Trends. Counterterrorist and Human Rights Logic and Illogic

Editor
Human Rights Watch has strongly attacked the recommendation of the United States Commission on Terrorism to lift restrictions on the Central Intelligence Agency to recruit foreign informants who have been involved in serious human rights abuses. The rationale for the attack is that recruitment connotes that "anything goes" in counterterrorism--a perspective mirroring that of the terrorist in achieving political objectives.

However, recruitment is not comparable to murder. Recruiting a murderer to legally prevent or solve other murders is not comparable to murder. And recruiting to legally prevent or solve other murders ipso facto does not condone murder. Nor is recruitment in essence a condoning of murder.

On the other hand, counterterrorism and terrorism may at times be ethically and morally supported dependent on their desired consequences. To categorically reject both as potentially ethical or moral reifies a proscription over that which is merely human and thus dehumanizes. A justice code prevails over social justice.