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War in the Shadows: Deterrence and the Struggle Against Terrorism

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B.A., Saint Joseph's University, 1992

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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War in the Shadows: Deterrence and the Struggle Against Terrorism
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Mark Henry Lunardi, Captain, USAF

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2001

This thesis analyzes the potential utility of deterrence measures in minimizing the number and impact of terrorist operations. This study is composed of two parts, the first focusing on the theoretical aspects of deterrence theory, and the second concerned with the application of deterrence theory to anti-terrorism efforts. In the theoretical segment, the foundations and assumptions of deterrence theory are reviewed, and are subjected to a number of prominent criticisms focusing on the structure and utility of deterrence. This analysis reveals that while deterrence theory in its original conception is flawed, it is not without value. Indeed, by taking to heart its criticisms, deterrence theory can be reformulated to account for the psychological biases of an opponent, and expanded to include measures designed to reassure, as well as those meant to threaten. The thesis goes on to apply this "new" vision of deterrence to terrorism. By demonstrating the failure of current, hard-line deterrent policies such as military retaliation and economic sanctions, as well as the fallacy of adopting popular yet inaccurate assumptions vis-à-vis terrorists and their sponsors, the study seeks to reveal both the value and necessity of implementing a "carrot and stick" approach to anti-terrorism. Though some groups are beyond the scope of conciliation and must be held in check through forceful means, many others have demands and objectives which reflect genuine inadequacies in the status quo. As such, states should seek to deter terrorism not only through forceful measures, but also by doing their best to alleviate the underlying causes of hatred and dissatisfaction which lead to violence.

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

This paper began over two and a half years ago, on a dark night in the desert of Southwest Asia. I was assigned to the 28th Air Expeditionary Group which had been deployed to the Middle East in response to the expulsion of United Nations weapons inspectors from Iraq. Upon arriving at the desert base which was to be our home, we discovered that transportation problems had stranded our entire contingent of security forces either in Europe or back in the United States. The four of us who had been assigned as counter-intelligence/anti-terrorism support possessed the only weapons in camp, and so we became the de facto security forces. This is how I ended up walking the camp perimeter at 3 a.m. one morning, freezing cold, trying desperately not to disturb any of the indigenous population (consisting mostly of scorpions and camel spiders), and thinking that this entire endeavor was insane. Was I going to take on a marauding band of terrorists alone, armed only with my trusty 9mm handgun and memories of too many bad action movies? The thought seemed absurd; after all, I figured a determined terrorist could do significant damage whether we had four weapons or 400. Thinking back upon that incident it occurs to me that it was then that I began to give serious consideration to preventing terrorism, for thwarting the attack before it ever begins. My thoughts have since progressed beyond tactical consideration of developing and analyzing good intelligence data in order to spoil terrorists plans, and began to dwell upon strategic concerns, such as how to diminish the overall terrorist threat and to reduce the state support which these groups receive. It was then, as it remains today, my belief that terrorism can be significantly reduced, both in the numbers of incidents as well as the

seriousness thereof, through the application of a number of strategic and tactical methods. Among these measures should be efforts to move the struggle against terrorism away from confrontation and toward deterrence. To do so will require thinking "outside of the box," accepting that to accomplish this goal may require the application of certain measures which are somewhat distasteful. Nonetheless, I hope to demonstrate that in so doing we can vastly improve our chances of successfully combating terrorism. As Sun Tzu wrote, "For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill...those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle[1]."

As a phenomenon of international security affairs, terrorism has traditionally been relegated to a secondary role. Given the limited number of annual casualties and the generally recognized inability of terrorism to greatly affect world politics, it has frequently been studied only alongside other forms of "unconventional warfare" such as guerilla and insurgent tactics. Nonetheless, the emerging global realities of the 21st century clearly indicate that terrorism is a growing threat which can create significant instability in vital areas of the world. In testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February, 2000, J. Stapleton Roy, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, indicated his belief that the terrorist Usama Bin Laden and his network were "the primary threat to U.S. interests at home and abroad[2]." And in

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[1] Moore, John Norton, Deception and Deterrence in "Wars of National Liberation," State-Sponsored Terrorism and Other Forms of Secret Warfare, Durham, NC, Carolina Academic Press, 1997, page 24
[2] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States: Hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence, United States Senate, One Hundred Sixth Congress, Second Session, February 2, 2000, Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000, page 5

February of this year, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet testified to

Congress that he considered Bin Laden the current greatest single threat to U.S. national

security. While this may well be overstating the threat (indeed terrorist acts alone rarely

succeed in causing major political upheaval[3]), it points to the real danger which

international terrorism now represents. In 1998 the total number of people killed or

wounded from terrorist attacks was the highest to date, despite the lowest number of

actual attacks since 1971[4]. This tells us that terrorism, while more rare, is today even

more deadly. In addition, terrorism now operates in a world free of the superpower

struggle, a conflict which often worked to dampen terrorism. Islamic fundamentalism

now flourishes in numerous former Soviet republics, and indeed the ending of the Afghan

war has created a dedicated and well-trained cadre of Islamic mujahadeen. While

terrorism is still incapable of truly threatening American national security (or that of most

other states), its growing violence and proliferation does represent a serious menace to

the citizens and interests of many nations.

The scourge of terrorism is unique in the realm of international relations for a number of

reasons. First, it is a difficult phenomenon to define; one man's terrorist is another's

freedom fighter. In addition, there exists the debate over whether terrorist actions are

more properly viewed as criminal activity or as legitimate armed struggles which must be

confronted as such. There is also the tremendous difficulty of state-sponsorship of such

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[3] Hosmer, Stephen T. and George K. Tanham, <u>Countering Covert Aggression</u>, Santa Monica, CA, Rand, 1986, page 1
[4] Dishman, Chris, "Trends in Modern Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Volume 22, Number 4, (1999)

groups. While the United States may decry Iranian backing of Hizballah, many in the 1980s denounced U.S. funding of the Nicaraguan Contras, demonstrating a potentially damaging double standard. Finally, the most vexing problem which terrorism presents is the secretive and hidden nature of its members and activities. Regardless of whether one views terrorism as a crime or an armed attack, preventing and/or responding to attacks are extremely difficult. Terrorists operate in the shadows, blending in with local populations, meeting clandestinely, using tried and true techniques of compartmentalization and tradecraft to prevent disclosure of membership or plans. Thus any war which states seek to carry on against terrorism will necessarily be a war in the shadows. In its 1999 edition of Patterns of Global Terrorism, the U.S. Department of State describes terrorists as seeking "refuge in 'swamps' where government control is weak or governments are sympathetic[5]." The report goes on to argue that, in order to successfully combat terrorism, we must "seek to drain these swamps[6]." While much of the anti-terrorism policy of the United States and other nations is designed to eliminate these pockets where terrorism can hide, the methods employed are often heavy-handed and unable to meet the task. Much of what is done to "drain the swamps" serves only to move the terrorists' sanctuary from one location to another.

The policies proposed in this thesis are designed to use traditional methods of deterrence to convince state actors to remove the shadows in which terrorists hide. In addition, I believe these same techniques can be utilized, albeit in limited cases, to convince groups themselves to step out from the shadows and face the light of civilized international

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[5] U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1999, April, 2000, iii
[6] Ibid

affairs. Deterrence theory has a long history of both academic analysis and real-world

utility which allow for a thorough consideration of its application to combating terrorism.

Traditionally, deterrence has been applied to relations between states, and has focused on

preventing conventional military actions. Throughout the Cold War deterrence theory

represented a cornerstone of U.S. foreign and military policy. Through the maintenance

of strong and reliable conventional and nuclear forces, U.S. policy makers sought to deter

Soviet aggression, particularly in Western Europe. As the Cold War has faded into

history, and as new unconventional threats have emerged, we are left to question the

utility of traditional Cold War methods for dealing with these growing dangers. Many

would argue that the very nature of deterrence, and a number of the assumptions upon

which it is founded, make its application to terrorism extremely difficult, if not

completely inappropriate[7]. However, as early as 1984 Secretary of State George Schultz,

one of the last true "Cold Warriors", stated, "Our goal must be to prevent and **deter**

future terrorist acts[8]." While by no means a ringing endorsement for the full-scale

implementation of deterrence theory, Schultz's remarks do indicate an early recognition

of the need to take preemptive measures in order to prevent future attacks. Today some

argue that states faced with the threat of terrorism, notably state-sponsored terrorism,

must recognize that they are facing a military threat, and thus must take appropriate

measures to counter the threat[9]. No doubt a valuable tool in such a struggle is the time-

tested instrument of deterrence. This paper will seek to demonstrate the ways in which

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[7] Moore, page 75
[8] Stohl, Michael (ed.), <u>The Politics of Terrorism</u>, New York, Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1988, page 585; emphasis added
[9] Hanle, Donald J., <u>Terrorism: The Newest Face of Warfare</u>, McLean, VA, Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Inc., 1989, page 200

deterrence can be used effectively to reduce both state-sponsorship of terrorism, as well as the violent inclinations of certain types of terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this paper, and based upon comments previously made, I shall assume the dangerous nature of terrorism and the threat it represents to the national interests of a wide variety of states. Although likely incapable of truly threatening the existence of all but the weakest of state actors, the increasing violence and sophistication of terrorism demand that nations do all in their power to prevent attacks, and when necessary to respond to assaults. It is my belief that states which do not employ a method of deterrence among their arsenal of counter-terrorist weapons are doing themselves a great disservice. Deterrence can be a highly effective method for obtaining compliance from many states which support or sponsor terrorism, and can also be successfully utilized to undercut the violent tendencies of certain types of terrorist groups. However, neither of these goals can be accomplished through the implementation of "hard line" deterrent policies.

The type of deterrent measures which are to be used must include a serious consideration of the psychological factors which underpin state and group resort to violence. Relying on well-worn metaphors of terrorists as "madmen" and "barbarians" will gain us little in pursuing a deterrent policy. Not only are such generalizations most often incorrect, they foster an image of an adversary which can be dealt with only over the barrel of a gun[10]. While there is no doubt a reasonable place for forceful action, as we shall see, sole

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[10] Hanle, page 108

reliance upon such measures will do little to dissuade states and groups from employing the types of attacks which we often deem "mindless." Thus consideration of the underlying social, political, economic, and historical reasons behind such violent outbursts must be an essential part of any deterrent policy. In addition, deterrence measures cannot be limited to either military responses or economic sanctions. Again, constant use of such heavy-handed approaches is far more likely to exacerbate the problem and to gain greater sympathy for one's adversary. In short, some of the sticks we use must have carrots dangled from their ends.

The framework of deterrence which I believe will prove most effective against terrorist groups and their sponsors is one which seeks not only to alter the underlying tactical and strategic analyses which view violence as a useful and acceptable tool, but which also looks to make the maintenance of international peace and order a goal in which more states and sub-national actors have a stake. If a state which sponsors terrorist activity can be convinced through predominantly non-violent means that such actions are contrary to its interests then we stand a much better chance of dissuading it from continuing its undesirable actions. Much the same can be said for terrorist groups. While certain groups, particularly those espousing radical ideological or religious ends, will likely never be susceptible to this type of subtle pressure, many other groups which seek more "mainstream" goals can be undercut in this manner. By trying to include such groups as much as possible in the political structure it may be possible to reduce or remove the incentive for violence which they perceive to exist. In so doing states may be able to alienate adherents of violence from their support base, and may make foreign assistance

more politically and logistically difficult by painting such holdouts as rogues and criminals. In sum, I hope to demonstrate in this paper that a reworked deterrence theory, one with much greater reliance upon psychological considerations and reassurance measures, can be successfully grafted onto the war against terrorism, and can be successful in reducing the violence which such groups perpetrate.

In order to demonstrate the utility of deterrence vis-à-vis terrorism I have chosen to divide this thesis into two primary sections. I will begin with a review of deterrence theory itself, its history, assumptions, and application, as well as its critiques and deficiencies. In so doing I hope to reveal the most glaring shortcomings of this theory, those areas in which I believe it is most likely to fail when applied to international relations. Having analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of deterrence I will conclude this section with an attempt to synthesize the valid components of the theory with measures which take into account its critiques and failings. In so doing I believe a structure of deterrence will emerge which is stronger and more valuable than its predecessors, and which will be most useful when applied to terrorism.

My second section will focus on applying the model outlined in section one to current efforts to thwart terrorism. This section will seek not only to demonstrate the ways in which the new model of deterrence surpasses what could be accomplished by older versions, but also how its structure allows for the greatest possible impact on terrorist operations throughout the world. This discussion will include ways in which deterrence can be applied to both terrorist groups and state-sponsors, as well as ways in which it can

complement current efforts to curb violence. The ultimate goal is not to negate the value of ongoing measures to combat terrorism, but rather to demonstrate how a properly structured policy of deterrence can enhance what is now being done, and indeed how it may make the implementation of less-pleasant alternatives (such as use of force) less likely. In the end I believe that a counter-terrorist policy which includes a deterrent component will be more likely to reduce instances of violence and the emergence of new groups than will one which seeks only to deal with terrorism on an ad hoc basis. Nonetheless, such a deterrent model must recognize the unique nature of each terrorist movement and seek to find, where physically and politically plausible, compromises and inducements which can be offered so as to alleviate the underlying causes of violent behavior. As such, deterrence must include not only traditional "heavy handed" measures such as military force and economic sanctions, but also components of reassurance; it is vital that states use both sticks and carrots when seeking to deter terrorist activities. By combining traditional methods aimed at denying terrorists the ability to operate with efforts to deprive them of the political and social foundation of their struggle we stand a much better chance of achieving long-term deterrence. The two-part approach of this paper seeks to demonstrate both the theoretical utility of a new model of deterrence (one which incorporates a more balanced approach), as well as the empirical, "real world" use to which it can be put. While it is unlikely that any theory or policy will be able to put an end to terrorism once and for all, any contribution which may save even a single life is surely worth consideration. I believe this paper to be such an offering.

PART ONE: DETERRENCE THEORY

I.   <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Traditional deterrence theory has developed a generalized framework concerning the actions which one must take in order to deter an adversary. This construction is based upon a number of assumptions and beliefs which shape both the form and substance of this theory. Over time these suppositions, and the conclusions to which they lead, have been critiqued from a number of different directions and for various reasons. These criticisms have placed traditional deterrence theory in a new light and have, to some extent, undermined the foundations upon which it rested. There has also been a general decline in the perceived relevance of deterrence as the Cold War has wound to an end and the United States has emerged as the sole remaining superpower. In order to develop a more complete and rigorous conception of deterrence in the security realm, and to construct a deterrent framework suitable for application to anti-terrorism efforts, it is necessary to synthesize deterrence theory with a number of its leading criticisms. In so doing I hope to set the theoretical groundwork for the particular discussion to follow regarding deterrence and its utility in measures intended to prevent terrorist activity.

To accomplish this goal it is necessary to begin with a review of deterrence theory, its tenets and assumptions, and the various forms in which it has emerged. We will then proceed to an evaluation of a number of the leading critiques of deterrence theory in an attempt to expose the weakest points of this theory. We will then proceed to an

evaluation of ways in which deterrence can be modified in order to alleviate some of

its shortcomings. This modified conception of deterrence should prove valuable not only

for reconsidering traditional state-state relations, but also for enhancing current efforts to

thwart sub-national actors, notably terrorist groups. I firmly believe that deterrence can

be, and indeed is, an important instrument for managing international affairs; nonetheless,

it can only serve this role if we can account for a number of its most serious critiques.

II.   TENETS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF DETERRENCE THEORY

To begin we must ask the rather obvious question, "What is deterrence theory?" As noted above it is a strategy designed to convince another actor, in this case a potential enemy state[11], not to take a particular action. While the goal of deterrence may be as simple as the dissuasion of another from committing a particular act[12], the methods used to achieve this end are not nearly so uncomplicated. The crux of deterrence theory is its emphasis on altering another's assessment of their own interests. As such "[i]t seeks to prevent an undesired behavior by convincing the party who may be contemplating such an action that its costs will exceed any possible gain[13]." It is this emphasis on altering the cost-benefit analysis of an adversary which gives deterrence theory both its "clearheaded logic[14]" and its parsimonious nature. Deterrence theory is appealing in its simplicity; convince an opponent that the costs which will be incurred should he take a certain action outweigh any potential gain from such an action and he will be deterred[15]. Again, this logic seems as straightforward and uncomplicated as such theories come. The question then becomes one of *how* to alter the cost-benefit analysis of our opponents.

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[11] Traditional deterrence theory has concerned itself with using its methodology to control the actions of other state actors. While this paper contends that such methods may be useful against certain types of non-state actors, for ease of discussion the theoretical outline to be presented will refer to states as the focus of deterrent actions.

[12] Lebow, Richard Ned and Janice Gross Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," *The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 43, No. 4, (Winter, 1987), page 8

[13] Ibid, page 6

[14] Achen, Christopher H. and Duncan Snidal, "Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies," *World Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, (January, 1989), page 143

[15] Mearsheimer, John J., Conventional Deterrence, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1983, page 23

The clearest method is by way of threats. As Timothy Van Gelder has put it, "Deterrence aims at peace via the threat of war[16]." Deterrence has thus traditionally relied upon considerations of military force and its threatened use in order to alter the thinking of an opponent. The utility of such an emphasis is plain; no other activity can so clearly and directly impact a nation as use of force against it. While threatened economic and/or political sanctions may also raise the costs associated with a given action, they do so in far less direct, measurable, and immediate ways than does armed intervention. The threats which one imposes in a deterrent relationship are designed to create certain levels of fear, apprehension, and uncertainty in an adversary, with the hope that doing so will cause him or her to reconsider their actions and to alter the value sets used to determined the utility of various options[17]. As such, military force is the most effective method for inducing such trepidation and insecurity. Of course, as Van Gelder's quote indicates, the overall hope is that any actual military engagement can be avoided. Thus the threats which a state uses to bolster its deterrent stance can be, and often are, merely bluffs. Nonetheless, whether or not a given threat is a bluff is almost irrelevant; what matters is only the level of fear that is engendered in the enemy. In short, what is crucially important is that the enemy does not believe one is bluffing (or, at the very least, is sufficiently unsure as to avoid risking the potential consequences). Again though we are left with the question of how to achieve this end. How do we make our threats believable? It is at this point in the logical chain of deterrence theory that we must begin to consider the assumptions upon which this theory rests.

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[16] Van Gelder, Timothy J., "Credible Threats and Usable Weapons: Some Dilemmas of Deterrence," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 18, Issue 2, (Spring, 1988), page 159
[17] Sadurska, Romana, "Threats of Force," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 82, Issue 2, (April, 1988), page 241

The first assumption which should be noted is that of rationality. Deterrence generally proceeds from the belief that decision makers on both sides operate in a rational manner[18]. The necessity of this assumption is clear; if a state (or more properly its leaders) is not bound by rationality it is unlikely that the logic of cost-benefit analyses will be sufficient to deter a given action. Indeed, an irrational actor may be willing to risk seeing his or her nation destroyed in the pursuit of glory or power. Such actors would clearly be undeterrable, and thus would fall outside of the scope of deterrence theory. It should be noted that deterrence theory does not necessarily deny the existence of such actors, but merely places them outside of the context of deterrence. Again this is necessary in order to maintain the basic logic of deterrence. It is not that irrational actors cannot make the necessary cost-benefit calculations, only that these calculations will be of little or no value in guiding their ultimate decisions. Conversely, rational actors when faced with a pessimistic analysis of potential gains versus potential costs will conclude that the proposed action is simply not worth it. Rationality is thus a key component of most schools of deterrence; however, as we shall see, it is far from a guarantee of success.

A second assumption is the importance of clear signaling between parties. Such clarity is essential in order to convey to an opponent exactly what action is prohibited. If the enemy does not know what we seek to deter it is far less likely that we will be able to prevent such actions. Many argue that the United State failed to fully understand what

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[18] Jervis, Robert, "Deterrence and Perception," *International Security*, Vol. 7. No. 3, (Winter, 1982/1983), page 73

actions the People's Republic of China sought to deter in the winter of 1950 as U.N. forces approached the Yalu River[19]. Many U.S. officials believed the PRC to be concerned with a possible incursion against China, an action the U.S. had no intention of taking. In fact, the PRC did not wish to allow U.S. control of the entire Korea peninsula, thereby indefinitely placing American forces on China's border. Similarly, the signals used to convey the threatened penalty for a prohibited action must be clear in communicating both the seriousness of one's demand and the commitment one has to carry through on the threat. Using the previously cited example, even had the U.S. been entirely clear on Chinese opposition to the march to the Yalu, American leaders may well have allowed the offensive nonetheless, believing the Chinese either incapable of, or unwilling to, retaliate. In a similar vein, it is possible that prior to the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950 both North Korea and the Soviet Union may have believed that the U.S. would be unable or unwilling to respond to such an action. This belief may have stemmed from a U.S. failure to clearly include South Korea in its defensive perimeter in Asia. Forty years later Saddam Hussein likely made a similar error upon invading Kuwait, mistakenly believing that the U.S. either could not or would not act. If one's adversaries do not know what they may not do, or do not believe that a state can or will take the threatened action in response, deterrence is greatly (if not fatally) weakened.

A further assumption which arises from the necessity for clear signaling is the strength and believability of a state's commitments. Indeed, credibility has been referred to as the

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[19] Schelling, Thomas C., <u>Arms and Influence</u>, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1966, pages 54-55

"magic ingredient" of deterrence[20]. While a state's capabilities may be clear for all to

see, it is irrelevant if that state is not believed willing to use these resources. Thus, "[t]he

need to demonstrate will remains regardless of one's capabilities or the capabilities of an

opponent[21]." Indeed, above all else, credible commitments become the most critical

means for deterring potential aggression[22]. "Even clear superiority provides no guarantee

that [the] antagonist will be dissuaded if the defender appears" likely to back down[23].

This is so because even if a deterrer state has sufficient capabilities to take the threatened

retaliatory action, and even if this state clearly conveys what it seeks to deter and its

alleged commitment, if the potential aggressor does not believe these statements to be

credible it is unlikely to be deterred. Commitments, and conversely threats, must be

believable, both from the standpoint of capability and will. In order to effectively deter

an adversary one must combine ability with *believable commitments*. When dealing with

instances of possible actions against one's own territory or citizens, the credibility of

one's commitments are normally taken for granted (thus few do not believe that the U.S

would act in response to an attack against California or New York). Where the

credibility factor comes into greater question is when a state seeks to deter a more remote

action, such as an attack on an ally, a violation of international law, or an unconventional

attack against its citizens or interests abroad. The key point of the credibility assumption

is that mere strength and clarity of communication alone are insufficient for effective

deterrence. An adversary must believe that we are as committed to a particular response

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[20] Kilgour, D. Marc and Frank C. Zagare, "Credibility, Uncertainty, and Deterrence," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 35, Issue 2, (May, 1991), page 305
[21] Dauber, Cori Elizabeth, Cold War Analytical Structures and the Post Post-War World, Westport, CT. Praeger Publishers, 1993, page 139
[22] Lebow & Stein, page 10
[23] Russett, Bruce M., "The Calculus of Deterrence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (1963), page 107

as we claim to be in order to make the proper cost-benefit analyses. If they do not believe the costs with which they are threatened will be incurred then they will not take great account of them when deciding upon a course of action.

A corollary to the assumption of credibility is that of reputation and the interdependence of one's actions. Deterrence theory is greatly concerned with the reputation a state possesses in the international arena and what this means for its ability to enact credible commitments[24]. The importance of reputation is directly linked to the need for credibility; if a state has a reputation for weakness or a failure to fulfill its commitments it will find it more difficult to deter others. Conversely, states with a reputation for making good on their pledges may find deterrence easier due to the inherent believability of their promises. This of course leads to the interdependent nature of commitments. Deterrence theory argues that a failure to stand firm in a situation in which one has pledged to do so may bring immediate peace, but only at the cost of future security[25]. States which fail to carry out their threats and/or obligations will be viewed as unlikely to do so in the future. Thus will be weakened subsequent commitments which these states make, with the result of making deterrence much more difficult. This assumption is composed of two sub-arguments, 1) that the actions which states take cause reputations to be formed regarding their inherent nature, and 2) that other states will use these reputations as predictors of future actions[26]. While we shall see that not all analysts of international affairs agree with these conclusions, it is important to note the central role that they play in traditional

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[24] Jervis, Robert, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, <u>Psychology and Deterrence</u>, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985, page 9

[25] Jervis, Robert, "Deterrence Theory Revisited," *World Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 2, (January, 1979), page 304

[26] Copeland, Dale, "Do Reputations Matter?," *Security Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (Autumn, 1997), page 36

deterrence theory. For strict adherents to deterrence, reputations are essential

mechanisms for conveying the credibility and seriousness of one's commitments. Status

as a strong state willing to sacrifice in defense of its obligations is far more likely to lead

to successful deterrence than is recognition as a weak-willed actor given to

accommodation and surrender.

III.   VARIATIONS IN DETERRENCE THEORY

We can thus view deterrence theory as being composed of a number of basic tenets and assumptions: 1) the rationality of actors on both sides, 2) the necessity of clear signaling between parties, 3) the importance of making strong and believable commitments, and 4) the significance of states' reputations and the interdependent nature of their actions. These core principles lie at the center of the majority of formulations of deterrence theory. However, it is worth noting at this point that the variations of deterrence theory are numerous, and the implications for each variant are diverse. Perhaps the most glaring divergence in deterrence theory has been between conventional and strategic, or nuclear, deterrence. Conventional deterrence looks to traditional military means to deter an adversary while nuclear deterrence places atomic weapons at the center of its efforts. Though nuclear deterrence can be, and has been, used to deter both a potential atomic or conventional attack, conventional deterrence is much more limited in its ability to thwart conflict. As such, the incentives for an opponent to attempt to defeat conventional deterrence are greater since the costs appear more manageable and the risks more acceptable than when faced with nuclear retaliation[27]. Nuclear deterrence faces its own unique conundrum in the so-called "paradox of credibility[28]." The problem is that because a nuclear exchange would be devastating to both sides threats to use these weapons may be inherently unbelievable. Because a nuclear-equipped adversary may have doubts as to one's willingness to risk utter annihilation the intrinsic credibility of

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[27] Kolodziej, Edward A., "The Limits of Deterrence Theory," *The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 43, No. 4, (Winter, 1987), page 132
[28] Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, page 219

our own atomic threats is weakened. Similarly, even against non-nuclear opponents, the international political and moral aversion to such weapons may make them unusable, and thus any such threats incredible. So we see that each of these variants has its own unique problems.

Another variation exists between basic and extended deterrence. Basic deterrence is, simply put, efforts to forestall actions against one's own territory. By contrast, extended deterrence represents attempts to prevent actions against a third party. As applied to the question of terrorism, we might also view such deterrence as applying to our diplomatic and military installations and personnel abroad, as well as our overseas citizenry. Where the principles of deterrence become tricky in this dichotomy is in creating and signaling a sufficiently credible commitment to defend extended interests. In basic deterrence it is axiomatic that a state will take action to defend its own territory, and that it will take appropriate retaliatory measures. What is not so clear is the extent to which any state is willing to risk hostilities in order to protect a third party[29]. This leads to increased difficulties in formulating threats and commitments which will be believable, as well as in finding ways to clearly communicate one's desires and intentions vis-à-vis the protectorate entity. The question of credible commitments to third parties also gives rise to an increased role for reputation. Though our actions in defense of our allies may not cast any doubt upon our perceived willingness to defend ourselves, they may indeed call into question our readiness to protect other allies. Such beliefs are often seen as one of the principle motivations behind U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. Extended

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[29] Schelling, page 35

deterrence thus requires an increased emphasis on reputational concerns, as well as on the creation of credible threats.

A final distinction which arises between differing forms of deterrence is that of general versus immediate deterrence. General deterrence is a system of commitments designed to prevent an adversary from taking certain long-term actions; for example U.S. efforts to deter Soviet moves into Western Europe. These types of efforts involve a wide variety of components, political, military, economic, social, etc., designed to maintain the general status quo. Immediate deterrence, in contrast, seeks to prevent an impending (or seemingly impending) action by an opponent. These situations take on more of an air of ad hoc measures designed to prevent an undesirable action that appears imminent. The principles of deterrence are far more urgent, and under greater strain, in a situation of immediate deterrence. Communication cannot be excessively nuanced, threats and commitments must be made absolutely clear, and must be so done in short order. In addition, if the defender fears having a reputation for weakness it must take urgent measures to shore up its image and to convey absolute resolve. Finally, the existence of an immediate deterrence situation may well indicate the failure of previous general efforts. It may represent limits on the rationality of the aggressor, or his lack of faith in one's stated commitment to prevent a given action. This difference is important in dealing with terrorist groups and their sponsors. General deterrence can be used with relative effect to decrease the perceived need of states and groups to resort to violence; where deterrence will clearly be ineffective is in halting an imminent attack, a task which can only be accomplished by good intelligence and appropriate defensive measures.

IV. CRITIQUES OF DETERRENCE THEORY

While the above is by no means an exhaustive or complete review of all facets of

deterrence theory, it should provide sufficient background to allow for the next phase of

our analysis, namely the critiques of this theory. There are those who argue, as we shall

shortly see, that deterrence is not only an ineffective means of avoiding conflict, it is, in

fact, an almost guaranteed method for bringing about such confrontation. Though

criticisms of deterrence vary greatly and can be categorized in a number of different

ways, for the purposes of this analysis I have chosen to review those which constitute

three types of critiques[30]: those focusing on the psychological components of deterrence,

those which fall into the spiral model, and those which question the importance of

reputational issues. Many of these criticisms could negate any utility which deterrence

theory holds in security affairs. Others, while not necessarily spelling the death knell for

deterrence, do call into question some of the basic principles upon which deterrence

policies are founded. By reviewing the most significant of these objections it may be

possible to emerge with a strengthened, if somewhat modified, formulation of deterrence.

Psychological Factors

The first grouping of criticisms focuses on the psychological school of international

affairs. We noted that the rationality tenet of deterrence meant that not only could the

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[30] It should be noted that these categories are of my own creation and do not necessarily represent any "official" schools of thought on the issue of deterrence. Those which I have chosen I use for ease of argument.

parties make the appropriate cost-benefit analyses, but they would also follow the course of action which provided the greatest possible utility value. The psychological argument presents serious doubts as to the ways in which even rational persons are assumed to behave. The crux of this argument is that "actors' perceptions often diverge both from 'objective reality'...and from the perceptions of other actors[31]." Rationality thus assumes not only a capability of reason but also a likeness of thought; herein lies the problem. Studies of instances of attempted deterrence appear to indicate that "initiators frequently distort information about the expected costs of military action, the probability of winning, and the probability the defender will retaliate[32]." The inability of deterrence theory to account for the inherent psychological qualities which influence human decision making, and its belief in full rationality and clarity of thought, lead some detractors to sense a great weakness in the overall framework of deterrence.

In their text <u>Psychology and Deterrence</u>, Robert Jervis, Richard Lebow, and Janice Stein have put together a remarkable review of the myriad ways in which human nature leads us to betray the straightforward thinking which deterrence so often assumes. The authors note two fundamental types of errors to which leaders are susceptible, motivated and unmotivated biases[33]. Unmotivated biases consist of those methods which human nature devises of its own accord in order to process the deluge of information and experiences with which we are faced everyday. These biases are not constructs of the individual and do not represent conscious or unconscious attempts to skew reality. Among the types of

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[31] Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," page 57
[32] Lebow, Richard Ned and Janice Gross Stein, "Rational Deterrence Theory: I Think, Therefore I Deter," *World Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, (January, 1989), page 215
[33] Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, page 4

unmotivated biases are cognitive predispositions, representativeness and availability. Cognitive predispositions are those biases which cause us to see the world through certain theoretical frameworks devised so as to simplify the massive amount of information which we must process. We tend to see what we believe we should see. Representativeness and availability focus on the human ability to categorize and process information. Our inferences are often affected by the ease with which various patterns come to mind; we tend to place event A in category X if category X comes to mind more easily than category Y. In addition, we are apt to recall those events which have taken place most recently[34]. Again, unmotivated biases are essentially the natural methods which the human mind has to bring order to a chaotic world. Nonetheless, these predispositions can greatly affect the ways in which information is sent, received, and processed in a deterrent relationship.

A second type of bias is the category of motivated biases. As its name indicates, motivated biases are less a factor of inherent human nature and are more closely related to the human desire to see the world as we wish it to be. Unlike unmotivated biases which "can be explained…by the workings of our cognitive processes…trying to make sense out of a complex and ambiguous world[35]," motivated biases are prompted by "affect and the subconscious need to see the world in certain ways[36]." Motivated biases can act upon decision makers in many ways. The needs of individuals and the states they lead can affect the way they view other states (enemy or ally), the type of threat they may

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[34] Ibid, pages 18-24
[35] Ibid, page 25
[36] Ibid

pose, and the best way to respond. In addition, as leaders become committed to certain policies, they will often filter out information which does not support these policies and be more likely to view a particular course of action as potentially successful, despite evidence to the contrary. Additionally, national leaders often believe that messages, whether explicit or implicit, which they have sent were received and interpreted as intended[37]. There is thus a general assumption of signaling clarity and believability which may not be warranted. Strangely, there is little evidence that national leaders systematically ignore empirical facts. When there are goals we desire we often find ways of making ourselves believe them attainable. Bad news is often mentally screened out, a phenomenon often bolstered by the intentional acts of subordinates who modify or withhold negative information so as to make reports more pleasing to superiors[38]. In the years preceding the Nazi invasion of Poland, the United Kingdom wished to avoid facing its domestic divisions over confronting Germany, and thus found reasons to steer clear of a deterrent situation with Hitler that might have led to war[39]. Such motivated biases thus work against the smooth and logical processing of information and decision-making which are at the heart of deterrence theory. These psychological factors are often seen as representing serious flaws in the logic of deterrence.

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[37] Ibid, pages 25-33
[38] Jervis, "Deterrence Theory Revisited," page 309
[39] Krell, Gert, "Groping Toward Synthesis? A Fresh Approach to Deterrence Theory," *The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 43, No. 4, (Winter, 1987), pages 112-113

The Spiral Model

 The second strand of criticism is the spiral model of security relations. This theoretical

school of thought takes a very different approach to relations between states than does

deterrence. While deterrence emphasizes the need to possess sufficient capabilities to

make strong and believable commitments in order to deter a potential aggressor, spiral

models view these very actions as undermining peace between states. Under this model,

efforts which one state takes to reinforce its military capabilities will be viewed by the

alleged aggressor not as a sign of the deterrer's determination to maintain the status quo,

but as a threat of hostility from the defender. As such, the potential adversary will, in all

likelihood, take measures to increase its own resources for confrontation, moves which

will no doubt be taken as confirmation of this state's antagonistic intent. Thus will the

defender feel it necessary to take even greater steps in preparation for possible conflict,

steps which will be seen as belligerent by the second state. So begins an escalation spiral

whereby each move by one side, though intended only to ensure the maintenance of the

status quo, will be interpreted as an act of hostility by others. This spiral can lead, and in

fact has led, to open warfare, a result which deterrence seeks to avoid.

The vastly different views which deterrence and spiral models have regarding essentially

the same sets of policies lie in a divergence in fundamental assumptions. Whereas

deterrence theory presumes a gain-seeking intent on the part of the enemy, spiral models

view both states in the relationship as essentially security-seeking[40]. Thus deterrence

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[40] Lebow and Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," page 40

theory believes that one's enemies are looking for any and all opportunities to grab whatever they can, and that they will only be prevented from doing do by making the costs of such actions outweigh the potential gains. Conversely, spiral models hold that states are, for the most part, simply attempting to ensure their own security against external threats. As such, states are not likely to be looking for a moment of weakness by the defender in order to exploit it. Instead they seek only to guarantee their own integrity, and are thus apt to interpret deterrent measures by the defender as real threats to themselves. In such a situation, deterrent policies are not only ineffective, but are likely to intensify an adversary's fear for its own security[41]. Adherents of the spiral model often argue that it was this effect which led to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Though the Kennedy administration enunciated its strategic superiority as a means of deterring Soviet advances, these statements forced Nikita Khrushchev to devise a method for closing the gap. Many believe it was in an attempt to achieve strategic parity with the U.S. that Soviet missiles were placed in Cuba, not, as was believed, in an attempt to realize a first-strike capability. In such situations states might lash out against a defender, not out of desire for conquest, but out of fear of not acting in time. Rather than emphasizing strength and clarity of commitments as does deterrence, spiral models point to policies of reassurance as the best hope for avoiding conflict. When faced with an adversary which seeks only its own security, the most effective means of maintaining the status quo is to assure this state that they have little to fear from one's intentions, and that indeed the safest route is maintenance of the current situation[42].

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[41] Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, page 226
[42] Lebow and Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," pages 41-63

Reputational Questions

The third grouping of criticisms focuses on the reputational assumptions of deterrence

theory. While these criticisms do not so much call into question the overall utility of

deterrence, they do cast doubt upon one of its principal components, the interdependence

of a state's actions and the value of its reputation. One of the most resounding critiques

of this belief is Jonathan Mercer's Reputation and International Politics. From the outset

Mercer makes it clear that states "should never go to war because of...reputation...it is

wrong to believe that a state's reputation for resolve is worth fighting for[43]." Such logic

flies in the face of conventional deterrence wisdom, which emphasizes the need for states

to maintain a reputation for standing firm in their commitments if for no other reason

than to convince adversaries of the strength and reliability of their future commitments[44].

In contrast, Mercer argues that this belief in the value of reputations assumes that one's

enemies will make one, sweeping judgment about a defender's resolve without any

differentiation between commitments. In short, it assumes that the Soviets believed there

to be no difference in importance to the United States between South Vietnam and West

Germany. When placed in this context, such an assumption seems clearly false. Friend

and foe alike are clearly capable of making distinctions between those interests in which

we have a high stake, and thus great credibility (i.e. West Germany), and those which are

of less importance (i.e. South Vietnam). Thus backing down in one area does not

necessarily mean a commensurate loss in credibility for defending another area.

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[43] Mercer, Jonathan, Reputation and International Politics, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1996, page 1

[44] Schelling, pages 55 & 124

Similarly, as previously noted, it is highly unlikely that any lack of commitment by a defender would lead an adversary to believe that the state would not defend itself from attack. Thus there may well be far greater latitude in acting than deterrence might lead us to believe; not all (if any) commitments are interdependent[45].

Mercer goes on to make a further argument against the need for reputational concerns. His additional logic is based upon certain psychological factors which affect how humans perceive one another. He elaborates an explanatory structure of reputations which demonstrates a number of fallacies in the deterrent belief system. The first of these is that behavior is explained solely in dispositional terms; in other words that we explain another's actions by the type of person they are. Mercer instead sees a greater role for situational explanations that focus not on a state's "type", but on the realities with which it was faced in a moment of decision[46]. Second, Mercer notes that not all states will interpret the same actions the same way. He notes some might see the U.S. failure to land troops in Haiti in 1995[47] as a sign of weakness, others as a sign of patience and maturity[48].

What follows from these principles is a framework which places far less reliance upon the need to maintain a reputation for strength and resolve. Using his dispositional/ situational distinction, Mercer argues that states cannot lose "face" by backing down

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[45] Mercer, page 9
[46] Ibid, pages 8-9
[47] Mercer here refers to the failure of the Clinton Administration to take direct military action to oust the Cedras regime; U.S. forces did later land in Haiti following an agreement to end Cedras' rule.
[48] Ibid, page 9

from a commitment. He claims that when a state shies away from defending a commitment, its adversary will credit this action to situational circumstances and not the inherent disposition of the state. Indeed our enemies will continue to believe us to be fully committed to confrontation, having only backed down because events necessitated this course[49]. Similarly, no action we take can convince our allies of our commitment to them. Just as our enemies will attribute our strength to character and weakness to the situation, out allies will do the opposite. When we stand firm they will believe it merely a situational response, while any weakness will be viewed as confirmation of our lack of resolve[50]. For Mercer reputations are a no-win scenario. We cannot lose a reputation for resolve with our enemies, nor can we build such a reputation with our allies. Thus under no circumstance should a state fulfill a costly commitment only in order to save "face". As we have seen, this view undermines deterrence theory's reliance on reputation as a means for gaining credibility, and indeed calls into question much of U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War era.

This review of critiques of deterrence theory does not, and cannot, include all criticisms. However, I believe that the criticisms I have noted point out aspects of deterrence theory which can be modified so as to strengthen it and make it of greater utility for today's international environment. In addition, these arguments point to what I believe to be the aspects of deterrence which are most wanting in instances when it is applied against terrorist activity, a point upon which I shall elaborate shortly.

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[49] Ibid, pages 44-48
[50] Ibid

V.   SALVAGING DETERRENCE THEORY

What then can we conclude about deterrence theory in light of its critiques? Is deterrence theory fatally flawed, a framework which is entirely unrepresentative of the world in which we live? Or can a careful reevaluation and restructuring of deterrence save it from itself? As should by now be clear, I firmly believe the latter to be the case. In general, I propose two fundamental changes to deterrence theory which I believe would make it of greater utility in today's world, as well as rescue it from some of its most biting critiques. These alterations are: 1) a greater emphasis on the inclusion of data on psychological components of national-level decision making, and 2) the complementary nature of deterrence and reassurance and the role of both in altering the underlying causes of an opponent's dissatisfaction with the status quo. While these modifications are neither perfect nor likely to spare deterrence theory further criticism, I do believe that they represent a real hope for maintaining the usefulness of this framework.

As noted above, deterrence's emphasis on rationality and the obviousness of one's actions has led to numerous criticisms from the psychological school, criticisms which seem entirely warranted. Nonetheless, such flaws are by no means fatal. Indeed, there is no inherent reason why an updated version of deterrence theory cannot account for certain psychological factors which may impact the implementation of such a policy. An emphasis on producing cadres of foreign policy experts within the government who have extensive *hands on* experience with a potential adversary is essential. Such individuals would be in a better position to explain political, social, and cultural considerations which

might affect the opponent's perceptions of our words and deeds. It might also give us

an insight into the biases which they bring with them to the table, and thus allow for the

crafting of a policy which will account for these predispositions. By formulating certain

specific views regarding the biases of others we can likely use these to replace blanket

rationality postulates in deterrence while maintaining the power and parsimony of this

theory[51]. After all, "knowing one's own objectives…is not enough; one must also

understand the perceptions and concerns of the other side and how the other side is likely

to react to policy initiatives of one's own state[52]." Given that even strong proponents of

deterrence theory admit of the likely existence of cognitive and psychological variables

affecting rational calculations[53], it seems obvious that some account must be taken of

these factors. Efforts by national policy makers to discern the biases which the adversary

possesses are crucial to the implementation of the most effective strategy possible. While

no amount of effort will ever allow for full and perfect knowledge of one's adversary, a

new deterrence theory must include a greater emphasis on empathy in order to avoid the

problems inherent in the assumption of a common worldview.

In addition to including more psychological factors, deterrence must also open itself to

the logic of the spiral model. An unwavering presumption of the hostile intentions of

one's adversary may indeed lead to the descent into conflict which spiral models predict.

Nonetheless, upon closer examination we can see that the policies espoused by both

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[51] Jervis, Lebow & Stein, page 11

[52] Tetlock, Philip E., "Testing Deterrence Theory: Some Conceptual and Methodological Issues," *The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 43, No. 4, (Winter, 1987), page 85

[53] Huth, Paul and Bruce Russett, "Testing Deterrence Theory: Rigor Makes a Difference," *World Politics*, Vol. 42, No. 2, (July, 1990), page 499

theories are, in fact, entirely complementary. Whereas the overall goal of deterrence is to alter an enemy's cost benefit analyses, its methods focus solely on changing the costs. Reassurance, which would look to change the benefits available to an adversary for maintaining the status quo, has no different goal than its more hard-line alternative. Following on the heels of an improved understanding of the other side's motivations and biases, an approach combining classic deterrence with reassurance might well serve the dual purpose of clearly expressing our commitment to protect our vital interests, while simultaneously assuring an opponent that we have no desire to challenge his own security or interests[54].

It is not hard to understand the need to formulate a policy which combines different mixes of coercive and conciliatory measures as appropriate to individual events[55]. Among deterrence traditionalists there is acknowledgment of this fact, an admission of the stabilizing effects of reciprocity versus the potential dangers inherent in policies of either "noncontingent conciliation or bullying[56]." By making deterrence a policy of both carrot and stick we are not admitting the inherent rectitude of spiral models over deterrence, only the validity of some of its criticisms. Deterrence should not be an either-or proposition between confrontation and reassurance. The preceding discussions have demonstrated that a potential opponent may seek to change the status quo for two reasons, either it is greedy and seeks conquest, or it is fearful and believes the status quo to be stacked against it. The combination of deterrence and reassurance may well serve

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[54] Jervis, Lebow & Stein, page 33
[55] Tetlock, page 86
[56] Lebow and Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," page 43

to counter both causes. Deterrence is far more likely than appeasement to succeed in preventing attacks based upon a desire for conquest, while reassurance is superior in situations of a fearful opponent. This approach might make the status quo more acceptable to an adversary, either by alleviating security concerns or by making a challenge unthinkably costly. Efforts to achieve a reciprocal solution to a disagreement may alter the utility analyses such that aggression becomes too costly for an opponent, not only because of the risk of military defeat or devastation, but because of the lost benefits of a continued peaceful association. In short, when the value of the status quo is increased, overall deterrence becomes more likely[57].

These suggestions are not intended as cure-alls to save deterrence from any and all future evaluation, rather they are offered in the belief that they will increase both the rigor and utility of deterrence theory and will allow for the correction of a number of obvious flaws. Other critiques, such as questions of the importance of reputational concerns, are not nearly so damaging to deterrence. Indeed, Mercer's reflections on reputation appear to point to a need **for** deterrence efforts. If, as he predicts, states view desirable behavior on the part of an adversary as situationally motivated, then these states should seek to recreate these circumstances in other instances. If we assume that states will credit at least some of the situational conditions to its own policies, then states should be inclined to follow deterrent policies so as to create situations in which others are forced to comply. Deterrence will continue to be necessary not in the hopes of changing the adversary's disposition, but in order to create situational constraints such that undesirable actions are

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[57] Kilgour and Zagare, page 321

avoided. If Mercer is correct and our enemies always see us as strong, then whether we make good on every commitment or not is irrelevant. Backing down will not make us look weak, nor will fulfilling our pledges make us seem stronger. Whether we flee or fight, under Mercer's formulation deterrence remains an important and viable part of security affairs.

Theoretical discussions and critiques aside, deterrence theory is, as it has always been, more than a mere academic debate in the scholarly literature, it is a means for explaining how things can and do operate in the "real" world. Only if states begin to adopt greater measures to account for the psychological biases of their adversaries, while also including a reassurance component in their deterrence policies, will we be able to determine how our "new" deterrence will function. The success or failure of the changes herein proposed will ultimately be judged by history. Nonetheless, I believe carefully crafted policies which look to change not only an opponent's intentions but also his mindset may prove invaluable tools in maintaining a relatively peaceful and prosperous world community. This is, I assume and hope, the ultimate goal of any deterrence theory. Having thus reviewed and reformulated deterrence theory into a framework which seeks to overcome its critiques and shortcomings we must now apply this construction to one of the most daunting challenges now facing the world community, international terrorism.

PART TWO: DETERRENCE AND TERRORISM

I.   INTRODUCTION TO TERRORISM

Before we can begin the task of applying our modified conception of deterrence theory to

the realm of international terrorism it is necessary to conduct a brief review of the

phenomenon know as terrorism, a review necessitated by the often confusing and

nebulous nature of these groups. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, terrorism is

often viewed in different ways depending upon one's perspective. No doubt many in

Great Britain believed the Continental Army to be nothing more than a band of terrorists

determined to use violence and its threat to exact political concessions from London.

Needless to say few Americans today would believe this an accurate portrayal.

Nonetheless it is a telling example of the various ways in which groups are viewed by

varying constituencies. The Vietnamese National Liberation Front (a.k.a. the Viet Cong),

the Irish Republican Army, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the African

National Congress are but a few prominent examples of groups which have been both

reviled as terrorists and cheered as liberators. Terrorists themselves often do not see

themselves as heartless killers; the notorious terrorist Carlos ("The Jackal") has described

himself as "above all…a family man[58]." The difficulty in separating terrorist from

revolutionary, criminal from freedom fighter, is made all the more difficult by the range

of definitions which exist for terrorism and its perpetrators. How we view and respond to

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[58] Hoffman, Bruce, Inside Terrorism, New York, Columbia University Press, 1998, page 30

terrorism very much depends upon how we see and define it. Whether we adopt a "sentimental" stereotype of these actors as driven to violence by injustice and oppression, or a "hysterical" stereotype of terrorists as madmen, thugs, or gangsters will weigh heavily upon how we choose to deal with this problem[59]. We are thus required to sort through the numerous definitions of terrorism, and to attempt to create some sort of delineation between it and its more legitimate cousins, insurgency and rebellion.

Definitions of Terrorism

Perhaps the best place to begin a discussion of the definitions of terrorism is with the official U.S. State Department characterization: "The term 'terrorism' means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience[60]." While the definition goes on to clarify that noncombatants includes military personnel who are unarmed and/or off-duty, this does little to alleviate the numerous problems inherent in this explanation. If terrorism must be politically motivated, what of groups which adhere to religious or other agendas, such as the apocalyptic Aum Shinrikyo group in Japan? In addition, to what extent must an action be premeditated to be considered terrorism? The Palestinian bus-driver who attacked a group of Israelis in February of this year has been deemed a terrorist, though most agree he decided to run down his victims only moments before doing so. Finally we face the pesky question of noncombatants. The State Department caveat is clearly intended to allow for the Khobar Towers incident

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[59] O'Brien, Conor C., "Thinking about Terrorism", *The Atlantic*, Vol. 257 (June, 1986), page 62
[60] Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1999, page viii

to be labeled terrorism, but what of the attack in October, 2000 on the U.S.S. Cole?

These military personnel were on duty, many were armed (as was the Cole herself) and

thus likely do not fit the State Department's definition. In addition, this definition utterly

ignores terrorist actions which involve only the threat of violence. Clearly we can see

how the definition we choose can greatly affect what is, and more importantly what is

not, terrorism.

Yet another attempt at categorizing terrorism states it is, "a deliberate attempt to create

terror through a symbolic act involving the use or threat of abnormal lethal force for the

purpose of influencing a target group or individual[61]." While this explanation avoids

some of the minutiae raised by the State Department definition, it raises questions of its

own. Who perpetrates these acts, states, subnational actors, or some other group or

individual? If the answer is "anyone" then would not the Allied bombing of Dresden and

the U.S. atomic attacks on Japan fit this definition? And what of the adjective

"abnormal?" What is considered abnormal, and does it depend upon the type of target,

the overall political situation, or some other variable? Another characterization of

terrorism comes from authors Theodore Couloumbis and James Wolfe who defined a

terrorist as, "a nonstate actor employing standard and unorthodox forms of violence in

pursuit of certain political objectives[62]." Again the problems which this view causes are

evident; the meaning of "unorthodox", its limitation to those seeking political objectives,

and the vague category of "nonstate actors" (which could include the European Union,

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[61] Hanle, page 104
[62] Celmer, Marc A., Terrorism, U.S. strategy, and Reagan policies, New York, Greenwood Press, 1987, page 5

United Nations, NATO, or any other such organization or group). It seems that the most glaring problem with various definitions of terrorism is that each attempts to leave enough uncertainty so as to permit the greatest possible latitude for including groups or actions as terroristic. While this is all well and good, the "wiggle room" which they allow is just as open to use/abuse by those who seek to use the inherent vagueness of a given definition to exclude certain groups or actions from the distasteful moniker of terrorism.

Perhaps the best, or more properly the most inclusive, definition which seems to exist is that currently used by the U.S. Department of Defense. Identified as "the unlawful use of – or threatened use of – force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives[63]," terrorism in this sense is painted both with a broad brush to allow for the inclusion of any number of acts deemed "unlawful", while at the same time imposing sufficient rigor upon itself so as to significantly reduce "wiggle room." Its inclusion of religious and ideological motivations allows for greater application to non-political groups, and its avoidance of identifying a particular set of targets (e.g. "noncombatants") deprives potential attackers of classification as lawful antagonists. Finally, this definition recognizes that not all terrorist actions are intended to coerce or influence a given government; many are designed to play to the fears and aspirations of society at large, hoping to win sympathy and new recruits. While far from perfect, this definition is

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[63] Hoffman, page 38

arguably the most complete available[64], and will thus be considered the "official"

definition for the purposes of this paper. No doubt an entire volume could be prepared on

the proper definition of terrorism; however, for our present objective it suffices to note

the wide range of concepts included in these definitions, and the ramifications which

proceed from choosing one over another.

Terrorists vs. Guerillas

One of the most troubling issues which arises from the difficulty of defining terrorism is

the separation of terrorist from freedom fighter or guerilla. While few states relish

combat against one of the latter groups, they have more or less come to be accepted as

semi-legitimate players in international affairs. Classification of a particular group as

revolutionary or guerilla can do much to legitimize it in the eyes of the world community

and to assist it in pursuing its objectives. Conversely, labeling a group as terrorists brings

with it much greater worldwide condemnation, as well as legal penalties and castigation.

Few states will openly support terrorists, whereas many more are willing to work with

freedom fighters. Thus clarifying the two phenomena is important not only for the

impact it has upon the groups themselves, but also upon the actions which states can take

in combating one or the other. One of the reasons behind the blurred line between these

two types of actors is the similarity in the tactics and methods employed by each. Both

tend to use assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, and hostage-taking in furtherance of

their goals. In addition, both are irregular forces which wear neither uniforms nor

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[64] Ibid, page 39

insignia and which blend into the local population[65]. There are, however, a number of

important differences. The first deals with the actual size of the groups. Guerilla

movements are often much larger and more well organized and led than terrorist groups.

In addition, guerillas normally attack enemy forces as would a conventional military unit,

capturing territory and resources and exercising a degree of sovereignty over some

defined geographical area or population[66]. By contrast terrorist groups are usually

smaller, less well organized, and given to clandestine "hit and run" tactics. They rarely

seize or control territory and often assiduously avoid direct military confrontations with

enemy forces[67]. Terrorist groups are also normally much weaker political actors than

guerilla groups, limited in their scope to the weapons they can obtain and the damage

which they can inflict[68]. In sum, a glaring difference between guerillas and terrorists is

that one conducts itself more like an organized military force, the other more akin to an

organized criminal syndicate.

Terrorists vs. Criminals

This statement raises another important question, the extent to which terrorists are merely

ultra-violent criminals. The desire of many western states to arrest, place on trial, and jail

(or in some cases execute) terrorists often serves to blur the line between terrorists and

criminals, and to portray such individuals as no better than common thugs. While there is

a valuable benefit to be realized from the diminution of the terrorists' political or

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[65] Ibid, page 41
[66] Ibid
[67] Ibid
[68] Celmer, page 9

ideological goals, we must be careful not to confuse terrorism with criminal activity. Though both tend to employ similar methods (almost any type or degree of violence) the key difference is the motivation behind the actions. Criminals seek only to achieve a limited end, usually financial, and have no desire for their actions to have a wider impact beyond the immediate target[69]. If one robs a bank, the ultimate target of that violence is the bank under assault, not the government or society. Terrorism, on the other hand, has a much loftier goal. It seeks to utilize violence or its threatened use to intimidate not only the direct victims, but also a much wider audience. In many cases the immediate target is irrelevant and chosen only for the degree to which it can inspire fear and terror. If the acts of criminals and terrorists appear similar then the resemblance ends at the act itself. Terrorists are hardly common criminals; they are motivated, thoughtful actors who seek to use violent means to achieve some political, ideological, or other end. To confuse them with ordinary lawbreakers is to do ourselves a great disservice. The existence of two primary views of terrorism, that of war-fighting and criminal, make it all too easy for us to fall into the trap of placing terrorists too far into the camp of either guerilla or felon. Terrorism is a unique phenomenon which cannot be managed through mere arrests or military responses. Terrorists are distinctive creatures; so too must be our response.

Myths of Terrorism

While terrorism is indeed unique, it is also often grossly misunderstood. A number of stereotypes and myths exist surrounding these individuals and their goals, and it is

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[69] Ibid

important to dispel several of these in order to create a clearer picture of the enemy we seek to deter. The first of these myths is that terrorism is exclusively the activity of non-governmental actors. This notion is patently false. Not only do any number of states use their security forces and military to conduct acts of terror against their own citizens, many also support and direct the actions of international terrorist groups against perceived enemies[70]. Another common misconception is that terrorists are madmen. This myth is common in Western, notably American, society where suicide bombings and attacks on unarmed women and children offend our sense of justice and honor. Nonetheless, few (if any) terrorists are insane. Most have clearly defined goals and formulate some planning on how to use violence to achieve these ends. Their targets are often chosen for symbolic value or the degree of damage which can be inflicted (the U.S. Embassy in Beirut or the Rome and Athens airports), and their victims often have their own political symbolism (Israeli athletes in Munich or a U.S. Navy diver on a hijacked TWA flight)[71]. A final important misconception is that terrorism is a strategy of futility. Many argue that terrorists can make a great deal of political and social noise, but in the end are limited in the ends they can achieve. Though it is likely true that only the weakest states are susceptible to collapse due to terrorist violence, there should be no doubt that terrorists can inflict a great deal of political and physical damage on even the largest of nations. Terrorist acts receive unprecedented press coverage, allowing groups that so choose to air their grievances and make their case before the court of world opinion. In addition, attacks can disrupt the normal activity of a given state, leading to increased security measures and paranoia (witness the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in

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[70] Stohl, pages 7-8
[71] Ibid, pages 8-11

front of the White House, a still controversial move). Finally, terrorist have been able

to parlay their attacks and notoriety into political capital[72]. The IRA and PLO are both

now considered partners in searching for a permanent solution to the problems plaguing

their homelands. Anyone who believes terrorism to be a policy of futility need only look

to Yasir Arafat or Gerry Adams for refutation. While many other myths about terrorism

exist, these are three of the most persistent and dangerous. Dispelling them is also key to

the successful application of deterrence to terrorist activity, as will be demonstrated

below.

Trends in Terrorism

Before moving on it is worth noting some of the trends in terrorism which have been

witnessed in the past five to ten years. These developments are important not only in

order to provide an insight into the changing mindset of terrorism, but also as a guide to

be used when considering the appropriate counter-terrorist policies to implement.

Strategies which are based too solidly in the past, which expect terrorism to continue to

operate as it did in the 1970s and 1980s will be, at best, ineffectual, and at worst

counterproductive. Among the more ominous changes, particularly for the United States,

is the increased operation of terrorist groups within the U.S., as well as the growing use

of communications technology to plan and carry out ever more deadly attacks[73]. This

means that American policy makers must increase their efforts at deterring terrorism

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[72] Ibid, pages 22-23
[73] Report of the National Commission on Terrorism via internet (http://www.fas.org/irp/
threat/commission.html), page 9

before such attacks are launched; if not successful, it is likely that yet more attacks will

occur within our own borders. In addition, government efforts to thwart one type of

attack, for example the use of metal detectors to counter hijackings, seems to have only

served to focus terrorist attention on other, less risky modes of attack[74]. The ever-

increasing number of bombings versus kidnappings and assassinations seems to bear

witness to this.

These trends are coupled with the mounting danger that terrorists may obtain an

unconventional weapon, such as a biological or chemical agent, or that they will grow

adept at staging "cyber" attacks to cripple national infrastructures[75]. Another trend is the

shift away from political motivations, and toward religious and ideological rationales.

The U.S. has become a target not because of the political actions it takes, but due to its

mere existence[76]. This trend is borne out by the growing number of attacks which

involve mass American casualties (Khobar Towers, the East Africa embassy attacks, and

the U.S.S. Cole) but for which no group claims responsibility[77]. This growing tendency

may represent a serious threat to the implementation of successful policies of deterrence

against such groups. Finally, the nature of state sponsorship has changed, with a

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[74] Cauley, Jon, Eric Iksoon Im, "Intervention Policy Analysis of Skyjackings and Other Terrorist Incidents (in The Political Economy of Terrorism)", *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the One-Hundredth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (May, 1988), page 27
[75] Crelinstein, Ronald D., "The Discourse and Practices of Counter-Terrorism in Liberal States," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Volume 44, Number 1, (1988), page 389
[76] U.S. Government Policies and Programs to Combat Terrorism: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundred Sixth Congress, First Session, March 9, 1999, Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000, page 26
[77] Bremer, L. Paul, III, "Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism," Presentation at the Nixon Center, July 19, 2000, Washington, DC via internet (http://www.nixoncenter.org/publications/Program%20Briefs/vol6no19/Bremer.html), page 1

decreased reliance upon traditional state sponsors and a commensurate increase in the

use of international logistical and funding networks between and among groups[78]. Again

this may affect the extent to which deterrence can be successful, and will require new

ways of conceptualizing state involvement in international terrorism. These shifts in the

motivations and operations of terrorist groups mean that we will likely face stealthier,

better funded, and ultimately more deadly enemies in the coming decades. To combat the

shadowy nature of tomorrow's terrorists we will need to look beyond how we have

traditionally responded and seek out innovative methods for protecting our citizens and

interests.

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[78] Report of the National Commission on Terrorism, page 9

II.   CURRENT METHODS OF DETERRING TERRORISM

Current policies designed to combat terrorism normally fall into one of two categories: measures intended to deter acts of terrorism in the general, strategic sense, and those intended to foil such plots in the short-term. The distinction may not be altogether clear, but the effects which each type produce are quite distinct. Measures which fall into the latter category include robust intelligence efforts, increased physical security at diplomatic and military installations worldwide, and cooperation with foreign governments to conduct surveillance and, if necessary, detention of members of terrorist groups. Such efforts are no doubt crucial to minimizing the damage which terrorists can inflict; however, the practical nature of these measures prevent them from playing a significant role in the overall deterrence of terrorist groups and their state sponsors. Security measures and intelligence can be circumvented by determined actors, and international cooperation does little to solve the problem of so-called rogue states which continue to harbor and support terrorists. What is needed to accomplish the more strategic goal of deterrence are grander policy measures which make the overall endeavor of terrorism a more costly, and thus less attractive, means for accomplishing a group's given objectives.

In terms of the policies which states have traditionally employed in furtherance of deterrence, three are most common; implementation of a "no negotiations" policy, the use of military force against terrorists and their state sponsors, and political and economic sanctions levied against state sponsors. Indeed, among the four primary elements of U.S.

counter-terrorist policy enunciated by the State Department are "**First**, make no concessions to terrorists and strike no deal...**Third**, isolate and apply pressure on states that sponsor terrorism to force them to change their behavior[79]." Given the important place which these three policy measures hold in counter-terrorism we must ask the questions of how effective they have been, and how effective they are likely to be in confronting the changing nature of terrorism.

The No-Negotiations Policy

Perhaps the most common strategy adopted in the struggle to deter terrorism is the no-negotiations tenet. Simply stated, this policy means that a given government will not negotiate with a terrorist group, either directly or through intermediaries, in order to resolve a violent or potentially violent situation. The basic logic of this imperative is that by denying terrorists the ability to achieve either concrete goals, such as ransom or release of prisoners, or the psychological victory of being recognized as a legitimate partner in negotiations, further terrorist acts can be deterred. In short, by refusing to negotiate with today's hostage taker we are sending the message to other potential actors that this course of action will come to no avail. In theory this policy would seem to represent an effective means for short-circuiting the logic which underlies many terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, the practical application of these measures has been less than ideal, and in many instances when actual government action has been contrasted with stated policies against negotiations the overall counter-terrorist effort has been weakened.

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[79] Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1999, page iii

The most damaging aspect of the no-negotiations policy has been the rather slipshod manner in which governments have applied it. The two states which have been most vocal in enunciating this policy, the United States and Israel, are guilty of numerous flagrant violations. Israel, which has been perhaps the nation most besieged by terrorists in the last fifty years, has applied its no-negotiations policy in an exceptionally porous manner. Despite the stated strategy, Israel has conducted negotiations with terrorists engaged in violent actions on a number of occasions. In May, 1974 Israel entered into negotiations with the captors of a group of school children taken hostage at Maalot; eleven years later Israel bargained with the hijackers of TWA flight 847[80]. In addition, Israel has gone to tremendous lengths to secure the safety and release of kidnapped members of its military forces. In a glaring violation of its no-negotiations policy, Israel released 1,150 Arab prisoners in 1985 in exchange for three Israeli soldiers. Among those released was Kozo Okomato, a member of the Japanese Red Army Faction and the sole surviving member of the terrorist group which killed 27 people in a 1972 attack on Lod Airport[81]. Such reversals of policy do little to convince potential terrorists that their actions will be futile in achieving either concrete or psychological goals. In fact, it has even been argued that Israel's stated policy of not negotiating with terrorists may have been taken by Palestinian groups as a challenge to increase the frequency and severity of their attacks in order to force talks with the Israeli government[82]. This goal may well

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[80] Lapan, Harvey E. and Todd Sandler, "To Bargain or Not To Bargain: That Is The Question", *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the One-Hundredth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (May, 1988), page 16
[81] Ibid
[82] Stohl, page 11

have been achieved by the Maalot attack, aimed as it was against children. Certainly

the Israeli readiness to negotiate this incident appears to have proven the terrorists

correct.

Israel is not alone in the general failure of its no-negotiations policy. The United States is

guilty of perhaps the most egregious, and public, violation of this policy, namely the Iran-

Contra affair. The absolute refusal to grant concessions to, or negotiate with, terrorists

and/or their sponsors was a strategy nearly synonymous with the Reagan administration.

Indeed during the years when Muslim radicals in Lebanon held numerous Western

hostages, there were many who argued that the hard-line stance of the U.S. administration

was prolonging these men's captivity. However, despite the outward support which

Reagan and his top advisors gave to this policy, we now know that behind the scenes they

were conducting relations based on very different tactics. In an effort to obtain Iranian

support to pressure Lebanese extremists holding Western captives, the U.S. sent secret

envoys to Tehran (including President Reagan's former National Security Advisor Bud

McFarlane), and eventually agreed to sell high-technology military supplies to the

Iranians in exchange for assistance which led to the release of three hostages[83]. Through

Israeli and Saudi intermediaries these supplies were delivered to Iran, and the excess

funds from their sale was diverted to the Contras, all in violation of both stated policy and

U.S. law. The ramifications of these actions were significant, with several Reagan

administration officials indicted, and others forced to resign. Iran-Contra in many ways

should not have come as an enormous shock. As early as 1985, during the hijacking of

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[83] Lapan & Sandler, page 16

TWA flight 847, it was the U.S. which first floated the idea to Israel of releasing 700-plus Shiite prisoners in exchange for the individuals being held on the aircraft[84]. There can thus be little doubt that incidents such as these reaffirmed for potential terrorists that the no-negotiations policy was, itself, negotiable.

It is important to note, however, that not all of the flaws of this policy derive from its inept or incomplete implementation. Indeed, there is much doubt as to whether any democratic state can rigidly adhere to requirements of this strategy. While publicly stating that negotiating with terrorists only encourages more such acts, governments are under enormous pressure in crises to do whatever is necessary to ensure the safety and security of those held captive or threatened. Few citizens are capable of reconciling the sight of dead Americans or Israelis with the need to maintain the no-negotiations tact. Though agreeing with these principles in theory, many individuals, including government leaders, are swayed by the exigencies of the moment and thus are convinced of the immediate necessity of taking whatever action possible to secure one's citizens and interests, even should this include negotiation. In addition, democratic states are faced with the reality of confronting angry voters who blame the government for failing to negotiate in order to avert certain carnage. Though voters may be equally as likely to blame a government for making concessions, the possibility that negotiations can be made palatable to the general public makes choosing the proper policy path difficult for any leader[85]. Finally, the hard-line policy against negotiations may be self-defeating. As

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[84] Hoffman, page 139
[85] Cauley, John, Todd Sandler and John T. Tschirhart, "A Theoretical Analysis of Transnational Terrorism", *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (March, 1983), page 43

noted above, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to adhere to such a strategy with 100% efficiency in the face of every terrorist incident; the complex nature of these crises, as well as the unique nature of each situation, make blanket application of a no-negotiations policy unrealistic. As such, by announcing this strategy despite the clear knowledge that it may well need to be modified or even violated can be a recipe for disaster. If terrorists can force states which have solemnly promised never to negotiate with them into conducting such discussions, then these groups have not only succeeded in breaking the back of the policy, but also weakening the credibility of governments, both at home and abroad. If states which choose to negotiate with terrorists then try to hide these actions, as did the Reagan administration, their credibility is further eroded[86]. In the end, a no-negotiations policy paints nations into an uncomfortable corner: negotiate and deterrence is undermined and one's credibility assaulted; fail to negotiate and one faces the grim possibility of bloodshed and butchery.

Uses of Force

A second major policy which states employ in hopes of deterring terrorist actions is the use of traditional military force against these groups and their sponsors. Though such actions may have the effect of curtailing attacks in the immediate sense by destroying groups' logistical and personnel capabilities, the chief aim of such interventions is clearly to impact the strategic picture by deterring terrorist activity in the long run. The logic is obviously quite simple. By inflicting significant damage against a group or its state

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[86] O'Brien, page 65

sponsor one hopes to not only influence the cost-benefit analyses of the direct targets,
convincing them that the damage to be inflicted in retaliation for any future attack will
vastly outweigh any potential gain, but also as a message to potential adversaries who
have not yet fully committed to uses of violence. Such a result is clearly the most useful
product of a military intervention; while training camps can be rebuilt and new members
recruited, the psychological effects which such an attack might have is far more likely to
last beyond the immediate future. Indeed, some within the U.S. government express a
desire for the United States to be even more proactive in implementing military responses
to terrorist incidents[87]. Their fear is that the U.S. and many of its allies have become far
too reliant upon defensive measures, such as intelligence gathering and fortification of
installations. They believe that only by greatly increasing the "cost of doing business"
for terrorists can we begin to make inroads into undermining the foundations of such
activity. This view has also been espoused before the U.S. Congress, with Ambassador
L. Paul Bremer III stating that our motto ought to be, "[h]it first; hit hard; and hit
often[88]." The U.S. is not alone in this belief. Israel has for years maintained that the best
method for preventing attacks against it is by possessing and utilizing significant
offensive capabilities[89]. The United Kingdom also has a history of using its military
capabilities against the IRA. Such policies play on the tendency to view terrorism as a
form of warfare, and as such to apply traditional methods of deterrence and retaliation[90].

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[87] Taken from author's interview with Department of Defense personnel currently working in counter-
terrorism. These individuals requested that their identities not be used.
[88] Statement of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III before the Committee on International Relations, United
States House of Representatives, October 8, 1998, Federal Document Clearing House via internet
(http://www-personal.umich.edu/~amackie/LN%20FDCH8OCT98%20BREMER.html), page 3
[89] Klieman, Aharon and Ariel Levite (editors), Deterrence in the Middle East: Where Theory and Practice
Converge, Boulder, Westview Press, 1994, page 10
[90] Hanle, page 227

Unfortunately, once again history seems to demonstrate that such a belief is not altogether correct.

Despite numerous uses of military force by a number of nations against terrorists and their sponsors, evidence seems to indicate that such strikes have been largely ineffective in deterring terrorist activity. Most positive effects seem to have been short lived and to have been limited to the group or state which was targeted. One of the most memorable such military responses was the U.S. bombing of Libya in 1986 in response to alleged Libyan involvement in a number of anti-U.S. terrorist attacks, including the bombing of a Berlin discothèque in which U.S. military personnel were killed[91]. Initially it was believed that this intervention had succeeded in curbing Libyan support for terrorist activity[92]; however, Libyan involvement in the downing of Pan Am flight 103 in December, 1988 seems to negate this idea[93]. Even more recent events bear witness to this lack of success. Despite the U.S. cruise missile strikes into Afghanistan in August, 1998, aimed at the training facilities of Usama Bin Laden, it is becoming clear that Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda movement were likely behind the October, 2000 attack on the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen[94]. Similarly, years of Israeli activity against Palestinian terrorist groups, including air strikes, shellings, and assassinations, appear to have done little to quell anti-Israeli violence.

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[91] Moore, pages 240-241
[92] Ibid, pages 203-204
[93] Rubin, Barry (ed.), The Politics of Terrorism: Terror as a State and Revolutionary Strategy, Washington, DC, The Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute, 1989, page 184
[94] Klaidman, Daniel, "Bin Laden's Poetry of Terror," Newsweek, Volume CXXXVII, Number 13, March 26, 2001, page 39

Quite apart from the contention that military force can reduce and deter terrorism, there are many who believe that retaliations such as this have done more to precipitate terrorism than to stop it[95]. The most likely cause of the ineffectiveness of military action is the reaction it provokes among various audiences. By demonstrating the "hostile" intent of the target nation (say the U.S. or Israel), such attacks give credence to terrorist denunciations of their adversaries and, as such, may facilitate the recruitment of new members and the solicitation of assistance from foreign states. The public outcry following the 1998 attacks against Afghanistan and Sudan (particularly in light of evidence that the attack in Sudan was against a mistaken target) did a great deal to weaken the American position in the Muslim world. Much the same can be said of the denunciations leveled against Israel and South Africa when they struck out against the PLO and ANC respectively. Such reactions no doubt added to the legitimacy which these groups enjoyed in some circles, and aided them in obtaining further foreign support and assistance. In addition to the backlash effect which military strikes often cause, another source of their frequent failure is the ability of terrorist groups to anticipate and avoid such actions. Once terrorists adjust to the first major strike against them, they are often able to adjust their expectations to meet the likely retaliation, to better anticipate such actions, and thus to be less and less influenced by uses of force[96]. Groups can learn to work around military interventions, allowing the retaliating state to suffer the negative

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[95] Slater, Jerome, "A Palestinian State and Israeli Security," *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume 106, Issue 3, (Autumn, 1991), page 423

[96] Brophy-Baermann, Bryan and John A. C. Conybeare, "Retaliating against Terrorism: Rational Expectations and the Optimality of Rules versus Discretion", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (February, 1994), page 204

effects of its actions, all the while conserving their resources and awaiting another opportunity for violence.

Another constraint on uses of force against terrorists is the limits which exist on the types and scope of actions to be used. The United States for one is inhibited by certain legal considerations. For example, Executive Order 12333 prohibits any U.S. government agency from engaging in assassinations[97]. In addition, the U.S. War Powers Act is a further constraint upon the President's ability to use force when and where he chooses. Though not preventing such uses, the Act involves Congress in such decisions to a level which makes the extent and purposes of military action open to tremendous public scrutiny. As such, certain political and public relations considerations emerge which can undermine the effectiveness of armed intervention by restricting targeting and duration of actions. The U.S. is not alone in confronting such impediments. While various states have different restrictions and limitations on uses of force, each is confronted with certain invariable obstacles. For example, even Israel, the state which has arguably exercised the greatest latitude in its forceful responses to terrorism, has faced various constraints. As previously noted, the furor of public opinion and the real threat of strengthening one's adversary are common to any state which seeks to retaliate. Additionally, international legal norms can cause nations to reconsider their level of response. Uses of force are also hampered by the difficulty in locating and identifying terrorists and their logistical structures[98]. It is also difficult to link states to their sponsorship of terrorist activities, thus reducing governments' ability to strike against these states while maintaining the

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[97] Celmer, page 87
[98] Hosmer & Tanham, pages 6-7

veil of justice and legality[99]. Finally, the growing compartmentalization of terrorist

activity is making it more and more difficult to retaliate against a set command structure.

Even extreme measures such as assassinations will have less effect on today's groups

than on those of the past 30 years. While imprisoning or killing Arafat or Mandela may

have weakened the PLO or ANC (respectively), many doubt that eliminating Bin Laden

would be so effective in dismantling Al Qaeda; its activities and membership are simply

far too diffuse and unstructured for uses of force to be highly effective[100]. In sum, it is

likely that military retaliations have little long-term deterrence effect, and as such are

incapable in and of themselves of preventing future attacks[101].

Political and Economic Sanctions

The final method which states frequently use in an attempt to deter potential terrorist

activity is political and economic sanctions. These measures are almost always directed

against state actors which are believed to be sponsors or supporters of international

terrorism. At present, there are seven nations which are listed by the U.S. Department of

State as state sponsors of terrorism: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and

Syria[102]. The majority of these nations are now subjected to some form of sanctions by

the United States and/or United Nations. In fact, the United States is the chief global

proponent of sanctions as a tool for countering terrorism, and in many cases (notably Iran

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[99] Ibid
[100] Taken from author's interview with current Department of State personnel currently working in counter-terrorism. These individuals requested that their identities not be used.
[101] Brophy-Baermann & Conybeare, page 196
[102] Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1999, page iv

and Cuba) is alone in maintaining a sanctions regime. There are, however, cases in

which the world community as a whole has embraced and participated in the imposition

of sanctions. The United Nations Security Council implemented significant economic

and travel sanctions against Libya in an effort to persuade that government to hand over

two Libyan nationals accused of perpetrating the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103. In

addition, current sanctions against Iraq are ostensibly impositions of the United Nations,

though their universality is highly questionable, as we shall see. Regardless of whether

sanctions are the work of a single state determined to change the policies of an accused

state sponsor, or if they represent the general will of the world community to express

dissatisfaction with the actions of a given nation, there is very little evidence to indicate

that they are an effective tool for deterring terrorist activity. Indeed, most sanctions

regimes appear weak and ineffective, and in some cases may contribute to the growth and

spread of terrorist activities.

Today the most well known, and hotly debated, sanctions regime is that imposed against

Iraq. While it is true that these sanctions are designed to achieve ends significantly

beyond the deterrence of terrorism (and in fact may have little to do with this goal), they

are highly representative of two of the greatest deficiencies of political and economic

sanctions, those of dual effect (the tendency of sanctions to cause severe harm to innocent

civilian populations) and lack of international resolve. At present the new U.S.

administration is seriously considering revamping the current sanctions against the

Baghdad regime in hopes of applying greater pressure on the government of Saddam

Hussein while alleviating some of the suffering of the Iraqi people. That this step is

necessary demonstrates a significant flaw in the use of sanctions. While such sanctions are almost always designed to influence and affect the national leadership, it is common that the greatest burden will be borne by the citizenry of a given nation. In most states tremendous efforts are taken to ensure that the leadership and support structures (such as the police, military, and foreign ministry) are provided ample resources to conduct the business of governing. As such, when resources are scarce it is not those on top who will feel the pinch, but those below who have little political clout. In an authoritarian regime such as Iraq this problem is compounded. Many today share the view of Fareed Zakaria who has candidly stated, "[t]he economic sanctions have impoverished Iraq while doing nothing to dislodge Saddam Hussein[103]." As the suffering of common citizens intensifies, it becomes easier for regimes to blame their woes on the imposition of sanctions by foreign aggressors, thus strengthening their support at home, and in many cases in the eyes of other nations. Again looking to Iraq, it is currently estimated that between 100,000 and 500,000 children under the age of five have died in the last ten years due to the poor medical and economic situation in Iraq[104]. Statistics like this make it extremely difficult for any state to maintain a sanctions regime sufficient to influence the behavior of a foreign government. Humanitarian concerns almost exclude the possibility of turning a blind eye to such suffering in furtherance of the goal of deterrence.

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[103] Zakaria, Fareed, "Let's Get Real About Iraq," Newsweek, Volume CXXXVII, Number 9, February 26, 2001, page 41
[104] Ibid

Not only do such human tragedies resulting from sanctions erode domestic support for sanctions in the imposing states, they do a great deal to force other nations to abandon their commitment to such efforts and to resume normal relations with the offending government. Again we see this all to clearly in Iraq. U.S. policies have been almost completely undermined, not just among Arab states in the region, but within the United Nations and with our European allies as well. Even Syria, the Ba'athist rival of Saddam Hussein, has begun efforts to improve relations with Baghdad[105]. As the human toll of sanctions rises so too does the difficulty in maintaining international compliance with these efforts. States will begin to withdraw their support for sanctions citing the untold suffering which these measures are causing. Though it may well be true that such suffering is, as in Iraq, largely due to the diversion of scarce resources away from those in need, such arguments will do little as year after year the death toll mounts. Today it is difficult for the United States to find a sympathetic ear for such arguments. In addition, the dual effect of sanctions not only causes international backlash against sanctions, it also provides a convenient cover for those states which, for other, less altruistic reasons, wish to resume relations. France, Russia, and China have all made concerted efforts over the past decade to eliminate U.N. sanctions against Iraq; most often their arguments are based on humanitarian concerns, but the economic purposes behind these efforts are equally clear. Today Jordan, a vital U.S. ally in the region, has concluded a free-trade agreement with Baghdad, and currently receives the bulk of its oil from Iraq. There is little humanitarian rationale behind Jordan's moves; it is quite simply an economic

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[105] Ibid

necessity for Amman to make such deals with Saddam[106]. Thus, just as the human costs of sanctions will work against their continuation, so too will the economic burdens which many states suffer once a targeted state is cut off.

These realities leave but two options; a few states can go it alone with sanctions, or sanctions can be adjusted so as to accommodate their critics. Either option leaves little chance that sanctions can ultimately be effective in deterring terrorism and changing the policies of the targeted state. If one or two nations go it alone, as does the United States in Cuba and Iran, trade and political support from the rest of the world will often compensate for lost commerce with the imposing state(s). Similarly, altering sanctions to make them more palatable to the world community will almost certainly have the effect of convincing the target government that the sanctions are neither serious nor permanent, and thus will have little consequence in achieving deterrence. Even those sanctions which are successful often support, rather than refute, the ineffectual nature of these actions vis-à-vis deterrence. The United Nations actions against Libya were, admittedly, successful in convincing Tripoli to hand over the two suspects for trial. However, these sanctions were aimed at an extremely limited end (the extraditions), thus allowing Colonel Qaddafi to placate the world audience with a relatively painless deed. In fact, there is no evidence that the surrender of these suspects signaled a change in Libya's support for terrorism; clearly their continued inclusion on the State Department's list is evidence of this. Thus sanctions regimes which appear successful are often those

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[106] This information comes from State Department personnel assigned to the U.S. embassy in Amman, Jordan.

directed toward limited aims which do not represent any significant change in the policies and direction of the target state.

To truly affect the required changes in the cost-benefit analyses of national leaders would no doubt require the imposition of sanctions over a period of years. We have already seen that to maintain such long term measures is next to impossible, and risks alienating the imposing state(s) even further by painting them as hostile nations intent upon destroying a foreign adversary. Such a vision of the sanctioning state can be used to recruit members and support for terrorist groups which pledge to fight this state and its actions. We should not doubt that many Iraqis support terrorist actions against the United States, painted as we have been as the harbinger of death and chaos in the Middle East. Thus even if a state could preserve long-term sanctions, there is every reason to believe that such a course of action will only provide terrorists and their supporters more ammunition in their war against the imposing state. Economic or political sanctions which do not have the nearly full support of the world community, and which cannot be directed so as to minimize the suffering of ordinary citizens, are likely to be all but worthless in deterring further terrorist attacks.

The preceding review of present efforts directed toward the deterrence of terrorism was intended to both encapsulate what is currently being attempted in this area, as well as to demonstrate a few of the reasons I believe these measures to be inherently flawed and incapable of achieving the end toward which they are directed. The no-negotiations policy is defective both in its conception, which seeks a more rigid implementation than

reality allows, and in its execution, whereby states frequently and blatantly violate its tenets. Uses of force fare no better, often reinforcing the negative stereotypes which terrorists use to garner support for their operations. Military responses are also damaged by the difficulty in developing a proportionate and appropriate response, as well as by the likelihood that repeated reprisals will allow terrorists groups to adjust to these measures and avoid the brunt of the punishment. Similarly, economic and political sanctions are prone to causing secondary effects which, like uses of force, frequently reinforce adversaries' views of one as an aggressive, immoral nation bent upon imposing one's will by any means available. In addition, the likelihood that long-term sanctions will need to be modified or dropped altogether makes them ill-suited for achieving the strategic goal of deterring terrorism.

III.   THE UNIQUE NATURE OF TERRORISM

Before proceeding to a discussion of the methods which I propose as substitutes for, and complements to, the previously discussed deterrent measures, it is important to briefly consider some reasons why terrorism remains a persistent problem despite the significant efforts made by numerous states and multi-national organizations. There are a number of realities which underscore terrorism and its states sponsors which make them difficult targets of deterrent actions. Though we have pointed out certain inherent flaws in the three current deterrent measures most widely used, it is not merely these shortcomings which render them ineffective against terrorism. Indeed, these actions may be effective means of achieving deterrence in other areas, such as conventional or nuclear conflict, as well as the development or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Nevertheless, the combination of each policy's shortcomings and the unique conditions of terrorism make them, as currently formulated and implemented, unsuitable for the task at hand.

As much of the discussion above has indicated, terrorism is a phenomenon unique among human endeavors. Neither war nor a crime, terrorism seeks to affect the international political and social order using methods which are often far outside of the scope of civilized conduct. In addition to the distinctive nature of terrorism and its perpetrators, there are also certain exceptional considerations behind those states which choose to support and sponsor such activity. The one trait which tends to underlie both terrorism and its sponsors is a general sense of dissatisfaction with the current local and global

status quo. Terrorism is, by no means, the tool of the strong[107]. Indeed, as noted

previously, in many ways it is the overall weakness of terrorist groups which separate

them from guerilla fighters. Many of those who engage in terrorism believe themselves

to be faced with an almost insurmountable obstacle or opponent. It is this belief in the

almost dire nature of the struggle which allows many terrorists to justify the extreme and

violent measures which they often take. On the other hand, states which sponsor

terrorism often likewise feel themselves to be in a particularly weak position vis-à-vis the

actor(s) it wishes to influence. Despite Cold War political rhetoric, there is little evidence

that strong nations engage in serious efforts to support, encourage, or foster terrorist

activities directed against their enemies; their very strength makes such efforts

unnecessary. However, for much weaker states which face what they believe to be an

unacceptable political situation, covert sponsorship of terrorism can be viewed as an

effective means of narrowing the gap between their ambitious foreign policy goals and

their relative lack of power[108]. The fact that terrorists and their sponsors often see

themselves as proverbial Davids squaring off against geo-political Goliaths has

significant implications for deterrent efforts.

The zeal with which terrorists themselves engage in their struggle presents a particular

difficulty for states which seek to deter their actions. Indeed, some believe that the

extreme commitment which many terrorists and their leaders have to their cause make

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[107] Hanle, page 118
[108] Rubin, page 188

them all but undeterrable[109]. These individuals are engaged in a struggle which they believe to be not only just, but absolutely necessary to the achievement of some higher political, religions, or ideological cause. The willingness of some terrorist members to engage in suicide attacks (such as against the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut or the U.S.S. Cole) is but the most visible and obvious symbol of the dedication and devotion of many terrorists. Given this ardor, terrorists have become highly skilled at working around various defensive and deterrent measures which states institute[110]. As states implemented greater measures to deter and prevent hijackings, the numbers of such incidents did drop[111], only to be countered by an increase in less risky activities such as mass bombings and grenade and shell attacks. Bruce Jentleson succinctly captures the reasons behind the continued terrorist efforts despite state measures against them; "[states] keep the conflict limited by fighting not to lose, [their] adversaries fight to win[112]." All of the deterrent measures noted above are limited in their scope; non-negotiation policies apply only to incidents initiated by terrorists, uses of force are always of a restricted nature, and economic sanctions almost always provide for humanitarian exceptions and loopholes. In this manner states are doing themselves a double disfavor,

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[109] Falk, Richard A., "The Beirut Raid and the International Law of Retaliation", *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (July, 1989), page 426

[110] Betts, Richard K., "Surprise Despite Warning: Why Sudden Attacks Succeed," *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume 95, Issue 4, (Winter, 1980-1981), pages 566-572 AND
Cauley, Jon, Eric Iksoon Im, "Intervention Policy Analysis of Skyjackings and Other Terrorist Incidents (in The Political Economy of Terrorism)", *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the One-Hundredth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (May, 1988), page 28

[111] Evans, Alona E., "Aircraft Hijacking: What is Being Done," *American Journal of International Law*, Volume 67, Issue 4, (October, 1973), page 649

[112] Jentleson, Bruce W., "American Commitments in the Third World: Theory vs. Practice," *International Organization*, Volume 41, Issue 4, (Autumn, 1987), page 695

both in using limited methods and in employing them against adversaries which are

dedicated to victory at almost any cost.

A similar phenomenon exists in terms of the states which are the staunchest supporters of

terrorism. As noted, these nations often view terrorism as a cheap and effective means to

take active steps in furtherance of their policy goals without jeopardizing either their own

military or diplomatic resources, while at the same time maintaining a veil of deniability

which will deflect the wrath of the world community[113]. These measures often achieve

significant success in forcing the target state of terrorist activity to take strong and often

heavy-handed measures to defend and retaliate against terrorist attacks. In so doing the

terrorists may be able to undermine the legitimacy of a given regime and its dedication to

peace and justice. Painting an adversary in such a light has undeniable advantages for

states which seek to realize concessions from the target state; greater international

pressure can be rallied to force the target to compromise, military and economic aid to the

target may be reduced in response to perceived excesses, and internal public opinion

within the target may be altered so as to pressure the government into negotiations or

concessions. A number of Arab states in the Middle East have successfully used these

tactics against Israel (notably Syria and Iran)[114], while Libyan and Eastern European

support for the IRA helped to put Great Britain in the uneasy position of defending its

often extra-legal measures in Northern Ireland. States also stand to gain concrete

advantages from the sponsorship of terrorism. Iran successfully drove the United States

out of Beirut in 1983 using only its Lebanese surrogates, avoiding the direct involvement

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[113] Hanle, page 181
[114] Rubin, pages 231-232

of its own resources[115]. State sponsors thus stand to gain both concrete and

psychological advantages in furtherance of their policy goals with a minimum of effort.

The lure which these rewards hold for many states make it difficult for them to turn away

from an enterprise which is so potentially beneficial. Despite military responses and

economic sanctions, state sponsorship of terrorism has not disappeared[116], and is not

likely to do so as long as states view terrorism as an efficient means for redressing their

grievances with the status quo. In addition, the existence of terrorist groups which

oppose the current state of affairs and are fully committed to altering these realities will

continue to make terrorism a proverbial "tough nut to crack." So long as states and

groups wish to alter the current state of affairs they will find ways to work around

whatever we do to maintain the existing order. Marc Celmer has summarized the

difficulties which states face when formulating deterrent strategies by stating, "[a]s long

as individuals, groups, and even nations view certain political, economic and social

institutions as illegitimate, unacceptable and immoral, terrorist behavior will continue as

a form of political expression[117]."

Terrorism is also unique in the problems it presents when gauging the effectiveness of

deterrence actions. It is often said that one can never truly know with any degree of

certainty when deterrence has been successful, only when it fails. If an adversary takes

an undesired action, deterrence has been unsuccessful. However, if the same actor is held

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[115] Hanle, page 157
[116] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, page 5
[117] Celmer, page 117

in check, is it the result of deterrence or the lack of a real intent by the enemy to implement the feared course of action? We might ask, for example, whether the Soviet Union chose not to launch an offensive against Western Europe because of the deterrent actions of the United States, or because it never sought such conquest. The difficulties in gauging the effectiveness of deterrence are amplified when the opponent is a terrorist group. Unlike state actors, whose military and diplomatic moves can be identified and analyzed in terms of signaling a willingness to retreat or to maintain the status quo, developing such insights into terrorists groups is all but impossible. Rarely can one identify via satellite photos the massing of terrorist forces, or their withdrawal. By its very nature terrorism is secretive and illusive, thus making it extremely problematical to determine whether a group has refrained from launching attacks because of deterrent measures or some other factor (e.g. loss of members, lack of weapons, disbanding of the group, etc.) While we may know little about what goes on inside the minds of foreign leaders, we know less still about the thoughts and plans of terrorists. In addition, the decentralized and non-hierarchical nature of many terrorist groups makes it difficult to determine who is, or is not, being deterred. The actions of splinter or sub-groups may make it appear that deterrence has failed, while in fact the main target may well have been effectively persuaded to abandon violence. The current activities of IRA offshoots in Northern Ireland demonstrate that judging the success of deterrence can be particularly problematic when confronting terrorist groups. In sum, it can be even more challenging to determine whether we have succeeded or failed in our deterrent efforts when confronting a terrorist threat rather than a traditional state actor.

A NEW DETERRENCE MODEL

In moving to a discussion of a new model of deterrence to be applied to counter-terrorism, we must consider a trait which the three previously mentioned deterrence policies have in common. Beyond seeking to affect some measure of strategic deterrence vis-à-vis terrorism, and despite the flawed nature of each, each measure seeks to induce deterrence through the manipulation of the cost side of the cost-benefit analysis. We have already noted how deterrence aims to alter this calculation so as to make the potential gains from a given course of action less than the costs which would be involved. The no-negotiations policy, uses of force, and political and economic sanctions all aspire to increase the costs to be incurred should a state or terrorist group involve themselves in violent activity. The method by which this is affected by military interventions is clear; terrorist attacks are met with significant armed responses which are designed to be so costly to the target group or state so as to negate any gains which may have been realized through uses of violence. It is hoped that by demonstrating this capability and intention attackers will be dissuaded from initiating terrorist operations. Similarly, political and economic sanctions are imposed upon state actors so as to greatly increase the costs they bear for supporting terrorist activity. Again it is believed that by making such losses sufficient, they will outweigh the political advantages of state sponsorship and thus deter future state involvement. Finally, the no-negotiations policy does not so much seek to increase costs as to eliminate altogether potential gains. By making it clear that terrorists will pry no concessions from a given government through the use of terrorist methods, nations clearly hope to alter the cost-benefit analysis by removing the hope of any

rewards. This, in turn, inflates the cost side of the ledger by eliminating considerations which might counterbalance the financial and logistical challenges, as well as the physical and political dangers, of terrorist operations. In short, any cost will be too high if one knows there is nothing to gain.

Unfortunately, as the critique of these methods has demonstrated, costs are notoriously difficult to manipulate. Many groups and their state sponsors are willing to accept tremendous risks and expenditures in the hope of achieving victory. In addition, some groups feel, for religious, ideological, or political reasons, that whatever the costs involved they must continue their struggle in order to set right a terrible wrong. Similarly, the relatively weak position of the majority of states which support terrorists makes it likely that they will perceive themselves as having little to lose by following such a course of action. Once a state (such as Libya or Iraq) has been thoroughly undermined by economic sanctions, and in some instances uses of force, there remains little incentive for them to stop their activities in support of terrorists. Given the inherent difficulties in altering cost perceptions of actors involved in international terrorism, the ultimate conclusion of this paper is that much greater success may be realized by looking to instead change the benefits which states and groups may realize by refraining from violence. In other words, I propose that policies be devised not to make terrorism too costly to commit, but to make peaceful interaction too advantageous to forsake. I will now turn to an analysis of the concepts and proposals which are the foundation of this principle.

The basic thoughts behind the policy direction which I propose are those which arose from the preceding discussion of deterrence theory and its critiques, namely the inclusion of efforts to better understand the psychological motivations which drive actors, as well as the formulation of methods to make the status quo more acceptable to those who seek its alteration. Just as state-level actors possess certain psychological dispositions and biases which incline them to one course of action or another, so too do terrorist members and the states which offer them support. Too often these considerations are ignored as terrorists are lumped together under the banner of "mad men" or "lunatics." As with classic deterrence, it is essential to unearth and evaluate true motivations in an effort to better understand that which lies beneath the violence of terrorism. Once such an analysis has been completed, governments will be in a better position to use what they have learned to prepare policies which might alleviate some of the underlying dissatisfaction which leads to terrorist violence. As noted above, such policies should seek to make the current status quo as appealing as possible to one's adversaries, without damaging one's basic political and strategic goals and beliefs. Each part of this new equation is vital in order to implement a more effective deterrence.

Motivations of Terrorist Groups

As has been noted several times before, for the most part terrorists are far from the mindless, sadistic killers we so often assume them to be. In fact, most have a specific goal for which they fight, goals which may or may not be considered legitimate within the context of international relations. Nevertheless, unlike serial murderers who maim

and kill for the pleasure of it, terrorists consider themselves soldiers in an undeclared war against the source of a perceived injustice. As such, their psychological motivations are a key to understanding the goals which they hope to achieve. Terrorists have grievances, grievances which they often share with a larger community which is at least sympathetic to their goals and motivations[118]. Such motivations may be the creation of a Palestinian or a Basque state, the expulsion of western influences from the Arabian Peninsula, the creation of a Marxist government in Peru, or the reunification of Ireland. Whatever the stimulus, and regardless of what the outside world might think, these grievances are real and tangible to the terrorists, are usually shared by a good percentage of the population at large, and are thus in need of redress. That a wider audience often exists in support of their goals only serves to reinforce in these actors the legitimacy and urgency of their mission. The terrorist almost certainly comes to believe in the inherent justice of his or her cause, and acts with the belief that he or she is supported by the will and desire of others.

In addition, ideological and religious factors often further reinforce these notions. The world has witnessed the ardent nature of Islamic terrorism and its willingness to resort to the most violent of means to affect a "jihad" against a perceived evil. Never mind that in Islam a true jihad is intended as an internal war against one's own inner demons; for those who believe in a cause religious symbols and concepts are easily perverted in support of their actions. This is a phenomenon not limited to Muslims: ultra-right wing religious groups in the United States have been tied to a number of attacks; it was an

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[118] O'Brien, page 63

ultra-orthodox Jew who assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995;

and religion has been one of the centerpieces of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Ideology is also a valuable psychological ally to the terrorist. Throughout the 1970s and

1980s numerous attacks were conducted by dedicated Marxist and Maoist groups such as

the Sindera Luminosa of Peru, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC),

the Red Brigades of Italy, and the Beider-Meinhoff Gang of West Germany. These

groups' belief in the inherent correctness of Marxist and Maoist philosophy, their

certainty of the inevitability of a worldwide proletarian revolution, and their conviction

that action must be taken in furtherance of the revolution were all certainly contributing

factors in the fervor with which they executed their attacks.

Another ironic factor contributing to the deep conviction which many terrorists feel in

their struggle against a supposed oppressor state is that the actions of the target nation can

often contribute to the creation of an image as the ultimate antagonist. For example, U.S.

Marines were not initially among the primary terrorist targets when they arrived in

Lebanon in 1983; however, over time the actions which this force took came to be seen

by many Islamic fighters as pro-Israel, pro-Phalangist, and anti-Muslim[119]. As a result of

this emerging image of the U.S. forces, the Marines became the victims of a vicious

suicide bombing which took the lives of over 200 American personnel. The policies

which the Reagan administration had followed in Lebanon, designed as they were to

stabilize the nation, instead had the unintended consequence of reaffirming in many

Muslim minds the bias of the United States against the Islamic cause, and thus the

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[119] Jentleson, page 690

necessity to target U.S. interests[120]. Similarly, the entire range of Israeli actions over the past fifty years has served as fodder for Arab hatred of the Jewish state and the conviction that Israeli leaders will not be satisfied until every Arab is safely dead, banished, or in prison. Perhaps the greatest contributing factor to this image has been, ironically, Israel's overwhelming superiority in military confrontations. Gabriel Ben-Dor believes this absolute lack of symmetry between Israel and its Arab adversaries has led Arabs to resort to "demonological explanations" of Israeli superiority[121]. In other words, Israel is viewed as possessed of an unwavering desire to eliminate its Arab neighbors, a desire which provides it tremendous advantage on the battlefield. Even within the past six months Israel has done a great deal to undermine its contention that it is basically peaceful, an assertion which many Arabs find difficult to believe as they witness the Palestinian death toll rising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In taking actions which they felt to be in their own self-interest, both the United States and Israel have unwittingly contributed to the underlying feeling of helplessness and resentment which motivates many terrorist movements.

These states are not alone in experiencing this phenomenon. Excesses by British authorities have been well documented (and indeed were the subject of the 1994 film In the Name of the Father) and no doubt assisted the IRA in portraying London as a savage and immoral occupying power. Similarly, Peruvian, Turkish, Spanish, and Russian security forces have all been noted for the severity of their counter-terrorist measures, measures which in many cases helped to bolster both the morale and support of the

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[120] Ibid, pages 689-690
[121] Kileman & Levite, page 90

terrorist groups opposed to these states. The desire by states to formulate an effective policy to diminish the threat of terrorist violence has often produced the counter-effect of strengthening the very groups against which they are directed, and of increasing public awareness of, and sympathy for, these groups. An interesting example of this effect was the British policy that radio and television broadcasts could not carry the voices of alleged terrorists. As a result, in the 1980s and early-1990s (prior to the policy's abandonment), the nightly BBC broadcast often carried interviews with Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, interviews which were dubbed over with another voice. Besides the sheer comic effect of this effort, such measures served to reinforce IRA charges that the British government was essentially unjust and undemocratic, a charge which British censorship did little to counter.

It is vital to note that terrorists operate based upon a very real logic grounded in a set of beliefs and grievances. Views of terrorism as barbaric and senseless, while appealing and perhaps appropriate in respect to the violence itself are utterly unsuitable for describing the mind of the terrorist. Terrorism is, in many ways, an extreme expression of a political or ideological position which is at odds with the current state of affairs. Though ideally such complaints would be addressed via peaceful and democratic means, for the terrorist such options are seen as either too slow to be effective in the face of great suffering, or as altogether nonexistent. Extreme violence becomes the only effectual means of altering the status quo so as to achieve the goals which such groups seek. Violence is thus viewed as not only as a legitimate course of action, but also indeed as the course which is demanded by the need to right a terrible wrong. Religious and ideological imagery and

rationality are very often applied to terrorist tactics, cloaking them in an air of legality and justice which makes them all the more powerful as tools of change. If violence is not only necessary, but required by God, who are we as mere mortals to turn our backs on both our suffering brethren and the almighty? Terrorists believe in themselves and their causes no less so than do law enforcement and military personnel throughout the world. While we may defend the Constitution of the United States, Yasir Arafat fought for Palestine, Usama Bin Laden seeks to protect the holy lands of Islam, and the IRA looks to reunite the Irish nation. To dismiss any of these causes out of hand risks diminishing our knowledge and understanding of those against whom we struggle. Indeed, previous U.S. administrations have been criticized for "the inability…to recognize the fact that terrorists have a different perception of rationality, life and use of violence as a form of political expression and behavior[122]." Today many believe that in order to formulate an effective deterrent policy for use against terrorists it is essential to take into account the reasons why terror is used as a weapon[123], and to recognize the existence of certain fundamental causes of terrorist violence, such as poverty, alienation, and disaffection[124]. Just as it is necessary to expend sufficient resources in order to gain a better understanding of the psychological motivations and biases which our state-level adversaries possess, so too is it critical to make the same effort against terrorist groups. Until states take greater account of why there is terrorism, it will be difficult to conceive of a method to overcome it.

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[122] Celmer, page 114
[123] Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism, page 3
[124] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, page 13

Motivations of State Sponsors

The psychological factors which underlie state decisions to harbor and support terrorists

are generally less complicated than those which inspire the terrorists themselves. Indeed,

much of the state motivation has been noted previously. In essence, states choose to

become sponsors of terrorists for the entirely self-serving reason that it offers a low cost

and low risk means to advance the state's interests and agenda[125]. In this sense terrorism

has become a covert and surrogate method for waging war whereby weaker states can

hope to make gains against stronger opponents, against whom they would have little

chance of success in traditional military engagements[126]. While it is thus generally true

that state sponsors harbor few, if any, motives other than political and economic gain,

there are some situations in which states are subject to the same complex motivations that

lead terrorists to turn to violence. Among cases of this type is Iranian and Afghani

support for radical Islamic terrorism, movements which these states might view as

furthering their own desires to foster strict forms of Islam throughout South and

Southwest Asia. Such desires are born both of ideological and religious fervor, as well as

from political interest. Similarly, during the apartheid era in South Africa, many so-

called "frontline" states provided support to the African National Congress, not only to

achieve the political goal of undermining the white South African regime, but also out of

a conviction that white minority rule was unjust and repressive. Finally, Arab support for

the Palestinian cause is motivated by dual desires, that of weakening Israel in hopes of

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[125] Statement of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III before the Committee on International Relations, United States House of Representatives, page 1
[126] Hoffman, page 27

gaining political advantage, and, at least to some degree, that of providing the

Palestinian people with a viable homeland in which they can live and prosper.

Thus while it may be tempting, and in most cases correct, to assume that state sponsors

are motivated solely by the hope of achieving some strategic advantage against an

adversary, it should always be remembered that some cases do not so easily fit this

pattern. To dismiss out of hand ideological, political, or religious convictions as causes

of state support could be dangerous and counterproductive. In order to properly and

effectively devise policies which will deter state sponsorship of terrorism it is essential to

achieve the best possible understanding of the motivations and goals which lie behind

state involvement. Traditional deterrence policies which seek primarily to increase the

costs associated with a given course of action will likely prove ineffective against states

which see themselves as being the religious or ideological benefactors of legitimate

guerilla movements which seek to correct horrible injustices. If states believe themselves

to be fighting on the side of God or justice, they will almost certainly prove as difficult to

deter as terrorist groups which maintain similar convictions. Conversely, military strikes

or economic sanctions may be more effective against states which utilize terrorism as an

opportunistic tool to achieve immediate gains. In such cases it is conceivable that these

actions might be more successful in altering the cost-benefit analyses of state sponsors[127].

However, in either case it is clearly vital for nations to formulate as accurate a picture as

possible of the psychological factors which are motivating state supporters of terrorism.

Are they advantage-seeking opportunists who believe terrorism to be a cheap and

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[127] Hanle, page 219

effective tool of leverage? Or are they actors with deep political, ideological, or religious convictions which convince leaders of the legitimacy and justice of both their own goals, as well as those of the terrorists they support? The answers to these questions are crucial if we are to devise effective means of implementing long-term deterrence.

Another point which must be noted in terms of state sponsorship is the advantage such nations gain from the clandestine nature of their relationships with various terrorist groups. As noted above, terrorism is viewed as a covert method of engaging in military confrontation with an adversary. That the ties between state and terrorist be kept secret is an important component of such relationships. Open support (other than in ideologically motivated situations such as discussed previously) is rare, and is generally considered to negate many of the advantages which states gain from backing terrorists. By hiding such support states can avoid both direct reprisals and the political and economic backlash of world condemnation. In addition, this secrecy makes it difficult for victims of terrorism to establish concrete ties between attackers and their state sponsors. Without such clearly articulated connections it is often difficult for victim states to justify action taken against a purported state sponsor. The clandestine nature of state collaboration in fact provides the sponsor with a sort of guarantee against reprisals, in the sense that states which do resort to military retaliation are often the targets of greater international outrage and condemnation than are the sponsors themselves. In this way heavy-handed measures such as uses of force or unilateral sanctions can often complement the violent activities of terrorists by further isolating the target state from the world community.

Perhaps the most obvious example of this effect is Israel, a nation which has been the victim of innumerable acts of violence, and yet which has been oft vilified by the international community for the actions it has taken in response. Were it not for the frequent intervention of the United States and its veto power, Israel may well have been the target of countless United Nations resolutions of condemnation. Each Israeli action, whether directed against terrorists or the state actors which sponsor them, seems to isolate the Jewish state further and to produce more and more support for the cause of its terrorist enemies. We can thus see how it may be to the advantage of state sponsors to absorb possible retaliatory actions in order to inflict further political damage upon their adversaries. Consequently even deterrent actions directed against the most opportunistic of state sponsors may fail to greatly alter their calculations regarding links to terrorism; after all, why stop sponsoring such activity when any retaliation will prove so clearly detrimental to one's enemy.

The lesson to be drawn from this discussion of the thought processes of state sponsors is that there is much which nations fail to take into consideration when contemplating how best to respond to such actors. Categorizing all such states as greedy opportunists clearly fails to take into consideration the religious and ideological motivations which may make them believe terrorism is both just and necessary so as to attain some higher good. Failing to consider this type of rationale can lead to the misperception and misrepresentation of any given state sponsor, mistakes which can ultimately lead to the creation of faulty and ineffectual responses. Additionally, governments which do not fully understand the unique advantages which covert relationships offer to state sponsors

will be far more likely to become the sources of their own failure. Assuming that the evidence a nation believes it has against another will hold up in the court of public opinion is a dangerous conclusion to reach. When the United States attacked Libya in 1986, and Afghanistan in 1998, world opinion was squarely against the U.S. actions, and condemnation poured from almost every corner of the globe. Despite the widespread belief in the U.S. that the evidence against Libya and Afghanistan was overwhelming, it is clear the international community did not believe so, and the U.S. suffered widespread denunciation for their illegal and violent responses. Before nations implement retaliatory measures it is critical that they consider the potential backlash which such actions might entail, and if possible devise ways to deprive state sponsors of the protection which the clandestine nature of their activities provides.

<u>What Can Be Done</u>

What the discussion of terrorist and state motivations points out is the importance of knowing one's adversary. This is meant not only from the traditional intelligence viewpoint of being able to describe in detail the organizational, logistical, and operational aspects of an adversary, but in the far more imprecise sense of understanding both the grievances and goals which are behind various groups' resort to violence, and the decision of certain states to assist them. The current assumptions which are made about the nature and motivation of terrorism are crude, imprecise, and geared toward our own desire to portray such actors as the violent "other" against which we must stand firm. If nothing else, the discussion to this point has demonstrated that the ideas and beliefs

which induce young men and women to engage in terrorist activity are tremendously varied and diverse. While some groups may bear strong resemblances to others, and may harbor similar ideals and goals, each has its own subtle (and not so subtle) differences which separate it from others. Some terrorist groups are based almost exclusively in ideology and/or religion, and have only vague political objectives which are so far-fetched as to strain credibility. Among such groups one might find Al Qaeda, the Shining Path, or Aum Shinrikyo. Others bear a greater resemblance to legitimate guerilla or rebel movements which profess intentions which are not only wholly within the realm of possibility, but which are supported by numerous non-violent actors. The PLO, IRA, and ETA are quintessential examples of terrorist groups which have had the support of large segments their own populations, as well as varying levels of support from the world community. In responding to terrorist groups it is essential to determine where along such a continuum a particular group lies in order to devise effective deterrent measures. Governments must evaluate to what extent the grievances and demands of a given group might be met before they can determine how best to respond to violence.

While I do not support the concept of rewarding terrorism with concessions, policy makers must be realistic in admitting that terrorism does not spontaneously erupt, but represents, in many cases, serious social, political, and economic realities which warrant redress. For example, many Middle Eastern states have population growth rates among the world's highest, significantly above 3 percent, a fact which contributes to economic hardships and the creation of large segments of unemployed and disaffected youths, the

prime recruiting pool for terrorists[128]. Without directly conceding to the immediate

demands of terrorist groups, states must take a closer look at the circumstances which

drive individuals to such groups and which cause even non-members to profess support

and admiration for such groups. Air-to-ground missiles and rubber bullets will not solve

problems which require economic growth and financial intervention. Governments

should also look for ways to reintroduce the least violent members of various groups back

into society. While there is no doubt those terrorists responsible for violent actions must

be held accountable, sympathizers and non-violent members such as couriers and

lookouts should be offered some type of amnesty, both as a sign of good will to the

community, as well as in an effort to show these individuals that their only choice is not

terrorism or incarceration. The Repentance Program in Italy has been a significant

success in addressing the terrorist's fear of being trapped between violence and jail, thus

removing some of the inhibitions which might otherwise prevent an individual's exit

from a terrorist group[129]

In addition, the political aspirations of many groups fall closer to those of a guerilla group

than of a pathological movement. Despite the deplorable violence which these groups

utilize, some do fight for certain legitimate rights which have been denied to a given

segment of the population. Recent Israeli willingness to negotiate a Palestinian entity,

and the British inclusion of Sinn Fein in a new political structure for Northern Ireland, are

strong indicators that the goals of the PLO and IRA (respectively) were not entirely

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[128] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, page 15
[129] Rubin, Barry (ed.), The Politics of Counterterrorism: The Ordeal of Democratic States, Washington, DC, The Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute, 1990, page 218

beyond the scope of negotiation and concession. Indeed the United States was making

overtures toward the PLO as early as the 1970s[130], a recognition of the need to take a new

look at how to address this problem. However, rather than coming to this conclusion

twenty or more years into a bloody terrorist war, governments would do well to give

serious consideration to the stated goals of various groups and determine if any

movement is possible in order to short-circuit the violence before it becomes widespread.

If nations fear legitimizing terrorist tactics, they can always find more moderate parties

with whom to negotiate, thus undercutting the most violent segments of a given

movement. Both the Israeli and British have successfully identified suitable

intermediaries, or have found ways to "rehabilitate" former enemies to make them more

acceptable negotiating parties[131]. In any event, both nations would have been better

served to have made such efforts at reaching out decades earlier, thus potentially avoiding

years of violence and scores of deaths[132]. States which do not take the time to seriously

consider the motivations and goals of terrorist groups arrayed against it risk missing out

on important opportunities to demoralize violent movements and forestall significant

bloodshed.

This is not to say of course that all attempts to find an acceptable negotiating stance with

terrorists groups will be successful, or even that all groups have goals which are

compatible with the overall political and social norms of a given state. For example, it is

unlikely that the Peruvian government could have offered any significant concession to

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[130] Kumamoto, Robert, International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations, 1945-1976, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1999, page 171
[131] Kumamoto, page 193
[132] Slater, page 417

the Shining Path terrorists without fatally undermining its own existence. So too are the states of Southwest Asia unable to consider negotiating with Usama Bin Laden, an individual who has called for the replacement of the current moderate governments with radical Islamic regimes. Quite simply there are a certain sets of terrorist groups which maintain goals which are beyond the scope of concessions and which cannot be engaged in any meaningful way in talks with the targeted government.

In addition to the inability to address the motives of these types of groups, states must be aware that even in those situations in which negotiations may prove successful, the nearly inevitable emergence of splinter groups will make elimination of all terrorist activity a near impossibility. It has been posited that the renunciation of violence by the "mainstream" members of a given terrorist group often leads those who remain committed to violence to increase their defiance and the severity of their attacks as a way to demonstrate their resolve[133]. As Israel and Great Britain have engaged their primary terrorist adversaries in significant discussions which have led to a diminution of violence sponsored by these groups, new, more violent factions have emerged which are utterly opposed to any peaceful settlement. The Palestinian Hammas movement and the so-called Real Irish Republican Army consist of those who believe that the negotiations underway in each country are unjust and are designed to undercut the legitimate political goals of the Palestinian and Northern Irish peoples. These individuals often vow to carry on the fight against the oppressor, and many times turn their violence against former compatriots who have accepted the wisdom of a peaceful dialogue. Thus it is doubtful

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[133] Reinares, Fernando, "Democratic Regimes, Internal Security Policy and the Threat of Terrorism," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Volume 44, Number 3, (1988), page 358

that even the most successful efforts by a government to address the legitimate concerns of certain groups will lead to the full eradication of terrorist violence. However, what it likely will do is to deny actors who continue an armed struggle the respect and sympathy of the general population, as well as the understanding of many in the world community. In cases where genuine concerns exist, efforts at conciliation can not only reduce terrorist violence, but also can remove the moral support which groups received from both within and without. By so doing states may not end violence, but will certainly make such actions even more unacceptable to the domestic and international audience.

What is ultimately of greatest importance in formulating successful deterrent strategies against terrorist groups is the analysis and understanding of the type of group a given state faces. Labeling all groups as evil and bloodthirsty is not only the sign of lazy foreign and security policies, but also increases the risks of enacting strategies which will be, at best, ineffectual, and at worst self-defeating. Just as this examination of the motives and grievances of terrorist groups must be undertaken in order to facilitate successful deterrence, so too must such analyses be conducted vis-à-vis the states which sponsor and support terrorist violence. As noted previously, these states often vary in the motivations which underlie their assistance to terrorists, and these differences can be significant when devising the proper response. State actors tend to exist on a sliding scale of motivation, ranging from those which view terrorism merely as useful tool in the short-term to affect certain political and/or economic advantages, to those which believe terrorists are legitimate warriors fighting a just war against an unjust and intransigent enemy. Where states' motivations fall along this continuum is crucial in determining

how best to implement deterrent measures against their continued support for terrorism. Those which are more opportunistic may be more easily influenced by deterrent efforts than those who are convinced of the absolute rectitude and necessity of their cause. Knowing where an adversary stand may thus allow measures to be properly tailored to achieve the greatest possible effect.

The above discussion of general deterrence theory, as well as the analysis of state sponsors, indicate that regardless of motivation states which seek to engage in some form of armed struggle against another are all essentially dedicated to a single ultimate goal, the reversal (or significant modification) of the current international status quo. Whether such ends include fundamentalist Islamic regimes, a Palestinian state, Iraqi hegemony, or a Tamil homeland, each state which sponsors terrorists seeks to secure by such support an alteration of the social and political order which exists. Much as classic deterrence theory concerns itself with how to change an opponent's desire to modify the status quo, so too must efforts to deter state sponsors begin with an identification of the particular aspect(s) of the current world order which a given state is attempting to change. This information will do much to inform a government as to the ultimate motivations which lie beneath state sponsorship, and the level of zeal which states have for various terrorist endeavors. If one assumes all state sponsors to be motivated solely by opportunism, or conversely by revolutionary ardor, then tailoring deterrent policies will become all but impossible, and strategies will be less than effective. It is incumbent upon nations to determine why states sponsor terrorism and what they are hoping to achieve.

An excellent example of the difficulties which arise when such analysis is not conducted is the current situation which exists between the United States and Iran. Iran is currently identified as one of the primary supporter of international terrorism[134], and as such is the subject of significant U.S. sanctions designed to deter such sponsorship. Indeed, despite recent efforts by the United States to ease tensions via cultural and educational exchanges, many argue that further concessions must be withheld until the government of Iran ends its support of terrorism[135]. The problem here is a variation of the age old question of the chicken and the egg; does Iran support terrorism because of U.S. pressure applied against it, and if so does the U.S. policy of applying such pressure until terrorist support is ended only perpetuate an endless cycle? No doubt a detailed analysis of the Iranian mindset in sponsoring terrorism would be difficult and complex; relations in Iran between reformers and hard-liners are strained, control of key agencies is divided, and the loyalties of the military and security services may be under some doubt. Nonetheless, advice such as that given by the National Commission on Terrorism to cease any and all concessions to Tehran[136] may produce far more harm than good. True, further easing of relations may reduce pressure on Iranian leaders to end their sponsorship of terrorism, but the reverse may also prove true. Improved relations between the United States and Iran might produce such valuable political, economic, and social gains for Tehran that it would not be worth their potential loss in order to facilitate terrorist operations. In short, the U.S. should be making greater efforts to understand the Iranian position and to make the benefits of peaceful relations, and the cost of their loss,

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[134] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, page 12

[135] Report of the National Commission on Terrorism: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, June 15, 2000, via internet (http://209.157.184.32/us/hearings/terrorism.html), page 3

[136] Ibid

sufficient so as to make any potential benefits from terrorism minimal by comparison. In so doing policies should be devised to alter the benefit portion of Iran's cost-benefit analysis, rather than the likely expenditures.

Such policies would no doubt prove enormously useful in deterring state sponsorship by other actors such as Syria, North Korea, and Cuba. The question then becomes how does one make concessions to such states sufficient to end their support for terrorism while not leading other nations to detect weakness or vacillation. I believe the key is to determine what each state wants and to evaluate to what extent a legitimate grievance exists and what can be done to alleviate these problems. For example, if it is concluded that Syria seeks a greater voice in the Middle East peace process and the return of lost territory, it may well be both feasible and beneficial for the U.S. and/or Israel to consider making adequate concessions so as to assuage these desires. Likewise, Cuba and Iran may be in search of the removal of long-term sanctions and the normalization of relations. Again, such actions are by no means beyond the realm of possibility for the United States, and any actions which might mitigate the grievances of state sponsors should be reviewed and considered. There is no doubt that to enact such policies would require making difficult, and certainly politically costly, decisions. The U.S. anti-Castro lobby would no doubt oppose any such efforts vis-à-vis Havana, as would the pro-Israel lobby argue against improved relations with Iran. Nonetheless, state sponsorship is a vital component of terrorism which allows these groups access to weapons, logistics, and intelligence which facilitate their attacks. As such, national leaders must consider the potential loss of

domestic political support in light of the possibility of saving lives by averting further

terrorist operations.

In addition, states must not allow moral and/or religious considerations to unduly

influence their policies toward nations which sponsor terrorism. While many in the West

oppose Iranian treatment of women and dissidents, such actions do fall within the

purview of internal Iranian jurisdiction, and in any case are hardly more deplorable than

the behavior of certain regimes which the United States and its allies have supported in

the past[137]. In fact, states may find it easier to work toward greater democratization and

liberalization within Iran (or any other such nation) when acting from a position of

normalized relations rather than as dedicated opponent. Although such strategies may

seem Machiavellian, leaders must realize a sad but undeniable fact; Iran will conduct its

internal affairs as it sees fit regardless of what other say or do. The only question is do

we wish them to simultaneously aid terrorists who seek to do us harm; if the answer is (as

it must be) no, then we must find a better way to deal with Iran and other nations like it.

The easing of tensions appears to already be reaping some rewards with Syria and North

Korea, though neither has made it off of the State Department's infamous list.

Nonetheless, even the slowly improving relations between the U.S. and these nations

seem to have paid some dividends in decreasing their propensity to support anti-

American terrorism[138]. Though new leadership in some of these countries may be one

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[137] The governments of Agosto Pinochet, Ferdinand Marcos, "Baby Doc" Duvalier, and even the Shah of Iran are examples of a potential double standard in this regard.
[138] Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, page 5

reason for the easing of tensions[139], a change in U.S. strategy has certainly also contributed to these small but significant successes.

As with terrorist groups, we must be prepared for the inevitability that we will face certain state sponsors which, by nature of their motivations or goals, will be beyond the possibility of negotiation. Those states which support terrorism in the hopes of bringing about revolution or the annihilation of an enemy are not likely to be appeased by any measures which will be acceptable to the target state. During the early years of Israel's existence, Arab states supported Palestinian terrorism in the hopes of eradicating the Jewish state; only after Israel proved by force that this goal would not be achieved did some of her Arab neighbors alter their objectives and begin to slowly pull back from their collaboration with terrorist groups. Today Afghanistan represents a state sponsor[140] which is likely beyond the scope of conciliation or negotiation. The desire of the Taliban government to export its own brand of fundamentalist Islam almost certainly makes it impossible for any state to seek compromise with Afghanistan. Afghanistan's continued harboring of wanted terrorists, as well as the frequent acts of seemingly irrational violence in which it engages (such as the destruction of radio transmission towers and the recent demolition of all statues in the country) make any efforts at conciliation appear futile and dangerous. Indeed, when faced with such a state, one which seeks goals which are beyond what is reasonable to concede or which is motivated by intense religious or

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[139] Statement of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III (Chairman, National Commission on Terrorism) before the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Government Information, United States Senate, June 28, 2000, page 4

[140] Although Afghanistan is not included on the State Department list, it is widely believed that the Taliban government of Afghanistan provides sanctuary to terrorists such as Usama Bin Laden, and provides some support for their activities.

ideological passion, the strategies described above are not only doomed to failure, but must **not** be implemented. The use of conciliatory or reassurance policies toward such a state will almost certainly lead to an increase in violence as these regimes and their terrorist surrogates sense a weakness which can and must be exploited. It is for this reason that I have stressed the importance of knowing one's enemy. While too rigid a stance may be ineffective against pragmatic and opportunistic nations, too soft a line may be deadly when confronting an overly ambitious and zealous regime.

What then can be done to effectively deter so-called rogue groups and states? Regrettably, very little is possible in such circumstances. Hard-line measures such as military strikes or economic sanctions will be unlikely to deter these actors since they will only reinforce the negative perceptions they have of target states. Conversely, conciliatory measures would likely be seen as a sign of weakness and an invitation to increase the pressure via violence in order to achieve greater rewards. Unfortunately, when confronted with intransigent states and groups the best policy options are likely those which are currently being employed. If one cannot implement a strategy to deter terrorist violence, the next best option is to defend against it. Current strategies which combine intelligence gathering, fortified installations, anti-terrorism training, economic and political sanctions, and occasional uses of force can be used to reduce the ability of groups to conduct operations, and the effectiveness of such attacks should they be carried out. As noted above, it is unlikely that such actions will have lasting effects in terms of altering the cost-benefit analyses of groups and/or states, and thus are not terribly useful in putting into practice long-term deterrence. Nonetheless, since the states and groups in

question are likely beyond the scope of deterrence, these measures can, at the very least, inhibit their ability to use violence as a political tool. If actors cannot be convinced that terrorism is an ineffective and counterproductive tool, then nations must at least look to minimize their ability to kill and maim in the name of their cause. Additionally, it is important that states seek to avoid the backlash which often accompanies sanctions and retaliation, and to put the onus of international scorn where it belongs, on the perpetrators of terrorism and their benefactors.

This point is important to bear in mind because traditional policies of military responses and sanctions are useful not only against rogue actors, but also have a place (albeit diminished) in countering even pragmatic states and groups[141]. Though these actions may represent the only options available for confronting intransigent adversaries, there are also likely to be situations in which they will be required to counter even those actors who are susceptible to the measures outlined above. For example, it is highly unlikely that efforts to reassure and negotiate will yield immediate results in terms of stemming violence. As such, states must continue to safeguard their citizens and interests by taking steps to impede terrorist operations. Thus even reprisals, sanctions, and standard defensive measures should be maintained in order to limit vulnerability to attacks in the short-term. However, in so doing there are two points which must be clearly kept in mind. The first is that these steps represent immediate, interim solutions only and will not bring about broader deterrence of terrorism. Nonetheless, military reprisals and other hard-line measures may be used to prevent immediate and imminent bloodshed, but only

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[141] Moore, page 164

with the acknowledgment that they must be accompanied by efforts to address the

underlying causes of violence and dissatisfaction. Though long-term solutions may not

be sought in the case of rogue actors, they should be considered and pursued in all

possible cases.

The second caveat is that states must make greater efforts to explain and justify such

actions so as to minimize the negative international reaction and prevent adversaries from

realizing a political and psychological advantage. To accomplish this goal measures

should be limited and well defined, geared only toward impeding the direct capability of

states and groups to engage in terrorist actions[142]. Military strikes should be directed

only against training and logistic facilities utilized by terrorist groups, and the national

intelligence infrastructures of state sponsors which supports attacks[143]. Tactics intended

to harass sponsoring regimes are ineffective and often seen as mean-spirited and illegal in

the eyes of the world community[144]. Retaliations must also be made credible, with

implementing states going to great lengths to explain the necessity of their actions and the

danger with which they are faced. Nations should make clear the extent and nature of

foreign support for terrorist groups, as well as establishing various groups' responsibility

for actual or planned attacks[145]. Governments should do their utmost to establish that

they have complied with the three main requirements of retaliation: 1) that the target of

the attack was guilty of a prior or planned attack against the implementing state, 2) that

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[142] Chalk, Peter, "Response to Terrorism as a Threat to Liberal Democracy", *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 44, Issue 3 (September, 1998), page 386.
[143] Falk, page 426
[144] Hosmer & Tanham, page 13
[145] Ibid, page 11

the implementing state made reasonable efforts to obtain redress from the accused state or group, and 3) that the damage inflicted was roughly proportional to that suffered[146]. By spelling out for all to see the reasons why direct and forceful action was necessary, states can reduce their vulnerability to international outrage and can mute many of the most stinging criticisms of their actions. Finally, nations which engage in retaliatory measures should, whenever possible, make immediate efforts to follow up such actions with attempts at conciliation designed to blunt the inevitable rage which such responses will engender. Much as the United States went to great lengths to assist Germany and Japan following their defeat in World War II so as to avoid the festering hatred and resentment which had led to this conflict, so too must modern states seek to complement necessary military actions with equally earnest social and economic measures designed to address underlying grievances. Failing to do so will only further poison relations and make even more difficult any efforts to achieve a lasting deterrent posture against terrorist adversaries. Thus it should be made perfectly clear that forceful responses, as well as political and economic sanctions, should be used sparingly and only under conditions designed to ameliorate their negative consequences. Additionally, they should not be viewed as solutions to the problem of terrorism, but rather as stopgap measures to prevent further loss of life as better and more permanent answers are sought.

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[146] Falk, page 431

CONCLUSIONS

If there is one key element which is vital to devising improved methods of deterrence, and to successfully implementing deterrence in the realm of international terrorism, it is understanding one's adversary. The simplified rationality assumptions of classic deterrence theory, and the similarly uncomplicated view of terrorists and their sponsors as mindless and bloodthirsty monsters do little to advance the cause of putting an end to potential violence. Neither view takes into full account the serious and complex social and psychological components which underlie an opponent's desires and tactics. For too long governments have sought to overly simplify their characterizations of both traditional and unconventional enemies. Such a desire is no doubt motivated not only by a general lack of understanding, but also by the same motivated and unmotivated psychological biases which afflict one's opponents. We see what we want to see and what we believe we should see, and it is therefore a far easier notion to digest that terrorists are murderous villains bent on carnage and mayhem. To put a more human, or more politically acceptable, face on these "barbarians" might call into question our own values and policies, forcing us to confront uncomfortable realities which might undermine our faith in the justice of our cause. After all, if the Palestinians, or Northern Irish, or Tamils, or Kurds have a justifiable grievance, then it is our actions, and not those of the terrorist, which will require review and modification. Far better then to simplify write off terrorists as irrational and undeterrable, thus making the only useful response forceful actions designed to eliminate both these groups and their capabilities for violence. However tempting such categorizations might be, it is vital that states which

wish to affect serious and long-term deterrence of terrorist activity look beyond the traditional descriptions of terrorist actors and make significant efforts to include political and economic "carrots" alongside (and in some cases in lieu of) military and economic "sticks".

In summarizing the conclusions and implications of this paper I would offer the following set of observations and suggestions:

1) Traditional deterrence, and thus any policies based upon it designed to counter terrorist activity, is fundamentally flawed by its failure to adequately account for psychological factors which motivate adversaries; not all states are fully bound by our visions of rationality, and not all terrorists are thugs and maniacs dedicated to senseless slaughter.

2) Likewise, traditional deterrence relies far too heavily upon measures which are designed to alter costs which opponents will incur should a given course of action be chosen. As such, little attention is paid to increasing the benefits of maintaining the status quo, an alternative which may be far more successful in achieving long-term deterrence.

3) When applied to terrorist groups and the states which support them, uncompromising tactics such as a no-negotiations policy, military retaliations, and

economic sanctions are far more likely to result in further violence as such actions confirm the perceived hostile intent of the implementing state.

4) When applying deterrent policies to terrorism, states must take into account the reasons why groups and states seek to alter the current status quo and determine if there exist meaningful but acceptable methods to redress these grievances and ameliorate the conditions which underlie the resort to violence.

5) Where possible, nations should look to separate state sponsors from terrorist groups by making the benefits of the current world order more attractive to these states. Similarly, governments should seek to divide terrorist groups between those members more and less inclined to violence; negotiations and significant concessions can help to lessen overall levels of violence by making peaceful means a more useful alternative to violence. In addition, by appearing to be willing to address the issues which are of concern to these groups, both domestic and international public opinion can be guided away from possible sympathy with terrorists and toward the embrace of nonviolent negotiations.

6) States must maintain a willingness and capability to resort to forceful responses in order to address difficulties which arise in two situations: a) the need for short-term defense against groups and states which might eventually be amenable to negotiations and renunciation of violence, and b) countering the actions of groups and states which possess objectives and motivations which are well beyond the

scope of any potential conciliation (an admittedly difficult and complex determination often born of a combination of experience and conjecture). In either case states must realize the limitations of forceful retaliation and be ever vigilant for the opportunity to implement more constructive measures in search of a final solution. In additions, states which choose to retaliate must take appropriate steps to ensure that their grievances are clearly articulated and the culpability of the targeted parties is demonstrated to the world community.

In a regrettable coincidence, current events in Israel and the Palestinian territories provide an outstanding example of the conclusions of this study. Every day we hear of further violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as Palestinians attack Israeli forces, only to be assaulted by rubber bullets, tear gas, and, on many occasions, full scale military reprisals. Each Israeli response seems only to intensify the anger and hatred which the Palestinian people harbor toward Israel, and to diminish the hopes of a peaceful settlement with both the Palestinian people and Israel's Arab neighbors. Every Palestinian who is killed at the hands of Israeli forces only increases the likelihood of violent responses against Israel. And each such terrorist attack is greeted by further Israeli intransigence and violence. On March 28, 2001, Israel launched air strikes against the Palestinian territories, targeting the headquarters of Yasir Arafat's presidential guard force, Force 17. This was done in response to an earlier suicide bombing in Israel which killed three, an attack which was claimed by Hammas. Israel thus chose to retaliate against targets not associated with the bombing, a fact which will certainly further enrage not only the Palestinians, but also the world community. By maintaining an unswerving dedication to meeting violence with

violence, to labeling those who attack Israeli soldiers as criminals and hooligans, to refusing to consider conciliation efforts until after the violence has ended, the Israeli government has condemned itself to an almost certain cycle of hatred and death. Indeed, even during the years of negotiation with the Palestinians, Israel responded to every terrorist attack as proof of the inevitability of violence, rather than as the spasms of a movement struggling to come to terms with an old and bitter enemy. Whether or not this cycle of death and brutality is escapable may well be determined by Israel's continued actions, and whether or not a leader emerges with the courage and strength to take the steps necessary to end it. Until Israel recognizes the futility of constant forceful responses and attempts to identify and understand what is motivating the overwhelming violence against it there is little likelihood that the situation will improve or that peace will again become a possibility.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said that if one seeks peace he must first work for justice. While it is certain that terrorism is neither a legitimate nor acceptable means for demanding the redress of grievances, in many cases there do exist inequities and injustices which make peace elusive. If we as allegedly civilized citizens of the world community truly seek to foster a more peaceful international order, then we must be willing to recognize and address the hatred, fear, and anxiety, which are the sources of much of today's violence. Whether it be in the form of full-scale war or terrorism, violence seeks one end, the alteration of the status quo. Governments which seek to crush not only the violent inclinations but also the social, economic, and political aspirations of its opponents will likely succeed in accomplishing neither. Only when states become more serious about

making the status quo less repellent and harmful for their adversaries will true

deterrence, and true change, be possible. Surely violence will continue to exist in the

form of unsatisfied, and unsatisfiable, individuals and nations; against these actors we

must be ready to respond, but only when and to the degree necessary. The courage which

our leaders must show in order to face down the scourge of terrorism is not to be seen on

the battlefield, but in the negotiating room. Such courage may yet prove to represent the

"acme of skill."

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Interviews of Special Agent L. Scot Folensbee, chief of Antiterrorism Assistance Programs for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and other Department of State personnel currently working in counter-terrorism, conducted on March 8, 2001. Other than Folensbee these individuals requested that their identities not be used.

Interviews of State Department personnel assigned to the U.S. embassy in Amman, Jordan, conducted February 12, 2001. These individuals requested that their identities not be used.