Terrorism
Means And Ends

Terrorism has been recognized globally as a phenomenon of dreaded covert war. It has taken international community more than fifty years to comprehend the phenomenon in its totality and devise strategies to deal with the menace. There is a near consensus the world over now about the ideology, objectives, logistics and operational mechanisms of terrorism. Over the years, the case studies from different parts of the world have helped the analysts and strategists to comprehend the dynamics of terrorism. Amazingly, these case studies conclude on the convergence of dynamics of the phenomenon although placed in diverse geographical settings.

The responses to deal with terrorism range from military means to political and diplomatic strategies, depending on varied factors. However, evolving a comprehensive and unambiguous international legal framework in defining terrorism and fixing the criminal responsibility of its perpetrators has remained illusive so far. In many a debate, even in international fora, the old controversy of 'some one's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter' resurges. In this regard, UN Commission On Human Rights, has equally not been able to help in drawing up a comprehensive international legal framework to deal with Terrorism globally. The reports and debates in the Commission have remained mired in the old controversies and academic rhetorics.

Be that as it is, the opinion of scholars and experts has converged on the 'means and ends' theorem. In this context, whatever the objectives and goals a group or association of people is pursuing, employing militant/terrorist/violent means make it a criminal

act. Therefore, this theorem provides a norm, a legal basis in evolving a legal basis to evolve a broader legal framework to arraign individuals, groups and even states for their liability in committing the offence of terrorism in any part of the world. It may be pointed out here that the rubric ' whatever are the causes' which is being used by states at present in responding to the threats of terrorism needs to be done away with. This rubric indicates arbitrariness and subjectivity. It equally shields the undemocratic and dictatorial regimes. In some cases it provides impunity to states which themselves are perpetrators of terror and fear.

In this issue of *Journal of Peace Studies* we have presented different dimensions of Terrorism. However, the contribution of Paul Wilkinson is remarkable in as much as it underlines the approach of 'means and ends' in dealing with the phenomenon of Terrorism. While joining bits and pieces of international legislations available on the subject, 'means and ends' theorem should be the basis of a new and comprehensive international legal framework to deal with the crime of terrorism.

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