

Persistence of safe havens will increase VEO activity.

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General Description of the Literature:

Various political scientists and US government authorities argue that safe havens allow for continued VEO activity. Lamb (2008) defines “safe havens” as “a place or a situation that enables illicit actors to operate while evading detection or capture, including ungoverned, under governed, misgoverned, or contested physical areas (remote, urban, maritime) or exploitable non-physical areas (virtual) where illicit actors can organize, plan, raise funds, communicate, recruit, train, and operate in relative security.” Kittner (2007) argues that terrorists benefit greatly from having access to safe havens that allow VEOs to organize and plan for operations in secrecy. Innes (2007) concludes that terrorist safe havens are normally found in failed/failing states such as Somalia, Afghanistan, Yemen and Bangladesh, due to a lack of government capacity, inaccessibility to terrorist hunters and a suitable environment for long term training

A US Department of State report (2006) declares that in order to achieve an end to terrorism, terrorist safe havens must be eliminated which indicates that there is a positive relationship between the presence of safe havens and the continuation of VEO activity. The US government has also encouraged the elimination of safe havens because of the belief that they increase VEO activity (The Times of India 2010). Counihan (2011) claims that provinces that share a border with Pakistan present potential safe havens for insurgency and hypothesizes that provinces which border Pakistan will have higher insurgent activity due to the safe havens in FATA and NWFP. This hypothesis was supported, indicating that there was an increase in activity in the areas bordering Pakistan (Counihan 2011). Byman (2011) claims that the existence of a safe haven for guerillas most often leads a civil war to escalate into larger interstate conflict and that the elimination of insurgent safe havens indicates that the given insurgency is on a decline.

Detailed Analyses

167: *Persistence of safe havens will increase VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: There is some support for the claim that terrorist safe havens increases VEO activity. The GAO report (2008) claims that the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US were planned from a safe haven in Afghanistan and that the terrorists involved also utilized Pakistan as the main route to travel from Afghanistan to the U.S.. Another example of terrorist attacks emanating from within Pakistani borders is the Mumbai attacks of 2008 (The Times of India, 2010).

Bhattacharji (2009) writes that the Philippines have been considered a terrorist safe haven for years. The Philippine government has very little control over the terrorist populated areas, and has trouble combating militant groups that have stationed there. These VEOs include Abu Sayyaf Group, the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People’s Army, Jemmah Islamiyah, the Alex Bonvayao Brigade, the Pentagon Gang, and many more. These groups have succeeded in over 100 attacks within the Philippines borders and although government has attempted to combat these acts, the terrorist groups continue to use the country as their base (Bhattacharji 2009).

Schmid (2004) adds to the support for the hypothesis by claiming that the loss of safe havens in the long run de-escalate terrorist activity, which indicates that the presence of safe havens increases the likelihood

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of VEO activity. Karaca's analysis (2010) argues that the PKK is not strong enough to sustain its activities without support from the safe havens in Iraq based on temporal analysis suggesting that the level of incidents diminished when support from the Iraqi base was low, compared to previous years when support was higher (Karaca 2010,100).

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: There is a relationship between the persistence of safe havens and the level of VEO activity within the respective region. From the evidence it is safe to conclude that if a VEO has access to a safe haven, they can increase their power through training in a secure place and attack their targets. There is some evidence that shows that some VEOs were able to continue attacking an outside region due to the access they had to a safe haven.

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

168: *Tolerance by state of a VEO in its territory (e.g. safe haven) will lead to reduction of that VEO's domestic activity but increase its transnational activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Kronstadt (2011) writes that even though the US has recognized Pakistan as a crucial partner in counterterrorism efforts against Afghanistan, the Pakistani military continues to tolerate selective Islamist extremist groups as a means of maintaining security interests. This leads to the continued tolerance of Afghan insurgents operating from within Pakistani territory. Kronstadt (2009) writes that many analysts believe that Pakistani officials are aware of the whereabouts of the insurgent leaders, even maintaining direct contact, and still choose to tolerate these groups. Kronstadt highlights Pakistani's mixed record on battling Islamist extremism, tolerating some while combating others. In 2006, nine Taliban militants were arrested near the port city of Karachi by Pakistani officials. This was a shift from Pakistan's previous "tolerance of extremist groups" and ended up putting the Afghan insurgency at a great disadvantage. The DNI's assessment (2008) discovered that Pakistani-based militants posed a threat to Pakistan itself, and that there was an unparalleled increase in suicide attacks against Pakistan's military and civilians over the span of a year. The total casualties in these events exceed attacks from the previous years, and were ordered by Pakistan-based militants.

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: Although not explicitly stated in the literature, Pakistan's tolerance of extremist groups within its borders does seem to have provided the group with enough support to succeed in its operations elsewhere (al-Qaeda). There is also evidence however, that a state's tolerance of a VEO within its borders does not necessarily imply that the state itself will be safe from harm.

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

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