities. Farmers also received indirect farm subsidies with state officials allocating public money to keep the price of electricity and agricultural products artificially low on a yearly basis to facilitate their acquisition by farmers. During this time, the Akali Dal also consistently advocated for higher crop prices, set by the central government, which was the primary purchaser of food grains

from Punjab farmers (Leaf, 1985). All the economic policies implemented by the Akali Dal government during this period drastically increased the wealth of many of its affluent members, but, in particular, they lined the pockets of the party-elite who gained tremendously from increased agricultural profitability and access to state financial resources.

The Akali Dal coalition government continued to hold power from 1967 to 1970, but, in 1971, lost the state election to the Congress (I) party. The defeat of the Akali Dal in 1971 was linked to a number of causes. The primary factor facilitating their defeat was loss of faith in the Akali Dal as a Sikh political party. This loss of faith happened among many members, followers, and factions within the party itself, as well as among segments of the general population (Oberoi, 1991).

Followers, members, and factions within the Akali Dal questioned the state government's lack of progress in implementing policies that would safeguard Sikh religious interests and preserve their unique cultural, linguistic, and social identity (Malik, 1986). Some Akali Dal members and many Sikhs could not fathom how a party that had fought so diligently for Sikh interests and finally achieved a position to implement change in a substantive way was unwilling to bring into effect the appropriate legal measures and policy changes. The strongest critics from within the party were separatist and religious factions who saw the compromising stance of the party as dangerous. They reasoned that not taking advantage of the opportunity to entrench Sikh communal interests would leave Sikhs open to continual repression and abuse in the future by the Hindu population (Malik, 1986).

General public opinion was also one of the overarching catalysts for political change. During their brief reign, the Akali Dal alienated a significant portion of the electorate as a result of the economic policies and various other social measures they implemented. It is important to understand two unique characteristics of the Punjab electorate. One was that the minority Hindu population was composed largely of business owners and operators or manual labourers in various industries. During Akali Dal rule, this section of the population failed to receive any significant direct or indirect economic benefits because most economic policies were geared towards agriculture, where the Sikh population was over-represented. The second characteristic was that not all Sikhs were farmers. In particular, Sikhs residing in urban areas, whose occupations were primarily linked to industry or small business, were largely ignored by the Akali Dal and their agricultural economic agenda (Malik, 1986). Another group that was largely ignored by the Akali Dal was the small Sikh farmer who owned few plots of land. Akali Dal agricultural policies were primarily geared towards assisting large- to medium-size farmers, and small peasant Sikh landowners faced significant hardship because of these policies (Oberoi, 1991). Access to state resources for small farmers was impeded by strict regulations pertaining to loans and subsidies. In effect, the Akali Dal, with its economic policies and lack of a social, cultural, and religious agenda, alienated a significant portion of the Punjab electorate. This alienation led to the moderate Congress (I) party's success in the 1971 Punjab state election.

Despite the Akali Dal's electoral defeat in 1971, the party continued to exert significant political influence in Punjab. In 1972, now out of power, the party adopted a new strategy to regain political power and associated economic benefits. Strategists in

the Akali Dal understood that the party had alienated a significant portion of the general Punjab voting population and the Sikh vote in particular. Thus, they reasoned that the only viable means of regaining political power would be to broaden the party's appeal amongst the general Punjab public, re-unite the large Sikh voting block, which alone was sufficient for electoral victory, and address issues that were important to religious factions within the party. The issue Akali Dal party brass focused on as the central pillar of their political platform was religious/cultural assimilation and discrimination against Sikhs. They were aware that any issue linked to the Sikh religion would be an effective means of uniting the Sikh vote under a single political banner and mobilizing the Sikh masses (Malik, 1986). They also understood that religion had historically been an issue that could be successfully exploited to obtain political objectives or political concessions.

Thus, in 1973, the Akali Dal began to organize a host of political agitations against the state and federal government highlighting social injustices Sikhs were being exposed to on a daily basis because of their religious and cultural orientation. Many of the arguments and examples of social inequalities and injustices raised by the Akali Dal borrowed heavily from historical arguments made by the Singh Sabha, Tat Khalsa, and Punjab Suba movements.

### **The Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR) 1973**

In October, 1973, a working committee of the Akali Dal composed of prominent Sikh ideologues, formulated the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR). The ASR was a document highlighting a host of Sikh political, economic, territorial, and religious grievances. The document clearly articulated policies of the central government that were detrimental to the Sikh population and offered resolutions by which these

grievances could be addressed (Yaegar, 1991). (See [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/punjab/document/papers/anantpur\\_sahib\\_resolution.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/punjab/document/papers/anantpur_sahib_resolution.htm) for full text of ASR). By some, the ASR was perceived as a secessionist document laying the ground work for the establishment of a Sikh state called Khalistan, while others argued that the document clearly articulated legitimate concerns of the Sikh population in Punjab and worked to reorient state and federal government relations (Teleford, 1992: 971).

However, the Akali Dal's true political purpose for constructing the ASR was to establish a high level of anxiety and fear within the Sikh population (Teleford, 1992). The Akali Dal wanted to entrench in the minds of Sikhs the idea that they, as a minority in India, were being exposed to a host of repressive state actions in an attempt to assimilate them into the dominant Hindu religion. The ASR was an influential document that shaped and moulded the Sikhs' perception that India and the Hindu majority were a direct religious threat to Sikhism. The ASR "played on the fears of the Sikh people"; it persuaded them to believe that over time, they would cease to exist as a religious and cultural minority and that only through political and physical action could they alter this fate (Yaeger, 1991: 226). The Akali Dal projected themselves as the only political party that could address these grievances and that, once re-elected, they would work diligently to protect the rights of the Sikh population. During the mid 1970s, the Akali Dal worked continuously to establish doubt and anxiety in the minds of the Sikh voting block in an attempt to re-establish credibility within the community and regain political power.

### **The Emergency (1975 to 1977)**

In the mid 1970s, the developments associated with the ASR and the Akali Dal were overshadowed by political events at the federal level. Between 1975 and 1977, Indira Gandhi decreed that India was in a state of “emergency”. The primary reason for this was to nullify legal proceedings examining her participation in illegal pre-election activities that facilitated her 1972 federal electoral victory (Leaf, 1985). In addition, public criticism of widespread political corruption within the federally elected Congress (I) government was rampant. Accusations were made that government ministers, Congress (I) party members, and public servants were accepting bribes in exchange for political favours. Indira Gandhi’s son, Sanjay, was a central figure in the political corruption investigation (Leaf, 1985).

The Congress (I) government’s popularity among the Indian electorate was decreasing rapidly. Federal and state opposition parties were effective in keeping the issue in the forefront of Indian politics and, thus, were also benefiting electorally. During the emergency, Indira Gandhi used legal measures to repress vocal political opposition parties in order to maintain power (Leaf, 1985). In Punjab, over the length of the emergency, 40,000 Akali Dal members were arrested for participating in anti-Congress (I) demonstrations and agitations named, appropriately, “save democracy” (Teleford, 1992: 972). Key leaders of the Akali Dal were arrested and detained for significant periods of time for organizing these demonstrations. The Akali Dal were vocal opponents of the political practices of the Congress (I) party, consistently criticizing the actions of Gandhi and the party as being anti-democratic, repressive, and tyrannical.



### **End to the Emergency (1977 to 1980)**

In March, 1977, Indian federal elections were held resulting in the resounding defeat of the Congress (I) government and the subsequent formation of a minority Janata-party-led coalition government. Morarji Desai, the Janata Party leader, aligned all anti-Congress opposition parties to form a more moderate and conciliatory federal government. The coalition government would work hard to address regional issues and reduce central government influence in state jurisdictions. In following a more passive and conciliatory approach, Desai integrated members of the Akali Dal into his coalition government and incorporated two Akali members of parliament into his cabinet (Teleford, 1992).

In the same year, state elections were also held in Punjab leading to an Akali Dal - Janata Party coalition government. The success of the Akali Dal at the state level can be attributed to voter anger towards the Congress (I) government for their unpopular social policies and their consistent erosion of democratic institutions and processes (Teleford, 1992).

In the lead-up to the 1977 federal and state elections, the Akali Dal political platform was adjusted to emphasize the dominant issue of the period: restoration of democratic governance and institutions. In its campaign, the Akali Dal failed to raise the ASR in any substantial manner, with Sikh communal concerns largely being neglected during the campaign. This strategy was adopted as the one most likely to increase the probability of the Akali Dal securing a substantial number of electoral seats and thus forming a government.

The Akali Dal continued to adopt a non-confrontational political strategy at both the federal and state level in the Janata coalition governments. The Akali Dal needed to

pursue a secular agenda politically in order to maintain coalition governments, as raising the issue of Sikh nationalism would surely lead to the withdrawal of support from the Hindu nationalist Janata Party.

At the state level (1977-1980), the Akali Dal, in coalition with the Janata Party, implemented policies and programs that benefited equally both Sikh and Hindu constituents of Punjab. Economic interests of the Sikh Jat agricultural population and Hindu “commercial and industrial class” were promoted, with state and federal funds going to both groups to appease constituents of both parties (Malik, 1986: 351). Thus, the Akali Dal continued a historical pattern of not implementing or pursuing Sikh religious, territorial, and political reforms once in power because raising such issues would lead to the loss of political power and the associated economic benefits. The failure of the Akali Dal to adequately address and protect Sikh religious and cultural interests would have serious consequences in the future. The lack of political desire and indecisiveness, in part, facilitated the emergence of Sikh fundamentalism and justified the use of extreme physical violence as advocated by this movement to bring about political and social change.

### **Rise of Sikh Fundamentalism and Terrorism (1977 to 1984)**

As political events in the 1970s continued to cause great social upheaval in Punjab, a new and increasingly dangerous threat was emerging in the rural countryside. In a small religious institution (Dam Dami Taksal) in Chowk Mehta, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was preaching a fierce and fiery brand of Sikh fundamentalism. Dami Dami Taksal was a sacred religious institution tracing its “origins to Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and final preceptor of the Sikhs who founded the Khalsa order” (Oberoi, 1990:

266). Dam Dami Taksal's educational goal was to instruct students on how to properly read and interpret the Granth Sahib (Sikh Holy Book) and impart religious training (Yaeger, 1991). Members of this religious institution preached and followed a very orthodox form of Sikhism. Followers of Dam Dami Taksal had a strong pre-conception of how Sikh society should be structured, what religious rules should govern individual behaviour, and what constituted the ideal of a "true" Sikh (Oberoi, 1990). Bhindranwale, being a product of this religious institution, held very strong beliefs about Sikhism. However, what separated him from other followers was his willingness to use violence to bring about change and his belief that physical action was necessary to achieve religious reforms (Yaeger, 1991).

### **Social and Economic Context**

In order to understand Sant Bhindranwale and the rise of his Sikh fundamentalist movement, one must understand the social and economic context in which the movement arose. As discussed earlier, the Sikh population historically has been a persecuted population, constantly fighting against religious and cultural assimilation. This continual persecution was entrenched in the minds of all Sikhs as they were consistently exposed to religious speeches, stories told by parents or teachers, and interaction with the Hindu population on a daily basis reminding them of their history. Political events during the 1900s, with Sikh political bodies attempting to gain recognition for Sikhs as a unique religious and cultural group, influenced how the Sikh population perceived themselves. Constant political feuds between the Akali Dal and the central Hindu government confirmed perceptions of a double standard in how Sikhs are treated economically, socially, politically, and territorially. This double standard also extended to the

unwillingness of the central government to protect or preserve the unique Sikh religion and culture. All these historical events not only contributed to a Sikh minority complex, but also produced a simmering hatred among segments of the Sikh population. This hatred would have drastic consequences.

In addition to the effects of historical and current political events of the time, significant changes in the Punjab economy and cultural value system increased discontent among Sikhs and laid the foundation for the emergence of Sikh fundamentalism. The Green Revolution was a new farming method introduced in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It involved the introduction of sophisticated farming techniques and technology into Punjab with the objective of increasing food grain yields. The farming technique involved farmers' planting high yielding variety (HYV) seeds and supplementing their growth through the application of certain types of products including fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, large amounts of water, and using farming equipment to harvest and maintain crops. This type of farming is capital intensive and is best suited for farmers possessing large holdings of land (Shiva, 1991). The ramification of this farming method was that a significant proportion of small Jat Sikh landholders were unable to maintain their farms, plunging a significant proportion of this population into unemployment (Oberoi, 1990; Teleford, 1992). The Akali Dal, with its loyalty to larger farmers, and the central Indian government led by the Congress (I) party, which primarily supported business owners, both ignored pleas for assistance from poor rural Jat Sikh farmers, creating significant discontent among poor rural, disenfranchised Sikh farmers who had no avenue to have their grievances addressed.

During the time that economic factors continued to rapidly change Punjab, there were also substantial cultural changes occurring in the Sikh population. Western culture began to have a profound influence on individual lifestyles and attitudes. Traditional Sikh beliefs were being replaced by seeming more progressive Western values. Social diseases like alcoholism, smoking, and drug addiction were reaching epidemic proportions among the Sikh population (Oberoi, 1990). Individuals adopted Western attire, women began to apply cosmetic products, and youth began to openly challenge authority.

The rate of economic and social change in Punjab was so rapid it did not provide the Sikh population with an opportunity to adapt or synthesize changes in their immediate environment. This instability provided an ideal opportunity for Sikh fundamentalists to exploit and facilitate the emergence of their religious movement. Instability provided Sikh fundamentalists a disgruntled and receptive audience who were willing to listen to and support anyone who could assist them in their dire situation.

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his Sikh fundamentalist movement helped individuals make sense of their everyday reality. The disenfranchised Sikh population provided Bhindranwale with recruits for his terrorist organization, an active following who supported his ideological beliefs, and a population willing to participate in violent physical actions to bring about social change.

### **Rise of Bhindranwale's Fanatical Religious Movement**

Sant Bhindranwale attributed the problems of the Sikh population to two factors: "religious depravity among the Sikhs and the ever increasing Hindu domination over the Sikhs" (Oberoi, 1990: 267). In relation to religious depravity, Bhindranwale was a vocal

critic of Sikh society straying away from its traditional religious roots and the teachings of the gurus. According to Bhindranwale, religious deviation was the primary source of Sikh suffering; “God” was punishing them. Bhindranwale had clear opinions about modifications that Sikhs needed to make in appearance and behaviour to decrease their suffering. The key component to Bhindranwale’s philosophy was the notion that individuals needed to make their faith the central feature in their lives (Pettigrew, 1987). Religion was to take precedence over all other aspects of one’s life. Individuals were to pray (Gurbani) at dawn and dusk, reminding themselves of the gurus’ teachings. He wanted all Sikhs to adopt the five outward symbols of the Khalsa (Sikh brotherhood) and required them to take amrit (Sikh baptism ceremony) (Oberoi, 1990; Pettigrew, 1987). Modifications in lifestyle were necessary as individuals behaviour needed to be guided by a strict moral code. Core elements of this moral code involved avoiding immoral activities, such as smoking, alcohol consumption, illicit drug use, gambling, adultery, and other inappropriate behaviours. Bhindranwale was also critical of the influence of Western norms on Sikh society. He believed Western ideals, music, style of dress (exposing women’s bodies), cosmetics, and jewellery led to moral decay in the community. This moral decay was exemplified by individuals deviating from the essence of Sikhism and becoming “indifferent toward their religious identity” (Chima, 1997, Oberoi, 1990).

In his examination of Sikh society, Bhindranwale also identified other troubling components that he believed degraded and distorted the Sikh faith internally. For example, he believed that the Nirankaris, a sub-sect of Sikhism, practiced an impure form of the religion (Mohan, 1991). The Nirankaris believed in a living guru, thought to be a

successor from previous Sikh gurus (Oberoi, 1990). “Orthodox Sikhs” believed the line of gurus ceased after the tenth guru with subsequent teachings being embodied in a scriptural Guru (Guru Granth Sahib-Sikhs’ holy book). Nirankaris also partook in idol worship; Orthodox Sikhs were critical of idol worship and the manipulation of historic religious doctrines or practices (Oberoi, 1990).

Bhindranwale, an Orthodox Sikh, was a vocal opponent of the Nirankaris and led his followers in direct confrontations against them. In 1978, the Nirankaris held their annual religious convention in the holy city of Amritsar. Bhindranwale was incensed by the convention, as he saw it as an insult for a heretical Sikh sect to gather in Sikhism’s holiest city and also the heartland of “Sikh Orthodoxy” (Oberoi, 1990: 273). He and other religious leaders in the Golden Temple exhorted their followers to take action against this “blasphemous act” and to send a clear message to the Nirankari sect that their behaviour and religious practices would no longer be tolerated (Teleford, 1992). A group of Orthodox Sikhs went directly from the Golden Temple to the Nirankari convention. A physical altercation ensued between the two groups with twelve Orthodox Sikhs and three Nirankaris losing their lives (Major, 1987). Bhindranwale and his associates continued to clash with the heretical sect culminating in the assassination of the Nirankaris’ “spiritual head”, Baba Gurbachan Singh, in April, 1980 (Oberoi, 1990: 273).

As the Sikh fundamentalist movement continued to evolve into the early 1980s, Bhindranwale expanded the scope of his criticism to include the Indian state. The initial phase of the movement primarily concentrated on criticizing the general Sikh population about its value system and the sub-sects within the religion who were perceived as deviating away from mainstream Sikhism (Chima, 1997). Later, Sant Bhindranwale

became increasingly critical of the Hindu central government and its perceived assimilation strategies. Bhindranwale's criticisms of the Indian state borrowed heavily from arguments made by previous Sikh leaders and the Akali Dal. Sant Bhindranwale believed the Indian central state was conspiring to repress the Sikhs in order to assimilate them into mainstream Hinduism. The inability or lack of commitment by the central Hindu government to implement measures or policies to protect the Sikh religion, language, and cultural traditions exacerbated the feeling of alienation within the community. According to Bhindranwale, this lack of commitment to protecting the Sikh faith was best exemplified by the Hindu government's failure to accept the political, religious, economic, and territorial demands presented in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR). Formal acceptance and implementation of these demands would have demonstrated the Indian government's commitment to preserving the Sikh faith and entrenching Sikhs' unique place in Indian society, thus, possibly neutralizing the Sikh fundamentalist movement and the underlying ideological beliefs on which it was based.

Bhindranwale's litany of complaints and criticisms against the Indian government was long and provocative. He was critical of how the central Hindu government had failed to address the economic plight of so many Sikh farmers who were facing dire financial difficulties because of increased farming costs. However, federal funding continued to be disproportionately allocated to the industrial sector dominated by the Hindu business class.

He noted religious incidents of roving Hindu gangs desecrating Sikh holy shrines with the central government unwilling to implement strict security measures to locate and prosecute those who committed such degrading acts. Bhindranwale highlighted social



injustices with police constantly harassing and falsely accusing Sikh youth of participating in criminal activities (Oberoi, 1990). The following quotation best exemplifies Bhindranwale's feelings for the federal Indian Congress (I) government:

The Hindus are trying to enslave us; atrocities against the Sikhs are increasing day by day under the Hindu imperialist rulers of New Delhi; the Sikhs have never felt so humiliated, not even during the reign of the Moghul emperors and British colonialist. How long can Sikhs tolerate injustice? (Teleford, 1992: 975).

### **Bhindranwale's Final Solution**

According to Oberoi (1990), Bhindranwale envisioned two solutions to the dire circumstances of the Sikh population. First, he demanded that all Sikhs in Punjab participate in a violent religious revolution against the Hindu-dominated federal government. The objective of the revolution would be the establishment of an autonomous Sikh state (Khalistan), independent of Hindu influence. The new state of Khalistan would be governed by Sikh theology and would be ruled by Sikhs. Bhindranwale believed that only through the creation of this religious state would Sikhs finally be free from the exploitation and social inequalities perpetuated by the Hindu government. Khalistan would allow Sikhs to practise their unique religion, language, and cultural traditions in harmony and would allow these to flourish under the protection of the Sikh state.

Second, as already discussed earlier, Bhindranwale demanded that Sikhs practise their religion with greater vigour, adopting the symbols of the Khalsa. Bhindranwale believed that if individuals lived a lifestyle the Sikh gurus had preached, their social and economic conditions would improve.

## **Use of Violence**

To support his strong belief in the use of violence to affect change in Sikh society and to combat the repressive activities of the Hindu-dominated central government. Bhindranwale consistently made reference to holy Sikh scriptures and the teachings of the gurus which stated that when under threat or facing repression, the Sikh community is justified in using violence to preserve the faith and to end the suffering of the people. In justifying the use of violence, Bhindranwale manipulated Sikh history in a self-serving manner by presenting his followers those historical fables or teachings of the gurus that emphasized the doctrine of violence for self-defence. He attempted to entrench the idea in his followers that violent opposition to “unjust rule and tyrannical rulers” was appropriate because the Sikh gurus had taken such actions when opposing Moghul and Muslim repression (Pettigrew, 1987: 8). His preaching made very little reference to the message of tolerance and restraint which the gurus also argued was necessary during turbulent periods.

The following excerpts from Bhindranwale’s message illustrate his use of Sikh scripture and teaching to bolster his own perspective. In the following quotation, he invokes the Sikh gurus and their struggles to demonstrate how “peace” has only existed for Sikhs when they have not faced repression from the state and that once the community is “the subject of attack it is its duty to restore righteousness” using violent action (Pettigrew, 1987: 4).

Peaceful means-Shanti mai- these words cannot be found together in any part of the Sikh scriptures [i.e. you will find “peace” and you will find “means” but no compound word] in the history of the Guru’s nor, in the history of the Sikhs.... [He illustrates what he means by this]. Guru Arjun Dev [the fifth Guru, 1581-1606] fought a peaceful struggle and he became a martyr. Guru Har Gobind took rightful revenge. The 7<sup>th</sup> [1644-61] and 8<sup>th</sup> [1661-64] Guru’s took no art in wars, preached Sikhism and helped the poor. The 9<sup>th</sup> Guru [1664-75] again faced

struggle which he fought peacefully and sacrificed himself for justice. The 10<sup>th</sup> Guru [1675-1708] redeemed that sacrifice in the name of justice (Pettigrew, 1987: 4).

In the following two excerpts, Bhindranwale explicitly encourages members of the audience to use violence. Violence is justified as a necessary means of religious preservation and reference is also made to the moral obligation of all Sikhs to use whatever action is necessary in the face of perceived threats to the Sikh faith. The manner in which Bhindranwale presented his message was also significant as he used language that was emotionally charged and provocative in citing individuals to participate in violent physical action. He knew how to manipulate the audience and exploit negative emotions.

I cannot really understand how it is that in the presence of Sikhs', Hindus are able to insult the Sat Guru Granth Sahib Sacha Patsha [the one and only True God, our scripture, the True King]. I don't know how were these Sikhs born to their mothers and why they were not born to animals, to cats, and to bitches..... whoever insults the Guru Granth Sahib, he should be killed then and there..... I will take care of the man who comes to me after lynching the murderer of the Guru Granth Sahib.

How many times have I told you if someone insults a Sikh girl, the Guru Granth, or acts against the weak and downtrodden, take revenge. The Guru Granth has been buried in cow dung and thrown on the road side. That is your father, your Guru's that they treat so. And then you come to me and ask what are your orders? You should know your orders if you are true Sikhs. (Pettigrew, 1987: 16)

Bhindranwale believed martyrdom was the ultimate sacrifice a "true Sikh" could make for his religion and that such actions would be rewarded in the after-life. To die for one's faith was seen as an expression of loyalty to Sikhism and the gurus' teachings. Bhindranwale discusses martyrdom in the following quotations:

Unless you are prepared to die, sacrificing your own life, you cannot be a free people..... If you start thinking in terms of service to your community, then you

will be on the right path and you will readily sacrifice yourself. If you have faith in the Guru no power on earth can enslave you. The Sikh tradition is to pray to God, take one's vows before the Guru Granth Sahib and then act careless of consequences to oneself. (Pettigrew, 1987: 17)

Young Sikh brothers, it says "sacrifice yourselves for Sikhism. Today the Sikh Panth is under threat, repay it by sacrificing your life..." All strengthen yourselves for action and be ready for sacrifice. (Pettigrew, 1987: 17)

### **Sikh Fundamentalist Violence Unleashed**

Advocating violence as a necessary component of change, Bhindranwale and his followers unleashed a campaign of terror by the late 1970s. As stated earlier, the initial target of Bhindranwale's organization were members of the Nirankari sect. Acts of violence against this group were largely carried out by Dam Dami Taksal followers and individuals loyal to Bhindranwale. However, during the early 1980s, formal terrorist organizations, the Dal Khalsa, Dashmesh Regiment, and All India Sikh Student Federation (AISSF) emerge as the primary actors of terrorist violence. All three of these terrorist organizations were in part controlled by Bhindranwale, with their members showing strong allegiance to the Sikh fundamentalist cause. AISSF was the most prominent of these organizations boasting a membership of 100,000 student supporters. AISSF had extensive grassroots and social support networks in Punjab universities and colleges, as well as in rural villages (Chima, 1997). The AISSF were led by Amrik Singh, a former student of Dam Dami Taksal and Bhindranwale's blood brother (Chima, 1997; Major, 1987).

The demographic characteristics of Sikh terrorist organization members remained relatively consistent over the length of the Punjab conflict. Members of Sikh terrorist

organizations tended to be under the age of 25, from the Jat Sikh caste, majority were high school dropouts, from a low socio-economic household, and a significant proportion had previous interaction with the Punjab criminal justice system (Puri & Judge, 1997). Initially, many of those who joined Sikh terrorism were ideologically committed to the religious movement. However, many recruits in the latter half of the conflict joined Sikh terrorist organizations to participate in illegal behaviour (i.e., bank robberies, theft, and kidnappings for ransom) and to obtain monetary awards. The types of violence carried out by these terrorist organizations can be classified into two categories: target killings and random indiscriminate killings.

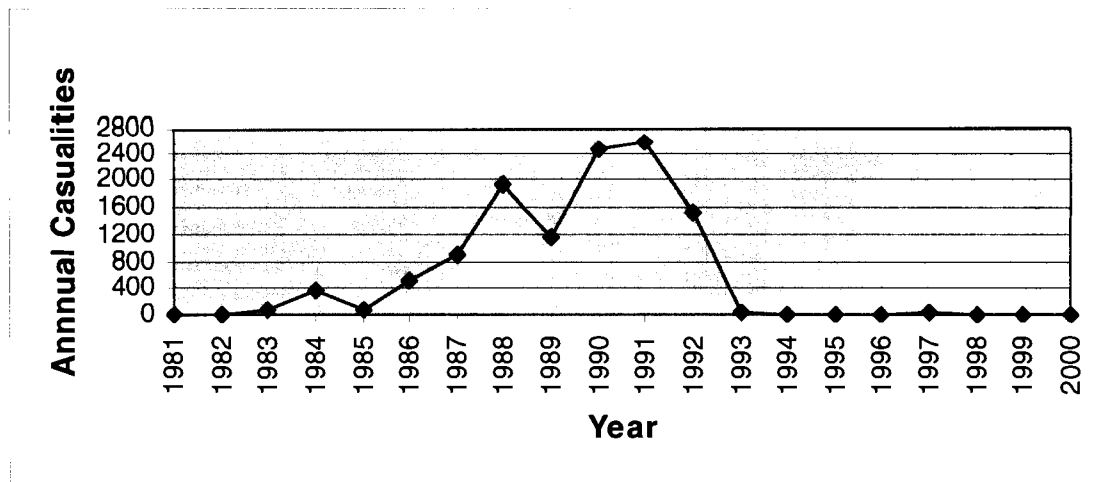
Target killings primarily involved the elimination of individuals deemed a threat to the movement and perceived as obstacles to the objective of Khalistan. Moderate Sikh leaders, Hindu politicians, and newspaper editors were assassinated for criticizing Bhindranwale's beliefs and actions and for demanding that the Indian government implement stronger security measures to suppress the Sikh fundamentalist movement (Keesings, 1984; Unknown, 1984). Members of the Congress (I) government and opposition Hindu parties (BJP, Jan Sangh) were consistent targets.

Sant Bhindranwale did not take well to criticism of his behaviour nor was he open to a critical analysis of his belief system. Any individual who spoke negatively about him or impeded his success was eliminated. This strategy also extended to agents of the government, such as security personnel. Punjab police officers were perceived as legitimate targets because they were agents of the Indian state participating in counterterrorism operations designed to capture or eliminate members of Bhindranwale's terrorist organization. For example, the deputy inspector general of the Punjab police in

charge of counterterrorism operations was assassinated on the steps of the Golden Temple in 1983 (Unknown, 1983).

The second category of terrorist acts involved the indiscriminate killing of individuals. The primary purpose of these acts was to promote fear in the Punjab's Hindu community, thereby encouraging their emigration and the establishment of the Sikh-dominated state of Khalistan. Victims of these acts of terrorism were not sought out for personal reasons, but rather were random victims in the commission of terrorist acts. There are a range of offences that fall into this category, including random shooting of Hindus in markets by armed Sikh gunmen on motorcycles, hijacking of buses leading to the execution of Hindu passengers, and grenade attacks on large congregations of Hindus at religious festivals (Keesings, 1982; Keesings, 1984). Members of Bhindranwale's terrorist organization also resorted to fire bombing railway stations or post offices and derailing commuter trains (Unknown, 1984). In addition, Sikh terrorists' committed criminal offences, such as bank or jewellery store robberies, in order to finance their terrorist networks (Mohan, 1991). In the commission of these criminal offences, innocent citizens were often killed. The level of Sikh terrorist violence, as illustrated in Figure 1, began increasing in 1983, with a sustained level of annual civilian casualties continuing to increase until 1992.

Figure 1: Annual Civilian Casualties in Punjab 1981 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001)



Most of the initial acts of terrorism in the early 1980s were carried out by members of Bhindranwale's organization. However, in 1984, Bhindranwale and key members of his terrorist network were eliminated in "Operation Bluestar", the armed raid by security forces on the Golden Temple. Violence after the mid 1980s was primarily carried out by a host of new, independent spin-off Sikh terrorist groups. These new Sikh terrorist organizations continued on with previous forms of violence and targeting Hindu politicians, Hindu residents of Punjab and migrant workers, moderate political voices within the Sikh community, and security forces. However, the intensity and frequency of attacks increased, and there was a slight variation in tactics overtime. Sikh terrorist organizations during the latter half of the conflict attempted to achieve mass casualties when carrying out attacks. This led to Sikh terrorist organizations to increase its use and reliance on explosives when carrying out attacks on buses, trains, and on Punjab security defence posts, thus ensuring high fatalities. Sikh terrorist organizations also began to favour the tactic of hijacking buses, and systematically selecting and executing Hindu passengers (Gill, 1997).

## **Role of the Indian Congress Party (1947 to 1981)**

From India's inception in 1947, the dominant National political organization was the Congress Party. The following section demonstrates how changes in leadership style in this federal party contributed to the Punjab conflict.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the inaugural leader of the Congress Party (1947 to 1965), was a charismatic leader who used a non-confrontational and diplomatic approach to resolve regional conflicts in India and in Punjab specifically. Nehru was a staunch supporter of secularism and India's territorial integrity, working tirelessly to address grievances brought forth by linguistic, religious, and cultural sub-national movements. Indira Gandhi, who took power of the Congress Party following Nehru's passing, had a very different approach to federal governance. She was less concerned with resolving linguistic, religious, and cultural sub-national issues and preferred to take a more confrontational approach when addressing these movements. Indira Gandhi was also more focused on centralizing political power, showing little concern to how political tactics implemented to achieve this goal might lead to conflict and violence. The implications and consequences of this leadership are illustrated by the Punjab conflict during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The Congress Party, after India's independence, was led by Jawaharlal Nehru, whose political reign extended to the mid 1960s. Nehru's and the Congress Party's doctrine of political governance had a number of unique attributes that were seen as essential in order to operate a country adequately. A great deal of emphasis was given to the establishment of a secular state, where the role of religion would not intertwine with political affairs (Chima, 1997). The shift to a state governed by secularism was the



consequence of pre-independence events, which saw a Muslim political entity (the Muslim League) successfully manipulate communal politics and win an independent Muslim state (East and West Pakistan, with governance being centralized in West Pakistan), partitioned from India. Thus, in order to prevent a similar event, the Congress government, under Nehru's rule, was a staunch supporter of secularism and the preservation of a united territorial India.

The Congress government worked feverishly to maintain a strong national identity among the Indian population. Nehru and the Congress Party were vocal critics of linguistic, religious, and cultural sub-national movements, which they perceived as threats to national unity and the pan-Indian identity (Hardgrave Jr, 1983). Any requests made by such movements were ignored at the federal level, and the Congress government was unwilling to meet any demands put forward by these movements. Nehru and the Congress party instead decided to micro-manage sub-national conflicts at the state and district level. As the Congress party had political wings active and, in many cases, in power at the state level, state authorities were delegated powers to deal with regional issues. Even in states where the Congress party was not in power, the federal government assisted opposition parties in an attempt to resolve issues and avoid conflict. Nehru consistently promoted the use of locally elected state governments, regardless of political affiliation, to help mediate the conflict, as local populations or political parties demonstrated a greater understanding of issues and the means in which to resolve conflict appropriately.

Thus, the federal government consistently played a supplementary role in negotiations with state officials having responsibility to ensure successful resolution of

issues. This mode of governance consistently ensured that the federal government would never be held directly liable for the failure of talks or negotiations as the federal government was not the primary actor at the negotiation table. This method of conflict resolution or political negotiation also ensured that distinct linguistic, religious, and cultural populations in India could not focus their discontent directly at the central government. Thus, Nehru and the central government were perceived as “impartial arbiters in interstate and regional conflicts” (Chima, 2002: 25). This method of governance ensured a state of continuous equilibrium with limited social violence and discontent. In relation to Punjab, Nehru consistently rebuffed the claims of the Akali Dal for the creation of a “Sikh state”. Rather, Nehru believed that Sikh demands could be managed more efficiently at the state level where authorities could address grievances more directly.

A change in leadership occurred in the mid 1960s when Indira Gandhi was appointed leader of the Congress Party after the passing of her father, Nehru. Indira Gandhi created a break-away political entity, Congress Indira (I), named after herself, when she faced a stiff challenge for executive leadership of the party who attempted to prevent her appointment. Indira Gandhi’s style of leadership in dealing with sub-national movements was vastly different than her predecessor.

The Congress (I) Party under Gandhi continued the tradition of being vocal critics of linguistic, religious, and cultural sub-national movements, however, the manner in which these sub-national movements were dealt with changed vastly under Gandhi’s reign. During her rule, she largely followed a doctrine of centralizing political power,

protecting Congress (I) Party interests, and governing in a manner that assured her personal political aspirations were achieved with little concern for the greater public.

Indira Gandhi's leadership style promoted social discontent and increased the use of political violence. Gandhi rarely made effective efforts to address issues raised by linguistic, religious, and cultural sub-national movements. To give concessions to any of these populations was deemed inappropriate as it would lead to escalating demands by these groups or subsequent sub-national movements. This hard-line approach was seen as appropriate to prevent the disintegration of India. Also, the Congress (I) Party held the naïve perspective that the concerns of these populations, if not addressed, would eventually disappear and, therefore, no formal action was needed. This view or philosophy directly impacted the political response the federal Indian government took to sub-national movements.

Whereas Nehru's government attempted to micro-manage sub-national movements through the use of state governments who were knowledgeable about local issues, Gandhi was unwilling to involve or ask for the assistance of state governments or officials. She was a strong believer in the centralization of political decision making and power, believing this was the only means to rule a country with such a diverse population and preserve its unity. Gandhi's unwillingness to utilize state governments in dispute resolution also emanated from her personal aspirations for political power. She feared that delegating political responsibility to state governments or personnel to resolve sub-national conflicts might lead to the emergence of political leaders or entities capable of challenging or rivalling her political power.

The central Congress (I) government, under Indira Gandhi's rule, also preferred to take a confrontational approach in resolving regional disputes. Gandhi and the Congress (I) government consistently intervened in regional issues that should have been resolved at the state level, and for political purposes, "nationalized issues for partisan advantage" (Chima, 2002: 25). In states where opposition parties or political groups voiced legitimate political, social, and economic concerns, the Congress (I) Party consistently made efforts to undercut them at the local level or to remove unfriendly non-Congress (I) state governments from power. Attempts to discredit specific movements through illegitimate and unethical political means was a dangerous tactic that, in many cases, escalated regional violence. To understand the pitfalls of this political strategy, one must examine the political events in Punjab in the early 1980s.

### **Congress (I) (1977 to 1981)**

During the 1970s, when the Akali Dal first raised Sikh concerns in the ASR, Gandhi scoffed at the political, social, economic, and territorial demands. In the 1970s, the Congress (I) Party, when in power, held no negotiations in relation to the ASR, nor did it attempt to address Sikh grievances. The Sikh population's concerns were not taken seriously by the Congress (I) central government; rather, Congress state officials were instructed to challenge the validity of demands and implement measures to discredit the Akali Dal (Chima, 2002). By the late 1970s, Gandhi began to see the Akali Dal as a political obstacle. She reasoned that if the Akali Dal were allowed to continuously highlight Sikh grievances without opposition, they would continue to pose an electoral threat both federally and at the state level.

In order to diminish the influence of the Akali Dal, in 1977, Gandhi implemented a drastic political strategy. The Congress (I) Party devised a coordinated plan to promote an alternative Sikh leader in Punjab capable of competing with the Akali Dal and ultimately siphoning off a portion of the party's Sikh support base (Chima, 2002). The ability to split the Akali Dal support base was imperative for ensuring the party's future electoral victories in Punjab. The individual selected to lead this new political entity was Sant Jarnail Bhindranwale, the vocal Sikh Orthodox priest (Koehn, 1991).

Initially, Bhindranwale criticized the Akali Dal for failing to protect the Sikh faith from moral decay and for actively facilitating the degradation of Sikhism through pro-Western social and economic policies (Teleford, 1992). He was later critical of Akali Dal treatment of rural peasant Jat farmers who faced financial crisis because of the Green Revolution. Bhindranwale actively challenged the Akali Dal in the 1979 election of the SGPC, "the administrative body of Sikh Gurdwaras" (Helweg, 1987: 143). The SGPC was a significant institution because control of this organization provided an individual considerable power and legitimacy within the Sikh community. Also, because of its influence in the community, the SGPC was a vital source of electoral votes. Bhindranwale ran candidates under the Dal Khalsa banner. Dal Khalsa suffered a resounding defeat with no candidates being elected. In the run-up to the 1980 federal and Punjab state elections, Bhindranwale actively endorsed two Congress (I) Party candidates showing his allegiance to the party (Chima, 2002). From 1978 to 1981, the Congress (I) Party continued to assist Bhindranwale providing financial aid, gun licenses, and immunity from criminal prosecution (Koehn, 1991).

During this period, Bhindranwale and his supporters committed a host of criminal acts and murders, which were indirectly condoned by the Congress (I) Party as a necessary by-product of the larger political goal of annihilating the Akali Dal. However, during the early 1980s, Bhindranwale began to deviate from the Congress (I) Party's agenda of undercutting the Akali Dal support base (Koehn, 1991). Bhindranwale became critical of the Congress (I) Party and his beliefs about Hindu repression of Sikhs became more pronounced. He not only began to see the Congress (I) Party as contributing to Sikh repression and assimilation, but also saw himself as being used as a strategic tool by the party to further their political agenda. Bhindranwale reorganized the focus of his movement towards achieving an independent state of Khalistan governed by the fundamental tenets of the Sikh faith (Nandi, 1996). Criminal acts committed by Bhindranwale and his organization now began to focus on the Khalistan agenda and eliminating any individual or group that would impede its establishment. The level of violence escalated dramatically with roving armed Sikh youth wandering throughout Punjab committing terrorist acts without impediment.

The Congress (I) Party's experiment of undermining the Akali Dal through the use of a Sikh Orthodox fundamentalist preacher had backfired. By not controlling or directing the actions of Bhindranwale at an early stage, the Congress (I) Party, in part, contributed to the formation of the Sikh fundamentalist movement and its later violent consequences. To give free rein to a movement and an individual without any accountability mechanism increases the likelihood of terrorism. Indira Gandhi's later attempts to reel in the Sikh terrorist movement through the use of security forces were unsuccessful because the movement had, by then, established a solid terrorist

infrastructure in Punjab. In effect, the Congress (I) Party contributed to the rise of the Sikh fundamentalist movement.

### **Akali Dal (1980 to 1984)**

Soon after her election victory, in 1980, the Akali Dal coalition government was dismissed by Indira Gandhi. In the subsequent state election that year, the Akali Dal were defeated handily by the Congress (I) Party. This action was consistent with the Congress (I) Party's political strategy of centralizing political power and removing political threats opposed by opposition parties.

After this electoral loss, the Akali Dal reorganized and devised a plan by which to regain political power. The Akali Dal once again reverted to their previous political strategy of organizing mass demonstrations against the central government, criticizing social policies, and raising the issue of Sikh discrimination and repression. On September 17, 1981, the Akali Dal officially launched "Dharm Yudh Morcha" (religious agitation) and presented the central government a "list of 45 demands and grievances based on the Anandpur Sahib Resolution" (Teleford, 1992: 984). By reintroducing historical Sikh grievances in a new, modified version of the ASR, the Akali Dal hoped to rekindle animosity among the Sikh population in Punjab against the Hindu-led Congress (I) Party. The Dharm Yudh Morcha enjoyed only limited success as the movement did not appeal to the masses.

However, the Akali Dal implemented a new tactic in their struggle to regain political power and increase their popularity among the Punjab's electorate. In 1982, they decided to bring Bhindranwale into their agitation (Chima, 2002: 128). Although Bhindranwale had been a strong critic of the Akali Dal, his inclusion in the party was

seen as essential to invigorating the Sikh independence movement. Both the Congress (I) Party and the Akali Dal's decision to incorporate Bhindranwale into their political strategy was done in haste and without long-term thought about the consequences. Both parties, in their desire to undercut their rival failed to realize the negative ramifications of their strategy. In both cases, the decision to incorporate Bhindranwale was made when the party was out of political power and needed a means by which to reconnect with the Sikh masses and increase electoral support.

An unofficial agreement was reached leading to Bhindranwale joining the Dharm Yudh Morcha. Akali Dal leaders Badal, Longowal, and Talwandi saw Bhindranwale as an asset who could be exploited for electoral purposes. Bhindranwale was immensely popular with the Sikh masses, had a significant following in the community, and advocated for a number of similar issues as the Akali Dal (Teleford, 1992). Bhindranwale was also perceived as an asset because of his use of physical violence and terror. The Akali Dal reasoned that if they continued to jointly agitate for implementation of the ASR and Bhindranwale's terrorist organization continued to perpetrate violent acts against the state, the Congress (I) Party would eventually buckle under the pressure and agree to Akali Dal demands.

The Akali Dal projected themselves as a rational voice with whom the Indian government could conduct political negotiations and resolve the violence in Punjab. They maintained an uneasy coalition with Bhindranwale over a two-year period, coordinating protests and mass agitations with Bhindranwale's followers. Indirectly, they sanctioned Bhindranwale's organization's use of violence by failing to condemn acts of terror. Because they controlled the SGPC, the body governing the temples, the Akali Dal



also directly supported his movement by allowing him to establish terrorist bases from which to launch and organize terrorist attacks within temples across Punjab (Mohan, 1991). The Akali Dal controlled the SGPC, the body governing Sikh temples in Punjab.

The Akali Dal strategy was partially successful in getting Indira Gandhi to agree to participate in negotiations to address Sikh grievances in return for a de-escalation of terrorist violence in Punjab. Between 1982 and 1984, the Akali Dal and Congress (I) representatives held numerous negotiation sessions to resolve the Sikh conflict. By 1983, Indira Gandhi was willing to concede to the religious demands highlighted in the ASR, but was unwilling to address social, political, and territorial issues in any substantial manner. Gandhi feared any concessions to a religious minority in relation to these issues would set a dangerous precedence that could have far-reaching ramifications on the unity of India, as other religious groups in India would demand a similar deal. Gandhi also feared that signing any agreement with the Sikhs would damage her reputation and popularity among Hindu nationalists. The Akali Dal were unwilling to accept a partial agreement and continued to agitate and negotiate for a resolution to other Sikh grievances. They feared that if all components of the ASR were not fully addressed, they would lose the confidence of their supporters and credibility among the Sikh voting population (Yaegar, 1991).

Negotiations continued sporadically until the early months of 1984 with attempts being made to breach the impasse. However, the Akali Dal was entrenched in their position and Indira Gandhi was unwilling to continue negotiations until the Akali Dal brought Sikh violence under control (Yaegar, 1991). The Akali Dal could not meet this demand as they no longer had formal links with Bhindranwale and his terrorist

organization, both parties having agreed to part ways in the spring of 1984. Bhindranwale had become critical of the Akali Dal and regarded them as only pursuing their own political objectives and “not larger interests of the Sikh Panth (community)” (Chima, 2002: 29). Sant Bhindranwale had achieved his goal of increasing his own political popularity and, in part, discrediting the Akali Dal as a legitimate party committed to addressing Sikh grievances. With his new-found power and popularity, Bhindranwale had grander political goals. He now saw himself leading the new nation of Khalistan upon its independence from India.

### **Attempts to Resolve Sikh Terrorism (1984 to 1991)**

In early June, 1984, Indira Gandhi made the decision to resolve the conflict in Punjab through military means. She came to this decision because Sikh terrorist violence was escalating dramatically. The likelihood of a negotiated settlement between the Akali Dal and Congress (I) was not plausible as neither party was committed to resolving the matter. This was compounded by the fact that Bhindranwale, the true mastermind behind Sikh violence, was unwilling to negotiate a settlement with the Hindu central government and had not been invited to participate in negotiations. The Congress (I) party had, in part, been negotiating with the wrong party and ignored the individual who could bring Sikh terrorist violence to an end.

Operation Bluestar commenced on June 5, 1984, when the Indian military lay siege to the Golden Temple, Bhindranwale’s safe haven and primary terrorist base. Forty other Sikh temples in Punjab were also targeted because they were being used for terrorist activities (Helweg, 1987). Over 70, 000 security officials were brought into Punjab, transportation routes were sealed, preventing the movement of individuals in and

out of the state, and a curfew was set. Within one week, Bhindranwale had been killed and many of the key members of his terrorist organization had either been captured or eliminated. Members of the Akali Dal were imprisoned for contributing to terrorist violence in Punjab. The Sikhs' holiest shrine, the Golden Temple, had sustained significant structural damage. Gandhi believed she had brought the Sikh terrorist movement to its knees with the removal of the key actors in the violence.

On October 31, 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards. The murder was in revenge for the desecration of the Golden Temple. Gandhi was perceived as being directly responsible for the atrocity, as she gave the orders for the army to commence the operation. When Indira Gandhi's assassination was made public, a segment of the Hindu population rioted against Sikhs all over India. Sikhs were attacked violently with victims being set on fire, hung from trees, shot, and stabbed. Homes were looted, businesses set on fire, and women raped (Helweg, 1987). Events in New Delhi, in particular, reminded Sikhs of the brutal persecution they were exposed to under Moghul rule. The violence subsided within three days as security officials brought law and order back to the streets of New Delhi and other cities across India.

Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son, was named the leader of the Congress (I) Party, succeeding his mother. In December, 1984, riding a wave of popular support and sympathy, Rajiv Gandhi led the Congress (I) Party to victory and became the Prime Minister of India (Teleford, 1992). Soon after his victory, Rajiv Gandhi began the process of resolving the Punjab problem through negotiations with the Akali Dal, then led by Harcharan Longowal (Malik, 1986). He believed that a conciliatory approach was necessary and a political solution was more desirable than the use of security forces,

which were perceived as escalating the conflict. Gandhi believed it was important to negotiate with the Akali Dal, the party that could give any agreement instant legitimacy. Arjun Singh, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh was appointed lead negotiator and by July 26, 1985, both sides reached an agreement by signing the Rajiv-Longowal Accord (Singh, 1995). The accord was an eleven-point agreement which saw the Akali Dal (L) obtain a majority of the demands it had laid out in the ASR (Malik, 1986). (See [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/punjab/document/papers/memorandum\\_of\\_settlement.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/punjab/document/papers/memorandum_of_settlement.htm) for the full text of the accord).

The accord was perceived by the Akali Dal in a positive light as many of the issues pertaining to Punjab sovereignty and the protection of the Sikh faith were addressed. The Sikhs of Punjab finally had their personal security entrenched in an agreement. Factions within the Akali Dal pledged support for the accord and their leader, Longowal, placing personal rivalries and differences aside. The Rajiv Gandhi government agreed to many concessions and the agreement demonstrated a degree of vulnerability by the Congress (I) government by conceding to the demands of a sub-national movement. Gandhi was content to maintain the unity of India and isolate the extremists. The accord was well received in general by the residents of Punjab who were exhausted by communal conflict and escalating violence. Years of social instability had impacted the lives and activities of the population and people wanted the return of a sense of normalcy so they could resume their routine activities (Malik, 1986). A general consensus existed that the accord was conciliatory in nature and addressed a majority of Sikh grievances.

Despite its general acceptance, the accord was not accepted by radical elements (i.e., former Bhindranwale supporters and Sikh terrorist organizations) who perceived the agreement as the ultimate betrayal by the Akali Dal. How could the Akali Dal reach an agreement with a Hindu government who had attacked the Sikhs' holiest shrine and systematically repressed the Sikh population in Punjab? Sikh extremists openly criticized the accord and threatened to use violence to undermine the agreement and prevent its implementation. Death threats were made against Harcharan Longowal, but he continued, undeterred, to promote the agreement throughout Punjab. Longowal saw the accord as the only peaceful political means to protect the interests of the Sikh population and Punjab within a united India (Malik, 1986). On August 21, 1985, only a few weeks after signing the accord, Longowal was assassinated by Sikh extremists as he attended a political rally (Teleford, 1992).

The assassination did not, however, deter Rajiv Gandhi. He ordered Punjab state elections to be held on September 25, 1985, believing that the re-institution of a democratically elected state government would ensure implementation of the accord and the re-establishment of law and order. Sikh extremists urged individuals to not participate in the election and threatened to kill those who did. Nevertheless, public turnout was high, with 60% of individuals deciding to vote. The Akali Dal Longowal (L), now led by Surjit Barnala, a moderate leader and political ally of Longowal, won 73 of 115 seats in the Punjab legislature (Malik, 1986). The Akali Dal (L) now held political power in Punjab.

It was assumed by political analysts in the Indian government that once the Akali Dal (L) were in power, three likely scenarios would be played out in Punjab. In the first

scenario, it was assumed that the Akali Dal (L) would be able to persuade Sikh extremists that the accord had addressed a majority of their grievances and that the use of violence was no longer necessary in order to obtain their objective (Malik, 1986). In a second scenario, it was assumed that if the Akali Dal (L) were not successful in persuading Sikh terrorists to accept the accord and lay down their arms, the general public would rally behind the Akali Dal (L) and support the accord (Malik, 1986). The Akali Dal (L) would be perceived as a legitimate Sikh political party that had been able to obtain concessions from the central government to address Sikh grievances. With public support for a political solution to the conflict, the public would no longer be willing to support Sikh extremists and, thus, the Sikh independence movement would be perceived as illegitimate, leading to its demise. The third scenario also involved the Akali Dal (L) being unable to persuade Sikh terrorist organizations to accept the accord and lay down their weapons. However, it was hoped the Akali Dal (L) would work with the federal government in coordinating a viable counterterrorism campaign to repress the Sikh terrorist movement. The federal government wanted the Akali Dal (L) to provide federal security agencies the authority to carry out counterterrorism operations within the state and also contribute state security resources to assist in the campaign. This third scenario was preferred by the Congress (I) Party because counterterrorism operations would be legitimized by state officials and less likely perceived as repressive (Malik, 1986).

The signing of the accord was seen as ushering in a new era of change and re-establishing some sense of stability within Punjab. However, the Rajiv-Longowal Accord became the catalyst for the dramatic increase in Sikh terrorism in the latter half of the 1980s. The first major element of the accord involved the transfer of Chandigarh to

Punjab on January 26, 1986. This transfer was initially delayed and, at a later date, the central government decided to withdraw from the commitment altogether (Singh, 1995). This lack of commitment to fulfil key elements of the agreement plagued the implementation of the accord over its lifetime. In certain circumstances, where attempts were made to address provisions of the accord, the outcome was usually not consistent with the spirit of the agreement (Singh, 1995).

In 1988, Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress (I) Party made a conscious decision to not honour the accord as there was a shift in political thinking about how to resolve the Punjab issue. Rajiv Gandhi now believed that the solution to the Punjab problem was through the use of security forces and a political solution was not viable. The shift in political thinking was brought about by two significant events: (1) escalating Sikh terrorist violence in Punjab; and (2) discontent among Hindu nationalists within the Congress (I) Party.

Even after the negotiation of a political agreement, Sikh terrorist violence in Punjab continued to escalate between 1986 and 1988. Sikh terrorist organizations continued to show violent discontent for the accord. The Akali Dal (L) continued to demonstrate an inability to bring the violence under control. They lacked legitimacy with Sikh terrorist organizations who perceived the Sikh political party as betraying the Khalistan movement and Sikh Panth.

Internally, within the Congress (I) Party, Rajiv Gandhi was facing stiff opposition from Hindu nationalist hardliners who saw concessions to the Sikh population as challenging their power and dominant status within Indian society. Also, Hindu nationalists within the party threatened to withdraw support for Gandhi leading to the fall

of the Congress (I) government. As a result of these two events, Gandhi adopted a security solution to resolve the Punjab conflict and the implementation of escalating counterterrorism measures to repress Sikh terrorism.

The decision by the Congress (I)-led Indian government to not pursue a peaceful resolution to the Punjab conflict directly contributed to the revival of the violent Sikh terrorist movement in 1986. By not implementing elements of the accord, Gandhi undermined the confidence of the public in the Akali Dal (L), who were committed to a peaceful resolution. This provided ammunition to Sikh terrorists. If a political solution was unattainable, they were justified in using violence to achieve change and the objective of preserving the Sikh faith. At this point, Sikh terrorism increased rapidly, with public support shifting in favour of Sikh extremist organizations, whose actions were perceived as legitimate because of no visible political solution to the Punjab problem.

Subsequent political attempts to resolve the Punjab conflict through political means were unsuccessful. In December, 1989, the V.P. Singh Janata government came to power in India defeating the Congress (I) government. The Janata government's approach to resolving the Punjab conflict primarily involved the implementation of a non-violent counterterrorism strategy. V.P. Singh believed that if the central government took conciliatory steps to win the hearts and minds of the Sikh population, terrorism would slowly decrease. This conciliatory approach involved the use of "sentimental gestures", such as visiting the Golden Temple to show respect for the Sikh faith and reducing the intensity of counterterrorism operations in Punjab which were seen as antagonizing the Sikh population (Gill, 1995). This approach was unsuccessful because



Sikh terrorist groups used the reduction in counterterrorism operations to reorganize their terrorist networks, increase recruitment, and re-arm their members.

After the collapse of the Janata government, Chandrashekhar became the leader of a minority Janata-Congress (I) government in 1990. Chandrashekhar also attempted to diffuse the Punjab conflict by directly engaging Sikh terrorist organizations in treaty negotiations. However, this process proved to be unfruitful for a number of reasons. First, Sikh terrorist organizations were unwilling to negotiate with a government whose political power was precarious because it was a minority government. It was unlikely the government would be in the position to put forward a significant offer or resolution (Gill, 1999). Second, the sheer number of Sikh terrorist organizations made it difficult to reach an agreement because all the terrorist organizations would have to be brought to the table to reach an effective solution. Compounding this problem was the structure of Sikh terrorist organizations. A majority of Sikh terrorist groups did not have political entities within their organizational structure, nor were they aligned with political organizations capable of acting on their behalf and participating in political negotiations. Third, Sikh terrorist groups were unrelenting in their position, demanding the establishment of Khalistan as a starting point to any negotiations. Their confidence in demanding Khalistan as a starting point to any negotiations came from increasing success in terrorist acts and a perception that the government, which was continually reducing counterterrorism operations, was buckling under the pressure. By 1990 and 1991, Sikh terrorism had reached an all-time high because the central government had no effective political strategy to repress Sikh terrorism.

### **Political Resolve to Repress Sikh Terrorism (1991 to 1994)**

On June 21, 1991, Narasimha Rao's Congress Party was elected and formed a new Indian government. Rao's top priority was to bring peace to Punjab. He did not see a political solution to the Punjab problem as there was no strong political party to initiate negotiations with, as the Akali Dal had fallen out of political favour and influence among the Sikh electorate. Also, with the continual multiplying of political and terrorist groupings in the state, there was no identifiable leadership with whom a dialogue could be initiated (Gill, 1999). Rao reverted to the use of security personnel to bring law and order back to the Punjab. Security officials were given free rein and allowed to use as much force as necessary to bring violence under control. The central government took a hands-off approach, ensuring that political interference did not hinder counterterrorism operations, as they had in previous administrations. The ability of the government to finally take a firm position on how to resolve Sikh terrorism and implement a coherent strategy to re-establish law and order facilitated the repression of Sikh terrorism by 1994. Finally, political will existed to repress Sikh terrorism.

As can be seen, the political factors influencing the Punjab conflict and Sikh terrorism has a long history. Over time, a host of historical events snowballed to a point where Sikh terrorism had an opportunity to emerge and escalate. In the late 1970s, the Indian Congress (I) government, pursuing a communal political strategy, in part, created Sikh terrorism by lending support to a relatively obscure Sikh religious preacher named Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale later became the central leader and organizer of the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement. The Akali Dal's willingness to later form a coalition with Bhindranwale to achieve their political objectives compounded the

conflict. Throughout the conflict, the Indian government attempted to reach a peaceful resolution with Sikh terrorist organizations and political parties. However, their inability or unwillingness to address grievances and implement the Rajiv-Longowal Accord led to the continuation of violence. The Indian government's political responses to Sikh terrorism were disorganized and had conflicting agendas during the length of the conflict. The political leaders in the earlier half of the conflict attempted to find a solution both through peaceful political and security means with no strong commitment to either course of action. This lack of a political commitment and indecision about how to deal with the Punjab conflict contributed to the government's inability to repress Sikh terrorism.

## **CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATIVE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED TO REPRESS SIKH TERRORISM**

Dealing with anti-state terrorism requires the use of certain types of anti-terrorist national laws. Such laws typically confer broad legal powers on security agencies that allow for the use of legal police and military measures against terrorists. Over the course of the conflict in Punjab, various distinctive laws were implemented in order to repress Sikh terrorism. For example, initially, acts of violence committed by Sikh terrorist groups were largely prosecuted under civil criminal statutes and offences were not defined as acts of terrorism. However, as the intensity and frequency of violence increased, several laws were passed that clearly defined acts of terrorism and measures available to security officials to repress these activities. In effect, the Punjab government moved from very limited anti-terrorism legislation in the early 1980s to a broad spectrum of statutes by the end of the conflict in 1993. Also, no one piece of legislation can be seen as critical; instead, a number of intertwined laws appear to have succeeded in helping to repress terrorism. The suspension of civil liberties facilitated the implementation of an effective counterterrorism campaign by security personnel. Immunity for security personnel also allowed for the implementation of illegal methods to repress terrorism. Finally, terrorism legislation in Punjab was consistently amended to adapt to the changing forms of terrorism during the conflict. The various terrorist laws that were enacted will be discussed in this chapter.

## **National Security Act (NSA) (1980)**

The first piece of anti-terrorism legislation was the National Security Act (NSA). The central objective of the NSA was to authorize the preventative detention of individuals who were deemed as acting in a manner “prejudicial to the defence of India” or any state (Human Rights Watch, 1991:17). The act allowed the detention of individuals for a period of two years without trial. Individuals detained under this act were to appear before a three-person government-appointed advisory committee composed of individuals who were or were capable of being a High Court judge (Human Rights Watch, 1991). Officials were to inform the advisory committee of the reason for detention within four months and two weeks. The advisory committee had five months to decide whether reasons for detention were sufficient (Human Rights Watch, 1994). Individuals deemed a security threat were detained, but, if the advisory committee believed insufficient grounds for detention existed, the government had to revoke the detention and release the individual (Human Rights Watch, 1991). Individuals were not allowed to appear before the advisory committee nor were they informed of the basis for decisions reached by the advisory committee (Human Rights Watch, 1994).

In the early 1980s, as Sikh terrorist violence increased, the Indian government implemented the NSA to repress terrorism. This act removed “constitutional legal restraints” hindering security authorities from quelling violence (Puri, 1999: 115). For most of the time it was being applied, between 1980 and 1988, the legislation was primarily used to repress political dissent that included mass protests and civil disobedience campaigns by Sikh political parties and activists against the Indian state. The Akali Dal leadership and members were consistent targets of this legislation because

of their vocal public criticisms. On numerous occasions during this period, Akali Dal members organized massive protests and civil disobedience campaigns criticizing religious, political, and economic practices of the Indian state (Human Rights Watch, 1994). Thousands of Akali Dal members and key leaders, such as Longowal, Barnala, Badal, Tohra, Talwandi, and Mann were detained many times. Secondary targets of this legislation were supporters of various terrorist organizations and militant political parties. Individuals linked with organizations, such as AISSF, United Akali Dal, Damdami Taksal (religious school/sect), and various other terrorist organizations were detained (Keesings, 1984).

The NSA had numerous flaws that hindered its effectiveness. Its major flaw involved the targets selected for detention. From its inception, the NSA failed to detain key members and leaders (e.g., Sant Bhindranwale) of Sikh terrorist organizations. Instead, it targeted political adversaries (e.g., Akali Dal) who were deemed a greater threat because of perceived control of and links with Sikh terrorist organizations. In effect, this misdirection was counterproductive in repressing terrorism in its initial stage. The secondary impact that targeting moderate voices had during the initial phases of the movement was that it removed the individuals who had the ability to bring the conflict to a peaceful resolution. Thus, for example, consistently detaining the Akali Dal for political objectives allowed more militant groups to hijack the movement and perpetuate violence (Leaf, 1985).

A tertiary deficiency in the application of the NSA by security agencies was consistent harassment of innocent civilians with mass arrests. For example, thousands of innocent religious pilgrims caught in the Golden Temple during Operation Bluestar were

detained subsequent to the raid. The detention of innocent civilians for prolonged periods infuriated the Sikh population who perceived this as another example of Indian government repression. The constant harassment of civilians in the application of this legislation only increased public discontent and, in part, contributed to the longevity of the conflict.

The NSA was also hampered from effective functioning by constant political interference. During various stages of the conflict, federal and state officials released individual militants under detention as good faith gestures in order to resume political negotiations with Sikh terrorist organizations or to appease groups as a means to minimize terrorist violence (Gill, 1999). However, this persistent political interference of releasing extremists led to the resumption of violence by a segment of these individuals and reduced the effectiveness of preventative arrests by security officials.

### **The Anti-Hijacking Act (1982 - No 65 of 1982)**

In the early 1980s, Dal Khalsa and the Dashmesh Regiment, Sikh terrorist organizations with links to Sant Bhindranwale, carried out a number of acts of aviation terror. On Sept 29, 1982, an Indian airliner travelling between Singra and New Delhi was hijacked and ordered to fly to Lahore, Pakistan (Keesing, 1982). The hijacking was in response to the arrest of Sant Bhindranwale for his role in the murder of a Hindu newspaper editor Lala Jagat Narain and the Nirankaris' sect leader, Baba Garbachan Singh. The matter was resolved peacefully when the five assailants were over-powered by Pakistan security officials. A host of other hijackings were carried out after the 1984 raid on the Golden Temple. The primary objective of these hijackings was to bring

attention to the perceived repression of the Sikh population in Punjab and to pressure the Indian government to grant Sikhs their independent homeland.

In response to the hijackings by Sikh terrorist organizations, the Anti-Hijacking Act was implemented in 1982. The act was largely constructed to deter acts of aviation terror by using judicial means to prosecute hijackers, impose strict penalties upon conviction, and to provide security authorities, through international treaties, the ability to extradite known hijackers to India for prosecution. Hijackers convicted under this act were liable to life imprisonment and a fine. Individuals under this act would be prosecuted for offences committed against passengers and employees of airlines, and, if found guilty, would receive the same punishment as available under civil law. The Anti-Hijacking Act and the implementation of increased security measures in airport facilities were instrumental in reducing acts of aviation terror by Sikh terrorist organizations by the mid 1980s (Gill, 2001).

### **The Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act (1983)**

The Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act was enacted by the Indian Parliament in 1983. Special powers were assigned to the armed forces when the governor of Punjab declared the whole or portions of the state as “disturbed” because conditions were so dangerous that assistance to civil authorities was necessary to bring about law and order. The objective of the act was to provide armed forces personnel in Punjab with special powers to assist state and security officials to repress terrorist violence. Powers assigned to the armed forces under this act were widespread and allowed for the suspension and violation of civil liberties. The act allowed members of the armed forces to use as much force as necessary, including lethal force, to prevent the



commission or “contravention” of any statute or order (Human Rights Watch 1994,: 23, 1991: 41). The legislation also authorized armed forces personnel to arrest, without warrant, any person who had committed or about whom “reasonable suspicion” existed was about to “commit a cognizable offense” (Human Rights Watch, 1991: 42). Finally, armed forces personnel were authorized to enter any premises without a search warrant in order to execute an arrest or to prevent the continuance of illegal behaviour (Human Rights Watch, 1991).

### **The Punjab Disturbed Areas Act (1983)**

The Punjab Disturbed Areas Act (1983) was a complementary piece of legislation to the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act (1983). The powers bestowed under this legislation came into effect when the governor declared the whole or parts of the state “disturbed” due to violence. The Punjab Disturbed Areas Act granted police officials the ability to use maximum force against any individual:

Who is indulging in any act which may result in serious breach of the public order or is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force prohibiting the assembly of five or more person or the carrying of weapons. (Human Rights Watch, 1991: 42)

Powers of search and arrest were similar to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act for police officials. Both pieces of legislation had internal clauses preventing prosecution of armed forces personnel or police personnel for any official actions carried out under the powers conferred to them by either the acts (Human Rights Watch, 1991).

### **Application of Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act and Punjab Disturbed Areas Act**

The Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act was first introduced in 1983 in Punjab. Initially, between 1983 and 1991, the act was an ineffective piece of legislation for repressing terrorism because security agencies failed to take advantage of the powers conferred to them. The main objective of the act was to allow the deployment of armed forces personnel to assist civil authorities to re-establish law and order in areas designated as disturbed. Ideally, this would encompass armed forces personnel actively participating in policing-type activities (e.g., carrying out arrests, search and seizures, and patrols) to locate and detain individuals participating in terrorist or illegal activities. The deployment of armed forces personnel would also involve co-operation with civil authorities to coordinate operations and ensure similar security objectives were achieved.

However, in reality, when the act was evoked on numerous occasions between 1983 and 1991, armed forces personnel did not actively participate in re-establishing law and order. For most of this period, the armed forces took a defensive position with personnel deployment largely concentrating on protecting strategic infrastructure and densely populated urban centers. Armed forces personnel were stationary, primarily restricted to fortified bunker positions with restricted patrolling or patrol areas. They were not pro-active, they made limited arrests for violation of criminal offences or preventative arrests, conducted limited numbers of raids to apprehend suspected or known members of terrorist organizations, and were unable to locate and destroy safe houses used by terrorist organizations to perpetuate violence.

### **Examples of Poorly Executed Army Operations Under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and Punjab Disturbed Areas Act**

When the armed forces did participate in a limited number of operations to eradicate terrorism in Punjab, the operations were relatively ineffective and, in many cases, escalated Sikh terrorist violence. When, for example, in 1984, the army launched Operation Bluestar to assist civil authorities in dislodging terrorists from the confines of the Golden Temple, it was successful in killing Bhindranwale and dislodging his terrorist network, but the army operation was poorly executed leading to extensive structural damage to the Sikh holy shrine, causing death and detention of hundreds of innocent Sikh pilgrims, and allowing summary executions within the confines of the holy complex. The effect was to infuriate the Sikh population causing segments to join terrorist groups to obtain revenge and propelling others to actively support terrorist organizations (Manor, 1998).

Operation Bluestar was also accompanied by Operation Woodrose, a mop-up operation designed to locate Bhindranwale's remaining associates and remove extremist elements from various other religious institutions across Punjab. The heavy-handed tactics of the army during this operation led to the detention of thousands of Sikh males between the ages of 15 and 60 who were not associated with terrorist violence (Jaijee, 1999). These actions alienated large segments of the rural population and forced some youth to flee to Pakistan to avoid false arrest where they were recruited by Sikh terrorist organizations. Operation Woodrose failed to capture any significant remnants of Bhindranwale's terrorist organization and this failure led to the proliferation of terrorism as many of these individuals would become the future leaders of the Sikh independence movement. As can be seen, the inability of armed forces personnel to take advantage of

increased powers conferred by legislation led to the expansion of terrorist violence (Joshi, 1993).

### **Effective Use of Armed Forces Special Powers Act and Punjab Disturbed Areas Act**

However, in 1991, the true potential of the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act was realized. Effective enforcement of this act during this period, in part, ensured its success. In November, 1991, the whole state of Punjab was declared a disturbed area and the army was deployed to assist civil authorities to repress terrorism in Operation Rakshak II (Keesings, 1991). Operation Rakshak II was the final military operation that played a central role repressing Sikh terrorism. The success of this operation was, in part, the result of the extraordinary powers granted to the military under the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act.

Compared to previous army actions, Operation Rakshak II was carried out in a vastly different manner. Military personnel actively assisted civil authorities in bringing about law and order. They proactively engaged in armed patrols and detained individuals for committing criminal offences. However, the major focus of the operation was on members of Sikh terrorist organizations and their support networks throughout Punjab. Army personnel conducted raids on safe houses and homes searching for weapons and explosives. Known sympathizers and those suspected of assisting terrorist organizations were detained. Both members of terrorist organizations who had been identified for committing terrorist acts and general members were actively pursued, although arresting these individuals was not the goal (Gill, 2001). Because the Armed Forces Special Powers Act provided army personnel the legal authority to use maximum force, emphasis

was on eliminating members of terrorist organizations. In addition, the immunity provided to military personnel from prosecution allowed them to participate in illegal acts such as torture, kidnappings, and other forms of abuse. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act provided military personnel with the legal means and freedom to carry out an effective counterterrorism operation to eradicate Sikh terrorism.

## **TADA**

In May 1985, the Indian parliament brought into effect the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Preventative) Act (TADA). Although the legislation applied to all states in India, it was largely implemented to bring control to the Punjab conflict. Up to this point, the Indian government had failed to implement any single concrete piece of legislation specifically to deal with terrorism. The majority of previous legislative acts were designed to provide security agencies with greater powers of arrest and seizure.

The TADA was significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it clearly defined what a terrorist act and a terrorist were. *A terrorist act or disruptive activity* was defined as:

Any action taken which questions, disrupts or is intended to disrupt whether directly or indirectly the sovereignty, and territorial integrity of India, or bring about or support any claim... for the cession of any part of India or succession of any part of India from the union (Keesings, 1985: 33987).

And, a *terrorist* was defined as;

Anyone who used explosives, firearms, poisons or other lethal weapons, with the intent to overthrow the government as by law established or to strike terror in the people or any section of the people or to alienate any section of the people (Keesings, 1985: 33987).

Second, distinguishing a terrorist act from a normal criminal act allowed for it to be dealt with in a different manner judicially. The TADA created a separate set of legal procedures/apparatus, penalties, and powers divested to security agencies to deal with terrorism. Previously, acts of violence by Sikh terrorist organizations and individuals were classified under civil criminal code offences and individual cases were tried under the conventional criminal justice system. This system was inadequate because punishment was lenient, the accused were afforded a great deal of constitutional protection, and the level of resources (police investigation and evidence-collecting methods) focused on obtaining a conviction was limited. In the majority of cases, individuals prosecuted under the conventional criminal justice system received minimal jail time which allowed some to rejoin their terrorist groups and participate in more violence (Jaijee, 1995). There are a number of components and procedures that made the TADA unique from standard pieces of criminal legislation.

### **Procedures**

TADA trial procedures were primarily constructed to benefit government prosecutors and ensure conviction. Under section 6, TADA court proceedings were allowed to occur in private (in camera) before the “designated court” (Humans Rights Watch, 1991: 154). Witnesses testifying against the accused were allowed to have their identities and address protected. This clause ensured that defendants were unable to challenge the testimony of witnesses as cross-examination was not permitted. These two measures were largely constructed to ensure the safety of court personnel and protect witnesses from intimidation. Defendants under the TADA were also presumed guilty,

until proven innocent (Humans Rights Watch, 1991). Thus, the burden of proof was shifted to the accused.

The TADA was also significant procedurally because it drastically altered the Indian Evidence Act in relation to the types of evidence accepted at trial. The TADA allowed for the introduction of confessions from police interrogations during trial (Puri, 1999: 115). Previously, confessions obtained from interrogations were deemed inadmissible due to fears police might expose individuals to extreme physical violence or intimidation to extract evidence.

### **Punishment**

The severity of punishment available to the judiciary for acts of terrorism was substantially increased under the TADA. Individuals whose acts led to the death of an individual could receive a sentence of death or life imprisonment. Previously, the maximum penalty for an act of terrorism was limited to a medium-term jail sentence and/or fine. Membership in a Sikh terrorist organization was outlawed and individuals convicted for this offense could receive a prison term of five years to life. All other terrorist offences, such as conspiracy, attempt to commit, harbouring, concealment, abetting, and advocating dissent were punishable with a term varying from five years to life imprisonment (Unknown, 1998).

### **Powers**

The legal powers granted under the TADA to law enforcement agencies were substantial. Under the TADA, individuals could be detained with or without “formal charges” for a period of one year, and they were to be tried before a court within a one-

year time frame (Humans Rights Watch, 1991: 153). The length individuals were allowed to remain in police custody was extended to sixty days before they were to be transferred to judicial custody. Detaining individuals for extended periods of time allowed the police to conduct lengthy interrogations or torture (Humans Rights Watch, 1991). These lengthy detentions also increased the potential for the police to obtain extra-judicial confessions which were now accepted at trial. However, the most significant aspect of the TADA was section 26 which exempted all law enforcement authorities from prosecution or civil proceeding for actions carried out under the act. Thus, with this immunity, police could carry out illegal acts that were instrumental in suppressing terrorism in the early 1990s (Unknown, 1998).

### **Problems with TADA**

The TADA as a piece of anti-terrorism legislation was well written; it clearly defined procedural rules, law enforcement powers, and punishment for terrorist acts. The legislation also created the technical framework for the judiciary and law enforcement to work together in a coordinated manner to repress terrorism. The TADA clearly defined the roles of the judiciary and law enforcement.

Nonetheless, initially, the TADA was a complete failure. The judiciary, a key component in the process, was plagued by a host of deficiencies that prevented the repression of terrorism via criminal conviction and incarceration. Between 1987 and 1990, 10,000 cases were registered under the TADA. Only 19 cases resulted in conviction (Sharma, 1996). The primary factor leading to the dismal rates of conviction was fear among judicial process participants. Witnesses on behalf of the prosecution were unwilling to provide testimony based on fear that “in camera proceedings” were



unable to protect their identity (Sharma, 1996: 341). Judges, fearing reprisals, were unwilling to convict terrorists or hear cases. Militant Sikh organizations targeted judges, government lawyers, witnesses, and informants (Unknown, 1987). Terrorist groups fundamentally understood that the ability to intimidate key individuals in the judicial process was essential to ensuring that legal means to repress terrorism would be rendered ineffective. Thus, by the early 1990s, the TADA legislation, designed to prosecute and convict terrorists was ineffective.

### **TADA's Role in Suppressing Terrorism**

Although the TADA was an ineffective piece of legislation judicially by 1993, some components of the legislation were instrumental in assisting security officials' attempts to repress Sikh terrorism. In the late 1980s, security agencies in Punjab had become disenchanted with the judicial system and legislative process as a means to repress terrorism (Sharma, 1996). Punjab security officials believed that restoring law and order would necessitate the use of then illegal counterterrorism methods such as torture and assassinations. The TADA was an instrument that allowed for the implementation of such measures. Section 26 of the TADA states:

Protection of action taken under the Act. No suit. Prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the Central Government or an officer or authority of the Central Government or State Government or any other authority on whom powers have been conferred under this Act or any rules made there under, for anything which is in good faith done or purported to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rules made there under or any order issued under any such rule. (Unknown, 1998)

The ability to operate with immunity from future prosecution allowed security agencies and officials to implement such tactics as executing known or suspected Sikh terrorists, sympathizers, and individuals without judicial process who publicly criticized

the government or advocated for Khalistan (Thandi, 1996). The ability to eliminate members and the support structure of a terrorist organization is essential for decreasing terrorist violence. In Punjab, law enforcement's ability to remove the actors in terrorist violence assisted in the rapid de-escalation of violence. Trying individuals under the TADA for offences against the state was no longer an option. Also, immunity from prosecution allowed police officials to utilize torture which was essential for gathering intelligence on terrorist organizations. Intelligence gathered was utilized to detain or eliminate known members of terrorist organizations and thwart terrorist acts. The ability of police organizations to carry out repressive, sometimes barbaric, counterterrorism measures was instrumental in suppressing terrorism in Punjab by 1993.

The TADA also assisted in the repression of terrorism in Punjab by providing security officials the legal justification to arrest and detain individuals. Security officials used this legislation to arrest en masse suspected militants, sympathizers, and logistical supporters who were later executed.

### **The Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Ordinance, 1988**

In 1988, the Indian government brought into law the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Ordinance. The act was primarily implemented to curb political dissent of the Indian government and illegal acts both occurring within and emanating from the temples. The target of the ordinance were the individuals who operated or managed religious institutions. The ordinance clearly defined which activities were not allowed to occur within temple grounds and what types of individuals were to be excluded from entering their facilities. Activities defined under the ordinance as

inappropriate and individuals to be denied entry on temple premises included the following:

No religious institution or manager thereof shall use or allow the use of any premises belonging to, or under the control of, the institution:

- 3 (a) for the promotion of any political activity....
- (c) for the storing of any arms or ammunition; or....
- (e) for creating or putting up any construction or fortification, including basements, bunkers, towers or walls without a valid license or permission under any law for the time being in force; in....
- (g) for doing any act which promotes or attempts to promote disharmony or feeling of enmity, hatred or ill will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities....
- (h) for the carrying on of any activity prejudicial to the sovereignty; unity and integrity of India;.... (Gill, 2001:2).

The first purpose of these provisions was to quell the ideological fundamentalist and nationalist fervour and political dissent being preached in temples against the Indian state as highlighted in sections 3a, 3g, and 3h. It was believed that eliminating the influence of the temples would reduce Sikh discontent and, more importantly, the number of individuals who were willing to participate in or support terrorist violence. Thus, this ordinance was essential for reducing terrorism in Punjab.

The second area this legislation focused on was the methods of reducing the strategic benefits temples provided to terrorist organizations in the form of safe havens or bases from which to organize attacks, store weapons and munitions, and logistical access to important infrastructure targets. In section 3c, 3e, and 3h, the ordinance clearly defines the goal of reducing these activities in the temples:

Section 3b and 4 of the Ordinance state:

No religious institution or manager thereof shall use or allow the use of any premises belonging to, or under the control of, the institution:

- 3b) for the harbouring of any person accused or convicted of an offense under any law for the time being enforce or;

4) No religious institution or manager thereof shall allow the entry of any arms or ammunition or of any person carrying any arms or ammunition into the religious institution. (Gill, 2001:2)

The objective of these ordinances was to prevent the entrance of armed Sikh terrorists into temples where they created bases from which to launch terrorist attacks and later seek refuge from security officials. In many cases, temples became safe havens for Sikh terrorists, in effect, providing them with immunity from prosecution or detention. The inability to eradicate Sikh terrorism bases allowed for terrorism to escalate in Punjab during the early 1980s.

### **Abuse of Religious Institutions by Sikh Terrorist Organizations**

Throughout the initial stages (1977-1988) of terrorist violence in Punjab, Sikh temples were used by Sikh terrorist organizations as bases from which to perpetuate violence against the Indian state and civilians. For example, during the early phases of the movement, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale utilized the Damdami Taksal temple (located in his hometown) and, later, the Golden Temple both as a place of refuge and as a place to plan terrorist operations. Similarly, Sikh terrorist organizations, in general, used Sikh temples as terrorist bases for a variety of strategic reasons (Gill, 1997).

The primary reason terrorists used Sikh temples as bases were that they afforded privacy and protection from government and security agencies. Holy shrines and temples held a unique status in Indian society, different from the holy sites in many Western nations. Most shrines and temples, especially in the Punjab, had historical links to biblical events or were steeped in religious history. As a result of the special status these holy places had, government and security agencies were unwilling to enter temple premises to dislodge Sikh terrorist organizations because they feared doing so would

provoke further religious violence or have political ramifications. Sikh terrorist leadership and organizations took advantage of this special status by establishing bases in these sites where they could plan attacks without fear, seek refuge from Indian security agencies, and store large caches of weapons and ammunition knowing it was unlikely security agencies would raid temple grounds.

Another reason for selecting and utilizing temples as bases for terrorist operations was their strategic benefits. Most temples in Punjab are enclosed in large walled compounds, large enough to house many people and store weapons and munitions. In addition to providing space for hiding people and weapons, the design of the temple compounds allowed them to fortify their positions so that they could more easily repel security intrusions. The height of many temples also provided look-out points from which they could detect hostile advances. In addition, many temples tended to be located in central locations that gave the terrorists easy access to strategic targets and infrastructure as well as a safe location to return to quickly after an operation was completed. The final advantage of these havens was the anonymity they provided. On a daily basis, Sikh temples are frequented by religious devotees, with a large number of individuals passing through temple grounds. This constant flow of individuals made it difficult for security agencies to distinguish terrorists from ordinary devotees. This anonymity allowed members of Sikh terrorist organizations to congregate in temples to plan attacks, to deliver messages with instructions about operations from Sikh terrorist leaders to members in the field, and to leave for operations without detection.

The ability to control temples in Punjab was also ideologically important to the terrorist movement. Throughout the history of the Sikh faith, temples were the primary

centres of learning. The temples played the key role in teaching and disseminating religious and worldly knowledge among the masses. This teaching took a variety of forms including the operation of schools for the public within temple confines, the delivery of sermons by the head priest (Giani), the recitation of the holy book (which contains biblical myths), and the singing of hymns by musical groups. All these methods of teaching impart knowledge to the audience. However, with dissemination of knowledge, the audience is exposed to specific ideological perspectives of a particular speaker. The perspective the public is exposed to and what they are taught influences the individual's perception of reality and their mode of thinking and actions. Leaders of terrorist organizations recognized that control of the temples was a means of influencing the thinking of the people. In order to achieve this objective, terrorist leaders and members inhabiting temples persuaded, both peacefully and forcefully, the head priests (Gianis) to modify their curriculum to conform to the ideological perspective and goals of the Khalistani movement.

The indoctrination methods used to gain support from the masses for the Khalistani movement was at times subtle and concealed, but, for the most part, blatantly obvious. All temple activities became means of indoctrinating the Sikh public. The indoctrination process began with priests and preachers reciting historical stories of religious persecution of Sikhs at the hands of various rulers (Majors, 1987). Priests consistently emphasized the distinct identity of the Sikhs with the Khalsa definition and the right of Sikhs to exist independently in a state in order to protect their faith (Shani, 2000). The public were exposed to the idea that violence was justified or acceptable when protecting one's faith and the practice of martyrdom was glorified as the ultimate

sacrifice by any Sikh (Majors, 1987). Priests criticized the Hindu Indian government for carrying out discriminatory practices and atrocities against Sikhs. Daily events or conflicts within Punjab were interpreted negatively by temple authorities and played into the conspiracy notion that the Hindu government was attempting to eliminate the Sikhs. Parts of the Holy Scripture were recited that emphasized injustices and notions of betrayal; religious hymns echoed stories of persecution and Sikh bravery in times of overwhelming odds. Thus, the overall objective of these activities was to indoctrinate the Sikh public to believe they were being persecuted and that the use of violence was justified to protect the faith and its followers, as well as to cement the notion of a distinct Sikh identity which could only flourish independent of Indian rule.

As can be seen, the temples operated by Sikh terrorists became institutions propagating hate against the Indian state and fostering ideas of Sikh nationalism. As temples promoted hate, they became avenues for terrorist organizations to recruit disenchanted Sikh youth into their ranks and elicit support from the community to physically assist in and support their terrorist infrastructure throughout Punjab.

### **Effectiveness and Enforcement of the Ordinance**

Since the earliest stages of the conflict in the Punjab, the Indian government and security agencies recognized the importance of temples as a logistical and ideological support base for Sikh terrorism. The willingness to deal with the issue legislatively in conjunction with physical enforcement by security agencies was lacking until 1988. With the implementation of the ordinance, security officials finally had a means to combat Sikh terrorism in temples effectively. The discussion below demonstrates what

made the ordinance an effective tool in repressing terrorist activities within the confines of temples.

The first significant aspect of the legislation was its moral or ideological underpinnings. The general objective of the legislation was to prevent individuals from abusing religious institutions and holy sites by carrying out illegal activities and utilizing the sanctity of temples to avoid detention for perpetrating criminal acts. The general Sikh population in Punjab saw the objective of the legislation as justified because they supported the notion that temples should not be used for illicit or illegal purposes. Segments of the Sikh population had begun to see that terrorist activities in the temples were sacrilegious and led to increased persecution of Sikh worshippers. This grassroots support for the legislation was influential in two ways: (1) public pressure, in part, forced some terrorist groups to abandon temples as bases because the congregations made conditions inhospitable; and (2) raids carried out to purge temples of terrorist organizations were not condemned by the general public (Gill, 1999). Thus, army officials had full support from the community to raid temples to remove terrorist organizations.

The second aspect of the legislation that made it effective was its focus on punishing the managers of Sikh temples for allowing such activities to occur within their institutions. The threat of incarceration for a maximum of five years and a ban from sitting on further temple administrative bodies for six years, if convicted, was an effective deterrent. Temple managers were no longer willing to condone such behaviour within temples because they were now directly liable, thus forcing some temple management committees to dispel terrorist organizations from their grounds. The new legislation also



provided temple managers with a legitimate justification for asking terrorist organizations to leave temple grounds; not only would the managers suffer ramifications, but terrorists themselves would now be actively pursued in the facilities. Thus, after 1988, temples as a logistical and ideological stronghold for terrorist organizations were weakened.

While legislative means were important in repressing terrorist activities within temples, the enforcement of legislation by security agencies also played a significant role. Before 1988, Indian security officials had conducted two relatively unproductive raids (Operation Blue Star in 1984 and Operation Black Thunder I in 1986) to dislodge terrorist groups from the Golden Temple and various other temples in Punjab. However, in 1988, with the implementation of the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Ordinance, the Punjab police, with the assistance of an elite anti-terrorist group, launched Operation Black Thunder II. The goal of this operation was to remove terrorist groups who had re-established themselves in the Golden Temple and to enforce the new legislation (Gill, 1999). Operation Black Thunder II was highly successful with little damage done to the Golden Temple structure and little loss of civilian life. The operation focused on controlling key peripheral sections of the Golden Temple complex and preventing water, food, and electricity from reaching the individuals housed in the facility. It led to the arrest and surrender of 12 hardcore terrorists and 160 other supporters of the movement (Sharma, 1996).

Although Operation Black Thunder II was a tactical success, it also demonstrated that the Punjab police and various security agencies were willing to use maximum force to enforce the new legislation. The use of temples as terrorist bases would no longer be

accepted and security agencies now possessed the legal backing to carry out such operations.

Another effect of enforcing this legislation with Operation Black Thunder II was that it demonstrated to terrorist groups that locating bases within temples was strategically a poor choice (Gill, 1999). Terrorist bases in temples easily identified by security agencies from intelligence sources were not effective as hideouts. The advantage provided by the walled compounds now became an Achilles heel; security forces were now willing to set up a perimeter around the temples and wait for terrorist groups to surrender. Thus, temple grounds became walled traps that made it difficult for terrorist members to escape and made it easy for security agencies to kill terrorists inside with well-placed snipers.

With the implementation of effective legislation and enforcement, terrorist activities in the temples were eradicated after 1988. This was a significant factor in the decline of terrorism in Punjab by the early 1990s. The removal of Sikh terrorist organizations from the temples severely hampered their ability to function. They no longer had a safe haven in which to make plans and store munitions, they were deprived of a strategic location from which to launch attacks, and they lost the anonymity the temples had afforded them. The most significant overall effect of this legislation, and its enforcement, was that it dispersed Sikh terrorist leadership and members into the countryside where they were more susceptible to detection, arrest, and assassination (Gill, 1999). An additional effect of the enforcement of this legislation was that it denied terrorist organizations a method of indoctrinating the public with anti-Hindu government

sentiment and justification for the use of armed resistance. Finally, it removed a key facility utilized to recruit Sikh youth into Sikh terrorist organizations.

As can be seen, in repressing anti-state terrorism, national counterterrorism laws and their enforcement are imperative in reducing terrorist violence. Over the course of the conflict in Punjab, various laws were implemented to repress Sikh terrorism. Increased enforcement of terrorism legislation in Punjab facilitated the repression of Sikh terrorism. Although the judicial system in Punjab was ineffective as a tool to repress terrorism, its utility, when functioning adequately as an effective counterterrorism measure, is still valid. By valid I mean that even though the judicial system was ineffective in repressing terrorism in the Punjab conflict, the judicial system may still be an effective tool in repressing terrorist violence in other conflicts in the world. The judicial system in terrorist conflicts in other countries may be effective in convicting and punishing those who participate in terrorism, thus assisting in the repression of terrorist violence. Finally, terrorism legislation in Punjab was consistently amended to adapt to the changing forms of terrorism during the conflict.

## **CHAPTER 5: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF COUNTERTERRORISM MEASURES IMPLEMENTED DURING THE PUNJAB CONFLICT**

During a civil conflict, the use of security agencies to regain law and order may be deemed necessary. The tactical use of security forces can be done independently or in conjunction with political or legislative strategies. During the Punjab conflict, from 1978 to 1995, security forces were utilized on numerous occasions to bring about law and order. However, early attempts to combat terrorism were plagued with a host of deficiencies. In examining the counterterrorism strategy in Punjab, primarily four components need to be discussed in depth: (1) the commitment or beliefs of security agencies; (2) security strategy; (3) intelligence; and (4) public opinion. A successful counterterrorism campaign depends upon the appropriate functioning of these inter-related components. The security forces' ability to defeat terrorism in Punjab by 1995 can be explained by their ability to remedy inadequacies in the above four areas.

### **Security Agencies' Commitment to Repress Sikh Terrorism**

The first component of an effective counterterrorism strategy is a strong commitment among security agency leadership to repress terrorism and a belief that this objective is achievable. Strong commitment ensures implementation of policies and practices to bring about law and order. During the conflict, the primary agency responsible for security was the Punjab police force. There were primarily two distinct

stages in the evolving commitment of those forces; (1) 1978 to 1990 and (2) 1991 to 1995.

The period between 1978 and 1990 was turbulent, chaotic, and relatively unsuccessful in combating terrorism. During this period, an ideological commitment to repress terrorism among police administrators was non-existent (Gill, 1999). This lack of commitment was influenced by a number of related factors. First, the police administration was not an independent entity forming its own policy decisions and ideological framework (Tiwari, 1990). In reality, the police force was an extension of the federal government whose political policies influenced the beliefs and actions of the police administration. Second, the political leadership at the federal and state level was being cautious. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the political leaders' response to Sikh terrorism was ambiguous and confusing. They had no long-term strategy for bringing terrorism under control (Dhillon, 1990; Gill, 1999). Rather, the dominant ideology "emphasized the minimum use of force against the unconstrained violence" (Gill, 1999: 5). This position translated into police administrators taking a hands-off approach to terrorism (Saksena, 1990). With this non-combative approach entrenched politically, the police were left to implement a defensive strategy.

Finally, the characteristics and attitudes of the Punjabi police leadership itself contributed to this lack of commitment. The chief of police in the Punjab played a key role in the policies and daily functioning of the security apparatus. During the initial phases of the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement, the Punjab chief of police and the police administration did not know how to deal with the terrorism (Gill, 1999, Sharma, 1996). They were perplexed and confused by the extreme violence and not able to

formulate an appropriate tactical response. Compounding this problem was the political leaders' constant re-shuffling and replacement of police administrators, in particular police chiefs (Dhillon 1990, Jaijee, 1999). The ramification of these constant changes was the inability of any one individual to introduce and implement consistent security policies. Instead, individuals were rapidly shuffled in and out of key positions, preventing them from entrenching an ideological framework or implementing measures or methods to curb the terrorist violence. Thus, a lack of commitment among political authorities and police administration led to the escalation of Sikh terrorism between 1978 and 1990.

In 1991, however, there was a dramatic shift in commitment to repress terrorism among police administration. Although the shift in policy occurred in 1991, the precursors of this change, though constrained by political factors, could be discerned in the late 1980s. From 1986 to 1990, Riberio (1986 to 1988) and KPS Gill (1988 to 1990) were appointed chiefs of police (Jaijee, 1999). Riberio was the first Punjab police chief who attempted to reform the ideological underpinnings of the police force. During his brief tenure, Riberio attempted to instil a more hard-line approach to deal with Sikh terrorism. He implemented a "bullet for bullet policy" and provided orders for the police force to crackdown on militancy (Joshi, 1993; Puri, 1999; Sharma 1996). When Riberio was replaced in 1988 by KPS Gill, the new chief also attempted to persuade the police administration to crackdown on terrorism vigorously. During his two-year appointment, Gill recognized that previous administrations had taken a soft approach on militancy and thus were ineffective. However, constant political interference during Riberio's and Gill's terms led to a cautious, non-violent response to combating terrorism by police

officials. Political notions of resolving the Punjab conflict through peaceful means was the dominant theme affecting policy decisions (Gill, 1999). The end-product of this process was the replacement of KPS Gill, in 1990, with a more conciliatory police chief, leading to a rapid escalation of violence due to an ineffective counterterrorism strategy.

The significant shift in commitment in 1991 was the result of underlying political and personnel changes. During 1991, Rao and the Congress Party won the federal election in India. Rao strongly believed that, if Punjab was to function once again as democratic state, law and order must be reinstated (Gill, 1999). Prime Minister Rao recognized that political solutions to the Punjab crisis were not appropriate and that a security solution was the only viable option (Jaswal, 1996). To this end, Rao reinstated KPS Gill as the Punjab police chief in November, 1991. In addition, he and the new federal government implemented a non-interference policy in relation to issues of security and counterterrorism operations in Punjab. Later on, when a new state government was elected and functioning under Beant Singh, they also took a non-interference approach (Gill, 1999). This allowed the Punjab police force to work as an independent entity free to implement whatever measures it deemed necessary to repress terrorism (Gill, 1999; Jaswal, 1999).

The Punjab police was now a separate institution whose members' actions were not liable for scrutiny under law or political influence. Committed to repressing Sikh terrorism, Gill purged police leadership removing those individuals who were not committed and replacing them with those willing to actively participate in the counterterrorism campaign. This created a police administration with a homogenous set of beliefs. Gill worked feverishly to boost morale among the lower ranks and entrenched

the idea that success was achievable (Gill, 1999). He implemented policies and tactical practices consistent with his ideological belief system. Counterterrorism measures shifted from restrained and cautious to daring and aggressive overnight. Security forces were to engage and root out terrorists and to pursue them with vigour unseen previously. With the ideological basis to repress terrorism present, strategic aspects of repressing terrorism were modified.

### **Security Strategy**

In conjunction with commitment, security agencies must implement an effective strategy to repress terrorism. The first instrumental component of an effective security strategy is a properly managed and functioning security administration. The administration must ensure that the entire security apparatus has a clear understanding of the overall objective of operations, that the role of individuals or groups are clearly defined and understood, and that a clear delineation of duties among various security agencies is present. The administration must also address issues of adequate manpower to reduce violence, ensure adequate training of security personnel, and provide appropriate equipment to security forces in order to conduct duties adequately.

The second component of the strategy is concerned with effective overt actions implemented by security forces to bring about law and order. Overt actions refer to activities such as security patrols, use of armed raids, target hardening, seizure of weapons, preventing terrorist funding, use of torture, and assassination or arrest of terrorist members or supporters. Most of these actions target the infrastructure of terrorist organizations, impairing daily routine functioning. If security agencies fail to implement an effective overt strategy to reduce terrorist acts, violence will continue out of control.



The next section will discuss how deficiencies in both security administration and overt security actions led to the rise in terrorism in Punjab during the 1980s. The ability to remedy these deficiencies led to a rapid de-escalation in the conflict by the early 1990s. Although I argue that an ineffective counterterrorism strategy existed during the 1980s, the reader must be aware that some individual components of an effective counterterrorism strategy already existed during the 1980s, but only realized their true potential in the 1990s when coupled with other tactics in a broader and more efficient counterterrorism strategy.

### **Security Administration**

During the initial phases of the Punjab conflict (1978 to 1990), the security administration was poorly managed and proper day-to-day functioning was impeded. The overall management of the Punjab police was deficient with no strong central leader present to dictate actions or implement counterterrorism measures. Security management was constantly in a state of flux with a high turnover of staff in key positions. Political entities consistently shaped and influenced security policies. The result of these variables was an “ambiguous response to terrorism” (Gill, 1999:5). The inability to define a coherent objective for counterterrorism policies left actions carried out by security agencies with a lack of purpose. If security agencies fail to understand how their actions will contribute to the final objective, the utility of their actions is not understood (Gill, 1997).

The command structure did not have a hierarchical structure with orders given by the top brass flowing down to the lower ranks at the local level. Instead, the chain of command was diffused, in some cases, detached from some members or organizations

within the Punjab police. Thus, some police precincts were working independently with no oversight or direction from central command. The ramifications of this lack of chain of command were that orders given by top officials did not filter down to the lowest levels and, therefore, were not carried out. In effect, there was a confused response to terrorism because not all police detachments were carrying out coordinated actions.

The Punjab police administration also failed to define the roles of security forces and members. If individual police officers fail to understand their roles and the actions they need to carry out, law and order cannot be achieved. Also, in a similar manner, there must be a clear delineation of duties among various security agencies. At various points during the conflict, there were a number of agencies in charge of security; the Punjab police, Indian army, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), border patrol, and paramilitary groups. With such a large number of agencies attempting to bring law and order to Punjab, there was a need for each agency to have a clear mandate as to their duties and day-to-day roles in repressing terrorism. In such a situation, each agency should have its own unique and separate function, but all should be fully integrated into the security apparatus and have a common objective. During the Punjab conflict in the 1980s, there was no clear delineation of the various security agencies' duties. In some cases, agencies, such as the Punjab police and army, carried out relatively similar roles with little coordination. Also, various agencies worked independently and competed with one another (Gill, 1999). This lack of coordination and delineation of duties led to a muddled response to terrorism.

### **Change in Security Administration in 1990**

During the early 1990s, the Punjab police administration went through a dramatic makeover. In 1991, when KPS Gill was reinstated, he, with the help of associates, reformed the Punjab police and associated security agencies (Gill, 1999). The first change was separating the security structure from the political administration (Human Rights Watch, 1994; Puri & Judge, 1999). Gill created a parallel, but influential, security administration that was independent and had a great deal of influence over Punjab's governance. Gill understood that constant political interference during the 1980s had prevented an adequate response to terrorism. With an independently functioning security apparatus, Gill could now dictate counterterrorism policies and implement draconian measures with immunity (Human Rights Watch, 1994). The structure of the Punjab police was overhauled, with Gill creating a hierarchical pyramid-shaped command structure. As the central individual at the top of the security administration, Gill purged individuals in key positions around him installing people who were loyal to him and shared his ideological outlook (Gill, 1999). He created a command structure where measures and policy decisions made at the top level filtered down through the security apparatus and were implemented at every level and in every jurisdiction. This command structure was united and firm in its resolve (Puri & Judge, 1999). Gill judged the performance of security agencies and individual officers by their ability to effectively "neutralize" terrorism (Pettigrew, 1995).

Gill also brought with him a clear objective or mandate for the Punjab police. The objective or underlying ideology of all operations was to repress Sikh anti-state terrorism at all costs, utilizing any measure, and bringing law and order back to the state (Gill, 1999; Singh, 1991). With this clear direction, security personnel understood what

the final goal was and what actions were needed to achieve it. Groups and individuals in the security apparatus also clearly understood their roles; whatever action assigned them (conducting raids, or searches and seizures, patrolling, manning checkpoints, or providing security to individuals or infrastructure), they were contributing to preventing or suppressing terrorism. This clear understanding provided security personnel with a sense of purpose.

Gill also clearly delineated the duties of various security agencies. The Punjab police would become the primary security agency to repress terrorism, locating and arresting or eliminating terrorists, conducting raids, and patrolling. The army was placed in a supplementary role, confined primarily to urban settings and deployed to guard infrastructure or man checkpoints. Paramilitary groups played a more active role assisting the Punjab police in rural areas and areas afflicted with high incidents of terrorism. Various other agencies, like the Border Security Force (BSF), were assigned to stop insurgents and weapons from crossing border routes. These various agencies also integrated their command structures, thus allowing for a coordinated, seamless response to terrorism. Officers from each agency were incorporated into rival command structures, allowing for communication and coordination of actions between agencies, such as the Punjab police force and army (Gill, 1999).

### **Security Resources**

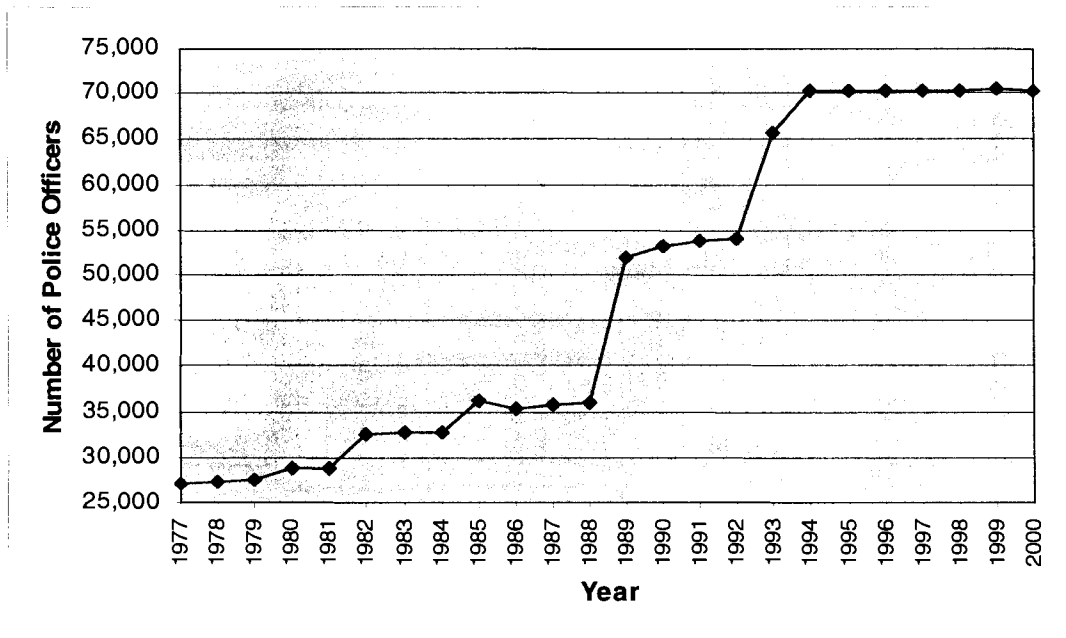
In order to implement an effective counterterrorism strategy, security administration must provide adequate manpower, training for security forces, and military hardware and equipment. Without these basic necessities, security forces cannot respond effectively to terrorism. From 1978 to 1990, the security administration's

inability to provide these necessities made it difficult for security forces to carry out their duties.

### Manpower

The security administration's implementation of an effective counterterrorism strategy hinges on their ability to ensure the presence of adequate numbers of security personnel in the zone of conflict. During the 1980s, the primary agency responsible for security, the Punjab police force, was inadequately manned. Figure 2 shows that in 1984, the Punjab police force had 32,855 police officers (Economic and Statistical Organization, 1984). This was woefully inadequate. Without the needed manpower, police were unable to carry out widespread counterterrorism operations.

**Figure 2: Strength of Punjab Civil Police Force 1977 to 2000 (Source: Economic and Statistical Organization, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 2000)**



By 1989, however, there was massive recruitment into the police force, resulting in its membership rising to 51, 833 men (Economic and Statistical Organization 1990; 1993; 1997). This was followed by another dramatic increase in 1993 to 65,658 officers and, in 1994, to 70,228 (Economic and Statistical Organization, 1993; 1996). The civil police force was also supplemented by additional security personnel in the early 1990s in conjunction with Operation Rakshak II. Although it is difficult to provide definitive numbers on other security personnel deployments, it is known that these agencies had a limited presence in the earlier parts of the conflict. The army and paramilitary forces tended to be stationed in Punjab for limited periods of time in the 1980s and to be confined to their barracks on many occasions. However, estimates place army deployments at 120,000 soldiers, 70,000 paramilitary personnel (which includes border security forces, central reserve police force, and central industrial security forces), 28,000 home guards, and 10,000 special police officers (Joshi, 1993).

The increased manpower in the 1990s allowed Gill to implement a more effective counterterrorism strategy with greater latitude. He was able to increase the number of patrols, security raids, checkpoints, and static guard duty of key infrastructure and to assign individuals to track down terrorist members or supporters (Gill, 1999). The extra forces also allowed the Punjab police and security forces to saturate areas that had little security presence and were known hot spots for terrorist activities. The increased manpower, in part, led to increased arrests and elimination of terrorists, increased seizure of weapons and ammunition, the elimination of safe areas for terrorist activities, and vast restrictions on the movements of Sikh terrorists. This, in part, contributed to the de-escalation of terrorism in Punjab in the 1990s.

## **Training**

The security administration also has to ensure adequate training is provided to personnel in order to effectively combat terrorism. In the initial phases of the conflict, because the police force did not know how to respond to terrorism, their personnel were not trained in the tactical knowledge or measures needed to actively repress terrorist violence. Individuals trained in civil policing do not have the background and skill needed to repress violent anti-state terrorism movements.

However, during the transformation of the Punjab police force in the early 1990s, the Indian army provided police officers with training for periods of 4 to 10 weeks in “various operational tactics” (Joshi, 1993: 14). Operational training emphasized weapons use, skills needed to conduct effective raids or searches, target-hardening methods, and other measures that could be implemented to pro-actively reduce violence or to respond to particular terrorist actions. Once the Punjab police were trained in these operational tactics, they could combat Sikh terrorist violence effectively.

## **Equipment**

In conjunction with adequate training, security forces personnel must be provided with the equipment needed to carry out their duties effectively. During the initial phases of the Sikh terrorism movement, the Punjab police and other security organizations were woefully under-equipped (Gill, 1999; Sharma, 1996). The three areas where equipment was deficient or obsolete were firearms, communication hardware, and transportation vehicles.

Until 1988, the Punjab police were equipped with “World War II vintage .303 rifles or equally obsolete bolt action 7.62’s” and, in some cases, police officers were not

armed (Gill, 1999: 6). Without adequate firearms, the police were vulnerable to attack because they were unable to repulse heavy automatic weapon fire (AK 47's). They also could not engage the enemy in raids or search operations because they could not match the firepower of the terrorists. Weapon sophistication also influenced the confidence security organizations had in carrying out their duties; police morale was low because they lacked confidence in their equipment. The Punjab police also lacked adequate telecommunication equipment needed to effectively coordinate activities between police officers and to communicate crucial information to headquarters. Police officers also had relatively few vehicles making it difficult for them to respond quickly to operations and to have the capability to shift manpower in an effective and timely manner.

In 1988, improvements in equipping the police forces began to be implemented. The police were provided with a number of light machine guns (LMGs) and automatic loading rifles (ALRs) (Gill, 1999). LMGs were primarily placed around police stations and equipped on police vehicles (jeeps) to make them less vulnerable to attack (Gill, 1999). Later on, in the early 1990s, more of the Punjab police were equipped with sophisticated automatic weapons capable of matching the firepower of Sikh terrorists. This increased weapons capability allowed Punjab police to engage terrorist groups directly causing significant casualties and, in some cases, restricting insurgents to a location facilitating their capture and detention.

Communication equipment was also improved. Modern radio hardware was brought in to facilitate communication between security agencies. This facilitated increased coordination during physical actions and was a means of communicating and collecting real-time intelligence.



There was also an increase in the number of vehicles available to the Punjab police which were primarily provided by the army. Having more vehicles allowed the police to patrol more frequently and over larger areas and greatly improved their response time to particular terrorist incidences or locations of identified terrorist members.

### **Overt Actions**

The second key component of a security strategy is overt actions implemented by security forces to bring about law and order. During the Punjab conflict, a plethora of effective techniques to control terrorist actions were implemented in the early 1990s. However, deficiencies during the initial phases of the movement greatly impeded repression of terrorist violence. The following discussion reviews the types of actions carried out by the Punjab police. The army and paramilitary forces also participated in these activities.

### **Manpower Use and Security Patrols**

In the early phases of the Sikh independence movement, the use of manpower resources by the Punjab police was inappropriate and inadequate to deal with the violence. The defensive, “static” or stationary, approach they took involved officers creating fortified compounds or checkpoints from which they were content not to leave to carry out patrols or counterterrorism operations (Gill, 1998; Joshi, 1993; Sharma, 1996). Officers were more concerned with their personal safety than carrying out their duties. Ensuring public safety was seen as a secondary goal (Sharma, 1996). Police Chief KPS Gill (1999) describes the use of police manpower during the 1980s as unproductive:

Between 40 to 50 percent of the 35,000 strong Punjab police force was, on any single day, tied down in static and entirely unproductive duties. The bulk of this

number was immobilized at innumerable nakas (barricades) all over the state, particularly in the cities and at checkpoints on the highways (p.8).

The bulk of the Punjab police was tasked in protecting infrastructure and major traffic thoroughfares. Even though the Punjab police attempted to deploy officers to protect sensitive targets, the lack of manpower left some sites woefully under-guarded. The police also tended to limit police duties to large urban areas and carried out operations only during the day. This practise compounded terrorist violence because most of the terrorists were from the rural villages and their support structure or networks were located in these areas. In addition, because the police would not conduct operations or patrols at night, Sikh terrorists moved about freely and terrorized the public at will (Gill, 1999; Puri & Judge, 1999; Sharma, 1996). Leaving large geographical areas under-policed, conducting limited patrols, and restricting police actions to particular time-frames gave terrorists the opportunity to carry out their actions relatively unhindered.

The non-proactive strategy in combating terrorism also meant that security personnel carried out relatively few armed raids of terrorist safe houses or hideouts. Thus, they failed to uncover and seize caches of firearms and explosive devices and arrest more terrorists and their supporters and sympathizers.

### **Modification in Manpower Use and Security Patrols**

During the early 1990s, a massive re-organization of how manpower was used happened in conjunction with Operation Rakshak II. As stated earlier, increased police recruitment and deployment of army and paramilitary personnel combined with a new

aggressive counterterrorism strategy facilitated greater flexibility in how security personnel were deployed and functioned.

The first significant change occurred in relation to how manpower was utilized. With the introduction of sizeable army contingent and paramilitary forces in the early 1990s, the police were able to modify their daily roles and functions. Army personnel took over the role of manning checkpoints and guarding infrastructure, such as government buildings, bridges, railways, and bus stations. Punjab security agencies were able to effectively target-harden key public facilities reducing the ability of Sikh terrorists to target these strategic institutions and impose significant civilian casualties. Also, with the increase in army personnel, there was a geographical expansion in the area now under security patrol and monitoring. The army was deployed in the rural countryside allowing for the saturation of previously under-policed and lawless areas (Gill, 1999).

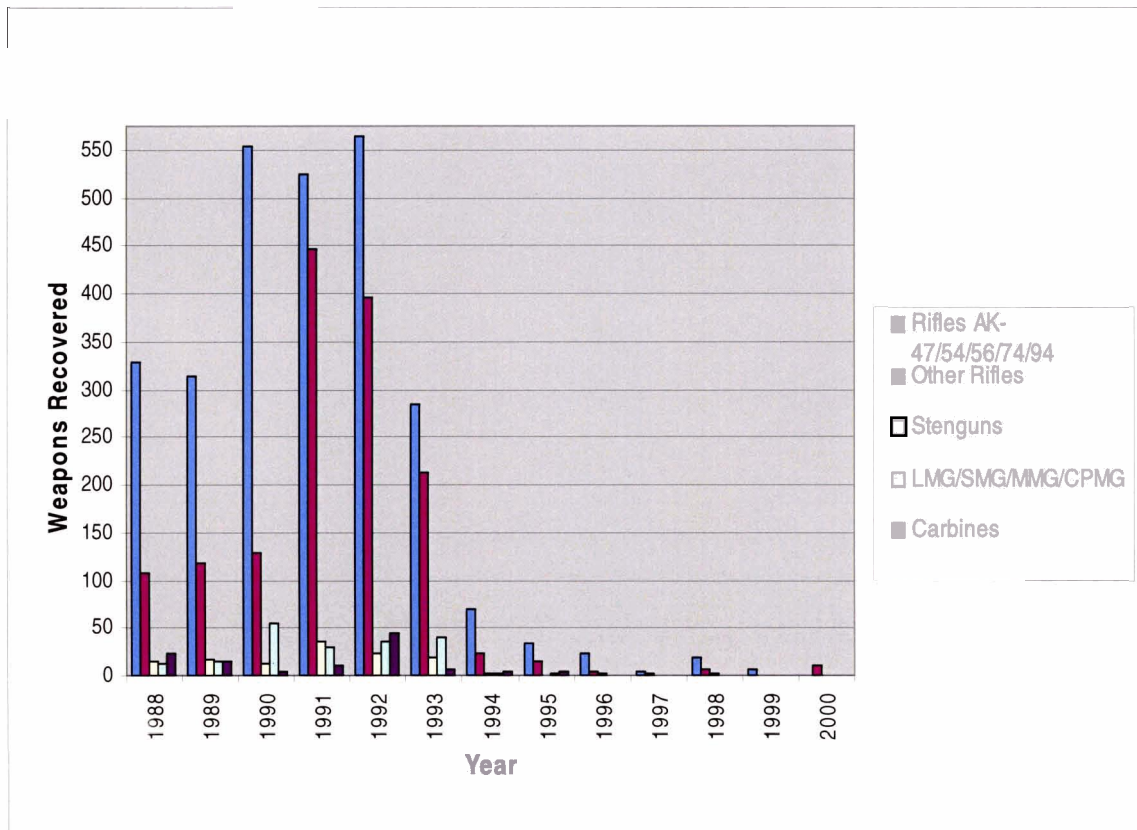
No longer limited to static duty, the police launched a more pro-active security strategy throughout rural and urban Punjab. Punjab was divided into small geographical areas under the control of a senior police officer (Gill, 1999). In these areas, police personnel were allocated specific patrol duties and were responsible for monitoring key “strategic points” (e.g., main highways and road links) (Pettigrew, 1995: 116). Patrolling levels were increased in frequency, raids on terrorist hideouts rose rapidly, and public surveillance was increased (Puri & Judge, 1999). The Punjab police also launched Operation Night Dominance designed to wrestle away the advantage Sikh terrorists enjoyed at night. Thus, in the early 1990s, police personnel started to conduct patrols and raids at night (Puri & Judge, 1999; Sharma, 1996).

The expansion of police operations into rural villages removed the safe havens terrorists previously used to avoid detection and conduct terrorist operations. By conducting patrols and raids on a consistent basis throughout all hours of the day, police greatly restricted the movements of Sikh terrorists who now feared detection or apprehension. The constant pressure on them inhibited their ability to conduct operations and prevented them from terrorizing the public at night. At the same time, the lives of civilians became very difficult in these areas as they were constantly being questioned by security officials and their houses and villages were being constantly raided. As such, the ability of Sikh terrorists to function normally on a day-to-day basis without interference ceased and was replaced with consistent pressure and monitoring of their activities (Pettigrew, 1995).

The Punjab police also began to use “cordon and search” operations to locate terrorist members or supporters and weapons or explosives and to search specific locations (e.g., homes, buildings, geographical areas) known to aid Sikh terrorist organizations (Joshi, 1993: 15). The army created rapid response teams to aid Punjab police in security operations and to provide extra firepower when engaging the enemy (Joshi, 1993: 15).

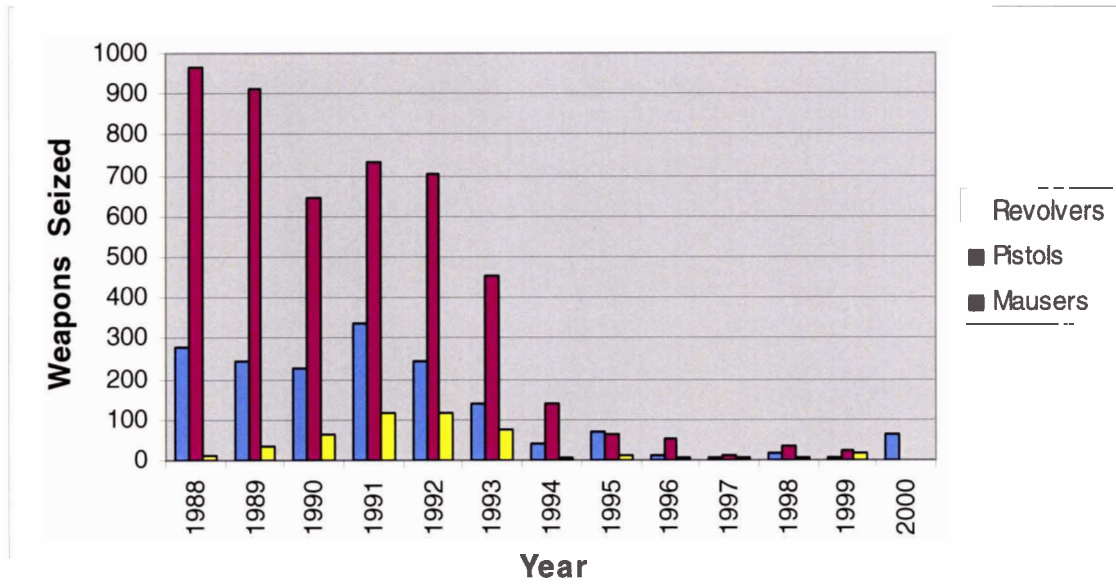
The results of these changes in the 1990s were dramatic and helped repress terrorism. Increased frequency of patrolling and raids led to the detection and arrest of Sikh terrorists, increased intelligence on the movement of individuals, and the seizures of weapons and explosives. Figure 3 demonstrates the rapid increase in the number of automatic weapons seized during the early 1990s.

**Figure 3: Automatic Weapons Recovered in Punjab 1988 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001)**



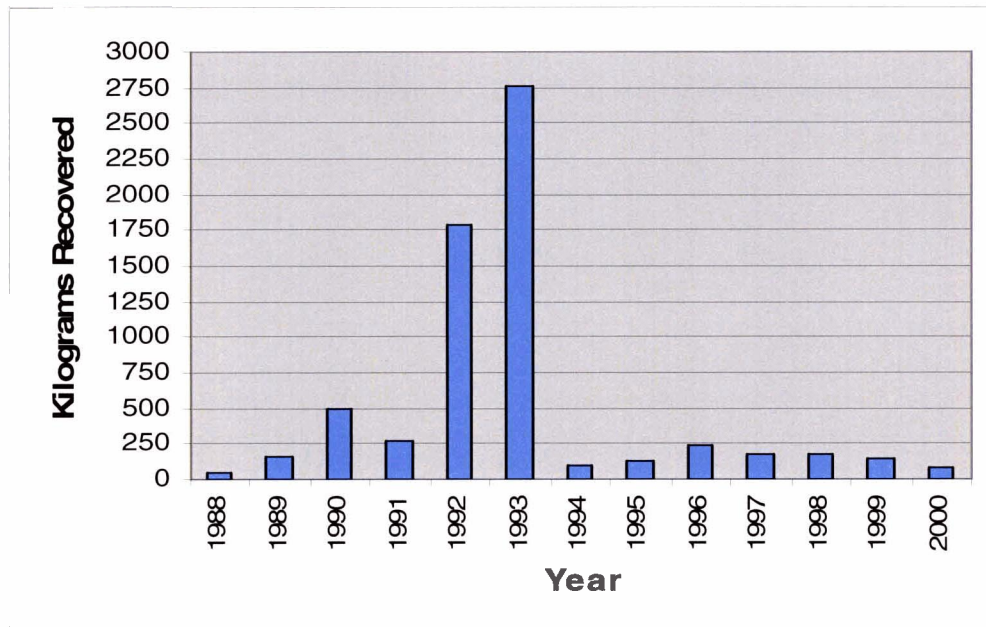
The handgun recovery rates mirror the automatic weapon trend which began earlier in the late 1980s. Figure 4 shows the significant numbers of handguns seized in 1988 with a gradually declining trend after that period. The decrease in hand gun seizures may, in part, be related to Sikh terrorists primarily using automatic weapons during the latter half of the conflict.

Figure 4: Hand Guns Recovered in Punjab 1988 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001).



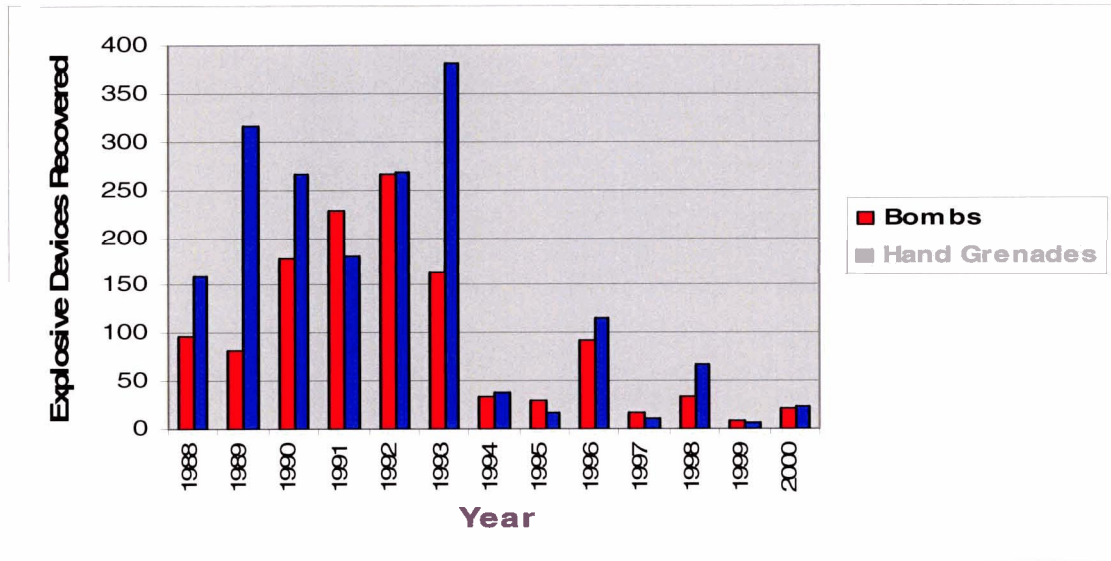
The seizure of explosive material also peaked in 1992 and 1993 at the height of counterterrorism operations with security forces recovering 3750 kgs of explosives in 1993. (See Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Explosive Materials (in Kgs) Recovered 1988 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001)**



This trend is also true for smaller explosive devices, such as bombs and hand grenades. The number of bombs recovered began to increase in 1990 with 139 bombs seized and peaked in 1992 with 266 bombs seized. (See Figure 6). Figure 6 also demonstrates that there were relatively high recovery rates of hand grenades during the early 1990s at the peak of counterterrorism operations.

Figure 6: Bombs and Hand Grenades Recovered in Punjab from 1988 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001).



Thus, in general, by modifying their operational tactics, the police were able to crackdown on the terrorist infrastructure, to arrest or eliminate key players in the terrorist movement and support networks, to seize material items needed to carry out terrorist operations, and to reduce the level of fear among the civilian population which increased civilian opposition to the movement.

### Eliminating Terrorist Groups and Infrastructure

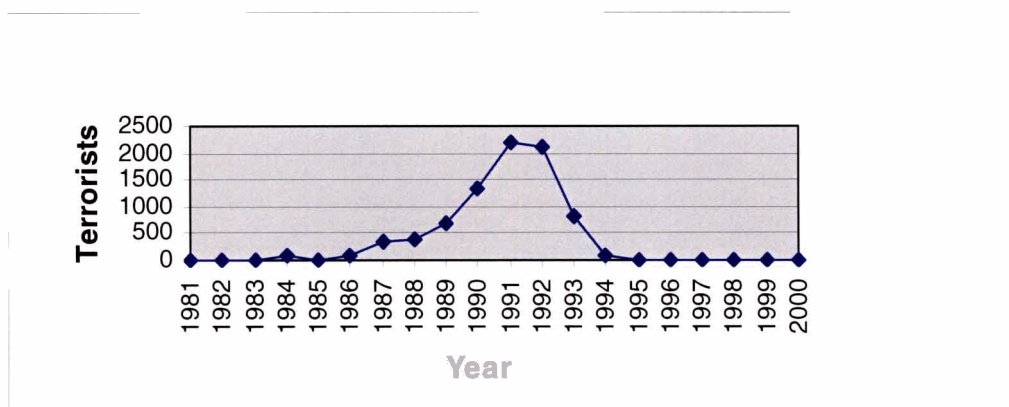
The most important facet of an effective counterterrorism strategy is the ability of security forces to physically remove individuals participating in terrorist violence. Removal of individuals can include arrest or detention, but, in this discussion, it will refer to the illegal tactics of killing known militants, supporters, and sympathizers.

In the early phases of the Sikh terrorist movement in Punjab, security forces were relatively ineffective in eliminating terrorist elements. Figure 7 shows that between 1981 and 1986 relatively few terrorists were killed, with the highest number of casualties



occurring in 1986 when 78 terrorists were eliminated. (The statistics do not incorporate sympathizers and supporters of the movement. The term terrorist is primarily referring to those individuals security authorities have deemed as actively participating in physical acts of terrorism).

**Figure 7: Annual Terrorist Casualties 1980 to 2000 (Source: Gill, 2001).**



The inability to eliminate Sikh terrorists in Punjab was influenced by a number of factors. For example, security agencies did not incorporate the elimination strategy into their counterterrorism campaign. Due to a lack of experience, they failed to recognize the elimination strategy as an effective method of reducing terrorism. Other reasons for implementing this policy was impossible included a non-confrontational political strategy constraining security methods utilized to bring about law and order, legislative constraints, and a dysfunctional security apparatus.

### **Effective Elimination Policy**

In the mid 1980s and early 1990s, Punjab security agencies adopted an elimination strategy for militants, sympathizers, and supporters. There are a number of factors that led to a successful elimination strategy by security agencies in Punjab

between 1987 and 1994. Terrorism statutes removed legal constraints providing security agencies free rein to implement whatever tactics they deemed necessary to bring about law and order. (See Chapter 4)

Increased intelligence capabilities and modification of patrolling practices also facilitated the elimination strategy. An effective intelligence infrastructure, capable of collecting and disseminating information by the late 1980s, enhanced security agencies' capability to locate Sikh terrorists and deploy security personnel to directly engage and eliminate these individuals or to detain them for later elimination. In addition, increased security patrols in the early 1990s led to the detection and elimination of known Sikh terrorist, supporters, and sympathizers.

Ideological support for the elimination policy at the bureaucratic and security leadership level increased after the mid 1980s. In 1986, Police chief Riberio and state governor Ray endorsed a "bullet for bullet" policy granting security officials the power to eliminate members of terrorist organizations as a means to bring about law and order (Singh, 1991: 179). In the late 1980s, however, the ideological commitment to this policy waned decreased by the late 1980s and its application in the field stopped. However, by 1991, Punjab Police chief KPS Gill reintroduced the strategy of eliminating members, supporters, and sympathizers of Sikh terrorism in Punjab. The elimination policy placed greater emphasis on individuals who participated in recent terrorist acts and focused on the "leaders, planners, and the ideologues" of the movement (Gill, 1999: 26). Security officials believed that focusing resources on key elements within the movement would facilitate the removal of individuals driving Sikh terrorist violence.

In order to ensure an effective elimination strategy, Gill introduced a unique set of tactics to entice security force personnel into practising it. In the early 1990s, security forces made hit lists of individuals known to be active in the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement (Jaijee, 1995). Lists were circulated to police districts and to security personnel in order to assist in the detection of these individuals. Anyone appearing on the hit list was subject to elimination, as they were seen as perpetrators and facilitators of violence.

An offshoot program created by the Punjab police was a bounty killing program. The bounty killing program was similar to the hit list program, but, under this program, monetary rewards were attached to the arrest or elimination of extremists on the list. These rewards were seen as incentives to track down individuals and eliminate wanted terrorists (HR, 1994; Joshi, 1993). The program was secretly financed by the Indian central government (HR, 1994). The amount of the reward ranged from Rs 30,000 to 2 Lakh, depending on the individual target and his level of participation and importance in the movement (HR, 1994; Jaijee, 1999). Leaders of terrorist organizations tended to have the highest bounty on their lives.

Another incentive used to promote the elimination of Sikh terrorists was job promotion. The promotion program involved police officers being promoted to a higher rank once they eliminated a terrorist on the wanted list. This resulted in out-of-order promotions and officers in the lower ranks being promoted rapidly to senior positions based solely on the number of terrorists they had eliminated (Puri & Judge, 1999). The incentive program used by security officials created an atmosphere in which security personnel were willing to eliminate members of terrorist organizations because of direct

financial rewards and promotions that motivated them to be more pro-active in seeking out militants.

Punjab security officials used a number of tactics to eliminate members of terrorist organizations. The first tactic involved the Punjab police and Indian army's conducting joint raids on known locations where Sikh terrorists were residing or using safe houses (Joshi, 1993). The police would directly engage individuals in these locations with army personnel functioning in a "supportive" role constructing "outer cordons" to prevent the militants' escape (Gill, 1997: 106). In some instances, the police would request assistance from mobile army units called "Quick Reaction Teams" (QRTs) whose specific purpose was to react to "firefights" immediately (Joshi, 1993: 13). These QRTs were equipped with heavy firearms capable of engaging and overpowering militants. Ambush teams were also utilized to target specific militants based on intelligence that these targets would be in a specific location. The ambush teams would set up in villages or roads, wait for their targets to arrive, and assassinate them (Joshi, 1993).

Hit squads were introduced in Punjab in the early 1990s. The Punjab police constructed 15-member teams with high-ranking officials in charge of their operations. The goals were to target specific terrorists anywhere in the state and eliminate them (Joshi, 1993). A variation of the officially mandated hit squads was the creation of vigilante groups by the Punjab police (Jaijee, 1995). These vigilante groups were primarily composed of civilians who had criminal histories. Individuals in these groups were provided a daily salary, a gun, and instructions to track down and eliminate terrorists, supporters, and sympathizers (HR, 1991; Jaijee, 1995). They were primarily

given a free hand to carry out their activities unchecked and were rewarded for their actions (Jaijee, 1995).

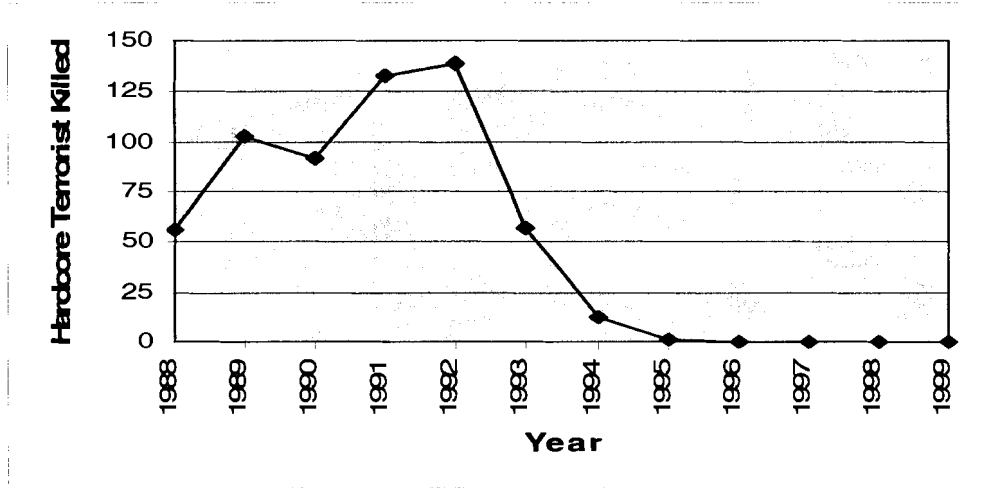
Finally, the most popular method of eliminating terrorists was the use of encounter killings. The definition of an encounter killing varied during the Punjab conflict: (1) police personnel patrolling in an area attempt to stop an individual who opens fire resulting in police action; (2) at a police constructed check-point, a militant/terrorist fails to stop or opens fire resulting in which police return fire; or (3) while in custody, a militant attempts to escape, at which point the police open fire to prevent escape (Puri & Judge, 1999). Encounter killings primarily resulted in the death of individuals who were or were presumed to be Sikh terrorists/militants. In reality, encounter killings tended to involve Punjab police arresting or detaining known Sikh militants, sympathizers, and supporters, interrogating them for intelligence, and then simply executing them (Joshi, 1993). Encounter killings became a primary means of eliminating terrorists.

### **Success In Eliminating Sikh Terrorists**

With the strategy of eliminating Sikh terrorists introduced in the mid 1980s, and strongly entrenched as a practice by Punjab security officials by the 1990s, security officials began to see a correlation in the number of terrorists killed and the increasing success of the counterterrorism campaign. The number of terrorists eliminated increased from 328 in 1987 to 2,113 in 1992 as a result of this strategy (Gill, 2001). (See Figure 7.) The increase in the number of hardcore terrorists killed also corresponded to the elimination strategy's focusing on the main ideologues of the movement. (See Figure 8.)

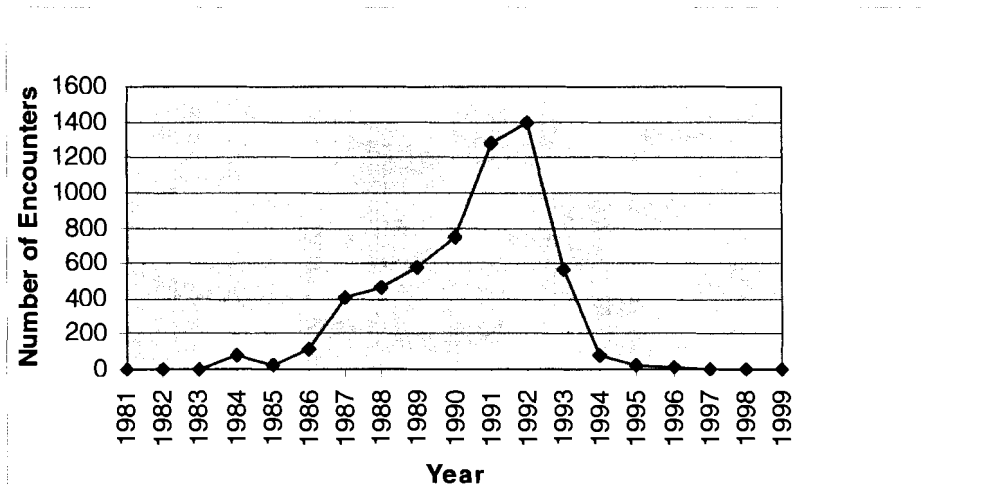
The number of hardcore terrorists killed went from 26 in 1988 to 133 in 1991, and 139 in 1992 when the counterterrorism campaign was in fully implemented.

**Figure 8: Hardcore Terrorists Killed in Punjab 1988 to 1999 (Source: Gill, 2001).**



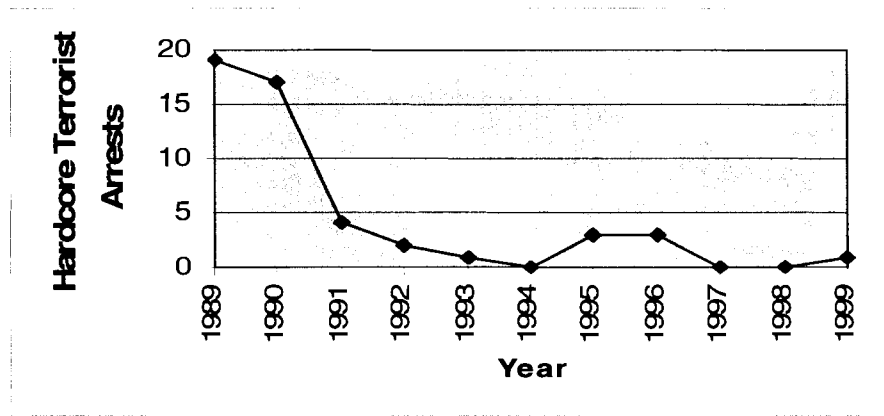
The number of encounter killings also dramatically increased in 1986 and accounted for a high level of terrorist casualties until 1992. (See Figure 9.)

**Figure 9: Police Encounters 1981 to 1999 (Source: Gill, 2001).**



The figures on the number of hardcore terrorist arrests between 1989 and 1999 demonstrate the use of the elimination strategy by Punjab Security officials: 1989 and 1990 saw the highest number of terrorist arrests, with 19 and 17, respectively; but, in 1991, arrests dropped to only four and, in 1992, to two individuals. During the height of the counterterrorism campaign, the strategy of arresting hardcore terrorists nearly ceased. See Figure 10 below.

**Figure 10: Hardcore Terrorist Arrests in Punjab 1989 to 1999 (Source: Gill, 2001).**



The official statistics visually demonstrate the use of the elimination strategy in place of arrest by Punjab security agencies. It is important to understand the impact these actions had on Sikh terrorist organizations and infrastructure at the grassroots level. With the elimination strategy primarily focusing on the “leaders, planners, and ideologues” of the movement, and effectively removing these individuals, the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement collapsed by 1993.

Prior to 1986, Punjab security officials had primarily been able to remove a handful of key terrorist leaders like Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (Dam Dami Taksal). Between 1986 and 1993, the strategy of eliminating key terrorist leaders was relatively

more effective. During the late 1980s, the Punjab police removed such militants as Aroor Singh (Panthic Committee), Gurdev Singh (Panthic Committee), Shanna Singh (Panthic Committee), Sukhdev Sakhia (Sakhira gang), Anokh Singh (Babbar Khalsa), Surjit Singh Penta (BTFK), Gurjit Singh (AISSF) (G), Manbir Singh Chaheru (KCF), and Avtar Brahma (KLF) (Sharma, 1996). However, it was between 1990 and 1994 that the elimination strategy implemented by Punjab security officials was most effective. The Punjab police were able to locate and eliminate central figures of the Sikh independence movement, such as Gurbachan Singh Manochahal (BTFK/ Panthic Committee), Babbar Avtar Singh (BK), Sukhdev Dasswal (BK), Gujarant Singh Budh Singhwala (KLF), Rashpal Chandrian (BTFK), Talwinder Singh Parmar (BK), and Gujarant Singh Rajasthani (KCF) (Gill, 1999; Joshi, 1993; Sharma, 1996).

By eliminating the leadership structure of Sikh terrorist organizations, Punjab security agencies were able to remove the individuals who provided ideological justification for the movement, organized and planned terrorist attacks, coordinated activities, and were the sources of operational knowledge of the organizations. With key leadership removed, Sikh terrorist organizations become disorganized as surviving members lacked the knowledge of how the organization operated, how to plan attacks, and how to coordinate group actions effectively. Also, because leadership tends to have specialized knowledge about the organization, such as contacts for weapons or munitions, location of safe houses, sources of financial assistance, identity of supporters and sympathizers, and other beneficial information needed to operate the organization on a daily basis, the loss of this specialized knowledge made it difficult for terrorist organizations to operate effectively.



Security agencies also targeted individuals working within the terrorist infrastructure who assisted militants to carry out acts of violence. Removing supporters or sympathizers who provided logistical, material, and financial aid is important. When terrorist organizations cannot access safe havens, they are more likely to be detected and eliminated. Eliminating individual supporters who provide financial support makes it difficult for terrorist organizations to access funds needed to acquire weapons or explosives, fund operations, and maintain terrorist infrastructure. Thus, removing individual members or supporters in terrorist organizations greatly hampers their ability to function and carry out violent acts against the state.

The elimination strategy was most effective in the 1990s because the effort was sustained for a three-year period corresponding with counterterrorism Operation Rakshak II. Security forces never suspended this strategy as they had done in previous years which provided terrorist organizations the opportunity to reorganize and recruit. Also, during this time, the strategy expanded to include individuals at all levels of the terrorist organization, especially those occupying secondary command positions (Sharma, 1996). Thus, the elimination strategy consistently removed individuals in the Sikh terrorist infrastructure who would fill key vacant positions. As a result, Sikh terrorist organizations could not re-fill vacant positions in their organizations fast enough to keep pace with the level of attrition. In addition, inexperienced members from the lower ranks began to occupy high-level positions in Sikh terrorist organizations before their level of experience made them appropriate and effective which also contributed to their quick demise and increased level of operational confusion among the ranks.

With the major leadership, actors in the independence movement, supporters, and sympathizers removed by 1993, large terrorist organizations like Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), Babbar Khalsa (BK), Bhindranwale Tiger Force Khalistan (BTFK) “suffered irreversible losses” (Gill, 1999: 27). Other more peripheral or mid-sized terrorist organizations, such as Dashmesh Regiment (DR), Mathura gang, Khalistan Armed Forces (KAF), Khalistan National Army, and Khalistan Liberation Army (KLA) and ceased to function. With terrorist ranks depleted by an aggressive counterterrorism strategy, Sikh terrorist organizations collapsed.

## **Intelligence**

Intelligence plays an important role in a successful counterterrorism campaign. A well-developed intelligence-collecting apparatus allows for timely and detailed collection of information that assists security agencies in dismantling terrorist organizations. In the case of Punjab, during the initial phases of the terrorism movement, the intelligence collecting apparatus was poorly constructed and disorganized. The lack of coordination of and investment in intelligence resources led to an ineffective counterterrorism strategy. The discussion below describes how deficiencies in intelligence collection and analysis contributed to the rise of terrorism in Punjab and how resolving these deficiencies contributed to the successful counterterrorism campaign against Sikh terrorists.

An effective intelligence apparatus has four components. The first component are dedicated groups of individuals whose primary role is to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence. These groups are critical because analysis of intelligence data influences counterterrorism strategies, operations, and the priorities of security forces. The second component of an effective intelligence apparatus are; the methods and strategies utilized

by security agencies to gather intelligence. Security agencies must arrest and interrogate known militants, supporters, and sympathizers for information on terrorist organizations, infiltrate terrorist organizations, and utilize technology to intercept communications. The third component involves effective cooperation between security agencies in information sharing. Sharing intelligence between security agencies is crucial because failure to provide information prevents other agencies from implementing steps or actions to diffuse terrorist violence. The fourth component of an effective intelligence apparatus is the capability of security agencies to act on intelligence they have received by conducting raids, arresting individuals, and modifying tactics in response to intelligence. If security agencies are able to adequately respond to or act upon intelligence information, they will be able to dismantle terrorist infrastructures and drastically reduce acts of terrorism.

### **Intelligence Apparatus**

During the initial stages of the Sikh independence movement, the Punjab police force did not have an active intelligence wing nor were federal agencies, such as the Intelligence Bureau, Criminal Bureau of Investigation, Research and Analysis Wing, or army intelligence officers, operating in the state (Gill, 1999; Jaijee, 1995). Security forces failed to maintain records of acts of terrorism: “No investigations were carried out, and invariably, no documentation existed of any actions taken” (Gill, 1999:3). The failure to collect and analyze data on terrorist acts prevented Punjab security officials from identifying trends in terrorist violence, members and supporters of terrorist organizations, sources of weapons, location of safe houses, activities of terrorist groups, and their strategies (Gill, 1999). The lack of an appropriately staffed intelligence wing

prevented collection and analysis of terrorism data, inhibiting security agencies in their ability to receive and use information needed to carry out counterterrorism operations and suppress terrorist activities.

### **Adequately Functioning Intelligence Infrastructure**

In 1984, the Punjab police created the general framework for an intelligence wing with officers from various security organizations being re-assigned into intelligence collection (Gill, 1999). Over time, the staffing levels in this wing were expanded and supplemented by intelligence officers from the army, Intelligence Bureau, Criminal Bureau of Investigations, and Research and Analysis Wing (Jaijee, 1995). The sole duty of these individuals was to organize incoming data, document information, carry out investigations in relation to terrorist acts, analyze information, and disseminate this intelligence to frontline security forces.

Through analysis of intelligence data, security officers were able to assign militants into categories based on their level of participation in the terrorist movement. From this data, priority lists of individuals who needed to be located and apprehended or eliminated were created. As intelligence from the field increased over time, significant trends in relation to the Sikh independence movement were discovered. For example, particular villages were identified as providing above-average material support or shelter to terrorists. Based on this information, disproportionate numbers of militants were recruited from these areas. Analysis by intelligence officials also detected patterns in terrorist activity with the discovery that militants tended to operate in a limited area (Gill, 1999):

Militancy in a majority of cases was highly localized. Even the most important leaders were found to operate within a radius of no more than 15 to 20 kilometres from their respective villages (26).

Analysis of intelligence also revealed that acts of terror in rural villages primarily occurred during the night or early morning, that militants continued to associate in local social networks, and that some operated local criminal operations to maintain their status (Gill, 1999; Gurharpal, 1991).

### **Intelligence Collection**

The second component of an effective intelligence counterterrorism apparatus concerns the methods used to gather intelligence. During the initial phases of the Sikh independence movement, an intelligence-collecting apparatus did not exist. Militants and sympathizers from whom intelligence could be gathered were not being arrested in significant numbers, there were no interrogation centres, terrorist organizations were not infiltrated, and the use of spies and technology to gather intelligence was minimal. The ability of the Punjab police and security officials to remedy these problems led to improved intelligence facilitating an effective counterterrorism strategy.

### **Interrogations**

The use of interrogations to extract information from militants, supporters, and sympathizers during a terrorist conflict is important. During the early 1980s, security agencies, and the Punjab police specifically, were hesitant to participate in the arrest and interrogation of terror suspects because they feared identification and reprisals from terrorist organizations (Gill, 1999). The number of arrests and detentions of militants and sympathizers was negligible during this time and the targets for detention were primarily

innocent civilians who provided little beneficial intelligence on the Sikh movement (Pettigrew, 1995).

The ability to identify key participants in terrorist organizations or infrastructure and bring them in for questioning significantly influences the quality of intelligence. The interrogation techniques used to obtain information from suspects or sympathizers was also deficient. Interrogation methods lacked the mental and physical intensity to elicit information. In many cases, interrogators were inexperienced and unaware of questions to ask or information that needed to be obtained. Also, the interrogation apparatus in Punjab was deficient with a lack of facilities and individuals specializing in the interrogation of suspects. In a majority of cases, interrogations took place at local police stations and were conducted by lower level police officers with limited experience in dealing with such issues (Gill, 1999).

### **Changes in Interrogation Process**

In the mid 1980s, the Punjab police and the larger security apparatus began to implement significant changes to the interrogation process. The first change was the creation of interrogation centers across Punjab (HR, 1994; Jaijee, 1995). Rooms of pre-existing police stations were also converted into interrogation areas. Interrogation centres were primarily constructed in former factories or buildings in numerous district centers and other larger towns (HR, 1999). These interrogation centers were operated primarily by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of India and Punjab police. With the creation of these facilities, the infrastructure needed to interrogate large numbers of individuals was available, districts in Punjab now had central locations where individuals could be housed for interrogation, and the greater number of locations allowed officials to

collect information from a smaller geographic area, making intelligence more manageable. Also, with the introduction of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of India into Punjab, there was now one agency conducting interrogations that had expertise and experience in intelligence collection. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of India and the Punjab police also began to utilize experienced senior officials and those with sadistic mindsets to carry out interrogations to ensure productive intelligence extraction (Gill, 1999; HR, 1994). As security officials became more aggressive and successful in their counterterrorism campaign, their fear of carrying out interrogations also dissipated.

Because new laws were expediting a dramatic change in the number of arrests and those targeted for detention, the number of individuals brought in for detention and interrogation increased during the latter 1980s (Jaijee, 1995). It is estimated that by 1993, 52,268 individuals were being detained under the TADA across India (Jaijee, 1995: 135).

Not only did security agencies increase the number of individuals under detention, and thus available for interrogation, they also began to target particular types of individuals for questioning. Security officials created a profile of those who they believed were Sikh militants, collaborators, and sympathizers of the movement (HR, 1994). The intelligence analysts regarded young Sikh males, 18 to 40, who were Amritdhari (i.e., baptized Sikhs) as prime suspects (HR, 1995). Individuals residing in known “militant strongholds or those belonging to political groups suspected of sympathizing with or supporting the militants” were brought in for questioning (HR, 1994: 18). Also, in areas where acts of terrorism were committed, security officials

rounded up entire villages in close proximity to the event and took them in for questioning. Family members of known militants were also especially targeted for detention and interrogation in order to obtain intelligence on the whereabouts and activities of these individuals (HR, 1991).

Thus, by the early 1990s, the dramatic increase in the number of individuals being detained and questioned under great physical stress was resulting in an increase in intelligence about the identities, whereabouts, and movements of militants, supporters, and sympathizers. Interrogated militants exposed the identity of individuals in their organizations, the whereabouts of leaders and members, the location of weapons and explosives caches, how weapons were obtained, details of plans for future terrorist attacks, and information about the working of the organizations and their support infrastructures (HR, 1994). This intelligence was then used by security officials to remove or detain individuals participating in the movement, raid safe houses, seize weapons or explosives, prevent terrorist attacks, and slowly dismantle the terrorist infrastructure.

### **Interrogation Methods**

Interrogation methods play an important role in how much intelligence is obtained from an individual. Although there is a lack of information about interrogation methods during the early parts of the Punjab conflict in the academic literature, there is a general consensus that security officials (e.g., Punjab police) used low intensity tactics (Gill, 1999). These low intensity tactics primarily involved long interrogation sessions in a warm room, detaining individuals for relatively short intervals in their cells, sleep deprivation, restricting access to family, restricting food and water, minimal bathroom



access, and the use of physical force. These methods of interrogation were relatively ineffective as individuals were not placed under significant strain to induce them to divulge information on Sikh terrorist organizations to security officials.

### **Changes in Interrogation Methods**

As the Punjab conflict escalated in the mid 1980s, security officials began to implement more draconian interrogation methods to obtain information from individuals. It is difficult to construct a timeline as to when each new interrogation method was introduced. A number of them appeared in the mid 1980s and the frequency with which they were used during interrogations increased into the early 1990s.

The methods of interrogation implemented can be classified as crude forms of torture. The implementation of torture in combating terrorism in Punjab was possible because security legislation suspended many of the civil liberties of the detainees and the safeguards against the use of excessive force. Persons detained for questioning were exposed to primarily two forms of torture: physical and psychological.

Methods of physical torture included such acts as electric shock (particularly to the genital area, head, ears, and legs), exposure to lengthy beatings with canes and leather straps, “tying the victims hands and suspending him or her from the ceiling, pulling victims’ legs far apart so as to cause great pain, rotating heavy wooden or metal rollers over the thighs”, pulling out nails and hairs with violent physical force, placing cloths over individuals’ heads and pouring water to simulate drowning, rape, placing chilli powder in an individual’s anus, sodomy, crushing testicles, and burning (HR, 1994; HR, 1991; Jaijee, 1995: 54).

Psychological methods of torture included personal death threats and threats to family, threats to rape female family members or to have individuals watch while female members were raped by security officials, isolated confinement, lengthy interrogations, “disrobing”, and making individuals watch as family members were tortured (HR, 1994: 59; HR, 1991: 5). The shift to these draconian methods of interrogation provided interrogators with the tools to expose individuals to the levels of physical and psychological stress needed to elicit information on terrorist organizations.

### **Infiltration**

Infiltration of terrorist groups is a key method of obtaining intelligence about these organizations. During the early 1980s, infiltrating Sikh terrorist organization was difficult largely because of the organizational structure of these groups. Early terrorist organizations, like Dal Khalsa, Dashmesh Regiment, All India Sikh Student Federation (AISSF), Babbar Khalsa, and Bhindranwale’s Dam Dami Taksal were composed of individuals who had close familial links or friendships with other individuals within the organizations. Individuals in these organizations had intimate knowledge of the ideological commitment of other members and a great deal of trust in one another. During this period, the organizations would not recruit members whose backgrounds were unfamiliar or unknown (Pettigrew, 1995). This process made it relatively easy for terrorist organizations to prevent infiltration and also eliminate infiltrators once detected. Security officials’ inability to infiltrate terrorist organizations made it difficult for them to identify members and organizational structures and to gather the intelligence needed to dismantle these groups.

In the late 1980s, security agencies began to successfully infiltrate terrorist organizations. Infiltration of Sikh terrorist groups was facilitated by terrorist organizations not doing background checks when recruiting. As the conflict continued into the 1990s, many of the main terrorist organizations began to splinter into smaller independent cells, and the ideological underpinnings of the movement deteriorated rapidly. The splintering of terrorist groups led to less discipline in recruitment methods as organizations now only worried about increasing membership in their ranks in order to become formidable terrorist threats. Recruiters failed to examine the ideological commitment of new members (Pettigrew, 1995). With Sikh terrorists recruiting en masse and failing to examine individuals' backgrounds, security officials were able to imbed agents to gather intelligence. Agents were quickly able to identify the command structure, militant members of the organization, and support networks that provided weapons, safe houses, and financial support. This intelligence allowed security agencies to conduct raids on locations and to seize and arrest known terrorists and sympathizers.

### **Spies**

Adequate intelligence collection also involves security agencies' utilizing agents in the community to collect information on terrorist groups and their movements. During the initial periods of the Punjab conflict, the security apparatus in Punjab failed to use spies in the field. This can, in part, be attributed to Punjab security agencies not having a history of dealing with terrorism and thus being unclear about the tactics needed for appropriate intelligence collection. Punjab security officials were also hampered in using agents in the field because their intelligence infrastructure was not developed and was disorganized. The inability to collect information at the grassroots level led to a lack of

intelligence on terrorist organization structures, movements, and sympathizers in the community and hampered implementation of long-term strategies for bringing Sikh violence to an end.

However, the inability to collect intelligence at the grassroots level changed in the early 1990s. The shift in intelligence collection was facilitated when Punjab security officials constructed an adequate intelligence-collecting apparatus and provided the needed manpower. Punjab security officials primarily used two types of individuals to collect intelligence at the grassroots level: “touts” and “cats” (Puri & Judge, 1999: 30).

A *tout* is “a police spy in a village”. Touts were primarily normal civilians who were enticed to provide intelligence to security officials for financial gain (HR, 1999: 25). In Punjab, security officials created a string of informants throughout the rural villages who provided information on terrorist activities in their area (Puri & Judge, 1999). These informants provided information about individuals active in the movement and suspected or known financial, logistical, and material sympathizers of the terrorist organizations. The Punjab police also used another form of tout, primarily undercover officers, who would go into selected areas known for terrorist activities and spy on the local population (Jaijee, 1995).

*Cats* refer to ex-terrorists who had surrendered to the police to provide information on terrorist organizations (Puri & Judge, 1999: 131). The role of cats was slightly different as they worked with police officials on a daily basis. As former militants, many cats had intricate knowledge of the organizations’ workings and could identify members and support networks. In a majority of cases, cats would accompany police officials to specific geographical areas, such as main bazaars, railway stations, and

bus stands where they were once active and identify individuals known to be active in the movement (Puri & Judge, 1999: 131). Over time, this grassroots intelligence allowed Punjab security agencies to detain, arrest, and remove known Sikh militants and logistical, material, and financial supporters. It also facilitated raids of safe houses and the seizure of weapons and explosives.

### **Public Opinion and Intelligence**

The role of the general public in providing intelligence will be discussed in detail below. However, it should be noted that the intelligence from the general public was non-existent in the initial phase of the conflict. During the early 1990s, the public began to provide intelligence to security officials which assisted in counterterrorism measures.

### **Intercepting Communications**

The final effective method for collecting intelligence is the use of technology to intercept communications between terrorist organizations and their members. In the early 1980s, security officials did not take advantage of technological solutions to intercept communications of terrorist organizations. However, during the late 1980s, the Punjab police began to use technical and non-technical methods to intercept communications. Individuals believed to be active in or supportive in any way of the militant movement were placed under surveillance (Jaijee, 1995). Intelligence officers were dispatched to local phone exchanges where they would tap into the phone system and listen to all calls being received by an individual under surveillance. Members were also posted at local telegraph offices and mail facilities where they would intercept communications.

The ability of security agencies to intercept communications between terrorist members led to the detection of terrorist plots, the identity of participants in the terrorist movement, and intelligence on the functioning of terrorist organizations. With this information, security forces were able to prevent terrorist attacks, arrest individuals active in the movement, and implement counterterrorism methods.

### **Intelligence Sharing Between Security Agencies**

The third component of an effective intelligence apparatus is information sharing between security agencies. In the early 1980s, when terrorism was in its infancy, a great deal of conflict existed between the various security agencies. The Punjab police, CRPF (central reserve police force), paramilitary groups, and the army, in a majority of cases, resented each other. This resentment stemmed from the belief that each organization's role was more important than the others and from institutional stereotypes about other agencies (Gill, 1999). Because of this lack of cooperation, security agencies did not share intelligence with each other. This lack of information sharing impeded the establishment of a coordinated counterterrorism strategy and prevented the various security forces from receiving information needed to conduct effective counterterrorism operations.

In the later half of the 1980s, security agencies began a new era of intelligence sharing. This was facilitated by the realization that historical levels of cooperation were ineffective, counterproductive, and contributing to the proliferation of violence. Reform in intelligence sharing involved the army and Punjab police, in particular, amalgamating "command structures" with "clearly defined institutional structures of cooperation and consultation" (Gill, 1999: 24). At the grassroots level, this translated into police and

army personnel embedding officers into each other's units to ensure intelligence received was transmitted to members of both organizations (Gill, 1999). The total sharing of intelligence was productive in a number of ways: (1) It prevented gaps in intelligence data; (2) it facilitated joint operations and greater coordination of overt action; (3) it allowed for the prevention of acts of terrorism; (4) it facilitated obtaining information on terrorist organizations; and (5) it assisted in the arrest of militants, supporters, and sympathizers and the seizure of weapons or explosives. With an adequately functioning and managed security apparatus, the Punjab police were finally able to concentrate on the physical counterterrorism actions that would bring law and order to Punjab.

### **Physical Actions by Security Agencies**

The lack of intelligence during the early 1980s inhibited the ability of security agencies to implement an effective counterterrorism response, as they lacked information on the participants of the movements, trends in Sikh terrorism, and in what areas increased patrolling and manpower was needed. With a properly constructed intelligence wing in the 1990s being able to collect and analyze information on the Sikh independence movement, security agencies were able to implement effective counterterrorism measures. They could focus their manpower on apprehending and eliminating individuals in the terrorist infrastructure [See previous discussion on implementation of effective security strategy in Punjab].

### **Public Opinion**

Public opinion plays a major role in determining the longevity, strength, and effectiveness of an anti-state terrorist movement. If the public ideologically supports a

terrorist movement, they are more likely to provide material, logistical, and financial assistance to terrorist organizations in order to further the cause. Public support for a movement also hinders counterterrorism measures. A dramatic waning of support for Sikh anti-state terrorism occurred during the 1990s which, in part, contributed to the demise of terrorism in Punjab.

Attempting to gauge public support for the Sikh nationalist movement in Punjab is difficult as it was constantly changing in response to political and historical events. The public's support for the movement came primarily from two groups: religious hardliners and average lay people. Religious hardliners were primarily hardcore fanatics who believed in a fundamentalist or "pure" version of Sikhism similar to that advocated by Sant Bhindranwale. These individuals' support for the movement remained relatively constant over time and could not be swayed even after the Sikh nationalist movement was repressed. Supporters of the second type, average lay people, tended not to have a vested ideological interest in the movement, but were willing to support it if they deemed it legitimate. The following discussion focuses primarily on the average lay person in Punjab during the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement.

During the initial phases of the terrorist movement, the general public were somewhat sympathetic to the cause (Puri & Judge, 1997). This sympathy grew primarily from the public's anger with the Indian state because of its attack on the Golden Temple (Joshi, 1993: 12). Sympathy for the movement was compounded by Operation Woodrose, an army operation designed to remove terrorist elements from the rural villages near the Golden Temple and other Gurdwaras (temples) in the state. These operations alienated large segments of the rural male population who were exposed to



heavy-handed tactics, arrest, and constant harassment by security officials (Gill, 1999; Joshi, 1993). Thus, it can be inferred that these events influenced sympathy for the terrorist movement because the public believed that the Sikh population was being repressed by the Indian state. The public also related to Sikh terrorists because they themselves were exposed to repressive measures and brutal physical treatment and because they shared similar religious and cultural backgrounds, thus associating the movement with their identity. This sympathy gradually translated into logistical, material, and financial assistance for the movement.

Logistical support provided by the general public was primarily limited to allowing members of Sikh terrorist organizations to seek refuge and store weapons and ammunition in their homes as well as use vehicles for transportation (Puri & Judge, 1999; Sharma, 1996). Safe houses provided Sikh terrorists with the ability to plan terrorist activities without fear, avoid arrest, and have the flexibility to launch offensives from various locations (Sharma, 1999). Weapon storage in safe houses facilitated the dispersal of weaponry to numerous locations preventing the seizure of items during security raids. Vehicles provided by sympathizers gave terrorists a means of getting to targets and escaping from security officials and of efficiently moving between targets. Material support for the movement was mainly limited to providing food, weapons, equipment, clothes, and other supplies. These items were largely used to support individuals on a daily basis in the field. The final form of public support for Sikh terrorism was financial aid. Methods of financial assistance included cash being given directly to terrorist organizations to maintain their terrorist infrastructure and purchasing supplies, such as weapons, ammunition, explosives, and other military equipment. The public also

indirectly financed terrorist organizations by giving donations to Sikh temples whose executive committees funnelled money to terrorist organizations. This method of contributing financially was primarily used to avoid being linked by government security agencies with financing Sikh terrorist organizations. In some cases, terrorists groups coerced logistical, financial, and material support.

The Sikh general public also provided the terrorist movement with another conventional form of assistance, one that substantially impeded the counterterrorism campaign; they withheld information and their cooperation from the state. Viewing the security agencies as illegitimate and repressive and, out of sense of fear and loyalty, the public, in general, would not cooperate with security agencies by providing information on the identity of known terrorists or sympathizers, the location of safe houses or weapons, or information about planned attacks. This lack of intelligence hindered security officials' ability to mount an effective counterterrorism strategy.

### **Shift in Public Opinion**

In the early 1990s, public opinion shifted dramatically because of changes in the activities and behaviour of the Sikh terrorists (Puri & Judge, 1997). The first half of the Sikh terrorist movement was fundamentally entrenched in a strong religious ideological base that guided action and instilled a notion of a "just cause" to the movement. However, this façade of "ideological driven holy warriors" crumbled over the length of the conflict (Gill, 1997: 101). Sikh terrorists alienated their support networks because of the criminal acts they committed (Sharma, 1996). The general public, who had provided shelter, began to disclose stories of female members in their households being raped, molested, and abducted by Sikh militants (Gill, 1997; Joshi, 1993). Members of the

movement participated in morally inappropriate behaviour, such as alcohol and drug use (marijuana and opium) (Gill, 1997; Puri & Judge, 1999). The public became incensed with these individuals for murdering innocent loved ones for no apparent reason or when family members failed to concede to ransom demands (Gill, 1997; Sharma, 1996).

In addition, the public felt betrayed when militants failed to protect them from the harassment, arrest, detention, and eliminations carried out in the harsh counterterrorism campaign by security officials. Members of the public argued that they had supported militants and their activities, but when it came time to defend them from state repression, the militants turned their backs on them (Pettigrew, 1995). The Sikh militant was now perceived as a common criminal.

With public opinion opposing the Sikh independence movement and the public fearing government reprisals, the support network for the movement started to crumble. The public gradually began to assist security agencies in their counterterrorism campaign (Gill, 1999; Sharma, 1996; Thandi, 1996). They provided security officials with information on the location of hideouts, safe houses, and weapons caches and they disclosed the identity and whereabouts of members of terrorist organizations and sympathizers. With this increased intelligence, the police were able to launch well-directed raids leading to arrests and seizures (Thandi, 1996).

The general public also began to withdraw all other forms of assistance. Logistical assistance in the form of safe houses and allowing weapons and ammunition to be stored in private homes ceased (Gill, 1997). People who once welcomed Sikh militants into their homes began to turn these individuals away and did not allow their property to be used for terrorist activities. Material support in the form of providing

equipment needed in terrorist attacks was reduced and financial support for the movement decreased gradually. Individuals were no longer willing to fund terrorist organizations for fear of reprisals by security forces. People now feared security agencies and the heavy-handed punishment they would deliver to anyone found abetting militants. Thus, these actions played an important role in neutralizing the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement in Punjab.

## **CHAPTER 6: THE ROLE OF FOREIGN INTERESTS IN THE KHALISTANI MOVEMENT**

The role of foreign nations in supporting the Sikh independence movement was limited to the involvement of the Pakistani government. A great deal of substantiated and unsubstantiated evidence exists that Pakistan provided financial, material, and logistical support to Sikh terrorist organizations. The willingness of the Pakistan government to support Sikh separation can be attributed to religious and historical animosities, particularly its political and strategic interests in Jammu and Kashmir.

### **Religious Animosities**

Religion has fostered a great deal of mutual animosity between India and Pakistan largely because of reciprocal persecution of Hindus and Muslims in both past empires and contemporary nation states. Events in British Colonial India significantly impacted perceptions and resentments. British India experienced a significant amount of political and social change during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The intense opposition to British colonial rule culminated in the Indian independence movement which was largely spearheaded by the Indian National Congress (INC), a predominately Hindu nationalist political organization. The religious membership of the party frightened segments of the Muslim population who anticipated a Hindu party eventually governing an independent India. Most Muslims believed that they then would be persecuted and repressed by a Hindu-led

government. In response, the “Muslim League”, a political party, was established in 1906 to represent Muslims’ political interests.

By the 1930s, the independence movement was gaining popularity, and the tension between Muslims and Hindus intensified. In 1940, the Muslim League demanded that India be partitioned along religious lines with majority Muslim areas forming a new nation. As religious riots escalated in the mid 1940s, British, Hindu, and Muslim diplomats and politicians finally agreed to the partition of India. Pakistan was created on August 14, 1947, based on Muslim majority areas in northeastern (i.e., present-day Bangladesh) and southwestern India (i.e., present-day Pakistan). India gained independence the following day. As these two nations were being formed, an enormous exchange of religious populations took place along with mass killings from both sides of Hindu and Muslim migrants. The violence occurred on all transportation routes. As well, Hindu and Muslims were evicted from their homes and women were sexually assaulted. These tumultuous events, pre- and immediate post-independence, created the foundation for contemporary political animosities between India and Pakistan. This trend continued and was amplified because of the irresolvable difficulties involved in the Jammu and Kashmir regions of northeastern India.

## **Historical Events**

Three specific post-independence events institutionalized the conflict between Pakistan and India. Post-partition, Jammu and Kashmir continued to function as a princely state independent of Pakistan and India under Maharaja Hari Singh. In 1947, with the assistance of Pakistan, a number of tribal groups occupied segments of Jammu and Kashmir. Maharaja Hari Singh, fearing the threat, requested Indian military

assistance. However, in exchange for their help, India requested that Maharaja Hari Singh sign an accession treaty agreeing to join his state with India. Maharaja Hari Singh acceded and India claimed sole ownership of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan challenged the legitimacy of the accession treaty and declared that Maharaja Hari Singh was forced to sign under duress. They also argued that because Jammu and Kashmir were predominately inhabited by Muslims, this region rightfully belonged to Pakistan. The war between the two countries ended in 1949 with a cease-fire line being established.

In 1965, India and Pakistan again went to war over Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistani forces launched a covert offensive across the cease-fire line triggering India's invasion of Pakistan near Lahore. The Jammu and Kashmir conflict de-escalated when both parties agreed to a cease-fire (1966) with the intent to resolve the dispute peacefully.

In 1971, a civil war broke out between East (Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (Pakistan). Although East and West Pakistan formed one nation, they were geographically isolated from one another because they were located on either side of the Indian sub-continent. In addition, many East Pakistani's had continuously advocated for an independent homeland. Although East Pakistan shared the same religion (Muslim) with West Pakistan, its population (Bengali) differed vastly in customs, traditions, cultural background, and ancestry. The residents of East Pakistan resented West Pakistan's dominance in political and economic affairs. In 1970, the East Pakistan population elected a National Assembly and were in the process of drafting a new constitution that would lead to self-government. In 1971, the West Pakistani government, opposing the creation of an autonomous state, ordered soldiers into the region. A civil war broke out and East Pakistan declared itself the independent state of

Bangladesh. In December, 1971, India joined the civil war by providing support to the East Pakistani independence movement. Indian armed forces entering East Pakistan enabled rebel forces to achieve a rapid victory over West Pakistan. India, therefore, was instrumental in the independence of Bangladesh by providing armed soldiers, training to East Pakistani guerrilla forces, and safe passage and assistance to East Pakistani rebel political leaders (Sharma, 1996). These major historical events have led to deep-seated animosities.

### **Why Support Sikh Terrorism in Punjab**

Religious and historical animosities have been built over decades between India and Pakistan. More recently, additional events have substantially influenced interaction between the two nations. In the mid 1980s, Pakistan began to support Sikh terrorism in Punjab. There were primarily three major factors that led Pakistan to support this. First, Pakistanis harboured a desire for revenge against India and its predominately Hindu population because of the historical atrocities carried in the name of religion against the Muslim population. Pakistan also resented India's consistent interference in Pakistani internal affairs, as in the case of Bangladesh and Jammu and Kashmir (Sharma, 1996).

However, the key factor that influenced Pakistan's support for Sikh independence was the strategic interest that Pakistan believed the Sikh movement could help them achieve in the region. Pakistani officials believed that the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement would benefit them in their objective of obtaining sole ownership of Jammu and Kashmir. They reasoned that, if a religious minority like the Sikhs in Punjab were able to obtain independence through the use of violence, this same scenario could be repeated in Jammu and Kashmir. Sikh independence was perceived as a catalyst that



could motivate the Muslim population in Jammu and Kashmir to seek independence through violent means. Also, Pakistan reasoned that if it were able to initiate anti-state terrorism in Punjab, strategically this would inhibit India's ability to effectively fight an anti-state terrorism movement in Jammu and Kashmir because Indian security resources would be stretched and supply lines through Punjab would be disrupted. In addition, they felt that Sikh terrorism in Punjab was essential to ensure political, economic, and social instability in India. Pakistanis worried that if India remained stable, over time it would exert too great an influence in the region, thus possibly posing a threat to Pakistan's sovereignty.

### **Pakistan Logistical, Material, and Financial Assistance**

Pakistani material, logistical, and financial assistance to Sikh terrorist organizations was instrumental in the escalation of terrorist violence in Punjab. The Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) agency operated by the Pakistan military was in charge of assisting Sikh terrorist organizations in their independence movement. The ISI's role domestically was to ensure Pakistan's internal stability; internationally, it was to carry out covert operations to promote Pakistani interests. It is alleged that in 1985, the ISI began to fully support Sikh terrorism on a variety of fronts (Sharma, 1996).

### **Logistical Support**

The ISI provided largely three forms of logistical support to Sikh terrorist organizations: (1) Assistance to the cross-border movement of individuals; (2) establishment of safe houses for leaders and members of Sikh terrorist organizations; and (3) construction of militant training camps. In 1985, the ISI created formal links with

many Sikh terrorist organizations and was actively assisting these groups in achieving their political objective of Khalistan (Sharma, 1996).

The first form of logistical assistance Pakistan provided was assisting leadership and members of Sikh terrorist organizations to gain entry into Pakistan via border routes. The Sutlej Rangers and the Pakistan Rangers, the main border security forces, were instructed by ISI officials not to impede movements of Sikh terrorists (Joshi, 1993). On many occasions, Pakistani border security officials created entry points for Sikh terrorists that would allow them to avoid detection. They also passed on intelligence to Sikh terrorists on Indian border deployments, thus allowing them to adjust entry points or to avoid capture or interception. Once Sikhs crossed into Pakistan, they were escorted to various safe houses that Pakistani authorities (i.e., ISI, Pakistani Rangers, and Pak Intelligence) established in large urban centers.

The ISI actively facilitated the creation of safe houses for leaders and members of various Sikh militant groups. Leaders of Sikh terrorist organizations were provided independent homes in Islamabad, Kohat, Lahore, Kasur, Rawalpindi, and Sialkot. These homes were equipped with telephones and faxes to facilitate their communication with their networks in Punjab. It is well known that prominent Sikh terrorist leaders Gurbachan Singh Manochahal (Bhindranwale Tiger Force Khalistan-BTFK), Wassam Singh Zaffarawal (Khalistan Commando Force-KCF), General Labh Singh (Khalistan Commando Force- KCF), Gurjit Singh (President of AISSF (G)), Sukhdev Dassuwal (Babbar Khalsa-BK), Wadhwa Singh (Babbar Khalsa-BK), Atinder Pal Singh (AISSF), Gurjit Singh (Dam Dami Taksal), Dr. Sohan Singh (KCF), and other Panthic Committee leaders were provided sanctuary in Pakistan between 1984 and 1995 (Sharma, 1996).

The ability of militant leaders to operate their organizations within the sanctity of Pakistan was a significant factor in the longevity of terrorism in Punjab. The immunity provided to Sikh militant leaders in Pakistan allowed them to actively plan and launch terrorist attacks without fear of arrest. Sanctuary in Pakistan also prevented Indian security forces from removing the core leadership responsible for the daily operational functioning of Sikh terrorist organizations.

Sikh militants who crossed into Pakistan were also afforded assistance by Pakistani intelligence officials. They were housed for short periods of time in bungalows or jails in various Pakistan cities, such as Faisalabad and Kotlakhpat, and then dispatched to terrorist training camps operated by their organizations or Pakistani authorities (Sharma, 1996).

The first terrorist training camps for Sikh militants were constructed by Pakistani authorities in 1985 with a total of four operating by 1986. However, the number of operational camps increased to eleven by 1988 with greater numbers of recruits crossing into Pakistan for training. These camps were operated by ISI operatives and the Pakistan Rangers, who were highly trained in modern and guerrilla warfare (Sharma, 1996). Most of the training camps were located in five major metropolitan areas: Faisalabad, Sialkot, Lahore, Kasur, and Bahawalpur (Gill, 1997; Sharma, 1996). The purpose of the training camps was to train Sikh extremists in general and sophisticated terrorist techniques in order to carry out violent terrorist acts in India (Nandi, 1996). Individuals selected for training underwent detailed background checks, their ideological commitment was tested and verified, and their physical abilities were assessed. Individuals who did not meet standards were limited to physical exercises and ideological training. Those deemed

physically capable and ideologically committed were provided arms training (Sharma, 1996).

The length of training provided to militants varied from two days to three months. Individuals who were highly trusted and perceived as dedicated by militant leaders received advanced training. The training regimens followed a very broad, general structure. However, they varied in length, level of detail, and sophistication of weapons and explosives training depending on the nature of training to be imparted. The initial phase of training was ideological instruction given by Sikh militant leaders and Pakistani intelligence officials (Sharma, 1996). Ideological training involved indoctrinating individuals to perceive the Hindu Indian government as repressing Sikhs and attempting to destroy the Sikh faith. Trainees were taught that their struggle for Khalistan was religiously and morally justified and that the use of violence was necessary. The key objective of ideological training was to “brainwash” individuals to ensure commitment to the Khalistani movement and provide justification for their violent actions.

The second component of training was primarily restricted to in-class lectures on weapons operation and handling (e.g., pistols, stenguns, Ak-47s, self-loading rifles, machine guns). In class, lectures were followed by practical demonstrations of weaponry and individuals were given an opportunity to discharge firearms (Sharma, 1996).

The third component of training focused on lectures about the functioning and construction of chemical low and high explosives. Individuals provided advanced training were instructed on the construction of “improvised explosives”, explosives detonated with electronic quartz timers, remote-operated explosive devices, shrapnel bombs, and plastic explosives combined with petroleum jelly (Sharma, 1996: 229). As

the level of training in the use of explosives and firearms increased, so did the ability of individuals to inflict greater casualties in terrorist operations. The final aspect of training focused on providing trainees with the tactical knowledge on how to launch effective offensives and which locations (e.g., railways, transformers, bridges, buildings, security personnel convoys, buses, and transportation routes) and individual targets (e.g., government employees, members of parliament, police, Hindu civilians) were most suitable.

Apparently, Pakistani authorities also facilitated the contact of Sikh militants with the Afghan Muhajideen. In the late 1980s, Sikh militants attended training camps operated by the Muhajideen near the Afghanistan/Pakistan border (Northwest Frontier Province). Training in these camps was relatively brief, limited to three-week periods and largely restricted to weapons training. Weapons training focused primarily on automatic weapons (AK-47s and Ak-56s) and general purpose machine guns (GPMC). Individuals were also taught the use of hand grenades, the laying of anti-personnel and armoured vehicle land mines, and explosives handling (Sharma, 1996). A select number of individuals were instructed on the basics of guerrilla warfare and carried out mock exercises in the Afghanistan border region (Jaswal, 1996).

Once Sikh militants completed training, they were escorted to various entry points along the Punjab border. Pakistan Rangers in charge of border security actively facilitated the militants' border crossings by providing cover fire and intelligence on Indian Border Security Force deployments (Sharma, 1996). As training provided to Sikh extremists increased over time, it contributed to the escalation of violence. The training

imparted to members of Sikh terrorist organizations allowed them to carry out more well-coordinated and violent attacks on security personnel and civilian targets.

### **Material Assistance**

The second type of covert support Pakistani authorities provided Sikh terrorist organizations was the acquisition of firearms and explosives (Jaswal, 1996). In the mid 1980s, as Sikh terrorist organizations forged stronger formal ties with Pakistani authorities, stabilized organizational structures, and defined ideological goals, material assistance provided by ISI and Pakistani Rangers increased rapidly. It is believed that in 1986, the ISI began to indiscriminately provide sophisticated weapons, for purchase and for free, to terrorist groups in order to escalate the intensity of violence in Punjab (Jaswal, 1996, Pettigrew, 1995). Prior to 1986, terrorist weapons were largely unsophisticated: handguns, twelve-gauge shotguns, Enfield rifles, 303 rifles, and a small number of stenguns (Humans Rights Watch, 1994). However, in 1986, the weapons rapidly became more sophisticated with ISI and the Pakistani Rangers supplying terrorist groups with automatic weapons (e.g., Kalashnikov, Ak-47s, AK-57s, general purpose machine guns, dragunov sniper rifles, and light machine guns), rocket propelled grenades (RPG-7s), anti-tank rockets, stinger missiles, low- and high-grade explosives, anti-personal and vehicle land mines, night vision equipment, and Kempro transceiver sets (Gill, 1997; Joshi, 1993; Unknown, 1988). Over time, these weapons became standard issue to members in various organizations.

The increasing sophistication of the weapons being supplied contributed directly to the escalation of terrorist violence in Punjab on a number of fronts. First, it allowed Sikh fighters to “consolidate power” in various regions militarily, thus entrenching their

area of armed influence (Human Rights Watch, 1994: 37). Second, as weaponry became more sophisticated, it allowed Sikh terrorists to carry out more effective and severe terrorist acts. When engaging civilian or security targets, automatic weapons “rapid fire” capability caused a greater number of casualties, and the use of explosives allowed for more devastating attacks on targets (Human Rights Watch, 1994: 37). Third, Sikh terrorists were more willing and confident to engage security personnel, armed convoys, and security installations (Human Rights Watch, 1994). The confidence to engage security personnel in direct conflict is attributable to their increased ability to engage security personnel in arms fire and, with their superior weapons, impose a higher number of security force casualties (Pettigrew, 1995).

Pakistani assistance was not limited to acquiring weapons for terrorist organizations. Rather, the ISI and Pakistani Rangers actively facilitated the cross-border movement of weapons into India through the creation of smuggling routes. Authorities used active intelligence on Indian military deployments along the border to smuggle weapons through routes with inadequate surveillance and security. Pakistani Rangers and ISI members provided cover fire to assist Sikh smugglers when they crossed the border (Sharma, 1996). Entry points for weapons could be adapted on a daily basis based on intelligence information.

On some occasions, smugglers were provided with false documentation about the nature of their cargo and were able to smuggle weapons through border checkpoints in commercial vehicles. Pakistani officials, who knew what the true nature of the materials being transported was, provided false documents. Also, the ISI recruited individuals along both sides of the border who were willing to provide sanctuary to Sikh militants

and allow the storage of weapons in their homes for money. Weapons were then distributed at a later date through various networks to terrorist organizations in Punjab (Sharma, 1996). Thus, Pakistan actively aided Sikh terrorist organizations in the acquisition of weapons, the trans-border movement of arms, and the transportation and distribution of weapons.

### **Financial Assistance**

The final form of assistance provided by Pakistani intelligence authorities was financial aid (Sharma, 1996). The amount of money Pakistan authorities contributed to various Sikh organizations is unknown. Funding was largely provided directly to leaders of Sikh terrorist groups seeking refuge in Pakistan and then distributed by these organizations to members in Punjab. Funds provided to Sikh terrorist organizations were used to purchase weapons and supplies, help establish and maintain organizational leadership structures, fund violent terrorist operations, maintain individuals and cells within the field, and assist in the recruitment of individuals. Pakistani intelligence authorities also used funds to bribe Indian Border Security personnel to aid in the smuggling of individuals and weapons and used money to attain the cooperation of individuals along the Indian side of the border to help establish safe houses for militants and to store weapons (Joshi, 1993).

### **What Changed Pakistan's Support for Sikh Terrorism?**

Just as Pakistan's assistance contributed to the rise of Sikh anti-state terrorism in Punjab, its withdrawal of logistical, material, and financial assistance in the early 1990s contributed, in part, to the movement's rapid decline. Two factors precipitated the



withdrawal of Pakistani support: (1) a shift in ideological commitment to the Khalistani movement; and (2) the implementation of effective counterterrorism measures along border districts by Indian security forces.

Although Pakistanis were willing to sponsor Sikh anti-state terrorism, they never shared the ideological goal of the movement to create an independent Sikh homeland. Rather, Pakistani officials regarded the movement as a tool for furthering their own political, economic, and strategic interests within the region. It was also a method of reducing support among border residents in Punjab for the Indian union, residents who played a significant role in thwarting Pakistani military advances during previous wars (Sharma, 1996).

Nonetheless, during the early 1990s, Pakistan began to view the Khalistan movement as ineffective and no longer believed supporting it would help them achieve their political, economic, and strategic interests in the region. The movement was unable to accelerate Jammu and Kashmir independence, create economic instability in India, or to produce the deep social cleavages in India needed to foment political instability. The movement was recognized as decreasing in popularity among the Sikh population and, therefore, its usefulness was waning.

At the same time, Pakistani intelligence officials perceived the Khalistani movement as a direct threat to Pakistan's internal security. In the early 1990s, Pakistan came to believe that if Punjab/Khalistan were to become an independent state, the Sikhs would not be content with the territory acquired, but might begin to expand or attempt to claim portions of Pakistan (i.e., West Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province). Pakistan contains many historical holy Sikh religious sites and segments of Pakistan

(West Punjab and Northwest Frontier Province) were once part of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom (the kingdom ruled by a Sikh ruler in the 1700s). Pakistani authorities came to the realization that because of historical religious animosities between Muslims and Sikhs, the two states (the Sikh state of Khalistan and Muslim Pakistan) would never share common interests. On the contrary, the creation of Khalistan would create another possible nation in conflict with Pakistan (Sharma, 1996).

In the early 1990s, as ideological justification for supporting Sikh terrorism disintegrated, Pakistani material, financial, and logistical support was substantially withdrawn. Weapons and other military equipment, which were once provided and distributed to Sikh terrorist organizations by ISI officials for free, now would have to be purchased at a premium (Jaswal, 1996). The inability of Sikh terrorist organizations to acquire sophisticated weapons and replenish supplies greatly impacted their ability to sustain an effective anti-state terrorism campaign, maintain military power in various regions, and engage government forces.

Logistical support was also substantially curtailed. The number of training camps operated by Pakistani officials for Sikh terrorists decreased significantly in the early 1990s with only a number of small camps remaining in Lahore, Sialkot, and Bahawalpur (Gill, 1997). The inability of Sikh terrorist organizations to send members to acquire specialized training in weapons use, explosives handling, and guerrilla warfare significantly impacted the ability of terrorist organizations to carry out intricate and devastating attacks. Thus, by the 1990s, Sikh terrorist organizations were relatively ineffective and were unable to maintain an effective anti-state terrorism movement.

Finally, Pakistan also withdrew financial assistance. Pakistani authorities began drastically reducing funding to Sikh terrorist organizations impacting day-to-day operations. Lack of funding affected the terrorist organizations' ability to acquire weapons and supplies, fund operations, maintain cells within the field, bribe security officials, and lure new recruits with financial incentives. It also, in part, forced terrorist groups to engage in criminal activities (e.g., bank robberies, extortions, and kidnappings) to finance operations and organizational structures. These criminal acts contributed significantly to turning public opinion against terrorist organizations during the latter half of the conflict.

The second factor that curtailed Pakistani assistance for terrorism in Punjab was India's implementation of effective counterterrorism measures along the Punjab state border. Punjab shares a complex 535-kilometre border with Pakistan. During the 1980s, the Punjab border was relatively porous and lacked adequate security to prevent illegal activities. Inadequate security along the border resulted from a shortage of manpower in the Border Security Forces (BSF) needed for patrolling, a lack of surveillance and equipment to detect illegal trans-border movements, rampant border guard corruption at entry points, and a lack of intelligence about illegal smuggling of weapons and individuals. These conditions created a porous border between the two nations which was advantageous to Sikh terrorist organizations for a variety of reasons; it facilitated the smuggling of weapons and supplies from Pakistan to Sikh terrorist organizations (Pettigrew, 1995), it allowed individuals to enter Pakistan for training in terrorist camps and return to carry out terrorist operations, and it allowed Sikh terrorists to seek refuge in Pakistan to evade arrest from Indian security officials.

In 1988, however, Indian security officials recognized that to curb anti-state terrorism in Punjab, they must reduce the material and logistical support Pakistan was providing to Sikh terrorists (Puri, 1999). Committed to repressing trans-border assistance, Indian security officials implemented a number of escalating steps. Between 1988 and 1993, the infrastructure along the border changed drastically with barriers being implemented to impede infiltration.

In 1988, a fence with triple rows of barbwire was erected and, by 1993, the entire 553-kilometre border was fenced (Pettigrew, 1995, Sharma, 1996) with large poles being erected and installed with flood lights to illuminate an area 100 metres ahead of the fence for detecting infiltrators. The flood-lit area was primarily limited to 112.4 kilometres of strategic border entry points (Sharma, 1996). A “border tract” of 409.62 kilometres was also constructed along the fenced border to allow vehicle and foot patrols (Sharma, 1996: 333). The number of observation towers was doubled from 267 to 513 which ensured a tower every 500 yards (Sharma, 1996; Pettigrew, 1995). These towers were installed with powerful dragon lights that could be beamed on particular areas where movement was detected. Also, border crossings were installed with gates to control the movement of individuals and vehicles (Joshi, 1993).

### **Border Equipment Upgrades**

The level of standard equipment provided to border security personnel also became more sophisticated. In the mid 1980s, a majority of Border Security Force personnel were equipped only with self-loading rifles and binoculars. By 1993, however, BSF were provided with light machine guns, AK-47s, carbines, sniper rifles, 2-inch mortars, metal detectors, twin telescopes, night vision equipment, and intruder alarms at various outposts

(Sharma, 1996). The upgrades in standard equipment assisted border security personal to detect intruders and prevent the illegal smuggling of weapons.

### **Border Patrols and Manpower**

The most effective change came in the early 1990s with an increase in manpower along the border and the introduction of the army in border districts. The number of BSF was increased with 24 BCF battalions being deployed along the border and housed in “169 Border Outposts (BOPs)” (Sharma, 1996: 333). The increase in BSF allowed for increased foot and mounted patrols, 24-hour manning of observation posts (OPs), and boat patrols along waterways. Increased manpower also facilitated greater use of ambush parties (Nakhas) deployed during night operations to actively intercept intruders (Sharma, 1996: 332).

The army was actively deployed under Operation Rakshak I (1990) and Rakshak II (1992). Operation Rakshak I, launched in 1990, had two official objectives: (1) to seal the border by implementing increased patrols and constructing checkpoints behind BSF positions and (2) to assist state security personnel in repressing terrorist activities in border districts and restoring civil rule (Joshi, 1993). Although Operation Rakshak I created a second line of security along the border and increased the number of patrols carried out, it was relatively ineffective in stopping cross-border movements and smuggling (Sharma, 1996). The operation was doomed because army personnel lacked the knowledge and skills to carry out effective operations, the army was not well received in the border region, and the army’s operations were not well coordinated (Joshi, 1993).

However, Operation Rakshak II was launched in 1992 and involved an expansion of operations to all districts in the state and deployments along the entire Pakistan/India

border (Joshi, 1993: 12). The number of individuals deployed was increased with the 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> corps being deployed (Joshi, 1993). The objectives of the operation were similar to the first operation, but the vigour with which patrols and operations were carried out increased drastically.

The army also reinforced and re-established their “ditch combunds” (DCBs) positions located behind BSF positions. These positions were located at various strategic border transportation routes and acted as checkpoints to inspect vehicles and individuals who crossed the border from Pakistan. Army officials also cracked down on border security forces’ posts known to accept bribes. These individuals were prosecuted for aiding militants and their posts were placed under the command of the army (Joshi, 1993; Human Rights Watch, 1994). Overall, army personnel increased surveillance of gated entry points and the number of mobile patrols between DCB and border positions was substantially increased. The army also placed all 900 border villages under a strict night curfew and surveillance (Joshi, 1993) and worked diligently with border residents to create trust, thus facilitating the flow of intelligence about illegal border crossings from the public.

The result of these various upgrades along the border by 1993 was the cessation of various forms of assistance from Pakistan. The sealing of the Pakistani border prevented Sikh terrorist organization from acquiring weapons, munitions, and supplies for their anti-state terrorist operations. Terrorist organizations were unable to send individuals to Pakistan to acquire arms and explosives training or to bring back those who had received training to carry out terrorist operations. Sikh terrorists were now unable to

launch attacks from safe havens in Pakistan into Punjab and were no longer able to evade persecution from Indian security officials by entering Pakistan.

## **CHAPTER 7: FOREIGN SIKH SUPPORT FOR THE PUNJAB CONFLICT**

The population of Sikhs residing outside of India is significant with a number of well-established communities in Western nations, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., Germany, Holland, and Australia. An interesting attribute of this community is that individuals residing in Western nations continue to maintain a keen interest in the political, economic, and religious affairs in Punjab. This interest can be explained by formal familial links and a deep sense of internal loyalty to their religious/ancestral homeland. Between 1980 and 1995, individual Sikhs and organizations living abroad provided material, financial, and ideological support to the Sikh separatist movement. The level and intensity of support can be classified into three distinct time periods: pre-Operation Bluestar (1980 to 1984), post-Operation Bluestar (1984-1993), and the death of the Khalistani movement (1993 to 1995).

### **Pre-Operation Bluestar (1980-1984)**

Support for Sikh separatism from 1980 to 1984 can be described as sparse and limited to the ideological sphere among a small segment of the community. A significant segment of the Sikh population residing in Western nations supported the Akali Dal (Sharma, 1996). However, during this period, fringe secessionist Sikh organizations were emerging the National Council of Khalistan, the Sikh youth movement, the Sikh Student Federation, and Sikh terrorist organizations -- Babbar Khalsa, Dal Khalsa, and



Dashmesh Regiment, members of which had immigrated to Western nations and were establishing offices for their organizations.

The most prominent secessionist Sikh organization during this period was the National Council of Khalistan based in London, England. The leader of this organization was Dr. Chauhan, a former Indian citizen. Activities of this organization were limited to pro-Khalistan demonstrations, declarations of an independent Khalistan, flag burning, and expression of anti-Indian sentiment (Sharma, 1996). This group largely attempted to increase support among the Sikh community in the U.K., U.S.A., and Canada for Khalistan, but enjoyed limited success.

The most prominent Sikh terrorist organizations to establish offices during this period were Dal Khalsa and Babbar Khalsa. Dal Khalsa was a terrorist organization known to have formal links with Sant Bhindranwale. This group was highly critical of the Indian government and cited examples of Hindu imperialist practices against the Sikh population in Punjab. They openly advocated the use of violence to obtain political power and construct an independent Sikh state. Dal Khalsa also was a religious reformist movement that saw the need to re-establish traditional Sikh practices within the community in order to prevent the deterioration of the Sikh faith. This organisation opened its first branches in 1982 in the U.K. and then expanded its operations into West Germany, Canada, and the U.S.A. Although this organization was unable to capture the minds of the Sikh community, it was able to organize small anti-India protests and media campaigns, raise the issue of Sikh separation in the public's mind, and raise funds for the Khalistan movement in Punjab (Sharma, 1996). Dal Khalsa funnelled the money it raised

through donations back to India to support terrorist activities perpetuated against Indian forces, Hindu civilians, and Sikhs who opposed the Khalistani movement.

Babbar Khalsa (BK) was the most established terrorist organization outside of India with a strong loyal following located primarily in the U.K. and Canada. Babbar Khalsa activities consisted largely of propaganda campaigns justifying Sikh independence and criticizing Indian policies in Punjab. Through branches linked primarily to temples, they raised money for extremist operations in Punjab. The individual in charge of Babbar Khalsa operations internationally was Talwinder Singh Parmar, who lived in Vancouver and was later implicated in the 1985 Air India bombing. During 1980 and 1984, this organization, through public donations solicited from local Sikh temple congregations, raised significant amounts of capital to sponsor extremist operations in Punjab. In 1981, Parmar's Babbar Khalsa (U.K., Canada) was able to raise \$60,000 CDN which was used to finance BK terrorist activities in Punjab. It has also been established that in 1982, Talwinder Singh Parmar received \$35,000 from Canada to sponsor Babbar Khalsa attacks against a perceived radical Sikh sect, the Nirankaris, and Indian government authorities (Sharma, 1996).

From 1980 to 1984, financial, material, and ideological support by the Sikh population and terrorist organizations based in Western nations was significant. The activities of secessionist organizations and terrorist groups during this period were important. They were able to establish themselves in the community and create the grassroots organizational support structures needed for expansion of activities between 1985 and 1995. The ability of terrorist organizations to open branches in Western nations allowed them to create links with Sikh temples for ideological and financial support,

come into contact with individuals ideologically committed to the cause, and solicit the help of those willing to aid in recruitment and fund raising activities. This created the foundation from which Sikhs residing in the West could spur on Sikh anti-state terrorist violence for a decade.

### **Post 1984 Foreign Assistance**

In June 1984, the Indian Army launched “Operation Bluestar” to remove Sikh militants using the Golden Temple complex for sanctuary. The extensive destruction to one of the holiest Sikh shrines resulting from this operation changed the opinions of a majority of Sikhs residing in Western nations about the Khalistani movement. Now, many people saw the need for an independent Sikh homeland to protect the faith from further religious persecution by the Hindu government. Change in public sentiment in Western nations led to the withdrawal of support for moderate voices within the Sikh community (aligned with moderate political parties in Punjab like the Akali Dal) and a transfer of support to militant Khalistani groups (Sharma, 1996).

Sensing a change in public sentiment, militant groups and their sympathizers implemented a strategy to consolidate their new-found support in the community. The strategy involved taking control of the central institution in the Sikh faith, the Gurdwara/temple. Militant groups and sympathizers understood that if they were able to control the functioning of the Gurdwaras they would have access to a large congregation to whom they could preach the virtues of establishing Khalistan and who could provide them with access to the financial resources of these institutions to support the movement. During this period, there was a dramatic shift in the composition of the democratically elected committees of temples with moderate committees being removed and militant

political parties being elected into power. Many of these Sikh temple committees were controlled by or had links to organizations like Babbar Khalsa, Dal Khalsa, WSO (World Sikh Organization), ISYF (International Sikh Youth Federation), KCF, KLF, and many other smaller Sikh terrorist organizations operating in Punjab. Between 1984 and 1993, militant organizations used the events in Punjab to their strategic advantage, taking control of key social institutions and entrenching their ideologies in Western Sikh consciousness (Sharma, 1996).

### **Ideological Persuasion**

As militant executive committees entrenched their power in Gurdwaras in Western nations, they began to expose Sikh congregations to their ideologies. Executive committee members, granthis (holy men), and religious hymn singers gave fiery speeches condemning the actions of the Indian government for attacking the Sikhs' holiest shrine. On a daily basis, the Sikh public were exposed to stories of Sikhs being persecuted in Punjab and shown images of Sikh martyrs who had sacrificed their lives for the cause. They spoke to the public about the need for an independent state of Khalistan based on religious doctrine in order to protect the Sikh population from further persecution. The use of violence was justified in this pursuit as it was a last resort thrust upon the Sikh population. The main goal of these speeches was to create in the minds and hearts of Sikhs residing in the West distrust for the Hindu government of India. Once they created this distrust, they spurred on their congregations to support the movement in any manner they could, though calls were largely for financial and material assistance. The temple went from being a place of worship to a new platform from which supporters of the Sikh

terrorist movement could legitimately justify the ideological underpinnings of their movement (Sharma, 1996).

### **Financial Control and Institutions**

A number of terrorist organizations were active within religious institutions, the most prominent being Babbar Khalsa, Khalistan Commando Force, World Sikh Organization (WSO), International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), and Dal Khalsa (Joshi, 1993; Sharma, 1996). Control of executive committees was dispersed with no one group dominating a significant number of religious institutions. There was significant coordination and assistance between militant organizations with executive committees aligned to particular parties allowing other militant organizations to operate offices from their institutions. The temple became the central institution in Western nations for propagating the Khalistani movement and funding terrorist organizations in India.

Gurdwaras are central institutions in the Sikh community and their members actively contribute to its day-to-day functioning through donations. When visiting the Gurdwaras, members place money in a collection box located adjacent to the Sikh holy book as an offering to their place of worship. Gurdwara authorities also have staff accepting donations from the public near the main congregation hall. The Gurdwara also raises money through fees for religious events, such as weddings, bhog, death, and child-naming ceremonies. Once militant organizations controlled the Sikh temples, from the mid 1980s to the early 1990s, funds may have been diverted to terrorist organizations in Punjab. The problem with Sikh Gurdwaras is that they are large organizations that receive significant cash donations from the public without any formal monitoring by an agency.

It is believed that militant committee members daily siphoned off money from temples. They managed this by only recording portions of monies received through donations and services in financial statements. For example, if \$250 was received through the collection box, only \$100 would be indicated in financial statements. Similarly, individuals who had services carried out in the temple would be charged a standard rate, but the amount received would be understated in financial statements.

Executive committee members also siphoned off money from the temple in other ways. For example, militant committee groups would solicit financial support from the congregation for militant legal defense funds and for various charities operating in Punjab who were providing humanitarian assistance to the Sikh population. The public hearing the call for these humanitarian causes would provide cash donations. However, these defense funds and charities were in reality fictitious and the money collected for them went into the pockets of militant organizations. Temple committees also accessed public money by accepting kickbacks from contractors carrying out contract work on temple premises. Individual contractors would receive contracts for inflated amounts from which a proportion would be returned in cash to temple authorities to be used at their discretion. Thus, between 1985 and 1995, militant terrorist organizations or terrorist organizations linked to committees operating temples had access to large sums of cash, a proportion of which was funnelled to Punjab to support the Khalistan movement.

Though no evidence has yet emerged in the literature, I believe, based on common knowledge in the Sikh community, that transfers of money out of Western nations to terrorist organizations in Punjab occurred primarily by three methods. Money was deposited or transferred directly into Indian bank accounts controlled by terrorist

organizations or individual members sympathetic to the cause where funds were later withdrawn for organizational use. Money was also transferred through third parties, mainly unregistered foreign money exchanges. These foreign exchanges transferred money through agents to specific locations within India or locations all over the world. This method of money transfer was effective because the money could not be traced and individual senders remain anonymous. The third method of money transfer was the use of human “mules”, who were members or supporters of Sikh terrorist organizations based abroad. These individuals travelled to India or Pakistan with significant amounts of money in their possession. Once individuals arrived in India or Pakistan, they made contact with their specific organization, and the money would be distributed through the organizational structure. It is well known that members of Babbar Khalsa, ISYF, KCF, and WSO travelled to Pakistan and India to provide funds raised abroad to their terrorist organizations (Sharma, 1996).

### **Use of Foreign Funds**

Sikh terrorist organizations in Punjab used money received from foreign sympathizers to purchase weapons (e.g., Ak-47s, AK-56s, explosives, military hardware) and ammunitions from Pakistan and arms dealers (Shani, 1999: 15; Sharma, 1996: 98). Funds were used to arm terrorists and purchase sophisticated weapons systems to replace obsolete equipment. Funds were also used to support daily operational functioning, support individual members or cells in the field, and fund attacks against Indian security personnel and civilian targets.

In Western nations, sympathizers and supporters of various organizations used funds to purchase arms from domestic markets. Once purchased, weapons were

smuggled into India and Pakistan and later dispatched to Sikh terrorist groups in Punjab (Nandi, 1996; Sharma, 1996). For example, in 1987, Mohan Singh of the ISYF confessed to the purchase (\$250, 000 U.S. worth) of automatic weapons from a Canadian arms dealer which were then exported to Pakistan and later smuggled into Punjab (Sharma, 1996). Foreign assistance was not limited to the purchase of weapons and ammunitions, but also included the export of wireless equipment, remote switches for explosives, radio sets, bolt cutters, “rubber dinghies”, binoculars, and outerwear (Joshi, 1993; Sharma, 1996). Foreign financial and material assistance perpetuated and escalated terrorism in Punjab.

### **Decline of Western Support**

A number of factors led to the rapid disintegration of ideological, financial, and material support for terrorism in Punjab by Sikhs residing in Western nations. In the early 1990s, public opinion abroad for the Khalistanis changed with individuals opposing and withdrawing support for the movement. Change in public sentiment was the result of personal accounts of family and media reports that the ideological underpinning of the movement had deteriorated. The Khalistani movement in Punjab was no longer concerned with obtaining an independent Sikh homeland or protecting the religious tenets of the faith. The independence movement was now operated by individuals perpetuating criminal acts against the Sikh public under the guise of Sikh independence (Gill, 1997; Sharma, 1996).

The public in Punjab were also being exposed to repressive counterterrorism measures by security personnel whose activities were now affecting innocent civilians not involved in the movement. Thus, the public in Punjab began to blame Sikh terrorists



for the inhuman treatment they were exposed to by security officials. Through communication with family in India or through exposure to media stories, these events began to influence public sentiment in Western nations against the Khalistan movement (Sharma, 1996).

The Sikh population in Western nations also became critical of the individuals supporting and raising funds in the West for Sikh terrorist groups when they became aware of incidents of individuals and organizations operating Sikh temples using funds to amass their own personal wealth. Temples were put into debt by temple authorities who borrowed money from financial institutions that was used to obtain personal goods and finance their own economic endeavours. Sikh terrorist organizations with branches in Western nations were also criticized for donated money not being forwarded to support the Sikh terrorist movement in Punjab, but instead being pocketed by individuals for their own personal gain. The Sikh public also began to question the commitment of individuals advocating for Khalistan in Western nations. If these individuals were so committed to the cause, why were they not willing to make the ultimate sacrifice and fight for Khalistan in Punjab? Thus, the Khalistani movement in Western nations came to be associated with greed, corruption, and lack of ideological commitment (Sharma, 1996).

It can be argued that the shift in ideological support among Sikhs in Western nations contributed to a massive withdrawal of support for the Khalistani movement. Sikhs in Western nations began to openly criticize and challenge the legitimacy of this movement. Significant anger was directed at pro-Khalistani executive committees operating temples and various Sikh terrorist organizations with branches in Western

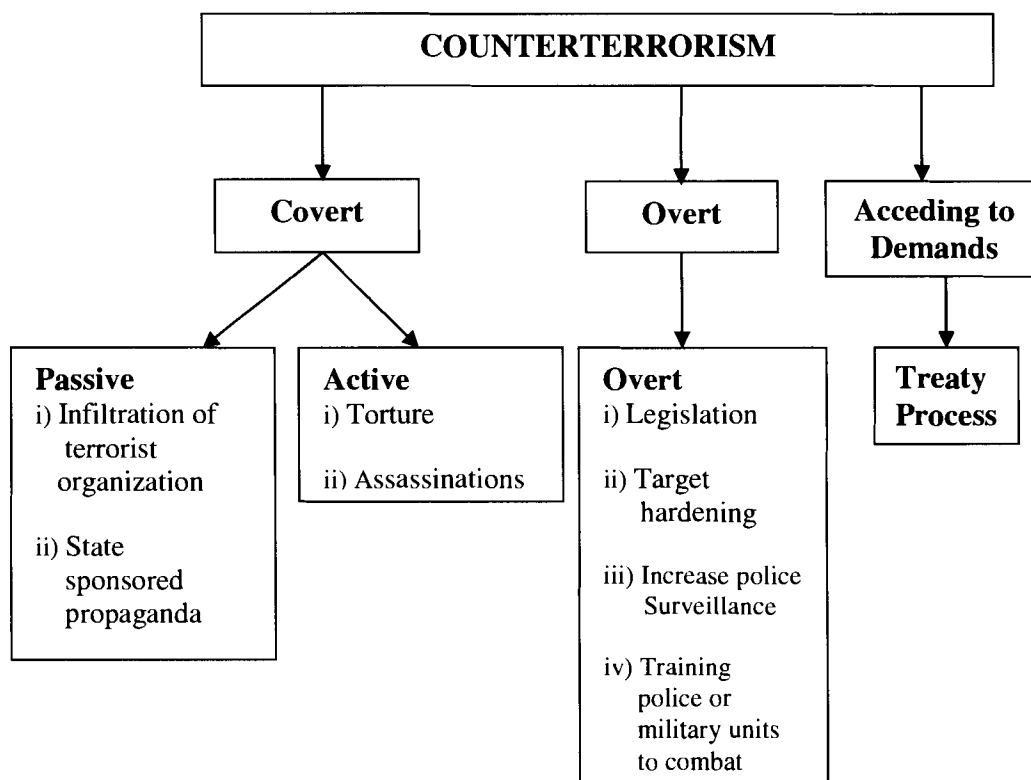
nations (Sharma, 1996). The ideological underpinnings of the movement no longer had support in the community. As this negative sentiment increased, temple members began to remove pro-Khalistani executive committees through elections. New, more moderate executive committees removed terrorist organizations and staff (primarily preachers and musical groups) who supported the Khalistani movement from office space in the temples and began to preach a more moderate, conciliatory argument for resolving the conflict in Punjab.

In addition, branches of terrorist organizations stopped functioning because individuals were unwilling to provide funds to the movement, and public sentiment forced these individuals to move their operations underground. Sikh terrorist organizations based in Western nations were unable to access money through temples or public donations. Their inability to raise funds prevented financial assistance being sent to terrorist groups in Punjab, which impacted their groups' daily operational functioning, acquisition of arms, and ability to launch terrorist attacks. The inability of terrorist organizations in Western nations to access funds also rapidly reduced the ability of these organizations to send various forms of material assistance to terrorist groups in Punjab, thus hampering terrorist operations. The withdrawal of Western support for the Sikh anti-state terrorism movement in part contributed to the de-escalation of terrorism in Punjab by the mid 1990s.

## CHAPTER 8: KANG'S COUNTERTERRORISM MODEL

Corrado's anti-state terrorism model emphasizes the importance of an effective counterterrorism strategy in preventing terrorism. The inability of government and security agencies to implement policies and measures to quell initial terrorist violence typically facilitates a rapid escalation in the intensity of the conflict. In his counterterrorism model, Corrado describes three government counterterrorism responses utilized to repress anti-state terrorism: (1) covert measures; (2) overt measures; and (3) acceding to demands.

**Figure 11: Corrado's Counterterrorism Model**



Covert measures refer to “clandestine operations on the part of the government to end the terrorist threat” and are divided into two sub-categories: passive and active measures (Corrado, 2000: 52). Examples of passive measures are security agencies infiltrating terrorist organizations to sabotage internal functioning or reducing public sentiment for the movement through the use of “state sponsored” propaganda (Corrado, 2000: 53). Active measures entail the use of illegal tactics, such as torture and “assassination”, to reduce terrorist violence (Corrado, 2000: 53). Overt measures refer to domestic legislation or international treaties designed to combat terrorism. They also include target hardening (i.e., implementing physical measures to increase security and reduce the ability of terrorists to carry out effective terrorist attacks), the creation of security forces trained to suppress terrorism, and the increase of public surveillance by security agencies.

The final component of Corrado’s counterterrorism model is the treaty process which involves national governments accepting “terrorist demands” and implementing “political reforms” in order to appease terrorist organizations (2000: 53).

In general, Corrado’s model highlights counterterrorism measures that lead to the rise and decline of terrorist violence. However, a number of modifications need to be made to the model in order to improve its predictive abilities and clarity. The major limitation of Corrado’s model is its vague explanation of how particular counterterrorism variables, such as covert and overt measures and acceding to terrorist demands, influence the rise and decline of terrorism. Thus, greater explanation is needed to demonstrate the relationship between variables and terrorism, and how particular variables influence the rise or decline of terrorism.

In a similar manner, Corrado's model fails to incorporate a variety of counterterrorism variables shown to be instrumental in reducing terrorism, such as political, legislative, and security measures and foreign policy. Inclusion of these variables expands the scope of the model and identifies the importance of previously obscure counterterrorism measures.

Another limitation of Corrado's counterterrorism model is its categorization of government responses to terrorism (covert, overt, and acceding to demands). In his model, Corrado fails to distinguish between the various levels of government (i.e., executive and legislative, and associated agencies or departments in government, such as security agencies and department of foreign affairs) that play a role in combating terrorism. Instead, his model categorizes the type of responses different levels of government take. Therefore, his model needs to be modified, identifying the various levels of government and agencies or departments that play a role in counterterrorism and the measures available to them to repress terrorism. It is important to base categorizations on specific actions different levels of government or agencies/departments take because such categorizations clearly assign specific responsibilities or measures that these branches of government must implement in order to bring terrorism under control. With a clear delineation of duties, there is clarity and less confusion or ambiguity as to the roles specific branches or agencies must take. Under Corrado's model, which only states the type of responses that need to be taken, there is no formal understanding of who will initiate a particular counterterrorism measure.

## **Kang's Counterterrorism Model**

The present model addresses the limitations of Corrado's model and provides a more detailed description of the variables that lead to an effective counterterrorism strategy. The present model is divided into four categories: (1) executive ideology; (2) legislative branch; (3) security agencies; and (4) department of foreign affairs. These four categories were selected on the reasoning that these levels of government and agencies or departments play the most crucial roles in combating terrorism. I advocate that the earlier these components of this counterterrorism model are implemented by a nation, the greater the likelihood that anti-state terrorism violence can be prevented or controlled in its infancy. Failure of nations to implement these measures will, in part, contribute to their inability to prevent civil war or lengthy anti-state terrorism conflicts and increases the likelihood of using draconian counterterrorism tactics at a later date to suppress high levels of violence.

The model is influenced by the events that transpired in the Sikh terrorist movement in Punjab, which provide an excellent opportunity to learn how to combat terrorism effectively. After examining this conflict, a number of deficiencies in the counterterrorism strategy used by the Indian state were identified. India, from the initial phases of the Sikh terrorism movement, did not have the needed measures in place to deal with and contain anti-state terrorist violence. Rather, the Indian state, over the length of the Punjab civil conflict, was consistently playing catch-up and implementing defensive counterterrorism measures that they saw as appropriate to suppress violence. However, what was learned from the Punjab conflict by the early 1990s was that the implementation of specific counterterrorism measures by the executive, legislative,

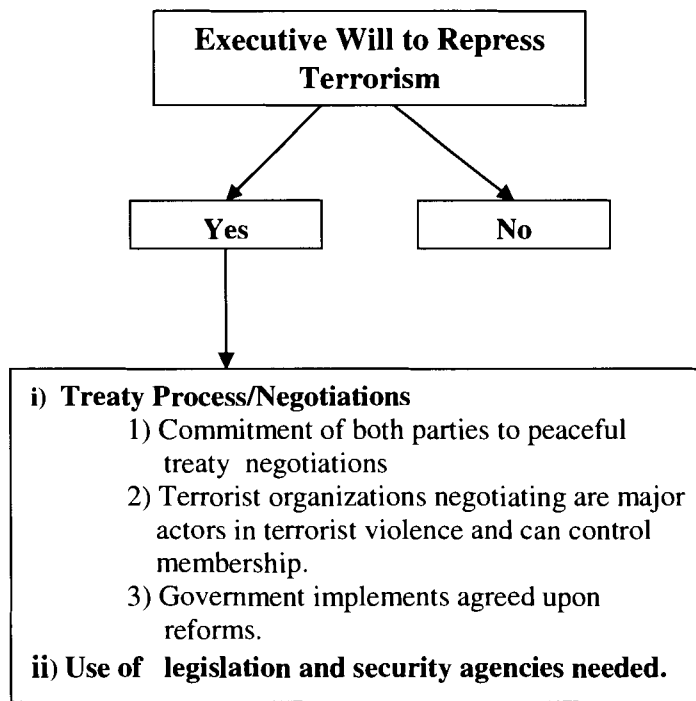
security branches, and department of foreign affairs of government, in part, facilitated the decline of Sikh anti-state terrorism. The counterterrorism strategy implemented by these separate branches of government and agencies or departments were interlinked, thus offering a coordinated response to terrorism. Although all four variables in the model are seen as important, an effective counterterrorism strategy may, in some cases, involve only portions of the model as each counterterrorism strategy is unique to a specific conflict.

The reader needs to be aware of the unique attributes of the Kang counterterrorism model. As one moves left to right in the model, the counterterrorism strategy used becomes more punitive and repressive. Each branch of government and the agencies or departments responsible for counterterrorism have the option to implement more stringent conditions gradually in order to respond to escalating violence. Thus, there can a gradual implementation of more drastic policies and procedures corresponding to an increase or dramatic shift in acts of terrorism.

### **Executive Level of Government**

The first component of the model focuses on the executive branch of government. An effective counterterrorism strategy requires a strong ideological commitment at the executive level to repress terrorist violence and bring about a peaceful resolution. Political will is key for an effective counterterrorism strategy because if the government is committed to repressing terrorism, they will implement policies and measures consistent with this objective. The policy decisions made at the executive level directly influence how other agencies within government respond to terrorism.

**Figure 12: Executive Will Model for Effective Counterterrorism**



When political will exists to repress terrorism, the executive branch has primarily two options for bringing about law and order. The first option involves the use of negotiations via a treaty process between the government and terrorist organizations. This process involves the state addressing grievances by implementing political reforms. In exchange for these concessions, terrorist organizations agree to cease participation in violent acts. The treaty process can be implemented during any stage of the conflict, however, there are a number of necessary conditions for this process to be successful. Both parties must be committed ideologically to the process, negotiations must only take place with those terrorist organizations that can control the actions of their members, and the government must implement agreed-upon reforms. If conditions are met, the treaty process tends to be relatively successful and terrorist violence desists. An example of a successful treaty process was the signing of the “Good Friday Agreement” (1998) in



Northern Ireland. The Good Friday agreement was a negotiated settlement between the British government and Sinn Fein (i.e., political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and other Irish terrorist organizations). The agreement outlined a host of political, social, and economic reforms the British government were willing to implement in Northern Ireland, in exchange for the IRA and other Irish terrorist organizations agreeing to cease violent activities against the state. Thus, far the agreement has been relatively successful in bringing peace to Northern Ireland. The second option available to the executive branch -- if the treaty process is not an option or is unsuccessful -- is to approve the use of legislation and/or deploy security agencies to reduce terrorism. These measures tend to be more punitive and involve a whole host of options for bringing about law and order.

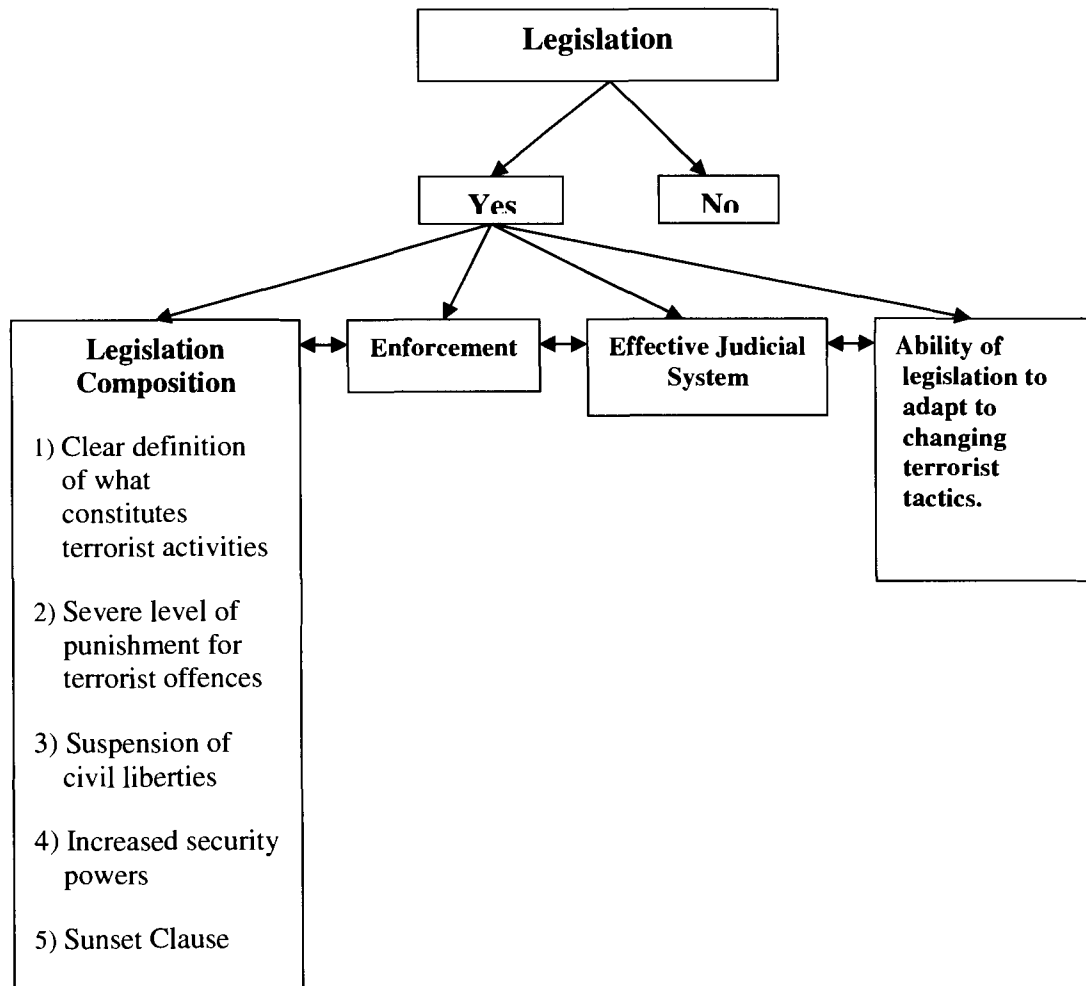
However, what are the ramifications if political will/ideology to reduce terrorism does not exist? Usually, under these conditions, terrorism will continue unabated. Governments usually lack political will to combat terrorism when they apathetically maintain that terrorist violence cannot be controlled, they fail to recognize terrorism as a threat, or they view the terrorist violence as serving a purpose or benefiting them. Inevitably, such conditions only lead to the continuation and escalation of terrorist violence.

### **Legislative Branch of Government**

The second component of the counterterrorism model involves the legislative branch utilizing statutes to reduce and eliminate terrorist violence. There are primarily four components that make legislation an effective counterterrorism strategy: (1) the

composition of the legislation; (2) legal enforcement; (3) an effective judicial system; and (4) the ability of the legislation to target specific aspects of terrorism and adapt.

**Figure 13: Effective Legislative Counterterrorism Model**



### **Legislative Composition**

The first attribute of effective counterterrorism legislation is its composition. Well-drafted legislation must have the following essential characteristics that will increase the likelihood of it effectively reducing terrorist violence. Clearly defined

activities deemed acts of terrorism and severe punishment for participation in such activities. Clearly defining what constitutes an act of terrorism, educates the public about what activities are illegal and what the legal ramifications are for these activities. A severe level of punishment is necessary both to deter people from participating in such activities and also to remove those convicted of terrorist acts from society for a significant enough period of time to prevent their threat and influence.

The cornerstone of any effective anti-state terrorism legislation is its ability to temporarily curtail civil liberties during insurances of civil war or political unrest and simultaneously increase powers available to security agencies to repress terrorism. The decision of when to restrict specific civil liberties and increase security powers will likely be made at the executive level. The suspension of civil liberties and increase in security powers can occur gradually depending on the level of violence. More punitive actions will likely be taken as the intensity of terrorist acts increases. Thus, as the number of terrorist incidents increase, the executive branch will likely begin to suspend a greater number of civil liberties. The decision as to when exactly a government will begin to suspend civil liberties is going to be dependent upon when the government perceives the level of violence as unacceptable. Executive branch officials in each nation have varying levels of tolerance for what they deem as an acceptable or unacceptable level of violence with in their society. For example, the commission of one terrorist act may trigger the executive branch in Canada to suspend civil liberties. Whereas, in India the commission of ten terrorist acts may lead to the Indian executive branch suspending civil liberties. Thus, there is going to be variation in responses between nations and when a nation deems it appropriate to suspend civil liberties.

Each reduction or suspension of individual civil liberties gives security agencies the ability to implement more intrusive investigation techniques facilitating the discovery of terrorist plots, identification of terrorists, and seizure of weapons and explosives. Complete adherence to constitutional rights designed to protect citizens from improper treatment by government hampers the ability of security agencies to properly implement an effective counterterrorism strategy. For example, traditionally, restrictions placed on search and seizure, detention, and other investigative methods thwart security agencies' ability to gather intelligence in a manner that can facilitate intervention of a terrorist threat. However, checks and balances should exist to prevent the abuse of civil liberties by state officials. It may be deemed appropriate when a decision is made at the executive level to revoke or curtail civil liberties that there be a corresponding review of the decision by the judiciary or an independent review committee. The sole purpose of these reviewing bodies would be to determine whether the suspension of a particular civil liberty is justified and necessary based on the present social conditions. If the reviewing body (i.e., judicial or review committee) find that the suspension of civil liberties is not appropriate, then the executive branch of government should be legally obligated to accept this decision, restore the civil liberty, and implement other tactics to control terrorist violence.

The first type of civil liberty likely to be curtailed is individual privacy rights. Anti-state terrorism legislation tends to reduce restrictions governing the type of intelligence that can be collected about individuals as well as the means available to security agencies to collect this information. In the case of collecting information on individuals, legislation may allow greater access to personal information pertaining to

banking records, telephone records, purchasing history, and other sensitive information. In the case of the means of collecting information, security agencies might be allowed to use intrusive methods such as wiretap, computer hacking, and listening devices in an individuals' homes. However, in most cases, security agencies would have to obtain judicial approval for their intended actions by making a request to the appropriate court.

Civil liberties in relation to detention also might be reduced. Individuals suspected of terrorist activity could be detained without charge or warrant for extended periods. This process allows security agencies to conduct further investigations of individuals to determine their role in terrorist activities and thus can be a preventative tool. Detention also allows security officials to interrogate suspects in order to obtain information on their involvement in terrorist activities.

Security agencies might also be allowed to conduct searches without warrants. During times of civil war, security agencies need the flexibility to carry out actions in a timely and efficient manner and to react to situations instantaneously. The present search warrant procedure, for example, in Western democracies is cumbersome and may prevent security agents from diffusing an emerging terrorist threat.

The final reduction of individual civil liberties pertains to restrictions on an individuals movements. In areas ravaged by anti-state terrorism, the use of curfews may become necessary to control the movements of individuals. Restrictions on individual movements provide security forces a means of carrying out counterterrorism operations without fear of insurgent interference and allows them to more easily identify people participating in illegal acts when curfews are present. Its primary objective is to control

the movements of individuals, thus inhibiting the ability of terrorists to carry out violent actions and prevent terrorist violence from spreading.

Nations may also want to implement a second phase of legislation dealing with the type of physical actions security agencies and personnel can partake in. Present-day constitutions or statutes tend to limit the form of physical actions security agencies can take when dealing with civil violence. Restrictions and penalties are clearly stated for security personnel who violate these conditions. In the case of Punjab, legislative guarantees that security officials would not be prosecuted were necessary to remove the psychological restraints and second-guessing that may have impeded security officials from carrying out actions to repress terrorism. It also allowed security officials to implement internationally condemned measures (use of lethal force or torture) to combat terrorism, measures that might become necessary in situations where anti-state terrorist violence is out of control. The term “out of control”, refers to a psychological breaking point where either: the executive branch, political decision makers, and or security agencies believe that the use of internationally acceptable measures to combat terrorism are not effective. The decision as to when internationally condemned measures to combat terrorism are deemed acceptable in liberal democracies is a moral and factual choice that decision makers will have to make. There will be a variation in most cases from nation to nation, as to if or when they will implement internationally condemned measures to combat terrorism. As each individual decision maker(s) has their own threshold of what level of violence and why type of response is tolerable.

Ideally, nations should put into law effective counterterrorism statutes before anti-state terrorist violence occurs. The ability to implement pre-emptive laws before violent

incidents occur ensures a rapid and effective security response. However, all pieces of legislation must contain a sunset clause that allows for legislation to expire when its objective has been achieved. Sunset clauses are important components of legislation to prevent the abuse of civil liberties by government officials in post-conflict situations.

### **Enforcement of Legal Statutes**

The second component of an effective legislative strategy is insuring it is vigorously enforced. Security agencies must target -- that is, arrest or detain -- those individuals responsible for acts of terrorism or perpetuating violence. The inability of security forces to effectively enforce legislation prevents the removal from society of individuals who carry out acts of terrorism, reduces the deterrent effect of legislation, and allows for violence to go unchecked. The enforcement component of the model cannot be implemented incrementally because the detention and arrest of those involved in terrorist violence is most appropriate in the early phases of a conflict to prevent terrorist acts from rapidly increasing.

### **Effective Judicial System**

The third component of effective legislation is the functioning of the judicial system. The judicial system works in tandem with effective enforcement. The role of the police and prosecutor is to maximize the likelihood of a conviction for those who have been charged with a terrorist offence. Law enforcement must collect legally obtained evidence and conduct impartial investigations. Once this process is completed, they must forward evidence to the prosecutors. The role of prosecutors is to provide a factual case in a court of law and articulate why individuals should be convicted of the offences they

have been charged with. In order to convict guilty parties, terrorist legislation tends to modify rules of evidence, trial procedures, and burden of proof in favour of government prosecutors.

Legislative modifications to rules of evidence may include expanding the types of evidence legally accepted by the courts and the courts' implementing less stringent judicial standards about what evidence is accepted or rejected because of the methods used to obtain it. For example, legislative changes to rules of evidence may allow for the use of confessions derived by police personnel after interrogation or torture. The courts may be permitted to accept evidence attained in an illegal manner, such as wiretaps or seizure of documents without search warrants. Different trial procedures for cases of terrorism may also be adapted. The use of "in camera" court proceedings may be seen as beneficial to prevent the disclosure of sensitive information. Other modifications may include not allowing the defendant to cross-examine witnesses, witnesses not having to disclose their identity, or defendants not being privy to evidence being used against them in the proceedings. The burden of proof may also be shifted so that the accused is presumed guilty and must present evidence to prove innocence. The initiative is then placed on the accused to formulate a response to disprove terrorist charges. The judicial system must provide as transparent and fair process as possible for determining who is a terrorist and removing those who have been convicted from society. The level of fairness and transparency in the judicial system may decrease as a government implements more stringent judicial procedures. However, it is the decision of individual nations to determine whether the judicial procedures they implement are appropriate and do not



infringe upon an individual's rights. Removing individual actors in a terrorist conflict prevents those individuals from further perpetuating or participating in acts of terrorism.

Convictions are also important to ensure that public confidence is maintained in the judicial process. Public confidence in the judicial system is important to maintain because if individuals feel the judicial system is functioning adequately, they will actively participate in the judicial process in the form of witnesses providing testimony against offenders which will lead to convictions. For example, although the judicial process overall during the Punjab conflict was relatively unsuccessful with Punjab citizens unwilling to provide testimony or intelligence against Sikh terrorists, thus impeding conviction. However, during the latter half of the conflict in the early 1990's, as Punjab security officials were more effective in repressing violence and Sikh terrorists began to perpetuate acts of terror on innocent civilians. A minority of Punjab citizens did begin to come forward in order to provide testimony against and information on Sikh terrorists. This testimony or information was used to arrest and convict Sikh militants who participated in acts of terrorism or criminal offences (i.e., rapes, kidnappings, and assaults against innocent civilians) (Gill, 1997). Also, the public will be more willing to come forward with intelligence on terrorist activities if they know their actions or information will bring about arrest and conviction.

It is also imperative that security officials not lose faith in the ability of the judicial process to convict terrorists. A lack of faith increases frustration among security officials leading them to abandon legal means to combat terrorism and instead implement illegal measures to repress terrorism. The use of illegal measures to repress terrorism will likely lead to gross human rights abuses.

The judicial process can be hampered when lawyers, judges, witnesses, and informants are unwilling to participate in judicial proceedings or carry out their duties because of intimidation or fear of violence. The role of police is to create an environment where intimidation is not possible. This can primarily be achieved through adequate protection of participants in the judicial process. For example, tactics that may be used to protect participants in the judicial process may include assigning armed body guards to these individuals and their families to protect them from intimidation and or assassination. Other tactics include placing witnesses and informants in safe houses or secure custody to protect their safety, and implementing measures to obscure these individuals' identities (i.e., not releasing witnesses' names, or in court proceedings erecting screens to block the defendants or the public's view of witnesses) during court proceedings.

### **Adaptability of Legislation**

The final component of an effective legislative counterterrorism strategy is the ability of legislation to adapt to changing terrorist tactics. Legislators should be able to modify or implement legislation in order to adapt to new forms of terrorism or associated activities previously not seen. For example, in Punjab, during Sikh anti-state terrorism, legislation was implemented to prevent the misuse of religious institutions by terrorist organizations. This was in response to Sikh terrorists' exploiting the sanctity of religious institutions in order to use them as a base from which to launch terrorist attacks. Thus, legislation must be able to adapt constantly to new terrorist threats.

## **Use of Security Agencies to Repress Terrorism**

The third component of an effective security strategy involves the use of security agencies to repress terrorism. The term *security agency* primarily refers to law enforcement, but can also include secondary agencies, such as the military, paramilitary, and other federal security-related departments (e.g., central intelligence services, border security, coast guard). The deployment of security agencies to combat terrorism can occur during any phase of the movement. However, this technique tends to be utilized in conjunction with political and legislative options or when these methods prove to be ineffective. In repressing terrorism, there are a number of factors that determine whether security agencies will be successful in their counterterrorism strategy.

## **Ideological Commitment of Security Agencies to Repress Terrorism**

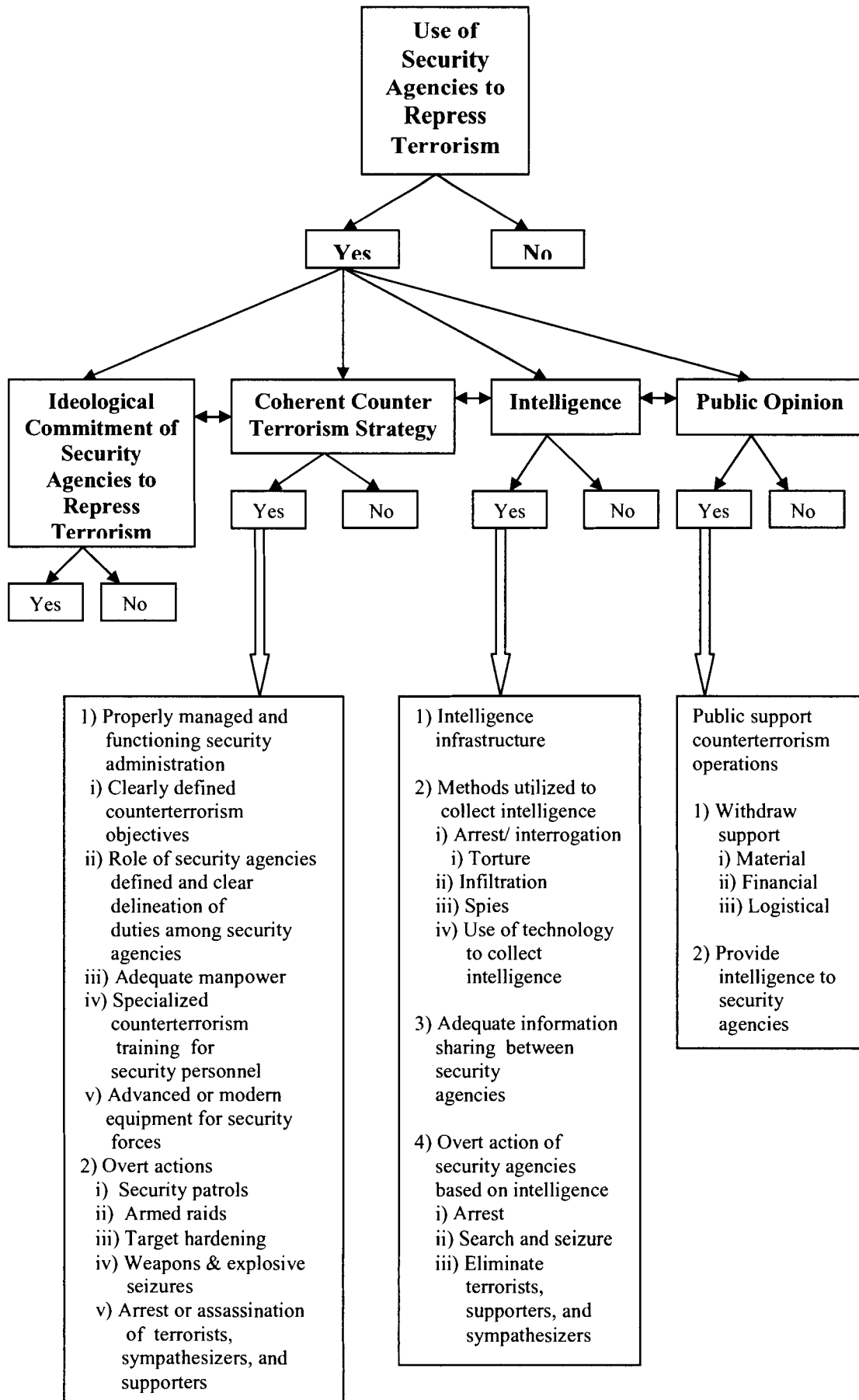
To be successful, a strong commitment to repress terrorist violence or belief that terrorism can be brought under control must exist among the leadership of security agencies. The leadership of security agencies must make a choice as to how vigorously they want to pursue the repression of terrorist violence. The mindset of these officials directly influences the course of action they will take when implementing a counterterrorism response. If the leadership are not committed to eliminating terrorist violence, they will likely implement ineffective policies and practices. For example, when security agencies lack a required offensive strategy and instead, pursue a defensive one, they may perpetuate violence by allowing terrorists the ability to carry out acts of violence unhindered. It is important to keep in mind that the executive branch has a major influence or impact on the actions of security agencies as security agencies are under the direct control of this branch of government. Thus, in many cases, the

counterterrorism response of security agencies may be directed or shaped by the executive branch who will dictate the intensity (i.e., passive or active) with which security agencies are to pursue terrorist violence.

### **Coherent Counterterrorism Strategy**

In conjunction with a commitment to repress terrorism, security agencies need to implement an effective strategy to repress terrorism. This process involves security agencies outlining a plan and determining methods by which to bring terrorist violence under control. Though the design of an effective counterterrorism strategy is unique to the specific conflict, there are characteristics that tend to be generally present in successful campaigns.

**Figure 14: Effective Security Counterterrorism Model**



### **Properly Managed and Functioning Security Administration**

The first instrumental component of an effective counterterrorism strategy is a properly managed and functioning security administration. The structure of the security command structure should primarily take a hierarchical pyramid shape with a senior-ranking individual at the top of the organization. This command structure should have authority over and control of all security agencies to ensure a single, coordinated effort. Having independent and competing command structures for each security organization largely leads to a uncoordinated and chaotic response to terrorism. Decisions pertaining to policy and strategy should be made by senior officials in the chain of command and then should filter down the security apparatus and be implemented by personnel in the field.

The administration must (a) ensure that the entire security apparatus has a clear understanding of the overall objective of operations, (b) clearly define the role of individuals or groups, and (c) delineate duties among the various security agencies so there is no inefficient overlap. It will be highlighted below what these three variables encompass.

The overall objective should be to repress terrorism by all means or measures available. With this objective in mind, security personnel can understand the actions needed to achieve it, thus avoiding confusion among the ranks about what needs to be done. Administration needs to clearly outline to security personnel which terrorist organizations pose a threat, what their motives and ideological beliefs are, where they operate, what measures are available to security agencies to bring terrorist violence under control, and a time frame for how long this process could take. It is imperative that

security personnel have a clear understanding how violence will be brought under control.

Security agencies (e.g., police, military and paramilitary units) should have a clear mandate or objective clearly defining their particular roles in the conflict. It must be clearly stated what duties these organizations need to perform -- be it patrolling, conducting raids, guard duty, or pursuing terrorist organization members. All attempts should be made to give each organization a separate, specialized function with few overlapping roles to ensure effective use of forces.

It is conducive when implementing a counterterrorism strategy to place a single security organization (e.g., law enforcement) in the primary role of counterterrorism operations with other forces or agencies playing supplementary and supportive roles. Law enforcement should play the primary role in counterterrorism operations because they tend to have a strong understanding of the local community and are more likely to have established links with members of the local community. This familiarity with the local area and population will facilitate implementation of an effective counterterrorism strategy. For example, when examining the Punjab conflict in the 1990's, KPS Gill the head of the Punjab police united all security agencies (i.e., police, military, and paramilitary units) under a single command. The Punjab police primarily headed the counterterrorism campaign conducting a majority of raids, patrols, and locating and eliminating terrorists. While, the army and paramilitary was placed in a supplementary role confined to guarding infrastructure or manning check points. This strategy in Punjab facilitated a coordinated and effective response to Sikh terrorism because Punjab police



officials were familiar with the characteristics of the local area and population, and the army was designated a set of clearly defined duties.

The appropriate use of military or paramilitary forces can assist in the implementation of an effective counterterrorism campaign. However, if supplementary use of military or paramilitary forces is not carried out efficiently, these forces will only compound the terrorist problem and will be unable to reduce violence because there will be a chaotic security response to the violence. For military or paramilitary organizations to be successful in their operations/deployments, they must coordinate their activities with police agencies to avoid confusion and ensure a common agenda is being served. As secondary security agencies, such as military and paramilitary units, tend to have separate and independent chains of command, these agencies have to ensure they amalgamate their forces under one single command (i.e., led by law enforcement) to ensure a single, common response to terrorism. If both organizations conduct their operations separately, they will lack a coordinated effort in repressing terrorism and possibly have conflicting mandates. Placing one security organization in charge of all security agencies is a difficult task to accomplish because there tends to be issues of jurisdiction that arise and or an unwillingness of some security forces to relinquish operational control of resources. However, if all security agencies are committed to repressing terrorism, they should avoid internal fighting and focus on the larger objective.

The administration must also address issues of adequate manpower and adequately trained security forces. The use of supplementary forces, such as the military or paramilitary, in a counterterrorism campaign may be necessary to aid civil authorities. Police agencies tend to be the initial responders to terrorism and historically have been

shown to be overburdened relatively quickly in attempting to suppress violence or bring violence under control. This is, in part, related to the fact that police agencies' primary role of maintaining civil order is not compatible with the role of attempting to suppress terrorist violence. Also, police agencies tend to be relatively small.

The quality of the personnel in the field also plays an important role in determining the success of the counterterrorism campaign. Terrorism is vastly different from the mundane, day-to-day criminal acts that police are trained to deal with, terrorist violence having an underlying ideological objective and tending to be more violent in nature. As a result of the unique attributes of terrorist acts, police agencies and personnel must acquire specialized training to react to this form of violence effectively. Police training should include education about the ideological factors that contribute to terrorism and, if possible, specialized knowledge about the terrorist group they are combating. Personnel should also be instructed on modern tactics and physical measures that can be implemented to repress terrorism. They will need to be provided with operational training that emphasizes the use of automatic weapons, bomb diffusion, target hardening methods, skills needed to conduct effective raids or searches, and the efficient use of communication technology. The creation of Quick Reaction Teams (QRT) composed of heavily armed and specially trained police personnel may be necessary.

Army and paramilitary forces may also need to acquire these physical tactical skills to combat terrorism, but with greater specialized training in how to conduct urban warfare. Army and paramilitary forces should also learn about the background and ideology of terrorist organizations. If violence continues unabated, then the use of

military or paramilitary units becomes necessary to assist police agencies in eliminating terrorist violence.

The number of security personnel needed to adequately combat terrorism in a particular region is difficult to determine. However, when determining deployment levels, security officials should attempt to achieve two objectives. First, there should be enough personnel to saturate a region embroiled in anti-terrorist violence, including both rural and urban areas, to ensure that no geographic region is left un-policed. Leaving regions un-policed allows terrorist organizations to set up bases and perpetuate acts of terrorism. Second, security agencies need to deploy a sufficient number of personnel to effectively carry out a wide array of duties, such as patrols, raids, target hardening, manning checkpoints, tracking down terrorists, and policing. Increased manpower increases the arrest or elimination of terrorists, seizures of weapons and ammunition, the ability to restrict the movement of terrorist organizations, and raids.

Ensuring security personnel are equipped with the appropriate tools to combat terrorism is also important. Attempts should be made to provide modern or advanced equipment to security personnel because out-of-date technology tends to hinder counterterrorism capabilities. Out-of-date equipment may limit security personnel's ability to perform specific functions which may place them in a vulnerable position when conducting their counterterrorism duties.

In addition sufficient levels of equipment should be provided. Three types of equipment for which there should be no deficiencies or shortages are: (1) weaponry; (2) communication hardware; and (3) transportation vehicles. Security forces provided with automatic weapons are more able to engage terrorists, inflict greater casualties, and

repulse terrorist attacks when security positions are directly engaged. Security personnel weaponry should be capable of overpowering terrorist forces, providing both a physical and a psychological advantage. Other equipment, such as night vision goggles, bomb detecting equipment, and advanced sensing technology, may also be needed in counterterrorism operations.

Communication equipment also plays an important role in counterterrorism operations. Modern telecommunication equipment assists security forces to communicate with each other, coordinate activities, and actively exchange or collect information instantly. Obsolete communication equipment hampers counterterrorism operations because security personnel are unable to access up-to-date information and coordinate counterterrorism activities. Finally, a sufficient number of vehicles should be provided to security agencies so they can constantly patrol terrorist-afflicted areas and expand the number of areas patrolled preventing the development of terrorist enclaves and giving security agencies the ability to respond rapidly to terrorist incidences or launch offensive actions swiftly.

### **Overt Actions**

The second aspect of an effective counterterrorism strategy is overt actions implemented by security forces to bring about law and order. Overt actions refer to activities, such as security patrols, the use of armed raids, target hardening, seizures of weapons, the prevention of terrorist funding, and assassination or arrest of terrorist members or supporters. A majority of these actions target the infrastructure of terrorist organizations impairing or preventing routine functioning. If security agencies fail to

implement an effective overt strategy to reduce terrorist acts, violence will likely continue.

### **Security Patrols**

Overt actions play an important role in an effective counterterrorism response. There are a broad set of guidelines or actions that will likely facilitate repression of terrorist acts. Overt actions primarily involve the use of manpower in an effective manner. Security patrols play an important role in a counterterrorism strategy and security agencies must consistently have personnel patrolling areas to act as a deterrent, facilitate detection of known terrorists/ supporters or illegal acts, and aid in the collection of intelligence. Patrolling should attempt to extend to all geographical locations within an area to prevent the creation of safe zones where terrorists can reside, recruit, and plan terrorist attacks. Patrolling should also be conducted around the clock to ensure constant public surveillance. The use of random checkpoints may also be deemed necessary in order to detect insurgents, seize weapons and explosives being transported by vehicles, and control or restrict the movement of individuals.

### **Armed Raids and Weapons and Explosives Seizures**

A related counterterrorism technique intertwined with effective patrolling is the use of raids on terrorist safe houses, hideouts, and operational facilities. The ability to identify these locations is usually facilitated by effective intelligence. The purpose of raids is primarily to arrest or detain known terrorists, sympathizers, and supporters of the movement. Raids can also lead to the seizure of weapons, explosives, and other equipment. Removing individuals active in a terrorist movement and instruments used in

violence greatly inhibits a terrorist organization's ability to function on a daily basis and achieve its objective.

### **Target Hardening**

Target hardening specific locations is another type of overt action. Target hardening key infrastructure or buildings can involve a number of tasks ranging from the posting of security officials, setting up barricades or checkpoints, installing surveillance equipment, and structurally altering facilities to reduce damage when attacked. Reducing the ability of terrorists to target key strategic institutions or facilities limits their ability to disrupt normal functioning of government and society. Target hardening also prevents the likelihood of massive civilian casualties and disrupts terrorists' ability to intimidate or create fear in the civilian population.

### **Arrest and Assassination of Terrorists**

Finally, overt actions that should be implemented by security forces in a counterterrorism campaign are the arrests or elimination of individuals in terrorist organizations. Focus should be given to removing the leadership structure of a terrorist organization because these individuals provide ideological justification for a movement, organize and plan terrorist attacks, coordinate activities, and have intimate operational knowledge of their organizations. Removing the leadership of terrorist organizations will likely create confusion and disarray among their members. Capturing terrorist leaders alive is also beneficial because these leaders have specialized knowledge about the organizations' functioning. Intelligence obtained from them can be used to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure. Clearly, arresting or eliminating individuals who carry out

physical acts of terrorism is necessary, removing individuals who provide material, financial, and logistical support greatly hampers the ability of terrorist organizations to access resources needed to function.

An elimination strategy tends to be implemented in conflicts where violence has been sustained for a significant period of time and where alternative non-violent methods have tended to be ineffective. The elimination strategy is beneficial because it neutralizes the threat in a simple and efficient manner. An elimination strategy tends to be facilitated by legal guarantees that individuals who participate in such acts will not be prosecuted. In some cases, such behaviour may be encouraged by security agencies' providing personnel who participate in such activities with monetary or personal rewards. Although implementing and using an elimination strategy goes against international human rights standards, it is a tactic available to governments to bring terrorist violence under control.

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence plays an important role in a successful counterterrorism campaign. A well-developed intelligence-collecting apparatus allows for the timely and detailed collection of information which assists security agencies to dismantle terrorist organizations. An effective intelligence apparatus has four components.

### **Intelligence Infrastructure**

The first component is a dedicated group of individuals within the security apparatus whose primary role is to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence to frontline security forces. This group of individuals is key as analysis of intelligence data

influences counterterrorism strategies, operations, and priorities. Members of this group identify peculiar trends in terrorist violence that can be exploited by security officials, as well as individuals active in the anti-state terrorism movement, thereby facilitating their arrest or elimination. They may also uncover terrorist plots.

### **Methods Utilized to Collect Intelligence**

The second component of an effective intelligence strategy is the methods used by security agencies to gather intelligence. There are a number of methods that facilitate accurate and productive intelligence collection. One is the arrest and interrogation of known militants, supporters, and sympathizers to obtain information. Interrogation methods should exert enough mental and physical pressure to elicit information. Individuals conducting interrogations should be provided adequate training and have sufficient experience in conducting interviews to ensure productive interrogations. During a conflict where there is an escalation in violence, conventional, humane methods of interrogation may be unproductive, and the use of torture may be deemed necessary. In states engulfed in terrorist violence, torture may be used to elicit information from combatants in order to prevent present or future terrorist attacks (Dershowitz, 2002). The use of torture is not restricted to the prevention of terrorist acts, but its use can be expanded to include scenarios where individual detainees are believed to possess specific knowledge about the working of a terrorist organization, including the identities of other individuals in the terrorist infrastructure, the location of safe houses or weapons, and other critical information. Torture is usually an option when governments enact legislation suspending civil liberties of detainees or the civilian population or by protecting security officials who participate in such acts from prosecution.



It has been argued that torture as a technique to elicit information is not productive, “that torture does not work, it produces false confessions and useless misinformation, because a person will say anything to stop being tortured” (Dershowitz, 2002: 137). Although this argument is valid, governments need to decide whether misinformation or torture of innocent individuals is justified in the larger goal of repressing terrorism and protecting its citizens. However, the use of torture can be justified based on the probability that torture will facilitate in a small percentage of cases useful intelligence from members of terrorist organizations who have been detained for questioning. By this, I mean there always exists a probability that when torturing a certain number of individuals, that there is a likelihood that it will lead to the acquisition of useful information. However, there is also a probability that torture may not lead to useful information. The decision of whether to use or not use torture as a technique to elicit information will have to be made by a nation based on their opinion whether this tactic is effective and the information obtained is useful. For example, a nation concludes that for every one thousand people it tortures, it obtains from one individual what they deem as useful information. Thus, the nation deems torture as an effective method to obtain information. However, another nation using torture and having the same success ratio (1:1000) may see this information gathering method as ineffective. Thus, it is up to individual nations to determine whether they want to utilize torture based on their perception of its effectiveness and utility.

Others make the slippery-slope argument that if democratic states implement torture against detainees or prisoners, it will lead to the gradual withdrawal of other individual civil liberties. Although a moralistic decision is easy to ascertain, states

subjected to violent terrorist movements may need to implement torture in order to prevent or bring under control terrorist violence. The executive branch of government must decide if the torture of a selected number of individuals is justified in order to save the potential lives of hundreds or thousands (Dershowitz, 2002). In order to prevent the abuse of this power, rules and conditions must be enacted to guide behaviour. Legislation may define appropriate and inappropriate forms of torture. It may also be beneficial for governments who authorize the use of torture to allow their decisions to be reviewed by the judicial system. This form of review ensures that the executive branch does not abuse its power and in situations where torture is authorized that the decision is justified based on the circumstances. Also, a sunset clause that removes torture as a means to gather intelligence when terrorist violence has been reduced or eliminated is imperative. However, governments must also take into account that violation of international laws, regulations, and moral standards may ultimately lead to condemnation and sanctions by the international community for states that adopt torture as a technique to elicit information. Although, I do not advocate the use of routine torture by low level officials, however, it may be deemed appropriate when directed by the highest executive level and also subject to eventual judicial review.

Infiltration is the second method of gathering intelligence. This primarily involves security agents or informants infiltrating a terrorist organization and providing intelligence on the workings of the organization. Infiltration does carry a great deal of risk to individual agents, but its benefits outweigh possible costs. Attempts should be made to infiltrate terrorist organizations in their infancy as a preventative method to counteract terrorism. The use of spies or agents in the field at the grassroots level is also

an important method of collecting intelligence. Security agents in the field are able to provide real-time intelligence and updates on terrorist members, movements, and sympathizers in the community.

Intelligence provided by the public is also of great importance. In conflicts where little support exists for a terrorist movement, members of the public are more willing to provide security officials information about terrorist organizations. Security officials' creating good relationships with members of the general public will facilitate active intelligence collection.

The final means of collecting intelligence is the use of technology. There are various methods of intercepting communications between members of terrorist organizations, such as wire taps, listening devices, monitoring internet communications, mail seizures. Technical methods of intercepting communications tend to be restricted by legislative and constitutional restraints because they intrude on individual civil liberties. However, legislative restraints can be relaxed officially or unofficially in order to permit such intrusive activities by security officials, and such measures tend to be standard in most counterterrorism legislation.

### **Adequate Information Sharing Between Security Agencies**

The third component of an effective intelligence infrastructure involves cooperation between security agencies in information sharing. All precautions should be taken to ensure rivalries between security agencies do not compromise the greater interest of national security. Rivalries between intelligence-collecting agencies can lead to the splintering of intelligence information and uncoordinated efforts. To avoid this scenario,

intelligence should be governed by a single, overarching department composed of various intelligence collecting agencies, with individual components of this organization consistently producing reports and information which are forwarded to this central body. Sharing intelligence between security agencies is crucial because it facilitates joint operations between security agencies and greater coordination of overt actions. Failure to do so prevents other agencies from implementing steps or actions to diffuse terrorist violence and creates gaps in intelligence data.

### **Overt Actions of Security Agencies Based on Intelligence**

The fourth component of an effective intelligence strategy is security agencies' acting on intelligence they receive by conducting raids, arresting or eliminating individuals, and modifying tactics in response to intelligence received. If security agencies are able to adequately respond to or act upon intelligence information, they will be able to dismantle terrorist infrastructures and reduce acts of terrorism.

### **Public Opinion**

Another significant component in the repression of terrorism is the role of public opinion. In any conflict, public opinion plays an important role in determining the effectiveness of a counterterrorism campaign. If the general public ideologically supports a terrorist movement and perceives the actions of terrorist groups as legitimate, they are more likely to provide material, logistical, and financial assistance to terrorist organizations. They may hamper security operations by viewing counterterrorism measures as illegitimate and thus be less likely to cooperate with security agencies in repressing terrorism. Conversely, if the public begins to oppose a terrorist movement,

they are more likely to withdraw material, logistical, and financial assistance and may assist security agencies. For example, people may start to provide greater intelligence on terrorist movements or members, reveal storage locations for weapons and ammunition, and actively resist terrorist groups.

## **Department of Foreign Affairs**

The fourth component of an effective counterterrorism strategy is the ability of the foreign affairs department and security agencies to reduce foreign support for anti-state terrorist movements. Foreign support is categorized into two sources: nation-states and individuals or groups. Nation-state support refers to foreign countries supporting insurgency in other states. The reasons nations support an anti-state terrorism movement range from religious, historical, and cultural animosities to nations attempting to achieve specific strategic interests in a region. The reasoning behind a nation's decision to support a terrorist movement tends to be unique to each situation and can change over the length of a conflict.

## **Forms of Assistance Provided by Nations**

The type of support provided by nations tends to be limited to three categories: material, financial, and logistical support. Material support includes a wide array of items, such as firearms, ammunition, explosive devices, military equipment, communication devices, and other forms of technology that may aid terrorist organizations. It may also involve countries' introducing terrorist groups to arms suppliers.

Financial support involves nations directly or covertly funding anti-state terrorism movements. The financial assistance provided is then utilized by terrorist groups to fund operations, maintain or expand organizations infrastructures, and purchase weaponry or explosive devices. Consistent funding of anti-state terrorism movements for lengthy periods ensures the longevity of a conflict. For example, during the Punjab conflict, Pakistani authorities provided financial funding to Sikh terrorist organizations from roughly 1985 to 1991. This funding ensured the longevity of the Punjab conflict because Sikh terrorist organizations were able to acquire weaponry, maintain terrorist bases, and fund terrorist operations. However, when this funding was eliminated by Pakistani authorities in 1991, some Sikh terrorist organizations found it difficult to operate. This lack of funding in part assisted in the de-escalation of terrorism in Punjab because Sikh terrorist organizations could no longer fund operations nor maintain their terrorist infrastructure.

Logistical support for a terrorist movement can involve a wide array of activities and the proximity of the nation to the conflict zone influences the type and quality of assistance provided. Logistical assistance involves nations knowingly allowing terrorist organizations to set up organizational structures within their borders and conduct illegal activities unfettered. In some cases, it may involve governments actively assisting in the creation of operational headquarters. Logistical assistance may also include nations allowing or assisting known terrorists to enter and leave the country with immunity or allowing foreign terrorists to reside in the country providing a safe haven. Foreign nations can also aid terrorist organizations by constructing and operating training facilities or camps. Allowing terrorist organizations to create facilities to train members

in the tactics of terrorism ensures the longevity and escalation of a conflict. Individual states may provide training camps with military instructors and equipment to train insurgents in the art of terrorism. Actively facilitating the training of terrorists demonstrates a nation's strong commitment to assisting terrorist organizations achieve their objectives.

### **Counterterrorism Methods for Defeating Foreign Nations' Support of Terrorism**

The ability of government and security agencies to disrupt foreign support for a terrorist movement is a significant aspect of an effective counterterrorism strategy. Methods of preventing other nations from aiding an anti-state terrorism movement can be classified into primarily two categories: diplomatic and physical measures. Diplomatic and physical measures can be implemented in a series of escalating steps.

The first of the series of diplomatic steps involves using envoys to request foreign nations to desist in supporting or sponsoring terrorist activities. This request may be accompanied by political or economic incentives or by threats of the use of military force to bring about change. At this point, nations supporting terrorist movements may withdraw their assistance, either accepting the incentive or fearing the potential hardships posed by sanctions or military action.

The second phase of diplomacy involves the signing of treaties or diplomatic understandings, where nations supporting terrorist groups agree to desist in harmful activities, actively assist in the repression of terrorist movements, and possibly implement measures to repress these movements within their borders. Measures that can be taken by these nations include signing extradition treaties with nations afflicted by terrorist violence, introducing domestic legislation outlawing terrorist organizations and their

activities, cracking down on these organizations within their borders through the use of security forces, sharing intelligence, or simply withdrawing financial, logistical, and material support. However, it must be noted that a state may, on its own, withdraw support for a movement at any time. The decision to withdraw support may be related to changes in ideological support for the movement by government officials, strategic interests, costs, and other extenuating conditions or circumstances.

### **Physical Measures to Reduce Foreign Nation Support**

The second method of reducing foreign state support involves introducing physical measures to control terrorist groups. Physical measures can be done in conjunction with diplomatic efforts or independently. The use of physical measures tends to be in response to escalating terrorist violence caused in part by cross-border insurgency. These measures tend not to focus on changing the behaviour of governments supporting terrorism, but rather on controlling terrorist movements emanating from these states. Nations afflicted by terrorist violence sharing a common border with hostile nations may need to construct physical barriers to prevent the movement of insurgents and material support across its borders. Physical barriers include concrete walls or fences, checkpoints, guard towers, increased lighting, motion detectors, security cameras, and new roads along the border for patrol vehicles. These barriers may be supplemented with increased deployments of well-trained and equipped border patrol personnel as well as increased searching and scrutiny of individuals and vehicles at entry points. The purpose of improving the physical infrastructure along the border is to prevent the entry of insurgents into the country and to eliminate sources of weapons, ammunition, explosives, and other material supplies.



Another option available to nations plagued by cross-border insurgency is the use of pre-emptive strikes on targets in foreign nations. Pre-emptive strikes may take the form of military raids, precision munitions strikes, or ground attacks on strategic targets seen as propagating or facilitating terrorist violence. Pre-emptive strikes should be used when foreign nations fail to take appropriate steps to repress terrorism emanating from within their borders and or when all diplomatic methods have failed, and the threat posed by terrorist organizations operating in these nations is imminent and significant.

### **Foreign Support from Individuals or Groups**

The second form of foreign support involves individuals or groups residing in foreign nations assisting terrorist organizations. Foreign group support tends to involve terrorist organizations establishing satellite branches in foreign countries in order to publicize their movement and to access material, financial, and logistical resources. These groups or organizations tend to raise financial resources for their movement by a number of methods: donations, legitimate businesses, illegitimate charities, criminal activities (such as narcotic sales, theft, and fraud), and other various legal or illegal methods. Funds are funnelled back into the zone of conflict to support organizational structures and operations of terrorist organizations. These funds can also be used by foreign terrorist satellites to obtain materials, such as weaponry, ammunition, and other equipment (e.g., radios, clothing, computers, and binoculars) within their host nation and then forward these items to the area of conflict. Foreign-based organizations may also provide logistical assistance by assisting known terrorists or terrorist family members to seek refuge in safe secondary nations where they can continue to propagate terrorism.

Individual foreign support tends to work in a relatively similar manner. However, individual actors work independently providing assistance to these movements.

### **Foreign Nations Implementing Stronger Domestic Counterterrorism Legislation and Enforcement Tactics**

For a counterterrorism strategy to be effective, nations facing anti-state terrorism must be able to decisively reduce foreign group or individual support for terrorist movements. Methods available to nations tend to be limited and require a great deal of cooperation from the foreign governments where these individuals and groups operate. The first option is to ensure that foreign nations create and implement legislation that bans terrorism-related activities of foreign groups or individuals operating within their domestic borders. Such legislation must deal with activities such as raising money for foreign terrorist organizations, acquiring materials to assist terrorists, and planning illegal activities. Effective legislation must be followed by effective enforcement and judicial processing. Law enforcement must be pro-active, conducting raids and detaining individuals or group members participating in terrorist activities. The ability to remove individuals from the support network reduces the perpetuation of terrorist violence.

### **Extradition Treaties**

The second option is similar to the aforementioned legislative scheme, but deals with treaties between nations. In some circumstances, nations afflicted with terrorism may need to negotiate treaties with foreign nations in order to secure the arrest of fugitives or individuals who have been shown to be conspirators in terrorist acts. The ability of governments afflicted with terrorism to pursue and secure the custody of

criminals in foreign nations ensures their ability to remove the actors of terrorist violence and those that continue to propagate violence from abroad.

### **Increased Intelligence Sharing Between Nations**

Increased intelligence sharing and collection between nations also ensures an effective counterterrorism strategy. The use of security agents abroad to infiltrate or collect intelligence on terrorist organizations in foreign nations may also be an option. The ability to identify or track individuals and understand the workings of foreign support structures and organizations allows security agencies to implement counterterrorism measures. For example, infiltration of foreign organizations may provide information about how terrorist organizations funnel money back into areas of conflict. With such information, security agencies can introduce measures to intercept or seize these funds. On rare occasions, governments with security agents based in foreign nations may have members of terrorist groups residing in foreign nations assassinated. This may be seen as a viable method of controlling terrorist violence that is being directed by individuals abroad. Increased intelligence allows security agencies to implement measures to decrease terrorist violence.

### **Public Support for Terrorism Movement**

The final means of reducing foreign support for terrorism is to decrease individual or group ideological support for the movement. Once ideological support for a movement is reduced, the willingness of individuals or groups to provide material, financial, and logistical support rapidly decreases. The primary method of reducing people's support is media campaigns to discredit the terrorist movement. However,

ideological support for a movement may also naturally decrease over time in extended conflicts or when individuals realize the ideological underpinnings of a movement are false or corrupt.

## **Concluding Remarks**

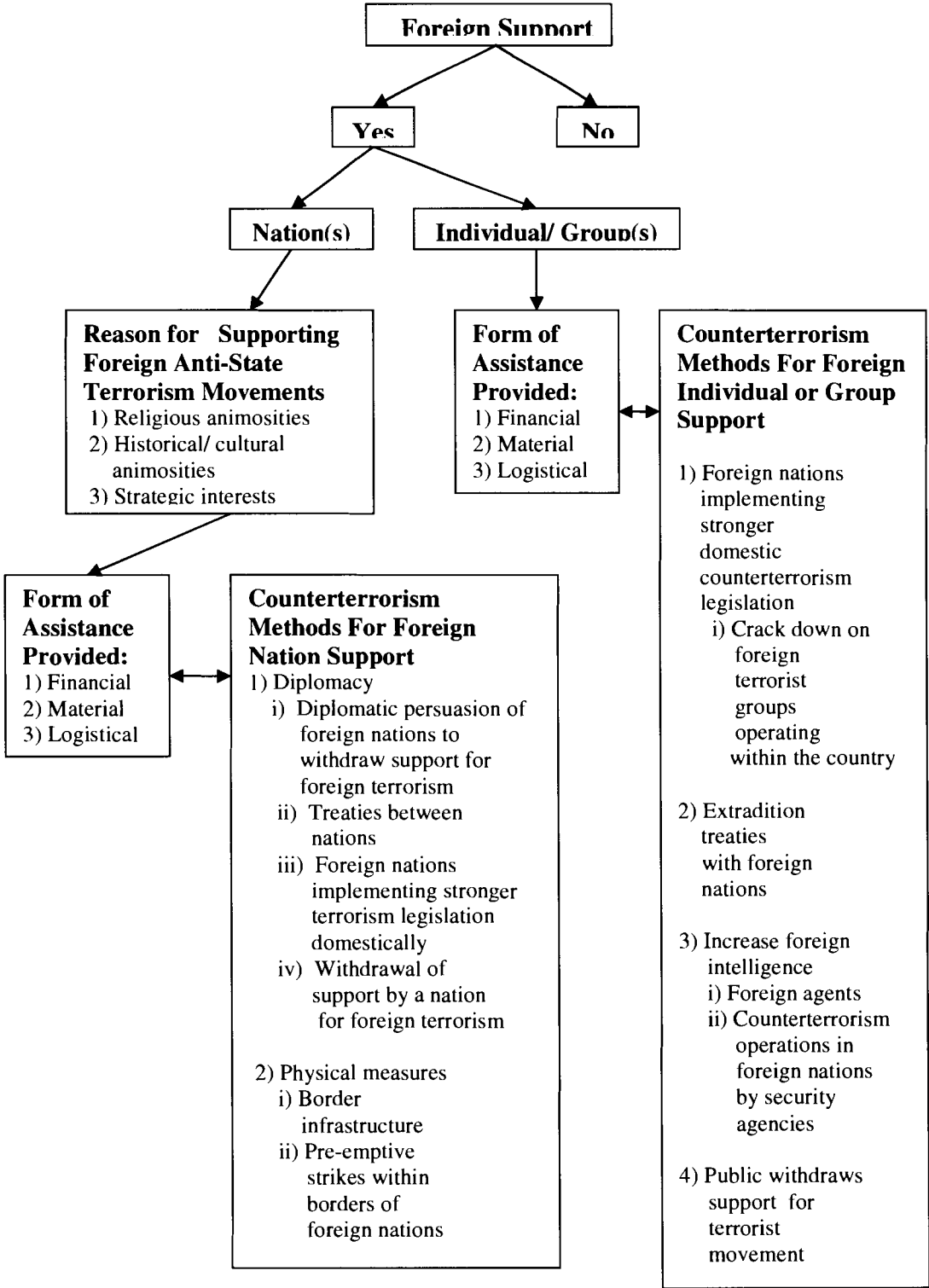
As can be seen, an effective response to anti-state terrorism involves a co-ordinated effort among various branches, departments, and agencies of government. If this co-ordination is non-existent, there will be a disorganized response to terrorism, or if one aspect or component of the counterterrorism response is deficient, this may hinder the reduction of violence. The executive, legislative, security forces, and department of foreign affairs must implement specific counterterrorism measures and enforce those measures in order to reduce and control terrorism in its infancy. The time frame of what measures or policies should be implemented and when is primarily going to be governed by the intensity of a conflict and when various levels of governments see it as appropriate or most beneficial. In my opinion, the ability to implement or have the overall structural capability to implement a wide array of counterterrorism measures on a needs basis is most beneficial in controlling anti-state terrorism in its infancy. Individual nations will have to make the decision as to what counterterrorism measures they see as appropriate and what aspects they will allow to be carried out by security agencies.

There is still a great deal of work that still has to be carried out in relation to the applicability of the Kang counterterrorism model to other terrorist conflicts in the world. As the model is influenced by the Punjab conflict, it needs to be ascertained whether the model is suitable to explain the rise and decline of anti-state terrorism movements in first world nations. Other case studies will need to be applied to the model to determine its

validity. Also, there is a significant difference in legislative standards in relation to human rights and legitimate tactics available to security forces to combat terrorism in first world democracies. Thus, it needs to be ascertained whether some of the tactics advocated in the model could or could not be used in first world democracies and whether they would be effective.

The model also may need to be modified upon examining other international terrorist conflicts to include more counterterrorism tactics that were deemed effective in repressing terrorist violence. As the model is influenced by the Punjab conflict based in the 1980's, a whole host of other effective counterterrorism measures may have been implemented or discovered (i.e., technological innovations, cyber counterterrorism, and/or military strategies) which have been used to effectively to reduce or repress terrorist violence. Finally, it needs to be determined whether the four components in the Kang counterterrorism model: (1) executive ideology; (2) legislative branch; (3) security agencies; and (4) department of foreign affairs play the most crucial role in combating terrorism and whether these four components have been shown to contribute to an effective counterterrorism campaign in other terrorist conflicts internationally.

Figure 15: Effective Foreign Counterterrorism Model



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