

**DAYS OF RAGE: AMERICA'S RADICAL
UNDERGROUND, THE FBI, AND THE FORGOTTEN
AGE OF REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE**

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September 4, 2024

Never in history has targeted violence by individuals or small groups, killings and bombings, what the Russians once called “propaganda of the deed,” ever led to the replacement of a governing system, or even triggered significant societal change. Yet for the Left such acts have proved irresistible since the mid-nineteenth century. In keeping with this history, during the 1970s the American Left engaged in vast amounts of murderous violence, setting off two thousand bombs in 1972 alone, all with the aim of triggering revolutionary change in America. Why, though, given that this tactic never works to catalyze political change? Today we will explore that question.

This book, *Days of Rage*, published in 2015, is an excellent, apolitical, detailed history of the Left’s campaign of violence fifty years ago, in the 1970s. It is also a unique history. There is no other, because for decades the truth about this Left violence has been, and continues to be, completely and deliberately memory-holed. The 1960s, by contrast, are endlessly talked about, because they are seen as putting the Left in a good light, at least when their slovenly and corrosive reality is concealed with a generous slathering of lying propaganda. The 1960s featured the rise to prominence of the so-called New Left, and the various events so beloved by aging, nostalgia-addled Boomers fondly recalling their lost youth, such as Woodstock, the 1968 Democratic Convention, and tedious protests by a small minority of Americans against the Vietnam War. (I amused myself, when a young lawyer, by telling such a decaying Boomer, a very powerful partner at my giant law firm, that I thought of the Vietnam War and World War I as much the same, events that happened long ago with little direct impact on today. He was offended. Now he’s dead.)

To the vast majority of the country at the end of the 1960s, these events were sideshows, clownish affairs featuring dirty hippies, although under the surface the Left had for decades steadily been making inroads into the power structures of America, especially into academia. But

in 1970, the country as a whole had in no way warmed to the Left's demands. Richard Nixon was on his way to a crushing victory in 1972 (before a Deep State coup took him out in 1975), and applied leftism was still a very niche philosophy. Still, it was a philosophy adored by tens of thousands of radicals, the type of men and women always generated by the Left, those who see a utopia of total emancipation, total egalitarianism, and consequent total human happiness, just over the horizon, achievable by enough determined action by the enlightened vanguard—action which primarily consists in removing those who maliciously stand in the way, and inspiring others to do likewise on a grander scale. What drove the bombings and other murders of the 1970s was the gap between what this vanguard had seen as inevitable, a new revolution in America flowing from the events of the late 1960s, and the reality, which was that America was, if anything, moving rightward. Abroad, left-wing violence seen as successful was commonplace, in places as divergent as Quebec, Algeria, and Cuba. Why not bring it here?

The two key terms in this book are “the Movement” and “the underground.” The Movement is Burrough's term for the spiderweb-like Left biome of the 1960s and early 1970s, the sprawl of socio-political connections among those who derived their life's meaning from supporting the Left. The Left certainly had many internal fractures, but those were not about Left goals, which were (and are) total overthrow of the existing system and its replacement by a Left utopia. Fractures were superficial, or merely about tactics and personality (though there were plenty of conflicts about the latter, as always within any extremist political movement). Thus it is appropriate to use the singular term “Movement.”

The underground is the term Burrough uses for something utterly missing today in America—an entire ecosystem of individuals living in fear of the law for political reasons, not just for committing violent acts, but also draft dodgers, deserters, drifters averse to contact with authority, and more prosaic criminals with a political bent. What most characterized the underground, as Burrough documents, is the extensive support network its members enjoyed “aboveground,” in the form of funding, legal assistance, and overt cooperation in advancing criminal activities. The border between “underground” and “aboveground” was therefore porous and flexible, but any Left individual who thought it

prudent to be no longer visible to the FBI (before it became the corrupt tool of the Left it is today), or to local law enforcement, could easily disappear and stay disappeared.

Burrough wrote this book expecting there to be rich sources of information that had not yet been mined. But he quickly realized that official sources were still mostly unavailable, and that almost nothing had been written about the groups he set out to profile (and what had been written was self-serving lies). This is not surprising; burying the memory of these groups, which apparently failed in their aims, benefits the Left, who has written all American history for the past fifty years (and much of it for the fifty years before that). Thus, he had to turn to tracking down and interviewing the participants. Few were interested in talking—at first. He then realized that working through their lawyers was a possible path. “The group of radical lawyers who handled underground cases turned out to be surprisingly small; maybe fifteen attorneys, almost all in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, handled just about every major case.” He “built bridges” to the clients of these lawyers, and thus was able to interview quite a few people who had never spoken before about their crimes.

The Movement spawned many killers. Burrough mostly focuses on five largely independent groups: the Weathermen; the Black Liberation Army (and its later offshoot the Family); the Symbionese Liberation Army; the FALN; and the United Freedom Front. The original bomber, though, in Burrough’s telling, was not a member of any of these. He was Sam Melville, a drifter in his thirties who had found his entire life’s meaning in Left theory, which he was desperate to implement in real life. Beginning in the middle of 1969, he set dynamite bombs in eight New York City buildings, all either federal offices or offices of large corporations. His rationale was simple. “This country’s about to go through a revolution . . . before the decade is over. And I intend to be a part of it.” He modeled his campaign, in part, on George Metesky, the “Mad Bomber,” a non-political lunatic with a grudge against Commonwealth Edison, who exploded nearly forty gunpowder bombs in New York between 1940 and 1957.

Melville’s bombs quickly inspired other aimless and depressed leftists, sad because their work of the 1960s (and in some cases, the 1950s) had not led to any fundamental change in America. Most early bombings

rarely killed people, and were not intended to kill people (though the bombers were happy to take that risk), rather to cause property damage and draw attention. "Bombs basically functioned as exploding press releases," and were usually followed by a ranting communique of some sort. A typical such bomb, set in 1969 by an acquaintance of Melville, was in support of "the North Vietnamese, marijuana, love, Cuba, legalized abortion, and all the American revolutionaries and G.I.'s who are winning the war against the Pentagon and Nixon." Melville was arrested in November (he set his first bomb in July), and was hailed as a hero by the Movement. He was sent to jail for eighteen years, but was killed in 1971 in the Attica Prison Riot, making him a useful martyr for the Movement.

Burrough is at pains to dispel the myth that Movement killers were hippies primarily interested in the Vietnam War. They weren't hippies, even if they smelled bad and indulged frequently in drugs of many types; they "were, for the most part, deadly serious, hard-core leftists," who read ideological literature daily and viewed themselves as serious revolutionaries. And they didn't really care about the war in Vietnam, except as an example of bad behavior by an "imperialist regime" they were determined to overthrow. According to Burrough, the major animating "injustice" that the Movement focused on was how blacks were supposedly treated in America. "Every single underground group of the 1970s, with the notable exception of the Puerto Rican FALN, was concerned first and foremost with the struggle of blacks against police brutality, racism, and government repression." No doubt this is true, but what Burrough does not realize, or does not advert to, is that this is incidental, merely the chosen vehicle for the inevitable attempt by the Left, when thwarted, to achieve utopia through violence. If black people had not lived in America, it would have been some other claimed injustice (as it was with similar movements abroad, back to the nineteenth century).

Black extremists, such as Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael, had called for violent revolution since the late 1950s, and they reached their apogee of fame and influence in 1966 and 1967 with the Black Panthers, exemplified by Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver. All these men were criminals (Cleaver, for example, was a convicted rapist who celebrated rape as liberating for black men). They turned this into a virtue, thorough their core claim that criminality was the essence of

political legitimacy, that “the most genuine ‘revolutionaries’ were those who were most oppressed: black prison inmates and gangbangers.” This was “an idea that appealed strongly to white radicals yearning for a taste of black authenticity.” Huge swathes of white Left opinion, from the *New York Times* on down, lionized these men, who openly called for violence against “pigs,” Nixon, and anyone they decided thwarted the new dawn they so eagerly awaited. But by 1969 the Panthers had faded, in part because some of them had been brought to justice for their crimes, but more because they had burned themselves out, and as with so many such groups, internal chaos and splintering eroded any chance they had at continued relevance.

What brought these two threads, Melville and the Panthers, together, and thus birthed the extreme violence of the 1970s, was the Weathermen. Of all the history narrated by this book, only the Weathermen are (perhaps) commonly known today, and then only a sanitized version of their history. Organizationally, the Weathermen grew out of the fanatic organization Students for a Democratic Society, prominent in the late 1960s. Philosophically, they were Communists, worshipping Lenin and Mao, as well as their more modern acolytes such as the murderous Che Guevara. From the SDS, a small group of men, and one woman, emerged, who believed they could inspire a “grassroots rebellion.” These were Mark Rudd, John Jacobs, Bernardine Dohrn, and Bill Ayers. Together they took control of the SDS in the summer of 1969, and planned, for October of that year, the “National Action,” better known as the Days of Rage, a series of violent demonstrations in Chicago (where most of the prominent Weathermen lived, and Ayers and Dohrn live to this day).

Others in the Movement thought the Days of Rage were a bad idea; not only was it likely counterproductive, alienating those who were supposed to be converted, but the police and the FBI were seeking to infiltrate and implode the Weathermen, and this would increase such pressure. Even the Cuban intelligence agents on whom Ayers and others relied for advice on tactics didn’t like the idea. The Weatherman, moreover, smelled to any rational person very much like a cult, including dictating that every Weatherman break up with any romantic partner, in order to make his or her priority the group itself. (The recompense for this was frequent orgies among the Weathermen and their hangers-on.) The Weathermen were not deterred, so on October 8, a few hundred

people gathered in Lincoln Park in Chicago to initiate the National Action, though thousands had been expected. Unwilling to call off their plans, they ran wild through the wealthy neighborhoods of Chicago, breaking windows and destroying cars. The Chicago police were caught off guard, but eventually reacted, arresting many of the malefactors in chaotic scenes while using tear gas to disperse the rioters. The Days of Rage were therefore a total failure—except that the event marked the Weathermen as the violent edge of the Movement, thus giving them prestige and influence.

Some Weathermen went to jail for brief periods, but they mostly went underground as part of a planned turn to bombing, now with the specific intent to kill people. At the end of 1969, they held a “National War Council,” nicknamed “Wargasm,” in Flint, Michigan, where speeches filled with violent rhetoric alternated with more orgies. (This was the event where Dohrn famously praised the murder of Sharon Tate and her baby by Charles Manson and his followers.) As always with cults, the leaders demanded further “consolidation,” meaning ending any connection to past, bourgeois life and total commitment to the political line put forth by those in charge. Quite a few who lacked commitment quit or were purged. For those who remained, supporters supplied money, fake identification, and places to stay, while the Weathermen planned bombings.

In modern times, the remaining Weathermen, notably Ayers, frequently claim they never intended to hurt anybody, “only symbols of power.” (Of the leaders, only Mark Rudd has ever expressed any remorse for any of their actions; the rest to this day openly celebrate their crimes, and have led privileged lives completely unafraid of being brought to justice, mostly as college professors.) As Burrough states, “This is a myth, pure and simple, designed to obscure what Weathermen actually planned. In the middle ranks, in fact, it was widely expected that Weathermen would become revolutionary murderers.” The main target for killings was to be policemen, based largely on the myth (then and now) of police violence against blacks. The Weathermen divided geographically into three main groups, in New York, the Midwest, and San Francisco, and set off their first bomb in February, 1970, at the Berkeley police headquarters. Ayers was the mastermind, if there was

a single mastermind, of a series of subsequent bombings, several of which killed people. They had grand plans to kill a lot more people.

But their plans were derailed by a massive explosion while building more bombs, at a New York town home belonging to the parents of one of the female Weathermen. The bombs they were making were intended to kill soldiers at an Army dance at Fort Dix, in New Jersey, but instead they destroyed the town home and killed three of their own, including Ayers's new girlfriend (he apparently exempted himself from the rule forbidding relationships, though you can be sure their relationship was not exclusive, for Ayers at least). The leaders held meetings at which they pointed fingers at each other and started arguing, bizarrely, whether sexism or white privilege was more to blame for their failures. Most of the Weatherman abandoned any active connection with the group. Some of the less-central members engaged in undirected wildcat violence across the country over the subsequent months, but the leaders, now led by Dohrn, retrenched, deciding to pretend they were still a large organization and still threatening violence, but retreating from their initial goal of mass killing. In June they were back to bombing. You have to give them credit for sticking to their principles.

The FBI, and the federal government more generally, were now very concerned about the Weathermen, but found they could make little progress (more from incompetence than anything else, it seems; infiltrating a drug-addled group desperate for recruits should have been easy). Bombings continued, from both the Weathermen and others inspired by them, but there was no revolution, except in fashion, as bell-bottom pants became popular. Many Americans, it turned out, wanted libertinism, but they definitely didn't want left-wing revolution. By December, the Weathermen were issuing communiques (usually written by Dohrn in turgid hippie-tinged Marxist-speak) that dialed back their revolutionary demands, including their support for blacks, and started talking about the importance of taking drugs and increasingly emphasizing ending sexism (Dohrn changed the name to "Weather Underground," because "Weathermen" was now deemed offensive to women). The leadership now lived in a luxurious gated home in a San Francisco suburb, creating resentment among others who lived a life of poverty on the run. "One Weather alumnus remembers visiting Bill

Ayers and opening the refrigerator to find a stick of butter. 'Butter!' he exclaims today. 'I couldn't afford a piece of bread, and they had butter!'

In March of 1971, the Weathermen bombed the United States Capitol (an actual attack, not at all like the heroic Electoral Justice Protest of 2021). The FBI, by luck, almost captured the leadership, so they went further underground, and largely disappeared again. They shrank to a hard core of perhaps fifteen people. Their place in active bombing was immediately taken over by the Black Liberation Army, the second of the groups Burrough profiles. The BLA was a looser, less-centralized organization than the Weathermen; it has received even less attention, in part, naturally, because it was composed of black men and women, who were supposed to be all heroes facing injustice. "In fact, the Black Liberation Army was a credible group of violent urban guerillas, the first and only black underground of its kind in U.S. history." Its main initial leaders were Nathaniel Burns and Anthony Coston, who changed their names to Sekou Odinga and Lumumba Shakur, petty criminals who came to political epiphanies in prison. Both were tied to the Black Panthers in the 1960s, but split off when a large group of the Panther leadership were collectively tried for their crimes in 1971 (to the great anger of the Left cognoscenti of the nation).

The BLA began by shooting several policemen (white and black) in the back. It organized as independent cells, in order to avoid being rolled up as the Panthers and (to some extent) the Weathermen had been, but that limited its central coordination. They funded themselves through armed robbery, more than once killing people while doing so, and killed more policemen, mostly in New York. But several of the cells were smashed by law enforcement (although Burrough notes that decisive action was greatly hampered by a "bugaboo of mid-1970s policing . . . newfound sensitivities about race") and, like the Weathermen, the BLA contracted. In 1973, they re-emerged under the apparent leadership of Joanne Chesimard, even if Burrough says she was more a charismatic, attractive figurehead than anything else, and more policemen died under their guns. But gradually the law caught up with them, including Chesimard. "Forty-two years later six onetime BLA fighters remain alive in U.S. prisons," though others fled abroad or managed to disappear without a trace.

Meanwhile, the remaining Weathermen were living in comfort in a bungalow in Hermosa Beach, in Orange County, and plotting their resurgence. They did bomb the Pentagon in 1972. In 1973, as the Left gained more and more power in law enforcement and in the courts, most open cases against the Weatherman were permanently dropped, using the excuse that the Supreme Court had ruled that warrantless wiretaps were not legal. (In fact, in an early example of Left triumph over the rule of law, several FBI agents, including the later “Deep Throat,” Mark Felt, were indicted instead.) The Weatherman evanesced as a violent group, and tried to reinvent themselves as an aboveground revolutionary cadre. But nobody cared, and they disintegrated, though some of their members reappeared in other Left groups later in the decade.

Burrough minutely details many of the more obscure members of the Weathermen, many not identified until his book. Actually, most are still not identified, because Burrough grants them pseudonyms. For example, Burrough discusses one bomber under the pseudonym Marvin Doyle, because he “now works for a Washington-area think tank, where no one knows his history as a 1970s-era radical.” (A priority in the new Trump administration should be identifying all the persons in this book who were interviewed by Burrough, and putting them in jail for the rest of their lives.) Very often the reader snickers at the overt stupidity of the Weathermen, and loses sight of their murderous intent, and that these were, to a man and woman, very bad people, something that is always true of the cutting edge of the Left revolution. By coincidence, at the same time I was reading this book, I read Fyodor Dostoevsky’s classic novel *Demons*, which revolves around similar types of people, Russian Left revolutionaries of the 1860s. It is an interesting set of parallels, showing that Left cutting-edge action is always the same and always attracts the same types of personalities, though I will not dive into the details here.

Burrough treats the Weatherman and the BLA as the “first wave.” The “second wave” began with the Symbionese Liberation Army, in 1974. An “unlikely alliance, between charismatic black [prison] inmates and adoring white radicals, provided the underground with the long-sought messiah it ardently sought, thereby prolonging the life of a movement that had been on its last legs.” That messiah was George Jackson, a psychopathic black thug, who “spent his entire adult life behind the

walls of California prisons." After he killed a guard, he was represented at trial by a radical lawyer, Fay Stender. "A plain woman with a smoldering sexuality, Stender was utterly entranced by the black inmates she represented." (The phenomenon of groupies, women irresistibly attracted to powerful men, occurs throughout this book, as it occurs throughout all history, though we are not supposed to recognize it.) Naturally, although married with children, she immediately began a sexual relationship with Jackson, as she had with previous clients.

It was Stender who made Jackson famous, through her strategy of putting the "white system" on trial, rather than actually defending Jackson. (She committed suicide in 1980 after being paralyzed when shot by another black criminal, incensed she had not done enough for Jackson.) With Stender's assistance, Jackson released a volume of his letters, or what were said to be his letters, which was "a critical and commercial sensation. The *New York Times* called it 'one of the most significant and important documents since the first black was pushed off the ship at Jamestown colony.'" He was a celebrity, and the messiah, around which more killing coalesced. Jackson and his prison buddies were lionized by an unprecedented propaganda campaign supported by broad segments of the Left, including much of the media. They were named the "Soledad Brothers," after the prison in which they were incarcerated, and praised to the skies.

None of this helped Jackson, who as one might expect came to a bad end. In 1970, the Communist leader Angela Davis and Jackson's brother Jonathan tried to spring him from jail by kidnapping a judge; the judge, Jonathan, and two others died. In August, 1971, one of Jackson's lawyers smuggled him a gun in prison; he used it to take over part of San Quentin, where he was then being held. He took six white guards and two white prisoners hostage and slit the throats of five of them, before he was shot by a police sniper.

That's a long story, where at least at the end Jackson got what he deserved, although he should have been hanged twenty years before. Now, though, he was a martyr, and his supposed writings, all calling straightforwardly for the violent Left takeover of America, were extremely popular. The writings inspired, and brought coherence to the life of, another black criminal, Donald DeFreeze. He escaped from prison, entered the underground in Berkeley, and created the Symbionese

Liberation Army, a surreal creation of his fertile mind, which centered around Jackson as a type of Christ figure. "Symbionese" was just a derivative of "symbiosis," with a "worldview that veered between comical and truly insane." Its favorite phrase in communiques was "DEATH TO THE FASCIST INSECT THAT PREYS UPON THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE!"

The SLA's first killing was of a black man, Marcus Foster, the superintendent of the Oakland school system. He was hated by the Panthers and other Left groups because he "suggested that police be brought in to curb school violence and [proposed] that students carry identification cards." DeFreeze aimed higher than simple murder, though, and he conceived an original plan—to kidnap Patty Hearst, daughter of Randolph Hearst, one of the richest men in America, and use her as a tool to leverage attention. While demanding, among other things, that her father distribute free food to the "oppressed people of the Bay Area" (which he did), DeFreeze and the members of his cult tried to indoctrinate Hearst in their ideology, while keeping her in a closet and raping her frequently (though they did let her use their communal toothbrush). Whether she was convinced, brainwashed, or just trying to stay alive, she famously joined the SLA, starting with a bank robbery in which her iconic photo was taken.

The SLA was, at some level, completely clownish. DeFreeze, who named himself "General Field Marshal Cinque," did things like go door-to-door at the apartment complex in which they were hiding, introduce himself, and ask people to join the SLA. Eventually, desperate to hide, in May of 1974 they invaded a random house in a Los Angeles ghetto, telling themselves that naturally, all black people were on their side. They were not; an incensed grandmother told DeFreeze he was a disgrace, grabbed her grandchildren, left the house, and marched down to the police station. SWAT teams arrived in haste; all the several SLA members inside, including DeFreeze, died by bullets or fire.

Hearst was not there; a handful of SLA members escaped. The remaining members, including Hearst, hid some of the time, and committed murderous bombings and bank robberies the rest of the time, mostly in the San Francisco area. At the same time, in 1975 and 1976, other nebulous groups, such as the shadowy and still-little-understood "New World Liberation Front," probably led by a literal ax-murderer, also conducted hundreds of bombings in the Bay area. Hearst stayed

with the SLA, and by her own account thought of herself as an “SLA soldier.” The FBI finally captured all of them in 1975, including Hearst (who, when asked her occupation, replied “urban guerrilla”). Hearst was tried for her crimes and sentenced to thirty-five years. The sentence was immediately reduced to seven years, Jimmy Carter commuted her sentence after twenty-two months, and Bill Clinton gave her a full pardon in 2001.

“By all rights, the fiery destruction of the SLA should have brought an end to what little remained of the underground movement. Instead, it reinvigorated it.” What emerged were various splinter groups (including related freelancers such as the Zebra Killers, black men who killed at least fifteen, and maybe as many as seventy-five, for the crime of being white, who are not talked about today because their existence highlights the problem that the real violence in America is black-on-white, not white-on-black, the opposite of the allowed narrative), and two groups of real consequence: the FALN and the Family. The FALN (a Spanish-language acronym for “Armed Forces of National Liberation”) were Puerto Ricans, who combined demands for Puerto Rican independence with standard Left cant. They killed policemen and they set off many bombs, in New York and Chicago, including in a crowded restaurant on Wall Street, killing four and injuring scores. One of their demands was more concrete than usual with Left armed groups of this era. They wanted the release of the Puerto Ricans who had opened fire on a session of Congress in 1954 and the ones who tried to assassinate Harry Truman in 1950, killing a White House police officer.

Organizationally, the FALN was masterminded by Oscar López. It was closely intertwined with the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, an organization set up and lavishly funded by the Episcopal Church for “minority outreach efforts,” whose director was a key member of the FALN. Both Cuban intelligence and the remains of the Weatherman seem to have been instrumental in converting López to violence. Rolling up the FALN was complicated by the Episcopal hierarchy actively frustrating the FBI’s efforts. The National Council of Churches and the ACLU joined in, so the focus turned to attacking the FBI, while the bombings continued. At last, in 1980, by chance, the FALN leaders were arrested in Evanston, Illinois. (Jimmy Carter had released all the 1950s Puerto Rican murderers the previous year.) Those who

were jailed all had their sentences commuted by Bill Clinton in 1999, except López. He stayed in jail until 2017, when Barack Obama commuted his sentence, completing the trifecta of Left presidents rewarding those who tried to advance the Left cause.

Finally, Burrough profiles the United Freedom Front, also known as the Sam Melville Jonathan Jackson Unit, the name again highlighting the importance of thug-martyrs to the Movement. This time no black people were involved; the leader was a Maine native named Raymond Levasseur, a descendant of French Canadians, and only a handful of people participated directly. In the usual arc, he became obsessed with Left politics as a young man, after serving in Vietnam. (He also became a dealer of the finest-quality marijuana.) George Jackson's death made him "insane with hate," in his own words, and he threw himself into Left political organizing, focusing on ex-convicts. He and his wife joined up with another couple, and began robbing banks. In April, 1976, they bombed a Boston courthouse, followed by other bombs around New England. Over the next four years, he and his wife intermittently set off bombs, while raising multiple children. They were finally captured in 1984; Levasseur was released from prison in 2004.

The founders of the BLA, Odinga and Shakur, were still free in the late 1970s, having spent much of the decade abroad. They returned to bank robbery, for money, not for politics. But then they fell in with an Italian woman named Silvia Baraldini, who in 1976 had founded an aboveground group, the "May 19 Communist Organization." (May 19 was the birthday of both Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X.) Together with some others, including a white woman named Kathy Boudin, they formed what they called the Family, in essence a reborn BLA, and they decided to try to break Joanne Chesimard, the "heart and soul" of the BLA, out of the New Jersey prison where she was serving a life sentence for the murder of a policeman. They succeeded; Chesimard lives in Cuba to this day. They continued robbing, while consuming massive quantities of cocaine, on which they spent most of the money they got from the robberies.

The final end of Movement violence came in 1981, with a Brinks-truck robbery in the Bronx perpetrated by the Family. They executed the driver, and got away with more than a million dollars, but were pursued, and killed two policemen during the chase through New York City streets.

Odinga and Boudin were captured; most of the rest got away. Odinga was released from prison in 2014 and died earlier this year. Shakur was captured in 1986 and was paroled in 2022, dying a few months later. Boudin was paroled in 2003 and became, no surprise, a professor at Columbia University, dying in 2022. Her son Chesa, who was raised by Ayers and Dohrn because his own parents were in prison, was the district attorney of San Francisco between 2020 and 2022, in which capacity he continued his mother's work by trying to avoid prosecuting, and by releasing, as many violent criminals as possible, until even the people of San Francisco had had enough, and recalled him from office in a special election. Naturally, he is now a law professor (as is Dohrn).

All these people were the truest of true believers, whose belief was not only in Left ideology, but that Left triumph was imminent, through the vehicle of a second American revolution. Burrough thinks it's "ironic" that "so many idealistic young Americans, passionately committed to creating a better world for themselves and those less fortunate, believed they had to kill people to do it." But it's not ironic at all; it's always been part-and-parcel of the Left project to kill every last person who opposes them. After all, if utopia is just around the corner, those opposing the Left are guilty not only of delaying utopia, but of denying it to all yet unborn. The men and women profiled in this book were just ahead of the curve, the vanguard of what is always to come if the Left gains power.

Certainly, what was expected by these men and women, a violent revolution remaking the United States as a Left paradise, did not happen. That's why memory of these events has been suppressed; if they had been successful, they would all be celebrated in today's history texts. Nonetheless, almost to a man and woman, the people Burrough asked about their involvement in the violence expressed satisfaction that the country had ultimately moved in the direction they wanted, if not nearly far enough. Certainly, the United States of 2024 is far more to the liking of, say, Bill Ayers than was the United States of 1970. The Regime which rules us has as its core principles the exact same ideology as Ayers, even if the promised utopia remains just as far away as it always will.

Let's ask, however, what seems like an offbeat question. Did Americans really care about this violence, when it was happening? Well, certainly, yes, in a sense. The more major killings were front-page news.

But Burrough makes clear that Americans, all Americans, essentially got used to and ignored the constant bombings of the 1970s. Even during Bicentennial celebrations in 1976, an obvious target, there was no concern among the populace, or alteration of plans. I found this fascinating, given that the September 2001 attacks unleashed a permanent state of fear across nearly all of America which exists to this day. Yes, far more people died in 2001 than in all the Left bombings of the 1970s combined. Yet in the 2000s and since there was no follow-on terrorism at all and no real reason to expect any kind of repeat. Nonetheless, in contrast to the reaction in the 1970s, Americans let themselves be terrorized into fearing a threat that was not real, allowed trillions of their dollars to be spent at home on fake “security” while thousands of lives were lost in pointless wars in distant places irrelevant to America, gave up a huge portion of their ancient liberties, and have had their collective psyche seemingly be permanently damaged. Why the difference?

I don't really know. Much of it is the hyper-feminization that has overwhelmed our society, a chief characteristic of which is the desire for safety at all costs. Another part of it is the whipping up of fear to create and reinforce the hydra-headed national security state that has now been turned against Americans—not to the degree it has been turned against citizens in the United Kingdom and Europe, but that and much more is the obvious intention of the Regime, if they can get away with it. A third reason is that America is a much lower-trust society today; a strong, cohesive society can easily withstand shocks that cause severe damage to a weaker society. A fourth reason is that a combination of completely Left-controlled media and ubiquitous propaganda allows a passive American people to be dictated to, in order to achieve political ends, in a way the more independent-minded America of the 1970s could not be. Whatever the precise causes, it seems likely that this fearfulness is worse now, and if there were ever the unpredictable threat of violence in America again, many Americans would lose their minds—something similar to the reaction of most Americans to the Wuhan Plague, perhaps. On the other hand, the rejection of the official Plague narrative, and the rejection of the Regime's commands, by much of America gives us some reason to hope that the opposite would happen, and that the contradictions would be heightened in a beneficial way.

And let's return to the question I asked at the very beginning—why does the Left adore propaganda of the deed, given that it never works? Mikhail Bakunin, the nineteenth-century Russian left-anarchist who came up with the term, thought propaganda of the deed was the highest and best form of propaganda, showing a supposedly immiserated population that hated enemies could be harmed. That might have been plausible in 1870; it's not plausible today. When Burrough asks his interviewees why they failed, the answers are interesting (remorse is never part of their responses, to be sure). Mostly they just think they were too optimistic, and that the Left revolution will still come, if more slowly and less dramatically. In other words, they can't bring themselves to see their actions as a failure. That's no surprise; asking a man in the grip of an ideology why he is wrong will never get you sensible answers.

Their responses suggest that the simplest, and probably best, answer is that the Left attraction to propaganda of the deed is, in fact, part of the inevitable delusion of ideology. James Burnham defined an ideology as "a more or less systematic and self-contained set of ideas supposedly dealing with the nature of reality . . . and calling for a commitment independent of specific experience or events." When someone is in thrall to an ideology, which the Left always is (and the Right rarely is, being instead based in actual reality), it is easy to believe that the revolution is imminent, because it must be, and that it can be catalyzed, despite all evidence to the contrary. After all, the obvious truth is that the Left has only ever brought total disaster, oppression, inequality, mass murder, and penury when they actually come to power, quite literally the opposite of the utopia they promise and believe is possible. Yet even after hundreds of years, since 1789, this has not hampered Left attempts to come to power, by any means possible, in the least. No surprise, therefore, that propaganda of the deed continues to attract the Left.

There may be other reasons. For example, I suspect that especially among men it is a form of status-seeking. It shows commitment to the cause, it is a demonstration to others in the Movement, whose admiration they crave. Perhaps this explains in some part the extremely rare instances of Right propaganda of the deed, of which I can think of only two instances—the assassination in 1922 of Walter Rathenau, foreign minister of the Weimar Republic, chronicled in Ernst von Salomon's *The Outlaws*; and Timothy McVeigh's bombing of federal offices in Oklahoma

City in 1995. (Naturally, that has not been memory-holed, because it is useful to the Regime to pretend that Right violence is a threat.)

We should remember, however, that propaganda of the deed is not the only tool of violence in the Left arsenal. Another is terrorism, which is more often used nowadays. While the line between the two can be blurry, in general the former is designed to act as a catalyst for a socio-political restructuring, while the latter is designed to force political change through intimidation, by making failure to change intolerable. Terrorism today has largely replaced propaganda of the deed for the Left, because it has proved more successful. In the modern context, Left terrorism can be either independent or Regime-sponsored, though both are designed to intimidate opponents of the Left. Today in America it is mostly Regime-sponsored, because the Regime is formally Left, and desires nothing more than further movement leftward. The Floyd Riots, for example, were Regime-sponsored terrorism—and we should note that memory of that violence, which killed scores, has been memory-holed, just as was the Left violence of the 1970s, because its failure to cause change was an embarrassment for the Left.

A favored Regime tool today is judicial terror, which by contrast is celebrated, not hidden at all, because it is seen to be successful (as a result, the United States today holds far more political prisoners than any late Western Communist regime). Or to take an example of recent Regime terror outside the borders of the United States, we can look at the hundreds of church burnings in Canada over the past few years, endorsed by the filthy Justin Trudeau and Canada's entire ruling class and justified by referring to a proven hoax, that Canadian religious authorities maltreated students decades ago. More precisely, they are a combination of propaganda of the deed, intended to motivate further attacks on Christians, and terrorism, intended to silence Christians. Such violence will continue until the Left is finally and completely silenced, driven forever from our society. Comity with the Left is impossible.

I do ask myself sometimes, am I, in my own political radicalism, a type of mirror image of some of the men profiled in this book? Certainly not in terms of violence—leaving aside such violence is very difficult to justify morally, it simply isn't effective, as I keep harping on, not to mention that any right-wing violence would be punished a thousand times more harshly than any left-wing violence has ever been in America.

But I certainly want a wholesale reworking of society. Burrough says, following 1968, "For these activists, who might be called apocalyptic revolutionaries, there was a vivid and growing sense that the world was on the brink of historic, irreversible change and that the morally corrupt American government . . . was poised for imminent collapse." I mean, I make basically the same claim, don't I, even if starting from opposite premises? I like to think that I see clearly, and they saw, and see, through a distorted ideological lens. But one should always be wary of wishcasting and self-delusion. I suppose it doesn't really matter; my claim is that while the Regime is extremely fragile, we can do nothing to accelerate its collapse and a subsequent possible renewal. We will just see. Check back in five years!