

The Foundation “Victimas del Terrorismo en España” (Victims of Terrorism in Spain) and the program “Educar para la convivencia” (Education for Peaceful Co-existence)

María Mar Blanco Garrido

semblance Blanco Garrido at present works as an advisor for the Popular Parliamentary Group in the Chamber of Deputies. Since 1997 she has presided over the Miguel Ángel Blanco Foundation, in memory of her brother who was killed by ETA. Since 2012 she has also presided over the Victims of Terrorism Foundation. She has given numerous lectures.

Abstract

In Spain there has existed and still exists an important threat from terrorists, a result of the actions of both national (ETA, GRAPO) and international organizations (Al Qaeda, ISIS, among others). The Victims of Terrorism Foundation came into being in 2001 to provide integral assistance to victims of terrorism and support and collaboration with various associations and foundations of victims. One of its most important activities is the program, Education for Peaceful Co-existence, which takes testimonials of victims to educational centers. The adolescents who take part in this project later take part in the School Awards, “A City Free of Violence.” The testimonials of victims in the classroom have been adopted as part of the new basic curriculum in Primary, Obligatory Secondary and High School education. These also include transversal elements such as rejection of terrorist violence, respect and consideration for the victims and prevention of terrorism. These same elements are present in the new basic curriculum of Professional Studies.

Keywords: Spain, victims of terrorism, education centers.

Introduction

Today Spanish society, like many others, finds itself exposed to the threat of terrorism. However, this is not a new phenomenon. Since the 70s over 1,200 people have been killed by terrorist organizations in Spain. To these deaths we must add the large number of people who have been wounded, kidnapped, been the victims of extortion or have been forced to flee from their homes due to violence.

All terrorist actions have a profound effect on the victim's environment, beginning with the direct families: spouses, offspring, parents, siblings, who have also suffered grave consequences. In this sense, we must ask ourselves how many people have become widows, widowers, have grown up as orphans over the years or have lost a brother or son. Without a doubt there are many more people affected than it would seem initially.

Terrorist groups coerce State institutions by attacking authorities and certain collective groups (mainly the Armed Forces, the Civil Guard and the National Police Force), or by committing indiscriminate killings with the objective of killing the most people possible. The so-called political justification for these crimes makes it clearer still that terrorism represents a challenge for society as a whole.

Terrorism in Spain

The terrorism of nationalist ideology and the far left arose in Spain during Francisco Franco's dictatorship, within the context of opposition to the regime, and intensified during the Period of Transition (1975-1982), when the country established fully democratic institutions.

In fact, the majority of killings have taken place¹ after the Constitution of 1978², which guarantees fundamental rights and public freedom, and also concedes the various regions of the country broad autonomy, came into being.

The terrorist organization which has caused the most deaths in Spain is Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), whose name in Eus-

kera means the Basque Country and Freedom. Its objective is to establish an independent, socialist state in the area that Basque nationalists call Euskal Herria, a territory which would be made up principally of the Spanish provinces of Álava, Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya and Navarra, and the western half of the French department of the Atlantic Pyrenees.

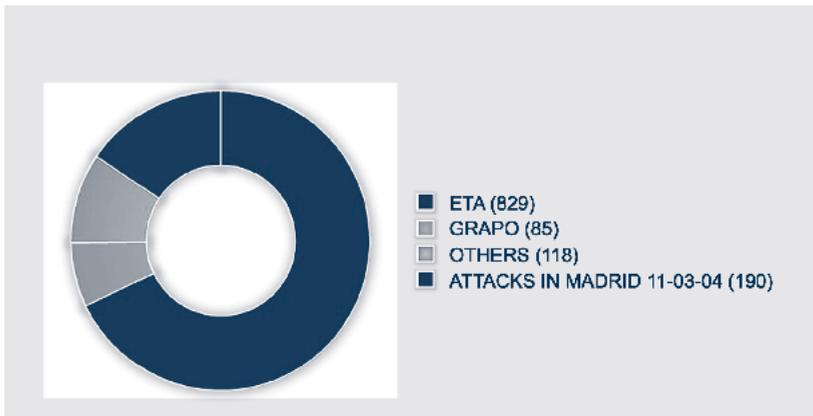
Eta was founded in 1958 as the result of a split in the Basque National Party Youths and its first victim was the baby girl, only 22 months old, Begoña Urroz, caught in the 1960 explosion of a fire bomb in the San Sebastián train station (Alonso, Domínguez and García, 2010). Eta did not claim responsibility for that attack, but they did lay claim to the one that killed Civil Guard José Antonio Pardines, killed while controlling traffic in 1968. Since then and up to 2011, the year in which Eta announced a definitive ceasefire of its armed activities, the terrorist organization killed over 800 people, including one president of the Government (Luis Carrero Blanco, in 1973). In 1995 they tried to kill King Juan Carlos I and José María Aznar who would win the general elections the following year.

The bloodiest attack took place in Barcelona in 1987, when a bomb in a car parked in a shopping center killed 21 people. Among the kidnappings carried out by the organization, one stands out, the kidnapping of Antonio Ortega Lara, a prison authority who was kept for 532 days in a tiny humid underground room beneath the Mondragón (Guipúzcoa) industrial warehouse. In response to his liberation in 1997 by the Civil Guard, ETA kidnapped and killed Miguel Ángel Blanco, a councilor of the Ermua Popular Party (Vizcaya). This

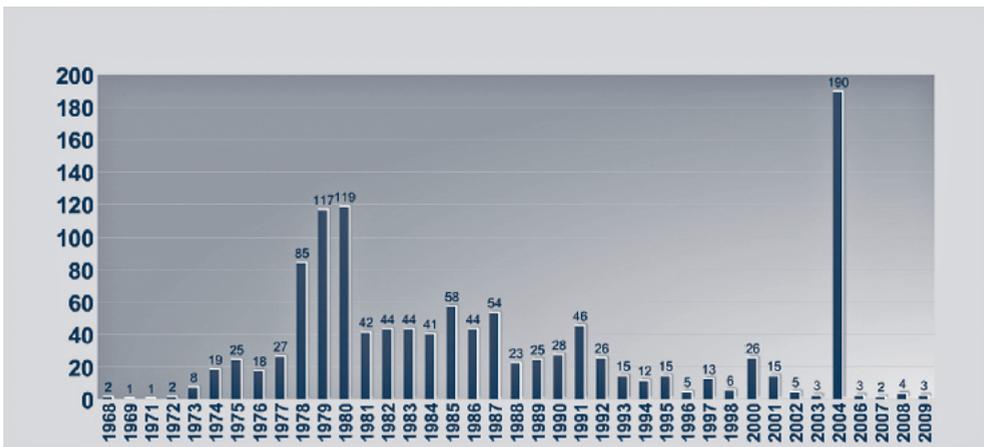
¹ In Spain there is a precedent of anarchist terrorism, very active at the end of the XIX and beginning of the XX centuries. Among the victims were three presidents of the Council of Ministers: Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1897), José Canalejas (1912) and Eduardo Dato (1921).

² The Constitution was approved in a referendum carried out on December 6, 1978. "Yes" was the majority option in all regions, although in the Basque Country there was a high percentage of abstentions, promoted by the National Basque Party. The 17 Autonomous Communities which make up Spain obtained approval of their respective Status of Autonomy between 1979 and 1983. The cities of Ceuta and Melilla, in North Africa, have also been autonomous since 1995.

Graph 1 Number of deaths caused by terrorist groups (Victims of Terrorism Foundation)



Graph 2 Number of deaths per year (Victims of Terrorism Foundation)



even brought on a widespread social outcry which became the turning point in the perception held of this organization up to that point.

Besides ETA, the Grupos de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre (October First Anti-fascist Resistance Groups) (GRAPO) also play a leading role in the history of terrorism in Spain, being responsible for the deaths of over 80 people. Their name is in reference to the date on which they carried out their first attack,

October 1, 1975, in which four members of the Armed and Traffic Police Force died: Joaquín Alonso, Miguel Castilla, Antonio Fernandez and Agustín Ginés. 1979 was the year that saw the most activity of this criminal organization, with ties to the Spanish Communist Party (Reconstructed).

The Antiterrorist Groups of Liberation (GAL), Terra Lliure or the Movement for the Self-determination and Independence of the Canaries Archipelago (MPAIAC) are some of the other terrorist groups which

Graph 3 Assassinations carried out by ETA (Victims of Terrorism Foundation)



Graph 4 Assassinations carried out by GRAPO (Victims of Terrorism Foundation)



have been active in Spain. More recently we see the Resistência Galega Organization (Gallego Resistance Organization), which is still active today.

With respect to Jihadist terrorism, the first attack committed on Spanish soil took place in 1985 in a restaurant in Madrid. However the greatest of these attacks has been, without a doubt, the attacks of March 11, 2004 in various commuter train stations, also in the capital of the country. 11-M as it is called is the largest terrorist massacre in the history of the country and one of the largest committed in the whole world.

That morning at rush hour ten nearly simultaneous explosions took place on four trains in use in Madrid. One of these was in the Atocha station, in the middle of the city. Another was just arriving at that station and the other two were on their way to that same station. The terrorists, who belonged to a cell of Al Qaeda, used various backpacks filled with dynamite. The explosions killed 193 people and injured nearly 2000. On April 3 various members of the commando were found in Leganés (Madrid) and upon realizing they were surrounded, they committed suicide

by blowing up the house where they were just as the Special Operations Group of the National Police began to storm the building. Agent Francisco Javier Torronteras was killed in this assault.

We cannot finish our brief history of terrorism in Spain without mentioning the present. The self-claimed ISIS, also known as Daesh, whose main fields of actions are Iraq and Syria, has repeatedly threatened to create a Caliphate from Spain to the Far East, thus embarking all of the territories which have or have had in the past populations which are mainly Muslim.³

The legal framework for actions in Obligatory Secondary Education and High School

The Council of Ministers recently approved Royal Decree 1105/2014 of December 26, which establishes the basic curriculum for Obligatory Secondary Education and High School. In the Spanish system, students between 12 and 16 years of age study under the Obligatory Secondary System and those between 16 and 18 study High School. The new curriculum includes rejection of terrorist violence, and respect and consideration for its victims and prevention of terrorism:

The Educational Administrations⁴ foster learning the prevention and peaceful

resolution of conflicts in all spheres of personal, family and social life, as well as the values which support liberty, justice, equality, political pluralism, peace, democracy, respect for human rights, equal respect for men and women, people with disabilities and the rejection of terrorist violence, plurality, respect for the rule of law, respect and consideration for victims of terrorism and the prevention of terrorism and any kind of violence. The teaching program should always include the prevention of gender violence, violence towards people with disabilities, terrorist violence and any form of violence, racism or xenophobia, including the study of the Jewish Holocaust as a historic fact.⁵

From the first to the third year of ESO (Obligatory Secondary Education), in the subject, Ethical Values, research on wars, terrorism, dictatorships, genocide and political refuges, among other themes, are included. In the fourth year of ESO, the subject of Geography and History covers the analysis of the problem of terrorism in Spain. Besides its beginnings, the history of terrorist organizations and the appearance of movements associated with the dense of their victims are taken

³ Between the years 711 and 1492, various Islamic states dominated the Iberian Peninsula, the Balearic Islands, and North Africa, where Ceuta and Melilla are located. The most important of these states was the Caliphate of Córdoba (929-1031).

⁴ The Educational administrations are the organs of General Administration of the State and the corresponding Administrations of the Autonomous Communities in matters of education.

⁵ The same thing is set down in Royal Decree 126/2014 of February 28, which establishes the basic curriculum for Primary Education and Royal Decree 127/2014 of February 28, which regulates specific aspects of Basic Professional Formation for the teaching of professional formation of the educational system. In the latter fourteen basic professional degrees are approved, the basic curriculum is set and Royal Decree 1850/2009 of December 4 is modified in reference to issuing academic and professional degrees related to teaching established in the Organic Law of Education 2/2006, of May 3.

up. In the subject Ethical Values, some of the new threats to peace and security in the world today, including terrorism are dealt with.

In the first year of High School, in History of the Contemporary World, the terrorist threat in today's globalized world, its effects on daily life, the organizations which are behind it, the most relevant acts, their symbols and repercussions on society are studied. The following year, in the subject of Psychology the reasons behind terrorist acts are explained, while in History of Spain the impact of the terrorist threat on the democratic normalization of the country, as well as the beginnings and evolution of various terrorist organizations which have acted from the democratic transition to our days are studied.

The same Royal Decree establishes that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and the Ministry of the Interior, in collaboration with educational administration and the Victims of Terrorism Foundation, "shall promote the dissemination of testimonials of victims and their account of the events among students."⁶

Victims of Terrorism Foundation and their actions in educational centers

The Victims of Terrorism Foundation is a public entity set up in 2001. It has its origins in the Agreement for Freedom and against Terrorism, signed the year before by the Popular Party and the Socialist Party of the Spanish Worker:

The victims of terrorism are our main concern. They are the ones who have suffered the consequences of fanaticism and intolerance most directly. We know that democracy can never return to them what they have lost, but we want them to receive the acknowledgement and attention of Spanish society. The Law of Solidarity with the Victims of Terrorism has been a unanimous and qualified expression of their moral and material recognition.⁷ But our obligations do not end here.

We must make an effort to preserve their memory, by establishing an everyday and permanent system of attention. Their collaboration with Spanish society in the fight against terrorism is still needed since there is no one better than the victims to defend the values of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect which those who have brought such suffering wish to destroy.

In order to promote this collaboration, both parties promise to push for, together with the associations of victims, the creation of a Foundation in which said associations which coordinate their activities are represented, along with the existing foundations.

This organization came into being to provide integral assistance to victims of terrorism and support and collaboration with the various associations and foundations for victims. On its Board are represented the government, associations and foundation of victims and private sponsors. The ex-president of Government, Adolfo, Suárez, was the Honorary President

⁶ The same is set down in Royal Decree 126/2014 of February 28 in which the basic curriculum for Primary Education is set down.

⁷ Law 32/1999 of October 8, on Solidarity with the Victims of Terrorism, was later complemented by Law 29/2011 of September 22, on the Integral Recognition and Protection of Victims of Terrorism.

of the Foundation until the time of his death on March 23, 2014.

Among its activities, the Victims of Terrorism Foundation developed, a few years ago, the program Educate for Peaceful Co-existence, which consists of taking testimonials of victims to the educational centers which ask, in order to contribute personal experiences and provide the students with a truthful account of events, promoting dialogue and participation. The first talk took place in 2002 in the Colegio Arzobispal de la Inmaculada y San Dámaso, in Madrid, and more than one hundred students were in attendance (Ratía, 2014).

Since then, more than 500 conferences have been organized in educational centers throughout Spain with the presence of victims of terrorism. Educate for Peaceful Co-existence is a pioneer project, begun in order to make young people aware of the need to repudiate violence, with a distant vision of hate and any desire of revenge or vengeance. It is estimated that over 100,000 students have benefitted from this program.

The talks last about an hour and a half and take place in auditoriums or large classrooms. Besides the students of Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO) and High School, to whom the talks are mainly directed, also professors and teams of directors of the centers attend. When the victims of terrorism finish their stories, it is time for questions and answers and sometimes the questions allow for delving deeper into debates on violence.

The coordinator of Educate for Peaceful Co-existence is the brother of Ramón Baglietto, a victim of terrorism, killed by ETA on May 12, 1980 in Alto de Azcárate

(Guipúzcoa), although the history of the crime goes back to September 22, 1962, as told in the book *Un grito de paz* (A Cry for Peace), the posthumous autobiography of a victim of ETA (Baglietto, 1999), and a documentary film "Trece entre mil" (Thirteen out of a Thousand), directed by Iñaki Arteta (Alson et al., 2010).

Although ETA has announced a definitive cease fire, the program Educate for Peaceful Co-existence is still necessary today, since the risk of the suffering of victims being forgotten still exists and there is danger of citizens', especially in the Basque Country, relativizing the responsibilities of terrorists and their accomplices, and to a certain extent justifying the law of silence which reigned there for many years.

After hearing the testimonials of the victims, the students embody their impressions in drawings and writing, which then participate in the Awards of the Victims of Terrorism Foundation, in the category called School Prizes, "A City without Violence". As set down in the bases of these awards which are given annually, the work presented must be centered on

aspects related to the goals of the Foundation itself, especially the promotion and dissemination of democratic values, the defense of human rights, plurality and freedom for citizens, as well as the promotion of a better understanding of the situation of the collective group of victims of terrorism.

Moreover, these prizes let the Victims of Terrorism Foundation evaluate the results of their teaching through the Educate for Peaceful Co-existence program. Up to

now, the degree of satisfaction has always been very high.

Education as a key factor in preventing violence and that is why the Victims of Terrorism Foundation dedicated its Summer School of July 8 and 9, 2014 to this theme, with the title "Justice and Education: the story of the victims", organized by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in San Lorenzo de El Escorial (Madrid). The Minister of the Interior, Jorge Fernández Díaz and the Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, José Ignacio Wert participated along with other important figures (Delgado, 2014).

Conclusion

Spanish society in general is especially sensitive to the situation of victims of terrorism since for many years they have suffered from the activity of various armed groups, both national and foreign. This situation resulted in an agreement reached in 2000 between the two main political parties of the country: the Popular Party and the Socialist Party of the Spanish Worker, which in turn brought about the creation, the following year, of the Victims of Terrorism Foundation.

This public organism since 2002 developed the program called Educate for

Peaceful Co-existence, which has allowed over 100,000 adolescents throughout Spain to hear the testimonials of those who were the victims of violence first hand or had lost relatives due to terrorism. The School Prizes "A City without Violence," for drawings and writing, is also linked to this project.

Educate for Peaceful Co-existence has had very satisfactory results, and in 2014 received the support of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, which has included "the dissemination among students of the testimonial of victims and their account of events" in the Royal Decrees which regulate the basic curriculum for Primary Education, Obligatory Secondary Education and High School. This measure is complemented by the presence of transversal elements such as repudiation of terrorist violence, respect and consideration for the victims and the prevention of terrorism, also applicable to Professional Formation.

This all responds to the conviction that education plays a fundamental role in preventing that part of society (specifically young people) justifies terrorist actions or even decides to form part of these murderous groups. It also entails recognition of the ethical and pedagogical values of the testimonials of victims of terrorism.

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