

to the Tokyo subway attack with a massive intelligence-collection and -analysis effort (including information gleaned from detained Aum Shinrikyo members). They developed a picture of Aum's organizational structure, tactics, strategies, production and use of chemical and biological agents, and involvement in terrorist attacks. They then arrested key members of the group, developed an information campaign to dissuade current and potential members from joining the organization, and tried to cripple the organization through legal measures. While Aum Shinrikyo continued to exist as a cult, changing its name to Aleph, it ceased to be involved in terrorism.

While successful against Aum Shinrikyo, policing is less likely to be effective against large insurgent groups that use terrorism. In these cases, military forces may be necessary, since they have greater firepower. What does the Aum Shinrikyo experience suggest about the end of terrorist groups more broadly? There are several issues worth considering.

First, Japan was a strong state that had, in Max Weber's words, a "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."⁴⁸ This is not always the case. Adopting a policing strategy in weak states presents a significant challenge, though it does not preclude working with tribal groups or other substate actors. Second, Japan was committed to undermining Aum Shinrikyo. Unfortunately, a state may support terrorist groups operating on its soil, as Syria has historically done with Palestinian terrorist groups. Encouraging a policing strategy in these countries—and expecting local forces to undermine terrorist groups—may be wishful thinking. Third, Japan was democratic. Implementing a policing strategy in a nondemocratic state may be notably different because of disparate laws and norms of behavior, including the repressive nature of security forces. Fourth, while Aum Shinrikyo did possess some expertise in biological and chemical warfare and did conduct military training for some of its members, it was not capable of taking on Japanese security forces in pitched battles.

⁴⁸ Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in Max Weber, Hans Heinrich Gerth, and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1958, pp. 77–128, p. 78.