**Are terrorist groups strategic?**

No – Abrams: Terrorist groups do not display characteristics of rational cost-benefit analysis in their actions

Yes – Kydd and Walter: Terrorist groups are rational actors that use violence because it often works to achieve concrete goals

Terrorist strategies as costly signals to influence behavior

•

Attrition: Outlasting an adversary through war of wills

•

Provocation: Goading the adversary into conflict

•

Intimidation: Overthrowing a government through reign of terror

•

Spoiling: Sabotaging the peace

•

Outbidding: Competition between terrorist groups

**How do we get from 9/11 to the war in Afghanistan?**

•

Pretty straightforward, Pres. Bush and advisors considered war right away, doing nothing not seriously discussed

•

Huge decision by Bush on night of 9/11: no discrimination between terrorists and states that harbor them

–

Quickly determined to strike Al Qaeda, given sanctuary in southern Afghanistan by Taliban in return for substantial financial support

•

Tremendous pressure on military and CIA to be ready ASAP, concerns about breakdown in order if another attack before striking back

–

Bush addresses Congress 9/20, addresses nation announcing commencement of air strikes on 10/7

**How do we get from 9/11 to war in Afghanistan to war in Iraq?**

•

Bush faces pressure from within administration to go to war against Iraq right away after 9/11

–

Rumsfield raises possibility on September 12

–

Wolfowitz, 9/13, “ending states who sponsor terrorism”

–

Orders Rumsfield on 11/21 to begin updating war plan for Iraq

**How do we get from 9/11 to war in Afghanistan to war in Iraq? Overdetermined...**

•

Weapons of mass destruction

–

Saddam Hussein seeking to augment capabilities and would threaten allies in region

–

Might give to terrorists

–

Had used in the past (deterrence would not work)

–

Wolfowitz: settle on this because easier to sell domestically

•

Iraq part of Axis of Evil and key enemy of the United States

–

Might harbor terrorists

•

Leverage point to transform and democratize Middle East

–

Democratic Iraq would put pressure on autocratic countries in region to liberalize

–

Needed bold solution to long term (two generations) problem of terrorism

•

Better to fight the terrorists in a foreign theater (Cheney)

**The debate over torture: some political voices**

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Bill Clinton on the permissibility of torture and the Jack Bauer moment

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Mitt Romney and John McCain at the 2008 Republican presidential debate

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Donald Trump and the use of torture in counterterrorism