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Daad en discussie: links geweld: de invloed van interne discussie en overheidsrespons

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Summary

DEED AND DISCUSSION

Left-wing Violence: the influence of internal discussion and government response

Chapter 1

This Introduction provides a brief outline of important political and social developments, but also of the interaction between activists and authorities. The Research design points out the current shortcoming in research into left-wing 'extremism': activists prepared to commit violence refrain from talking to journalists and scientists based on the belief that outcomes will be shared with intelligence services and investigative authorities.

The onset is a qualitative historical research specifically focussing on the influence of the (anti-imperialist) Movement's internal discussion of violence and the 'Dutch Approach', the specifically Dutch policy approach to political (violent) activism. This historiography hardly concerns theoretical (sociological) explanations.

The research covers the period 1965-2015, during which three categories were active: the 'Red' groups, the 'old' and the 'new' Movement. An answer is sought to the question of what influence the internal discussion about the use of violence and the government response have had on development and continuity of violence originating from these movements. The influence on disintegration and decay of (parts of) the Movement is also examined.

In an 'Advance justification', account is taken of the author's background as a BVD and AIVD analyst, which may affect perceptions of reliability. Possible pitfalls and prejudices are discussed here and how resulting bias has been circumvented.

Chapter 2

This outlines the theoretical framework and provides several relevant definitions, such as extremism, activism and radicalization. (Sociological) theories are addressed tangentially, but it focuses on immediately relevant theories. This happens mainly because 'causes of violence' by Buijs and 'internal brakes on violent escalation' by Busher et al. are important in this research into the role of the intra-Movement discussion in limiting the use of violence to a de facto small group of extremists.

Additionally, attention is paid to the different policy of Dutch authorities towards their political opponents compared to elsewhere. This 'Dutch Approach' is defined as the way in

which the government, taking into account societal sentiments, acts against and/or responds to actions of activists and extremists who challenge it. Depending on whether it concerns moderate (legal) or violent (illegal) activities, the authorities' policy is characterized by basically lenient, but occasionally repressive action when deemed necessary and effective.

The Design of the research summarizes which theories are included in this – factual – practical research into the aforementioned categories of activists.

Chapter 3

Subsequently, the methodological differences from 'normal' research is discussed. Because interviews proved impossible due to the refusal of extremists to speak to researchers, the investigation relies heavily on information from BVD and AIVD in particular. Because of potential added value, it is methodologically responsible, beside using open sources, to present intelligence information as field observations, but also as indirect participant observation. Hence, this provides insight into the lives of activists and possible evasive answers in interviews are avoided: *what you see (or hear) is what you get*.

Desk research is the main part of this partially indirect field experience. This open observation describes what has been assessed as important or striking and sketches – both in terms of actions and discussion – as detailed, but also complete, as possible a picture of developments and incidents. In addition to countless open sources, use has been made of public scientific publications, but especially of - previously classified - intelligence material. This also provides insight into the effect that BVD and AIVD exert on reality, usually invisible to outsiders, also referred to as *hidden factor*. Also a brief overview is given of the various intelligence resources.

Chapter 4

This descriptive chapter forms a detailed elaboration of the research question and - divided into activists, authorities and disintegration - provides a detailed overview of fifty years of political (violent) activism in numerous areas of action, in which political violence, intra-movement discussion and government response play a role. Terrorism plays no role, except for the murder of Fortuyn, but Dutch activists have had contact with terrorists abroad. Special attention is paid to RaRa attacks and subsequent internal discussion. RaRa also appears to have engaged in criminal activities for terrorists.

Chapter 5

This highlights the Conclusions from the research. In addition to explanations of political violence by Buijs and internal brakes on violent escalation by Busher et al., the

conclusions from the practical research are specifically discussed, emphasizing the importance of intelligence information and explaining the (important) role of the *hidden factor*. Main conclusions: there is no such thing as “the Movement” and political violence condemned by the vast majority of society and the Movement comes from a small minority.

Chapter 6

This final chapter focuses on some underexposed causes of disintegration, but mainly looks ahead: what do the results of this study into fifty years of campaigning mean for current changed (or evolving) activism and extremism? What is left of the Movement and what are possible starting points when it comes to (the return of) new political violence?