

POLS 318: Theories of IR

Lecture 25 (11.12.2020):

International Terrorism: Effects and Responses

Rotem Dvir

Texas A&M University

rdvir@tamu.edu

Department of Political Science
Fall 2020

Overview

1 Quick review

2 Effects of Terrorism

3 Counteracting terrorism

4 Politics of CT

5 Extra Material

Review

WHAT WE COVERED LAST MEETING?

- International terrorism - an issue?
- Why important?
- Definition - scholars, public.
- The causes - a strategic approach.
- The causes - an organizational approach.
- The causes - an ideological approach.

Questions?? Email me!

Political Effects

Two overarching questions

- ① Attacks increase with elections?
 - 2004 → 407 attacks.
 - 2005 → 761 attacks.
- ② How attacks affect voting behavior?

Political Effects

Terrorism timing & elections

- Pre-election violence → affect process.
- Example: India (October 1999).
 - Jan.-June 1999: 31 attacks.
 - July - October: 53 attacks.
 - Evening/day of elections: 11 attacks.
- Post-election violence → protest results.
- Example: Philippines (May 2007).
 - Week after: 6 attacks.
 - 3 months after: 18 attacks.
 - Next 6 months: 27 attacks.

Political Effects

How elections process affects terrorism?

- Structure and domestic institutions.
- Democratic regime allow nonviolent expression of grievances.
- Elections → Less attacks.
- Turbulent time.
- High instability (potential leadership turnover).
- Elections → More attacks.
- Critical role for domestic institutions.

Political Effects

Elections and terrorism (Aksoy 2014)

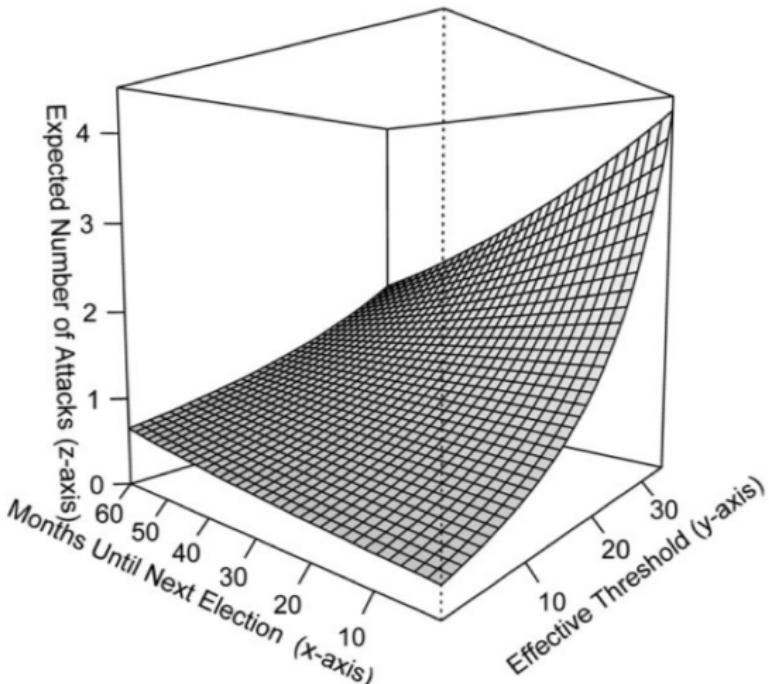
- Unpack institutional factors.
- Degree of freedom to participate in elections.
- Restrictions → inter-group competition and violence.
- *Permissiveness*: election threshold, proportional representation.

Data and Analysis

- Domestic terrorism incidents.
- Europe (1954-2004).

Political Effects

Elections and terrorism (Aksoy 2014)



Political Effects

Elections and terrorism

- Israel (1988): Intifada and close results.
- Israel (1996): challenger won by 30,000 votes.

Israel: March 1996

Jerusalem: 19 Killed



Tel Aviv: 13 Killed (Purim Massacre)



Political Effects

Elections and terrorism

- Spain 2004: surprise win by opposition.



Political Effects

Terrorism and electoral preferences

- Retrospective voting.
- Punish/reward incumbent.
- Valence theory.
- Parties experts in policy areas.

ROCKET LAUNCHES IN ISRAEL - EXPANDING THE THREAT

Political Effects

Threat of rockets

- Emerged in 2001, increased after 2005.
- Economic costs.
- Psychological costs - PTSD, violence, and anxiety.
- The threat - map [RocketsMap](#)
- Life under the threat (Alarm in Sderot Video clip)
- Government response - the "Iron dome" defense system.

Political Effects

Threat of rockets (Getmansky and Zeitzoff 2014)

- Spatial proximity to threat and voting behavior.
- Distance from localities to Gaza strip.

Results

- Voters under threat → support right wing parties.
- Support increase for nationalist parties.
- Significant effect (0.2%-0.6%) → 2-7 parliament seats.
- No punishment for right-wing incumbent.

Social and Psychological Effects

"Terror a population"



Social and Psychological Effects

Anxiety/fear (Huddy et al. 2005)

- Dominant individual response.
- Limits cognitive capacity.
- Risk aversion and uncertainty.
- Data: public surveys after 9/11.
- Proximity:
 - North-East → high threat perception.
 - NY area → anxious.
- Policy: military retaliation.
- President (Bush) approval.

Social and Psychological Effects

Security vs. Civil liberties (Davies and Silver 2004)

- Concede privacy and human rights for security.
- Data: 1300 respondents (11.2001 - 01.2002).
- Also important - trust in government. ▶ Trust

Panel A. Percentage of Prosecurity or Pro-Civil Liberties Responses to Each Item

Questions	Prefer Security	Protect Civil Liberties
1. Give up some civil liberties	45	55
2. Investigate protestors	8	92
3. Racial Profiling	18	82
4. Warrantless searches on suspicion	23	77
5. Monitor telephone and e-mail	34	66
6. Detain non-citizens indefinitely	47	53
7. Require national ID cards	54	46
8. Teachers criticize antiterrorist policies	60	40
9. Crime to belong to terrorist organization	71	29

Counter-terrorism

Government actions

- How do governments counter the threat of terrorism?
- The practice, tactics, techniques, and strategies by which various arms of the state combat or prevent terrorism.
- 1st challenge - what is success?

Successful CT goals:

- ① Reduce attacks and damages.
- ② Destroy group.
- ③ Containment.

Counter-terrorism

Unpack government policies: Hard power

- Deploy tangible resources to punish and deter terrorists.
- Military or police forces: drones, SF raids, policing and intelligence operations.
- Enemy centric doctrine.

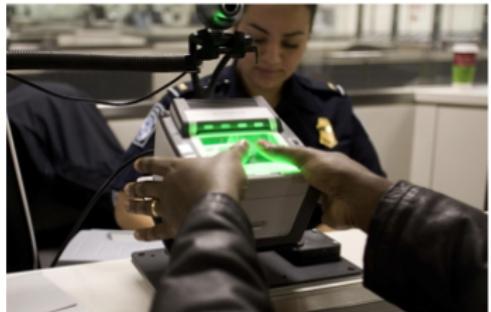
(1) Indiscriminate approach

- Impose costs on participants.
- Rational logic - coercion.
- House demolitions - Israel and Palestinian terrorists.

Counter-terrorism - Hard power



Indiscriminate Policy actions



Counter-terrorism

(2) Discriminate approach

- Method: leaders' decapitation
- Mixed evidence on effectiveness (few short-term benefits)
- Bin Laden and Al Qaeda → group structure.



Counter-terrorism

(2) Discriminate approach

- Other policies: house demolitions.
- Israel - focus on perpetrators and families.
- Evidence on effectiveness.
- Apprehend terror leaders.
- Turkey and PKK (Ochalan 1999)
- Leader removal → group demise.

Counter-terrorism

DRONES - A TOOL TO FIGHT TERRORISTS



Drones as CT policy

The Debate

- Backlash of attacks - public resentment.
- Not effective → recruitment, international laws violations.
- More than a "killing" machine?

Multipurpose CT Instrument (Mir and Moore 2019)

- Collect intelligence, large-scale surveillance.
- Anticipatory effects for terrorists.

Drones as CT policy

Multipurpose CT tools

- Pakistan: substantial drop in attacks ▶ PakistanAttacks
- Also decrease in casualties.
- Implications for CT policy:
 - Use beyond decapitation is more effective.
 - Hard power and population centric approach: complement *humint* efforts.

Counter-terrorism

Unpack government policies: Soft power

- Indirect tools, focus on population.
- Capacity-building initiatives and countering radicalization.

Areas of policy

- *Economic*: limit financial flows.
- Tradeoffs - restricts intelligence efforts.
- *Political*: resist passive state sponsorship.
- UK - US (IRA); Spain - France (ETA).

Counter-terrorism

Soft power - Areas of policy

- *Social and cultural*: CVE strategies.
- Prevent radicalization process.
- Emphasize benefits of abstain from terrorism.
- Community outreach and engagement program.
- Capacity building, education and empowerment, integration.
- Non-violent channels of political contention.
- **Effectiveness**: difficult to evaluate.
- Individual interventions rather than broad-based programs.

CT actions - political aspects

Strategic approach

- Rational actor assumptions.
- Policy → based on a deliberative calculated process.
- Maximize return and match for threat.
- Halt ineffective policy.
- Example - Israel repression and terror attacks (14 days after lethal attacks).

CT actions - political aspects

Strategic approach

- Domestic effects on CT policy - why emphasize threat?
- Terrorism → salient to public.
- Politicians → survive in office.
- Visible actions: concrete barriers and metal detectors.
- Other options: covert actions and intelligence.
- Favor sub-optimal policy - visible to public.
- Why? Strategic politicians and public opinion.

CT actions - political aspects

Organizational approach

- Internal dynamics within government and CT agencies.
- *Security structure*: who dictates CT policy?
- Military or police?
- Why? Influence and survival.
- Examples: UK vs. France.
- *Interagency rivalry* and CT policy.
- Fight over influence - R.Clarke and AQ threat before 9/11.

CT actions - political aspects

Organizational approach

- Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs): the good.
- And the bad: "automatic" response, ignore context/issue.
- British army and "the troubles" (N.Ireland).



CT actions - political aspects

Ideological approach

- Ideas, beliefs and norms drive CT policy.
- 9/11 through the eyes of different nations:
 - US - act of war (aggressive military response).
 - Germany - Criminal act (police).
 - Japan - political crisis.
- Perceptions driven by historical experience and relations with other nations/actors in the international system.

CT actions - political aspects

Ideological approach

- Beliefs, ideologies and public support for CT policy.
- *Ethnocentrism*: in- and out-group view, counter external threat.
- High values → powerful CT response.
- *Authoritarianism*: nature of authority, traditions and use of violence.
- High values → offensive and repressive policies.
- Evidence in US public after 9/11.

Government response to terrorism

What's the bottom-line?

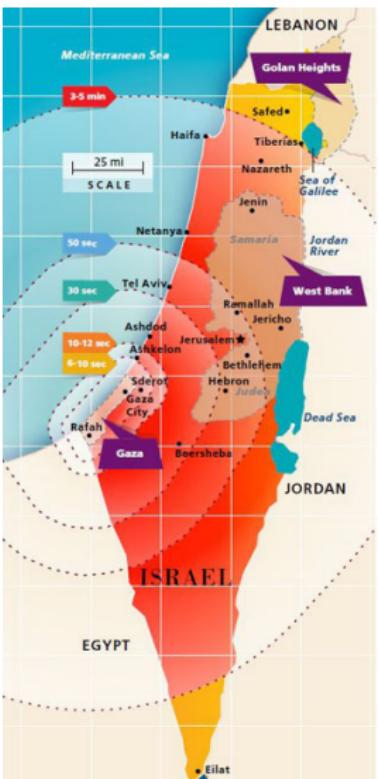
- *Indiscriminate repression* → likely to fail.
- Increase support for terrorists and harm legitimacy.
- Examples: US - AQ, Israel - Palestinians.
- *Discriminate policy (leader decapitation)* → context dependent.
- Success depends on organizational factors and situation.
- *Soft power* → most promise and potential.
- Focus on benefits of abstain rather than punishment.
- Difficult to implement.

Recommended readings

More studies on the effects of terrorism and CT polices:

- ① Godefroidt, Amélie, and Arnim Langer. (2020). "How fear drives us apart: explaining the relationship between terrorism and social trust." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32, 7, 1482-1505.
- ② Cordell, Rebecca. (2019). "Security-Civil Liberties Trade-offs: International Cooperation in Extraordinary Rendition." *International Interactions* 45, 2, 369-400.
- ③ Burstein, Alon. (2018). "Armies of God, armies of men: A global comparison of secular and religious terror organizations." *Terrorism and political violence* 30, 1, 1-21.

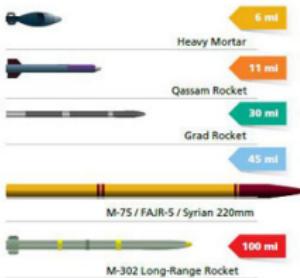
Rocket threat on Israel



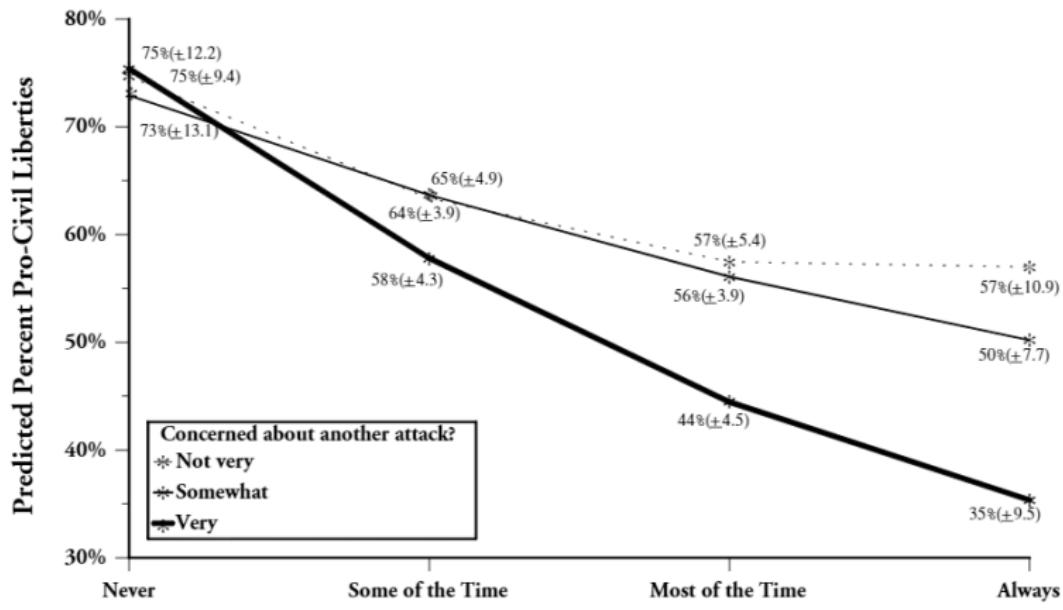
The Gaza-based terrorist group Hamas has rockets that can reach most major cities in Israel.

Hamas' Rockets

Range (in miles)



Terrorism, trust and civil liberties



How much of the time do you trust the federal government?

Drones program in Pakistan

