
UNIT 14 POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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14.1 INTRODUCTION

Political violence in most of the modern societies is the result of social tensions, which develop in them due to different reasons. Normally, political violence is directed against the state

because the state is considered the chief source of injustice and repression. As a result, different sections of society are taking recourse to violence to solve their problems. They are following violent methods because the state has failed to secure regular obedience from the people. Violence is a purposeful political action to register protest of certain sections of society against 'wrong' policies of the government. In modern times, revolution as a form of political violence is carried out to change the form of government and to transform social structure.

Political violence is a deliberate political activity, which has enormous ethical implications. It is pointed out by Aristotle that men do not revolt because they catch the cold. There are serious moral issues involved in it. Therefore, he said that the honour enjoyed by a political assassin cannot be compared with that of an ordinary murderer. The supporters of political violence justify it on moral grounds. They argue that they are fighting against bad government and for a just cause. The opponents of violence condemn terrorist activities for acting against the lawfully constituted government. Hence, one country's terrorist is a 'freedom fighter' for another country.

14.2 MEANING OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Political violence is a collective violent action of a group of people against the government to highlight its discontent. It may be a protest against a particular policy of the government, it may be used to remove a particular government from power, or it may be taken recourse to for the change of political system.

Aggression and violence have been a part of human history since long because men take to violence and aggression to secure things that they did not possess or to preserve things that they possessed. Normally, political violence is directed against the state, its property and men who manage its institutions. Political violence may begin with rioting or mass demonstrations. But it is always possible that it assumes different forms.

Aristotle was the first political scientist who discussed the nature and causes of political disorder. He pointed out that change in the balance of social forces in a particular state was responsible for political disorder. The Indian political thinker Kautilya (Chanakya) was of the opinion that change in the attitude of one's own people is revolt. It results from a wrong policy of the government and immodest behaviour of the king. Thus, since ancient times, political violence had caused disorder in the state and in modern times, the problem of political violence has become more marked and complex.

14.3 VIOLENCE AND STATE

We have seen in our discussion that political violence is largely directed against the state and its various institutions. Therefore, it is as old as the state itself. Violence is in built in the institution of the state. It has the monopoly of coercive power in its hands. The state exercises this power with the help of its repressive agencies such as the army, the police, jails and courts. It can punish people who do not obey its orders and who disturb law and order. The state claims authority to rule and it secures authority with the help of legal sanctions or popular sanctions. When the state exercises power, it is entitled to use legally sanctioned violence to enforce its order. More often than not, the state uses coercive methods, which are not sanctioned by law. The degree of use of violence differs from state to state, because ultimately it depends on the ability of the state to secure compliance of its order without using coercion.

Modern states are increasingly using violent methods because they want to bring about political integration of the country as well as to hasten the process of economic development.

14.3.1 Political Violence and Political Integration

The state is an institution of society and its prime function is to bring about social and political integration of the people. Ancient and medieval states allowed co-existence of multiple autonomous political authorities. The modern state wants to establish its total authority over people and the territory under its jurisdiction. In every state, there exist distinct cultural and ethnic groups and it is a desire of every state authority to amalgamate these cultural groups into a single political unit under a single central authority. Historically, this process has, with a very few exceptions, been one of extreme violence which has varied from the physical murder of whole sections of cultural minorities to their forced deportations, their forced religious and cultural conversion and large scale population transfers. This violence has been exercised by states on their own citizens or those it claims are its citizens and violence has been employed as an instrument of policy. The purpose of this policy was to extend state's political authority upon those who for one reason or another do not accept its authority as legitimate.

The modern state was built upon the demise of feudal and tribal communities, which were autonomous entities. Once this integration was achieved in West Europe, attempts were made there to control the arbitrary exercise of state violence by agencies of the state such as the army and the police and their immediate controllers: Kings, ministers, generals and bureaucrats. At present, most of the countries of Asia and Africa are undergoing this process; therefore, politics in these states is the most violent.

14.3.2 Political Violence and the Process of Economic Development

Historically we have seen that the state exercised violence in the early phase of economic development when there was a transition from a handicraft system based on agriculture to a relatively labour intensive factory system. During this period, a great majority of population suffered because of this change. The state used extremely violent methods to curb agrarian revolts of the farmers who were agitating against unjust policies of the government. It used its authority to protect private industries by curbing the rights of workers and by declaring trade unions illegal. For example, during the 'captain's swing troubles in rural England in 1830, when agricultural machines were destroyed, animals killed, crops destroyed and bricks burnt, the state arrested 1976 farmers, deported 481 farmers and executed 18 farmers. Thus, transportation, imprisonment, the lash and even death were the lot of those agitating against the inhumanity of the early factory system. The process of economic development, both in the planned and unplanned economies, involved the exercise of force because the new economy required capital formation by curbing the consumption levels of working classes. Thus, the attempts to achieve higher economic standards for certain classes of society produced violent reactions from those deprived classes who suffered.

In short, in the process of political integration and economic development, the level of political violence is extremely high. The state has considerably greater potential of internal violence than its citizens.

14.4 CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

There are many causes that give birth to political violence. Men take recourse to violence as a last resort. It is rightly pointed out by Aristotle that men do not revolt because they catch cold.

People decide to use violent methods when they think that their survival as a community is at stake and unless they fight against it, they will have to have to suffer no end. Normally, people exhaust legally available avenues to get their grievances redressed. But if the legal methods fail to deliver goods, people take to violence.

Following are some of the causes of political violence.

1) General causes 2) The Concept of National Self-Determination 3) Ideology 4) Religious and ethnic conflicts 5) Political conflicts between different groups of elites 6) Economic conditions and the concept of relative deprivation.

14.4.1 General Causes of Political Violence

We have seen in our earlier discussion that political violence has been a result of bad government. Kautilya in his '*Arthashastra*' said that wrong policies of the government and immodest behaviour of the rulers give birth to revolts of the people. Wrong and oppressive policies of the government create resentment in the minds of the people and the people rise violently to change the wrong policies. Excessive taxation, hike in the prices of essential commodities, deliberate disregard of law and morality in the exercise of power, unjust treatment meted out to certain sections of society, deliberate neglect of certain regions of the state, political incompetence and misgovernment and excessive and tactless use of force to put down peaceful agitation are the general causes of violence. Kautilya held that impoverishment, greed and disaffection are the causes of revolt.

14.4.2 The Concept of National Self-Determination

During the last two centuries, a large number of countries of Third World came under foreign control. They became colonies of Western countries. People in the Third world countries wanted to free themselves from foreign domination. Hence, they waged violent struggles against foreign rule. In modern times, the American settlers were the first to take to arms to free their country from British rule. We have numerous examples of such struggles in Afro-Asian countries such as Vietnam, Algeria and Indonesia. Due to the pacifist ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian liberation movement remained largely non-violent, though there were certain armed revolutionaries like Sawarkar Bagha Jatin, Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose in India also.

After the Second World War, a large number of Third World countries became independent. These countries faced the problem of nation building, as the process of political integration was weak. But there was increasing political consciousness in the minds of the people. Certain regions in these states who had a distinct cultural or religious identity demanded the right of self-determination for their provinces. The supporters of national self-determination movement called it a movement for national liberation while the opponents of these movements called them secessionist movements. In India, we are facing these type of movements in Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur and Assam. Most of the Third World countries are facing this problem. Even developed countries like Great Britain and Canada faced the problem of secession in Northern Ireland and Quebec respectively. The Irish Republican Army and the LTTE in Srilanka are the most dreaded separatist groups in the world. These movements are marked by excessive use of violence from both the sides. Thus, nationalism caused the emergence of national liberation movements as well as the movements for national self-determination.

14.4.3 Ideology

In modern times, ideology has played an important role in the spread of political violence. Ideology mobilises people and gives them a certain cause to wage struggle against the state. Ideology explains the present conditions of society and asks the people to change it to bring about a better system of governance. Most of the movements in modern times are ideological in character. Fascism and socialism were two such ideologies.

Fascist ideas became popular in Europe between the two World Wars. Fascists glorified force and violence and advocated the unity of interests of individuals with that of the nation state. Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany used the extreme form of violence to capture political power.

The ideology of revolutionary socialism moved a large number of people who were involved in violent revolutionary activities. The socialists stand for the abolition of the capitalist system, which is based on state violence. The socialists want to establish a classless and stateless society which would end exploitation of man by man. We have examples of successful revolutions like the Russian revolution, The Chinese revolution and The Cuban revolution. The socialists argue that they take recourse to violence to counter state violence. There are a large number of countries, which are witnessing violent socialist uprisings. India, Nepal, Indonesia, Burma are the countries that witnessed violent revolutionary activities by the socialists. In India, the Naxalites are involved in revolutionary political activities.

14.4.4 Religious and Ethnic Conflicts

Most of the countries of the world are inhabited by the people who adhere to different religious faiths and belong to different ethnic communities. Therefore, there are religious and ethnic minorities in most of the countries. Modern state is trying to bring them under a single central political authority. Religious and ethnic minorities resist this attempt because they fear that due to this political integration they may lose their separate identity. The moment force is applied to advance this policy these communities take recourse to resistance and violence.

Many of the West European countries witnessed religious conflicts during the 17th and 18th centuries. The conflict was between the Catholics and the Protestants. Now, modern European states claim that they are secular and they have achieved separation between the church and the state. But in many countries of East Europe, Asia and Africa, religious strife is common. Inter-religious conflicts take place between two religious communities, between Christians and Muslims, Jews and Muslims or Hindus and Muslims. There is intra-religious conflict within a particular religious community when a particular religious sect wants to purge the religion of corrupt practices. The fundamentalist groups, who want to purify their religion, take to an extreme form of violence. Those people who do not approve of this 'puritan' view of religion are considered as enemies of religion and an internecine warfare begins. Algeria, Egypt, Afghanistan and several Muslim countries are facing this problem.

Culturally and ethnically, modern societies are not homogenous. Cultural and ethnic minorities want to preserve their separate identity. Hence, they want to secure and protect their rights. These minorities are formed on the basis of race, language and culture. They take to violence if they feel threatened. Quebec province in Canada, Nagaland in India, Northern Ireland in Great Britain, the Chechens in Russia, Tibetans in China and Kurds in Iraq and Iran are examples of this. Minorities are concerned about their identity and majorities question their

political loyalty. In some cases like Srilanka, the struggle of minorities assumed the form of separatist violence, which culminated in insurrection.

14.4.5 Political Disputes between Different Groups of the Elite

Governing elite in each state consists of groups, factions, and these groups and factions are involved in power politics. These groups and factions use violent methods to secure support of the people by organising street demonstrations, communal riots and sabotage. A group, well established in the government uses coercive powers of state institutions to curb this violence. Political disputes among the elite may result in splits and divisions in the ruling group. The dissident group may incite violence against the ruling group or take help of a faction in the army to capture political power. Sometimes, the disgruntled leaders may support the secessionist movements. Many a times, the military take over is the result of such disputes. The Afghan history after 1972, military take overs in Pakistan and Bangladesh are examples of this type of politics. These military takeovers are often very violent and cause a large-scale bloodshed.

14.4.6 Economic Conditions and the Concept of Relative Deprivation

Economic conditions give birth to different types of political violence because they generate resentment in the minds of the people. It is the wrong policies of the government that favour certain sections of the society and push a large section of the people below poverty line. Due to the wrong policies of the government, there is growing inflation, declining living standards of the people, price rise, unemployment and non-availability of essential commodities in the market. These factors force people to take to streets and participate in violent demonstrations against the government. Workers, farmers, students and other sections of the society take part in demonstrations to protest against the policies of the government.

But it must be remembered that poor living conditions alone do not constitute a sufficient cause to give birth to violence. The workers and farmers must develop consciousness about it in their minds. When a section of people begins to believe, that it is being deliberately deprived of the valued goods to which it is entitled, it takes recourse to agitation. The sources of deprivation lie in social processes, which cause a gap between what people are entitled to and what they receive. In modern times, due to education, learning of new skills, new consumption levels and advertisements create a feeling of deprivation in the minds of the people. The feeling of relative deprivation thus gives birth to political violence. Low level of economic growth causes considerable resentment in the people. Even rapid economic development may lead to resentment if the fruits of growth are not fairly distributed among the different strata of society.

14.4.7 Support by Neighbouring Countries

Political violence, especially sustained political violence in a state always gets support from the neighbouring countries, which are hostile. The foreign country gives support in the form of arms, money, training and shelter. For example, political violence in Jammu and Kashmir is supported by Pakistan. America gave support to rebels in Cuba and Nicaragua and Libya and Iraq are accused of supporting the Islamic terrorist network.

14.5 FORMS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

There exist different forms of political violence, which people use to show their resentment and dissatisfaction against the government. It can assume a form of a violent demonstration or it

can be an epoch making revolution like the French revolution of 1789. We see the emergence of political violence in the following forms :

- 1) Violent protests by the people against the government
- 2) Terrorism
- 3) Military revolts and take overs
- 4) Revolts and Rebellion
- 5) War

14.5.1 Violent Protest by the People against the Government

Normally, people take recourse to violence when all the constitutional means available to them fail. The violent protests of the people assume different forms. The violent protests of unorganised mobs cause a large scale damage because they attack the symbols of government authority such as government offices, railways and buses. They try to disrupt normal functioning of the government. This type of violence is sporadic in nature and it dies down after registering protest. But, due to the violent riotings, the governments tend to amend their policies to avoid the spread of violence.

Those groups which are well organised mobilise people against the government and use different methods of resistance. They declare strikes, 'bandhs', and hartals. Sometimes, they organise violent demonstrations and morchas. If the central authority of the government is weak and it lacks legitimacy, a well organised demonstration may cause the downfall of the government. But this rarely happens. Otherwise, the impact of violent protests of the mobs is temporary in nature because the government uses repressive measures to control it.

14.5.2 Terrorism

In modern times, terrorism has become one of the important forms of political violence as a large number of young people join terrorist groups to bring about change in the government. The weapon of terrorism is used by terrorists because they know that they cannot launch an open war against the state as the state has a superior force at its command. But terrorists are determined to use violent methods because it is their opinion that opponents understand the language of the gun. Their power in society is also based on the gun. Terrorists use all sorts of methods to teach a lesson to the state authorities. Their activities start with blowing up of a bridge or breaching a wall of a dam. But in the process, they expand the area of their operation. They get involved in activities of sabotage, murder, killing a large number of people in sudden gun fire, hijacking of an aircraft or a bus, holding people for ransom, kidnapping, political assassinations, extortions, setting fire to places of worship and markets, inciting caste and communal riots etc. They succeed in harassing the state authorities because there is an element of surprise in their actions. The Irish Republican Army, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, various Palestine Guerilla outfits, Al Qaeda militants are some of the most violent and dreaded terrorist organisations. In India, we have witnessed activities of terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram. The Naga militants have been continuing their terrorist activities for the last 4 years. Through their activities, the terrorists want to establish a well-trained armed wing to carry forward insurrectionary activities. But most of them do not succeed. It is true that some terrorist organisations succeed in setting up their

own militias but they cannot fight a well-oiled regular army of modern state which is often supported by a super power. Guerilla warfare succeeds when the state authorities are extremely weak and when their writ does not run beyond the capital. In South Vietnam, the Viet Cong guerillas succeeded because of the weakness of the South Vietnamese state.

Terrorists take recourse to crime, but they are not ordinary criminals because they are ideologically motivated and they have a vision of establishing a better society. Terrorist activities are legitimised by their ideology. We can see three distinct phases of ideological orientation of terrorism. In its first phase, national independence was its goal. In the second phase after the Second World War, most of the terrorists owed their allegiance to revolutionary socialism and at present, their orientation is religious fundamentalism or ethnic separatism. Every terrorist movement has its own group of intellectuals who rationalise the use of violence.

14.5.3 Military Revolts and Take Overs

In modern times, the military or the armed forces of the country are playing an important role in the politics of the third world countries because they are the only well organised force available in societies which have not undergone the process of state and nation building. Involvement of military in political violence assumes two forms 1) the mutiny of soldiers and 2) military take over or 'coup d'etat'.

All over the world disgruntled elements in the armed forces rebel against the government. This revolt is called mutiny. Due to some economic or political reasons, the soldiers take to arms and get involved in violent activities. For example, in 1857 the Indian soldiers of the army of British East India Company revolted against the British rule and killed a large number of their British officers. Normally, a mutiny is always taken very seriously by the state authorities because soldiers possess arms and training and they are in large numbers. But if a mutiny has no ideological base, sooner or later it is brought under control by the state authorities.

The second form of political violence is the military take over by engineering a 'coup d'etat'. Military takeover is a sharp armed insurrection by a group of army officers to capture political power by establishing control over key installations of the state. It is a well organised operation in which masses are bypassed. If coup leaders are confident of controlling the situation, they may not take recourse to violence. For example in Pakistan, most of the military takeovers were bloodless. But if the coup leaders are not confident of their success, they indulge in an extreme form of violence to strike terror in the minds of the people. For example, in Bangladesh in 1975, President Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and his entire family were wiped out. The military coup in Indonesia in 1965-66 was extremely violent. All military takeovers in Afghanistan after 1973 were violent. In the military takeover, the masses are not involved and in many of the Afro-Asian and Latin American countries, the military displaces the democratic government and usurps power. Most of the dreaded dictators in these countries are military generals.

14.5.4 Revolts and Rebellions

We have seen that terrorist violence or even military revolts do not need the support of the masses. It is essentially an action carried out by a determined group of people. But revolts and rebellions take place because of popular disaffection. Revolts represent the anger of certain sections of society and they are aimed at changing the policy of the government or change in the government. The revolts may take place in different parts of the country and the demands of the rebels may be very specific. If the revolts are accompanied by a high degree of

organisation and with the tacit approval of wide sections of the population, one can say that they have assumed a serious form. It includes large scale terrorism and civil war. The revolt may develop into a rebellion.

Rebellion is the second stage of revolt in the sense that in this phase, the rebels are ideologically committed and they have developed a vision of future society. Due to the normally socialist or the nationalist ideology, they are supported by a large number of people. If the rebels are able to concentrate in a geographically peripheral area or the areas outside the efficient control of the state and if foreign support is available to them, the rebellion assumes the form of armed insurrection, which cannot be easily put down. The rebels normally use the tactics of guerilla warfare because they lack the military strength to counter state forces. To circumvent the armed superiority of the state, the guerillas try to win the support of the people through the ideological exhortations or through the promises of redistributive policy. They promise land to the landless, regional autonomy for ethnic minorities and political equality through the end of foreign domination. The revolutionary guerilla warfare succeeded in countries like China, Vietnam and Cuba but it failed in Greece, Philippines and Iran. Near perfect intelligence, mobility, freedom from fixed logistic bases and surprise are the characteristics of successful guerilla operations but increasingly due to strengthening of the state organisation and state forces guerillas have not been able to achieve the successes that they had achieved against weak states immediately after the Second World War.

14.5.5 War

War is the culmination of political violence in the sense that war brings forth two contending forces face to face with each other and settles the issue on the basis of balance of armed forces. War is as old as human history and violence and bloodshed are at the heart of it. There are two types of wars : 1) war with the external enemy of the country and 2) internal war, which takes place between the state forces and the rebels (civil war).

The external war causes widespread damage and destruction because both the parties use massive armies, modern weapons of mass destruction and air force. The First World War accounted for a million deaths and the Second World War was the most destructive of all wars. Atomic weapons were used by the USA to settle the issue.

Internal war is fought between the forces of a central government and the secessionist forces. It could be a revolt by a certain sections of the people or a rebellion by the broad mass of people. In the 1860s, the USA witnessed a civil war between the northern and the southern states on the issue of the abolition of slavery. Internal war is equally destructive and it may cause widespread destruction and massacres. We have examples of violent internal wars in Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Nigeria and India.

Thus, political violence assumes different forms in modern times. Revolution is also a particular form of political violence.

14.6 REVOLUTION

Revolution is essentially a modern phenomenon because it wants to bring about a total transformation of society. Revolutions are marked by widespread violence, social unrest and ideological commitment. The new revolutionary ideology is radical, rational, democratic and universal.

Modern revolutions are not confined to replacing a bad ruler with a good one but they have a modernist agenda of restructuring the entire socio-political order by the legitimate representatives of the community.

14.6.1 Meaning of Revolution

As we have seen, revolutions are aimed at changing the basic structure of society. They want to bring about a rapid transformation of the society's state and class structures. This is accompanied and carried through by the class based revolts from below. Modern revolutions differ from the earlier revolts in the sense that the latter did not think of basic changes in society and state and they were more interested in change in the government. Modern revolution has its goals clearly defined and its leaders use violence to consummate it. Its leaders are backed by a well-defined theory which seeks to legitimise revolutionary violence.

14.6.2 Three Phases of Revolution

We can say that there are three distinct phases of revolution. The first phase of revolution is the classical phase. The second phase of revolution is the socialist phase and the third phase of revolution is revolution in the Third World countries.

The classical phase of revolution began in England during the British Civil War of the 17th century that destroyed royal absolutism in England. It was followed by the French Revolution of 1789, which witnessed unprecedented violence and bloodshed. It destroyed feudalism in France and paved the way for the emergence of the modern capitalist society. The American Revolution ended foreign domination and established a modern constitutional democracy in USA. All these three revolutions transformed state organisations, class structures and dominant ideologies. The classical revolutions were followed by the socialist revolutions of the 20th century. It began with the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia. It was succeeded by the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and the Cuban Revolution in 1961. Ideologically, the leaders of these revolutions were more radical in the sense that they wanted to have a total transformation of social, economic and political structures. Though all socialist revolutionaries believed in Marxist philosophy and Leninist politics of international proletarian revolution, they followed different methods to bring about the revolution.

In the third phase, revolutions were witnessed in the third world countries. The Egyptian revolt of 1953 paved the way for the emergence of new politics in Arab countries. The Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979 was the last of the great revolutions, which tried to reorder Iranian society on the principles of radical Islam.

14.6.3 Theories of Revolution

There are three distinct theories of revolution. These theories probe causes, goals and consequences of revolution and throw light on the ideology that wins adherence of the people. The first theory of revolution is expounded by Ted Robert Gurr in his book '*Why Men Rebel!*' He says that revolution is a form of political violence and it challenges the monopoly of force possessed by the state. He is of the view that turmoil, conspiracy and internal war are the three features of revolution. The main cause of disaffection and rebellion is relative deprivation of the people. The more intense the deprivation, the greater is the degree of violence. He thinks that at first, there is discontent of the people, then there is politicisation of discontent and finally, its actualisation in violent action against the state. He holds that the discontented elite plays a major role in revolution.

C. Johnson tried to understand revolution as a systemic imbalance. He is of the opinion that revolution takes place due to the development of social imbalances and systemic disequilibrium. These imbalances are caused because of the changes in the values of people. The changes may also occur because of the environment within which the social system is located. These changes must be particularly sudden and intense. He points out that disequilibrium does not cause revolutions, as the systems can repair damage by taking corrective measures. He thinks that the first cause of revolution is power deflation. The process of power deflation takes place when the system fails to fulfill its obligations and it loses confidence and legitimacy. It has to use force to maintain law and order. Second cause is the inability of the legitimate leaders to effect 'synchronisation' to overcome power deflation. If they are unable to restore confidence, the ultimate loss of authority ensues and the use of force by the state is no longer considered legitimate. As a result, the state cannot justify its monopoly over the use of force. There is a sudden break in the effectiveness of the armed forces and commencement of special operations against the rebels.

The third theory of revolution is the Marxist theory, which believes in class warfare. According to Marx, our known history is a history of class struggle between haves and have nots and the contradiction between them come in the open in the capitalist state of development. The capitalists exploit workers by extracting surplus value from their labour and cause widespread poverty and misery. As a result, class struggle between the capitalists and workers becomes intense. In this struggle the state as an instrument of class rule supports the capitalist classes. The workers bring about a violent revolution. The purpose of the proletarian revolution is to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with the socialist system. Establishment of a classless and stateless society is the ultimate goal of the socialist revolution.

All these three theories point out that violence plays an important role in revolution because the revolutionaries want to challenge and end the state's monopoly over the use of force and they want to establish their own control over the state.

14.7 METHODS OF OVERCOMING POLITICAL VIOLENCE

In our preceding discussion, we have seen the nature and causes of political violence. In this part, we shall study methods of overcoming violence. The state uses three different methods to overcome violence which are as follows: 1) the remedial method of liberals which believes in reforms 2) the method of force and 3) the method of carrot and stick policy.

14.7.1 Methods of Reforms and Remedies

The liberals and reformers are of the opinion that political violence can be overcome by following necessary reforms in the social and political system. They argue that political violence is a part of our social and political process and it is built in the system as an antidote to the violence of the state. Hence, it is necessary that the government should take remedial measures to reduce dissatisfaction and anger of the people. Social and economic grievances could be remedied by initiating basic reforms in social and economic fields. It includes giving equality of opportunity to the people, reducing the tax burden, equitable distribution of wealth and removal of all disabilities imposed by the state and society. Just treatment to all sections of society is important.

The liberals believe in the method of education and they want to tell people that ultimately, the use of violence is irrational in the sense that it brought out the base elements in man. Human

beings have registered spectacular achievement, because they have learnt to control violence. Man has developed a new set of rules to resolve the conflicts peacefully. The economic compulsions in national and international economy would convince people that they could gain more in peace than in war. Violence cannot resolve the basic problems of society. Hence, the liberals want the people to learn the operation of constitutional machinery to resolve conflicts. They want minimum use of state violence to curb violence. They hold that the basic problems of society could only be resolved by consensus and contract.

14.7.2 The Method of Force

Those people who take recourse to the method of force believe that the rebels have consciously chosen the path of violence and they cannot be persuaded to abandon it. Violence of rebels can be countered by superior violence of the state, because if you cannot kill rebels, they will kill you. The state should strengthen its intelligence and try to penetrate the inner rings of terrorists. It should follow the policy of dissension and punishment and isolate and confuse the rebels. Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* suggested that the king should initiate action against the leaders of the revolt because it is the leaders who provide leadership to a revolt. In no case should he use force against the multitude of people because it may result in a widespread bloodshed. He should devise his response taking into consideration, the position of different classes of the people and should see to it that foreign support to the rebels is cut off. Though he suggested the use of force against revolt, he was quick to point out that the cause of revolt must be addressed.

14.7.3 The Policy of Carrot and Stick

The 'carrot and stick' policy is a dual policy, which aims at driving a wedge between the moderate and extremist elements in the opposition. The government can offer rewards and concessions to the moderates but at the same time, it can continue its military operations against the extremists. If the moderates are able to generate support for a deal with the government, the extremists lose the support and in the process, they become ineffective. But if moderates fail to generate support, the extremists may brand them as the agents of the government and destroy their support base. Hence, the method of carrot and stick has to be used very carefully.

The state can use different methods to overcome violence, but it must first try to remove the causes of revolt. Kautilya said that by merely killing the rebels, rebellion cannot be stopped. It is necessary to remove the cause that is giving birth to new rebels.

As we have seen, it is the state practices that give birth to violence because it is not rebels or terrorists who divided Ireland or drove Palestinians to exile or imposed white rule in South Africa or killed thousands of innocent men in Iraq. State violence is the womb of terrorism, betrayal and humiliation is its cradle and revenges its mother's milk. Therefore, the states, which are committed to their imperial interests by force, are unlikely to recognise that political violence and terrorism are both a response to their policies as well as an imitation of their style. The states should reorganise their policies on the basis of justice and fair play and stop continuing the oppression of classes, nations and ethnic communities so that the root cause of violence is removed.

14.8 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have studied different aspects of political violence in modern times. Political

violence is built in the political process itself, because the state seeks to monopolise the use of force. There are different causes of political violence, but loss of legitimacy of the government and inability of the political system to accommodate demands of different sections of society are the important causes. Religious and ethnic differences also play an important role in encouraging violence. Political violence assumes different forms including turmoil, sporadic violence and internal war. In modern times, revolution is an important form of political violence because it seeks to restructure basic social, economic and political institutions of the society. The state uses different methods to overcome violence. Those who support the democratic system argue that political violence can be overcome by redressing grievances of the people, by reforming the system and by devising constitutional remedies, which provide for peaceful resolution of social and political conflicts.

14.9 EXERCISES

1. What is the nature and scope of political violence?
2. How do the problems of political integration produce violence in modern society?
3. Why does economic development cause political violence?
4. What are the general causes of political violence?
5. Discuss briefly the role of economic conditions in the rise of political violence.
6. Bring out the main features of terrorist violence.
7. Briefly discuss the nature of military involvement in political violence.
8. Write a short note on war as a form of political violence.
9. Write a note on the theories of revolution.
10. What is the liberal method of overcoming political violence?