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From Terror to Politics: How Nationalist Terrorist Organizations Evolve

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Abstract

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This paper examines how nationalist terrorist organizations (NTO) evolve from military units into political units that use peaceful means in order to achieve their goals. The main hypothesis states that NTO's are more likely to evolve into political groups when they have a higher level of opportunity for political competition within the given state. A further hypothesis states that evolution is more likely to take place if the organizational structure of the NTO is more cohesive and streamlined. The theory was tested using three cases, the IRA in Northern Ireland, the ANC in South Africa, and the ETA in the Basque Country of Spain. Of the three cases the ANC exhibited the highest level of evolution, the IRA exhibited a moderate level of evolution, and the ETA exhibited very little evolution. The results from the three case studies generally supported the theory and hypotheses stated above.

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The presence of a nationalist terrorist organization (NTO) in a country can often result in chaos, fear, and strife within the state. Therefore it is helpful to explore cases in which NTOs evolve into political or civil actors that operate without the use of violence and within the legal limits of a given state. A terrorist organization is typically defined as an organization that uses unsanctioned violence in order to influence a group or government to agree to a certain political objective (Stevenson 1996). Given this definition, a surprising number of political parties had their beginnings as terrorist organizations, or at the very least were groups that engaged in terrorist activities. Some of these groups include the African National Congress in South Africa (ANC), the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Palestinian Territories (PLO), and the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland (IRA), the National Liberation Front in Algeria (FLN), and the Basque nationalists in Spain (ETA). Although these groups were at one point considered nationalist terrorist organizations, they were able to evolve into political actors that rely on nonviolent means to achieve their goals. In fact, given this general pattern, most NTOs will eventually attempt to become involved in politics; however not all are able to evolve fully into political actors.

Terrorist organizations usually have a certain level of fanaticism and uncompromising commitment to the goals that they set forth. Successful political participation, on the other hand, intrinsically requires more moderate stances and the willingness to compromise with other groups, especially for nationalist parties, which usually represent a minority. Thus, when an NTO moves into the political front it has to change its uncompromising stance in order to compete successfully. Theoretically, an NTO will move into the political realm if it is not achieving the desired results through armed struggle, but how exactly does an NTO measure its level of success in an armed struggle? This raises the following question: how and under what circumstances do

nationalist terrorist organizations evolve into legitimate political actors that do not rely on the use of violence in order to achieve their goals?

There are several reasons why finding an answer to this question can be beneficial. First, knowing the circumstances under which NTOs evolve can be helpful for states in determining their foreign policy stance; depending on the circumstances, concessions may yield better results than a hard-line policy. Second, there is a possibility that an NTO in a certain country could provide funding, training, material goods, or other forms of support to other terrorist organizations; finding the circumstances under which NTOs evolve can help to limit these occurrences of networking between various terrorist organizations around the world. Furthermore, the presence of an NTO can disturb that country's economic, political, and social situation. Finally, the eradication of an NTO can actually, in some cases, alienate the social or ethnic group that the NTO represents. This alienation can be avoided if the NTO evolves into a legitimate political actor and continues to represent the interests of the group. Therefore, understanding the circumstances under which this transformation takes place is a meaningful pursuit.

In the following paper, I will examine the conditions under which an NTO is able to evolve from a military actor into a political actor through a close examination of three case studies. My hypothesis states that the ability of an NTO to evolve is determined by two conditions: the ability of the political wing of the NTO to compete successfully in elections, and the coherence of the organizational structure of the NTO. I will test these hypotheses through the use of two independent variables: the vote percentage of the political wing of the NTO in national level elections, and the coherence of the organizational structure of the NTO. The paper begins with a brief examination of the existing literature on the subject, followed by an explanation of the methods and variables used in the analysis. This is followed by the case studies of three NTOs: the IRA in Northern Ireland, the ANC in South Africa, and the ETA in the Basque

Country of Spain. Each of the three case studies includes background information and an analysis of the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable, NTO evolution. The paper concludes with an overall analysis of the hypothesis and results, as well as suggestions for further research on the topic.

Literature Review

At the end of WWII, NTOs emerged in a number of areas around the world -- Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. The goals of these NTOs were to gain national independence from foreign or colonial rule (Shughart II 2006, 8). According to the U.S. Department of State, terrorism is defined as “premeditated, politically motivated violence against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (Shughart II 2006, 9). In order to achieve these goals, terrorist organizations generally follow the rational choice model that allows them to maximize their gains and minimize their losses; in this case, gains are steps toward achieving their goals, and losses are concessions that the groups have made (Shughart II 2006, 11). Therefore, one would expect to see terrorist groups engaging in activities other than politically motivated violence if those activities will help the organizations achieve their goals with minimal loss.

NTOs are, first and foremost, terrorist organizations that follow this strategic decision-making processes in order to achieve their goals of national independence or autonomy (Harmon 2000, 73). In this case, disruption of the existing political regime can serve to undermine the government’s authority and power, thereby furthering the NTOs objective. Therefore, in order to achieve this political disruption, many NTOs will engage in politics and create political fronts to represent their ideals and goals in the political arena of a state (Harmon 2000, 60). These political fronts, or wings, are almost always subordinate to the military wing of the NTO, much in the way that Sinn Fein was as the political wing of the IRA (Richards 2001, 72-73). According to

Richards, therefore, the transformation of the NTO into a political actor happens only when the political front of the NTO gains more power than the paramilitary wing within the structure of the organization. Typically, if the political wing begins to gain more power in the political arena, then the power distribution within the organization itself will begin to shift in favor of the political wing (Richards 2001, 79-80). Richards maintains that Sinn Fein was able to gain the dominant position in the Northern Irish case due to the events of September 11, 2001 and the resulting change in US attitude towards terrorism (85). A similar theory is advanced by Pettyjohn who argues for the importance of third party mediation in resolving conflicts involving NTOs and the effect that long-term engagement by a third party actor has had on NTO evolution (Pettyjohn 2009, 42). According to the article, engagement by a third party actor, such as the US in the Northern Ireland case, can establish circumstances in which it becomes more beneficial for the NTO to abandon violence and adhere to peaceful means of accomplishing its goal. For example, US involvement in favor of the NTO can have a tempering effect on the stance of the national government towards the group (Pettyjohn 2009, 43).

The circumstances under which a third party, such as the US, becomes involved can also determine if and how an NTO will evolve. If the involvement of a third party actor really has such a major impact on the transformation of an NTO, as the literature implies, then the circumstances under which that actor becomes engaged are also relevant. According to Pettyjohn, the US will become involved in a situation with an NTO only if two conditions are present: first, if there are no other preferred groups representing the same constituency; and, second, if the NTO is willing to make concessions on certain points (Pettyjohn 2007, 8). Stevenson, on the other hand, divides NTOs into two categories, those that have the support of the majority of the group that they claim to represent, such as the ANC in South Africa, and those that do not, such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland (Stevenson 1996). Generally, it is much less costly for a third

party actor, such as the US, to become involved with the first type of group rather than the second. Nevertheless, there are circumstances under which the US may involve itself with the second type of NTO, if the benefits should outweigh the costs of associating with a group that does not have majority support (Stevenson 1996). Once the US, or another powerful third actor, is involved, the likelihood of the military wing phasing out is greatly increased, because third party involvement often means that dialog is more likely to open between the NTO and the state (Stevenson 1996). The main goal of the US is typically to aid in the ceasing of hostilities between the NTO and the government. However, the ceasing of hostilities does not necessarily indicate that the NTO will evolve into a competitive political actor.

The majority of the theories on NTO evolution focus on the effects that the involvement of a powerful third party can have on negotiations. The consensus in the literature is that engagement by the US, or another influential outside actor, gives the national government greater incentive to engage in negotiations, since the third party can threaten sanctions against the government. However, there is little to indicate that third party involvement will result in NTO evolution. Third parties usually place emphasis on phasing out the military wing and ending violence between the groups and not necessarily on ensuring that NTO members are capable of participating politically. Although third party involvement can certainly play a role in arranging a cease fire or ensuring peaceful negotiations it is not a very good explanation for the phenomenon of evolution.

Furthermore, there is little agreement about which cases represent successful US engagement. Pettyjohn claims that the transformation process in Northern Ireland took place in the early 1990's when the US became involved with the IRA (Pettyjohn 2009, 50). On the other hand, Richards claims that the transformation process in Northern Ireland did not begin until 2001, when the US attitude towards terrorism changed after September 11th (Richards 2001, 82-

83). Prior to the beginning of the Bush administration and September 11th, the US attitude towards the IRA was relatively lenient, even going so far as to grant Gerry Adams, a suspected IRA leader, a visa to visit with President Clinton (Stephenson 1996). After September 11th however, the US became much less tolerant towards groups that could be considered terrorist organizations, and therefore put pressure on the IRA to transform (Richards 2001, 82-82). From this literature, it is unclear precisely when, if ever, US involvement in Northern Ireland resulted in the IRA's transformation. Similarly, Pettyjohn maintains that US involvement with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) failed to yield an evolution, whereas Stevenson claims that the evolution of the PLO was a success.

The variety of explanations indicates that there is another variable that has not yet been explored. Two explanations appear to be missing from the literature. The first explanation concerns the amount of opportunity for political competition afforded to the NTO; in other words, whether the state has a democratic system, and if so, if the system is one that allows nationalist parties, which often have a limited support base, to compete freely in elections. If an NTO has the opportunity to compete in politics, then the likelihood that the NTO will engage in politics increases, especially if its efforts at armed struggle have been ineffective. The more engaged an NTO becomes in politics, the more likely it is to form alliances with other, more moderate groups in order to increase its percentage of the vote share. These alliances will, in turn, moderate the NTO's own stance on issues, as it will have to appease its alliance partners as well as more median voters. Therefore, the support for the military wing of the NTO will gradually fade, and it will evolve into a largely political actor. The second explanation concerns the organizational structure of the NTO and the possible effect on its ability to evolve. Theoretically, groups with a more cohesive structure will be less likely to fragment once they begin participating politically. Therefore cohesive groups are more likely to complete their evolution because the decision to

engage in political competition was reached through some sort of consensus building or decision enforcement within the NTO.

Hypothesis

The primary hypothesis, therefore, is the following: *if an NTO has a strong opportunity for political competition within a state, then it is more likely that the NTO will engage in political competition in order to further its goals, and, as a result, the NTO will be more likely to evolve into a nonviolent political or social actor.* In addition to this primary hypothesis, a secondary hypothesis states: *the more consolidated the organizational structure of the NTO is, the more likely it is that the NTO will moderate its stances once it has begun to engage in political competition.* Since the military and political wings are two sides of the same organization, they generally have the same goals, although they work to achieve these goals through different means: the political wing through political competition and the military wing through armed attacks. Evolution will occur when the political wing's means of achieving the goal become more viable and productive than the military wing's means. When this happens, the balance of power between the two groups will tend to shift towards the political wing, and gradually the military wing will be phased out. In order for this to happen, however, the political wing must be able to compete in politics and produce results in terms of percent vote share and number of seats. In this case, political competition refers not only to the party's legal and organizational ability to contest elections, but also the party's overall political competitiveness as compared to the other political actors on the national arena. The larger the vote percentage of the party, the more competitive the party is in the arena of national politics; the more competitive the party is, the more productive it becomes at achieving its goals. Therefore, as the party gains a greater role in politics and votes, the expected outcome would be a shift in power from the military to the political wing.

The hypotheses are tested through a series of case studies that will examine the IRA in Northern Ireland, the ANC in South Africa, and the ETA in the Spanish Basque Country. The dependent variable is the level of evolution that the NTO undergoes: that is, to what extent the power has shifted from the military wing of the group to the political wing. My independent variables are the level of opportunity for political participation by the NTO and level of NTO organizational coherence. These cases provide a wide range of the two independent variables and should therefore result in varying levels of NTO evolution within the cases. If the independent variable conditions are present, then the outcome should be greater NTO evolution. On the other hand, if the conditions are not present, or are present to a lesser extent, then the observed outcome should be a much smaller degree of NTO evolution.

Variables and Case Selection

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, *NTO evolution*, can be measured in a number of ways. The level of evolution of the NTO is split into three categories: complete evolution, some evolution, and limited evolution. Levels of presence and activity of the NTO's military wing on the national scene are the measures used to determine the level of NTO evolution. If the military wing is very prominently present and active then there has been limited evolution, if it has a limited presence and activity then it has undergone some evolution, finally, if the military wing is completely absent then the NTO has fully evolved into a political actor.

I am able to examine each of my cases on an individual basis, in order to determine to what level the conditions listed above are present. I have chosen to use NTO number of attacks as the measure for the dependent variable because the number of attacks is a good indicator of the military wing's level of activity. The military wing uses violence, in the form of terrorist attacks, in order to further the organization's goal. As already established, evolution begins to occur when

the means used to further the goal shift from violence to political competition. Therefore, a drop in the level of violent activity can serve as an indicator of a shift in means away from the use of violence.

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is the main source for data that I use to determine NTO level of activity. This database provides information on instances of terrorist attacks throughout the world from 1970 to the present, and can be sorted by country, year, or perpetrator. Therefore, the number of terrorist attacks that occurred within each country, as well as the number of terrorist attacks that were perpetrated by the specific NTOs, was determined and recorded. Using this sort of data will allow for the observation of peaks and drops in each NTO's level of activity. Furthermore, I can observe any existing patterns to find relationships between violent activity and political competition. The timing of NTO activity is important, because, in order for the hypothesis to be confirmed, variation in NTO activity should occur after changes in the independent variable.

Independent Variables

I will use two independent variables in order to test my hypotheses: *the possibility of political competition for the NTO within the state* and *the organizational structure of the NTO*. The level of opportunity for political competition is measured through three combined factors. The first factor is the government system; whether it is a democratic system, and, if so, whether it is a majoritarian or proportional system. This is important because the possibility for political competition of a minority party may be much smaller in a majoritarian system, where there is only one winner, than it might be in a proportional system.

In addition to examining the type of system, elections data of the three countries were examined to find the percentage of votes and number of seats received by the political front of the NTO. This was the main measure I used to determine the level of opportunity for political

competition afforded to the political wing. Theoretically, the higher the vote percentage, the higher the level of popular support and thus the greater the possibility of political competition and political influence for the NTO's political wing. A highly competitive NTO would win a large number of seats, possibly enough to act as a pivotal coalition partner or even to form its own government, whereas a less competitive NTO may win only a few seats. However, there is no set number of seats that can act as the threshold for all three cases, since each legislative body has a different structure and different numbers of total seats. This is why the data are presented as percentage of votes won rather than the actual number of votes. Also, because case studies were conducted, election results were closely examined within the context of each country's system in order to determine whether a certain percentage is particularly significant in a given political system.

I examine data on the national level because the effects of the moderating-effect of democratic competition are more likely to be felt after competition on the national level, rather than the regional or local level. Often, regional political preferences may be the same, especially in a regional conflict such as the ones in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country. In the Basque Country especially, almost all of the parties are Basque Nationalist Parties, although most want to use political means to accomplish independence. Therefore, participating in this environment on the regional level would bring less need for compromise than competing on the national level would. Furthermore, on the national level, small parties are forced to make coalitions with larger parties that may have different views.

For the Northern Irish case I used data provided by the Economic and Social Research Council, which lists elections results by party from 1973 to the present. For the South African case I used data from the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, which provides election results by party and candidate for national, provincial, and municipal elections

from 1994 to the present. For the Spanish case I used information on election results in the Basque Country provided by the Basque Government Interior Department, as well as information on national level elections provided by the Spanish government.

It is important to note that changes in the electoral outcomes were examined not only in terms of the results of a rise in vote percentage, but also in terms of the effects of a drop in vote percentage. Once the political wing of an NTO is established as a political party that participates in elections and politics, then it should begin to act rationally in order to increase its power base in the area of politics. In a democracy, this power base increases when the number of votes increases. A drop in vote support typically indicates drop in popular support for the party's actions; therefore, a rational political party would change its actions once a drop in vote percentage occurs, in order to regain the votes it has lost. However, the political wing of an NTO is intrinsically linked with the military wing. Consequently, the vote percentage indicates the level of popular support not only for the actions of the party but also for the actions of the military wing. For example, a spike in violence followed by a drop in vote percentage shows a drop in popular support. If the drop in vote percentage is followed by a drop in the level of violence before the next election, then this can serve as an indicator that the political wing is beginning to gain more power. Since the military wing of the organization is comprised of the most radical elements, and violence is considered the most radical means of achieving political goals, then drops in the level of violence should indicate a moderation in the organization's approach. In this case, the competing political wing of the organization is acting as a moderating force. For example, a drop in the number of attacks following a drop in vote percentage would indicate that the political wing is able to exert influence on the military wing in order to decrease the level of violence. This then would indicate that the balance of power between the two wings is beginning

to shift in favor of the political wing and the organization is evolving into a more political rather than militant group.

The possibility for NTO political competition was also measured through a close examination of the laws governing party participation in elections for each country. I analyze the constitution of each country, as well as laws and High Court decisions that may limit the number and types of parties that can participate in elections and government were. This is an important variable, because if the national level authorities prohibit or limit the political wing of the NTO from participating elections, then the opportunity for NTO political competition decreases considerably. This measure is coded dichotomously: whether the NTO is permitted by law to compete in elections or not.

The second independent variable, NTO organizational structure, is more difficult to measure since NTOs, as terrorist organizations, are by definition not open about their inner functions. Nevertheless, there is some data on the organizational structure of the three NTOs. The level of cohesiveness of the NTO is important because a more cohesive organization will be better able to keep radical elements in check. This would allow the more moderate members to commit to compromises that radical members might reject; this gives the organization a better chance to make political alliances. An organization's structure was classified as cohesive if there was a clear delineation of power, with a concentrated leadership that is able to control the lower levels directly. An organization's structure was classified as incohesive if it has a diffused leadership and is made up of a number of semi-autonomous cells. Furthermore, I include a measure for the presence of a strong, charismatic leader in the organization. A strong leader may be able to suppress radical elements even if the organization's structure is fairly incohesive. The highest level for this measure is the cohesive group with a strong leader, followed by a cohesive group

that lacks a key leading figure, followed by a group with a key leader but lacking a cohesive structure, followed by a group lacking a cohesive structure and a key leader.

The data on these five measures are combined into a master timeline for each case. The timelines are divided into five-year intervals from 1970 to 2005 in all three cases, although some of the actual data analyzed falls outside this range due to the individualistic nature of the three cases. Each timeline lists the level of violent activity, as measured through the number of attacks; the level of political competition, as measured through vote percentage in the national assembly; the presence of laws that may limit the political wing's ability to compete politically; the level of coherence in the organizational structure; and whether there is a strong charismatic leader present in the organization.

Case Selection

The cases of the IRA, ANC, and ETA were selected for three primary reasons. First, the cases provide a wide range of historical variation. Furthermore, despite this variation, the three goals of the three organizations in question all have their roots in a fight for civil rights. Second, the three cases display a wide range of dependent variable results; that is, the level of NTO evolution varies between the three, with the ANC presenting almost complete evolution, the IRA moderate evolution, and the ETA very limited evolution. Finally, the cases were partially selected due to time and resource constraints. Although there are other cases which may provide wider variation on the independent and dependent variables, I did not have the time or the necessary resources to conduct in-depth case studies on these other cases.

Expected Results

The primary hypothesis states: *if an NTO has a strong possibility for political competition within a state, then it is more likely that the NTO will engage in political competition in order to further its goals, and, as a result, the NTO will be more likely to transform into a non-violent*

political or social actor. If the independent variable condition, the possibility for political competition, is present in a case, then the observed outcome should be NTO evolution. Furthermore, changes in the independent variable preceding changes in the dependent variable would indicate the presence of a causal relationship. Therefore, I would expect to see changes in the percentage of votes to precede changes in the level of violence. The secondary hypothesis is that *the more consolidated the organizational structure of the NTO is, the more likely it is that the NTO will compromise and moderate its stances once it has engaged in political competition*. In this case, the observed outcome is not NTO evolution, but rather the extent to which the NTO moderates its stance. Therefore, a more moderate stance should result in fewer attacks and a greater emphasis placed on political competition. If the conditions for this variable are met, meaning that the NTO has a cohesive structure, then the observed outcome should be higher NTO political participation and a more moderate stance, if the NTO has begun to compete politically.

Case Study: IRA in Northern Ireland

Background

The IRA in Northern Ireland originates from the Irish Volunteers, who officially became the Irish Republican Army of the independent Irish Republic in 1919 (Taylor 1997, 19). Between 1919 and 1921, the IRA engaged in a “war” with Britain over the independence of the Irish Republic; this, for the most part, involved guerrilla warfare (Taylor 1997, 20). The British saw the IRA then in the same way that they now see the IRA that is active in Northern Ireland: as a terrorist organization (Taylor 1997, 21). After several years of armed struggle, in 1921, Michael Collins signed a treaty that would partition Ireland and establish an Irish Free State. It was the best arrangement he could get at the time, due to unionist pressures in Ulster; however, the treaty was met with serious disapproval by a large number of IRA members who proceeded to break off in 1922 and form a new

constitution in which they recommitted themselves to Republicanism and (Taylor 1997, 24-27). The treaty supporters and the anti-treaty faction, known as the “irregulars,” clashed in a bloody civil war that left the IRA decimated but still committed to its goal of an independent Irish state (Taylor 1997, 28-29). By 1924, the Civil War was mostly at an end, and the IRA, which had suffered serious losses, began to slowly regroup (English 2003, 42). The partition of Ireland became official in 1925, and although the IRA remained active over the next forty years, by the 1960’s, it was beginning to lose its focus and strength (Taylor 1997, 29-30).

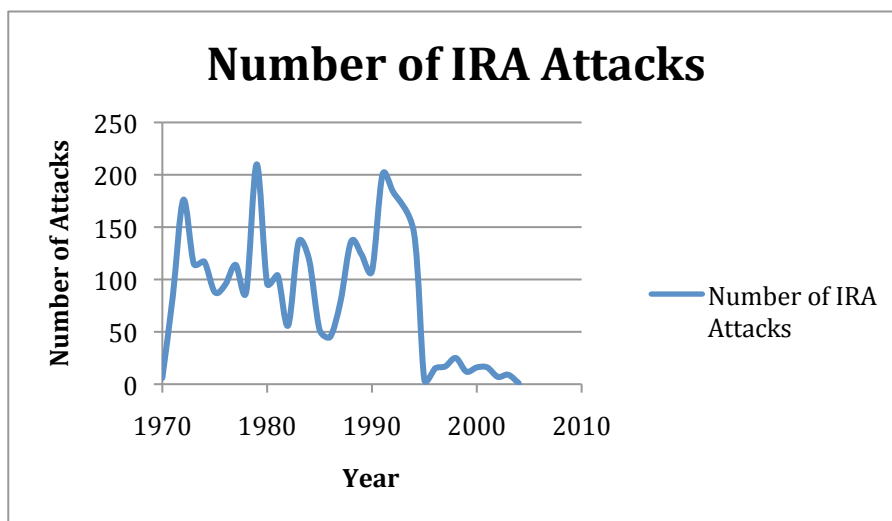
The partition angered IRA members for a number of reasons; primarily because the partition prevented all of Ireland from becoming a sovereign state, although questions of civil liberty and civil rights also played a major role (Taylor 1997, 30). Irish Catholics in the North faced heavy discrimination from the Unionists, who feared Catholic disloyalty (English 2003, 39). In 1969, the Provisional IRA was established as a response to Protestant violence against a 1960’s Catholic peaceful, non-nationalist, civil right movement in the North (English 2003, 81). The Provisional IRA felt that it was their duty to protect the citizens, and therefore reemerged from the faltering IRA of the 1950’s as a strong organization newly devoted to radical civil rights and nationalism in the North (English 2003, 82).

Levels of Activity

The dependent variable, level of NTO evolution, was measured through an analysis of the level of the NTO’s activity between the early 1970’s, when the Provisional IRA (henceforth referred to as IRA) became active, and 2009. The number of Provisional IRA attacks does not drop below forty attacks per year until after 1995. There are peaks in number of attacks in both 1979 and 1991, with 248 and 240 attacks, respectively. The drops

in number of attacks occur in 1982, with fifty-six attacks, and in 1986, with forty-eight attacks. A major drop in attacks occurs between 1994 and 1995, with only four recorded attacks in the latter year. After 1995, attacks resume, although at a much lower rate than before. The number of attacks falls again in 2001, and then continues at a rate of about two or three attacks per year until 2009, although many of the attacks that occur after 2000 are perpetrated by IRA breakaway groups (Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>).

Graph 1



Source: Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>

History of the Political Wing and Possibility for Democratic Competition

The independent variable, level of opportunity for political competition, is measured by percent vote share for the national assembly elections. The results of this measure indicate a strong correlation between the level of violence perpetrated by the organization and the percent vote share that the political wing gains. Both political wins and losses are correlated with changes in the level of violence. More importantly, changes in the vote share

precede changes in the number of attacks indicating that the causal relationship I hypothesized is indeed valid.

Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, existed as an organization before the emergence of the IRA. When it was founded before 1916, Sinn Fein did not support the use of violence as a means to achieve its goals (Taylor 1997, 17). By 1916, however, Sinn Fein was considered mostly obsolete, since it was unable to accomplish any of its goals through the available means. The majority of the participants in the Easter Uprising of 1916 were members of Sinn Fein who felt that armed struggle had become necessary (Taylor 1997, 17-18). After the execution of the leaders of the Uprising, Sinn Fein won seventy-three of the one-hundred and five Irish seats in the Parliament at Westminster during the 1918 election; however, all of the newly elected Sinn Fein MPs refused to go to the “foreign Parliament” at Westminster (Taylor 1997, 18-19). The large electoral victory legitimized Sinn Fein, which then proceeded to form the Dail Eireann, or Irish Parliament, in Dublin and swear allegiance to the Irish Republic (Taylor 1997, 19). When the Irish Volunteers were officially named as the Irish Republican Army, the fate of the IRA and Sinn Fein became intrinsically linked.

After 1921, Sinn Fein delegates who had refused to accept the treaty signed by Michael Collins decided that they would not participate in Parliament, and instituted a policy of abstention. After several splits in the party, Sinn Fein emerged in the 1960’s as a relatively weak group, with number of votes dropping by as much as sixty percent from its 1920’s results (Feeney 2002, 252). In the early 1970’s, another split occurred in the party, resulting in some members pledging their loyalty to the Provisional IRA, which had come into existence in late 1969. When the Provisional IRA finalized its structure, the group that had pledged to follow them became known as the Official Sinn Fein (Feeney 2002, 252).

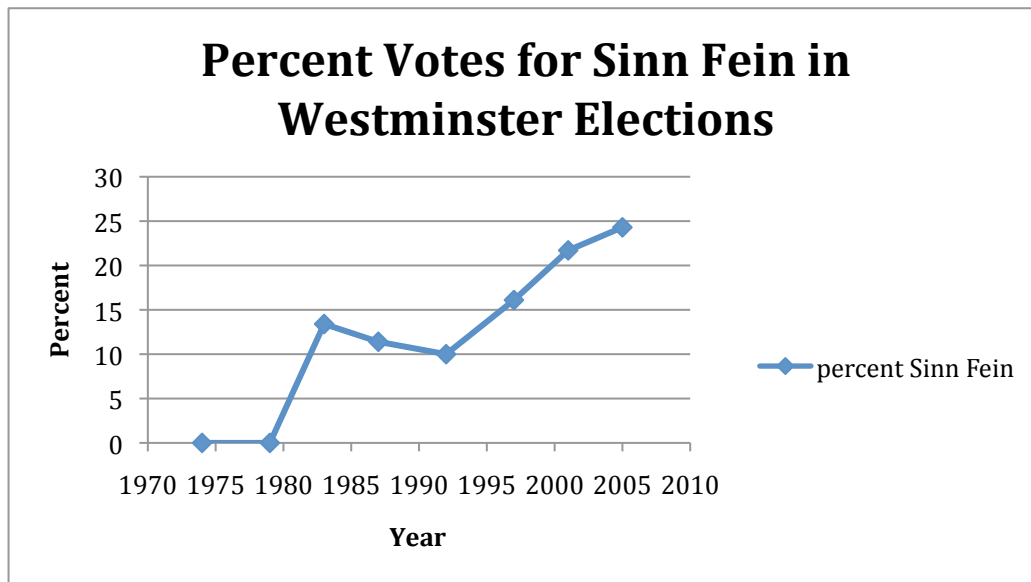
During the 1970's, Sinn Fein existed as little more than a mouthpiece for the IRA (Feeney 2002, 272). The membership overlap between Sinn Fein and the IRA was widespread at all levels. For example, in 1970, the Sinn Fein executive contained three Army Council members, which indicates a very close relationship between the two groups (English 2003, 115). At this time, the party was clearly inferior to the IRA and acted only as a political arm, which remained visible as a way to publicize the IRA's goals and news in a political setting (Taylor 1997, 219).

It was not until 1975, when the IRA agreed to a truce and cease-fire, that Sinn Fein really began to gain a role as an organization independent from the military wing, although it still remained clearly subordinate (Feeney 2002, 272). When the truce failed, Gerry Adams, one of the rising leaders in the IRA, came to the conclusion that the goal of an Irish Republic could only be reached if the IRA developed political structures that could take an active role on the political arena (Taylor 1997, 234). This led to the development of "The Armalite and the Ballot Box" strategy, which guided the IRA and Sinn Fein until the 1997 IRA ceasefire. This strategy called for a dual approach to the struggle for Irish independence. The IRA would continue its armed struggle, while Sinn Fein would take the struggle to the political arena by actively competing in elections (Taylor 1997, 328). Once implemented, this double strategy appeared to work fairly well; leaders were able to build up political support while continuing the armed struggle and maintaining an active role in the IRA (Taylor 1997, 330). Sinn Fein was pursuing its electoral strategy in combination with the IRA's armed strategy. This gradually allowed the political wing to become equal partners with the military wing (Taylor 1997, 330).

In the 20 October 1982 elections, Sinn Fein won 10.1 percent of the vote in Northern Ireland, and both Adams and McGuinness won seats in the assembly. This victory showed the viability of the IRA's new strategy. On 9 June 1983, Gerry Adams was elected as the MP for West Belfast. Sinn Fein had 13.4 percent of the vote, trailing the SDLP by just slightly over four percent (Taylor 1997, 329). Due to this victory, Adams was elected as president of Sinn Fein in 1983. Despite the change in the leadership, armed struggle still remained a key aspect of the IRA strategy (Taylor 1997, 329).

Since these early victories, Sinn Fein has continued to compete in elections with moderate success. The party won a fairly sizeable percentage in 1983 and 1987. However, after the initial successes of Sinn Fein, the SDLP and Britain regrouped and were able to portray Sinn Fein as a marginal nationalist party, playing on the party's connection to the IRA and its more radical nationalist views (Taylor 1997, 353). In 1992, Sinn Fein won only ten percent of the vote, the lowest it had received since it began contesting elections, and the first time it lost its MP representative at Westminster since 1983. More importantly, this drop in votes occurred almost directly after an escalation of the armed struggle. The leaders realized that in order to have a political chance, Sinn Fein had to make alliances with other groups and parties in Parliament (Taylor 1997, 353). However, in order for the party to form alliances with other groups, it needed to moderate its stances on certain issues, which included moderating the actions of the IRA to a certain extent. Therefore, through the effects of political competition, Sinn Fein gradually began to moderate its political stance. The low results of 1992 were followed by a sixteen percent vote at the next Westminster election in 1997. Vote percentage for the party has steadily increased since then (Whyte 2009).

Graph 2



Source: Whyte, Nicholas. 2009. "Election Results in Northern Ireland Since 1973." <http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/gallsum.htm> (December 10, 2010).

A comparison between the levels of the independent and dependent variables of the IRA case seems to support my hypothesis. The electoral results and significant vote gain in 1983 preceded the biggest drop in level of violence since the 1960's. The 1987 election results were relatively consistent with the 1983 election results. However, these results were followed by a considerable escalation in violence, observed in 1991. The results of the 1992 election were the lowest since Sinn Fein began to contest elections, resulting in the loss of the party's one MP seat at Westminster. This electoral loss was followed by a considerable decrease in the number of attacks over the next two years. Following this drop in level of violence, Sinn Finn made its largest victory to date in the 1997 elections, winning sixteen percent of the vote and two seats in Parliament.

These results are consistent with my hypothesis. Once the party began competing politically, changes in the party's vote share were followed by changes in the level of

violence. When the level of violence increased significantly, as was the case between the 1987 and 1992 elections, the percent vote share of the party decreased. This was followed by a decrease in the level of violence, indicating that the results of the election had an impact on the party's stance and caused a reduction in the level of violence. This further indicates that the balance of power between the political wing and the military wing of the organization began to shift in favor of the political wing. An electoral loss does not affect the military wing's ability to use its means to achieve its goals. If the military wing had continued as the more dominant wing within the organization, then an electoral loss would not have resulted in a drop in the level of violence. In other words, a drop in vote percentage does not make it any more difficult for the IRA to instigate attacks. However, such a drop does make it more difficult for Sinn Fein, the political wing, to achieve its goal through political means. Therefore, the fact that the political wing was able to exert influence on the military wing in order to affect a drop in the number of attacks, as a way to regain its popular electoral support, indicates a shift in the balance of power between the two wings.

Organizational Structure

The ruling body of the IRA is a seven person Army Council, which is chosen by a twelve person Army Executive, which, in turn, is chosen in a General Army Convention (English 2003, 114). Initially, the IRA in Northern Ireland was modeled on the British military into brigades, battalions, and companies (English 2003, 114). In the late 1970's, the IRA moved away from the typical military organizational structure and toward a new, more complex and fluid structure that employed Active Service Units (ASU) to execute attacks. These units were smaller than the brigades, and were armed by a quartermaster who was directly under the command of the IRA leadership (Bell 1997, 437). This new organizational

structure allowed the IRA leadership to control ASU actions directly by controlling their arms supply. This indicates that the structure of the IRA is fairly streamlined, with significant power placed in the leadership, which is able to control smaller units directly. Therefore, the IRA is classified as an organization with a cohesive structure.

Changes occurred in the IRA's leadership throughout the 1980's. As already mentioned, Gerry Adams was named president of Sinn Fein in 1983, which also placed him in a fairly high position in the hierarchy of the IRA, since the two groups were so closely linked. Unlike previous leaders, Adams was very open to the idea of political competition as a means of achieving the Republicans' end. In fact, Adams is quoted as saying he was willing "to consider an alternative, unarmed form of struggle to achieve Irish independence" (Taylor 1997, 353). This attitude, combined with Sinn Fein's electoral success in 1983 and 1987, indicated that the IRA could give up its armed struggle and work exclusively through Sinn Fein if necessary, although radical members were heavily opposed to this (Taylor 1997, 353).

When the possibility for electoral competition and the dual strategy first emerged, the new direction of the movement was not supported by the old leadership, many of whom were founding members of the Provisional IRA in the 1960's. Their lack of support caused discernible tensions in the movement (Taylor 1997, 328). However, the electoral success of Sinn Fein vindicated the idea of political competition and allowed Adams and his supporters to emerge as the more powerful faction in the IRA. Given the IRA's very cohesive and leadership-centric structure, once Adams and his supporters were established as the leaders of the organization, their agenda became the main agenda of the organization as a whole.

The organizational structure of the IRA therefore allowed these more moderate leaders to take control and subvert the radicals, while at the same time preventing them from breaking off and forming offshoot militant groups. Given the IRA's cohesive structure, the effects of the moderate stance of the new leadership can be seen in the organization's response to Sinn Fein's 1991 electoral loss. After the drop in vote percentage, the party was able to regroup, moderate its stance, and come back in the next election. As I already mentioned, the moderation of Sinn Fein's stance and the drop in the number of IRA attacks would have been unlikely if the more radical military wing remained the stronger of the two actors. Therefore, the cohesive organizational structure allowed the leadership to subvert radical actors and moderate the organization's stance. This, in turn, allowed the party to gain a greater vote percentage, which increased the viability of the political wing's means of achieving the goal.

Analysis

The following table summarizes the results of the case study into one master timeline. The level of activity is classified as either high, with the average number of attacks above 100 per year, moderate, with the average number of attacks between forty and 100 per year, or low, with the average number of attacks less than forty per year. These numbers are based on the overall average number of attacks over the time period. The level of political competitiveness is also sorted into three categories. Sinn Fein only contests national elections in Northern Ireland; therefore, when looking at their level of competitiveness, the base number is eighteen seats, the number of seats that Northern Ireland has at Westminster. Low competitiveness indicates no votes, or a percentage that did not allow the party a seat in Parliament. Moderate competitiveness indicates a

percentage that allowed for one seat in Parliament. High competitiveness indicates a percentage that allowed for two or more seats in parliament. The third column of the table, “laws limiting competition,” measures whether there are any laws in place to limit the ability of the political wing to compete politically. The organizational structure is measured as either cohesive or incohesive, with a separate measure for the presence of a charismatic leader. As already mentioned, the highest level of coherence is an organization with a cohesive structure and a charismatic leader, followed by a cohesive structure with no charismatic leader, followed by an incohesive structure with a charismatic leader, and finally an incohesive structure with no charismatic leader.

Table 1. IRA Timeline

Year	Level of Activity	Level of Political Competitiveness	Laws Limiting Competition	Organizational Structure	Charismatic Leader
1970-1975	High	Low	None	Cohesive	No
1975-1980	High	Low	None	Cohesive	No
1980-1985	Moderate	Moderate	None	Cohesive	No
1985-1990	Moderate	Moderate	None	Cohesive	No
1990-1995	High	Low	None	Cohesive	No
1995-2000	Low	High	None	Cohesive	No
2000-2005	Low	High	None	Cohesive	No

Given these general results, as well as the more in-depth analysis of the data presented above, it is apparent that the two hypotheses are generally supported by the data on the IRA in Northern Ireland. The first hypothesis states *if an NTO has a strong possibility for political competition within a state, then it is more likely that the NTO will engage in political*

competition in order to further its goals, and, as a result, the NTO will be more likely to evolve into a non-violent political or social actor. The results of the first independent variable, vote percentage in the national assembly, are correlated with the results of the dependent variable, level of violence as measured by number of attacks. Furthermore, close analysis indicates that changes in the independent variable precede changes in the dependent variable. An example of this is the drop in violence that occurred in 1983 after Sinn Fein's first significant electoral victory. Furthermore, the drop in violence that occurred after 1992, after Sinn Fein's first significant electoral loss, is also correlated with the independent variable. As already mentioned, once a political wing has begun to compete as a party, drops in vote percentage can also have a moderating effect on the dependent variable.

The secondary hypothesis, which states that *the more consolidated the organizational structure of the NTO is, the more likely it is that the NTO will moderate its stances once it has begun to engage in political competition* was also supported by the data. A close analysis indicated that the IRA has a very cohesive, streamlined organizational structure. According to the hypothesis, if this is the case, then the result should be greater moderation in achieving the organization's goal. Again, the events after the 1991 electoral loss indicate that this hypothesis is supported. The organization was able to moderate its stances and affect a drop in the level of violence and in the number of terrorist attacks.

Case Study: ANC in South Africa

Background

In the case of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, we see an NTO that is able to fully evolve; the political wing was able to gain full control of the organization while the military wing was abolished. The ANC was created in 1912 with the goal of representing the interests of black South Africans. When it first emerged, the group was

moderately nationalistic and limited membership to black South Africans, in order to maintain its focus on black issues (Ellis 1991, 439). In the 1920's, it became clear that the ANC and the South African Communist Party were natural allies who shared the same goal of free multi-party elections; this led to a coalition between the two groups and significant cross-membership. In the 1940's, the ANC Youth League members, among them Nelson Mandela, the eventual leader of the armed wing of the party, began to focus on promoting an increase in ANC military capacity (Ellis 1991, 441). Members of the Youth League, as well as many other ANC members, felt uneasy with the group's association with the South African Communist Party, and other organizations such as the Congress of Democrats and the Indian Congresses, because relationships with these groups might change the black-centric nature of the ANC (Ellis 1991, 440-41).

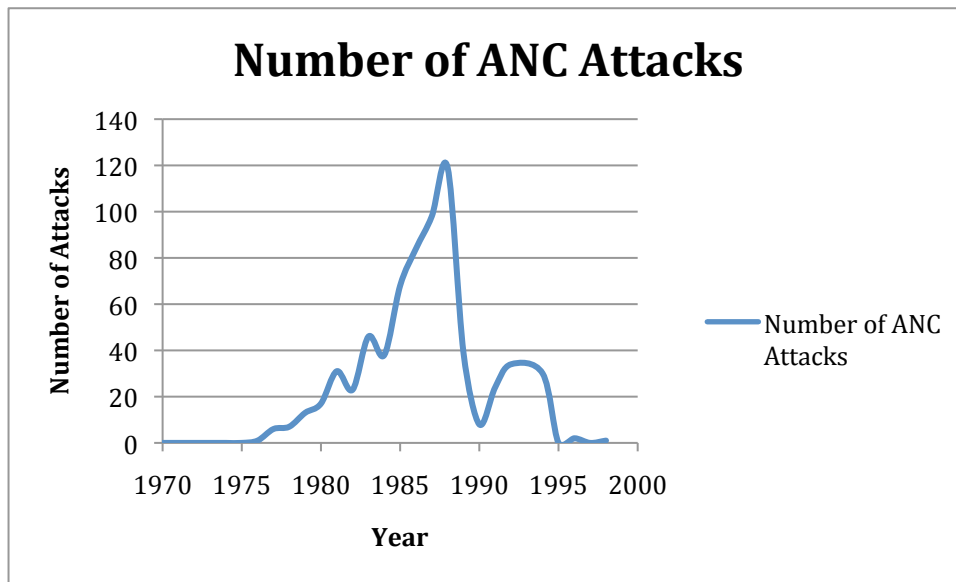
While this was occurring, the political climate in South Africa was beginning to change, especially with the victory of the National Party in 1948 (Ellis 1991, 441). This victory led to the banning of the ANC in March of 1960; the ban would not be removed until 2 February 1990. The abolition of apartheid and the granting of equal rights to black South Africans became the ANC's main goals after the ban went into effect (Pfister 2003, 51). Between 1960, when the ban went into effect, and 1990, when it was abolished, the ANC faced repression in South Africa, with many members were forced to flee the country and form ANCs in exile in other African countries in the area (Pfister 2003, 51). The ban also triggered the creation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the ANC, which attempted to accomplish the goal of democracy and black rights through the use of violence and military action (Ellis 1991, 439).

The military wing, MK, was co-formed by Nelson Mandela in 1961, shortly after the ban went into effect. Although it started out as the military wing and shared the same goals as the ANC, the MK was technically separate from the political wing (Ellis 1991, 442). Therefore, although it emerged in a different manner, the relationship between the ANC and its military wing, MK, is very similar to the relationship observed in the case of the IRA and the ETA. That is, there was clear cross-membership between the two groups, and, beginning in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the military wing was the more active of the two in attempting to achieve the organization's stated goals.

Levels of Activity

The MK's began to perpetuate terrorist attacks in 1976 and the number of attacks quickly escalated. MK terrorist activity reached its peak in 1988, with a total of one hundred and seventeen attacks that year. The number of attacks dropped drastically in 1990, the year that the negotiations between the apartheid government and the ANC took place. Activity rose again between 1990 and 1995, although it remained relatively low compared to the levels of the 1980s. Finally, activity became nonexistent with the disbanding of the military wing of the ANC in 1996 (Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>).

Graph 3



Source: Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>

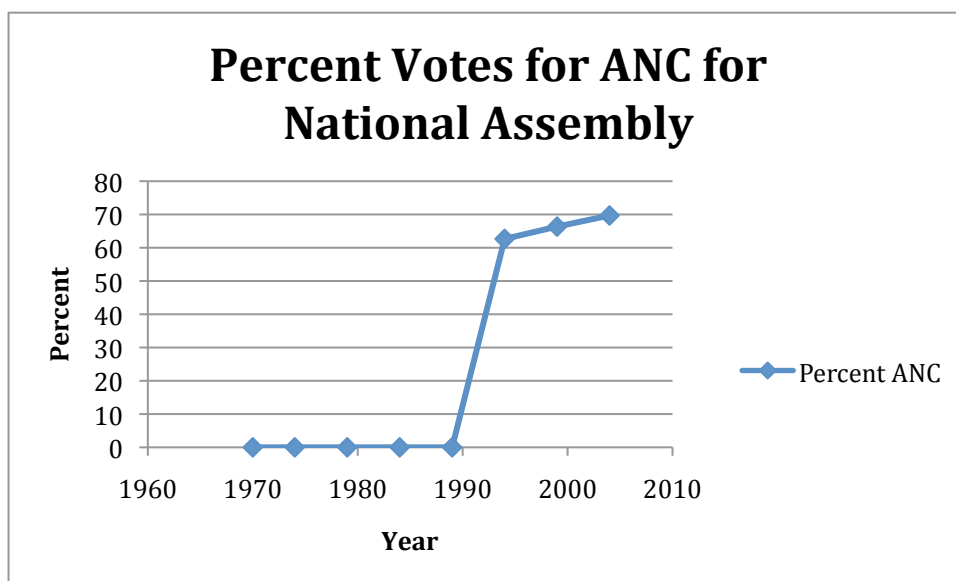
History of the Political Wing and Possibility for Democratic Competition

The independent variable, opportunity for democratic competition, is measured through the percent vote that the party was able to win in national elections, in which it was allowed to compete. The ANC had no opportunity for democratic competition between its banning in 1960 and the removal of the ban in 1990. During this time, the apartheid state controlled the government and the majority of the population was given very little voice in politics (Harshe 1994, 2591). Prior to the abolition of apartheid, there were unequal racial divisions mandated by law, which allowed white South Africans to have a very high standard of living while other races lived very poorly (Harshe 1994, 2591). The major goal of the ANC was the abolition of apartheid and the establishment of a democracy with a popularly elected government that would allow blacks to have equal social and civil rights with whites (MacDonald 1996, 222). However, it took almost four years after the removal of the ban on the ANC in 1990 for democratic elections to be held in South Africa. When the

democratic institutions did begin to develop after 1994, they were democratic in both appearance and practice, but during the period between the removal of the ban and the first elections, the MK remained active (MacDonald 1996, 222).

After the institution of democratic elections, which finally granted the ANC the ability to compete politically, there was a significant drop in the ANC's use of violence. The number of attacks dropped in 1990, after the signing of the Pretoria Minute, in which the ANC agreed to "suspend all armed activities" while the government agreed to stop arresting ANC and MK members (Jeffery 2009, 254). Despite this agreement, the ANC made it clear that the armed struggle was only put on hold, and would resume if DeKlerk, the leader of the National Party at the time, did not hold to his promises, as indeed occurred later that year (Jeffery 2009, 254). This indicates a high level of distrust towards the apartheid regime government. Therefore, the knowledge that a democratic election was supposed to occur was not enough to prevent the ANC attacks from continuing. It was not until after the ANC was able to actually compete that the level of violence in the country dwindled.

Graph 4



The electoral victory in 1994 was followed by a general drop in the number of terrorist attacks, until the attacks perpetrated by the MK stopped altogether. This is further evidence of a successful evolution. Although the ANC began as a political organization, the MK was the more powerful wing of the movement from 1960 until the early 1990's. However, the fact that successful democratic competition allowed for the phasing out of the military wing demonstrates that the primary hypothesis seems to hold true for this case as well. In other words, once the ANC was granted a high level of opportunity to compete politically it was able to regain its role as the leading wing of the organization and gradually phase out the MK. The political means available to the ANC as a party were more productive towards achieving the goal than the military means used by the MK.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the ANC can be classified as cohesive under a single, highly influential leader. Mandela was selected to represent the ANC before the Pan African movement for East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) in the early 1960's (Pfister 2003, 54). During this trip, Mandela visited a number of other countries and met with many heads of state that offered him military training and money for weapons (Pfister 2003, 54). The training he experienced would place him in a good position to become head of the MK. Furthermore, the fact that he was able to make these connections marked him as a capable and reliable leader (Pfister 2003, 54). When he was arrested in 1962, he was already the head of the MK. His time in prison served to make him appear as a martyr before the people (Ellis 1991, 443). Therefore, when Mandela was released in 1990, with the expectation that he would be a leading actor in the negotiations between the ANC and the government, the

members of the MK, viewed him as an extremely influential person. This meant he would be able to exert significant control over the actions of the members of his party, as evidenced by the events that immediately followed his release.

The first speech Mandela gave after his discharge from prison in 1990, urged the people to continue their resistance and hold to the ANC's armed struggle because the "factors which necessitated [armed struggle] still remain[ed]" (Jeffery 2009, 236). By 1993, however, Mandela presented a more moderate stance, was even willing to make concessions on the electoral rules and the date of the election (Jeffery 2009, 436). This moderation in the leader's stance was followed by a general tempering of the ANC's political stance, although it is important to note that widespread moderation did not occur until after the ANC successfully won the 1994 election, and was expected to participate in government with other political parties present (Harshe 1994, 2591).

Analysis

The following table presents the compiled data for the ANC case study. The level of political competitiveness is a measure of the percent vote that the party gained. It is either "none" for time segments in which the party was not able to compete; low for vote percentages are those below twenty percent; moderate percentages are those between twenty and forty percent; finally, high for vote percentages are those above forty percent. The reason these percentages are so high is because the ANC actually represented the largest group in South Africa; therefore, its percentage vote share is expected to be much higher than the vote shares of Sinn Fein and Batasuna. The level of political competitiveness between 1990 and 1995 is marked as low because of the major role the ANC played in the transition negotiations, even though the party was not able to actually compete electorally

during most of that period. The measures for level of activity are based on the average number of attacks over the entire span of time span; this average was around thirty attacks. A high level of activity is an average number of attacks above thirty; a moderate level of activity is an average number of attacks between fifteen and thirty; a low level of activity is an average number of attacks below fifteen. The measures for “Laws Limiting Competition,” “Organizational Structure,” and “Charismatic Leader” are the same as those used in the Irish case.

Table 2. ANC Timeline

Year	Level of Activity	Level of Political Competitiveness	Laws Limiting Competition	Organizational Structure	Charismatic Leader
1970-1975	None	None	Banned	Cohesive	Yes
1975-1980	Low	None	Banned	Cohesive	Yes
1980-1985	Moderate	None	Banned	Cohesive	Yes
1985-1990	High	None	Banned	Cohesive	Yes
1990-1995	Moderate	Low	None	Cohesive	Yes
1995-2000	Low	High	None	Cohesive	Yes
2000-2005	Low	High	None	Cohesive	Yes

The ANC provides an example of an NTO that was able to successfully evolve from a military to a political unit. Furthermore, the results confirm the primary hypothesis that the possibility for political competition will increase the likelihood for the NTO to engage in politics in order to further its goals. In this case, once the group was allowed to participate on the political front, the level of violence perpetrated by the military wing dropped significantly. This indicates that the political wing and the results that it could gain through

its political means were more productive than the results the military wing could achieve through the use of violence. It is also important to note that the ANC was the clear favorite to win the election as the majority party in 1994. Therefore, although the ANC had had no prior experience with vote percentages, they believed that they would gain a very high vote percentage (MacDonald 1996, 222). This meant they had an extremely high potential for political success once the elections took place. Despite this, it is important to note that the militant attacks did not drop off until after the ANC gained a majority in the 1994 elections. Although the support was there, it was not until after this support produced political results that the power shifted from the military to the political wing.

The secondary hypothesis, which states *the more consolidated the organizational structure of the NTO is, the more likely it is that the NTO will moderate its stances once it has begun to age in political competition* was also supported by the data. The cohesive nature of the ANC's structure and the presence of a highly charismatic leader, meant that once the leadership of the group decided to moderate its views, the rest of the members fell in line with little conflict. Furthermore, once the party began competing politically, the stance of the ANC became much more moderate and compromising than it had been prior to its participation in political competition. After only a few years of political competition, the ANC was able to completely phase out its military wing, MK. The majority of terrorist attacks perpetrated in South Africa after this point were done by unidentified groups (Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>).

Case Study: ETA in Basque Country Spain

Background

The emergence of Basque nationalism began as early as the late nineteenth century, as a

result of the differences in the social and economic conditions between the Basque Country and the rest of Spain. These differences often meant that what was presented as progress and social reform in other parts of the country was not necessarily good for the Basques (Perez-Agote 2006, p.57). Industrialization and urbanization brought in a large number of migrants from the rest of Spain and Portugal, which threatened the cultural and linguistic dominance of the native born Basques, and resulted in the rise of Basque nationalism, which stressed racial purity in the Basque country (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 243). At the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the Basque nationalist elements sided with the Republic (Perez-Agote 2006, p.63). The end of the war found those moderates in the Basque Country who allied with Franco in control both politically and economically, and the Basque nationalists faced with severe persecution (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 244). There was severe cultural and linguistic repression in the Basque Country; the nationalist movement in particular was forcefully suppressed throughout the course of the Franco Regime (Perez-Agote 2006, 63). The politically moderate Basque Nationalist Party, which had been the major mode for Basque nationalism up until this point in time, found itself completely unable to act. This resulted in a number of radicals splitting off and forming the ETA, whose goal was the independence of the Basque Country (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 244).

The repression used by the regime actually served to legitimize the ETA's means and goals (Perez-Agote 2006, 71). In 1964, the ETA published "Insurrection in the Basque Country," a pamphlet which described the Basque Country as a colony of Spain, whose people were suffering from cruel oppression by the more powerful colonizers (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 244). Despite these broad claims, the ETA lacked the military capacity to engage the Spanish state in outright war; they instead relied on guerrilla tactics to disrupt government control,

which led to a vicious cycle of violence and repression. This, in turn, resulted in greater repression of the Basques, which culminated in more popular unrest in the area and a larger number of ETA supporters (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 245).

After the fall of the Franco regime, the Basque country was allowed a significant level of autonomy in the new Spanish democracy (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 246). Although, with the ratification of the new constitution, the Basques gained a significant level of political freedom, the ETA's real enemy was not Franco, but rather the central government in Madrid. Therefore, Basques who participate in the current political process are considered traitors to the cause (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 246). The ETA political front, the party Herri Batasuna (HB), later known as Euskal Herritarrok (EH), contested political elections until it was banned in 2002, although elected members usually refused to participate in both Basque and National governments (Douglass and Zulaika 1990, 247).

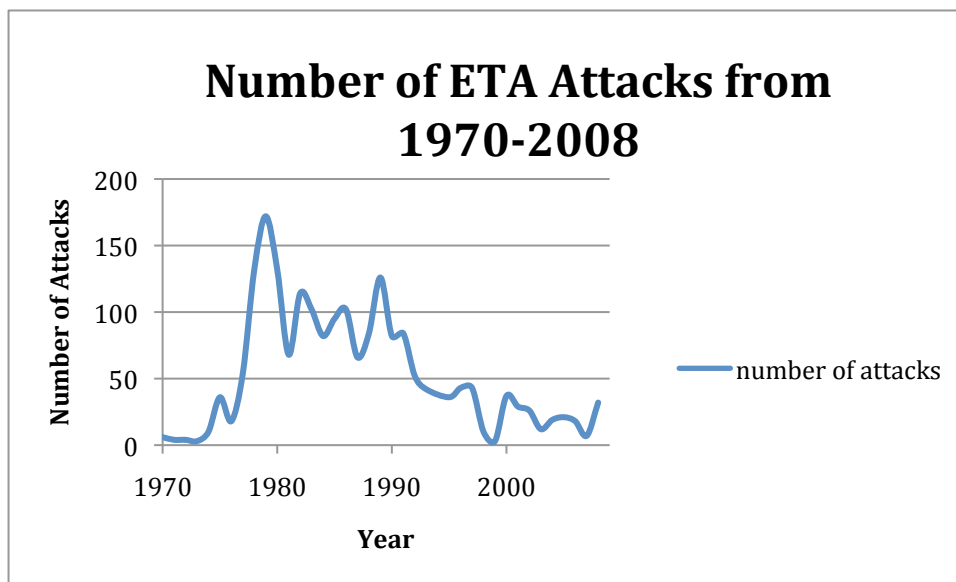
Levels of Activity

The ETA first became active in the early 1970's, with a limited number of attacks mostly on government buildings or institutions, which resulted in no known casualties or injuries (Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>). In the late 1970's, the number of attacks spiked significantly, reaching a peak of 172 attacks in 1979 before dropping to sixty eight attacks in 1981 and spiking again in 1982 to 114 attacks. The ETA was most active during the 1980's, with an average of around one hundred attacks per year. During the 1990's, the average number of attacks-per-year dropped to around twenty six (Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>).

It is important to note that the new Spanish Constitution was ratified in 1978, allowing for the emergence of democracy and a multi-party system (Turano 2003, 730).

Although the level of persecution towards Basque nationalists had dropped significantly, ETA members still felt that their goals had not been met, and therefore continued their military campaign. In fact, to most radical nationalists the current situation of Spain is a “pseudo-democracy” which denies Basques the rights to certain political projects or goals, and therefore must be overthrown (Woodworth 2001, 3). The fact that these radical elements are still capable of initiating attacks, and have not been co-opted into a more moderate stance, serves to demonstrate the effects of a highly decentralized organizational structure on the group’s ability to evolve.

Graph 5



Source: Global Terrorism Database, START, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>

History of Political Wing and Possibility for Democratic Competition

Herri Batasuna (henceforth referred to as Batasuna) emerged in 1979, after the fall of the Franco regime and the creation of the new Spanish Constitution (Powel 2002, 26). Although it does not recognize the Spanish Constitution or the autonomy granted to the Basque Country, the party does compete in local, regional, national, and even European level

elections (Powel 2002, 26). Batasuna has the same goals as the ETA, and takes a very tolerant stance on the groups' terrorist actions. Herri Batasuna has even held rallies to honor ETA "martyrs" (Woodworth 2001, 2). As of 2002, over 132 elected members of Batasuna were being tried for or had been convicted of terrorism (Powel 2002, 27). In fact, many ETA members who serve prison sentences for murder emerge from imprisonment and participate in elections as Batasuna candidates (Powel 2002, 27).

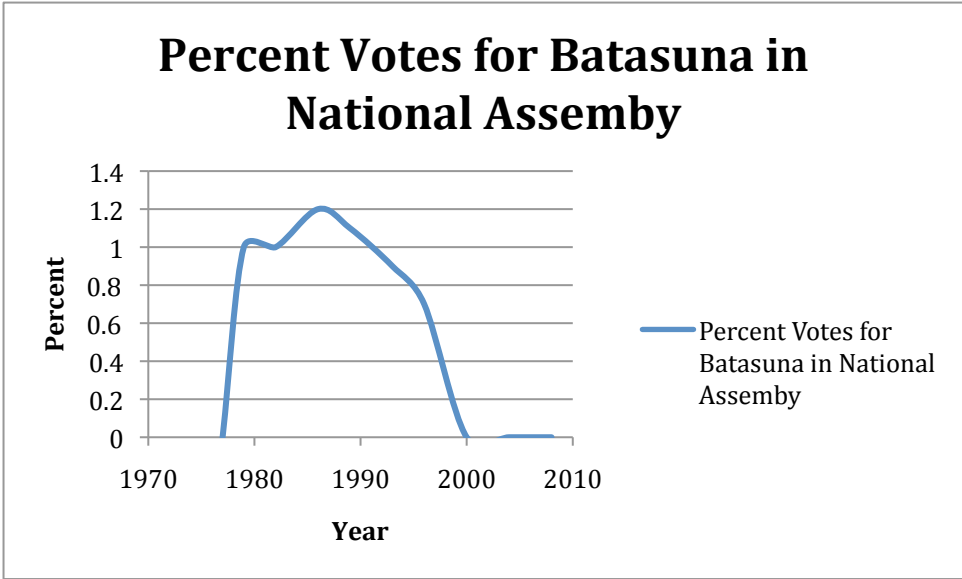
The connection between Batasuna and the ETA has caused the Spanish government to attempt to ban the party on several occasions, beginning as early as 1980, only one year after the party's formation (Powel 2002, 26). Although the Spanish Supreme Court ruled that the party was legal in 1986, in 1996, all of the party leaders were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment each for disseminating an ETA video; this sentence was revoked two years later (Powel 2002, 26).

More recently, in 2002, the Ley Orgánica de Partidos Políticos (LOPP) gave the government the power to ban from political participation groups that support or are related to violent acts (Turano 2003, 731). Batasuna's refusal to condemn the ETA's Santa Pola assault led the government to act against the party (Turano 2003, 738). In fact, many of the articles in LOPP were designed specifically in order to "catch" Batasuna (Turano 2003, 735). One of the goals of LOPP is to keep parties that support the goals of terrorist organizations from participating in the democratic process (Turano 2003, 732). Parties perceived as going against the fundamental rights of all citizens by "promoting, justifying, or excusing" attacks against others are considered to violate the spirit of the democratic Constitution and therefore face dissolution under LOPP (Turano 2003, 733).

Furthermore, groups that condone or aid in the use of violence to achieve political goals and groups that are linked to terrorist organizations by providing political support face the same consequences (Turano 2003, 733). After the creation of this law in 2002, the Parliament encouraged the government to sue Batasuna for violation of LOPP (Turano 2003, 730). In March 2003, the Tribunal Supremo unanimously ruled that Batasuna violated LOPP and the party was disbanded (Turano 2003, 739). Furthermore, the Tribunal Constitutional ruled earlier that year that the LOPP does not violate the constitution, thereby removing any grounds to dismiss the case against Batasuna (Turano 2003, 740). Given this ban, Batasuna’s possibility for democratic competition has been severely limited.

Although the party has changed its name on numerous occasions, the government has repeatedly brought to court and banned the new parties on grounds of breaking LOPP.

Graph 6



Source: Alvarez-Rivera, Manuel. "Election Resources on the Internet: Elections to the Basque Parliament." September 7, 2010. <http://electionresources.org/es>

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the ETA can be classified as incohesive, with limited control from the top leadership. This is largely due to the fact that the organization needs to keep itself decentralized in order to avoid arrests. According to sources, the ETA went through a fairly major restructuring sometime in the mid to late 1990's (El Correo Digital). Prior to the restructuring, the ETA was organized into three major sub-divisions, which governed the actions of the group. Below these were subdivisions made up of four or five members, and which are usually not based out of one specific place (El Correo Digital). The new organizational structure divides the ETA into eleven different committees, each with a differentiated focus that can function more autonomously than the previous three subdivisions could. This restructuring occurred in an effort to avoid arrests or major action against the core leadership of the organization (El Correo Digital).

Given this decentralized, incohesive organizational structure, the ETA has little cause to compromise and moderate its stances. Even if there are moderates present in the high leadership, the scattered nature of the eleven different committees makes it difficult for a single moderate member or even a group of members to exert any significant influence on the rest of the organization. Furthermore, the decentralized structure allows for independent action from individual units; this perpetuates the use of violence. Since moderates are unable to exert influence on radicals in the organization, the group's stance remains radical and focused on the armed struggle. Consequently, the political wing continues to be secondary to the military wing within the organization. The party remains unlikely to moderate or compromise, and therefore is unable to gain the necessary alliances that would make it an equal or greater partner with the military wing.

Analysis

In the table below, the level of political competition is measured in terms of the percentage that the party won in National Assembly elections. The Spanish political system is based on Proportional Representation; therefore, the percentage that the party wins will be the percentage of seats that it is awarded in the National Assembly. The Basque country population is approximately 0.05 percent of Spain’s total population, while one seat in the National Assembly is only about 0.002 percent of the total number of seats. Given this, one seat in the National Assembly is actually a much smaller level of representation as compared to the percentage of the population found in the Basque country. Therefore in the following talbe, the level of political competition is marked as low for percentages that resulted in one or two seats, moderate for percentages that resulted in three to five seats, and high for percentages that resulted in more than six or more seats. The level of NTO activity is based on the overall average of ETA attacks perpetuated over the time span. Therefore, a high level of activity results from an average of over sixty attacks; a moderate level of activity results from an average of twenty to sixty attacks; a low level of activity results from an average of less than twenty attacks. The “Laws Limiting Competition,” “Organizational Structure” and “Charismatic Leader” measures remain the same as those used in the other two cases.

Table 3. ETA Timeline

Year	Level of Activity	Level of Political Competitiveness	Laws Limiting Competition	Organizational Structure	Charismatic Leader
1970-1975	Low	None	Banned	Incohesive	No
1975-1980	High	Low	Banned (made legal in 1978)	Incohesive	No
1980-1985	High	Low	None (Ban attempted)	Incohesive	No

			but failed)		
1985-1990	High	Low	None	Incohesive	No
1990-1995	High	Low	None	Incohesive	No
1995-2000	Moderate	Low	None	Incohesive	No
2000-2005	Moderate	None	Banned (2002)	Incohesive	No

The data in the table shows that there is a correlation between the level of activity of the group and the level of political competitiveness, although it is not nearly as comprehensive as the relationship observed in the other two cases. According to the primary hypothesis, an NTO is more likely to evolve into a nonviolent political actor if there is a high possibility for political competition. The 2002 ban of the party has made it impossible for Batasuna to compete in politics, thereby removing political competition as a means of furthering the organization's goal. Furthermore, this is the only NTO I studied that does not have a cohesive organizational structure or a charismatic leader at present. According to my secondary hypothesis, lack of coherence makes it difficult for the party to moderate its views, which, in turn, means that the party may not be able to make political alliances, and remains mostly marginal. The data supports this. The party has never been able to achieve more than a low level of political competitiveness in the years that it was allowed to compete.

Therefore, the ETA presents a fairly low level of evolution of the military wing towards a political organization. Although the group does have a political wing that competed in elections until 2002, legal intervention on the part of the national government has prevented Batasuna from competing currently. Furthermore, throughout the 1980's, the government acted against the party and the leadership on several occasions (Powel 2002,

26). This also served to limit the validity and productivity of the party's political means at achieving the goal. Moreover, the incohesive and decentralized organizational structure of the group makes it difficult for moderate members to exert control over radical entities, thereby lessening the overall level of moderation and compromise that the party uses as a political strategy.

Conclusion

The evolution of nationalist terrorist organizations from military to political actors is one of the lesser-studied aspects of NTOs and terrorism. I establish two hypotheses that serve to explain how and under what circumstances an NTO will be more likely to evolve into a political actor. The primary hypothesis states that *if an NTO has a strong opportunity for political competition within a state, then it is more likely that the NTO will engage in political competition in order to further its goals, and, as a result, the NTO will be more likely to evolve into a non-violent political or social actor*. In other words, if the political wing has the possibility to compete successfully in elections, then it will do so. If these political means of achieving the organization's overall goal prove to be more productive than the military means, then the organization will gradually begin to shift towards the political arena.

The data from the three cases support this theory. Overall, as the political parties become more competitive and gain more votes, the incidence of terrorist attacks begins to drop. For example, after the 1994 elections in South Africa, the vote share of the ANC was very high. This served to mark the ANC political party's means as the more viable and productive way of achieving the organization's overall goal of black South African rights. The case of the IRA also supports this conclusion. The steady rise in electoral support and vote percentage for Sinn Fein in the 1990's was followed by a steady drop in the number of attacks perpetuated by the IRA. The case of the ETA, on the other hand, presents a situation in which the political wing of the party is

not able to compete because of legal restraints placed on it by the national government. The Spanish government attempted to ban the party or arrest party leaders on terrorism charges throughout the 1980's and 1990's. Finally, in 2002, Batasuna was banned by the LOPP, thereby completely removing the possibility for political competition. Although Batasuna competed in elections prior to 2002, the sporadic attempts by the government to interfere with the party made political competition a less viable means of achieving the organization's goals. Therefore, although Batasuna continued to exist as a party, the level of evolution observed in the case of the ETA was much lower, as evidenced by the continued ETA attacks.

The secondary hypothesis states *the more consolidated the organizational structure of the NTO is, the more likely it is that the NTO will moderate its stances once it has begun to age in political competition*. The more cohesive the organizational structure, the more likely it is that moderate elements will be able to limit radical members and steer the organization toward a less violent course. Furthermore, as the political party becomes more moderate, it will engage in agreements and alliances with other groups. The greater the number of alliances and coalitions the group makes, the more political power it gains in the assembly, which, in turn, makes it a more competitive political actor. Therefore, if an NTO has a more cohesive organizational structure, then the expected outcome is that the group will become more moderate as a whole, once it begins contesting political elections.

The data from the three cases indicates support for this secondary hypothesis as well. The ANC has the most cohesive structure found in the three case studies due to the presence of a strong charismatic leader, Nelson Mandela. Given this high level of cohesiveness, the theory suggests that decisions made by Mandela will have an almost immediate impact on the overall stance of the organization; moderate decisions by Mandela would be expected to result in a moderate ANC stance, while radical decisions by Mandela would be expected to result in a

radical ANC stance. When Mandela was first released from prison, he was fairly radical in his rhetoric, which resulted in a radical stance of the ANC. When Mandela began to express more moderate views, the ANC's overall stance also became more moderate, thereby curtailing some of the radicals. In the case of the IRA, the cohesive structure of the organization allowed moderate leadership to curtail radical members and move the group to a more moderate stance throughout the late 1980's and early 1990's. Sinn Fein's electoral loss in 1992 was followed by a drop in violence, which resulted in a subsequent electoral success in the 1997 elections. This indicates that the more moderate members of the political wing were able to subvert the radicals into lowering the number of attacks in order to achieve political success. The case of the ETA presents an organization with a less cohesive internal structure in which the leadership is spread out over a number of committees and autonomous volunteer units. Given this organizational structure, moderate elements, even in the high leadership, would be less able to exert influence over radical members. Therefore, we would expect to see a lesser level of moderation and compromise in the case of the ETA. Although it is true that Batasuna been unable to compete politically since 2002, prior to the creation of LOPP the party did contest elections on all levels; therefore, political competition was a viable option. Despite this, however, there is a much smaller shift towards political means in this case than witnessed with the ANC and the IRA. This difference can be attributed to the incohesive organizational structure of the ETA, which makes it difficult for moderate elements to control radicals within the group.

Although the data from the three cases indicate a fairly strong level of support for the secondary hypothesis, it is important to note that the organizational coherence of an NTO is very difficult to determine, especially if the NTO is currently active. The data I have gathered originate from historical and current assumptions made by experts on the topic; but, they are nevertheless assumptions, especially in the case of the ETA. Without actual membership in the organization, it

is impossible to know the level of coherence and structural functions of the NTO. Despite this, I believe that the level of coherence in organizational structure does play a major role in determining the ability of moderates and radicals to exert influence on the overall stance of the organization.

Further Research

Although my hypotheses are supported by the research, alternate or concurrent explanations are also possible. For example, topics such as the influence of other political parties on voters within the system, and the effects of negotiations and ceasefires on voter opinions towards the NTO can serve as supporting explanations. However, the hypotheses and theory in this paper were kept as simple and general as possible in order to make it more widely generalizable. Each NTO carries with it its own historic and cultural background that lends an individualistic quality to the organization and its actions. Even in the cases studied here, there were vast differences between the three organizations despite the fact that all three originated from dissatisfaction with civil rights and an unequal interaction with a more powerful, sometimes repressive regime. Given the individualistic character of NTOs, it is natural that alternative or concurrent explanations will be present, depending on the case being studied. Nevertheless, in all three of the cases, the possibility for democratic competition played a role in determining the level of NTO evolution. Furthermore, despite the shortcomings inherent in a study of terrorist group structure, the coherence of the organization did appear to play a significant role in the level of moderation the NTO undertook after the political wing began contesting elections.

Therefore, the question of NTO evolution can have very far-reaching consequences. For example, finding ways to assure rapid NTO evolution could result in greater stability in regions such as the Middle East and Southeast Asia, which are both important geopolitical regions in this issue. NTOs are present in a number of other countries around the world, including organizations

such as Hamas in Lebanon, the PLO in the Palestinian Territories, the National Liberation Front in Algeria, and, more recently, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. The research presented here is just a first step in the study of this topic; however, it does provide a valuable and relevant general theory which can then be expanded to include a greater number of cases and variables.

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