

Cultivating doubt as to whether, even if operationally successful, the ultimate goals of the VEO in conducting attacks will be achieved, deters the VEO from engaging in violence.

62; 80; 63

General Description of the Literature:

By definition, deterrence policies aim to create the perception that a VEO's goals cannot be achieved, which should decrease the rationale for violent terrorist attacks. When a VEO believes that an attack will not be successful, it likely will not perpetrate the attack (Kroenig 2010; Auerswald 2006/2007). Furthering this point, the literature cites multiple examples of terrorist groups' sensitivity to operational risks (e.g., Hoffman 1997; Combating Terrorism Center at West Point 2008; Enders and Sandler 2002). However, the most effective level of deterrence by denial is debated. Dutter and Seliktar's theoretical discussion of terrorism deterrence proposes that the governments should deter at the strategic level (2007). Wilner's essay notes the difficulty of tactical deterrence by denial (2011). While the scholars discussed above and other political scientists have discussed the breakdown of operational, tactical, and overall goals in relation to deterrence, few academics have tested strategic deterrence versus tactical deterrence. However, increased security measures (a form of deterrence by denial) often only shift the tactic or target rather than actually reducing VEO perpetrated violence (Cauley and Im 1988; Enders and Sandler 1993, 2002).

Detailed Analyses

62: *Cultivating doubt as to whether, even if operationally successful, the ultimate goals of the VEO in conducting attacks will be achieved, deters the VEO from engaging in violence.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: No studies were found that analyze governments cultivating strategic doubt as an influence tactic. However, most often, VEO attacks are focused on the larger goals of the organization which can sometimes still be moved forward through failed tactical attacks.

Empirical Support Score: 0 = No empirical support (for or against the hypothesis)

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: N/A.

Applicability Score: Not Applicable – There is no empirical support in any context

80: *Strategic deterrence by denial is more important than tactical denial because VEOs may accept a few tactical failures if they believe their ultimate objectives are still achievable.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Wilner (2011) notes that the significantly increased defenses of airports and embassies have not deterred al-Qaeda from attempting attacks. Even tactical failures produce publicity and may have a place in achieving the ultimate goals of the VEO. Based on studies of increased airport security, tactical deterrence by denial often shifts the target or tactic without reducing overall VEO violence (Cauley and Im 1988; Enders and Sandler 1993, 2002). While quantitative studies support ideas within the hypothesis (e.g, studies on tactical or location

deterrence show a shift in the mode or location of attacks), but do not specifically address tactical failures and ultimate objectives.

Empirical Support Score: 1 = Anecdotal support only for the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Anecdotal support is in the context of VEOs.

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

63: Greater social resilience bolsters deterrence by denial

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Societal resistance can be considered a component of deterrence by denial (DBD). A society could conceivably commit to a rigorous DBD regime by allowing certain inconveniences, such as bomb detection, extra airport screening, expensive security devices, a multitude of bomb squads, etc. The DBD strategy prevents potential VEO action by convincing the group it will not work, nor will it lead to a positive outcome. DBD is carried out through defenses and target hardening (e.g., locks on cockpit doors), second strike capability, and the ability to signal 'toughness' (Davis 2010; Trager and Zagorcheva 2005/2006). DBD relies on signaling that the state will not bow to terror by making concessions (Trager and Zagorcheva 2005/2006). Societal involvement and resilience could bolster this signal (Jenkins 2006, cited in Davis 2010). In his study of suicide terror, Pape (2003) argues that offensive strategies aimed at terrorists often do not work, nor do incremental or large, one-time concessions. The most salient solution is to deny. States must make it so hard for terrorists to succeed that VEO confidence in success is shaken. Pape points to the West Bank wall in Israel as an example of DBD. Almog (2004/2005) notes that Israel has effectively used DBD. However, there is little specific evidence on the nature of the societal role in DBD. Jenkins (2006, 157-158) provides plausible anecdotal evidence. He observes that the American society is uniquely qualified to become involved and demonstrate resilience in the face of VEO threats. To this end he recommends (p. 157) 'actively engaging citizens in their own preparedness and response. Such a strategy would attack the terror, not just the terrorists. This approach would have seen the administration working closely with the legislative and judicial branches to increase security without trespassing on liberty.' This is a clear call for societal resilience that would enhance DBD.

Empirical Support Score: 1 = Anecdotal support only for the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: There is strong anecdotal evidence and some evidence from Israel that DBD works. It is quite plausible that the societal role could enhance DBD.

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

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