

Building a Reputation: Government Partisanship, the Use of Force and the Frequency and Lethality of Terror Events

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Abstract:

The ability of a government to prevent violence and threats against the state and its citizens often depends on its ability to deter its enemies from engaging in such tactics. Because deterrence is based both on capability and credibility it is not clear that all governments, even those that emerge within the same state, will always be similarly effective at deterring its enemies. In this paper I examine a number of factors both political and military to assess their impact on how they effect terrorists' decisions to attack states, specifically civilian populations. Specifically I examine whether credibility in regards to deterring terrorist attacks is affected by partisan politics as well as the decision to use force against an enemy or those thought to be associated with an enemy. I test my expectations using data drawn from the Israeli- Palestine conflict between the years 1979 and 1996. The results suggest that governments of the right are more effective at using force to deter future attacks both in regards to frequency and lethality but more moderate governments are less likely to be the target of terrorist attacks given the absence of the use of force. Additionally, government of the right are more likely, once they begin to use force, to be the targets or encourage spectacular events such as suicide bombings while governments of the left are less likely to see such occurrences.

To an outstretched hand of peace we will respond with an olive branch but expressions of terror will be met by fire more intense than ever.”

Ariel Sharon

The ability of a government to prevent violence and threats against the state and its citizens often depends on its ability to deter its enemies from engaging in such tactics. Because deterrence is based both on capability and credibility it is not clear that all governments, even those that emerge within the same state, will always be similarly effective at deterring its enemies. In other words, not all governments are likely to be seen as equally credible in their deterrent or compellent threats even if they are equally capable to carry them out.

In this paper I examine a number of factors both political and military to assess their impact on how they effect terrorists' decisions to attack governments. Specifically I examine whether credibility in regards to deterring terrorist attacks is affected by partisan politics as well as the decision to use force against an enemy. In order for threats to use force, either to deter or compel an enemy, to be effective governments must be perceived as being credible. Two keys to effective credibility are reputation and the resolve to act. I argue that for democratic governments these reputations are derived in part from the beliefs and policy preferences of their partisan supporters. In addition to partisan reputation I also examine whether the use of military force against sub group populations related to the terrorists also acts to raise the stakes and further deter terrorists from engaging in terror events against the state. I test my expectations using data drawn from the Israeli- Palestine conflict between the years 1979 and 1996.

This research attempts to accomplish three things. First I combine two distinct literatures in an effort to develop a better understanding of how domestic politics and military choices affect a population's vulnerability. Second given the nature of the

question and the data employed to test my hypotheses this research provides an empirical test of the efficacy of the use of force against terrorist groups, which has largely been studied only in formal models (Arce and Sandler 2005 Bueno de Mesquita 2005). Finally, because the data used to test the hypotheses are in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this research provides some interesting insights into the ability of Israeli governments to deter aggression against Israeli citizens and territory.

Below I provide a brief review of the literature on various mechanisms by which reputations and credibility can emerge to gain traction on the question. Then I develop a theoretical framework that incorporates two sources of reputation and credibility for governments and how these sources affect decisions by terrorist groups to engage in attacks against a government and its population. I then test the hypotheses derived from the framework against a data set examining both the frequency of attacks as well as the lethality of attacks. Finally I discuss both the theoretical as well as the policy implications of the results and discuss avenues for further research

Using Force and Reputation:

Much of the literature on the use of force in international relations portrays force, or the threat of force, as a means of influence (Baldwin 1971, Holsti 1964, Rothgeb 1993). Actors use force, or more specifically the threat of force, to influence some target's behavior by either compelling them to stop pursuing some course of action underway or deterring them from engaging in some action to begin with. The goal is to make the costs of not complying with the actors goals greater than the costs of compliance either in changing action or, as is often the case, not acting. Because the successful use of

deterrence and compellence rests upon a threat of violence if the desired action does not occur by the target, one of the key ingredients to making deterrence successful is making the threats credible.

Credibility, as Mercer (1996) point out, consists of resolve, interests and capabilities.¹ To make a credible threat the actor must have the means by which to follow through on the threat. Another way to raise the credibility of a threat is to show that the issue at stake is of vital importance. A third component and often related to the issue is the resolve of the actor. A highly resolved actor is one who is likely to risk a lot to accomplish their goal while an actor with low resolve is likely to give in easily.

How then does an actor gain or even maintain credibility? One component of credibility is reputation. Much of the deterrence literature focuses on how actors can use or manipulate their reputations for being resolute to achieve their goals (Jervis 1970, Powell 1990, Shelling 1966). Actors that have a reputation as tough or resolute are more likely to be believed than those that do not but very little of the literature discusses how players develop these reputations. One way that actors can develop reputations is through their behaviors. Poker is a good example of this.

In poker much of how players play a given hand is based on the past behaviors, or reputations of the other players at the table. If a certain player appears to only stay in the game, or play close to the vest, when they have good or winning hands then when that player does decide to play a hand other players are more likely to fold. Conversely, if a player is constantly bluffing during the game then others players are less likely to be

¹ For a slightly different understanding of credibility and reputation see Tang 2005

concerned when the “bluffing” player remains in the game because that player has developed a reputation as a bluffer.²

Based on past behavior actors attempt to deduce what “type” of player the other actors are based on their behaviors. Past behaviors reveal information about whether the actor is one type or another. In the poker scenario past behaviors tell the other players that the player in question is either a cautious player who is likely to stay in only when they have a high probability of winning or whether the player in question is a loose canon and unpredictable in terms of whether they have a good hand or not. Either way, reputations form or these reputations ultimately affect the decision making calculus of the other players in the game. Therefore one source of reputation and credibility is an actor’s past actions. John F. Kennedy made this point clear during his Berlin Crisis speech:

The solemn vow each of us gave to West Berlin in time of peace will not be broken in time of danger. If to we do not meet our commitments to Berlin, where will we later stand? If we are not true to our word there, all that we have achieved in collective security, which relies on these words, will mean nothing. And if there is one path above all others to war, it is the path of weakness and disunity.³

Another source of credibility is tied to what most international relations scholars now refer to as audience costs (Fearon 1994, Martin 1993, Schultz 2001). In short audience costs are the political costs that leaders or politicians incur for not following through on a commitment, promise or policy. Much of the recent work on audience costs and international conflict suggests that democratic leaders pay potentially higher audience costs when making threats against other nations because it is easier for them to be replaced if they should not follow through on their threats than it is for autocratic

² Of course some players attempt to create reputations as “bluffers” early on when the stakes are low in order to later trap other players when they have good hands later in the game when the stakes are usually higher. This will also affect a given player’s reputation in future games.

³ <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/historicspeeches/kennedy/berlincrisis.html>

leaders (Partell and Palmer 1999). What this suggests is that leaders of democratic nations are less likely to bluff or become involved in situations that they are unlikely to emerge victorious from. This dynamic has been used to help further our understanding of the democratic peace proposition.

For example Bueno de Mesquita et al (2003) use a variation of this to explain why democratic states do not go to war with one other. Their argument, essentially, is that because democratic leaders have little incentives to bluff, should a crisis emerge between two democracies and if neither are willing to compromise or negotiate the result is likely to be a very costly bloody conflict. This is because there is a greater potential for the leaders in each democracy to be removed if they do not follow through on their threats and try accomplishing the mission or following through with the threat. Because of this dynamic, leaders in democratic societies are more inclined to attempt to settle disputes peacefully rather than allow a conflict to escalate beyond the point of large scale violence. According to the audience costs literature then, reputation is less a function of past actions and more a function of specific attributes that belong to the actor. Actors gain credibility through mechanisms in which they alone pay a cost to some third party whether it be internal or external, and not necessarily based upon their past behaviors or actions.

Credibility then can emerge from a variety of sources. Actors can develop reputations through actions and past behavior which can either enhance or undermine their deterrent and compellent threats. At the same time actors can also obtain credibility through internal sources or attributions. The above describes two avenues by which governments develop reputations for credibility and resolve. Below I further develop

these avenues specifically in the context of the partisanship of a government and the use of force by governments as a means to generate reputation

Partisanship credibility and deterrence:

Does the partisanship of a democratic government affect the likelihood that a state will be subjected to violence, whether it by from another state or from organized non-state actors such as terrorist groups? Specifically for this study I am concerned with whether partisanship enhances or erodes a government's credibility in regards to deterring attacks against the state and its population by terrorists. In other words does partisanship provide some reputational benefit to some governments, and not others, which might enhance the deterrent threat of the specific government in office? Schultz (2005) specifically attempts to answer this question by examining the logic behind whether hawkish or dovish governments are more likely to secure a cooperative outcome from a distrusted adversary in the international system. Using the logic of the two level game, Schultz demonstrates that more hawkish governments are more likely, in the long run, to secure cooperation because they are seen as more credible in following through on threats should the other party defect. The reason for this is due to the hawkish party's electoral base and the policies that they support and want enacted. IN this manner partisanship enhances their reputation and ultimately makes threats by hawkish governments more credible because opponents know that these governments are more likely to follow through with threats so as not to risk electoral punishment.

Dovish parties, on the other hand, are likely to only secure short term cooperation. Why is this case? Ultimately opponents are likely to defect against dovish governments because Doves' threats are not seen as credible as hawkish threats. Why are these threats

not seen as credible? Ultimately governments of the left are not seen as credible for the same reason that hawks' threats appear as being very credible, their electoral base and supports.

Leaders in democratic states do not necessarily enact policies that are preferred by a majority of the population. Rather governments tend to enact policies that are preferred by their constituency (Bueno de Mesquita et al 2003). Therefore leaders and parties implement policies that reflect their own ideological beliefs as well as the beliefs of their supporters. This means that governments are constrained by the policy choices preferred by their own partisan supporters and that governments of different orientation will approach similar policy problems differently.⁴ Failure to enact policies that are preferred by ones supporters are likely to lead to either defection from the party or lead to defections within the party, both of which can cause governments to fall.

In regards to conflict dovish parties are usually elected to settle conflicts peaceably. This ultimately creates incentives for opponents to break commitments against the use of violence and defect. Because doves offer the olive branch, so to speak, often opponents will engage in violent or conflictual behaviors in order to extract even more concessions from the doves, which can lead to escalation. The end result of this is that because the doves could not keep the peace they are likely to be replaced by a more hawkish party who will at least be seen as more effective in containing the violence of the opponent. Conversely, if dove's do employ the use of force, or engage in threatening behaviors, they risk alienating there supporters who voted them into office to make peace and not continue or escalate the conflict. Again the dovish government is likely to lose

⁴ This is especially true in PR systems with multiple parties. In these systems, parties and politicians choose policies aimed at policy differentiation and not at maximizing the number of voters or the median voter. Instead, parties focus on gaining the support of a core group of constituents (Cox 1990).

office given that this is not their forte and again they are likely to be replaced by a more hawkish government. As Schultz (2005) notes, “Doves want peace, but they may not have the electoral security or credibility to deliver it. Hawks enjoy both electoral security and credibility in attempting cooperation, but they may not want to.”

While there appear to be differences in credibility and perception by opponents between doves and hawks does the dove-hawk distinction translate along more traditional left right partisan lines? We know that certain economic issues translate very well onto this left right distinction⁵. For example Warwick (1992) demonstrates this dynamic in regards to macro economic policies. He demonstrates that there are significant policy differences between governments of the left and right in regards to both the issues they pay attention to as well as the solutions they are likely to attempt. Thus parties once in office will enact legislation and pursue policies that are closely in line with their supporters and there is a strong relationship in regards to domestic economic policy.

There is also evidence (Budge and Hofferbert 1990, Fordham 1998, Koch 2002, Koch and Cranmer forthcoming, Palmer, London and Reagan 2004) that suggests parties of the right tend to be more hawkish than parties of the left. Why might this be the case? Returning to the discussion above, remember that one of the key elements in developing reputation and acting against an aggressive opponent is the support base of the party or parties in government. The supporters, or winning coalition, of a right oriented government is likely to be comprised of supporters that have an internationalist agenda, the support of international businesses and partisans are concerned with such policy issues as inflation, free trade, and security. Governments of the left are likely to have their base of support tied to such groups as labor and are more likely to be concerned

⁵ In fact left right positions are often defined along such issues lines

with issues such as welfare, employment, and health care. Additionally, governments of the left often have policy platforms based on such ideas as collective action, redistribution of resources, and equality (van der Brug 2001).

Translating this to the issue of national security, governments of the left then are likely to appear as more attractive targets than are governments of the right.

International actors are likely to perceive left oriented governments as dovish, more peaceful and more likely to compromise in their approach to international relations.

Unfortunately, international actors are also likely to interpret the willingness to negotiate as weakness and see these governments as favorable targets. Conversely, right oriented governments are likely to be perceived as hawkish and more likely to respond to threats and uses of force against the state with corresponding force and are unlikely to negotiate or compromise in light of some threat made against the state.

The above provides a foundation for why terrorists, when examining whether or not they can accomplish their goals, should be more likely to target or escalate violence against governments of the left. Because governments of the left are more likely to emphasize norms of compromise and equality given their ties to labor, minority groups, and social welfare they are likely to be seen as more dovish. Therefore a goal oriented terrorist should believe he will be more successful in accomplishing his goal by targeting a more left wing government that is inclined to negotiate rather than targeting a more right wing government which is likely to be more hawkish, less inclined to compromise, and more likely to retaliate.

The Use of Force as Reputation:

One strategy that states, or governments, can employ to deal with perceived threats to the state is deterrence. As George and Smoke (1974) and Huth (1988) have noted deterrence rests on a state's or government's ability to make threats that are seen as credible to the target thereby preventing the target from acting. Above I discussed how partisanship can work to potentially enhance or undermine credibility. Obviously however there is more than one way to develop credibility. An alternative strategy is to demonstrate that you are willing to use force to signal others that you are willing to back your threats and that you are not engaging in "cheap talk". The Mayaguez incident in 1975 has often been viewed in this context. In the aftermath of Vietnam, US President Gerald Ford wanted to send a strong signal to both the North Koreans as well as other nations by using a military response to the seizure by the Khmer Rouge of the USS Mayaguez (Gwertzman 1975).

As in the case of President Ford and the USS Mayaguez this argument has been extended beyond states to individual leaders as well. Gelpi and Grieco (2001) contend that international reputations and resolve are, "attached not only to states, but also to individual leaders." According to their argument leaders develop these reputations through real world behavior therefore resolve largely depends on experience in office. They find that inexperienced leaders, especially among democracies, tend to "attract trouble." As a result, leadership experience and subsequently leadership tenure provide the important links to explaining state leaders most likely to initiate a dispute and nations most vulnerable to targeting. Therefore leaders in democratic states, especially those with very little foreign policy experience may resort to using force early in their tenure to

create a reputation for resolve so that future threats, whether deterrent or compellent in nature, are likely to be seen as credible. It seems reasonable that the above arguments can also be extended more generally to governments in office and the parties that comprise them.

Partisanship, the Use of Force Credibility and Terrorism:

I have articulated two ways in which both reputations and credibility can be generated to dissuade opponents from engaging in terrorist actions. In addition there is some research that has addressed both the connection of partisanship and terrorist activities as well as the role of using force as a counter terrorist tactic. For example Koch and Cranmer (2004) found that democratic governments that were oriented towards the left of the political spectrum were more likely to be the targets of a terrorist attack, even when accounting for other factors that might make democratic states more attractive targets. In another recent study Braithwaite, Foster and Sobek (2005), examine whether there is a relationship between government orientation, terrorist group orientation and the frequency of terror events focusing on Western Europe. While their results were mixed they did find evidence that terrorist groups do account for the political orientation of governments when making calculations over the use of force.

There have been a number of game theoretic studies that examine the efficacy of using force against terrorists as well. For example Bueno de Mesquita (2005), suggests that government crackdowns have competing effects on mobilizing terrorists. On the one hand there can be a decrease in a terrorist group's ability and effectiveness to carry out threats as well as a deterrent to carry out future attacks. At the same time however they also provide incentives for others to join the cause and increase mobilization as terrorist

groups can foment opposition against the target government. Rosendorf and Sandler (2004) also examine whether proactive tactics are effective at harming terrorist organizations and/or sending deterrent signals or in fact do they bring legitimacy to a group's cause and ultimately increase both recruitment and activity. If on the one hand use of military force generates credibility and increases a state's deterrent threat than this should ultimately have a negative effect on future attacks. If however the use of force does not enhance a governments deterrent threat, but rather aids in recruitment and legitimation then the use of force by a government should lead to an increase in terrorist activity over time. Finally, Arce and Sandler (2005) find that under certain conditions proactive policies are more effective but that at other times more defensive measures may be more efficacious. While there appears to be some debate over whether military force has a deterrent or a mobilization effect it appears that there is at least a legitimate theoretical connection between the use of force by governments and the possibility of deterring future attacks at least in the short term.

I represent the overall relationship in regards to the sources of reputations and resolve below in the following equation

$$EU(\text{terrorist attack}) = f\{\text{Government's Credibility}\}$$

$$\text{Credibility} = \text{Partisanship} + \text{Past Behavior}$$

As a government's credibility increases we should see a decrease in the number of terrorist attacks against that government. Overall then I expect that governments of the right should be less likely to be the targets of terrorist attacks and that, at least in the short run, the use of force should have some deterrent effect on terrorist attacks.

This leads to the following hypotheses:

H1: Governments of the right are less likely to be the targets of terrorist attacks than more left oriented governments.

H2: Governments that engage in the use of force to quell terrorist attacks should see fewer future attacks.

Because the above relationship might also be interaction I also pose the following hypothesis:

H3: Governments of the right that engage more frequently in the use of force should see a reduction in the number of attacks against them.

Research Design and Data:

Data on terrorist tends to fall into the category of what is often called event count data focusing on the frequency of attacks in a given time period and often in a specific spatial location such as a state. However most studies that use data such as the ITERATE data (Mickolus et al.2004) or TWEED (Engene 2006), do not account for the magnitude of the events under investigation. Additionally, much of this data does not account for the government's response to terror events such as whether governments employed force against suspected terrorists or sub groups affiliated with those groups or possibly even sponsors of those groups. To overcome this problem, I employ a data set that focuses on terror events against Israel between the years 1979 and 1997. While using a single country or case makes generalizability perhaps more difficult it does allow me take a more dynamic account of the relationship between political orientation, the use of force and terrorism, both in terms of its frequency as well as its magnitude. The events are

coded from the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) Terrorism Knowledge Base. The MIPT allows for not only the date of a terrorist event but also the lethality of the event. In addition the MIPT also allows for coding of tactics employed such as suicide bombings versus other forms of terrorism such as armed attacks or hijackings. The independent variables are all coded from the LEVANT database (<http://www.ku.edu/~keds/data.dir/levant.html>). The LEVANT data delineates each action by actor, target, and type. By combining the two datasets I have been able to produce a more dynamic dataset that not only accounts for terrorist events beyond merely a count variable I can also account for Israeli actions against both Palestinians as well as international actors that may wield influence in the conflict.⁶

Dependent Variables:

In order to more fully understand the relationship between partisan politics, governmental decisions to use force and terror events I use three dependent variables in the study. They are labeled Frequency, Lethality and Suicide. Frequency is a count variable that counts the number of terrorist events in a given month. Lethality is a measure of the number of fatalities that were incurred by Israeli civilians. The final dependent variable is suicide. This variable counts the number of suicide missions in a given month. Recent research suggests that this tactic lay at the extreme in regards to violence and its psychological impact on the target population (Hoffman 2003, Pape 2003). It is also seen as a somewhat costly strategy. Therefore if governments were

⁶ While essentially focusing on “one case” may reduce the generalizability of the results, the Israeli case is often the focus on more general works on terrorism (Kydd and Walter 2002, Bueno de Mesquita 2005), given its long history, the relatively rich data, and that the roots of the conflict are similar to many other terrorist conflicts, territory and self-governance. In addition because of both the duration of the conflict as well as spatial conditions, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is ideal for this study because it is highly likely that terrorist groups will know not only who is in government but also the types of policies that they advocate allowing for a test of partisanship as a component of reputation.

hoping to deter at least one type of terror event suicide missions would be among the most likely targeted.

Independent Variables:

In order to determine the political orientation of the government in power I use the Party Manifesto data (Budge et al. 2001). I calculate the mean weighted average of the government based on the Left-Right position of each party and the number of seats that party controls in the government. I then code states that are greater than 15 a right oriented government, governments less than -15 a left oriented government and all others are considered centrist governments.⁷ Governments of the Right are labeled *Right-Govs*. In order to capture the effect of the use of force on terror events I calculate the number of uses of force by the government over the past six months, using a weighted moving average. I call this measure *Past uses of Force*. I use a weighted moving average to discount past events from more recent events.⁸ *Right-force* is the multiplicative term between Right Governments X Past uses Force.

It may be the case that past successes by terrorists either in terms of frequency or lethality might affect current events. To control for such temporal effects, I include weighted moving average counts of both the frequency measure and the lethality measure over the past 6 months. These are weighted in the same manner as the *Past Uses of Force* measure. They are labeled *Past Frequency* and *Past Lethality*. In addition, because reputations can evolve over time I code for the number of months in office. This measure

⁷ During the time period under investigation there are no governments that can be coded as left, only center or right.

⁸ The use of force was determined according to WEIS coding rules that were adopted by KEDS. All uses of force are coded as 223 in the KEDS data. The weighting scheme for the variable is a simple scheme that decreases by .2 each month so that the prior month is given its full weight and the 6 month is weighted at .2. I used a number of other weighting schemes and time lags and the results remained essentially unchanged. As follows,

is labeled *Gov Duration*. There has also been research that suggests that elections and election cycles might provide “windows of opportunity” for terrorists to seize on to. To account for these, I include three measures: *Ciep-month* which is the number of months left until the next mandated election, *Month Prior* which takes the value of 1 if the current month under investigation is the month prior to when elections occur, and *Election Month*. This equals one if an election was held in that given month.

I also control for a number of events and actors that might also influence the number of events. I refer to these as contextual factors. The first Intifada is a contextual factor that occurs during the time frame under investigation. To account for this I create a measure called *Intifada* that takes on a value of 1 during the intifada and 0 otherwise. I also control for the use of force against neighboring states given that they may influence events within Israel either by their governments sponsoring terrorists or by terrorists seeking safe haven in territories outside of Israel. I create 4 lagged measures for the use of force in each of the neighboring states, *Egypt*, *Syria*, *Jordan* and *Lebanon*. Each of these measures is a count of the number of uses of force against that state in the previous month.⁹

In order to test the hypotheses across a variety of dependant variables I employ two different estimation methods, Negative Binomial Regression and Poisson. While three of the dependent variables are count variables (*Frequency*, *Lethality* and *Suicide*) only *Frequency* and *Lethality* show indications of over dispersion. Therefore I use negative binomial regression to account for the over dispersion in the first two models. The variable *Suicide* does not show indication of over dispersion and therefore I use the

⁹ One advantage of using data from the broader Israel-Palestine conflict is that it reduces the problem of whether reputations are transferable to other issues or from one country to another. (see Huth 1999)

more conventional Poisson regression on this variable.¹⁰ Additionally I use robust standard errors and I cluster on the prime minister given that the errors are likely to be correlated within governments headed by a particular prime minister but not necessarily between governments headed by other prime ministers.

Results:

Table 1 presents each of the dependent variables in a naïve model controlling only for government partisanship. While the coefficient for governments of the right is positive using the frequency of attacks measure, all of the other models show a negative relationship between political orientation and terror events. This is fairly consistent with previous research that exams partisan orientation (Koch and Cranmer 2004).

Superficially, at least, it appears that political orientation lends more to credibility than actions alone by governments.

Table 2 presents the fully specified models of the dependent variables Frequency and Lethality. Perhaps the most striking difference between the naïve models from Table 1 and the fully specified models of Table 2 is that not only are the key independent variables statistically significant and greater in magnitude, they are positive indicating that previous uses of force and right oriented governments are associated with a higher probability of the state being the target of terrorist attacks. However, the interactive measure is in the expected direction, which is negative, and it is statistically significant.¹¹ This suggests that while governments of the right are likely to see more terrorist attacks against them, the overall effect of using force actually reduces future events.

¹⁰ see Appendix one for the summary statistics of all of the variables

¹¹ .

In terms of past behaviors by terrorists, previous fatalities has no affect on future attacks but the previous frequency of attacks is a good indicator of future attacks. Among the measures related to the electoral environment, only the government duration measure and the month prior to an election measure are statistically significant. It appears that the longer a government is in power reduces the frequency of attacks against it which is what I had anticipated. Conversely, the month prior to an election rather than providing a window of opportunity for terrorists to potentially extract more concession, or effect future electoral fortunes, shows a negative relationship in regards to the frequency of attacks while the measure of the actual election month is statistically insignificant. Turning finally to the contextual measures, somewhat surprisingly the variable capturing the period of the first Intifada has no statistical impact on the frequency of terrorist attacks and only the targeting of Jordan appears to affect the calculations of terrorists.¹²

Model 2 of Table 2 presents the results when I change the dependent variable from the frequency of attacks to the lethality of attacks in a given month. In terms of the main independent variables, the relationships are very similar to the frequency model. It appears that higher levels of force and right oriented governments are separately associated with increased fatalities however the joint effect is again negative.

The measure of past frequency of actions is positive and significant suggesting that frequency is also associated with lethality, however previous fatalities do not affect current levels of casualties. The measures of the electoral environment are more robust in the lethality model than in the frequency model. Both the measures of government duration and time until next mandated election exert negative influences on how lethal

¹² Israel and Jordan began cooperating in regard to terrorism long before the peace treaty of 1994. These are strikes not against the Jordanian government but rather against territory in Jordan.

terror attacks are likely to be in a given month. Again this suggests that the longer governments are in office the more credible they are likely to be in their deterrent threats. At the same time however as elections draw closer violence in terms of lethality is likely to increase which supports the window of opportunity argument. As far as lethality goes however, election months are associated with a significant decline in fatalities while the month prior to election has no statistical effect.

In regards to the contextual measures, the measure for the intifada has a negative and statistically significant affect on lethality. This suggests that the time period of the first intifada was less lethal than other times in data. In addition, the use of force against two of the four potential sponsor countries is statistically significant. Increased uses of force against Jordan leads to a decrease in the lethality of attacks, while uses of force against Lebanon leads to an increase in the lethality of terror attacks in a given month.

While the two negative binomial regression models in table 2 give some indication about the relationship between terror events and both political and military they are not straight forward in its interpretation. In order to examine the substantive impacts of the measures on terror events I convert the coefficients of the two negative binomial regression models into incident rate ratios. Table 3 presents the relative change in the incident rates of the independent variables on both the frequency variable and the lethality variable.

I first examine the impact of right oriented versus more centrist governments on the frequency and lethality of attacks. Looking at table three the number of attacks against a right oriented government is about 3 times greater than the number of attacks when the government is of the center. Perhaps more importantly the number of fatalities

is likely to be almost 5 times greater under a government of the right than under a government of the center. This suggests that not only do terrorists engage in more frequent attacks against right oriented governments in Israel, they are more destructive as well.

At first glance it appears that the use of force does little to stop or reduce terror events. In regards to the number of events, a 1 unit increase in uses of force by a government leads to increases the number attacks by 1.08 times. Past uses of force have a greater impact on lethality increasing the number of fatalities by 1.35 times. However, unlike its constituent terms the interactive term has a dampening effect on both the frequency of events and the lethality of events. A one unit increase in the Right-Force measure leads to about .9 times the number of attacks that the state would incur otherwise, while a one unit increase leads to only .76 as many fatalities. What this suggests is that while governments of the right may start with a slightly higher baseline of attacks against them, once the use of force is factored into the equations they actually incur fewer attacks as the use of force increases.

All of the other measures except for the temporal measures and the Lebanon measure have a dampening effect on both the frequency and lethality of attacks. Government Duration for example has similar impact on both outcomes as does Ciep-months. More unusual is the fact that the month prior to an attack reduces the frequency of attacks by half it does not reduce the lethality of attacks, while the month of an attack dampens the lethality of terror events leading to only about .06 the number of fatalities than non-election months but it does not effect the frequency of them.

While table 3 gives some sense of the relationship between political orientation and force in order to more fully understand how the two concepts works together I turn to another method of interpretation, simulation. Using models 1 and 2 from table 2 I generate the predicted number of events and casualties respectively by government orientation varying the uses of force measures while holding all other values at their means. Figures 1 and 2 represent these results graphically.

It is quite easy to see that the patterns are very similar. While government of the right start at a slightly higher baseline than governments of the left in regards to the frequency of attacks the use of force has a small but significant dampening affect on the number of attacks. The opposite relationship is true for more centrist governments. The use of force by these governments tends to increase the number of attacks in a given month and as they continue to use force the number of attacks begins to accelerate. At about 13 the lines cross over and governments of the left become the more frequent targets of terror attacks. It may be that governments of the left that engage in excessive uses of force over time do in fact help the terrorists' cause by mobilizing more people against the incumbent government which ultimately leads to more frequent attacks especially since the expectation is probably that these governments should be extending olive branches and not bullets. The same pattern emerges in regards to fatalities but it appears to be more pronounced. Governments of the right show almost a flat line in terms of the relationship between force and political orientation while, governments of the left have the same accelerating line in relation to casualties that they did in relation to uses of force.

Suicide Attacks:

The first set of models suggest that the overall affect of right oriented governments that use force against terrorists or the related sub group population should expect increases and not decreases in both the frequency and lethality of attacks. One of the primary strategies of accomplishing both is the use of suicide attacks as a main tactic. Pape (2003) argues that in terms of a strategy suicide terrorism is one that works best when trying to coerce liberal democracies to make territorial concessions. The logic behind this is not so much one of conventional military coercion in which the strong coerce the weak but rather one of punishment in which the weak punish the strong. The overall goal, as is with most terrorist tactics, is to overwhelm the target government with such damage as to convince the government and society that the price of retaining the territory, policy etc... is too great. In addition because suicide terrorists are willing to die, their attacks are likely to be very destructive especially given their ability to infiltrate crowded civilian areas. Second suicide attacks act as clear signals that more pain is in the future should policies not change. As Pape states, "suicide itself is a costly signal, one that suggests that the attackers could not have been deterred by a costly threat of retaliation (2003:347).

If suicide strategies are among the most destructive and among those that are least likely to be deterred then its reasonable to expect that in light of the evidence presented above that governments of the right and uses of force seem to cause escalation in terrorist activity rather than a decline as I expected that the number of suicide attacks should increase under these conditions. To test this hypothesis, I use the same model as before but change the dependent variable to a count variable of the number of suicide bombings in a given month.

Table 4 presents the results of the *Suicide* model. While the *Past Uses of Force* measure is still positive and significant the coefficient associated with government orientation is now negative and extremely significant. In fact the incident rate ratio is essentially zero suggesting that government of the right are likely to see zero suicide attacks against them. Why might this be the case, returning to the theoretical discussion above if governments of the right are more hawkish and less likely to negotiate with a terrorist group then it make little strategic sense for groups to use such a costly tactic. The underlying logic is the same logic that Pape and others have suggested about why democratic states make better targets. Those arguments imply that democracies are “soft” and vulnerable to attack and that they have a lower threshold pain. When comparing governments of varying political orientation the left is often seen as either weaker, “soft” or less experienced in security issues. More importantly these governments are also more likely to engage in the peace process, negotiate over the issues at stake or at least be seen as more compassionate or humanitarian in its foreign policies. Governments of the right on the other hand have reputations as being extremely hawkish and are more likely to respond militarily and not given into or negotiate with terrorist groups.

Just as important however are the results in terms of the uses of force and the interactive active term. Unlike the previous models where the interactive term was negative indicating a dampening of the relationship now that the term is positive suggesting that eventually governments of the right that use force actually increases the likelihood of suicide attacks against them much more so than governments of the left who use force.

The other interesting result is that all of the contextual measures are negative and significant as well. What this suggests is that in the Israeli case outside influence have large impacts on suicide terrorism. Pape and other suggest that suicide attackers' families receive financial rewards and compensation from either the terrorist organization or its supporters. Again this is another reason why the strategy is costly. The results would suggest that targeting either potential government sponsors or at least the safe havens of terrorist groups in other countries does in fact deter the use of suicide bombing at a strategy.

Discussion:

The hypotheses under investigation examined two different sources or reputation in regards to deterrence. One source based on the use of physical tools, i.e. military attacks to develop reputations and send signals to targets about anticipated future costs, the other source based on credibility in terms of audience costs and the types of policies associated with political parties. The results suggest that both the use of force and partisan politics matter in regards to terrorist groups calculations about not only when to strike but the type of tactic used and the overall lethality of the attack. More importantly the results show that the effect is jointly dependent between both behavior and partisan orientation.

Governments that are more oriented to the left that engage in the use of force whether it is to develop tough reputations in attempt punish targets or deter future attacks incur more attacks and more deadly ones as well. Additionally while left leaning governments are less likely holding all else constant to be the target of an attack, increased uses of force leads to an overall increase in the number of attacks while uses of

force by right oriented governments actually reduces, albeit slightly, the number of attacks against them. A similar pattern also occurs in regards to fatalities. While the baseline for right oriented governments, in the Israeli case, is slightly higher than those of more left leaning governments, the use of force leads to an increase in fatalities by both governments. The increase is negligible against governments of the right while it increases dramatically against governments of the left. This suggests that when governments of the center or left in Israel go against “type” and use force, whether to create a reputation or punish others, what they appear to be doing instead is mobilizing support against the government.

Then there is the interesting case of suicide attacks. The presence of a government of the right initially introduces a very strong pacifying effect on the likelihood of suicide attacks. However as governments of the right increase the use of force against sub group populations, the ultimate result is an overall increase in the number of suicide bombers. What might drive this result? Given that suicide attacks are relatively costly but also highly effective when used, it may be the case that terrorists use these tactics strategically. That is to say they use more spectacular events against harder targets in order to attempt to generate the psychological responses they want while using lesser tactics against “softer” targets.

In regards to the Israeli case the results suggest a number of things. One is that overall centrist or left leaning governments, *ceteris paribus*, are actually less likely to be the targets of terrorist events once such factors as election cycles, external influences and uses of force are controlled for suggesting that a vote for a more moderate or liberal

government is not a vote for an increase in terrorism¹³. However problems emerge when left oriented governments start using force against sub-group populations. While the use of force may be the result of either responding to events by groups trying to extract concessions from the government, possibly undermine the peace process or because the government is trying to develop a reputation as a one that will follow through on its threats, the overall outcome is one in which terrorists increase both the amount of activity as well as the lethality of those activities against the state. Governments of the right however, while they are more likely to engender terrorist attacks, *cerates paribus*, they are also more likely to be seen as effective and credible in regards to following through with threats and using force to deter future attacks.

Thus it appears that two paths to peace are either to for governments of the right to engage in the peace process, often at the risk of losing office given their base of support¹⁴, or for left oriented governments to engage terrorist groups in such away so as they are not put into a position of having to use military tools to either deter or punish. In the Israeli case if a group like Hamas could effectively reign in terrorist activity, something Arafat and the PLO could not do, a settlement between Palestine and Israel could be reached especially if it was with a more centrist government.

Conclusions:

This paper examined the interaction between partisan politics, uses of force and their effects on terrorist activities both in terms of frequency and lethality. This research provides a much more dynamic study of terror events and government choices than previous literature by focusing not only on the frequency of events but also the lethality

¹³ See Koch and Cranmer “Testing the Dick Cheney Hypothesis”

¹⁴ Similar to the policies of Sharon and the settlement areas

of events and tactics chosen. It highlights the fact that terrorist calculations are dependent on expected responses by governments and that these expectations are in large a function of credibility and reputations based on partisan support. It also shows that parties that go against type are not likely to achieve their desired goals but rather only increase violence against the state. The results in regards to the conditions under which suicide bombings are more likely is especially telling in regards to the rationality of terrorists. The results suggest that terrorists do use tactics commiserate within the broader context of the conflict. That is to say the results suggest that terrorist groups are more likely to engage in terrorist attacks against very repressive governments that use excessive force against sub-group populations rather than governments that do not engage in such violent tactics.

In terms of the broader theoretical literature on terrorism and government interactions this paper highlights a number of important results. In regards to research using formal models of uses of force as a deterrent and its subsequent effect on target populations, the results suggest that uses of force can be effective but it depends on who is employing force. That is to say, uses of force by more left oriented governments appear to have a mobilizing effect while uses of force by right oriented results tend to have a larger deterrent threat. The results also highlight the fact that the electoral cycle in Israel appears to have an influence on terror events. As elections near events increase, however, right before elections events appear to decline suggesting that either governments crack down especially hard during these time periods or that possibly terrorist know that events closer to elections could have more damaging results to their long terms goals.

However despite the contributions of this paper there is still much additional work. While much of the literature and research focuses on negative means of influence very little if any incorporates at least empirically positive inducements. If governments of the left are more dovish then they should be rewarded for extending the olive branch. Future empirical research needs to account for this. Additionally, while governments of the left appear to have less success in deterring terror attack by using force a more complete model of both terrorist decisions to attack and government decisions to engage in the use of force needs to be specified as both decisions are likely to be jointly dependent on the other. Finally, it appears that election cycles matter. Another avenue for study is to examine the impact of electoral fortunes of parties in the context of terror events and the incumbent government's response to these events.

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Table 1: Negative Binomial Regression Models: Terror Events in Israel 1979-1996 - Government Orientation Only

<i>Variable</i>	<i><u>Model 1:</u></i> <i><u>Frequency</u></i>		<i><u>Model 2:</u></i> <i><u>Lethality</u></i>	
	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std.</i> <i>Error</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std.</i> <i>Error</i>
Right Gov	.694***	.187	-.573**	.299
Constant	.331***	.135	.780***	.213
(Ln)alpha	-.673***	.190	1.42***	.159
Observations	210		210	

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2 Full Negative Binomial Regression Models: Terror Events in Israel 1979-1996

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Model 1: Frequency</i>		<i>Model 2: Lethality</i>	
	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Right Gov	1.134***	(-0.15)	1.594*	(-0.86)
Past Uses of Force	0.0780***	(-0.025)	0.306***	(-0.065)
Right - Force	-0.0842**	(-0.037)	-0.264***	(-0.074)
Past Lethality	0.00969	(-0.038)	-0.069	(-0.087)
Past Frequency	0.241***	(-0.083)	0.335*	(-0.2)
Gov Duration	-0.0132**	(-0.0055)	-0.0625***	(-0.012)
Ciep-months	-0.00959	(-0.0071)	-0.0699***	(-0.002)
Election Month	-0.333	(-0.68)	-2.778***	(-0.65)
Month Prior	-0.687*	(-0.37)	-0.693	(-0.95)
Intifada	0.163	(-0.11)	-0.858***	(-0.32)
Egypt	0.2	(-0.27)	-1.029	(-0.76)
Syria	0.0138	(-0.42)	-0.682	(-0.79)
Jordan	-0.175*	(-0.1)	-0.573***	(-0.15)
Lebanon	0.00649	(-0.028)	0.0470**	(-0.023)
Constant	-0.0963	(-0.2)	1.161**	(-0.57)
(Ln)alpha	-1.000***	(-0.17)	0.909***	(-0.18)
Observations	204		204	

Robust standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3: Incident Rate Ratio's: Frequency and Lethality Models

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Incident Rate Ratio's</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Lethality</i>
Right Gov	3.10	4.92
Past Uses of Force	1.08	1.35
Right - Force	0.91	0.76
Past Lethality	1.01	0.93
Past Frequency	1.27	1.39
Gov Duration	0.98	0.93
Ciep-months	0.99	0.93
Election Month	0.71	0.062
Month Prior	0.50	0.49
Intifada	1.17	0.42
Egypt	1.22	0.35
Syria	1.01	0.50
Jordan	0.84	0.56
Lebanon	1.01	1.04

Statistically Significant Variables in Bold

Table 4: Poisson Regression Model: Suicide Bombings in Israel 1979-1996

<i>Suicide</i>		
<u>Variable</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Right Gov	-17.85***	(-2.27)
Past Uses of Force	0.536***	(-0.13)
Right - Force	0.888***	(-0.077)
Past Lethality	-0.0708	(-0.057)
Past Frequency	0.158	(-0.57)
Gov Duration	-0.124***	(-0.047)
Ciep-months	-0.129***	(-0.017)
Election Month	-17.35***	(-1.1)
Month Prior	-12.85***	(-2.16)
Intifada	-20.04***	(-0.89)
Egypt	-17.81***	(-1.61)
Syria	-16.96***	(-0.82)
Jordan	-16.82***	(-1.26)
Lebanon	-0.434*	(-0.23)
Constant	-0.582***	(-0.12)
Observations	204	

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 1

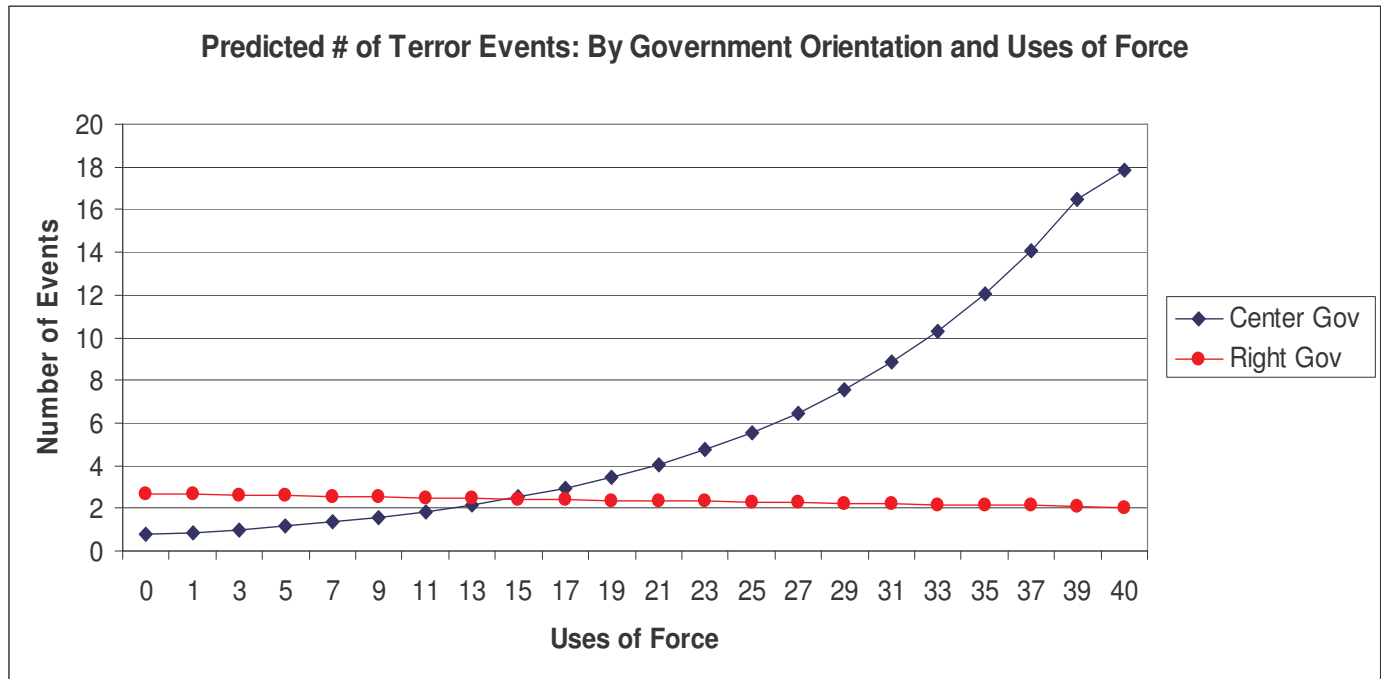


Figure 2

