NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON VIOLENCE

Violence Today

No. 9
Political Violence

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The notion of the global village is now a commonplace. One consequence of this expansion of our traditional horizons is that images of violence from around the world tend to influence our perceptions of the nature and extent of violence in our own country. This is particularly true of political violence. Television coverage of hijackings, bombings and violent demonstrations is constant, giving an impression of overwhelming assault everywhere. In many peoples' minds, Australia is under threat from an increasing tendency toward violent political action and the importation of terrorism.

The historical and contemporary record, however, shows that Australia has had and continues to enjoy a comparatively low level of violence associated with its political life. This is not to say that we have not experienced political violence. As this issue of Violence Today **shows, there has been a thread of violence running through many aspects of Australian politics. The examples given are illustrative rather than comprehensive and many other instances could be cited. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there has been no tradition of political violence in Australia. Such violence as has occurred has not, on the whole, been widespread, long-lived nor posed a serious threat to the stability of government. By overseas standards, the amount of personal injury and property damage has been small. It is to be hoped that this remains true of political violence in the future in Australia.**

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Submissions to the National Committee on Violence suggest that levels of violence disturbing to many citizens are present in Australia today. This may lead us to assume that the Australian political arena is also characterised by excessive violence. In fact, however, our society, both past and present, is remarkably free of serious or prolonged political violence. Although at various times in the 200 year history of white settlement in Australia, citizens have rioted or rebelled to voice discontent, these events have generally been brief and participation has not been widespread.

Political violence encompasses those violent acts which result from attempts either to change or resist change to a country's political system or aspects of it. It is a broad category which includes violent demonstrations, riots of a political nature, insurrections, and assassinations. One particular form of political violence which has attracted considerable attention is terrorism — the use of violence to create extreme fear in a target group larger than the immediate victims with the purpose of coercing that target group to accede to some political demands. Because of the publicity accorded terrorism and because of the fear it generates and the harsh measures which some governments may feel they need to take to counter it, there is a particular need to be careful in defining and measuring this form of political violence. It is vital that political violence more generally does not become labelled as terrorism, because the impression this creates of a major threat to public security may panic governments into over-reaction and inappropriate counter-measures.

Violent activity for the purpose of attempting to overthrow a governing regime has been uncommon in Australia. In this respect we are unlike those countries which do have a tradition of political violence, often with force being used by a regime to suppress dissent. In Australia, the first offenders were the military stationed on Norfolk Island who, in December-January 1793-94 rioted against the authority of Lieutenant-Governor King. This affair came about as a result of the objection of the military to the civil authority of Governor King and to civilian settlers' interference with what they regarded as the right to be free from civilian control. The riot leaders were subsequently tried by court-martial in Sydney (Shaw 1968, p. 546).

The only occasion on which an Australian government has been overthrown by force was in 1808. The Governor of New South Wales, William Bligh, was forcibly removed from office by a group of dissident military officers who objected to his attempts to prevent their monopolisation of the sale and purchase of rum. The Governor attempted to have the men who refused to curtail their activities charged with treason. The Rum Rebellion, as it has been called, was peaceful and has been referred to by historians as a "bloodless coup". The officers were not attempting to change the political structure, but aiming to overthrow the Governor whose authority they viewed as illegitimate. The rebellion was not followed by any significant changes

to the political system of the colony. The extent to which the Rum Rebellion of 1808 constitutes a serious revolutionary overthrow is thus highly questionable.

The closest approximation to an attempt at a mass-based revolutionary overthrow occurred in 1804 when a group of 300 Irish convicts, transported to Australia primarily for protest activities, took up arms and marched toward Sydney. The rebellion was quickly suppressed by colonial forces. Historians have disagreed about the goals of the rebels; however, "whatever the rebels' ultimate goals, their rejection of British rule was beyond doubt" (Grabosky 1974, p. 5).

The New Guard, a group of First World War veterans, represents the only other significant revolutionary threat in Australia. Members of the New Guard were, generally, professional and white collar suburban residents. The New Guard formed as a response to the perceived socialist policies of the Premier of New South Wales, J.T. Lang. New Guard members threatened to resist attempts by the State Government to take control of private enterprise. Eric Campbell, the movement's leader, has described the objectives of the New Guard as:

> First to preserve law and order and maintain services in case of civil strife breaking out as a direct result of the economic crisis, and second, to foil any attempt, constitutional or unconstitutional, by the government to foist socialisation upon the people (Campbell 1965, p. 72).

The need for the New Guard to act upon these threats did not arise; Lang fell from power in 1932 and never pursued the policies which may have led to a rebellion. According to Grabosky, this organisation represented a significant revolutionary threat; it was large, well organised and willing to employ force to change political policies. In 1931 the New South Wales Police estimated that the membership was 36,000 and regarded it capable of controlling and operating transportation, power and other public services (Grabosky 1974, p. 7).

In addition to the absence of revolutionary violence, Australia has also been remarkably free of attempts on the lives of its political leaders. The first assassination attempt occurred in the earliest days of settlement when an Aboriginal inflicted a spear wound on Governor Phillip during an exploring expedition. This was, however, more a product of armed clash than attempted assassination (Frost 1987, p. 194). A more conventional assassination attempt occurred on 12 March 1868 when the Duke of Edinburgh was shot in Sydney. assassination attempt was unsuccessful and the assailant, an Irish nationalist named O'Farrell, was subsequently executed. The only successful assassination attempt occurred in South Australia in 1921 when a minor state legislative candidate was assassinated in a rural railway station by an apparently insane gunman. Another major assassination attempt did not occur until 19 June 1965 when Arthur Calwell, the leader of the Labor Party, was shot after addressing a political rally in Sydney. His assailant had thrust a sawn off .22 rifle against the window of Calwell's car and fired. Calwell's wounds were not fatal and the would-be assassin was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Although there have been various other milder attacks on politicians in the form of egg throwing, bomb threats, paint splashing and the like, no further attempts to inflict serious physical injury have occurred.

As previously mentioned, political violence in Australia has generally been isolated to specific incidents. For the most part, demonstrations and dissident activities have remained peaceful. However, some forms of political protest, involving either outright violence or the threat of it, have an ongoing history in Australia. The following discussion by no means represents a comprehensive account of all occasions involving political violence, but is intended to provide an overview of the main areas in which political violence has been most common.

WORKER/TRADE UNION VIOLENCE

The most common form of political violence in Australia has been that associated with workers, particularly trade unionists. The Eureka Stockade of 1854, probably the most famous example of worker protest, was the culmination of a long period of increasing discontent on the Victorian goldfields. The diggers were not enfranchised, nor represented in the Legislative Council and land settlement was not readily available to them. They were also frustrated by the imposition of a compulsory and expensive licence to mine. Considerable bloodshed occurred when police advanced on the diggers campsite and were subsequently fired on by the insurgents. Hundreds of mounted troopers returned the fire resulting in the deaths of 30 diggers and five troopers.

The development of commerce and industry in Australia in the 1870s and 1880s brought with it the emergence of the trade union movement. Workers became increasingly aware of the powers inherent in organisation and of the improvement in working conditions which could be gained by trade union action. In the 1890s political violence became very much a concomitant of strikes, which were accompanied by shooting and bashing. In 1912 there was massive unrest during the Brisbane General Strike over the right to unionise. During the strike period there were numerous riots and assaults upon strike breakers and special constables. Sabotage of trains by attempted derailment and explosions with gelignite was a regular occurrence. Several people were injured and there was at least one violent death (Evans 1986, p. 21).

In Queensland the unusually high level of unemployment heightened the grievances of returned soldiers. In 1918 disputes occurred at Townsville and Gladstone between striking unionists and returned soldiers working as strike breakers. According to newspaper reports of the time, the returned soldiers used firearms or other weapons to defend themselves (Rawson 1968a, p. 27).

The 1920s were again characterised by the type of violence characteristic of the 1890s (Rawson 1968a, p. 27). According to Rawson, the riots accompanying the Melbourne Police Strike of 1923 were, in their way, the most destructive disturbances ever seen in Australia. The 1923 strike developed from a number of grievances among the rank-and-file. The Victorian police had the lowest pay of any force in Australia and there was no pension scheme for men who joined the force after 1902. Matters were brought to a head by the introduction of a "spook" system — the appointment of four senior constables, in plain clothes, to watch how uniformed men patrolled their beats. The *Evening Sun* described the scenes as "unparalleled in the history of Melbourne. Routing the police, a savage mob smashed windows, stole valuable stocks and committed acts of violence in the streets" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, October 1976).

Rawson has argued, however, that this strike was essentially criminal, and had no political objective, not even the winning of the policemen's claims. Numerous petty crimes were carried out by professional criminals and the violence involved, such as assaults to special constables, was largely a means to this end (Rawson 1968a, p. 27).

The 1925 Australia-wide Seamen's Strike also led to widespread disturbances, many of them occurring when hundreds of striking seamen were arrested and gaoled. There were some attacks on non-union labour in which firearms were produced, but apparently not used (Rawson 1968a, p. 27). A series of strikes which began with a dispute at the South Johnstone sugar mill in 1927, broadened into a state-wide Railway Strike. The following year the extensive use of non-union labour under police protection began with a strike against a new waterside workers' award in September 1928. In Melbourne, police fired at a threatening demonstration of strikers, wounding four, of whom one subsequently died.

The depression of the 1930s severely weakened most of the unions. During and after the Second World War there was an absence of violent strikes. Those which did occur — the Coal Strike and the Metal Trades and Transport disputes of 1945-47 — did not elicit an attempt to use non-union labour and no violence occurred (Rawson 1968b, p. 38). Minor exceptions to this were the Queensland Railway Strike of 1948, the Waterside Workers Strikes during the 1950s, and the Mount Isa Strike of 1964-65 which involved some incidents of violence. Rawson has suggested that violence associated with strikes is generally the result of attempts to use non-union labour to break up the strike. Violence occurs when unionists attempt to stop non-unionists from entering the workplace (Rawson 1968a, p. 27).

In addition to strikes associated with the use of non-union labour, a number of violent incidents occurred throughout the 1980s when the Victorian Government attempted to deregulate the Builders Labourers Federation.

DEPRESSION VIOLENCE

Although a number of individual disturbances occurred during the depression of the 1930s, most of these were not characterised by violence. Those which did occur were virtually limited to 1930 and 1931 with a few in 1932. Violent incidents were also concentrated in New South Wales. Most incidents were not very serious and did not result in any deaths (Rawson 1968b, p. 35), the exception being the shooting by police of miners during a lockout at Rothbury in northern New South Wales which left seven wounded and one dead.

The two most common forms of violence during the depression of the 1930s were demonstrations by the unemployed and eviction of squatters and residents in default of rent or mortgage payments. The characteristics of these demonstrations did not generally vary. Police, using batons, broke up marches and demonstrations. Demonstrators would resist the police with bottles and stones. Eviction riots also resulted in some violence. Tenants and their supporters would barricade themselves in the house with sandbags and barbed wire and would resist the police with iron bars, bottles and furniture. Crowds, often numbering thousands, would assemble in the streets and throw stones at police. Eviction rioting was generally confined to the working class suburbs of Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle and Wollongong. By 1932 both unemployment and eviction rioting had diminished considerably, largely as a result of the introduction of policies to alleviate the conditions of the unemployed (Rawson 1968b, p. 35).

WAR-TIME VIOLENCE

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was initially a small group of radical workers which was hostile to the more moderate ideological position of the Labor Party. With the outbreak of the First World War the IWW shifted its focus somewhat, becoming a vocal opponent of the war. The IWW viewed the war as "a vehicle of capitalist enrichment at the expense of working class blood" (Grabosky 1977, p. 107). Its arguments were primarily in relation to proposals to introduce conscription for combat service. IWW activists allegedly engaged in arson, counterfeiting and forgery. The New South Wales Police conducted raids on IWW premises and arrested many of its more vocal members. Twelve IWW members were convicted of conspiracy to commit arson after a series of fires had occurred in Sydney department stores. Turner (1967) has argued that evidence for these convictions did, however, appear to be substantially fabricated by the New South Wales Police. Legislation was enacted in 1916 which made the IWW an unlawful group.

Evans (1986) has described the series of violent anti-conscription campaigns that occurred in Brisbane during the First World War. He suggests that these incidents were, however, not confined to Brisbane and other capital cities experienced violent incidents over the conscription issue. Evans provides an example of an extremely violent incident at the Melbourne Cricket Ground when Prime Minister Hughes was surrounded by thousands of angry protesters who hurled eggs and stones at speakers (Evans 1986, p. 22).

In the years immediately following the First World War political disorder was widespread. As soldiers began to arrive home in significant numbers, violent episodes became increasingly common. These incidents were, on the whole, directed against politicians who made their opinions on the futility of the war well known (Rawson 1968a, p. 19). The Second World War was not characterised by any significant violent political dissent.

The Vietnam conflict provided the next occasion for war-related political violence in Australia. Political tensions heightened considerably in 1965 when the Menzies Government committed Australian troops to the American operations in Vietnam and began sending conscripted Australians into battle. Dissent was voiced primarily by student groups who objected to Australian involvement in the war and the conscription policy of the Liberal government. Thousands of students participated in protest demonstrations and marches during the period 1965-72. The Vietnam protest movement had assumed mass proportions by 1968 and protests were most severe in Melbourne and were often characterised by violence, largely between police and protesters. York has described the level of conflict and resulting bloodshed between police and students during the period between 1966 and 1972 and the "law and order" campaigns which characterised this period (York 1987, p. 185). Violence against students by police was very much, York suggests, government inspired.

During these years the Victorian Government revised section 5 of the *Unlawful Assemblies and Processions Act*, which had been passed in 1865 but revised in 1958. This section stated:

> It should not be lawful for any person to assemble together riotously and tumultuously and to the disturbance of the public peace at any place in Victoria.

According to York, the protest movement declined in response to the announcement of the withdrawal of Australian troops from Vietnam in August 1971 and the election of a Labor Government in December 1972 — and not in response to the law and order campaign (York 1984, p. 58).

ENVIRONMENTAL/ ANTI-NUCLEAR VIOLENCE

Conservation is another area where politically-motivated destruction of property has been a regular event. One of the earliest examples of this type of political violence occurred in 1976 when two masked and armed men planted 1000 sticks of gelignite at the Bunbury woodchip export terminal in Western Australia which blew up the conveyor tower. The next major incidents began in 1978 on the New South Wales south coast when, in October, eight forest machines were damaged at the Harris-Daishowa woodchip operation near Eden from acid put into fuel lines and abrasives into gear boxes. In January 1979 a fire, apparently started by arsonists, destroyed the largest woodchip pile at the Harris-Daishowa export plant. In April 1979, a fire, believed to have been started by petrol, destroyed thousands of dollars worth of equipment at nearby Moruya. Similar acts occurred throughout 1979 at Lismore during the Terania Creek Dispute. In 1982, when the announcement was made to flood the Franklin River, the Tasmanian Hydro Electric Commission was subjected to acts of vandalism with offices flooded and equipment damaged.

Mainstream conservationists are anxious to distance themselves from the activities of these "eco-guerillas" who represent the extreme end of the environmental movement in Australia (Sturgess 1982, p. 51). Conservation demonstrations and protests have generally been in a tradition of non-violent confrontation. Demonstrators generally chain themselves to equipment and block the pathways of bulldozers. Violent incidents usually result when police attempt to break up demonstrations or when scuffles occur between loggers and protesters. Incidents involving violence between police and protesters over environmental issues are becoming increasingly common.

TERRORIST VIOLENCE

In recent years an extreme form of political violence, terrorism, has become a major focus of concern world-wide and some writers have predicted an upsurge in Australia (e.g. Crown 1986). Assessing the level of terrorist threat to Australia and seeking to uncover terrorist connections between events here and in other parts of the world have sometimes almost become obsessions with the Australian news media. This is particularly so after major acts of political violence, both overseas and within Australia. There is an almost macabre aspect to some reporting which conveys a sense of "regret" that Australia is not at the centre of major acts of international terrorism. Criminal events such as the March 1986 bombing of the Russell Street Police Complex in Melbourne are seized on to suggest that the horrors of Belfast or Beirut have now reached our shores. The impression is given that although the death and injury are lamentable, at least Australia is not just some forgotten backwater, but is part of the big league — at last. Acts of violence of all sorts are seized upon to suggest that Australian governments have been complacent because of our distance from most of the world's trouble spots and have failed to take adequate steps to protect us from the inevitable terrorist outrage.

Both predicting and coping with terrorism are extremely difficult and complex enterprises. It is important to be accurate in prediction and balanced in response. Two of the foremost aims of terrorism are to induce widespread fear in the population and to force the authorities to over-react and undermine their own legitimacy. The tone of much discussion about terrorism contains within it the seeds which will themselves achieve the aims of the terrorists. Alarmist and inaccurate estimates of the level or type of threat facing a society can cause public apprehension far in excess of that warranted by an objective assessment. Such apprehension can lead to personal fear, changes in business or other practices which are unnecessary and damaging to economic or social life, and eventually government actions which may undermine our democratic institutions.

An equal danger exists, however, caused by ignoring the reality of terrorism as a threat to individual safety and public security and failing to predict, at least in broad terms, the types of attacks which may face us and the frequency with which they may occur. Failure in this area may lead to being unprepared for terrorist attack and incapable of responding effectively to it.

For Australia, as for other countries, the questions we must ask are: do we accurately predict the level of terrorist threat to this country and its potential sources, and do we have the machinery and resources capable of preventing or coping with threats at the assessed level? A number of factors make public discussion of these questions difficult. First, crystal-ball gazing is an uncertain enterprise at any time. *Detailed* predictions are almost always inaccurate. Further, there seems to be a tendency in those who predict events connected with violence to under-rate evidence leading to "unexciting" (that is, non-escalatory) predictions.

Put bluntly, the assertion that Australia will come under significant terrorist threat in the near term will get considerably more media coverage than the assertion that sporadic, relatively minor acts of terrorism will continue at about the level that they have in the past.

The second problem is that many predictions, and the assessments of our state of readiness that flow from them, are heavily tinged by ideological or organisational perspectives. The media, some political groups, and some organisations may have an interest in emphasising the terrorist threat. The payoffs may be boosted circulations, satisfaction at having taken a "tough" stance, easy criticism of governments, increased budgets or powers for police and security agencies, and growing markets for security equipment manufacturers and private security firms. Those in political groups suspicious of government

powers may see in the publicity accorded to the terrorist threat a conspiracy to use it as an excuse to add to the repressive arm of the state and, hence, try to minimise the threat, seeking any justification for explaining it away. Government agencies themselves may endeavour to minimise the threat in order to reduce budgetary pressures and to deflect criticism about the adequacy of their counter-terrorist arrangements.

The final problem has to do with assumptions about the nature of terrorism and how to deal with it. Much of the discussion which follows predictions of an increased level of terrorism seems to be predicated on the assumption either that terrorism generally can be defeated (that is, reduced to a low enough level so as not to occasion great national or international concern) or that, given the will (manifested by adequate security measures), any country can reduce the probability of attack against it to a very low level. In fact, neither of these assumptions is realistic. Worse, they are dangerously unrealistic. The danger is that accepting them can lead to an uncritical acceptance of security measures domestically, and military measures internationally, which may themselves be counterproductive, destabilising and contribute to further terrorism. The reality that, whatever we do, terrorism will be a feature of the international landscape for the foreseeable future and that no country can prevent all acts of terrorism, must be accepted as a basis for rational threat assessments and discussions of counter-terrorist policy and machinery.

The Australian Terrorist Environment

Having identified potential sources of difficulty in making assessments in this field, it is possible to outline the current terrorist threat facing Australia.

First it is important to remember that acts of terrorism connected with struggles in other parts of the world have taken place sporadically here over the past 20 years or so. In the 1970s there were a number of bombings of Yugoslav diplomatic, airline and other facilities perpetrated by Croatian extremists. In the late 1970s the UPRF (Universal Proutist Revolutionary Federation) section of the Ananda Marga sect was implicated in attacks on Indian diplomats and diplomatic facilities in Australia. In February 1978, three people were killed when a bomb exploded outside the Sydney Hilton Hotel, venue for a Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional meeting. It was this bombing which provided the impetus for the initial implementation of many of Australia's current counter-terrorist mechanisms.

In December 1980, as part of a world-wide campaign of terror against Turkish diplomats, the JCAG (Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide) assassinated the Turkish Consul-General, Mr Sarik Ariyak, and his bodyguard, in Sydney. In all probability, this operation was carried out by a terrorist brought into the country for this purpose. In December 1982, the Israeli Consulate-General in Sydney was destroyed by a bomb, probably planted by the Palestinian May 15 Organisation. In November 1986, a bomb exploded in the basement of the building housing the Turkish Consulate-General in Melbourne, killing one of the bombers. Finally, in 1988, explosive devices were also involved in a number of incidents involving cars or premises belonging to United States and South African diplomatic representatives in the Australian Capital Territory.

As this list indicates, most acts of terrorism in Australia are caused by or have their focus on conflicts in other parts of the world. They are acts of international rather than domestic terrorism. In view of Australia's substantial immigrant population, much of it coming from the countries which are at the centre of terrorist conflicts, there has been disquiet expressed from time to time about the potential for increasing levels of international terrorism here. In fact, however, the vast majority of our immigrant population is law-abiding and Australian police forces have been able to deal successfully with political tensions which do exist between rival elements of immigrant communities. Nevertheless, the existence of these elements and their contacts with radical groups in their home countries are a legitimate focus of security attention as we strive to minimise the occurrence of political terrorism and other forms of political violence in Australia.

Deciding just what constitutes terrorism is, of course, a major obstacle which bedevils all discussions of this form of political violence. There have been many acts of violence, or threatened violence, in Australia which have been labelled as terrorist acts. However, it is very important to maintain clear distinctions between these categories of violence since there are quite major policy and operational differences which arise in trying to combat, for example, political terrorism, criminal hostage-takings, commercial extortions, bombings committed by criminals or by mentally unstable individuals, and so forth. There will always be degrees of overlap between these categories, which are exacerbated by the fact that criminals and others often consciously mimic terrorist tactics. But, in general, we must be aware of the distinction between terror and terrorism. If we allow ourselves to be persuaded that all violent acts which cause terror are terrorist acts, the concept of terrorism becomes so inflated as to have no analytical or explanatory use at all.

The question facing us now is whether or not the threat facing Australia has changed significantly in recent times, either because of the general increase in the incidence of international terrorism world-wide, our own policies (for example, siding with one party in a contentious issue), or our alleged inattention to counter-terrorist security (making Australia a "soft target"). At a general level, the rapid geographic spread of terrorism implies that on the basis of the laws of probability alone we will experience acts of terrorism in Australia in the future (as indeed we have done in the past). Since terrorism is tending towards tactics which produce more deaths and injuries, we can expect any future incident in Australia to have an increased probability of assuming significant proportions. All nations, therefore, face an increased risk of terrorist attack but it needs some specific threat against this country's interests, or some particular issue here, to raise the threat level significantly. This does not appear to be the case for Australia at the present time.

THE LACK OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Although writers on political violence have commented on the apparent lack of political violence in Australia, very few have attempted to provide explanations. Grabosky, in a discussion of the "quiescent polity" of New South Wales, has suggested that the relative infrequency of collective disorder

during the first half of Sydney's history appears to have been the product of the coercive capacities of the regime, and the persistence of favourable economic conditions. Colonial forces were considerable in both size and strength and were responsible for inhibiting most forms of collective protests. The threat of transportation to remote penal settlements, the most notorious of these being Norfolk Island, deterred those convicts who had the propensity for deviant or dissident activity. In addition to these obvious disincentives to dissent, favourable political conditions such as the ticket of leave and other positive emancipation policies encouraged supportive political inclinations. Transportation for convicts was not as universally horrific as the colonial authorities in London had envisaged. Material deprivation in Sydney was less severe than in the slums of London and enterprising convicts were generally able to secure a relatively prosperous existence on completion of their sentences. The cessation of the transportation policy in the 1850s also pleased many (Grabosky 1974, p. 17). Following the attainment of responsible government during the later colonial period, political institutions were adaptable and the working class was enfranchised relatively early in our country's history.

Havens has suggested that at least one explanation for the absence of assassination attempts and other extreme forms of political violence in Australia is due to the relative lack of importance of politics in Australian society. He argues that Australians have generally demanded that the political order should leave the citizens alone, which it has done far more than most societies (Havens 1970, p. 724).

A further argument for the absence of political violence in Australia is the relatively high standard of living enjoyed by most Australians. Intense economic deprivation is experienced by very few (Grabosky 1974, Havens 1970). A cross-national study by Gurr and Duvall (1973) confirms these views and has indicated that the magnitude of civil conflict varies according to the extent of maldistribution of economic well-being and political autonomy within a society.

Havens has also argued that Australian politics has generally focused on economic issues which are not generally of "life and death" concern. The historians of various other countries have argued that people are much more likely to kill each other over religion, racial differences or abstract political principles. Australian politics has, on the whole, Haven suggests, kept out of these issues (Havens 1970, p. 726).

CONCLUSION

Trends in Political Violence

Rawson has argued that physical injury for a political purpose has been the most common form of political violence in this country; much more than arson, sabotage and other forms of destruction of property (Rawson 1968a, p. 19). Trends in Australian protests have generally been similar to those in other western industrial societies, although the actual amount of violence has been lower. Throughout the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century the participants have generally focused on issues relating to economic well-being.

Rioting has tended to occur during periods of economic distress and has been of brief duration and low magnitude. Regardless of the participants' motives, and with few exceptions, the events in question have been limited to periods of war, economic decline, or labour-management tensions. Reactions on the part of organised workers to what they viewed as threats to economic well-being constituted the bulk of such activity prior to 1935, while objections to foreign and military policy served as the dominant theme for protest from the First World War through to the early 1970s.

The frequency of political violence in Queensland during the 1970s and greater part of the 1980s can almost certainly be attributed to legislation which forbade demonstrations in public places. The Springbok Rugby tour in 1971 sparked several anti-apartheid demonstrations throughout Australia. The most serious violent incidents did, however, occur in Queensland when police attempted to dispel demonstrations. On Thursday 22 July 1971, 200 people standing in silent protest outside the motel where the team was staying, were charged upon by police (Brennan 1983, p. 113) in an unprovoked and unnecessary display of violence. It is unlikely that this, and many other demonstrations in Queensland, would have resulted in violent incidents between police and protesters had the Queensland Government displayed a tolerance of peaceful dissent and allowed the opportunity for Queenslanders to publicly air their grievances.

Another trend in protests has been the greater tendency toward physical conflict between protesters and police. Increasing numbers of people are being drawn into environmental debate; this may mean that more demonstrations will result. The actions of governments in making environmental policy, of police in handling public disorder, and of protesters in determining their tactics will determine whether or not this issue becomes a focus for future political violence.

Some conclusions emerge from this account of political violence in Australia. The most obvious is that Australian politics has had, on the whole, a comparatively peaceful existence. Political violence was at its greatest heights between the years 1913 and 1933 and again during the 1960s. In more recent times the environmental and nuclear issues have resulted in the greatest expressions of large-scale protest. Other matters which have the potential for causing significant dissent include the presence of American defence facilities, racial tensions and a number of other "single issue" causes which from time to time become the focus of protest. Despite these episodic instances of unrest in Australia it nonetheless seems indisputable that in political terms Australia has been relatively non-violent and there seem no obvious reasons to suppose that this situation will change in the immediate future.

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How does the Australian criminal justice system deal with violent offenders? Are there policy measure other than imprisonment which may be more effective in reducing violence? Is it possible to rehabilitate violent offenders? The principles of punishment are reviewed, and the range of sentencing options outlined. Case histories illustrating the variety of violent acts and the diversity of violent offenders appear throughout the monograph.

Violence Today Series, a series of papers between 6,000 and 8,000 words covering the following aspects of violence:

Violence Crime and Australian Society
Domestic Violence
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Violence, Disputes and their Resolution
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