

Does Terrorism Work?
A Comparison of Terror and Non-Terror Groups and Achievement of Goals

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After decades of studying terrorism, scholars and pundits are finally starting ask what has perhaps been not only the most overlooked question on terrorism, but the most important one of all: does terrorism actually work. For many, the answer is yes, often because groups still seem to be practicing it. They often point to success stories of several groups, told and retold until fact seems to be replaced by legend. They note that terror groups garner a lot of publicity, and have conducted numerous operations ranging from setting bombs that do go off, to assassinating leaders, etc.

They conclude that acts such as suicide terrorism are rational and have resulted in some successful operations. Based on these cases, terrorism is concluded to work. In some situations, an author or two has found terrorism to work because the author has an axe to grind, to support a liberal disapproval of U.S. foreign policy, or a conservative critique of the United Nations.

However, others have challenged such orthodoxy. They have argued that terrorism may have a few successes, but quite often has more failures than accomplishments, when it comes to strategic goals.

To test these arguments, my students and I look at a number of different groups, instead of just a small handful of cases. Instead of selecting on the dependent variable, or only looking at terrorist groups, we look at groups that do not practice terrorism, and a number adopt non-violence as their strategy. Our dataset of nearly 100 cases is often marked matched pairs, or as close to a matched set as possible (by country region and time frame). We compare the two groups (an equal number which use terrorism, and those that do not) to see which have been successful at accomplishing their strategic goals, not their short term tactical goals (though a mini-analysis of publicity will be conducted). After all, it is hard to compare a terror group that uses assassination to one that preaches and practices nonviolence. What is the latter to

do...count the number of political opponents who resign or are ousted at the ballot box? The two outcomes seem as different as apples and oranges, even if both are fruit.

In addition to this statistical test, we also take a closer look to see if these terrorism success stories really stand up to scrutiny, going beyond the headlines to probe deeper into the evidence, not only leading up to the strategy's climax, but also its denouement: what happens after the government falls, independence is achieved, or the policy is accomplished?

Literature Review

Those Who Feel Terrorism Works

The chief cheerleader for the argument that terrorism works is attorney Alan M. Dershowitz, also a law professor. He blames rules of the United Nations and America's European allies, which he claims have enabled terrorism to thrive, because there is no disincentive to engage in terrorism (Dershowitz 2002). In fact, he makes the argument that terrorists are rational actors who will engage in terrorism if it benefits them, and abstain from it if the costs are too high. The example he gives is the 1972 Munich Olympics attack, where he feels that many members of the international community were willing to sympathize with the Palestinian plight, instead of rejecting terrorism. In a follow-up article, Dershowitz (2017) adds "They make a rational cost-benefit decision to murder innocent civilians for one simple reason: they believe that terrorism works. And tragically, they are right." Dershowitz asserts that victims of terrorism (Israel) are condemned more than the perpetrators of it, like Palestinians. He claims that those ignored by the international community and the media struggle without using terrorism, but strangely includes Kurds and Chechens along with Tibetans.

Gould and Klor (2010) contend that terrorism works because of the effect it has on the Israeli political landscape. They discover that terrorism shifts Israelis in favor of making land for peace deals with the Palestinian Arabs, and push previously right-wing parties toward the political left, though there are some attacks so devastating that make the Jewish voters shut down any notion of accommodation.

Using rough calculations (including citing “back of the envelope calculations,” Calabresi (2015) challenges the notion that a stringent war of counterterrorism can be effective, given the enormous costs and nebulous benefits from neutralizing the terrorists.

Rose and Murphy (2007) see the 2004 Madrid Train Bombings on March 11 as an example of a terrorist group achieving its goals. The authors contend that Al-Qaeda wanted countries to withdraw from Iraq, and decided to attack Spain just before the election. Sure enough, after hundreds were killed in the attack, dubbed “3/11” by the press, the Socialist Party prevailed over the Spanish conservative party in the next election shortly thereafter, and the new Prime Minister, Zapatero, began withdrawing his country’s troops from Iraq. That’s why the authors consider this a success story for terrorism (Rose and Murphy 2007). The actual outcome of the 3/11 case will be discussed at the conclusion of this paper.

Indridason (2008) does not crow about the effectiveness of terrorism, but does show it has an effect upon politics, namely the ability to alter political party coalitions. Rather than accept minimum winning coalitions to avoid sharing the spoils of politics with a larger number of groups, those broader coalitions are now desired in modern times to insulate a government against possible defectors from the coalition or instability that would lead to vote of no confidence, should the regime suffer a disruptive terror attack. Indridason (2008) calls these “surplus coalitions.”

It's not initially clear whether Richard English (2016a) stands in the debate over whether terrorism works. He claims that there is too much focus on contemporary cases (ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Hamas) and not enough on learning from older, prior cases. But he is more willing to accept "partial strategic success" and "tactical terrorist success" as yardsticks to measure the effectiveness of terrorism. Furthermore, he judges that there are "inherent rewards" from terrorism which including Al-Qaeda rejoicing over 9/11, or the happy times the Baader-Meinhof Gang members spent together on their terror spree (English 2016b).

Thanks to English's (2016b) broader vision of what constitutes success, he judges ETA and the Provisional IRA as successes because they carried out operations that he judges to be "spectacular successes" even though North Ireland is not in the hands of Catholics or the Republic of Ireland, any more than there is a separate Basque homeland. Given that regimes have fallen in many situations across history, it's not too much to ask that a terrorism group be held to the same standard for success as those who used conventional warfare, or even peaceful means, of dislodging a regime. And it's worth noting that both Al-Qaeda and the Baader-Meinhof Gang suffered leadership decapitation, and are either disbanded or a shadow of its former self, without having accomplished its aims.

Krause (2016) argues that when judging terrorism's effectiveness, we have been too willing to zero in on whether there are changes in state policy or not, whether that is the goal of terrorists or not. Instead, he claims we should focus on a broader set of objectives for evaluating terrorism, ranging from the spread of ideas, to dividing society, neutralizing organizations, and to be mindful that succeeding in one of these may undermine the other. This allows those who feel terrorism is effective to hedge their bets on whether it is working or not.

Pape's (2003) well-known research on the logic of suicide terrorism reveals that there may be a certain strategic rationality to terrorism. In the process, Pape is essentially arguing that such terror tactics are effective. He claims that suicide terrorism is on the rise because it "works." Citing evidence of the Hezbollah attacks upon Americans in Lebanon in the early 1980s, Pape provides case study research that suggests that suicide terrorism compelled Israel to withdraw from Lebanon, leave the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (after Hamas attacks), and the induced the governments of Turkey and Sri Lanka to make major concessions. He contends that democracies are particularly vulnerable to such attacks, and should respond with better homeland security instead of military action (Pape 2003). My own findings with other students (Tures et.al. 2008) also confirm Pape's argument that suicide attacks are more deadly than non-suicide attacks, but more research will be done to test his cases of Lebanon and Sri Lanka later in the paper.

Terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman (2015) writes "But heinous and repugnant as these acts indisputably are, it's important to recognize that terrorism is more calculated and choreographed than these mindless acts of barbarity suggest. Rather, these and other less egregious deeds are the products of strategic choices consciously made by terrorists to further their aims in order to attract attention to themselves and their causes." He claims that terrorists continue to use such tactics, because they believe such methods will be successful (Hoffman 2015).

Those Who Are Skeptical Of Terrorism's Success

Max Abrahms tends to be skeptical of the success terrorists can achieve. He finds that terror attacks on civilians are less like to achieve the desired outcome for the terror group, and terrorists in general come up short in their pursuit of their objectives (Abrahms 2006). He contends that in the wake of 9/11, non-state groups that "escalate to terrorism, or with terrorism"

are not likely to help these challengers to states achieve their goals. The targets of terrorism are more likely to dig in their heels, and forego any concessions, making the use of such tactics less likely to work (Abrahms, 2011).

Fortna (2015) looks carefully at rebel groups that challenge the state in civil wars. Her research reveals that those insurgents who use terrorism may be able to prolong the conflict, but are less likely to get a favorable outcome than those rebels who forego terrorism in their fight against the regime in charge.

Romanov, Zussman and Zussman (2010) take on the argument that terrorism works because it has a psychological effect upon its victims. They examined the happiness of Israelis during the Second Intifada led by the Palestinians. Their measures showed that when a terror attack occurred, it had little or no effect on Jewish Israelis. But such terrorism did make the Arab citizens of Israel quite unhappy, which did not seem to be the mission of that Second Intifada.

Terrorism and Tactical Publicity

As for tactical successes, there certainly is a lot of evidence that terrorists can get things accomplished. They can kill a lot of people. And they do get a lot of attention, as I found in a prior analysis.

“I found that ISIS got 233 million hits on Google, while the Carnation Revolution (148,000 Google hits) and the Cedar Revolution (58,000) barely get any attention. Yet the Carnation Revolution forced the Portuguese military from power peacefully, while the Lebanese largely refrained from violence in expelling the Syrians from their country after decades of foreign rule during the Cedar Revolution. Meanwhile, despite the deaths and all the publicity from attacks in London and Paris, ISIS is no closer to the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate

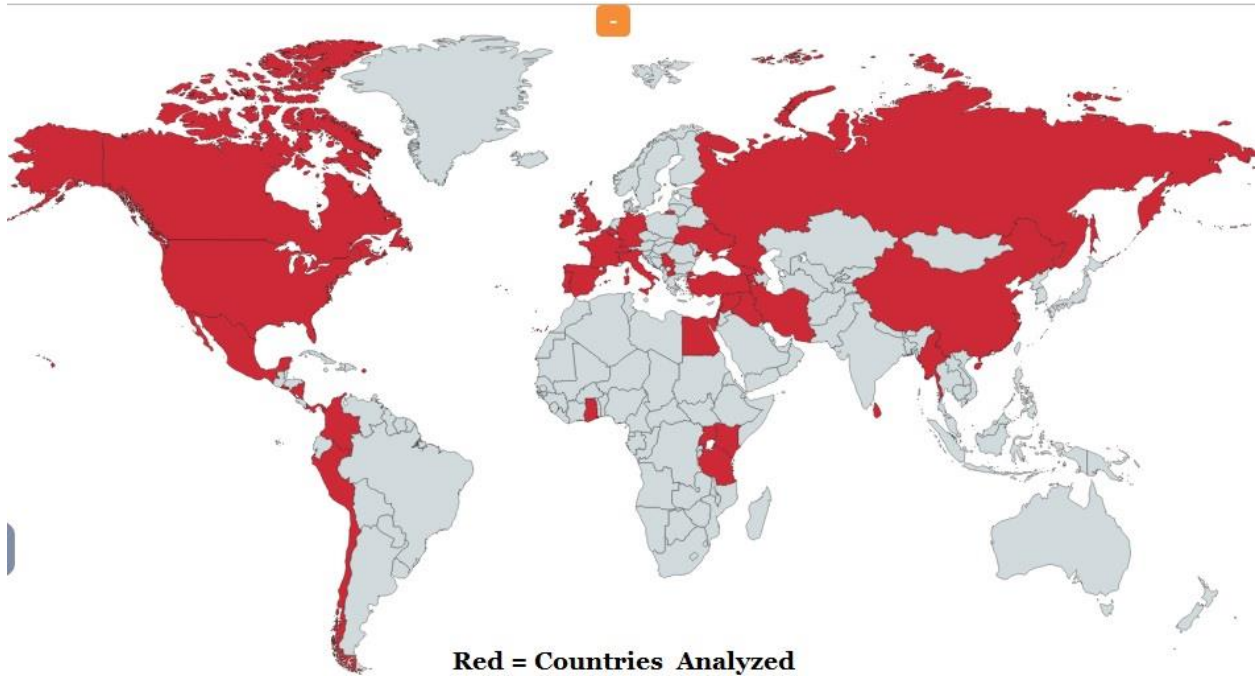
or forcing Britain to give in to their demands, while both of the other revolutions succeeded in a much shorter period of time (Tures 2017a).”

It’s a similar story for the Armenian terror groups. As terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman (2017) notes, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia got plenty of attention for their attacks, and were able to kill Turks. But most importantly, they failed to accomplish their goal, much the same way the South Moluccan terrorist group was unable to force any concessions from the Dutch government after their terror attacks.

A Theory of Terrorism Effectiveness

For our theory, we are examining if a group’s tactics can improve its effectiveness. More specifically, we are examining the hypothesis that claims that whether a group uses terrorism or a different tactic will impact its ability to achieve its strategic goals. The independent variable is the tactic (terrorism vs. non-terrorism), and the dependent variable is whether the group achieves its goals or not.

Of this list, we attempted to pair terrorist groups with those that did not practice terrorism, with a similar country at a similar time. Following this style, we came up with 90 cases of groups, half of which utilized terrorism and the other half that did not. Indeed, we attempted to find cases where the groups used non-violent tactics. For example, we looked at ETA, the Basque separatist group in Spain known for practicing terrorism. At the same time, we looked at the Catalonians, a group that has not been known to utilize terror tactics. Where possible, we tried to get countries at least in close proximity in pairs.



| | |
|---|---|
| Nicaragua: FSLN (Sandinistas) | Chile: No! (Anti-Pinochet Plebiscite) |
| Nicaragua: United Nicaraguan Opposition | Chile: Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front |
| Kenya: Mau Mau | Catalan Independence Groups (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya) |
| Tanzania: Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) | Spain: ETA (Basque) |
| Peru: Tupac Amaru | Germany: Red Army Faction |
| Dominican Republic: Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) | Germany: Nuclear Disarmament |
| Armenia: Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia | Israel: Irgun/Stern Gangs |
| Georgia: Rose Revolution | Israel: Orthodox Jewish Groups (Shas Party) |
| Macedonia: IMRO | Egypt: Islamic Jihad |
| El Salvador: FMLN | Egypt: Wafd Political Party |
| Serbia: Black Hand (Serbia) | Sri Lanka: Tamil Tigers |
| Serbia: Pan-Slavic Congress | India: Gandhi's Independence Movement |
| Yugoslavia: Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) | America: KKK, Ku Klux Klan |
| Macedonia: Party for Democratic Prosperity (Albanian Party) | America: NRA, National Rifle Movement |
| Algeria: National Liberation Front (FLN) | America: Earth First |
| Montenegro Independence Movement | America: Sierra Club |

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|---|---|
| Ghana: CYO or UGCC Kwame Nkrumah | Syria: ISIS |
| Sudan: SPLM (South Sudan) | Syria: Free Syrian Army |
| Uganda: National Resistance Army (Yoweri Museveni) | Iraq: Al-Zarqawi's Al-Qaeda of the Two Rivers |
| Wales: Welsh Independence Movement or Plaid Cymru | Iraq: Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP, Barzani's Faction) |
| Russia: October Revolution (Russia) | Afghanistan: Al-Qaeda |
| El Salvador: FDR | Afghanistan: Northern Alliance |
| Chile: Concertacion | Turkey: PKK (Kurds) |
| Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) | Myanmar or Burma: Karen National Union (Karen Ethnic Group) |
| Palestinian People's Party | Myanmar or Burma: Aung San Suu Kyi's Movement |
| Italy: Red Brigade | Lebanon: Hezbollah |
| Italy: Northern League | Lebanon: Cedar Revolution (Intifadat al-Istiqlal) |
| Canada: FLQ (Quebec) | Mexico: EZLN (Zapatistas) |
| Canada: The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) | Mexico: Student Movements of the 1960s in Mexico (Mexico 68) |
| Peru: Shining Path | Ukraine: Ukraine Separatists (Donetsk People's Republic) or Lugansk People's Republic |
| Peru: American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) | Ukraine: Orange Revolution |
| Colombia: FARC | Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood |
| Colombia: National Front (1957) | Egypt's Arab Spring Movement (Taksim Square Protesters) |
| Puerto Rico: Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) | Ireland: "Skirmishers" of the 1880s |
| Puerto Rico: Socialist Movement (MST) | Iraq: Ansar al-Islam (Kurds, Al-Qaeda Affiliate) |
| Colombia: National Liberation Army (ELN) | Iraq: PUK or Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (Talabani's Kurds) |
| Panama Independence Movement (pre-1903) | Russia: Narodnaya Volya |
| Iran: People's Mujahedin of Iran (MEK) | Russia: February Bourgeois Democratic Revolution of 1917 (Putilov Protesters) |
| Iranian Student Protesters (Opposing the Reelection of Mahmoud Ahmadinjead) | China: Uighrs |
| Irish Republican Army (IRA) | China: Tibetans |
| Scottish National Party (SNP): | Netherlands: South Moluccan Terrorist Group (Republic of the South Moluccas or RMS Group) |

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| Israel: Jewish Defense League | Switzerland: Ticino League |
| Israel: Machsom Watch | Italy: Sardinian Action Party |
| France: Accion Directe (DA) | Belgian Walloon Groups (Walloon Parliament) |
| Portugal Independence (Carnation Revolution) | Belgium: CCC |

Results

Among these 90 cases, we looked at how many had actually achieved their goals. This does not mean publicity and tactical success (did the bomb go off, did people die, how many people know about the group, but strategic success. But this asks this: what was the purpose of it all? Did the group get their separate homeland, overthrow the regime, change government policy, garner a territorial acquisition, take power from the government, etc.?

Of the 45 groups that used non-violence, or generally abstained from terrorism, 26 of the 45 achieved their strategic goals (57.78%). As compared to these 26 observed cases, at least 16 were expected by a random model. Of the 19 groups that had not, or have not, achieved their strategic goals, 29 were expected by the random model. Non-violence or refraining from terrorism to achieve one's goals, worked better than expected.

Of these 45 terror groups, we found that only six of them achieved some sort of success (13.33%). Almost three times more groups (16) were expected by this random. Moreover, of the 39 groups that came up short in their bid for accomplishing their goals, there were at least 29 expected by a random model.



The Chi-Square statistic of 19.396 is statistically significant at the .05 level indicating that we can likely reject the null hypothesis that it makes no difference whether terrorism is used or not. Terrorism appears to perform quite poorly compared to those groups that use non-violence to achieve their aims.

| | | Dependent Variable (Y) | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| | | Accomplish Goals | | |
| Independent Variable (X) | | Achieve Goals | Don't Achieve Goals | Row Total |
| Groups Analyzed | Terrorist Group | Observed = 6 | Observed = 39 | 45 |
| | | Expected = 16 | Expected = 29 | |
| Groups Analyzed | Non-Terrorist Group | Observed = 26 | Observed = 19 | 45 |
| | | Expected = 16 | Expected = 29 | |
| | | Column Total | 32 | 58 |
| | | | | 90 |
| Pearson | Chi-Square Statistic | 19.39655172 | 3.841 | |
| Degrees of Freedom = (# of rows-1)(# of columns-1) | | | | |
| Is Chi-Square Statistic Statistically Significant At The .05 Level? Yes. | | | | |



Analysis of Terror Group Success

Several terror groups have been alleged to have achieved spectacular success. Perhaps their tale, told repeatedly among other terror groups, gives some sort of credence to the myth that terrorism “works.” But even some of these supposed success stories may not have achieved the impressive outcomes that their supporters have attributed to them, when we take a closer look at how victory may have been achieved, and what happened after that success was supposedly achieved.

Israel’s Irgun and Stern Gang

For example, the Jewish Group “Irgun” and the “Stern Gangs” were said to have used terrorism to oust the British from Palestine, and win independence for Israel (English 2016b). There is no doubt that the King David Hotel was blown up, and that British sergeants were hung in retaliation for the execution of Israel terrorists who were caught. Hoffman (2015) contends that this is the key case for showing evidence that terrorism works. “For proof, look no further than post-WWII Palestine,” he writes.

But it is a trickier subject to establish that the Israelis won their independence due to terrorism. After soldiering through World War II, the exhausted United Kingdom seemed unlikely to hold on to their colonies and protectorates. Additionally, protectorates like Palestine by international mandate (Hoffman 2015) had less appeal than outright colonies, given the international regulation on what the ruling government could and could not do. The U.K. began the process of decolonization during this time, and protectorates would be the most attractive

pieces to decouple from the British Empire. One wonders if peaceful protests would have achieved a similar, perhaps even better result.

Regardless, things did not go so well for the political careers of those who backed terrorism against the British. The Irgun and Stern Gang members were unable to do well in the initial elections. Those early successes went to the Labor Party, which adopted a more moderate tone in their interactions. Voters clearly did not “vote” for terrorism or reward those who perpetrated such tactics.

These hardliners from the Likud Party, in fact, did not win until the late 1970s, nearly three decades later. Even that electoral upset only took place because of (a) scandals in the dominant Labor Party, and (b) a decision by the Likud members, several of whom had ties long ago to these old terror groups, to moderate their foreign policy positions (even leading to the Camp David Agreements and a Nobel Peace Prize). The former terrorists had to learn that there was little public stomach for such terror tactics that they once advocated.

The Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka

The LTTE, a terror group known better as “the Tamil Tigers,” are also revered as a “successful” terror group in popular literature. They are lauded by others for being “pioneers” in tactics, such as the development of suicide bomb vests, copied by other terror groups with devastating consequences (Hoffman 2017). At one point, the LTTE was credited with the most number of successful suicide bomb attacks. The group was able to kill over 100,000 people in 26 years of violence, including current or former heads of state in India and Sri Lanka.

It is important to note that many of those dead were not just Sri Lankan or Indian politicians, Sinhalese soldiers or India peacekeepers. Many of those killed included Tamil

moderates, unwilling to back the bloodbath created by the LTTE. In fact, the Tamil Tigers failed to take control of Sri Lanka, win a separate state, or achieve much in the way of lasting gains, a different conclusion than what Pape contends (2003). Eventually the leader of the Tamil Tigers was killed, that the LTTE was largely destroyed by the Sri Lankan government, making one wonder what the group had accomplished among its strategic goals. A fellow conference presenter at a conference earlier this year who was a Tamil from Sri Lanka told me how happy he was when the violence from the LTTE against his people ended.

The Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN)

Algeria's National Liberation Front, or FLN, is often cited as a successful case of terrorism. Immortalized in the movie "The Battle of Algiers," viewers were treated to a demonstration of how terrorism works (Graham, 2015). It starts with organization, unification of disparate groups, small targeted assassinations of police, and the terrible bomb blast that swings many moderate Algerians behind the FLN. French colonial citizens are assassinated by bomb blasts in restaurants and clubs, bringing a full military response, whose heavy-handed tactics are seen as further antagonizing the Algerians, creating a movement for independence for all, at the price of the terrorists who perish in the service of their cause of freedom (Hoffman 2017).

Unfortunately, little is shown of what actually happened once the FLN terrorists were neutralized by the French military. In fact, nothing followed the final deaths of the operational commander and his unit (1957). Several years later, a general strike led the French government to begin negotiations that eventually led to Algerian freedom. Several questions persist. Why did nothing happen for several years after the terrorists were killed. Why was there no armed struggle? Why did the strike happen later, not sooner, if the martyrdom proved anything? Why

did this event several years later utilize a work stoppage, and not more terrorism, if terrorism was really so successful? Why was the Algerian independence negotiated? And did divisions within the French military and political leadership play more of a role in the process than anything the Algerians did?

Moreover, things did not go well for the FLN political leadership when they eventually assumed control after independence. Leader Ahmed Ben Bella squabbled with other members of the FLN, Islamists, and even FFS (Socialists), all opposed to his dictatorial policies. He was easily deposed in a coup, and the Algerian military assumed power ever since, waging a bloody war against Islamist rebels. Though considered a case of terrorism “working,” the Algerian FLN case does not appear to be a success story for terrorism, both before and after independence.

Other Cases

Hezbollah in Lebanon

These are hardly the only supposed success stories discussed in the literature. There is the case of Hezbollah, and their truck bomb that destroyed the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, killing more than 200 U.S. Marines and French Paratroopers (Hoffman 2017).

Though credited for forcing the United States, France, and a number of other peacekeepers to withdraw from Lebanon, Hezbollah shows no signs of being able to independently run the country. They may be able to intimidate the government, battle Israel, even carry out more attacks, but this Shiite-based organization is no closer to ruling Lebanon than they were back in 1983 when the attack occurred, and perhaps less so since the Syrian withdrawal.

Al-Qaeda in Spain

Al-Qaeda's 3/11 bombing of several trains in Madrid, leading to the fall of the ruling Partido Popular (PP) in Spain, is cited as another success story for terrorists. The PP, led by Jose Maria Aznar, was voted out of office, and the incoming Socialist Party in Spain, led by Zapatero, pulled Spanish troops out of the Iraq coalition, an event seen as a direct consequence of the bombs that killed hundreds in 2004.

But there's a problem with this story. Evidence shows that the 3/11 bombings actually produced a boost in the polls for Aznar's conservative party the PP (Tures 2009). They might have even won the election. But Prime Minister Aznar's government made the incredibly foolish decision to blame the bombings on ETA and the Basques, a region typically aligned with the Socialists, even as all evidence pointed to Al-Qaeda (Tures 2009). In addition to playing political games, Partido Popular was also afraid that revealing Al-Qaeda was involved would put them on defensive for having troops in the Middle East. Angry voters punished Partido Popular at the ballot box shortly thereafter, not because of the Al-Qaeda attack or having soldiers in Iraq (polls nullify this argument), but because the conservative government clearly lied to the people (Tures 2009). Had Aznar told the truth, Al-Qaeda would have failed. Moreover, the terror cell, which claimed the broader goal of bringing the Iberian Peninsula under Islamic control, was neutralized shortly thereafter by Spanish authorities.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) And The Provisional Irish Republican Army

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) is another terror group that has said to inspire generations of subsequent terror groups. Hoffman (2015) claims that the Irgun were inspired by the IRA and their methods and in belief of their success. IRA members have even trained terrorists of other groups and types on different continents, from Colombia to Libya. While the

success of Michael Collins and Eamon De Valera in defeating the British (while the country was distracted during World War I) has been cited as an example of terrorism “working (English 2016b),” the subsequent bloody Irish Civil War, which lasted for decades afterwards, tore the country apart, and may have contributed to the Irish Republic’s stunted growth.

The Provisional IRA’s actions in North Ireland have been cited as getting British Paratroopers and other soldiers removed from the country (Hoffman 2017), but their arrival was a response of terrorism in the first place. Moreover, the British forces did not generally withdraw from the province because of terrorism, but due to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, negotiated after a lengthy pause in terror attacks (and not during the height of the troubles, the 1980s bombings, etc.). Despite the attempt of hard core radicals, calling themselves “The Real IRA” to destroy the peace with the worst bombing ever in the region (in Omagh) during this time the peace agreement has held to this day, a triumph for a peaceful solution (negotiated between Protestants and Catholics from North Ireland, as well as the United Kingdom, Ireland, and assisted by the United States).

And former terrorist Martin McGuinness, who abandoned his former craft to become an advocate for peace, was a central player in the negotiations (Tures 2017), as Robert McFadden with *The New York Times* writes in his press eulogy last year.

“In bombings and killings that raged from the 1960s to the ’90s between Protestant and Roman Catholic forces — the Troubles that left 3,700 dead — Mr. McGuinness was widely believed to have joined, and later directed, terrorist activities. He denied the allegations. His only convictions, in the early ’70s, were for possessing explosives and ammunition and for belonging to the outlawed I.R.A.

But in his 40s he evolved into a peacemaker and politician. He was chief negotiator for Sinn Fein, the political arm of the I.R.A., in a complex Good Friday Agreement in 1998, in which Britain, Ireland and the political parties of Northern Ireland created a framework for power-sharing in Belfast and for eventual resolution of issues like sovereignty, civil rights, disarmament, justice and policing.

This is the side of his political life that McGuinness wants the Irish people to remember: the reformed man, the young, hotheaded idealist who learned the error of his ways and forged peace, an achievement that still wins him plaudits from around the world,” the British magazine New Statesman said in 2011.”

Conclusion

Our research has found that terrorists can kill more people. They can assassinate leaders. They can get more attention for their cause. They can achieve tactical success. But when it comes to strategic success, it is another matter. Our research has shown that tactics other than terrorism perform 4.34 times better than terrorism does.

Even when people conclude that terrorism “works,” the successes are mixed, at best. Either the group fails to achieve its goal (LTTE), finds a dubious connection between the terrorism and the achievement of independence (FLN), and fails to achieve public support after the dust settles (Irgun, Stern Gang, FLN).

Those who claim that terrorism “succeeds” have claimed touted these success stories, which actually show more mixed results under greater scrutiny. They conveniently forget the cases of failure, which our analysis shows are more frequent and likely to occur than those which use more pacific means of waging their struggle. They also presume success in tactics (killing,

assassinating, and publicity) matter as much, if not more, than the entire reason the group was formed: the strategic objective.

Terrorism will probably stick around, perhaps because of those few success stories that get told, and retold, among terrorist groups, the media, and a nervous public. This inflates the success people attribute to terrorism. Few discuss the failures, spectacular or otherwise. And as our research on terrorism publicity finds, few know about those groups that use non-violence, which are often more successful than the widely known ones who make the headlines during an attack, and lengthy discussion or political discourse or ads.

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