Freedom, and openness and participation will lower VEO activity.

148; 72; 150; 149; 99

General Description of the Literature:

Governments are constantly looking for ways to lower VEO activity, but the literature is mixed on whether increasing openness, freedom, and participation can help to do that. Crelinsten (1998) discusses the dangers that arise when a country's counter-terrorism mandate expands so much as to affect the openness of government, which in turn affects the conditions that can foster the development of terrorist activity. Kirchick (2010) suggests that openness is not necessarily something that will hinder VEO activity but may, in fact, encourage it. In terms of economic openness, however, Blomberg and Hess (Gupta 2008) conclude that economic openness reduces terrorism, particularly between two strong trading partners. This is supported by Drakos and Gofas (2006) who find that the majority of terrorist attack venues are characterized by low economic openness. Freedom is another important factor to consider when looking at societal conditions that may foster or hinder VEO activity. Some of the literature, such as Krueger and Laitin (Kavanagh 2010) argues that political characteristics, such as institutional strength and political freedom, are stronger predictors of terrorist group formation than macroeconomic variables. There is further evidence that political freedom and access affect individual participation decisions, since "violent resistance may become more appealing when political channels are blocked" (Kavanagh 2010, 108). Participation is another key factor to consider. Briggs (2010) uses the example of the growth of political activism within Muslim communities in the UK as a necessary component of attempts to counter the threat of violent extremism and terrorism. However, Dalacoura (2006) uses case studies to show that the political exclusion and repression of Islamist movements contributed to the adoption of terrorist methods in some cases but not necessarily in others. Openness, democracy, and freedom are considered hallmarks of a democracy, but the relationship between democracy and VEO activity is not a simple one. On the one hand, democracy allows potential VEO recruits a viable alternative to violence. On the other hand, Pape (2003), Chenoweth (2010), Fortna (2011), and many others report that democracies are often the targets of terror. These studies argue that elements of democracy (free press, low tolerance for casualties, unwillingness to harshly repress with counterterror) are enabling rather than direct causes of terror (Crenshaw 1981, Wade and Reiter 2007). Fortna (2011) also finds that democracies are targeted relatively more often. In addition, countries with more generous social welfare policies have been shown to suffer fewer terrorism attacks (Burgoon 2006). However, some studies, such as the one by Drakos and Gofas (2006), find a weak link between the level of democracy and terrorist activity.

Detailed Analyses

148: *Freedom, openness and participation will lower VEO activity.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Regarding openness, Crelinsten (1998) discusses how the rise of the counterinsurgency model of counter-terrorism can lead to a blurring of police and military functions and that in that case, "openness and accountability are threatened, in turn, by the need for secrecy in intelligence operations and the bureaucratic imperatives of multiple and interlocking institutions of control" (Crelinsten 1998, 412). Kirchick (2010) cites the example that, of the 30-odd attempted terrorist plots against the U.S. or American targets abroad that have been stopped since 9/11, many of the perpetrators were indoctrinated inside the U.S. This was a surprise

to political scientists and scholars, as it had "become accepted wisdom that the openness of the U.S. and its acceptance of minority faiths and communities had helped to prevent the spread of the kind of Islamic radicalism that has gripped Western Europe over the past decade" (Kirchick 2010, 17). Regarding economic openness, Drakos and Gofas (2006) also report some mixed results regarding openness and its effects on terrorist activity: "Openness, when viewed as an indicator of a country's economic performance and development, may have a negative effect due to fewer economy-driven grievances. However openness, when viewed as an indicator of a country's integration in the world economy, may have a positive effect on terrorism. Openness increases the freedom of transnational movement and decreases the effectiveness of governments to monitor illegal transactions that could be used to fund terrorist operations" (91). But ultimately, they find that "openness, on average, exerts a negative impact on the occurrence of terrorist incidents (91)." Some authors argue, however, that freedom and openness are less important in preventing terrorism than other factors, such as human rights protections. For example, Walsh and Piazza (2010) show 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, more so than freedom and openness do. Some studies also posit that political participation will lower VEO activity. Briggs (2010) notes that activism and dissent can be a "pathway into engagement with other forms of civic and political participation" (282). She also mentions that democracy opens up channels for debate, representation and dialogue that allows marginalized groups to be heard, which shifts the appeal away from using violence. Similarly, Dalacoura (2006) suggests that if al-Qaeda were more involved in the political process, it might be less extreme: "Rather than specific grievances and the experience of repression, it is the lack of its' members participation in any domestic political process which allows them to take extreme positions" (515). She also addresses whether political participation leads to the emergence of moderate, non-violent Islamism and finds that the non-violent nature of some movements is usually a result of being included in the political process. But she states that the evidence does not always "demonstrate a clear causal link between political participation and non-violence" (519). The literature is also mixed when looking at the correlation between terrorism and democracy in general. Li (2005) and Walsh and Piazza (2010) observe that blanket statements should not always be made about the effects of democracy on terror. Brooks (2009) also notes weaknesses in this line of inquiry, saying that "empirical tests reveal contradictory results, reflecting failure to disaggregate and evaluate competing effects and to specify clearly analytical connections between militant activity and different forms of political access" (787). When looking at a specific type of terrorism, namely suicide terrorism, Pape finds that democracies are most often targets of suicide terror because a) these states are open and the news is reported; b) these states are free enough to allow VEOs to form; and c) the VEO is really targeting the public in the democracy so that the public can influence politicians. In short, suicide terror has been used with some success by VEOs to get democratic states to make concessions on territorial issues.

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: These studies were performed on VEOs and the findings are, therefore, directly applicable to government efforts to influence VEOs. While there were many studies that offered mixed reviews and several positive correlations, such as economic openness reducing terrorism and increased political participation reducing terrorism, there were multiple negative or inconclusive findings as well.

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

72: *Lack of press freedom can retard state efforts to influence VEOs.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Increased press freedom is associated with decreased levels of violence in a study cited by Meyer (1988) which samples 24 countries. He states that the free flow of ideas "can actually help to decrease violence …. Freedom of expression is said to open up alternatives, show new possibilities, and promote contacts" between countries. One part of the study cited a participant who stated that the media, "by countering false rumors, had helped reduce violence between ethnic groups" (36). So a free press can be helpful in dispelling rumors that might contribute terrorism of one group towards another. However, some authors, such as Li (2005), argue that the free press is epiphenomenal (has no independent effect of its own) of constraints on government in a democracy.

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

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: At least one study was performed on VEOs and the findings are, therefore, directly applicable to government efforts to influence VEOs.

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

150: *Political competition in a regime decreases terrorist attacks.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Chenoweth (2010) cites a study of 119 countries looking at political competition and terrorist activities, and finds that intergroup competition, motivated by the competition of the political regime, accounts for an increase in VEO activity. Political organizations are often motivated to escalate their activities due to political competition. She found that terrorist groups within democracies compete with other actors, which lead her to conclude that "the most common origins of transnational terrorist attacks are politically competitive polities, which produce aggressive dynamics between groups vying for influence" (27). She further found that political competition causes more terrorist groups to emerge, due to competition between domestic and foreign interest groups that have adopted violence to provoke mobilization.

Empirical Support Score: 7 = Single, high-quality quantitative analysis supporting the hypothesis.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: At least one study was performed on VEOs and the findings are, therefore, directly applicable to government efforts to influence VEOs.

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

149: *Policy deadlock can lead to increases in VEO attacks as actors go outside of institutional means to try to achieve their goals.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Young and Dugan (2008) demonstrate that if we assume a VEO wants government policy to change, then an increase in veto players that would be indicative of policy gridlock will lead to more terror. They note that this focus is one of policy rather than regime type. There is moderate confidence that easing gridlock could influence VEO actions.

Empirical Support Score: 7 = Single, high-quality quantitative analysis supporting the hypothesis.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: At least one study was performed on VEOs and the findings are, therefore, directly applicable to government efforts to influence VEOs.

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

99: *Opening up debate, irrespective of its impact on the prevalence of anti-Western sentiment, may reduce support for VEOs.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Meyer (1988) states that "debate can temper hostilities and divert potentially violent behavior" (30). Citing J.S. Mill and the "marketplace of ideas," Meyer notes that debate can serve as a political alternative to violence, and free and open discussion is seen as a way to defuse violent situations. He notes that efforts to stop debate "deprive society of its chief non-violent means of self-improvement" (30). In addition, Jones and Smith give the example of Southeast Asian societies which "ignored underlying religiously motivated tensions within [their borders] and by refusing to countenance mature debate" they contributed to the rise of radical Islamism and extremist violence (343).

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

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: At least one study was performed on VEOs and the findings are, therefore, directly applicable to government efforts to influence VEOs.

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

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