

State use of legitimate and limited force is less likely to increase public support for VEO activity.

30; 37; 38; 39; 40; 41; 42

General Description of the Literature:

The literature on this topic comes mainly from Political Science. Key articles appear in mainstream political science journals and a number of specialty journals on terrorism, security and strategy (e.g., *Terrorism and Political Violence*). Malvesti (2002) describes how major uses of US force as a response to terror was rare prior to 9/11. She observes that the US only responded with great military force three times (Libya, Iraq and Sudan/Afghanistan) in response to over 2,400 terror acts against Americans during the period 1983-1998. During this time, terrorism was often treated as a law enforcement problem. Since 9/11, the US has adopted a military approach to the problem. Malvesti argues that major military strikes against VEOs that acted against US interests from 1993-1998 were a function of 'relatively immediate positive perpetrator identification; perpetrator repetition; direct targeting of a US citizen working in an official US government-related capacity; the fait accompli nature of the incident; flagrant anti-US perpetrator behavior; the political and military vulnerability of the perpetrator'. This is useful for helping us to understand the use of force against VEOs but it does not tell us much about the influence, if any, wielded with varying levels of force. The following articles assess the effects of force on VEOs. However, the conclusions vary. The success of force is context-specific. Brophy-Baermann and Conybeare (1994) look at Israeli retaliation to VEO actions. Their empirical evidence from time-series (ARIMA) modeling points to the conclusion that Israeli reprisals are only effective if they are unexpected. VEOs expect reprisals right after attacks so these are not likely to be effective. Reprisals are more effective if they are timed according to an exogenous mechanism rather than according to government discretion. Perkoski (2010) summarizes two important empirical works on the indiscriminate use of force against VEOs. LaFree, Dugan and Korte (2009) argue that force against VEOs in the Northern Ireland context actually builds public support for the VEO. Downes (2008) also reports that indiscriminate violence (involving civilians) works in favor of the VEO in the long-run. Examples of US success and failure in this regard are illustrative. Indiscriminate force in Vietnam was counter-productive in fighting the Viet Cong. The US learned from this and when Che Guevara launched the ELN in Bolivia in 1966, the US was circumspect and did not advocate or use indiscriminate force that would help the VEO recruit (see Ryan 1998, cited in Mintz and DeRouen 2010). The targeted killing of VEO leaders/actors is a form of limited force that typically, but now always, limits civilian casualties. The evidence here is from Jordan (2009), Johnston (2010), and Zussman and Zussman (2006). Lyall (2009), on the other hand, finds that Russian use of indiscriminate violence in Chechnya hindered the VEO. In this case violence was so thorough and overwhelming that citizens were cut off from the VEO. Lyall and Wilson (2009) argue that modern military's focus on mechanization has made it harder for government armies to get intelligence from the people. A strong army focused on capital-intensive equipment and a reliance on strong force can be counter-productive. Paul, Clarke, and Grill (2011) report that COIN success is a function of having more good practices than bad ones. Good practices are exemplified by 'reducing tangible support' and using 'strategic communications' and 'competent government', while bad ones are, e.g., 'the COIN force failed to adapt' or 'the COIN force is an external occupier'. Overall, this research is rigorous. However it lacks an overarching focus and a cohesive set of definitions. Perkoski (2010) provides a useful summary of the repression/force literature.

Detailed Analyses

30: *State use of legitimate and limited force is less likely to increase public support for VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is not much direct evidence that can shed light on this hypothesis. Evidence can be found indirectly by asking whether indiscriminate force can actually undermine COIN success rather than asking whether discriminate force is less likely to build VEO support. In one of the few empirical studies that looks directly at this question, Young (2007) writes that the ‘indiscriminate’ use of force can increase the number of ‘members of the population willing to participate in insurgency’. Young presents evidence that a ‘Velvet Gloves’ approach that uses selective violence is effective in combating VEOs. Indiscriminate force (Young calls this ‘Iron Fist’) will likely yield civilian casualties and ultimately more insurgents. Proponents of the Iron Fist assume VEOs will capitulate in the face of strong force. This assumption is often unfounded. More discriminate force such as checkpoints can weaken the VEO without leading to more recruits. The key is context. When VEO resolve is high, strong COIN force is counterproductive. When resolve is low, strong COIN force will work. When resolve is high a Velvet Glove approach is more likely to work for COIN. Young tests time-series models using data from the post-2003 Iraq COIN. His dependent variable is VEO ‘success’ measured in its ability to inflict casualties. He reports that linking the amount of COIN force to the level of resolve is an effective strategy. The Velvet Glove strategy (e.g., checkpoints, weapons clearing) is more appropriate when resolve is high. This is a useful, well-done study that hopefully will be expanded to cover other insurgencies. Some studies argue that strong force can work in certain situations. Kupperman and Kamen (1989, cited in Chasdi 2010) suggest that force is more likely to work when used against states that support VEOs rather than against the VEO itself. Davis and Jenkins (2002; cited in Chasdi 2010): argue that lethal force is needed to control ‘Type A’ terror (terror for terror’s sake). ‘Type B’ terrorists are after a negotiated settlement, and therefore, force should not be part of the counterterror policy. If applied correctly, force can cause the VEO to splinter. Others find that force can easily backfire or be ineffective. LaFree, Dugan and Korte (2009) report that violent acts by the British led to more violence by the IRA. As discussed above, Brophy-Baermann and Conybeare (1994) observe that VEOs expect retaliation and that retaliations have a ‘natural’ rate. They report that only unanticipated retaliations will reduce terror. Their findings support the hypothesis that retaliatory policies set externally rather than by Israel are more effective. They also report that reprisals have only a short-lived effect. Their policy recommendations are that Israel should rely upon an externally-driven retaliatory policy that circumvents VEO expectations, and that the deterrence value of force is largely a moot point because the effect of such a policy quickly dissipates in the case of Israel. As mentioned above, ‘decapitation’ of the VEO by taking out its leadership is also a form of discriminate force. This topic has been explored by, among others, Johnston (2010), Jordan (2009), and Zussman and Zussman (2006). Using new data and statistical methods Johnston (2010) finds that VEO duration is shorter when COIN efforts remove leaders; COIN efforts that capture or kill VEO leaders are more likely to win; insurgency intensity decreases after successful leadership removals as opposed to failed ones; and VEO attacks are more likely to decrease after successful leadership decapitations than after failed ones. Johnston also controls for regional differences, population, elevation, income, and type of insurgency. He presents evidence of just over 70 cases of decapitation. Jordan’s (2009) findings are quite different. She presents evidence from a logic analysis of 298 VEO leadership assassinations between 1945 and 2004. VEOs are more likely to rebound from decapitation when they are old and large. Religious-oriented (as opposed to ideological) VEOs are also more likely to survive decapitation. Separatist groups are also more resistant to decapitation. Overall, the rate of decline of VEOs that have had the leaders removed is actually lower. She concludes that decapitation is not an effective COIN strategy. The policy implication is that the targeted killing of OBL will not yield positive results. One of the factors at work is that separatist and religious VEOs are more decentralized and thus able to withstand the loss of a leader. Zussman and Zussman (2006) explore Israeli assassinations of Palestinian insurgents since

the intifada began in 2000. There were 159 attempts and 317 killed between 2000 and 2004. The authors note major differences in targeting political versus military leaders. The former are well-known while the latter are the predominant decision makers in terrorist campaigns. The expectation is that the 'success' of effective assassinations will be manifested as positive changes in the Israeli stock markets. The regression results indicate that the index goes up after senior military leaders are killed but down after senior political leaders are assassinated. The decapitation literature is not especially rigorous. The variables used in Paul, Clarke and Grill's (2011) study are potentially tautological. In general, the literature needs to be more sensitive to the possibility of endogeneity and selection effects.

Empirical Support Score: 8 = Multiple quantitative analyses supporting the hypothesis.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The literature is applicable to influencing VEOs. Taken as a whole, the studies point to an overall conclusion that there are important differences between discriminate and indiscriminate force. Attention must be given to the context in which force is being considered. For example, the goal of the VEO, whether it is state-sponsored or harbored, whether it is ideological or religious, type of organization (hierarchical or decentralized), etc.

Applicability Score: Moderate Confidence – Empirical results are derived from alternative contexts, but you have some degree of confidence that they apply similarly to the context of influencing VEOs

37: Widespread repression will reduce domestic VEO activity.

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Lafree, Dugan and Korte (2009) argue that repression against VEOs in the Northern Ireland context actually builds public support for the VEO. Downes (2008) also reports that indiscriminate violence (involving civilians) works in favor of the VEO in the long-run. Young reports that strong repression (military force in the form of the Iron Fist) approach can be counterproductive if it is not used in the appropriate situation. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (2004, cited in Hafner-Burton and Shapiro 2010) report that the probability of terror is higher with low levels of repression (in the form of human rights). The probability increases as repression increases until a threshold is reached. Hafner-Burton and Shapiro (2010) discuss the vicious cycle between terror, human rights and international counterterror cooperation. They note that many countries move to curtail human rights in light of terrorism. They also note that allegations of US torture and rendition hurt its international image and distances it from close allies. Thus, curtailing human rights could be counterproductive. They conclude that more rigorous research is needed to show more conclusively whether this vicious cycle exists. They also point (pgs. 417-418) out clear recommendations for future work in this area (natural experiments, case studies, etc.). Walsh and Piazza (2010) measure human rights in the form of physical integrity. They test time-series models with appropriate lags and report that respect for physical integrity reduces domestic and transnational terror. Lyall (2009), on the other hand, finds that Russian use of indiscriminate violence in Chechnya hindered the VEO. In this case violence was so thorough and overwhelming that citizens were cut off from the VEO.

Empirical Support Score: 2 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e., some in favor, some against the hypothesis) but more negative than positive findings.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The preponderance of the evidence is that repression does not work. Context must be taken into account and we need to be clear whether we are talking about human rights repression or repression in the form of military might.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

38: *State use of force that causes civilian casualties among VEO constituents or community of identification aids VEO recruitment.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: The study by Joe Young discussed above speaks to this question. The Iron Fist approach can be counterproductive if it is not used in the appropriate situation. It is a question of resolve. Downes (2008) also reports that indiscriminate violence involving civilians works in favor of the VEO in the long-run. Joes (2004, cited in Walsh and Piazza 2010) also posits that state brutality leads to gains for the VEO. Lyall (2009) is a notable exception. He shows that in Chechnya, where Russian use of indiscriminate violence was thorough, it hindered the VEO. In this case violence was so thorough and overwhelming that citizens were cut off from the VEO

Empirical Support Score: 3 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e. some in favor, some against the hypothesis), but more positive than negative findings

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The evidence indicates that factor-inappropriate force can lead to gains in VEO recruitment and is thus directly applicable to influencing VEOs.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

39: *Widespread government repression (e.g., torture, disappearances, extrajudicial killings, political imprisonment) will increase transnational VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: In a cross-national study Piazza and Walsh (2009) show that states respond to transnational terror with increases in extrajudicial killings and disappearances. There are no statistically significant increases in torture or political imprisonment or reductions in freedoms of religion, speech, or assembly. The question then becomes, does such repression translate to increases in transnational terror. In a follow-up study, Walsh and Piazza (2010) show (using ITERATE and RAND-MIPT data) that respect for human rights in the form of physical integrity (freedom from extrajudicial killings, torture, disappearances, and political imprisonment) reduces domestic and transnational terror. This study is rigorous. It has good controls and allows for various lags between rights and terror. The study shows how government behavior, rather than regime type, is important.

Empirical Support Score: 8 = Multiple quantitative analyses supporting the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Empirical analysis relates directly to VEOs.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

40: *Inconsistent application and levels of repression will lead to an increased level of VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Uneven application implies that there will be harsh repression at times. Accordingly, the findings discussed above that repression is counterproductive are relevant here. In fact, if repression is uneven it could lead to higher relative aspirations/expectations (see Gurr 1970) in the general populace. In this case, gains for VEOs could be even greater. The findings of Lyall (2009) that indiscriminate force in Chechnya works because it was so effective and consistent also points to the conclusion that an uneven application is less likely to work.

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Empirical Support Score: 3 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e. some in favor, some against the hypothesis), but more positive than negative findings

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The empirical analysis took place in the context of VEOs.

Applicability Score: High Confidence – Similar context: Empirical results concern a sufficiently closely related context (e.g. transnational criminal organizations) that you have high confidence that they will also hold in the context of influencing VEOs.

41: *Incompetent application of repression will lead to increased level of VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: An ‘incompetent’ application of repression implies that repression will not be applied with sufficient coordination or efficiency to block VEO actions. The studies discussed above, taken as a whole, indicate that repression is not an effective means of influencing VEOs. ‘Incompetent’ repression would seem to be even less efficacious. Incompetence implies a weak state. Repression in the face of a weak state (e.g., Burma, where some insurgencies have lasted since the 1940s) will likely work in favor of the VEO. The findings of Lyall (2009) that indiscriminate force in Chechnya works because it was so effective and consistent also points to the conclusion that an incompetent application is less likely to work. Newman (2007) writes that weak states are a contributory cause of VEO onset, but many VEOs arise in strong or stable states. However, a weak state would likely be more important in terms of VEO duration.

Empirical Support Score: 3 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e. some in favor, some against the hypothesis), but more positive than negative findings

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Direct

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

42: *More oppression will lead to more VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: The comments in 40 (above) are relevant here. Oppression is tantamount to torture and other abuses. Lyall (2009) is an exception.

Empirical Support Score: 3 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e. some in favor, some against the hypothesis), but more positive than negative findings.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Empirical analysis relates directly to VEOs.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

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