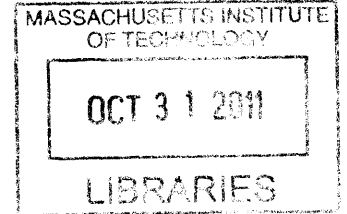


Fighting for Control:
State-Sponsored Terrorism as Foreign Policy in Cuba and Libya, 1959-2010

by

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Submitted to the Department of Political Science
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Submitted to the Department of Political Science on August 30, 2011, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

Abstract

In this dissertation, I ask four inter-related questions about state-sponsored terrorism. First, under what conditions do states choose to support foreign terrorist groups? Second, when do sponsor states stop supporting terrorism? Third, how can states which are the targets of terrorism best persuade sponsor states to cease their support? Fourth, how can sponsor states best avoid being held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents?

Building on Byman and Kreps' theoretical model of state-sponsored terrorism as a principal-agent relationship, I propose four hypotheses to answer these questions. First, states sponsor terrorism because they meet three necessary conditions: motivations for conflict, constraints against open conflict, and a perceived lack of accountability. Second, states cease supporting terrorism when any of these conditions changes. Third, states that are the targets of state-sponsored terrorism can best persuade state sponsors to change their behavior by holding them accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. Fourth, states that sponsor terrorism will be more likely to avoid accountability if they sacrifice both control over their terrorist agents and credit for their agents' successes.

These hypothesized answers are tested by examining two in-depth case studies of state-sponsored terrorism, Libya and Cuba during the Cold War. The evidence from these cases is generally congruent with the four hypotheses, with the first and second hypotheses demonstrating the best fit.

The cases also yield five prescriptions for policy makers. First, economic sanctions may be more effective than military action at holding sponsor states accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. Second, multilateral diplomatic and economic sanctions may be more effective than unilateral sanctions, although a single state may be capable of spearheading a successful international policy response. Third, the sponsor state's peers are crucially important in determining the success of target states' efforts. Fourth, better relations with sponsor states mean better leverage. Fifth, politicized application of the labels 'terrorist' and 'state sponsor' robs the terms of their condemnatory power and decreases their utility as rhetorical weapons. States that follow these prescriptions may be successful in persuading state sponsors to cease their sponsorship.

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Chapter One

The Problem of Terrorism and State Support

Introduction

Terrorism is a persistent problem for the United States and many other countries. An important cause of terrorism is state sponsorship— the giving of support to foreign terrorist groups by states. State-sponsored terrorism is an important instrument of foreign policy for many states. State support for terrorist organizations and networks around the world (like state efforts to fight terrorism) also shapes the character of international terrorism. Better understanding why sponsor states support foreign terrorists, and why they cut off this support, will help states which are the targets of terrorism better respond to this problem.

This dissertation accordingly asks four inter-related questions. First, why do states sponsor terrorism? Second, what causes sponsor states to cease their support? Third, how best can targets of state-sponsored terrorism persuade sponsor states to cease their support? Fourth, how best can sponsor states avoid accountability?

In answer to these four questions, I offer four hypotheses. First, I argue that three conditions are necessary for state sponsorship: states must have a motivation for conflict, constraints against pursuing conflict openly, and enjoy a lack of accountability for their conduct. Second, since all three are necessary, removing any of these conditions will result in the state ceasing its support. Third, the most useful tool for target states in the short term is to increase accountability of the state sponsor for the terror it supports. Fourth, to avoid accountability, sponsor states should sacrifice control of their agents and credit for their accomplishments.

These hypotheses are discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Then I test them by examining two in-depth case studies: Libya and Cuba during the Cold War. In the concluding chapter, I evaluate the model constituted by these hypotheses and discuss its utility for scholars and policymakers.

What is terrorism?

A multitude of definitions of terrorism are in common usage. There is no consensus on how terrorism should be defined. Well over two hundred academic and government definitions exist.¹ And policymakers, journalists, and pundits sometimes use yet other definitions. One reason there are so many definitions is that the word terrorism is used to describe very different kinds of events. “[I]f we list all the different phenomena which are at one time or another described as terrorism in ordinary conversation, or in ordinary newspapers, or by ordinary politicians, we will end up with a huge rag-bag of not very similar terms.”²

In many cases, this mislabeling is deliberate: since the term carries such a heavy negative connotation, the speaker attaches it to an unrelated phenomenon in an attempt to communicate moral opprobrium.³ As Bruce Hoffman writes, “virtually any especially abhorrent act of violence perceived as directed against society—whether it involves the activities of anti-government

¹ Andrew Silke, *Terrorism Research: Trends, Achievements and Failures* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 3.

² Jenny Teichman, “How to Define Terrorism,” *Philosophy* 64, no. 250 (October 1989): 505-506.

³ Eqbal Ahmad and David Barsamian, “Terrorism: Theirs and ours,” in *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment*, 2nd ed., ed. Russell D. Howard and Reid L. Sawyer (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 46-52.

dissidents or governments themselves, organized-crime syndicates, common criminals, rioting mobs, people engaged in militant protest, individual psychotics, or lone extortionists—is often labeled ‘terrorism.’”⁴ Thus, because the term so effectively conveys reprehension, there is an impulse to include phenomena which the speaker abhors. This would draw the boundaries of terrorism widely. There is a corresponding impulse to exclude phenomena (or groups) which the speaker admires, which would result in the boundaries of terrorism being drawn narrowly.

While these impulses to include the abhorrent and exclude the admirable are understandable, to follow these impulses would muddy the waters by including acts of violence that would best be studied separately. For example, ethicist Michael Walzer defines terrorism as “the random murder of innocent people,” whether it is committed by states against their own citizens, by militaries against enemy civilians, or by anti-state revolutionary movements.⁵ These three classes of phenomena, however, have widely divergent causes and very different policy solutions. Studying them together may be useful from an ethical standpoint, but is less likely to be fruitful for a social scientist.

The academic literature has been wrestling for decades with ways to construct definitions that are broad enough to include the bulk of the cases that animate the public and policy discourse while still being narrow enough to capture what is unique and distinct about the phenomenon we call terrorism. Although no single definition has emerged as champion, a consensus is emerging which would limit the phenomenon of terrorism to “a set of methods or

⁴ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, revised and expanded ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 1.

⁵ Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust War: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 197.

strategies . . . [which] involves premeditated use of violence against (at least primarily) non-combatants in order to achieve a psychological effect of fear on others than the immediate targets.”⁶

For this study, I have chosen a definition which has the virtue of being well-established, as well as being close to this consensus view. This definition comes from the US Department of State, which is required to report to Congress on international terrorism and maintain a list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs). For this purpose, terrorism is defined as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” And an international terrorist group is “any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice . . . terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country.”⁷

This definition includes five key components. First, by specifying that terrorism is premeditated, it implies that terrorism is rationally chosen from among a menu of policy options. Second, by stating that terrorism is “politically motivated” it implies that the purpose of terrorism is to effect a change in policy on the part of the targeted state or group. In this sense, the definition deviates from the consensus view, but I believe that specifying a political motive is still well within the mainstream, both in the policy world and in academia. Third, the State Department definition narrows our focus to violence directed at “non-combatant targets,” which

⁶ Tore Bjorgo, “Introduction,” in *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward*, ed. Tore Bjorgo (London: Routledge, 2005), 1-2.

⁷ *U.S. Code, Title 22: Foreign relations and intercourse*, section 2656f, “Annual country reports on terrorism,” http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/usc_sec_22_00002656---f000-.html (accessed September 12, 2011).

excludes violence directed toward soldiers, including occupation forces. Fourth, the State Department's definition confines us to non-state actors, or actors which can not be identified as legitimate, authorized representatives of states. Fifth, and last, by considering terrorism as a method, and considering a terrorist group to be any group that employs this method, this definition allows us to consider all non-state actors who are employing violence in this fashion. Thus we are not compelled to exclude groups that also use other methods to advance their goals, whether those methods are crime, guerrilla warfare, or even non-violent party politics.

This is useful, because it is difficult to disentangle terrorism from other, similar phenomena— particularly guerrilla warfare. Terrorism can be differentiated from guerrilla warfare in several ways.⁸ First, terrorist groups are usually smaller, meaning that they have fewer people in their organizations, and often fewer resources (particularly heavy weapons and vehicles). Second, the groups are organized differently. Guerrillas tend to use a more hierarchical structure, like a conventional military organization, while terrorists typically are organized into compartmentalized cells of three or four people, in order to maintain security. Third, terrorist groups do not wear uniforms, while guerrillas often do. Fourth, terrorist groups do not attempt to control territory. Fifth, terrorist groups do not attack military targets.

However, there is a great deal of overlap; both terrorism and guerrilla war are uses of violence by non-state forces in order to advance political goals, and many groups have used both practices. In some cases, the two methods are employed concurrently. The Liberation Tigers of

⁸ See Hoffman 2006, 35; Richard Clutterbuck, *Terrorism and guerrilla warfare: Forecasts and remedies* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 6-9; US Army Department of Military Instruction, "Insurgents vs. guerrillas vs. terrorists," <http://www.usma.edu/dmi/iwmsgsgs/insurgents-vs-guerrillas-vs-terrorists.pdf> (accessed August 12, 2011).

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) used guerrilla tactics to win and hold territory in north-east Sri Lanka (from 1983 to 2009), while also employing frequent terrorist attacks in areas controlled by the state. On the other hand, some groups switch from one tactic to the other. For example, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) relied primarily on guerrilla warfare from its creation in 1964 until 1970 when it was expelled from its safe haven in Jordan. After 1970, the PLO almost completely abandoned guerrilla warfare in favor of terrorism.

Typically, groups begin with terrorism, because it requires the fewest people and resources. As the group succeeds in its conflict with the state, it progresses to guerrilla war and then to conventional war. Thus, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and conventional war can be considered three points along a spectrum of violent conflict. As organizations increase (or decrease) in size, organizational complexity, and resources, they almost inevitably change their practices, moving up (or down) the spectrum as circumstances allow.⁹

Interestingly, the preference for moving up the spectrum seems nearly universal. Almost all groups move as far up the spectrum— from terrorism to guerrilla war to conventional war— as soon as they can afford to do so. Even groups that have enjoyed great success at the bottom of the spectrum abandon it in favor of struggling at a higher level.¹⁰ We see this tendency towards conventional war even in the first groups to be called guerrillas, Spanish civilians fighting against French military forces sent by Napoleon to occupy Spain in 1808. As various resistance groups gained resources and manpower, their organizations became more like those of regular armies,

⁹ William R. Polk, *Violent politics: A history of insurgency, terrorism, & guerrilla war, from the American revolution to Iraq* (New York: Harper, 2007), 18.

¹⁰ Malcolm Gladwell, “How David Beats Goliath: When Underdogs Break the Rules,” *The New Yorker* 85, no. 13 (May 11, 2009): 40.

even to the point of paying soldiers and manufacturing arms.¹¹ And even though the guerrilla tactics had been very successful, Spanish authorities moved to disband and outlaw all unconventional forces even before the French had completed their withdrawal from Spain.¹²

Similarly, terrorist groups seek to escalate along the spectrum of violence to guerrilla war as soon as it is possible. Using the State Department's definition of terrorism gives scholars the opportunity to be more flexible as they examine groups which are also flexible in their choice of tactics. However, it is possible to be too flexible.

One criticism that has been leveled at the State Department's definition of terrorism is that it has not been used consistently by the US government. The cause of this inconsistency has already been discussed: the impulse to include the abhorrent and to exclude the admirable. American policymakers have at times taken advantage of the powerful negative connotation of the word 'terrorism' and labeled their enemies terrorists or the supporters of terrorists, even when their activities do not fit the statutory definitions. Likewise, American policymakers have been eager to create new labels— such as 'freedom fighters'— for friendly groups practicing terrorism, or friendly states supporting terrorism. George Shultz, secretary of state under President Ronald Reagan and a strong advocate for the anti-Communist Contras in Nicaragua, said, "We know the difference between terrorists and freedom fighters, and as we look around we have no trouble telling one from the other."¹³

¹¹ Polk 2007, 29.

¹² Polk 2007, 32.

¹³ Eqbal Ahmad and David Barsamian, *Terrorism: Theirs and ours* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001), 14.

To many outside observers, US decisions about who to include on the list of state sponsors of terrorism too often appears to be determined by American national interest, rather than the behavior of the states or groups in question. And as US interests changes, the labels can also change: “The terrorist of yesterday is the hero of today, and the hero of yesterday becomes the terrorist of today.”¹⁴ Thus, many observers are suspicious of any government definitions of terrorism, or state sponsorship of terrorism, and allege that they are applied arbitrarily and unjustly. However, these criticisms do not point to a defect in the definitions, but defects in their application. In this dissertation, I have attempted to strictly abide by the definitions themselves—not the lists supposedly generated by those definitions—to avoid the problems of bias pointed out by critics.

Effects and causes of terrorism

However it is defined, terrorism is an enduring source of global insecurity and disorder disproportionate to its material effects. Not despite, but because of, its seemingly random nature, this type of violence has a unique ability to inspire fear in those who were not its victims, but who can imagine that they might have been.¹⁵ Since at least the 1950s, terrorists have proven to be highly adept at capturing media attention, which magnifies their societal impact

¹⁴ Ahmad and Barsamian 2001, 12-13.

¹⁵ “Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims. Terrorism is theatre.” Brian Jenkins, “International terrorism: A balance sheet,” *Survival* 17, no. 4 (July 1975): 158.

tremendously.¹⁶ As Philip Heymann writes, “a little bit of terrorism goes a long way. Even small-scale terrorism possesses an almost magical ability to produce fear, anxiety, anger, and a demand for vigorous action in a sizeable portion of a country’s population.”¹⁷ Indeed, the capacity to spread mass terror is what gives the phenomenon its name.

This widespread psychological effect means that even when the physical costs of terrorism are limited, the indirect costs—such as reduced productivity when citizens stay home from work, reduced economic activity due to decreased tourism and shopping, etc.—can be great.¹⁸ And international terrorism, even more than domestic terrorism, seems to have a remarkable impact on societal consciousness.¹⁹ As security consultant Bruce Schneier points out, more Americans died in 2001 from malnutrition than from terrorism.²⁰ But terrorism, not malnutrition, motivated both the public and the policymakers to dramatic action.

Because terrorism has transformative effects on states, economies, and societies, scholars have long sought to explain its causes. In the academic and policy literature, these attempts at

¹⁶ “Mass-mediated experiences, events, and issues are particularly salient for audiences lacking direct, personal experience with the problem. Indeed, many . . . have wondered how it is possible for a comparatively healthy and safe population to perceive themselves to be so at risk.” David L. Altheide, *Terrorism and the politics of fear* (Lanham, MD: Rowman Altamira, 2006), 62. See also Boaz Ganor, *The counter-terrorism puzzle: A guide for decision makers* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction publishers, 2005), 229-250; and Bruce Hoffman 2006, 173-228.

¹⁷ Philip B. Heymann, *Terrorism, freedom, and security: Winning without war* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 3.

¹⁸ Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. foreign policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 24.

¹⁹ Jenkins 1975, 160-2.

²⁰ Bruce Schneier, *Beyond fear: Thinking sensibly about security in an uncertain world* (New York: Springer, 2003), 239. See also pp. 27-8.

explanation can be grouped into three categories. First, some scholars examine individual terrorists, often with psychological or sociological theories to help understand why a person would join a terrorist group or perform violent actions as part of such a group. Some scholars assert that there are certain kinds of people who are simply attracted to the use of violence.²¹ Terrorism attracts these “psychopathic people,” whose goals and methods may seem irrational to observers.²² Other scholars look at the feelings of powerlessness, purposelessness, or alienation, common to the youths who are recruited to join terrorist organizations. Others look at the radicalization of individuals after they become isolated from other social networks.²³ In particular, there is a wealth of literature on suicide terrorists as individuals.²⁴ Much of this literature argues that, unlike those who commit suicide because of depression or hopelessness, suicide terrorists see themselves as sacrificing their lives to advance a cause to which they are totally committed.²⁵

²¹ “The bastard theory of political violence has one central proposition: bastards do the violence.” Neil J. Mitchell, *Agents of atrocity: Leaders, followers, and the violation of human rights in civil war* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 1. See also p. 46.

²² Rui J.P. De Figueiredo, Jr. and Barry Weingast, “Vicious cycles: Endogenous political extremism and political violence,” Institute of Governmental Studies Working paper (October 2000), <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1153519>.(accessed August 11, 2011).

²³ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 107-124.

²⁴ Much of the suicide terrorism literature examines both psychological theories for individuals and rationalist theories for groups. E.g., Ehud Sprinzak, “Rational fanatics,” *Foreign Policy* 120 (September 2000): 66-73.

²⁵ Ami Pedazhur, *Suicide Terrorism* (Cambridge, MA: Polity, 2005); Shaul Kimhi and Shmuel Even, “Who Are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 4 (winter 2004).

This leads to the second group of theories on causes of terrorism, theories that focus on the logic of the organization. These theories set aside debates about what motivates individuals within a terrorist group and instead examine the costs and benefits of terrorist violence to the terrorist group itself. They assume that terrorism follows the logic of collective rationality, in which individuals undertake actions that are risky or unprofitable to them personally because they identify so closely with the organization and its goals that they are willing to sacrifice their own good in order to help the larger cause.²⁶ An individual terrorist is thus a kind of altruist, like a soldier, a firefighter, or any other person who risks costs that may seem irrational to an outside observer in order to accrue benefit for a larger community with which the individual identifies.²⁷ In fact, the willingness of individual terrorists to sacrifice themselves for the good of the group may function as a kind of ‘costly signal,’ demonstrating the dedication and resolve of the group both to their enemies and their friends.²⁸

Groups choose terrorism as a means of securing their goals, whether these are their ultimate goals, such as independence or revolution, or more immediate, even organizational goals, such as attracting attention or obtaining money. Groups may engage in spectacular terrorist attacks in order to ‘outbid’ other groups which are competing for the attention and

²⁶ Martha Crenshaw, “The logic of terrorism: Terrorist behavior as a product of strategic choice,” in *Origins of terrorism: Psychologies, ideologies, theologies, states of mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998), 7-24.

²⁷ Hoffman 2006, 37.

²⁸ Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, “The strategies of terrorism,” *International Security* 31, no. 1 (summer 2006): 58, 59. See also Bruce Hoffman and Gordon H. McCormick, “Terrorism, signaling, and suicide attack,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27, no. 4 (July 2004): 243-281; and Mia Bloom, *Dying to kill: The allure of suicide terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005): 77-80.

sympathies of the groups' putative constituents.²⁹ Or they may seek to disrupt peace processes that they believe would undermine public support for their own preferred solutions. For all of these reasons and more, scholars at the organizational level conclude that terrorism happens because is instrumental in furthering the goals of the group. In other words, terrorism happens because terrorism works.³⁰

Third, there are theories on the root causes of terrorism which examine broad groups of people from which terrorists or terrorist groups may emerge. These theories are very popular outside of academic circles, and are often referred to by political leaders and in the popular press. Highly politicized, these theories can be divided into three groups. First, there are progressive theories of 'root causes' examine the ways in which imperialism, colonialism, economic dependence, and globalization foster resentment among underprivileged populations. One good example comes from Illinois State Senator Barack Obama, writing in the *Hyde Park Herald* a week after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks,

Even as I hope for some measure of peace and comfort to the bereaved families, I must also hope that we as a nation draw some measure of wisdom from this tragedy. ... We must ... engage ... in the more difficult task of understanding the sources of such madness. The essence of this tragedy ... derives from a fundamental absence of empathy on the part of the attackers: an inability to imagine, or connect with, the humanity and suffering of others. Such a failure of empathy ... is not innate; nor, history tells us, is it unique to a particular culture, religion, or ethnicity. It may find expression in a particular brand of violence, and

²⁹ For an account of how suicide bombing has been used in Palestine as a means of intra-group competition, see Bloom 2007, 29-34.

³⁰ Alan M. Dershowitz, *Why terrorism works: Understanding the threat, responding to the challenge* (New York: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., Inc., 2002), 24-5. See also Robert Pape, *Dying to win: The strategic logic of terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005). For an opposing view, see Max Abrahms, "Why terrorism does not work," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (fall 2006): 42-78.

may be channeled by particular demagogues or fanatics. Most often, though, it grows out of a climate of poverty and ignorance, helplessness and despair.³¹

These progressive theories may be conceived in economic terms, with terrorism arising from conditions of absolute poverty, relative deprivation, or simply frustrated expectations at the inability of poor states to develop fast enough for their citizens to get what they see on TV. It may also be a product of cultural hegemony, as non-Western societies react to perceived threats to their religion, customs, traditions, or way of life. Progressive theories of terrorism thus see it as an essentially defensive phenomenon, arising out of fundamental structural inequalities and out of economic and cultural globalization.³²

A second group of theories on societal roots of terrorism comes from neo-conservative scholars and politicians who argue that the most important root cause is not frustration with Western states, but frustration with illiberal regimes which give their citizens no voice in government. As US President George W. Bush said,

Our strategy to keep the peace in the longer term is to help change the conditions that give rise to extremism and terror, especially in the broader Middle East. Parts of that region have been caught for generations in a cycle of tyranny and despair and radicalism. When a dictatorship controls the political life of a country, responsible opposition cannot develop, and dissent is driven underground and toward the extreme.

...This status quo of despotism and anger cannot be ignored or appeased, kept in a box or bought off, because we have witnessed how the violence in that region can

³¹ David Remnick, *The bridge: The life and rise of Barack Obama* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 337.

³² Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism," *International Security* 27, no. 3 (winter 2002/3): 30-58. See also Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Education, poverty, and terrorism: Is there a causal connection?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 4 (2003):119-144.

reach easily across borders and oceans.³³

In this view, the roots of terrorism lie with illiberal regimes, which repress even legitimate grievances expressed by peaceful movements. This pushes dissent further underground, where opposition groups become radicalized and turn to violent means to pursue their goals.

There is also a third group of theories on the root causes of terrorism: folk theories that terrorism is the unique product of Islam and/or Arab culture. This idea has never been taken seriously by either academics or policymakers, given the hundreds of terrorist groups who are neither Arab nor Muslim, but it remains popular in the fringes of the American and European right.

The impact of state sponsorship

Thus we have theories of terrorism which find explanations at the individual level, the organizational level, and the societal level. However, this leaves out an important level of analysis: the state. Terrorism is usually thought of as a non-state activity, because terrorists are non-state actors. However, states have powerful effects on private actions. For example, some ethanol might be produced in the United States without state incentives, but anyone who wants to understand the current American ethanol industry, and how ethanol production has changed and will change in the future, must look at the government subsidies which shape the actions of individual farmers and agricultural conglomerates (in ways both intended and unintended). Likewise, state sponsorship has both increased terrorism and changed the face of terrorism.

³³ George W. Bush, "Speech at the National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair," (March 8, 2005), <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.08.05.html> (accessed September 12, 2011).

State support for terror necessarily increases terrorism by providing positive incentives which reward this behavior. Even weak states have resources that terrorists must have, so terrorist groups obviously stand to gain substantially from state sponsorship. States can provide many of the means that terrorist organizations need in order to achieve their ends, including: money, weapons, personnel, training, assistance with transportation and communications, intelligence, legitimacy or moral support, and safe haven.

Although some terrorist groups survive without sponsorship, active state support lifts many groups out of obscurity and into viability; without it, they would not have come into being, or would not have been able to survive. By some measures, a majority of the international terrorist groups that have posed a threat to the United States in the last half century have been supported by one or more states. As Daniel Byman noted in 2005, twenty of the thirty-six organizations listed by the State Department as Foreign Terrorist Organizations have had active state sponsorship at some point in their history.³⁴ And giving any terrorist group substantial support helps them to expand their scope: their attacks can be more frequent, more ambitious, more likely to succeed, and more lethal.³⁵ All terrorist groups, therefore, are facilitated by state support, meaning that they have a greater impact than they otherwise would have.

State sponsorship also necessarily shapes the phenomenon of terrorism by rewarding groups whose goals or methods meet with their approval. This causes some groups to alter their

³⁴ Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 2-3.

³⁵ Bruce Hoffman, *When the lights go out, and never come back on: Nuclear terrorism in America*, RAND Corporation International Security and Terrorism Series, No. 4 (Upland, PA: DIANE Publishing Co., 1987), iv, 55.

behavior, or the ways in which they seek to reach their constituents, in order to win or maintain state support. No matter whether they intend to or not, states change the face of terrorism merely by acting in this realm. Populations in any ecosystem respond to changes in food and predators. Terrorism is likewise a Darwinian dance: the global (or local) population of terrorist groups changes in response to actions of sponsor states which support them and target states with retaliate against them. And just as living organisms constantly attempt new strategies to acquire food, terrorist groups seeking support from states often adjust their doctrine or ideology to increase their chances of gaining support.

It is easy to see how state sponsorship alters international terrorism immediately after this influence is removed. The best example of this happened in 1991. During the Cold War, most terrorist groups made at least some attempt to frame their grievances in Marxist terms in order to position themselves to receive Soviet support. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, there was no more Soviet support to be had, and in the years that followed the face of terrorism was transformed. Some groups effectively disappeared (such as the RAF), others shifted their focus to crime in order to stay operational (the FARC), others re-branded themselves to attract benefactors from different ideological camps (the PLO), and others returned to the negotiating table (the IRA). Overall, there was a dramatic, worldwide decline in left-wing terrorism. The reasons for this decline should not be a puzzle. But some scholars find themselves lacking the key variable to help explain this change, because their theories on causes of terrorism do not include state support.³⁶ That the Soviet Union's tremendous impact on

³⁶ See Seth Jones and Martin Libicki, *How terrorist groups end: Lessons for countering Al Qaeda* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 18, 37. These scholars note that left-wing groups are more short-lived than groups motivated by any other ideology, but seem at a loss

international terrorism could be overlooked by careful and thoughtful scholars amply demonstrates that state-sponsored terrorism lies in a blind spot— and that explanations of the phenomenon of terrorism which leave out state support are at best incomplete and perhaps inadequate.

Studying state sponsorship is therefore vital to scholars and policymakers, because state-sponsored terrorism is an enduring threat. Rome and other ancient empires supported terrorism to undermine their adversaries and rivals, because it was “cheaper and less risky” than confronting them directly.³⁷ Modern states continued to sponsor terrorists because they likewise believed it was “more cost effective than conventional war,” and “carries less risk of escalation.”³⁸ This peaked during the Cold War, when both superpowers supported unconventional anti-state forces as a method of proxy warfare. But many other states have also been accused of sponsoring terrorist groups— including Sudan, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. And several of the most pressing foreign policy challenges facing the United States today are directly related to this phenomenon of state-sponsored terrorism.

As with all terrorist groups, state-sponsored terrorists pose a direct security threat to their target states, as in 2008, when the Pakistani-supported terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba attacked multiple targets in the Indian city of Mumbai, killing at least 173 people. Counter-terrorism is

to explain this finding. Similarly, Audrey Kurth Cronin mentions the collapse of leftist terrorism after 1990 merely as an example of one way terrorist groups can lose ‘popular support.’ Audrey Kurth Cronin, “How al-Qaida ends: The decline and demise of terrorist groups,” *International Security* 31, no. 1 (summer 2006): 28-9.

³⁷ Laqueur 2000, 156.

³⁸ Clutterbuck 1990, 3-4.

usually seen as a fight between states and non-state actors, but as this example shows, resolving these conflicts requires dealing with the state sponsor, not just the terrorists. For this reason, discussions of US troop commitments in Afghanistan, for example revolve around Islamabad, not Kabul. Without eliminating Pakistan as a sanctuary for terrorists and insurgents, US-led forces will continue to see their victories melt away.

When state-sponsored terrorism takes place in a context of inter-state conflict, it can aggravate tensions between states, leading to changes in economic, cultural, and diplomatic relations. Colombian military expeditions against FARC bases in Ecuador over the last two years have increased tensions in the region and led in the summer of 2010 to an interruption of diplomatic ties between Colombia and Venezuela. In some cases, state-sponsored terrorism can even drag sponsor states into war with target states.³⁹ For example, in 2006, the terrorist group Hezbollah provoked a war between Israel and Lebanon which was costly and destructive to both, and which neither would have initiated on their own.

State-sponsored terrorism may also be combined with another danger— weapons of mass destruction (WMD): biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons.⁴⁰ American policymakers since September 11, 2001, have been focused on the intersection of three threats: rogue states, international terrorist groups, and WMD. President Bush repeatedly said that his administration’s highest priority was keeping the ‘worst weapons’ out of the hands of the ‘worst

³⁹ States sponsors of terrorism thus face the same risks as states who “chain themselves unconditionally to reckless allies.” See Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, “Chain gangs and passed bucks: Predicting alliance patterns in multipolarity,” *International Organization* 44, no. 2 (spring 1990): 137-68.

⁴⁰ Walter Laqueur, *The new terrorism: Fanaticism and the arms of mass destruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 243-4.

people.⁴¹ As he explained at West Point in 2002,

The gravest danger to freedom lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology. When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, along with ballistic missile technology—when that occurs, even weak states and small groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations. Our enemies have declared this very intention, and have been caught seeking these terrible weapons. They want the capability to blackmail us, or to harm us, or to harm our friends—and we will oppose them with all our power.⁴²

President Obama likewise declared that nuclear terrorism is “the single biggest threat to US security, both short-term, medium-term and long-term.”⁴³ And, particularly for nuclear weapons, even the best-funded and largest terrorist organizations are unlikely to develop them without state support. As UN weapons inspector Richard Butler said, “It is virtually certain that any acquisition by a terrorist group of nuclear explosive capability could be achieved only through the assistance of a state in possession of that capability.”⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ashton B. Carter, “How to counter WMD,” *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 5 (September - October 2004): 72.

⁴² George W. Bush, “President Bush delivers graduation speech at West Point,” (June 1, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html> (accessed September 12, 2011). See also: National Security Council, *The national security strategy* (September 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/nss5.html> (accessed August 11, 2011).

⁴³ David E. Sanger and William J. Broad, “Leaders gather for nuclear talks as new threat is seen,” *New York Times*, April 11, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/12/world/12nuke.html> (accessed August 11, 2011).

⁴⁴ Quoted in Matthew Bunn and Anthony Wier, “The seven myths of nuclear terrorism,” *Current History* 104, no. 681 (April 2005): 153. Many scholars discount the likelihood of states giving terrorists weapons of mass destruction, because of the risks of their links to the terrorists being discovered. Andrew O’Neil, “Terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction: How serious is the threat?” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 57, no. 1 (April 2003): 99-112. For a debate on this issue, see Scott Sagan, Kenneth Waltz, and Richard K. Betts, “A nuclear Iran: Promoting stability or courting disaster?” *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 2 (spring/summer 2007): 135-150.

Unfortunately, state-sponsored terrorism is likely to be a persistent, and perhaps increasing, concern for the United States for two reasons. First, overwhelming American power discourages direct confrontation, and encourages conflict through proxies, such as terrorists. Second, US counter-terror efforts have historically aimed primarily at non-state terrorists, which encourages state-sponsored terrorism. Consider the past decade. On September 11th, 2001, the United States was attacked by Al Qaeda terrorists, and five days later President George W. Bush first spoke of a “war on terrorism.”⁴⁵ For ten years, the United States and its allies have fought against terrorism, and succeeded in many ways: non-state terrorist groups like Al Qaeda have become less centralized, less cohesive, and less effective. But states continue to choose to support terrorism, and terrorist groups continue to seek state support, and so state-sponsored terrorism remains an intractable problem. This is a natural reaction to the American focus on non-state terrorist groups. Returning to the previous analogy, terrorists and counter-terrorists form an ecosystem, and the two populations evolve together— each reacting to the other’s changing tactics. Counter-terrorism drives the evolution of terrorism just as living organisms are shaped by the forces of natural selection. In order to combat terrorism effectively, states must understand the phenomenon of state sponsorship.

What is state-sponsored terrorism?

Before state-sponsored terrorism can be studied, though, it must be defined. The US State Department has maintained since 1979, shortly before the Iranian hostage crisis, a list of

⁴⁵ Kenneth R. Bazinet, “A fight vs. evil, Bush and cabinet tell U.S.,” *New York Daily News*, September 17, 2001, http://www.nydailynews.com/archives/news/2001/09/17/2001-09-17_a_fight_vs__evil__bush_and_c.html (accessed August 11, 2011).

State Sponsors of Terrorism (SST), using in part the definitions listed above. Yet this list has the same problem as the FTO list, discussed above: inconsistent application of the definition.

Since the State Department was given this mandate by law, only eight states have appeared on the SST list: Iran, Iraq, Libya, South Yemen, Syria, Cuba, North Korea, and Sudan. All eight have all been connected to international terrorism, but they were not the only states in the world to be doing so. The Soviet Union was perhaps the most important sponsor of anti-Western terrorism in the 1970s, but neither the USSR nor its Eastern European satellites ever showed up on the list. Neither did Greece, which has given support to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in order to undermine its adversary, and fellow NATO member, Turkey. Pakistan, also never appeared on the list, even though it has sponsored terrorism against India (and other neighboring states) for decades, and remains one of the leading state sponsors of terrorism in the world today. Iraq was removed from the list in 1982, during its war with Iran, although its support for terrorism continued unabated, and was returned to the list in 1990, after the war ended.⁴⁶

Further, three of the eight states that have appeared on the list of sponsors have been kept on the list long after ceasing (or dramatically reducing) their active support for international terrorism. Cuba was added to the list in 1982 because of its active sponsorship of violent revolutionary movements throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, but the most recent documents justifying Cuba's inclusion on the list emphasize passive support, such as rhetorical

⁴⁶ Iraq was removed again from the list in 2004, after the US toppled Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist government. Although terrorism related to Iraq undoubtedly increased after 2004, there have been no allegations that this terrorism is supported by the new Iraqi regime.

opposition to US-led international counter-terror efforts.⁴⁷ North Korea was added to the list in 1987 after two North Korean operatives planted a time bomb on Korean Air flight 858, killing all 115 passengers.⁴⁸ When North Korea was removed from the list in 2008, it had long since ceased to be actively involved in supporting international terrorism, and so the decision was explained as a consequence of changes in North Korea's nuclear weapons policy, completely unrelated to terrorism.⁴⁹ Libya was one of the five states included on the first list in 1979, and was removed in 2006—also because of promises to cooperate with global counter-proliferation norms. Libya's active support for terrorism had essentially ended a decade earlier.

Clearly, the State Department's list is driven by politics and national interest, and for this reason should not be used by impartial scholars to determine the universe of cases. However, the State Department's definitions of terrorism are useful, and should be useful if applied

⁴⁷ For example, "Cuba continued to publicly oppose the U.S.-led Coalition prosecuting the War on Terror. To U.S. knowledge, Cuba did not attempt to track, block, or seize terrorist assets..." United States Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006*, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/index.htm> (accessed August 3, 2009). The report also claimed that "The Government of Cuba provided safe haven to members of ETA, FARC, and the ELN," although this has been disputed.

⁴⁸ A memoir was published by the surviving agent, who later renounced the action. Kim Hyon-hui, *The tears of my soul* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1993). Interestingly, since both perpetrators were covert operatives of the North Korean government, and were not members of any terrorist organization, this attack should more properly be considered an act of war.

⁴⁹ "The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea has agreed to a series of verification measures that represent significant cooperation concerning the verification of North Korea's denuclearization actions. ...Based upon the cooperation and agreements North Korea has recently provided and the fact that the DPRK has met the statutory criteria for rescission, the Secretary of State this morning rescinded the designation of the DPRK as a state sponsor of terrorism, and that was effective with her signature." Sean McCormack, Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation, "State Department briefing on North Korea, 11 October 2008," <http://www.acronym.org.uk/docs/0810/doc07.htm> (accessed August 3, 2009).

consistently and carefully. For example, the State Department explicitly defines terrorism as an act committed “by subnational groups or clandestine agents.” This means that any action taken by official representatives of the state— such as a dissident being tortured and executed by secret police, in order to set an example for the rest— is not terrorism, by definition. Terrifying violence employed by coercive state institutions against the populace inside the state’s own territory, though reprehensible, is nonetheless distinguishable from terrorism. The victims of the former are the perpetrator’s own citizens. This phenomenon should be studied separately, as ‘official’ or ‘state terror.’⁵⁰

Additionally, although state-sponsored terrorism also involves states, the agents of violence are not official representatives of the state, but third parties. This means state sponsorship is a collaboration between at least two actors— although their relationship is kept secret. State terror involves no such collaborative relationship, and there is no secret. No one wondered who was behind the Gestapo, or the KGB, since they were government agencies. Using terms like ‘terrorist state’ in contemporary discussions of North Korea, Cuba, Libya, etc., obscures this important distinction and lumps current state sponsors of terrorism in with others which no longer sponsor terrorism in any significant way, but which nonetheless repress their own citizens. This study is looking for states that give significant support.

There are many things a state can do for a terrorist group which will support it. Byman describes six categories of support: training and operations; money, arms, and logistics;

⁵⁰ National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Task Force on Terrorism, *Disorders and terrorism*, report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism 86, no. 2, part 63 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1976), 21. For another framework, see Mark Selden and Alvin Y. So, *War and state terrorism: The United States, Japan, and the Asia-Pacific in the long twentieth century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 4-6.

diplomatic backing; help with organizing; ideological direction; and, sanctuary.⁵¹ The first five of these always require deliberate or conscious choice. The exception is sanctuary, which—although very important to terrorist groups—is problematic to the study of state sponsorship, since it is difficult to establish the intent of the state in which the terrorists find safe haven. Some states are not capable of securing their borders, and others “will make efforts too half-hearted to be effective but real enough to be indistinguishable from punishable incompetence.”⁵² Paul Pillar separates these states out from true sponsors, but still calls them “enablers” of terrorism.⁵³

However, even states which make complete and sincere efforts to evict terrorists from their territory may not succeed. As with an organized crime network, a terrorist group may not be “willingly tolerated by the state where it is found, but is able to operate (and cooperate with other such groups) through secrecy, corruption, and intimidation.”⁵⁴ This is true even of powerful states. For example, on September 11th, 2001, all nineteen hijackers were authorized to be on US soil.

Given the difficulty of distinguishing between passive support arising from weakness, from sympathy, and from the failure of state counter-terrorism efforts, only active support is considered in this study. Thus, a state sponsor of terrorism is defined as a state which chooses to

⁵¹ Byman 2005, 59-66.

⁵² Heymann 2004, 29.

⁵³ Pillar 2003, 157, 178. Byman makes even narrower distinctions, describing six different types of states which support terrorism, through action or inaction. Byman 2005, 15.

⁵⁴ Heymann 2004, 30. See also *ibid.*, 24.

sponsor (rather than passively enable) a terrorist group (as per the US State Department's definition, but not their FTO list), by giving significant support (more than sanctuary).

Why do states support terrorism?

Having described the importance and impact of state terrorism, and defined the phenomenon, an important question remains: Why do states choose to sponsor terrorism? Just as terrorists are best understood as strategic actors,⁵⁵ the states that choose to sponsor them do so because key policy makers believe that this decision will help them achieve a goal. (For the purposes of this paper, states are assumed to be unitary, rational actors.) In some cases, they believe that terrorists share some key interests with the state; in other cases they believe that terrorists can be induced to act in a way that will advance state interests. Either way, state-sponsored terrorism is simply another instrument of foreign policy. Like other instruments, such as military forces, trade, diplomatic missions, or intelligence assets, states employ terrorist groups as a means to an end. States sponsor terrorism because key foreign policy decision-makers believe that the state is more likely to benefit than to suffer from this relationship.

Which states are expected to choose this instrument? The reasons may be born of cold, calculated pragmatism rather than any ideological affinity. Many scholars of terrorism have noted that terrorist attacks are cheap:

⁵⁵ "There is nothing automatic about the choice of terrorism. Like any political decision, the decision to use terrorism is influenced by psychological considerations and internal bargaining, as well as by reasoned or strategic reactions to opportunities or constraints, perceived in light of the organization's goals." Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism in Context* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 5. See also Crenshaw 1998, 7-24.

Such are the weapons of war in Israel today: nuts and bolts, screws and ball bearings, any metal shards or odd bits of broken machinery that can be packed together with homemade explosive and then strapped to the body of a terrorist dispatched to any place where people gather—bus, train, restaurant, café, supermarket, shopping mall, street corner, promenade. These attacks probably cost no more than \$150 to mount...⁵⁶

The appeal of this approach is especially obvious when the material cost of a terrorist attack is compared to the cost of conventional military forces in advanced industrial economies, which rely on expensive, sophisticated weapons platforms.⁵⁷ But even states whose militaries do not rely on such technological wonders want more bang for their buck.

In addition to requiring little in the way of money or weaponry, terrorism requires only a few men. In fact, terrorist attacks require so few people that scholars of terrorism must seriously address the question of whether a lone individual can be considered to “constitute a terrorist group.”⁵⁸ Terrorist organizations are small, almost by definition, because greater numbers bring greater security risks.⁵⁹ And a small number of terrorist operatives are often a match for a much larger force: campaigns of terrorism have succeeded despite being outnumbered by state military

⁵⁶ Bruce Hoffman, “The logic of suicide terrorism,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 291, no. 5 (June 2003): 42.

⁵⁷ This comparison is implicit in the famous statement of US President George W. Bush in September 2001: “When I take action, I’m not going to fire a \$2 million missile at a \$10 empty tent and hit a camel in the butt. It’s going to be decisive.” Howard Fineman, “A president finds his true voice,” *Newsweek* (September 23, 2001), <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2001/09/23/a-president-finds-his-true-voice.print.html> (accessed August 8, 2011).

⁵⁸ Hoffman 2006, 37. Hoffman’s answer is no.

⁵⁹ Security is the reason for the cell organization of almost all terrorist networks. Chris E. Stout, *The psychology of terrorism: A public understanding* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 4-5. See also Sageman 2004, 166.

and police forces more than a hundred to one.⁶⁰ Terrorists also often use existing communications and transportation networks, obviating the need for extensive logistical support, which increases the tooth-to-tail ratio.

In part because even very small organizations are capable of performing spectacular terrorist attacks, terrorism itself is said to be “the quintessential weapon of the weak against the strong.”⁶¹ In this view, terrorists choose this tactic only because they can not afford conventional weapons of war. As Algerian FLN leader Ramdane Abane said, “I hardly see any difference between the girl who places a bomb in the Milk-Bar and the French aviator who bombs a *mechta* [village] or who drops napalm on a *zone interdite* [free-fire zone].”⁶² In the fictionalized film version, *The Battle of Algiers*, a captured FLN terrorist makes this comparison more explicit: “Give us your airplanes and we will give you our women and their handbags,” (used earlier to carry bombs into public places).⁶³

⁶⁰ Hoffman 2006, 54-5. The specific example referred to here is George Grivas’s EOKA, which achieved independence for Greek Cypriots from the British. This numerical disparity is greater than is typical for successful groups, but twenty to one seems common. The US military avers that a ratio of 10 or 15 to 1 may be insufficient when fighting insurgents. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006), 1-13.

⁶¹ Pillar 2003, 1.

⁶² Alastair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2006), 186.

⁶³ Roger Ebert, “The Battle of Algiers,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 30, 1968, <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19680530/REVIEWS/805300301> (accessed August 11, 2011).

If terrorism is indeed the ‘poor man’s air force,’⁶⁴ then it would be natural to assume that state-sponsored terrorism is the poor state’s stealth bomber. In other words, states that support terrorist attacks against their enemies do so because they are weak and impoverished and can afford nothing else. As has been discussed, terrorism is cheap, and when a state chooses to sponsor terrorist groups which are already extant and operating in their enemy’s territory, it is even cheaper. The state does not even have to recruit operatives; they have simply to supply them with resources— a small amount of money or arms, and perhaps training or a safe haven. Given the low costs, it is reasonable to presume that terrorism would be an optimal weapon for weak states.

However, the idea that weakness alone explains state sponsorship of terrorism is unsatisfying for two reasons. First, weakness does not seem to be a necessary condition for state sponsorship. Many states that support terrorism are certainly poor, but still are strong relative to their target states. For example, Syria’s per capita GDP is roughly on par with Guatemala, but it dominates smaller Lebanon (in part) through terrorism. And some indubitably powerful states have sponsored terrorism, such as the USSR, which was one of the world’s most prolific sponsors of terrorism from the late 1960s to the mid 1980s. During this time, the Soviet Union was one of the world’s two superpowers, and many in the West worried about a relative decline in American power.

Second, most poor and weak states do not currently sponsor terrorism. It is true that failed or failing states can become “reservoirs and exporters of terror,” simply by not removing

⁶⁴ See Byman 2005, 22-23; Mike Davis, “The poor man’s air force,” *Harper’s Magazine* 313 (October 2006): 15.

terrorists from their territory.⁶⁵ In this way, the very weakest states sometimes do *passively* support terrorism. Despite the dire warnings of scholars and policymakers, however, “[i]n the 49 countries currently designated by the United Nations as the least developed hardly any terrorist activity occurs,” with the notable exception of Somalia.⁶⁶ If only active support is considered— as in this dissertation— there is even less evidence that the poorest and weakest states support terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy. Of the twenty-four states listed by the United Nations Development Program as having ‘low human development,’ only two (Afghanistan and Liberia) have ever supported terrorism.⁶⁷ Of course, the Taliban’s support for al Qaeda facilitated the most lethal terrorist attack in history, but this is the exception, rather than the rule. Given that ninety percent of the weakest states have never chosen to sponsor a foreign terrorist group, weakness can not be a sufficient condition for state sponsorship.

This may be because even weak states need not resort to terrorism; they have many other foreign policy tools at their disposal. All states are able to use “economic resources, violence,

⁶⁵ Robert I. Rotberg, “Failed states in a world of terror,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (July 2002): 128.

⁶⁶ Walter Laqueur, *No end to war: Terrorism in the twenty-first century* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 11.

⁶⁷ The 24 states are (from poorest to least poor): Niger, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, Mali, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Gambia, Rwanda, Senegal, Eritrea, Zambia, Côte d’Ivoire, Timor-Leste, Benin, Malawi, and Togo. United Nations Development Programme, *Human development report 2009: Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/> (accessed August 11, 2011).

and persuasion... in order to achieve the aims of foreign policy.”⁶⁸ Even states that have no economic resources to spare for foreign policy goals can employ persuasion— certainly a very low-cost strategy, not just in terms of monetary costs but in terms of the risk of negative consequences. If all other policy instruments fail and violence becomes necessary, states have actual armed forces they can utilize— men who are in most instances better trained, better equipped, and more dependable than terrorists. Even weak states outmatch powerful terrorist organizations in terms of military capabilities.⁶⁹ Given that very few weak states have sponsored terrorism, and strong states have been among the most important supporters of terrorism, it is clear that state capabilities alone can not explain the choice to sponsor terrorist organizations.

To get “a more complete picture,” it is necessary to examine state intentions as well as

⁶⁸ Morris Janowitz, *The professional soldier: A social and political portrait* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1960), 258. This idea, dropped by Janowitz in passing, was developed by Etzioni into an analytical typology, in which organizations relate to each other using three different types of power: coercive, remunerative, and normative. See Amitai Etzioni, *A comparative analysis of complex organizations: On power, involvement, and their correlates* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), 5-6. See also Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc, Ray C. Rist, and Evert Vedung, *Carrots, sticks, and sermons: Policy instruments and their evaluation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 30-31.

⁶⁹ Three problematic examples bear further examination. First, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam carved out a swath of territory in Sri Lanka and for decades were able to hold it in the face of considerable opposition. Second, during the Afghan civil war, Al Qaeda was able to provide a number of conventional units to fight alongside the Taliban— although these proved incapable of ousting the Northern Alliance from the Panjshir. Third, in the summer of 2006, Hezbollah was able to provoke a war with regional military powerhouse Israel and fight it to a draw that ended in a ceasefire brokered by the UN. In all three examples, however, the vast majority of the combatants employed by the terrorist organizations were, in fact, conventional soldiers or paramilitary guerrillas. As such, these groups must be seen as having evolved beyond simple terrorism.

state capabilities.⁷⁰ The threat of state-sponsored terrorism emanates from states which have aggressive intentions towards their neighbors and the international system. Daniel Byman has created a typology of the different motivations for states which sponsor terrorism. These include: strategic concerns— to destabilize or weaken a neighbor, to project power, to change a hostile regime, or to shape an opposition movement within a neighboring state; ideological concerns— to enhance international prestige, to export the sponsor state’s political system; and domestic political concerns— to rally support, or to aid ethnic kin groups of domestic constituents.⁷¹ Again, most states with these strategic motivations do not sponsor terrorist groups. But if we look at the set of states which do support terrorism, we find one or more of these motives present in each case. Motivations are an important part of the puzzle.

Conclusion

Terrorism is a threat to many countries, including the United States, and state sponsorship is an important part of the cause. State support for terror increases the amount and the effectiveness of terrorism, and shapes the face of international terrorism by incentivizing certain ideologies, goals, or methods. Better understanding why sponsor states support foreign terrorists will help states which are the targets of terrorism better respond to this problem.

This dissertation accordingly asks four inter-related questions in order to better understand the phenomenon of state support of foreign terrorism. First, why do states sponsor

⁷⁰ Stephen M. Walt, *The origins of alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 26.

⁷¹ Byman 2005, 36.

terrorism? Second, what causes sponsor states to cease their support? Third, how best can targets of state-sponsored terrorism encourage sponsor states to cease their support? Fourth, how best can sponsor states avoid being held accountable by their target states?

Regarding the first question, both capabilities and motivations help to explain which states choose to sponsor foreign terrorist groups, but that neither of these is sufficient, either alone or together. I argue that states only choose to support terrorism when they meet three necessary conditions: they are strongly motivated towards conflict, they are strongly constrained against pursuing conflict directly, and they have reason to believe that they will not be held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. This hypothesis and its implications for the other questions are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

Hypotheses on State-Sponsored Terrorism

Introduction

To understand terrorism requires an understanding of the international environment in which terrorist groups operate, and the states, with which they interact. State sponsors, like the states which serve as the targets of terrorist attacks, affect the face of international terrorism. And sponsorship is a deliberate act, a conscious delegation of foreign policy authority. Therefore, this dissertation asks four questions. What explains why some states choose to support foreign terrorist groups? What explains why these same states choose to cut off their support? How best can states which are the targets of terrorism persuade sponsor states to stop sponsoring terror? Fourth, how best can state sponsors of terrorism avoid being held accountable by other states for the actions of their terrorist agents?

This chapter details my hypothesized answers to these questions. Specifically, I argue in response to the first question that state decisions to sponsor terror have three necessary causes. The first necessary cause is that a sponsor state must have strategic, ideological, political, or personal motivations for conflict. The second cause is that a sponsor state must be constrained against direct or open conflict—by relative weakness, by an international environment unfavorable to war, or by recalcitrant allies or constituents. The third necessary cause is that a sponsor state must believe that it can avoid accountability, because its target lacks knowledge, capability, commitment, or credibility.

In response to the second question, I hypothesize that since all three variables must be

present, eliminating any of them will cause the state to cut off its support for terrorism. In answer to the third question, I hypothesize that target states can best persuade sponsor states to stop by increasing accountability, principally because of the difficulty of altering another state's motives and the undesirability of eliminating constraints which inhibit conflict. And in answer to the fourth question, sponsor states are able to avoid accountability when they are willing to sacrifice control of their agents, and credit for their achievements.

Delegation and terrorism

These four hypotheses have their genesis in the view or mental model of state-sponsored terrorism as a principal-agent relationship, proposed by Daniel Byman and Sarah E. Kreps.¹ In any act of state-supported terrorism, there are three actors to consider— the sponsor state, the terrorist agent, and the target state. The sponsor state hopes to influence a target state through the action of its terrorist agent, the sponsor state. In other words, the state sponsor is attempting foreign policy by proxy. State sponsorship of terrorism is thus an example of a principal-agent relationship.

A principal-agent relationship exists wherever there is delegation, or “a conditional grant of authority from a principal to an agent that empowers the latter to act on behalf of the former.”² Principals delegate power not out of altruism, but out of necessity. A president, no matter how

¹ Daniel Byman and Sarah E. Kreps, “Agents of destruction? Applying principal-agent analysis to state-sponsored terrorism,” *International Studies Perspectives* 11 (2010): 1-18.

² Darren Hawkins, David A. Lake, Daniel Nielson, and Michael J. Tierney, “Delegation Under Anarchy: States, International Organizations, and Principal-Agent Theory,” in *Delegation and agency in international organizations*, ed. Darren Hawkins, David A. Lake, Daniel Nielson and Michael J. Tierney (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7.

capable, does not have the time to perform every task which she is authorized to perform.

Delegation different tasks to a variety of agents permits each agent to specialize in performing a small number of tasks, and “tremendous gains accrue if tasks are delegated to those with the talent, training, and inclination to do them.”³

State sponsors of terrorist groups play the role of the principal, seeking to delegate a portion of their foreign policy authority to terrorist agents. However, in this principal-agent relationship, only minimal gains from specialization are to be expected.⁴ States, after all, have other agents who possess the skills necessary for terrorism. For example, some terrorists specialize in the use of explosives; but states already have military ordnance and demolitions experts. Terrorists specialize in operating in unfriendly territory without being detected and detained by the target state’s security forces; but states already have spies, commandos, and other covert operatives. Terrorists specialize in capturing media attention and swaying public opinion to their cause; states already have their own propaganda organs and diplomats.

Further, the state’s existing specialists are formally affiliated with the state. They have paychecks and pension plans, and thus should be easier to control. Controlling terrorists is difficult, at least in part because, as many scholars of terrorism and counter-terrorism have noted,

³ D. Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew Daniel McCubbins, *The logic of delegation* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1991), 24.

⁴ There are probably other gains in delegating to terrorist agents. For instance, terrorist groups may have access to contacts and networks that state agents do not. Or they may enjoy political credibility and the ability to mobilize popular support. Viet Cong terrorists, for example, could gain the confidence of a Vietnamese village much more effectively than Chinese or Soviet agents. But, as this example shows, this is not because they have gained skill through specialization.

success in terrorism depends not just on skill but a generous helping of luck.⁵ To delegate foreign policy authority to foreign terrorists, therefore, means losing a degree of control over both process and result.

Yet some states still choose to delegate authority to terrorists instead of performing the same actions through their officially recognized agents. The primary purpose of such a delegation must be for states to avoid having the delegated act associated with the state, and perhaps avoid the negative consequences of this association. “[T]he motivation that differs most notably between illicit and licit forms of delegation...is that of plausible deniability.”⁶ The importance of this deniability is evinced by the way that states deny their connections to terrorist groups, even when virtually all other states are cognizant of the relationship, as is the case with Iran and Hezbollah, for example.

The efforts of sponsor states to maintain the secrecy of their relationships to foreign terrorist groups has the unfortunate effect of making it harder for the state to control its agents, since information is an important key to principal-agent relations. Agents may have their own interests, and may fail to accomplish what their principals intend. Principals attempt to reduce this ‘agency loss,’ but the problem is compounded by asymmetries of information. Agents have incentives to conceal from their principals any divergence in interest, or behavior. Knowledge of the agent’s true interests and actual behavior makes control possible, and alignment between principal goals and agent actions more likely.

⁵ Steve Simon and Daniel Benjamin, “Daybreak,” in *The age of sacred terror* (New York: Random House, 2002), 3-37.

⁶ Byman and Kreps 2010, 6.

Just as information makes control possible, secrecy aggravates agency dilemmas— as has been studied in relation to military forces and intelligence agencies, which use rules of secrecy to avoid civilian oversight.⁷ Unfortunately, with state-sponsored terrorism, secrecy is unavoidable. Terrorism is a criminal and clandestine enterprise; states who support it seek to conceal their involvement.

Even more secretive are the terrorist agents themselves. Being outlaws, they are likely to distrust their state sponsors, suspect their motives, and resist aligning their interests with those of the state. Further, they are likely to succeed in avoiding state control for two reasons. First, terrorists are, by definition, operating outside of the domestic laws and international conventions which states create and enforce. Any terrorist agent worth employing must necessarily have practice in evading and escaping the forces the target state uses to control law-abiding citizens. Second, supporting a *foreign* terrorist group means that the agent will often be literally beyond the bounds of the states who sponsor them because they are operating inside the territory of the target state. And the most reliable third-party testimony often comes from the intended victims of the terrorist action. For these reasons, state sponsors of terrorism should expect to have difficulty gathering accurate information on their terrorist agents, and therefore controlling them. In fact, it is difficult to imagine a principal-agent problem in which principals would have a lesser expectation of control over their agents.

State-sponsored terrorism deviates from the typical principal-agent relationship in another way. First, state-sponsored terrorism may involve nested principal-agent relationships. For

⁷ Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005): 70, 178.

example, the Soviet Union delegated to East Germany, which delegated to the Red Army Faction. The nested relationship allows for greater agency loss, since each agent can blame the other for problems which arise, and principals must pay a greater cost to monitor their agents. This is not entirely novel. Government and business are composed of multiple layers of delegation. President delegates to a cabinet secretary, who delegates to an undersecretary, who delegates to an ambassador, who delegates to a foreign service officer, etc. Indeed, any organization “can be seen as networks of overlapping or nested principal/agent relationships.”⁸

The practical problem for scholars of state-sponsored terrorism is the difficulty of knowing how independent client states are from their patrons. In the example above, is it possible to talk about East German foreign policy, independent from Soviet foreign policy? For this reason, this study focuses on Cuba and Libya. Qaddafi’s foreign policy was always independent from the Soviets; Libya even fought a war with Egypt, a more loyal Soviet client state. Cuba’s relationship with the USSR was likewise fraught with conflict, because Castro was often more zealous than was required (or permitted) by the Soviets.⁹ These states pursued terrorism for their own reasons, and not merely at the behest of the USSR.

A third complication is that in state-sponsored terrorism, often multiple principals are trying to control the same agent. For example, both Iran and Syria support Hezbollah. The agent may be able to force the principals to compete. And competition among principals means agents

⁸ Jean Tirole, “Hierarchies and bureaucracies: On the role of collusion in organizations,” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 2:2 (Autumn 1986): 181.

⁹ This is particularly true of Cuba’s support for violent revolutionary movements in Africa. See Piero Geijeses, *Conflicting missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

win. Deborah Avant and other scholars of civil-military relations have written about how civilian control of military is undermined by divisions between the President, the Department of Defense, Congress, etc.¹⁰ High agency loss, or loss of control, is likely when the agent may sell its loyalty to the highest bidder.

This is somewhat offset because state sponsors employ this same tactic, supporting multiple groups targeting the same state. Again, civil-military relations scholars have discussed this principal-agent model. Harvey Sapolsky and Owen Cote have written about how civilian policymakers use inter-service rivalries to force the military to compete for shares of the budget.¹¹ This logic also seems to hold true outside the arena of domestic politics. For example, Britain during World War II wanted to support Yugoslav resistance to Axis occupation, and had both chetniks and partisans to choose from. Initially, they gave more support to chetniks because these were perceived to be armed wing of legitimate government in exile, but the chetniks seemed more interested in fighting other Yugoslav factions than the Germans. This did not help the British, and so by 1944 they were supporting Tito's partisans instead. The division in the insurgency meant that the British were able to choose insurgent groups whose actions were more closely in line with British goals. Multiple agents competing for scarce support means more control for principals.

However, even the most conscientious principals may have agents who fail to accomplish

¹⁰ Deborah Avant, "The institutional sources of military doctrine: Hegemons in peripheral wars," *International Studies Quarterly* 37:4 (December 1993): 414. See also: Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, chapter 15. Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 90.

¹¹ See also Michael H. Armacost, *The politics of weapons innovation: The Thor-Jupiter controversy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

the task that was delegated to them. All acts of delegation are risky, and the ways in which state-sponsored terrorism deviates from the typical pattern of principal-agent relationships makes it even riskier. This helps to explain why comparatively few states choose to delegate foreign policy authority to terrorists. But sometimes they do, and the rest of this chapter describes the model that predicts when states will support foreign terrorists, and when they will not.

Motivations for conflict

The first necessary condition for state sponsorship is a strong motivation for conflict. Either state interests or personal interests may serve as motivations. For state interests, Daniel Byman's studies of state sponsors of terrorism provides a good list of the ends to which terrorist agents are set, or the motivations that states have for sponsoring terrorism. These motivations are divided into three categories: strategic concerns, ideology, and domestic politics.¹² For this theoretical model, it is not important which specific motivations a state possesses, only that they are strongly motivated to pursue conflict.

The first category of state motivations for conflict which might lead a state to sponsor terrorism are strategic concerns. In this category are four specific interests. The first is to destabilize or weaken a neighboring state—usually a state with which the sponsor has an antagonistic relationship. East Germany sponsored several terrorist groups in West Germany in order to weaken and destabilize their stronger, capitalist neighbor. Greece has supported the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in their campaign for independence from Turkey, because a

¹² Daniel Byman, *Deadly connections: States that sponsor terrorism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 26.

smaller and weaker Turkey would be more manageable for Greece, strategically. Colombia accuses Venezuela of doing the same thing by providing sanctuary to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The second security concern is projecting power, which is more important for weak state sponsors, such as Iraq, which used the Abu Nidal Organization in the 1970s in order to have a greater effect on regional and global politics than otherwise would have been possible given Iraq's modest military power. Strong state sponsors, like the Soviet Union, can project power by conventional military means. Third, states may wish to use terrorism to change another state's regime, as Liberia's Charles Taylor did during the civil war in Sierra Leone.¹³ This is a different approach to the same problem of the antagonistic state, attempting to change the neighbor's intentions rather than capabilities. Although Byman here uses the word regime, it might be more proper to speak of changing governments, since the intention is not necessarily to alter the entire political system, but rather to replace the state's leaders with someone more sympathetic. The fourth and final security concern which might motivate states to sponsor terrorism is the desire to shape an opposition movement in another state. This could mean almost any kind of change, including making an opposition movement either more radical or willing to compromise. Most commonly, states seek to shape opposition movements by bringing their goals into line with the state's own goals, which often necessitates fracturing the movement to make it easier to control. For example, Syria (and several other Arab states) sponsored Palestinian terrorist groups in order to shape the broader Palestinian independence movement which encompassed many groups with diverse goals and allegiances.

¹³ Daniel Byman, *Trends in outside support for insurgent movements* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 76.

The second category of motivations which could lead a state to sponsor terrorism is ideological. Sponsoring terrorist attacks against ideological opponents may enhance the state's prestige among their international in-group (foreign people or states which share their ideology). For example, East German leaders hoped to raise East Germany's stature among other socialist states in the Soviet bloc, and therefore securing a larger share of Soviet largesse. To this end, East Germany began supporting terrorism in the Middle East and Europe in the mid-1960s, and was, in the words of its interior minister, "an Eldorado for terrorists" in the decades that followed.¹⁴ A second ideological motive is the desire to export the state's political system by supporting terrorists who follow the same ideology. The Taliban regime in Afghanistan believed that all other governments in Muslim-majority countries were lost in *jahiliyya*, spiritual darkness, and supported terrorism in order to spread the light of their own political and religious philosophy to other states. Iran has sponsored terrorism in Bahrain in hopes of creating a fellow revolutionary state. Nicaragua under the Sandinistas did the same in El Salvador.

Byman's third and final category of motives for conflict which could lead a state to sponsor terrorism is domestic politics. A state may support a foreign terrorist group because some segment of the domestic polity identifies with the terrorists or their cause, and supporting them will help the state's domestic political goals. This segment may be large or small. In Pakistan, a major reason for supporting Muslim terrorist groups in India is because the vast majority of Pakistan's population is Muslim. India supported the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) for a time because it was popular with Indian Tamils. Likewise, France for

¹⁴ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 298.

decades gave Spanish Basque ETA terrorists a safe haven in order to keep French Basques happy.¹⁵ Another domestic political motive for supporting terrorists is because this gives the state the ability to later call upon those terrorists for aid against their political opponents.¹⁶ One notable example is the Taliban, which supported al Qaeda in part because Osama bin Laden supplied troops for the ongoing civil war against the Northern Alliance. It is unusual that states use terrorists for conventional combat, since terrorists are less reliable and capable than official state security forces. More typical is the use of terrorists to assassinate opposition leaders in exile in foreign countries, as Libya has done many times.

In addition to Byman's three categories of state motivations, there may be personal motives which factor in to the decision to sponsor terrorist groups. This is especially true in states where executive power is highly concentrated— a category that includes most state sponsors of terrorism. Just as some leaders “do not support terrorists, considering it an illegitimate instrument of statecraft, despite having strategic or domestic incentives to do so,” other leaders have personal reasons to favor supporting terrorism.¹⁷ It is therefore useful to include personal

¹⁵ Mark Kurlansky, *The Basque history of the world* (Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 1999), 285-6. Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus democracy: The liberal state response* (Taylor & Francis, 2006), 67-8.

¹⁶ When states covertly or unofficially sponsor violent non-state actors which operate primarily within the state's own borders, it may resemble state terror. For example, Colombia has at times lent support to right-wing paramilitary groups like the AUC (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia). It is nonetheless distinct from 'state terror,' in two ways. First, because of the use of (illicit) non-state agents, instead of police, military, or internal security forces. Second, because this takes place in a context of intra-state conflict. This is accordingly a mark of a state that has difficulty controlling its populace, as opposed to state terror, which is mostly employed in police states by authoritarian governments.

¹⁷ Byman 2005, 23.

motivations of state leaders in sponsoring foreign terrorist groups, alongside the state motivations described by Daniel Byman and discussed above. (See Table 2.1, below.)

Table 2.1. Motivations for conflict among state sponsors of terrorism

Daniel Byman's typology			<u>Personal motives</u>
<u>Strategic concerns</u>	<u>Ideology</u>	<u>Domestic politics</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weaken / destabilize neighbor * Project power * Regime change * Shape opposition movement in another state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enhance international prestige * export political system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * aid ethnic kin of constituents * gain military aid from terrorists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Idiosyncratic sympathies * Hatred or vendetta * International popularity * Personal legitimacy

Personal motives can be completely idiosyncratic. A state leader may be motivated by sympathy. Principals sometimes choose to delegate to a certain agent because the principal is comfortable working with the agent, due to shared ideas or identities.¹⁸ The leader may respect the causes or grievances of the terrorists, or personally value their ideals. He may simply believe that conflict and struggle are laudable. The sympathy may even extend to actual friendship. Afghanistan's Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden clearly respected and admired one another, and there were rumors that their children intermarried. In any event, a decision made to sponsor a terrorist group out of sympathy should be considered a normative, rather than utilitarian, choice.¹⁹ Likewise, a state leader may choose to sponsor terrorist groups out of antipathy, such as a deep-seated hatred or desire for revenge. Saddam Hussein attempted to use a terrorist car bomb

¹⁸ McNamara, 2002.

¹⁹ This is not to say that sympathy has no practical benefits. Choosing groups based on ideological similarity may increase control. "Delegation to an agent that shares and implements policies consistent with the principal's is one way to enact change over the longer term when the principal's power may wane or when other principals may assume greater power." Byman and Kreps, 2010.

to assassinate former US President George H.W. Bush simply because he hated the man for having presided over the humiliating defeat of his country in the Gulf War.²⁰ Giving support to terrorist groups in this manner may not benefit the leader in any way, other than satisfying an idiosyncratic desire, but may nonetheless prove a powerful motive.

There are also selfish motives, desires that are rooted in self-interest. A state leader may support terrorism in order to gain international acclaim and personal popularity. This is similar to, but distinguishable from, the state motivation to secure prestige for the country and its government. State sponsorship is more common in states where power is concentrated in the hands of the state's leader, and some of these leaders seem to suffer from megalomania, such as North Korea's Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. They act out in order to attract attention, and to affirm to themselves their importance in world events. More pragmatically, state leaders may sponsor terrorism in order to shore up their personal legitimacy and secure their hold on power. Foreign conflicts often cause constituents to rally to support their own national leaders, as was the case for the elder Assad, whose popularity rested in part on his image as a warrior against Israel and the West.

States thus motivated for conflict—whether these motivations are strategic, ideological, political, or personal—may choose to sponsor foreign terrorists. But they may also pursue direct, conventional conflict for the same reasons. All state sponsors of terrorism are animated by these motives, but so are nearly all other states. Thus, strong motivations for conflict are necessary for states to support terror, but not sufficient. All three factors must be present in order for states to make the choice to delegate foreign policy authority to terrorists.

²⁰ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/iraq/timeline/062793.htm>

Constraints against direct conflict

As previously discussed, limited state capabilities cannot alone explain state sponsorship of terrorism. Many of the state sponsors are weak states, but some sponsors have been very powerful, which means that state weakness is not necessary for state sponsorship. And almost all weak states do not sponsor terrorism, which means weakness is not sufficient. However, weak states are constrained against engaging in direct conflict with their stronger adversaries.

Strong states which have supported terrorism have also been constrained in ways which make direct confrontation unlikely to result in the state securing its goals, as with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Despite being a nuclear-armed superpower, the USSR eschewed open war with its adversary, the United States, preferring conflicts in which one or both superpowers were represented by proxies. Thus, although relative weakness is not a necessary condition for sponsorship of terrorism, relative weakness is one reason why direct confrontation is perceived to be impossible, which is a necessary condition.

The second variable in this theoretical model, then, is constraint. Sponsor states must be strongly constrained in a manner that makes direct conflict almost unthinkable. There are three categories of constraints considered in this study. First, states may be constrained by their own military inferiority. Second, states may be constrained by a defense dominant international environment. Third, states may be constrained by foreign or domestic political opposition to war. (See Table 2.2, on the following page.)

The first possible constraint is inferiority. This might be due to an absolute lack of offensive military capabilities. Some states are simply incapable of projecting power far enough to affect their adversaries in any meaningful way— even if their adversaries are neighboring states.

More likely, the state might be weak relative to its adversaries. For example, East Germany was smaller in size and less populous than its primary adversary, West Germany. And as Communism ruined its economy, East Germany became poorer, as well. Syria's army was adequate, compared to some of its neighboring states, such as Jordan and Lebanon. However, in comparison to Israel, it was unquestionably inferior. Greece, a member of NATO, had a modern military, well-equipped and well trained. But in comparison to its larger neighbor, Turkey, Greece was outmatched.

Table 2.2. Constraints against conflict among state sponsors of terrorism

military inferiority	defense dominance	political opposition to war
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * absolute lack of offensive military capabilities * relative imbalance in distribution of military capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * military factors * geography * political and social order * diplomatic factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * allies, patrons * branches of government, parties, bureaucracies * constituents, society

Direct confrontation is almost always dangerous, and all the more so for relatively weak states. Using military force, in whatever way, would make their involvement obvious. If their tanks are advancing, or their planes are overhead, for good or for ill, their adversary will know who is responsible. And if their attempt is unsuccessful, it could have disastrous consequences, such as the end of your regime. Terrorism may not be as decisive, but it may seem less risky (as well as easier and less expensive) for states constrained by their own military inferiority.

The second type of constraint is not about the distribution of military capabilities in the international system, but the offensive or defensive bias in the system itself. An international system strongly biased against offensive action, or in other words a defense dominant world, constrains all states against pursuing conflict directly. When conquest is perceived to be

difficult, states are less likely to attempt to conquer.

Defense dominance is determined by four factors: military technology and doctrine, geography, national social structure, and diplomatic arrangements.²¹ Some military technologies, doctrines, or force postures have a defensive bias. The most important of these since 1945 is the atom bomb. Secure second-strike nuclear deterrent forces make direct offensive action unthinkable by promising thermonuclear retaliation. As has been mentioned, the Soviet Union competed vigorously with the United States during the Cold War, and sometimes invested great effort in undermining it and its allies. However, the Soviet Union worked equally hard to make sure that American and Soviet forces never confronted each other directly, in order to avoid the risk of escalation to nuclear war.²²

For states which seek modest security goals, such as merely securing their own borders, a defense-dominant environment means there is no need to resort to sponsoring foreign terrorists, since these modest goals can be reached without resorting to such risky adventurism.²³ For states with more aggressive goals, however, a defense dominant environment doubly encourages state-sponsored terrorism. Not only does it constrain sponsor states against pursuing conflict, but it gives them reason to expect that their targets will not want to pursue conflict with them. They

²¹ Stephen van Evera, "Offense, defense, and the causes of war," *International Security* 22:4 (spring 1998), 16-22.

²² One exception is the Korean War, in which some Soviet and American air forces engaged in combat. However, both superpowers maintained the fiction that the Americans were facing Chinese pilots.

²³ These states are sometimes called status quo states or satiated powers, in contrast to revisionist powers or have-nots. See Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for profit: Bringing the revisionist state back in," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 85, fn. 59.

may then assume they will face no military retaliation for the actions of their terrorist agents.

The third constraint against direct conflict is political. States might be constrained by risk-averse allies, or more importantly, patrons, who do not wish to be dragged into war.

Likewise, states might be constrained by domestic politics, such as a legislature controlled by opposition parties or a public which is set against military intervention.

States constrained in this way— whether by their own military inferiority, a defense dominant environment, or by political realities— are unable to pursue direct conflict with their enemies and rivals. If they are also strongly motivated towards conflict, then they are frustrated states. They have good reasons to fight, but good reasons to expect that this fight would end badly. Covert support for terrorist groups might appeal to such frustrated states as a low-cost, low-risk way to advance their goals without directly confronting adversaries and rivals.

Even frustrated states, however, might not choose terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy. They have many other options available to them, and sponsoring terrorism risks many of the same terrible consequences as conventional military actions. Frustrated states which fear the blowback from supporting terrorism should not be expected to support this activity.

Lack of accountability

The third necessary element for state sponsorship, then, is a belief that the state can avoid accountability for the actions of its terrorist agents. States which do not believe they can deny responsibility for the actions of illicit agents, or in other words, states which believe that they will be held accountable, will not sponsor terrorism. They will either refrain from conflict, or pursue it in a more straightforward fashion.

It is therefore important to specify what is meant by accountability. Holding a state sponsor accountable is more than just “naming and shaming.” The United States first placed Iran on the list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1979 (as part of the Export Administration Act), and it has remained on that list continuously. In fact, the list of state sponsors has remained “remarkably static” since 1979, even though being on the list has important economic consequences.²⁴ Not all attempts to hold state sponsors accountable, then, are successful.

Accountability includes at least four components. (See Table 2.3, below.) First, the target state must have knowledge of the sponsor state’s activities. Second, the target state must be able to share that knowledge. Third, the target state must have the capacity to enact sanctions against the target state in some form— whether military, economic, or diplomatic. Fourth, the target state must credibly threaten to punish, including following through with this threat if the sponsor state does not change its behavior. When sponsor states perceive that one of these components is missing, they perceive a lack of accountability.

Table 2.3: Elements of accountability for target states

<u>knowledge</u>	<u>capability</u>	<u>commitment</u>	<u>credibility</u>
Know which state is supporting the terrorist groups attacking you.	Possess the capability to inflict an intolerable sanction on the sponsor.	Clearly communicate to the sponsor a specific commitment or threat.	Be seen by the sponsor as credible in your determination to carry out the threat.

Sponsor states want the groups they support to be good agents, to faithfully execute their commands and look after their interests. However, sponsors do not want to be good principals; they do not want to be held responsible for the group’s actions. They seek control, and seek to

²⁴ Audrey Kurth Cronin, “The ‘FTO list’ and Congress: Sanctioning designated foreign terrorist organizations,” *CRS Report for Congress* (October 21, 2003), 3.

avoid accountability. They want something for nothing.

Accountability is not easy to escape, though, since sponsor states have little control over the target state's capabilities, commitment, or credibility. For the sponsor to escape accountability, they must seek to deny the target state knowledge of the relationship between the sponsor and their terrorist agents. To do this, the sponsor must be prepared to make some sacrifices. One possibility is to sacrifice control.²⁵ States like to keep their agents on a tight leash, but the shorter the leash, the more difficult it is to deny their responsibility. Another possibility is to sacrifice recognition from their in-group. If friendly states know enough to give credit where it is due, enemy states may, as well. To maximize chances of denying accountability, states should be prepared to make both sacrifices.

States sponsor terrorism because key decision-makers believe that this will be a low-cost way to achieve foreign policy goals that are highly desirable, but frustratingly out of reach. Lack of accountability makes this seem possible. If the sponsor state is not held responsible for the actions of its terrorist agents, costs can remain low. However, accountability can only be avoided if the state accepts certain sacrifices— minimal control of their agents, and minimal recognition from their in-group of peers and allies— which are unappealing. The longer states manage to avoid accountability, the more they begin to believe that they will never be held accountable and thus that these sacrifices are unnecessary. However seductive this belief may be, it appears to be

²⁵ This kind of intentional surrender of control has been seen in intrastate conflict. Neil Mitchell contends that states sometimes intentionally create conditions leading to agency loss, in order to deny responsibility for detestable actions, such as human rights violations in civil war. Weak states may similarly lose control over agents— but unintentionally, says Neil Englehart. State sponsors likely experience both deliberate *and* unintended loss of control over their terrorist agents.

false. When states attempt to increase their control or their in-group recognition, they usually face higher accountability. This makes terrorism no longer cheap, and thus no longer desirable.

Three necessary conditions

For states to sponsor terrorism, then, three factors are necessary. First, states must have strong incentives for conflict. The exact source of this motivation does not seem to be important. It might be strategic, ideological, or a matter of domestic politics. It might simply be an idiosyncratic interest of the head of state. What matters is that the motivation is strong.

Second, the state must be strongly constrained from pursuing direct conflict. This might be because the state is weak, in absolute terms, or weak relative to its adversaries. It might be constrained by a defense-dominant environment, meaning an international arena in which conquest is perceived to be difficult. The state might also be constrained by international or domestic politics, such as risk-averse allies, a legislature controlled by opposition parties, or a public which is set against military intervention. Again, the source of the constraint is less important than the degree. A sponsor state must be frustrated—strongly motivated toward conflict, and strongly constrained against pursuing that conflict directly.

The third necessary condition is a lack of accountability. Frustrated states will only sponsor terrorism if they believe they can avoid accountability for the actions of their terrorist agents. For a state which has been the target of terrorism to hold the state sponsor accountable, four elements are required. These elements are: the target state's knowledge of the conduct of the sponsor state; the target state's capacity to inflict an intolerable sanction on the sponsor state; the target state's clear communication of a commitment or threat to the sponsor state; and the

credibility of the target state's threat in the mind of the sponsor state. When sponsor states believe that their targets do not possess all four elements necessary for accountability, they should be expected to support terrorism. (See Table 2.4, below.)

Table 2.4. Three necessary conditions for state sponsorship of terrorism

Motivations	Constraints	Lack of accountability
Strategic concerns	Military inferiority	Target has no knowledge
Ideology	Defense dominance	Target has no capability to sanction
Domestic politics	Allies or constituents	Target has not communicated threat
Personal	opposed to conflict	Target's threat of sanction not credible

This model also explains why states *stop* sponsoring terrorism. Since all three conditions are necessary, states will cut off their support for terrorist organizations when one of these conditions changes.²⁶ Either they lose motivations for conflict, they escape their constraints, or they no longer believe that they can (or, perhaps, should) remain unaccountable for their actions.

Examining the model, it is also apparent which of these three variables is the most important policy lever for target states seeking to change the behavior of sponsor states. The motivations of other states are difficult to change. States which are strongly motivated in favor of conflict have good reasons, or at least reasons which are deeply rooted and durable in the short and medium term. Constraints against conflict may be easy to remove, but this would only enable the sponsor state to go on the offensive and follow its motivations toward conflict more directly. Anything which constrains states against conflict, or in other words prevents

²⁶ There may be a time lag, of course, since institutions and institutional relationships tend to outlive their original purpose. See Robert O. Keohane, *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 135; and Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: The social construction of power politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (spring 1992), 417-8.

devastating war, should probably be kept in place.

The key variable for states combatting state-sponsored terrorism, then, is the lack of accountability. It is not easy to hold a sponsor state accountable, but it may be easier than changing its motivations, particularly in the short run. And unlike decreased constraints against conflict, increased accountability is an inherent good, rather than an inherent bad.

Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I introduced the four questions which this dissertation asks about state-sponsored terrorism. First, why do states sponsor terrorism? Second, what causes sponsor states to cease their support? Third, how best can targets of state-sponsored terrorism encourage sponsor states to cease their support? Fourth, what can state sponsors of terrorism do to avoid accountability for the acts committed by their terrorist agents?

This chapter describes answers to each of these questions. States sponsor terrorism because they are motivated toward conflict, constrained against pursuing it directly, and convinced that they can delegate this conflict to terrorist agents without being held accountable. States cease sponsoring terrorism when any of these three necessary conditions changes. Thus, increasing accountability is the best way for target states to persuade sponsor states to cut off their support for terrorism. And state sponsors can avoid being held accountable by sacrificing both control of their agents and credit for their actions.

These hypothesized answers to the four central questions of this dissertation can be framed more explicitly as testable propositions, in this fashion:

H1: States will sponsor terrorism if they are motivated toward conflict, *and* constrained against pursuing conflict openly, *and* convinced that accountability can be avoided.

H2: Sponsor states will cease to support terrorism if they lose motivations toward conflict, *or* are able to pursue conflict directly, *or* are held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents.

H3: Sponsor states that cut off support for terrorism will often have been persuaded by target states increasing accountability.

H4: Sponsor states that are successfully held accountable by target states for the actions of their terrorist agents will have ceased to sacrifice control and/or credit.

In the following chapters, these propositions are tested against evidence from in-depth case studies of Cuba and Libya, two states which formerly were important sponsors of terrorism during the Cold War.

Both Cuba and Libya were weak regional powers facing a dangerous international environment, including strong, hostile neighbors. Both sought to increase their prestige among their ideologically like-minded fellow states. Moammar Gadhafi made Libya perhaps the most prominent hub for terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s. Cuba supported violent revolutionary movements in almost every country in Central and South America, as well as in Angola and elsewhere. Both countries were constrained against direct conflict, and both supported foreign terrorist groups in order to advance foreign policy goals such as weakening enemies, increasing prestige, and rallying support.

However, neither state has maintained its level of support for foreign terrorism, although both remain both motivated and constrained against open conflict. Libya abandoned terrorism as part of its rapprochement with the West. Cuba, although still under the revolutionary leadership of Fidel Castro has largely ceased to materially support terrorism. Both cases thus provide a rich

opportunity to examine the reasons why states choose to support terrorism, the reasons they choose to stop, and the policy responses which are most effective for states which are the targets of state-sponsored terrorism.

Chapter Three

Cuba, Revolutionary Terrorism, and the American and Soviet Response, 1959-2010

Introduction

Under the leadership of Fidel Castro, Cuba was one of the world's most important sponsors of terrorism during the late 1960s, and again in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Cuba's varying reliance on foreign terrorists as instruments of state policy are consistent with the theoretical hypotheses outlined in the previous chapter. As the first hypothesis would predict, when Cuba chose to sponsor terrorism, it desired conflict, but was unable to pursue it directly—and Cuban policymakers did not believe that Cuba would or could be held accountable for the actions of its terrorists agents. Consistent with the second and third hypotheses, Cuba reduced its dependence on state-sponsored terrorism (and then abandoned it completely) during time periods in which accountability increased. Somewhat consistent with the fourth hypothesis, Cuba attempted to control its terrorist agents and to take credit for their accomplishments, and was later held accountable for their actions.

Modeling state-sponsored terrorism

This dissertation asks four questions. First, why do states sponsor terrorism? State-sponsored terrorism is a deliberate choice, and states that make this choice do so because they believe it will help them to achieve a goal. To give support to terrorists is to surrender control over that portion of a state's foreign policy, or in other words, to delegate foreign policy authority

to a terrorist agent. In most principal-agent relationship, states delegate because they hope to gain from specialization. This works with many state agents who perform functions such as making war or gathering information. Since states already have soldiers and spies, though, which are usually better trained and better equipped than terrorists, the purpose of employing terrorists is not just specialization. States sponsor terrorists and then obscure the relationship, so they can deny responsibility for their acts and thus avoid the negative consequences. The virtue of terrorists, then, as with other kinds of illicit agents, is that the state may be able to deny responsibility for their actions, and thus avoid the negative consequences.

Thus, my theory proposes that states can be expected to sponsor terrorism only when three necessary conditions are met. First, it is necessary for states which support terrorism to be highly motivated to pursue conflict with their target state. These motivations can be strategic, ideological, based in domestic politics, or personal. Second, state sponsors must be strongly constrained against conflict, which might be due to absolute or relative military weakness, or constituents or allies strongly opposed to conflict, or a defense-dominant security environment. This condition of constraint, in combination with strong motivations for conflict, leaves the state structurally frustrated: it has good reasons to fight, but good reasons to expect that conflict would go badly. Third, the sponsor state must perceive that acting through terrorist agents will permit them to avoid accountability. For a sponsor state to be held accountable, the target state must possess knowledge, capability, communication, and credibility. Any lack allows the sponsor state to avoid accountability, and under which condition it should be expected to sponsor terrorism. When states are motivated for conflict, constrained against pursuing it directly, and believe that they will not be held accountable, they should be expected to sponsor terrorism.

Given this theoretical explanation for the origins of state-sponsored terrorism, the second question is: Why do states end their support for terrorism? A change in any of the necessary three conditions will lead to a change in the behavior of the erstwhile sponsor state. A sponsor state which loses its constraints will pursue conflict more directly. A sponsor state which loses its motivations for conflict will cease supporting terrorism and other kinds of conflict. A state which is held accountable will cease support for terrorism, but might move into other forms of conflict with the target state.

The third question is: How can sponsor states best be persuaded by target states to cease their support for terrorism? Changing any of the three necessary conditions will change the sponsor state's behavior. However, the three variables are not all equally feasible or desirable to change. Motivations for conflict are difficult to erase, especially in the short term. Constraints against conflict are desirable and are best left in place. Accountability is the key variable, because target states can affect it in the short term, and because increasing accountability is not undesirable. To effectively hold a sponsor state accountable, a target state must: (1) gain knowledge of the sponsor state's responsibility for the actions of its terrorist agents; (2) possess the capability to enact intolerable diplomatic, economic, or military sanctions against the target state; (3) clearly communicate the threat to enact sanctions if the sponsor state does not change its behavior; and (4) be perceived as credible in this threat by the sponsor state.

Cuban support for terrorism from the 1960s to the 1990s is largely consistent with my hypothesized answers to these four questions. During this entire time period, Cuba was in a position of structural frustration, both highly motivated to pursue conflict with the United States and its Latin American allies, and also strongly constrained against conflict, because of

overwhelming US military power (including nuclear deterrent forces). These motivations and constraints remained largely unchanged until 1991, when the Soviet Union dissolved.

Accountability, however, varied, as did Cuban sponsorship of terrorist groups. Thus, the Cuban case is congruent with the hypothesis that changing accountability, or the perception that accountability can be avoided, is a key factor in changing the behavior of state sponsors of terrorism.

This can be clearly seen by dividing this case up into six time periods, corresponding to changes in accountability. (See Table 3.1, below.)

Table 3.1 . Cuban support for terrorism, 1959-2010

<u>period</u>	<u>years</u>	<u>sponsorship</u>	<u>accountability</u>
1	1959-1963	no evidence	US sanctions, Soviet support
2	1964-1967	increasing	US sanctions, Soviet support
3	1968-1974	decreasing	US sanctions, threat of Soviet economic sanctions
4	1975-1985	increasing	US sanctions, Soviet support
5	1986-1993	decreasing	US sanctions, threat of Soviet economic sanctions
6	1994-2010	no evidence	US sanctions, Soviet Union non-existent

From the revolution in 1959 until 1963, there is no evidence of Cuban support for foreign terrorist groups. In 1964, Cuba began to support terrorism against ideologically-opposed Latin American states. During the third period of the case (1968-1974), the Soviet Union held Cuba accountable through economic pressure, because it desired better relations with the US. Cuba decreased its support for terrorist groups, and kept it low, in order to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union. During the fourth period (1975-1985), the Soviet Union signaled disinterest

in holding Cuba accountable— as did the US until 1981— and Cuba again increased its support for terrorism. In the fifth period (1986-1993), Gorbachev held Cuba accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, because terrorism would interfere with his new domestic and foreign policy goals for the USSR. Then Cuba had to adjust to a new reality in which the Soviet Union did not exist, exposing Cuba to US accountability. This led to an essentially complete cessation of support for terrorism. This has, in the sixth period (1994-2010), continued to the present day. In each of these time periods, the change in accountability, or the perceived likelihood of avoiding accountability, drove the change in state sponsorship for terrorist organizations.

Cuban motivations for conflict

The first necessary condition for a state to sponsor terrorism is that the state must be strongly motivated to pursue conflict with its adversary or adversaries. Daniel Byman's study of state sponsors of terrorism provides a good list of the ends to which terrorist agents are set, or the motivations that states have for sponsoring terrorism. These motivations are divided into three categories: strategic concerns, ideology, and domestic politics. Cuba under Fidel Castro was strongly motivated by strategic concerns and ideology, and weakly motivated by domestic politics. Castro himself was also strongly motivated to pursue conflict with the United States, for personal reasons, which also influenced Cuba's decision to sponsor terrorism.

Strategic concerns are the first group of motivations which might move a state to sponsor terrorism. In this category are four specific motivations: the desire (i) to destabilize or weaken a neighbor, (ii) to project power, (iii) to change an enemy regime, and (iv) to shape an opposition movement within a neighboring state. Castro was motivated by all four: he wanted to destabilize

or weaken his neighboring states, to change their regimes, to project power in the Caribbean, and to shape the nature of opposition movements in these countries. First, because Cuba faced a hostile environment (due in no small part to its own actions), it sought to weaken or destabilize its neighbors, particularly the United States, which opposed Castro's regime and at least once attempted to end it by supporting an invasion. Terrorist attacks served this purpose. Second, Castro wanted to lead a widespread socialist revolution which would allow the poor states of Latin America and the Caribbean to confront the imperialist powers of the West together. Again, sponsoring terrorist groups which sought to overthrow these regimes was the means to this end. Third, Castro desired to project Cuban power abroad, as can be seen in Cuba's tendency towards foreign adventures, such as its conventional military interventions in Africa in the 1970s. Terrorism was one more way for Cuba to punch above its weight. Fourth, Castro sought to shape the character of opposition movements in Latin America and the Caribbean by forcing different factions to compete for Cuban support and by placing Cuba in the role of mediator between factions and groups. By 'feeding' Cuban-leaning groups and 'starving' groups affiliated with the Soviet Union, these opposition movements were tilted toward Cuba, allowing for greater control. Cuban involvement also radicalized these movements, because Castro tended to support the most aggressive and violent groups and factions. Thus, all four strategic concerns described by Byman played a role in Cuban foreign policy, demonstrating that Cuba was strongly motivated to pursue conflict with the United States and its allies.

The second category of motivations which may cause states to sponsor foreign terrorist groups is ideology. This ideological motivation takes two forms, in Byman's typology. They may wish to export their own political system or values, or they may wish to enhance their

prestige among their international in-group (foreign people or states which share their ideology). Castro was highly motivated in gaining approval and prestige from states which he considered to be in Cuba's peer groups— namely the Soviet-led Communist bloc, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the third world. To gain prestige in these circles, Castro had to confront the United States, forcefully:

Castro can only achieve his objectives by placing himself in constant opposition to the United States. ...since Castro's international designs are largely based on his need to antagonize U.S. interests, peaceful coexistence is unacceptable to him.¹

Castro's overall support for violent revolutionary movements throughout Latin America and the third world was the linchpin of his attempt to become the chief ideologue of international Communism.

Castro's ideology also led Cuba to attempt to export its political system, supporting leftist opposition movements in virtually every country in Latin America and the Caribbean, whether those movements were violent or not. Further, Castro attempted to shape both governments and opposition movements according to the Cuban model. And since almost no state in the world followed Cuba's model, this made for conflictual foreign relations. Thus, Cuba was strongly motivated by ideology to pursue conflict with the United States and its allies in the Western Hemisphere.

Third, a state may support a foreign terrorist group for domestic political reasons. This may be because some segment of the domestic polity shares ethnic identity with some segment of a foreign polity which the terrorists claim to represent, and thus supporting the terrorists will help

¹ Juan Benemelis, "Cuba's African policy," in *Cuba: The international dimension*, eds. Georges A. Fauriol and Eva Loser (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 123.

the state gain popularity among this segment of its own constituency. This was not a powerful motivation in the case of Cuba, although Castro did emphasize the African heritage of many Cubans in his propaganda efforts to gain public support for Cuba's military interventions in Africa. States may also choose to support terrorists so that they can then call for their aid in repressing domestic opponents. Castro did not attempt this, relying instead on his own institutions of repression, developed in his years as a guerrilla in the Sierra, formalized as state security forces as he consolidated his hold on power, and refined with the aid of the KGB. Castro had no need for military aid from terrorists. Domestic political considerations therefore played only a small role in Cuba's decision to sponsor terrorism.

In addition to Byman's three categories of state motivations, there are personal motivations which factor in to the decision to sponsor terrorist groups, especially in states where executive power is highly concentrated, as it is in Cuba. First, Castro had idiosyncratic sympathies for terrorism and revolution; violent confrontation with imperialism may be the core of Castro's personal belief system. Although after ousting Batista he initially seemed to consider the possibility of peaceful coexistence with the United States, it appears that he came to believe that worldwide socialist revolution was necessary and desirable— especially in countries which had historically been dominated militarily and economically by Europe and the United States. Second, Castro was motivated by a personal desire for revenge. As a target of American attempts to overthrow his regime and assassinate him, Castro had a deep personal animosity against the United States. Third, because foreign conflicts often cause constituents to rally to support their own national leaders, Castro may have supported terrorists in an attempt to increase his popularity. Cuba's support for socialist revolutionary movements abroad did help rally

support throughout the world for Castro personally. And Castro's image as a defiant underdog standing up to the imperialist American bully was (and is) one of the keys to his domestic political legitimacy. However, Castro demonstrated on many occasions his willingness to advance unpopular policies, and so it may be that this was not an important motivation in the Cuban decision to support foreign terrorists.

However, as should now be clear, Cuba did not support foreign terrorists at the request of the Soviet Union, as many American policymakers alleged during the Cold War.² Cuban sponsorship of terrorism can only be understood as a fundamental, integral part of Castro's vision and Cuba's foreign policy. For strategic, ideological, political, and personal reasons, Castro's Cuba was motivated to pursue conflict with the United States and its allies, particularly in the Western Hemisphere.

Cuba - constrained against conflict

In addition to being strongly motivated toward conflict, the second necessary condition for a state to support terrorism is that the sponsor state must also be strongly constrained against pursuing direct, conventional conflict with the target state. These constraints can come from three sources. First, the sponsor state might be militarily weak, either in absolute terms or relative to its adversary or adversaries. Second, the sponsor state may be constrained by a defense dominant environment. Third, the sponsor state may be constrained by either its domestic constituency or by allies which do not desire conflict. Castro does not appear to have

² One notable example is Zbigniew Brzezinski, US National Security Advisor under President Carter. See Richard Gott, *Cuba: A new history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 262.

been effectively constrained by the desires of the Cuban people, but he was powerfully constrained during the Cold war by Soviet desires to avoid open military conflict with the United States and its allies. Additionally, Cuba was powerfully constrained by its weakness relative to its adversaries, particularly the United States, and by a defense-dominant environment which prevented direct military confrontation (with the exception of Cuba's direct interventions in Africa in the 1970s).

Weakness can be a powerful constraint against conflict, as it was for Cuba. For its size, Cuba had a powerful military. In fact, with Soviet aid, Cuba had the third largest military in the Americas.³ This meant Cuba was much more formidable in military terms than many of its targets, such as Jamaica and Nicaragua, which were hardly great powers. However, two things cut against Cuba's power. First, in part due to Castro's own aggressive foreign policy, Cuba was ringed with unfriendly regimes. Taken individually, Cuba's enemies might not have been dangerous, but on the whole Cuba faced a frustrating international environment. Second, Cuba's primary target was the United States, against which it was hopelessly outmatched. This disparity not only made direct conflict unthinkable with Cuba's greatest adversary, but also with many of Cuba's other enemies. Starting with the Monroe Doctrine, the United States has long asserted primacy in the Western Hemisphere, especially in Central America and the Caribbean, and backing up these assertions with military force. The United States has deposed unfriendly regimes in Guatemala, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and other states in Central America

³ In 1982 it was estimated that, in the Western Hemisphere, only the United States and Brazil had a larger military than Cuba. United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *Cuban armed forces and the Soviet military presence*, US Department of State Special Report No. 103, (August 1982), 1-2.

and the Caribbean. Even Cuba's independence is owed to an American intervention. This was not a thing of the past, either. In 1983, the US invaded the island of Grenada in order to evict a socialist government which had come to power with help from Cuba. Direct action by Cuba using official state instruments would thus have been very risky, and restraint was therefore prudent. Indeed, the effectiveness of US power as a constraint against direct Cuban military intervention in the Western Hemisphere can be seen in the fact that the only place where the Cuban government openly sent uniformed soldiers to support an insurgency was in Angola, well outside the historical American sphere of interest.

A second constraint against direct action is a perceived defense-dominant international environment, one in which offensive military action is likely to be fruitless. Defense dominance can be caused by military technology and doctrine, geography, national social structure, and defensive diplomatic arrangements.⁴ Castro's Cuba has faced a defense-dominant international environment for its entire history. First, in the realm of military technology and doctrine, Cuba exists in a world overflowing with small arms, which facilitate guerrilla resistance to invading armies. Cuba was further constrained by the promise of assured destruction through American nuclear retaliation. As General Alexander Sakharovsky of the KGB said, "In today's world, when nuclear arms have made military force obsolete, terrorism should become our main weapon."⁵ Second, as an island, Cuba is constrained by geography unfavorable to conquest,

⁴ Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of war: Power and the roots of conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 122.

⁵ Lt. Gen. Ion Mihai Pacepa, "Russian footprints: What does Moscow have to do with the recent war in Lebanon," *National Review Online* (August 24, 2006), <http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/218533/russian-footprints/ion-mihai-pacepa> (accessed July 28, 2011).

since it must necessarily begin any conventional offensive with a difficult amphibious assault, and sustain any campaign with a vulnerable maritime supply train. Third, in terms of political and social order, Cuba faced an international political environment characterized by nationalism, which allows even weak states to better rally and mobilize their citizens for defense. Fourth, and finally, Cuba was constrained by defensive diplomatic arrangements, in particular the Organization of American States, used by the United States to facilitate balancing behavior against Communist states like Cuba. Technologically, geographically, socially, and diplomatically, the international environment was biased toward the defensive, which constrained Cuba from pursuing direct conflict with its enemies. For a state like Castro's Cuba, with goals more ambitious than merely securing its own borders, this defense dominance was a constraint which encouraged risky strategies, such as the delegation of foreign policy authority to foreign terrorist groups.

The third constraint against direct conflict is opposition from domestic constituencies or from allies. Castro faced no serious domestic political constraints, but for much of this time period its major ally, the USSR, opposed direct conflict with the US and its allies. Thus, Castro's Cuba was both highly motivated to pursue conflict and effectively constrained against conflict.

Cuba - unaccountable

The third necessary condition for state sponsorship is the belief that the sponsor state can avoid accountability. This belief is easy to come by, given the illicit nature of the relationship between the sponsor state and its terrorist agents. This plausible deniability makes sponsoring

terrorism seem like conflict without consequences— a low-cost way to achieve foreign policy goals. But this is a seductive illusion; sponsor states must pay the price to get the benefits from supporting terrorism. Avoiding accountability usually means sacrificing control. The shorter the leash, the more difficult it is to deny your responsibility. Avoiding accountability also usually means sacrificing recognition from your in-group. If your friends know enough to give you credit for your efforts, your enemies may, too. But sacrificing control and recognition is unappealing. When states stop paying the price, they become accountable. This makes terrorism no longer cheap, and thus no longer desirable.

Cuban support for terrorism was made possible by the belief of Cuban policymakers that they could avoid accountability. In part, this was because Cuba's relationship with the USSR protected them from military and economic pressure. Cuba was protected by the Soviet Union, which made it easier for them to avoid being held accountable by out-group powers like the US and the Organization of American States. Further, Cuba's economic relationship with the Soviet Union made them less vulnerable to economic pressure from the out-group.

For decades, Cuba was willing to make the sacrifices necessary to remain un-accountable. Thus, even though Cuba aided terrorist groups, guerrilla armies, and peaceful political parties in virtually every country in Latin America (with the notable exception of Mexico), they were always careful to deny responsibility for terrorist actions. In one notable case, when campaigns of terrorist and guerrilla violence led to revolution in Nicaragua, Cuba did claim credit for the result. This desire to gain credit from their in-group meant that they also got more attention from their enemies, in this case the United States and its allies in Central America. Thus the Sandinista Nicaraguan government had to face its own campaign of terrorist and guerrilla

violence, from the US-backed Contras.

Cuba, 1959-1963

Although Fidel Castro came to power in a revolutionary war that included both guerrilla tactics and terrorism, Cuba did not initially give material support to foreign terrorist groups. In fact, Castro made a point of denouncing terrorism. While he was still a guerrilla, years away from deposing Batista, he published an essay criticizing a terrorist bombing campaign in Cuba's largest cities.⁶ In 1957, Castro spoke out to condemn an assassination attempt performed by another revolutionary organization as a "useless spilling of blood," adding: "I am against terrorism. I condemn those procedures."⁷ However, this declaration was somewhat deceptive. Castro denounced terrorism because he perceived it, as did many other Latin American revolutionaries, as an urban endeavor, and he had come to believe that control of the rural countryside was the key to overthrowing the regime. Thus urban terrorism was— worse than immoral— counter-productive.⁸

Castro and his 26th of July movement did benefit from the efforts of the urban terrorists, and also employed terrorist tactics themselves, in several ways.⁹ Castro's Rebel Army set fires to

⁶ Fidel Castro, "Against terrorism and crime," in Rolando E. Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdes, eds., *Revolutionary struggle: Selected works of Fidel Castro* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972), 252-4.

⁷ Bonachea and Valdes 1972, 95.

⁸ Roger W. Fontaine, *Terrorism: The Cuban connection* (New York: C. Russak, 1988), 23-4.

⁹ Castro also copied the methods and organization of the ABC movement, a mysterious group of terrorist bombers active in Cuban cities in the 1930s. Georgie Anne Geyer, *Guerrilla*

sugar plantations across the island that killed scores of innocent people, to frighten away workers and keep them from collaborating.¹⁰ They kidnaped foreign civilians who supported the Batista regime and used them as hostages, human shields to protect the guerrillas from Batista's army.¹¹ In the final stages of their revolutionary campaign, Castro's rebels used a widespread bombing campaign in Cuba's major cities, in combination with a rural guerrilla offensive, in order to defeat the remaining government forces and take Havana.¹² Finally, both during the six-year insurgency and after Batista was deposed, Castro executed dissidents and opponents to secure his hold on the movement, a classic use of terrorism to achieve social control. He called this "revolutionary terror."¹³ But Cuba did not give substantial support to terrorist groups operating in other countries during this time period, and thus was not a state sponsor of terrorism.

Cuba's lack of support for foreign terrorism fits the model, because Cuba initially did not meet all three of the necessary conditions. The first necessary condition is motivation, and Cuba was not initially motivated to pursue conflict with the United States. In 1959, Cuba did not have strategic concerns that would have motivated conflict, such as the need to subvert or weaken neighbors, or to change their regimes.

This follows from the fact that Castro's ideology was not yet fully developed. In the

prince: The untold story of Fidel Castro (Boston: Little, Brown, 1991), 35-6.

¹⁰ Geyer 1991, 182.

¹¹ Fontaine 1988, 25. See also Geyer 1991, 184-5.

¹² Ramon L. Bonachea and Marta San Martin, *The Cuban insurrection, 1952-9* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1974), 264-5. See also Fidel Castro, "Unity Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra," in Bonachea and Valdes 1972, 386-9.

¹³ Geyer 1991, 216. This usage echoes the original 'terrorism' of the Jacobins.

present, this may be difficult to fathom, since Castro has been known for decades as a committed Communist and an implacable adversary to the United States. But neither of these roles was obvious or certain when he came to power. In fact, the CIA station in Havana supported and encouraged Castro before he came to power.¹⁴ And after the revolution swept out Batista and the old regime, Castro emphasized that he wanted to stay out of the conflict between the US and the Soviet Union. Visiting Washington in April 1959, just months after seizing power, he met with the CIA's chief expert on Communism in Latin America, the man who later directed the preparation for the Bay of Pigs invasion, who said, "Castro is not only not a Communist, he is a strong anti-Communist fighter."¹⁵ Castro himself publicly denied receiving offers of aid from the Soviet Union and said, "We are against all kinds of dictators, whether of a man, or a country, or a class, or an oligarchy, or by the military. This is why we are against communism."¹⁶ Whether such declarations were feigned or true, Cuba and its neighbors had no quarrels, without ideology to set them at odds.

Cuba was also not motivated by domestic politics during this time period. After years of bloody insurgency and reprisal, relative peace prevailed over the island. (The first American trade sanction against Cuba was an arms embargo, enacted as a response to the violence of the Cuban civil war.) The dictator Batista was gone, along with his brutal security apparatus, and many Cubans were happy with the change. Peace was also good for the Cuban economy. In

¹⁴ Norman Gall, "How Castro failed," *Commentary* 52, no. 5 (November 1971): 54.

¹⁵ Gall 1971, 54.

¹⁶ Dana Adams Schmidt, "Castro stresses land reform aim," *New York Times*, April 21, 1959.

1959, Cuba was one of the wealthiest countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and a more equitable division of Cuba's riches seemed to guarantee prosperity for all.¹⁷ For the poor, there were "two dramatic and immediate benefits," delivered by Castro's revolutionary government: education, and year-round employment.¹⁸ The new regime was accordingly popular, and had no need to shore up domestic support by engaging in foreign adventures. Castro himself was also very popular, and so there would seem to be nothing for him to gain personally by supporting terrorists abroad— however, he did reveal glimpses in those early years of his idiosyncratic personal fascination with conflict, revolution, and terrorism. Believing that his adversaries were evil, and that his ant-imperialist revolution could not be contained to Cuba and would ultimately be victorious, Castro was deeply committed to a revolutionary ideology.¹⁹

The second necessary condition for state sponsorship of terrorism is constraint against direct conflict. Unlike motivation, this factor was clearly present during this time period. In 1959, Cuba was weak compared to its adversaries, the American nuclear doctrine of massive retaliation underscored the dominance of the defensive, and the Soviet Union— which soon became Cuba's key ally— pursued competition with the west, but not conflict. However, it may be true that Castro did not accurately perceive these constraints in 1959. Cuba had not yet measured its the prowess of its new revolutionary army against any foreign opponent. Before

¹⁷ Gott 2005, 165.

¹⁸ Before the revolution, many poor Cubans had only seasonal work, and had to subsist the rest of the year on wages earned during this time. Gall 1971, 46.

¹⁹ See Stephen M. Walt, *Revolution and war* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 25-28. He also notes that later, after losing his initial popularity, Castro did attempt to distract and deflect his citizens' anger by blaming Cuba's failures on its conflicts with the United States. Walt 1996, 9.

the emergence of the doctrine of mutually assured destruction (MAD), even the superpowers did not yet understand that nuclear weapons were defensive, not offensive, weapons. And Castro was not constrained by the Soviet Union in 1959 because they were not allies. Castro was interested in good relations with the USSR, but this did not constrain Cuba against conflict, since Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev relied on brinkmanship, confrontation, and the provocation and exploitation of crises. Thus, Cuba was perhaps slightly less constrained against direct conflict during the early years of Castro's rule, and thus less likely to consider sponsoring foreign terrorists.

The third necessary condition for states to sponsor terrorism is a lack of accountability. In 1959, Castro could be expected to believe that the United States could, and would, hold him accountable for provocative behavior such as supporting foreign terrorism. After the fantastic success in 1954 of US-sponsored coups in Iran and (more importantly for Castro) Guatemala, America's new Central Intelligence Agency seemed omniscient and omnipotent. Only later would the Bay of Pigs debacle raise the possibility of American incompetence and ignorance. Also, in 1959, the United States was Cuba's major trading partner, and the most powerful economy in the world. To be denied access to the American market would have appeared to be an intolerable loss for Cuba. Thus, in 1959, Cuba was not motivated for conflict, its constraints were not apparent, and accountability seemed likely. And as the model would predict, Cuba did not initially support foreign terrorist groups.

Nonetheless, during the first years of Castro's rule, the stage was set for Cuba to become one of the world's most prolific state sponsors of terrorism. My hypothesis is that there are three necessary conditions for state sponsorship of terrorism, and all three of these conditions came

into being during this time period. First, during these formative early years, Castro developed his revolutionary ideology and incidents like the invasion attempt at the Bay of Pigs demonstrated the precarious nature of Cuba's strategic situation, which gave Cuba the necessary motivations for pursuing conflict. Second, in this time period, Cuba assumed an adversarial relationship toward the United States and its allies, and American nuclear doctrines solidified, which meant that constraints which prevented Castro from pursuing conflict directly became apparent. Third, Cuba's strengthened economic ties to the Soviet Union convinced Castro that the sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies would be ineffective, which meant that no one would succeed in holding Cuba accountable for the actions of terrorist agents. Cuba's subsequent adoption of foreign terrorism as a means of advancing its foreign policy goals is consistent with the theoretical hypotheses, as previously explained..

The road to conflict began in May of 1959, when Cuba began seizing American-owned properties, in accordance with its new Agrarian Reform Law, without any compensation paid to the Americans who lost their properties.²⁰ This stirred up popular sentiment against Castro, especially among dedicated anti-Communists. Later that summer, Cuba began courting the USSR to buy Cuban sugar. After months of trade shows, exchanges, and negotiations, the USSR signed a deal in February 1960 to buy Cuban sugar in exchange for some hard currency, along with oil, machinery, and other goods.²¹ In the bipolar world of the Cold War, international trade was a zero-sum game, and any gain for the Soviet Union was a loss for the United States. In the

²⁰ Cole Blasier, "The elimination of United States influence," in *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*, ed. Carmelo Mesa-Lago (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), 60-1.

²¹ Gott 2005, 182.

election year of 1960, both Castro's leftist leanings— which were becoming more evident— and Cuba's economic ties to socialist countries became a major issue, with both Nixon and Kennedy promising to reverse the Cuban revolution.

In April 1960, Cuba got its first shipments of Soviet crude oil. In May, Cuba demanded that the three international oil companies on the island (Exxon, Texaco, and Shell) purchase and refine the Soviet crude.²² The oil companies balked (after being directed by American authorities not to comply), and Cuba seized the refineries and nationalized them.²³ In retaliation, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower in July signed a bill to reduce import of Cuban sugar, but this move was obviated when the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China signed up to buy the sugar that the US had declined.²⁴ On August 6, Castro nationalized American banks, sugar mills, and every other major US-owned property on the island.²⁵ Over \$1.5 billion worth of property was seized without any compensation being given to the owners.²⁶ The act outraged many Americans, including key members of the Eisenhower administration

²² Jorge F. Perez-Lopez, "Sugar and petroleum in Cuban-Soviet terms of trade," in *Cuba in the world*, eds. Cole Blasier and Carmelo Mesa-Lago (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), 276-7.

²³ Gott 2005, 183.

²⁴ The Soviet Union's increasing commitments to buy Cuban sugar may have been as much a policy response to Chinese behavior as American behavior. Leon Goure and Julian Weinkle, "Cuba's new dependency," *Problems of Communism* 21, no. 2 (1972): 70. See also Gott 2005, 183-4.

²⁵ Gott 2005, 184.

²⁶ Helen Osieja, "Economic sanctions as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy: The case of the U.S. embargo against Cuba," [master's thesis, The American University of London, 2005], 108.

The United States decided to take its grievance to the Organization of American States (OAS). In August 1960, the OAS met in Costa Rica and after much discussion and debate issued the Declaration of San Jose, which condemned Communist intervention in the Western hemisphere. The following month, Castro issued the First Declaration of Havana, in which he declared his opposition to the “political and financial Yankee empire,” and his solidarity with those people who “grip the weapons of their freedom,” struggling to liberate Latin America from “North American imperialism.”²⁷ Noting that “something would have to be done” about Castro, Eisenhower announced in October restrictions on trade with Cuba.²⁸ Validated government licenses were required for most US exports to Cuba, with the exception of non-subsidized food, medicine, and medical supplies, and the administration routinely denied most license requests. The following January, the two countries broke diplomatic relations.

In April 1961, the United States attempted to evict Castro from power, through an invasion of American-trained Cuban exiles which landed in Cuba in the Bay of Pigs. The plan had been developed by the Eisenhower administration, but had been subsequently approved for execution by US President John F. Kennedy. The invasion was a disaster. Castro was able to mobilize hundreds of thousands of Cubans to meet the invaders. The exiles inspired no uprisings on the island, and were soon defeated by Cuban forces. The United States disavowed the enterprise, although US involvement had been reported in the New York Times and other newspapers.

²⁷ Fidel Castro, “First Declaration of Havana,”(September, 1960), <http://www.walterlippmann.com/fc-09-02-1960.html> (accessed August 2011).

²⁸ Peter Schwab, *Cuba: Confronting the U.S. embargo* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 53-4.

The failed invasion illustrated Cuba's perilous security situation, and helped to cement the emerging Cuban-Soviet relationship by giving Castro reason to think he needed a patron. This was a hard sell. Castro's ideology was still taking shape, but he clung ferociously to independence from any external domination. Even as the two countries drew closer in the aftermath of the invasion, Castro many times said that Cuba was "not anyone's satellite."²⁹ As a third world country in the original sense of the term—neither part of the American-led First World, nor completely integrated into the Soviet Bloc—Castro saw Cuba as a vanguard in the conflict between the industrialized North and the undeveloped South, not the Communist East and democratic West. As such, Castro aspired to be one of the leading voices of the Non-Aligned Movement, rather than a Soviet client state.

This desire for autonomy made Cuba an ideological and political oddity in the socialist camp, which confused and frustrated Soviet leaders. Eastern Bloc countries typically followed the Soviet model, and governed through their respective Communist parties. Castro's 26 of July movement was not explicitly Communist, nor was it closely linked to Cuba's Communist Party—which took more than a decade to hold its first congress. Unlike all other avowedly socialist states, Cuba did not have a true centrally planned economy. Indeed, extremely poor financial records and poorly administered bureaucracies often made it seem as if no one was doing any planning at all.³⁰ Castro was encouraged to follow the established pattern for socialist states,

²⁹ Peter Shearman, *The Soviet Union and Cuba* Chatham House Papers, ed. William Wallace, no. 38 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1987), 16.

³⁰ French agronomist (and Marxist) Rene Dumont observed after visiting the island that Castro had eliminated a capitalist system full of defects, but "could not develop the same abilities for organizing work," which the old system had displayed. Gall 1971, 47.

instead of acting like every other Latin American military dictator.³¹ But Cuba resisted being pushed into the Soviet orbit, with Che Guevara saying it was a “mistake” to copy “automatically, from the experiences of brother countries.”³² In the end, it was American policy, not Soviet policy, which showed Castro that Cuba could not go it alone.

The Kennedy administration continued its efforts to isolate Cuba internationally, especially from other states in the Western Hemisphere. In November 1961, Venezuelan President Romulo Betancourt, a staunch anti-Communist, followed the example of the United States and broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.³³ Seeing that the tide was against him, and that the Soviet Union was his only hope, Castro publicly declared himself a “Marxist-Leninist,” on a national television and radio broadcast, on December 1³⁴ With Castro now openly a Communist, the US went to the OAS meeting in Uruguay in January 1962, hoping to get sanctions against Cuba. This proved impossible, but the OAS did vote to exclude the “present government of Cuba” from the OAS. Even this was adopted without the approval of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico. The vote got the support of 2/3 of the member states, but these

³¹ Gall 1971, 47.

³² Kosmas Tsokhas, “The political economy of Cuban dependence on the Soviet Union,” *Theory and Society* 9 (1980): 332.

³³ Judith Ewell, *Venezuela and the United States: From Monroe's hemisphere to petroleum's empire* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 216.

³⁴ Unsurprisingly, this revelation came at the end of a three hour rambling intellectual autobiography, which went on long past midnight. Robert E. Quirk, *Fidel Castro*, paperback edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995), 393-5.

states represented less than 1/3 of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁵ This was a stronger action than the San Jose declaration, but still well short of what the United States wanted. So, the United States worked behind the scenes for the next several months, and succeeded in preventing Cuba from signing trade deals with Israel, Jordan, Iran, Greece, and Japan.³⁶

Even as the United States struggled to convince the other states in the Western Hemisphere that Castro posed a danger that must be contained, American policymakers also worked to strengthen unilateral US economic sanctions against Cuba. On September 4, 1961, the US Congress passed the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which prohibited aid to Cuba and authorized the president to create a trade embargo with Cuba. President Kennedy did so on February 3, 1962, by issuing an executive order which officially proclaimed “an embargo upon trade between the United States and Cuba.”³⁷ Only certain medical supplies were exempt from the ban. The President authorized the Treasury Department to issue new regulations for trade with Cuba, and in July of the following year these regulations were revised and strengthened to effectively prohibit American travel to Cuba.³⁸

Castro was furious at these American attempts to isolate and weaken his regime, and he

³⁵ Gordon Connell-Smith, “The OAS and the Dominican Crisis,” *The World Today* 21, no 6 (June 1965): 232.

³⁶ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1989), 9.

³⁷ *U.S. Code, Title 22: Foreign relations and intercourse* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2002), 667.

³⁸ Mark P. Sullivan, Congressional Research Service, “Cuba: U.S. restrictions on travel and remittances,” *CRS Report for Congress* (January 7, 2011), 3.

demanded assurances of support from the USSR. The Soviet Union responded with a tangible guarantee of the viability of his regime, in the form of medium range ballistic missiles– capable of delivering nuclear warheads to American cities such as Washington, DC. In October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis erupted as the United States revealed that its reconnaissance planes had discovered the missiles. The US imposed a naval blockade around the island, and demanded that the Soviet Union remove the missiles. After tense negotiations, including some which were kept secret even from the executive committee (ExComm) the president had assembled to come up with solutions for the crisis, the Soviet Union relented and removed the missiles. In return, the United States pledged not to invade Cuba and removed its missiles from Turkey, although this was not publicly acknowledged as a swap. The deal made Kennedy look strong, and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev look weak. Further, during the rest of his tenure in the Kremlin, Khrushchev was careful not to provoke another crisis with the United States.

Just as the Bay of Pigs convinced Castro of the need for a closer relationship with the USSR, the Cuban Missile Crisis demonstrated the distance between them. Castro was enraged that he had lost the missiles which guaranteed him protection from invasion in exchange for a mere promise. He was disgusted with Khrushchev's unwillingness to confront the imperialist West. And even more upsetting was the fact that Castro had been so little involved in the negotiations, despite his country's fate being in the balance. Castro believed that his country had been sold out in the interests of superpower comity. The Soviet Union attempted "on its own initiative," (as declared in a joint communique) to repair the relationship with further economic

assistance, but the damage had been done.³⁹

Believing that his small island must look after itself, Castro began planning to use Cuba as a base to spread revolution abroad. By overthrowing the regimes which supported the United States, Castro could create more friendly neighbors, and thus tilt the balance in Cuba's favor. At first, this did not translate into support for terrorist groups, but rather for leftist political movements throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, and beyond. And much of his support in this time was rhetorical, rather than material. Nonetheless, in 1963, we have the first accusations of Cuban support for violent revolutionaries, including a group of guerrillas in Venezuela "who threatened Betancourt's government and the scheduled 1963 elections."⁴⁰ And that summer, an Argentine journalist named Jorge Masetti attempted, with Cuban support, to start a people's war in Salta, Argentina. His group, the People's Guerrilla Army, quickly failed and did not practice terrorism, except by executing dissidents within their own organization.⁴¹ Nonetheless, Castro had turned a corner.

This change in Cuba's foreign policy is consistent with the theoretical model. During the first four years of Castro's regime, all three variables began to trend in the direction that would predict state sponsorship of terrorism. Cuba became more motivated toward conflict, for four reasons. Cuba's strategic situation deteriorated, leading Castro to contemplate weakening

³⁹ One important reason for the failure of increased Soviet aid to fully restore relations with Cuba is that the Soviet Union also wanted Cuba to stop trying to industrialize and return to monocultural production of sugar. Goure and Weinkle 1972, 71-2.

⁴⁰ Ewell 1996, 216.

⁴¹ Antonius C.G.M. Robben, *Political violence and trauma in Argentina* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 98-9.

neighboring countries or subverting their regimes. Castro's ideology developed and became more explicitly antagonistic towards the US, and supportive of worldwide revolution. This ideological shift also placed Cuba in a group of like-minded states, where Castro vied for prestige and prominence in the movement with other state leaders. In domestic politics, Castro and his regime also needed to secure their leadership of the country, as an opposition movement began to emerge, led by pro-Soviet members of Cuba's Communist party. Personally, Castro became more motivated to pursue conflict with the United States and its allies due to assassination and invasion attempts.

Even as Cuba became more motivated towards conflict, the constraints which prevented it from pursuing conflict directly became more obvious. Cuba was no weaker in absolute terms, but it was weaker relative to its adversaries simply by having more adversaries. American efforts to isolate Cuba diplomatically and economically meant that the island was largely surrounded by unfriendly regimes, several of them explicitly anti-Communist. American willingness to go to the brink of nuclear war over Soviet missiles in Cuba, and the apparent Soviet capitulation, amply demonstrated the defense-dominant nature of the international environment. Direct conflict with a nuclear-armed superpower was unthinkable. Cuba was also held back by its most powerful ally. Khrushchev seemed uninterested in violent confrontation, ignoring Castro's bellicose advice during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Soviet Premier restrained Cuba in order to establish a different kind of relationship with the United States, one characterized by peaceful economic competition, and even increased cooperation on certain issues.

Cuba was therefore a frustrated state, increasingly motivated to pursue conflict, but unable to do so openly. Changes in accountability also trended in favor of Castro's decision to

sponsor foreign terrorism. For a target state to hold a sponsor state accountable, they need knowledge, but the catastrophic intelligence failures of the Bay of Pigs proved that the US was fallible, and had little understanding of Cuban internal affairs. The revelation that American spy planes had discovered Soviet missiles in Cuba showed the reach of US intelligence, but also its limitations. It would be reasonable for Castro to probe those limits, to see what he could get away with. Accountability also depends on the target state's capability to inflict an intolerable sanction. By 1963, the United States had already done its worst. What began as an arms embargo during the Cuban civil war broadened to cover almost all goods in subsequent executive orders and legislative acts in 1960, 1961, and 1962. Given that the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations had essentially banned all trade with Cuba, and frozen all Cuban assets in the United States, as punishment for Cuba's nationalization of American corporate properties, there was little to do to punish Cuba for supporting terrorism. Thus, a frustrated Castro could reasonably believe that the United States would not (or could not) hold Cuba accountable for supporting foreign terrorist groups.

Cuba 1964-1967

During this time period, Cuban support for foreign terrorism dramatically increased, as the theory would predict. Cuba remained both highly motivated toward conflict and highly constrained against pursuing it directly, and the United States and the Soviet Union alike failed to hold Castro responsible for his foreign adventures. There were attempts, of course. The US deepened its sanctions regime. In 1964, the Treasury Office issued new provisions regarding the licensing of food and medicine, "that made it all but impossible for those items to reach Cuba

from the United States.”⁴²

Also in 1964, American ally President Betancourt of Venezuela petitioned the OAS to impose sanctions on Cuba, “after the discovery of a cache of arms on a Venezuelan beach, allegedly dropped by Cubans for the use of Venezuelan guerrillas.”⁴³ The Ninth Meeting of the OAS in July considered the allegations and issued a report finding that, “the Republic of Venezuela has been the target of a series of actions sponsored and directed by the Government of Cuba, openly intended to subvert Venezuelan institutions and to overthrow the democratic Government of Venezuela through terrorism, sabotage, assault, and guerrilla warfare.”⁴⁴ A resolution was also passed, calling on all OAS member states to help make US sanctions effective by likewise ceasing trade and breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba.⁴⁵ The resolution further warned Cuba that “if it should persist in...acts...of aggression and intervention” that OAS states would defend themselves, “which could go so far as resort to armed force”⁴⁶

The 1964 OAS sanctions appeared to be a triumph for the United States, since this made American sanctions multilateral, but in reality the sanctions completely failed to make Cuba accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents. This should have been no surprise, given that at the time the resolution passed only four OAS member states (Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, and

⁴² Schwab 1999, 15.

⁴³ Ewell 1996, 216.

⁴⁴ Organization of American States, “Ninth meeting of consultation of ministers of foreign affairs, serving as organ of consultation in application of the inter-American treaty of reciprocal assistance, Pan American Union, Washington, DC,” (July 21-26, 1964), 5.

⁴⁵ Connell-Smith 1965, 234.

⁴⁶ OAS 1964, 6.

Uruguay) still had diplomatic relations with Cuba, and all four voted against the sanctions.⁴⁷

This demonstrates an almost total failure, on the part of the Americans, to persuade. However, three of the four naysaying states folded under US pressure in the coming months and complied with the resolution, leaving Mexico as the lone holdout.⁴⁸

In truth, the participation of Mexico in OAS sanctions would have made little difference, as was the case with the other three states who voted against the resolution. The 1964 OAS sanctions, although multilateral, included only states in the Western Hemisphere, leaving Cuba free to trade with the rest of the world. And although Cuba sought trade relationships with many different countries, the one country whose participation in sanctions would have destroyed Cuba's economy— the Soviet Union. The USSR was Cuba's predominant trading partner, both buying most of Cuba's sugar exports and selling Cuba its petroleum "in amounts fully meeting" Cuban needs, according to a declaration from Nikita Khrushchev.⁴⁹ Since the 1964 sanctions did not extend to include the Soviet Union, or any of Cuba's other important trading partners, they "could not realistically have been thought likely to alter Cuba's behavior."⁵⁰ Even among OAS members, the sanctions were not uniformly followed. Mexico never ceased its trade with Cuba, and Chile resumed trading with Cuba in 1970. In 1972 a cascade of others followed. When the

⁴⁷ Connell-Smith 1965, 233.

⁴⁸ A. Mark Weisburd, *Use of force: The practice of states since World War II* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 186.

⁴⁹ Goure and Weinkle 1972, 69.

⁵⁰ Weisburd 1997, 186-7.

sanctions were formally lifted in 1975, even the United States voted yes.⁵¹ Many accounts of Cuba's battles with economic sanctions entirely neglect to mention the ineffective and incoherent OAS effort.

Castro continued to develop an ideology based on violent confrontation with the imperialist West, as Cuba's position in the hemisphere became ever more tenuous and isolated. In November 1964, Cuba hosted a conference of Latin American communist parties in Havana, where Castro attempted to persuade them to support armed struggle.⁵² The communique issued at the end of the conference emphasized solidarity between the parties, but also stated that each party was not obligated to follow the Cuban approach and should follow its own "correct line."⁵³ Castro could not even count on the support of his fellow socialists. In April 1965, American troops intervened in the Dominican Republic to "prevent another Cuba." Even more worrisome, from Castro's perspective, was the Soviet response, which he deemed unacceptably mild.⁵⁴ Suspicious of Soviet intentions, Castro created his own Cuban Communist Party (PCC) in October 1965, by merging his own 26 July Movement with the Revolutionary Student

⁵¹ Richard B. Lillich and Frank C. Newman, *International human rights: Problems of law and policy* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), 417.

⁵² Shearman 1987, 15.

⁵³ W. Raymond Duncan, "Historical antecedents of Cuban foreign policy," in *Cuban Communism*, 6th ed., ed. Irving Louis Horowitz (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1987), 99.

⁵⁴ Jorge I. Domínguez, *To make a world safe for revolution: Cuba's foreign policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 70.

Directorate and the more established, and more Soviet-friendly, Popular Socialist Party (PSP).⁵⁵ Although Castro claimed that this was necessary in order to create “genuine communism,” his true aim was to build a cadre loyal to him and to his vision for Cuba, including Cuba’s independent role in fomenting worldwide socialist revolution.⁵⁶

Cuba was a small country, but Castro aspired to take what he saw as his place as a leader of the international socialist movement and a spokesman for the third world. Soviet leaders encouraged Castro in these ambitions, largely as a way to create a possible ideological rival for Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong, who Soviet leaders saw as a more serious threat to Moscow’s dominance. Khrushchev, and later Brezhnev, struggled to maintain Soviet revolutionary credentials in the third world, which had emerged as the key battlefield between the Communist East and the capitalist West, without provoking the United States.⁵⁷ Mao, who had no such compunction, took the more radical position, both in rhetoric and in support for armed struggles in places like Vietnam. This naturally led to the People’s Republic of China being courted and celebrated by revolutionary and independence movements throughout the world.

Castro was a distant third in the competition between Moscow and Beijing, but he worked hard to make a case for himself and Havana. He verbally attacked both the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. The USSR earned his ire for making friendly overtures to

⁵⁵ Charles D. Ameringer, ed., *Political parties of the Americas, 1980s to 1990s: Canada, Latin America, and the West Indies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), 227.

⁵⁶ Shearman 1987, 18.

⁵⁷ Shearman 1987, 15.

Chile and Brazil, both Cuba's enemies, and both governed by right-wing regimes.⁵⁸ But ultimately, Castro chose to side with the Soviets against the Chinese.⁵⁹ In 1964 and 1965, Cuba made veiled critiques about China. But in 1966, when China cut back its rice shipments to Cuba, Castro erupted with vicious personal attacks, suggesting that Mao was senile by saying that, "in spite of having done good things in his life, [he has] committed great barbarities at the end of his life."⁶⁰ The two countries recalled their ambassadors, and did not resume friendly relations for another twenty years.

In January of 1966, Havana played host to the Tricontinental Conference, a gathering of representatives from socialist states and Communist parties around the globe, with a special focus on the third world countries of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Castro saw the opportunity to advance his own agenda, and invited groups which were neither tied closely to the Soviet Union nor to China.⁶¹ At the conference, speakers called for armed struggle with the West, in every way, and on every front. Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, one of the leading ideologues of the Cuban revolution, had always emphasized that rural guerrilla movements would be more successful in Latin America than urban terrorism. Accordingly, his conference address, delivered by proxy, spoke of the need to support 'people's wars' of the sort being fought then in Vietnam.

⁵⁸ Shearman 1987, 18.

⁵⁹ One way in which Castro did this was by excluding Communist parties with strong ties to China from the 1964 Havana conference. William Ratliff, "Cuban foreign policy toward Far East and Southeast Asia," in *Cuba: The international dimension*, ed. Georges A. Fauriol and Eva Loser (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 210. See also Shearman 1987, 17.

⁶⁰ Ratliff 1990, 210-1.

⁶¹ Shearman 1987, 17.

But this time, he went further, advocating violent confrontation in every form:

We must carry the war into every corner the enemy happens to carry it: to his home, to his centers of entertainment; a total war. It is necessary to prevent him from having a moment of peace, a quiet moment outside his barracks or even inside; we must attack him wherever he may be; make him feel like a cornered beast wherever he may move.⁶²

Unwilling to confine the revolutionary struggle to conventional norms of war, Che called openly for attacks against people at home and in public places— in other words, terrorism.

By the time Che died in Bolivia, in one of his several failed rural guerrilla campaigns, not long after the Tricontinental Conference, Castro was fulfilling a promise he made at the conference, that “any revolutionary movement anywhere in the world can count on Cuba’s unconditional support.”⁶³ With the exception of Mexico, where Cuba had good relations with the ruling PRI, or Institutionalized Revolutionary Party, Cuba supported terrorist groups throughout Latin America. Cuba supported the FALN and PCV in Venezuela, and the MRTA (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement) in Peru. In Ecuador, Cuba supported the AVC (Eloy Alfaro Popular Armed Forces), and in Colombia the ELN (National Liberation Army), the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), and M-19 (19th of April Movement). In Brazil, Cuba supported Carlos Marighella and the ALN (National Liberation Action), in Uruguay the Tupamaros, aka MLN (National Liberation Movement); in Argentina the MPM (Montonero Peronist Movement), and ERP (People’s Revolutionary Army); and in Chile the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), and FPMR (Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front). Many of these

⁶² Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 173.

⁶³ Rex A. Hudson, *Castro’s America Department: Coordinating Cuba’s support for Marxist-Leninist violence* (Washington, DC: Cuban American National Foundation, 1988), 9.

groups primarily employed guerrilla methods, such as attacking state or military targets, but all of them fit within the State Department's definition, from chapter one, in that they practiced, or had significant subgroups that practiced, terrorism.

Cuba's reach was truly remarkable, and it was due to a robust set of domestic institutions which Castro had built to facilitate the sponsorship of terrorism abroad. The General Intelligence Directorate (DGI) in the Ministry of the Interior, Cuba's intelligence service, became one of the country's centers for the sponsorship of foreign terrorist groups. The other center was the American Department (DA) in the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), which was set up to be more independent of the Soviet Union than the DGI, which had been "colonized" by the KGB.⁶⁴ The DA and DGI set up camps inside Cuba called PETI (*Puntos de Entrenamiento de Tropas Irregulares*) where they began training terrorists and guerrillas.⁶⁵ One of their early graduates was Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, later known as 'Carlos the Jackal,' one of the world's most famous mercenary terrorists.⁶⁶

One of the important functions of these camps was for Cuba to monitor and control the various groups. In several cases, there was more than one leftist group in a given country that Cuba could sponsor, and usually these groups fought with each other as much as they did the states they were ostensibly trying to overthrow. In Colombia, for instance, Cuba gave support to

⁶⁴ Fontaine 1988, 12.

⁶⁵ Alberto Pérez Giménez, "El Departamento América cubano," *ABC* (August 17, 2001). Salim Lamrani and Ricardo Alarcón, *Estados Unidos contra Cuba: La guerra contra el terrorismo y el caso de los cinco* (Mataró, Spain: El Viejo Topo, 2005), 188.

⁶⁶ Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, *The Carlos complex: A study in terror* (New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1977), 33-36.

the ELN (National Liberation Army), the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), and M-19 (19th of April Movement). Cuba hosted talks between representatives of the groups, getting them to combine their efforts for a time.⁶⁷ Cuba also helped negotiate between leftist factions in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, serving as a coordinating body and creating a corps of ‘internationalists’ drawn from many different countries and dedicated to helping the cause of Communist revolution throughout Latin America and the world.⁶⁸ Cuba’s involvement allowed Castro to shape the opposition movements in neighboring states, pushing them in a more radical direction.

Cuba 1967-1974

Beginning in 1967, Cuba began to be effectively held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, by the Soviet Union. Soviet leaders already had knowledge of Cuban sponsorship of terrorist groups, and had the capability to impose an intolerable sanction by cutting off aid and trade. This threat had existed as a potentiality since 1960, when Cuba entered into a highly dependent economic relationship with the Soviet Union; all that remained was for this threat to be actualized by Brezhnev. As the theoretical model would predict, shortly after his happened, Cuba responded by decreasing its support for foreign terrorist organizations.

In 1967, Cuba was supporting terrorist and guerrilla groups throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. By choosing which groups to sponsor, and which to ignore or denounce, Cuba could effectively shape the character not just of individual groups but of entire opposition

⁶⁷ Fontaine 1988, 97-100.

⁶⁸ Fontaine 1988, 60-75.

movements in other countries. In Venezuela, for example, Cuba ceased supporting the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) in March, accusing the party of “betraying the cause of revolution in Venezuela by abandoning the armed struggle.”⁶⁹ Not only had the PCV stopped employing terrorism, it had also become increasingly aligned with the Soviet Union, instead of Cuba. As was true all over Latin America, Castro sought to tilt the Venezuelan opposition movement towards more radical, violent action, and away from Moscow. In August, at the first conference of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS), Castro gave a fiery speech in the closing session, calling for armed struggle to bring about socialist revolution, and denouncing the peaceful model of coexistence and electoral transition to socialism advocated by many Latin American communist parties (and the Soviet Union).⁷⁰ This of course strained Cuba’s relationship not just with these parties, but also with the Soviet Union itself.

Cuba’s frenetic sponsorship of terrorist activity throughout Latin America contributed to a rift between Cuba and the Soviet Union in two ways. First, Cuban terrorism was a sore point in Soviet relations with the United States. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, Khrushchev had tried to improve Soviet-American relations, seeing the alternative as a series of crises that risked nuclear war. When Khrushchev was replaced in 1964 as General Secretary of the Communist Party by Leonid Brezhnev, and as Soviet Premier, by Alexei Kosygin, some Americans feared that this would be the end of the ‘Khrushchev thaw.’ Brezhnev did make sure that Soviet diplomacy would be backed by “the real muscle of a military buildup,” but the new Soviet leadership

⁶⁹ Dominguez 1989, 70.

⁷⁰ Tsokhas 1980, 353.

continued Khrushchev's essentially peaceful approach to superpower relations.⁷¹ This led US President Lyndon Johnson in the summer of 1967 to ask Premier Kosygin to dissuade Cuba from supporting revolutionary terrorism in Latin America and the Caribbean. After this was reported, Raul Castro responded by saying "We have no boss; our people have no master."⁷² Cuban intransigence on this issue made the Soviet Union look either too weak to restrain its clients, or duplicitous. Neither was good for superpower comity.

Cuba's support for foreign terrorist groups also contributed to the Soviet-Cuban rift because it was a direct challenge for the ideological leadership of the international Communist movement. Castro called for change: the advance of Socialism in the Third World, and forceful confrontation with the United States and its allies, the representatives of the global system of capitalist imperialism which kept the poorer states of the world in perpetual poverty and subservience. Brezhnev, a stolid establishment figure, seemed uninterested in disrupting the status quo. Cuba's support for revolutionary terrorist and guerrilla organizations throughout the world increased Castro's prestige throughout the Communist world, but also increased resentment among the Soviet leadership. By 1967, Cuba's continued sponsorship of terrorism was a source of great tension between the two countries, and the Soviets made their displeasure known. In July, *Pravda* reprinted a critique of Fidelism by Chilean Communist Luis Corvalan, which declared that

⁷¹ William G. Hyland, "Brezhnev and beyond," *Foreign Affairs* 58, no. 1 (fall, 1979): 57. See also David D. Finley, "Conventional arms in Soviet foreign policy," *World Politics* 33, no. 1 (October 1980): 1-35; W.T. Lee, "The shift in Soviet national priorities to military forces, 1958-1985," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 457 (September 1981): 46-66.

⁷² Dominguez 1989, 71.

The revolutionary current which emerges on a petty bourgeois basis usually under-rates the proletariat and the communist parties, is more disposed toward nationalism, adventurism, and terrorism, and sometimes permits anti-communist and anti-Soviet attitudes.⁷³

In October, *Pravda* published another critical essay, by Rodolfo Ghioldi, an Argentine Marxist, who denounced the policy of exporting revolution, although Cuba was not mentioned by name.⁷⁴

Although Cuban leaders joked in mid-1967 about their support for foreign terrorism as “our little heresy,” it was a serious issue, and one which the Soviet Union began trying to resolve.⁷⁵

In trying to control Castro, Soviet leaders faced numerous challenges. First, two of their most useful mechanisms for control— political influence through the local Communist party, and actual or threatened military intervention— were unavailable here.⁷⁶ In Eastern Europe, the Soviets used local Communist parties as an external check on governments, much in the same way that they used the Party as a check on the Red Army at home. But in Cuba, Castro had built the Communist party from the ground up, and used it as an instrument to ensure his own control, even against the USSR— as when he created the party’s America Department after the DGI became compromised by KGB influence. Second, in Eastern Europe, the presence of Red Army forces made military intervention an ever-present implicit threat, carried out in Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968. Cuba’s remote location, and the relatively small Soviet military presence,

⁷³ Edward Gonzalez, “Relationship with the Soviet Union,” in *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*, ed. Carmelo Mesa-Lago (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), 103.

⁷⁴ Quirk 1995, 586.

⁷⁵ Gall 1971, 54-5.

⁷⁶ Goure and Weinkle 1972, 68.

made this approach much less likely to succeed.⁷⁷

Cuba's economy was its point of greatest vulnerability. Despite Castro's fiercely independent rhetoric, Cuba relied heavily on the USSR for economic aid, including direct investment. In the 1960s, Cuba "received more economic aid per capita than any nation on earth, with an incredibly high investment rate of nearly 30 per cent of GNP, mainly in agriculture."⁷⁸ Castro still hoped to industrialize Cuba, and this would not be possible with Soviet aid.

In addition to Soviet assistance and investment, Cuba depended on the Soviet Union as a trading partner. Cuba had almost no domestic energy production, relying heavily on the shipments of crude oil from the Soviet Union. In the words of Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado, president of Cuba from 1959 to 1976,

Without petroleum, there is no sugar. ... Without petroleum, there is no economy. There is nothing left. There would not even be food, because there would not be fuel for the transportation sector to carry the beans from one place to another. The country would be paralyzed immediately.⁷⁹

Cuba's dependence on imported Soviet oil gave the USSR tremendous economic leverage, or in other words, the capability to enact an intolerable sanction.

As the major purchaser of goods exported from Cuba, the Soviet Union had additional leverage over Cuba. Sugar accounted for between seventy and ninety percent of Cuban exports in this time period,⁸⁰ and the Soviet Union bought the bulk of this. Even this may understate the

⁷⁷ Shearman 1987, 20.

⁷⁸ Gall 1971, 56.

⁷⁹ Perez-Lopez 1979, 275.

⁸⁰ Perez-Lopez 1979, 273-4.

economic importance of the USSR, because many contemporary analysts and scholars on both sides of the Iron Curtain alleged that Cuba got better than world market prices from the Soviet Union for its sugar.⁸¹ These “sugar subsidy payments,” were estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars per year during the 1960s.⁸² But the point is moot since there is little argument that Cuba would have had difficulty getting the world market price, if the Soviet Union had decided not to buy.⁸³ Western countries had become reluctant to deal with socialist Cuba, and friendly socialist countries lacked the capability to step in and rescue Cuba. The People’s Republic of China, for example, was already buying as much of Cuba’s sugar as it could afford to do. It lacked the capital to purchase more, and could not trade petroleum for sugar, as the Soviet Union did, since it had none to export. And even if the Chinese had possessed the capital, or the oil, they lacked a merchant marine fleet capable of transporting the goods back and forth across the ocean.⁸⁴

When the US stopped buying Cuban sugar in 1960, it had little effect on Cuba’s behavior because the Soviet Union was willing to step in to the gap. But in 1967 or 1968, neither the United States nor other Western countries would have done the same, and other countries could not have done the same. The Soviet Union was thus uniquely capable of imposing significant

⁸¹ Tsokhas 1980, 326.

⁸² Willard W. Radell, Jr., “Cuban-Soviet sugar trade, 1960-1976: How great was the subsidy?” *The Journal of Developing Areas* 17, no. 3 (April 1983): 365-6. Together with military aid, including aid from Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe, the total benefit was estimated at between 2 and 3 billion dollars per year. Desmond P. Wilson, Jr., “Cuban-Soviet relations: Conditions and constraints,” in *Aspects of modern communism*, ed. Richard F. Staar (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), 378.

⁸³ Perez-Lopez 1979, 278-9.

⁸⁴ Wilson 1968, 380-1.

economic sanctions on Cuba. Moreover, this threat was credible, since the Soviet Union had already shown that it was willing to cut economic relations with states that proved untrustworthy, as it had with Yugoslavia in 1958 and Albania in 1960.⁸⁵ And since the Soviets had knowledge of the activities of Cuba's terrorist agents, the only missing ingredient for accountability is the communication of the threat.

Although no record has been found of an explicit threat by the Soviet Union, the USSR communicated an implicit economic threat to Cuba in four ways. First, in 1967, they began "stiffening their terms of trade," offering prices for Cuban sugar that were less favorable than they had been, compared with preferential US prices.⁸⁶ Second, as the end of the year approached, Cuba requested more crude oil, a request which had been made in other years and routinely approved. This time, the Soviet Union granted only a little more than half of what Cuba asked for.⁸⁷ In January, Castro publicly announced that because Moscow would be slowing their shipments of oil shipments to Cuba, oil would have to be rationed even more tightly. Thirty percent of the gasoline allotted to the military would now be diverted to agricultural purposes.⁸⁸ It must have been a bitter announcement to make, since the Soviets at the same time increased exports to Brazil and Argentina, two countries where Cuba had been sponsoring terrorism, and which were (naturally) both hostile to Cuba.⁸⁹ Further, the Soviet press had recently printed (and

⁸⁵ Wilson 1968, 380.

⁸⁶ Wilson 1968, 379. See also Radell 1983, 367.

⁸⁷ Dominguez 1989, 73.

⁸⁸ Tsokhas 1980, 325.

⁸⁹ Shearman 1987, 21.

Cuba's official newspaper reprinted) reports that 1967 had been a record year for Soviet oil production and that large gains were expected in the future.⁹⁰ Castro could not fail to get the message: the slowdown of oil shipments was a deliberate snub. Third, in 1968, the Soviet Union delayed the signing of their annual trade agreement. This hurt Cuba by again delaying oil shipments, which Cuba desperately needed. It also meant a delay in the Soviet Union's purchase of sugar, and the corresponding influx of hard currency. Fourth, the USSR began charging interest on the credits they had extended to Cuba.⁹¹

Together, these measures sent a powerful signal to Castro, who took a number of conciliatory steps, including decreasing Cuba's involvement with terrorist and guerrilla movements. After Castro ceased to support international terrorism, things began to change for Cuba. In 1969, the Soviet Union lifted their sanctions, and signed a new trade agreement with Cuba, including a billion rubles hard currency per year, and new lines of credit.⁹² Cuban sponsorship of terrorist groups did not return to its previous highs for more than ten years.

The difficulties between Cuba and the Soviet Union in 1967 and 1968, and their subsequent resolution, were noted by Western scholars and policymakers. Many of them explained the end of the crisis as Cuban capitulation to Soviet "oil blackmail." However, other scholars have examined the timeline and concluded that this oil blackmail must have failed, since Castro continued to irritate his Soviet patrons.⁹³ For example, in January of 1968, Castro began

⁹⁰ Dominguez 1989, 73.

⁹¹ Tsokhas 1980, 325.

⁹² Tsokhas 1980, 326.

⁹³ Shearman 1987, 21-2.

the trials of the ‘microfaction,’ a group of pro-Soviet Cuban Communists from the old Popular Socialist Party, which Castro had merged into his own PCC a few years before. Castro accused them of collaborating with Communist parties in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany in order to “destroy the firmness of the revolutionary forces” in Cuba.⁹⁴ This was part and parcel of the argument about Cuba’s sponsorship of terrorism in Latin America, and the Soviet Union’s desire to see this terrorism cease. The ringleader of the microfaction, Escalante, was placed under house arrest, where he remained even after the Soviet Union and Cuba signed their new agreement.

In August, after the Soviet Union sent the Red Army into Czechoslovakia to suppress the ‘Prague Spring,’ Castro gave a speech which some scholars credit for repairing the Soviet-Cuban relationship. Yet the speech is remarkable in that Castro by no means supports the Soviet intervention. And further, his speech called on the Soviet Union to pledge to defend Cuba from external attack.⁹⁵ This was an odd demand to make as Soviet tanks rolled through Prague, which only called attention to the presence of foreign troops in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union’s supposed fraternal socialist ally. If the oil blackmail had been designed to bring Cuba back into the Soviet orbit, and if it had succeeded, Castro would have released and rehabilitated the microfaction. He would have endorsed the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia without qualification. But he did not. What he did is to stop supporting terrorism, which suggests that this was the key policy change desired by the Soviets.

Many other scholars have suggested that the end of Cuban support for terrorism was due

⁹⁴ Tsokhas 1980, 325.

⁹⁵ Dominguez 1989, 76. For a different view on Castro’s speech, see Gott 2005, 237-9.

to the death of Che Guevara. However, this also does not fit the timeline. Cuban support for terrorism continued to increase in 1967, only falling in 1968. Further, Che was not the motivating force for Cuban state sponsorship of terrorism. In fact, he was largely opposed to it, for ideological reasons. Like many other Marxists in the 1960s, he believed that terrorism was a tactic to be employed in the cities, while Che, like many other Latin American revolutionaries, thought control of the countryside was the key to success, as he believed it had been in Cuba. For this reason, Che spent years arguing against terrorism, and in favor of ‘people’s wars,’ a combination of guerrilla and conventional warfare. It is not therefore surprising that his death marked, if anything, an increase in Cuban support for foreign terrorism.

After 1969, Cuba’s foreign policy became more closely aligned with Soviet policy, and Cuba became economically ever more dependent on the Soviet Union. In April 1970, Castro responded to criticisms that he had abandoned the strategy of armed struggle with a speech in which he stated that Cuba was committed to supporting not just revolutionary movements, but also governments which liberated their people from US imperialism “no matter by what path that government has reached power”— thus allowing for peaceful opposition and electoral transition to socialism.⁹⁶ Later that year, Cuba’s economy was nearly wrecked by a disastrous sugar harvest, and Castro submitted himself for public self-criticism.⁹⁷ Only Soviet aid kept Cuba afloat. And when Kosygin visited Havana in 1971, Cuban leaders expressed “complete unanimity” in their evaluation of the “international situation”— a far cry from Castro’s strident critiques just a few

⁹⁶ Tsokhas 1980, 355.

⁹⁷ Gall 1971, 50.

years earlier.⁹⁸ In 1972, Cuba joined the CMEA, and its economy became more formally integrated with the economies of the Socialist bloc.⁹⁹

In 1973, Castro demonstrated his loyalty to the USSR by denouncing a Chinese theory of two imperialist superpowers, voiced in a meeting of the Non Aligned Movement in Algiers.¹⁰⁰ At this time, Cuba was suffering from a double economic catastrophe, as sugar prices sank and oil prices rose.¹⁰¹ But they were able to weather it, thanks to the help of the USSR, which provided almost half of Cuba's imports in 1974.¹⁰² As Castro himself said in an interview that year,

The past few years have been so difficult, so hard for us, that we could not have survived without this aid. Who can say this aid has hurt us? What would we have had to do without this aid?¹⁰³

Unsurprisingly, scholars and policymakers alike noted the closeness and harmony of the Soviet-Cuban relationship in this time period. Given the complete economic dependence of his country on Soviet support, it is no wonder that Castro no longer sponsored terrorism, undermined pro-Soviet or peaceful leftist groups in Latin America, or criticized Brezhnev for pursuing detente with the United States.

This change in Castro's behavior was reflected in more pacific relations with his Latin

⁹⁸ Tsokhas 1980, 351.

⁹⁹ Shearman 1987, 28 .

¹⁰⁰ Tsokhas 1980, 352-3.

¹⁰¹ Perez-Lopez 1979, 273.

¹⁰² Tsokhas 1980, 330.

¹⁰³ Tsokhas 1980, 328.

American and Caribbean neighbors. Despite Cuba's increasingly close ties to the Soviet Union and its satellites, Latin American countries began in 1972 to defect from the 1964 OAS sanctions— not only because the sanctions were ineffective, but also because “it became apparent that Castro no longer sought to foment revolution in the region.”¹⁰⁴ In particular, Cuba's relationship with Venezuela improved markedly. After Betancourt and his successor left office, diplomatic relations were restored in 1974, and Venezuela began selling oil to Cuba, helping to reduce its dependency on Soviet crude. Venezuela, the state which had been the cause of the OAS sanctions, even advocated Cuba's readmission to the OAS. And on July 29, 1975, the OAS voted to allow its members to make their own arrangements with Cuba, effectively ending the multilateral embargo.¹⁰⁵ Cuba had been rehabilitated.

Cuba 1975-1985

Because Cuba had ceased to support terrorism, it enjoyed much better relations with its neighbors in the Western Hemisphere, including the United States. During this time period, the US began to dismantle elements of the sanctions regime which had been built in the early 1960s. Cuba was still motivated towards conflict, though in the early and mid 1970s these motivations were expressed in other ways, such as military interventions in Angola and Ethiopia. The US pursuit of rapprochement with Cuba convinced Castro that US threats were not credible,

¹⁰⁴ Lillich and Newman 1979, 417.

¹⁰⁵ Organization of American States, “Sixteenth meeting of consultation of ministers of foreign affairs, serving as organ of consultation in Application of the inter-American treaty of reciprocal assistance, San Jose, Costa Rica,” (July 29, 1975), <http://www.oas.org/consejo/MEETINGS%20OF%20CONSULTATION/Actas/Acta%2016.pdf> (accessed July 21, 2011).

especially since Castro was still engaged in many of the activities which had caused the US to impose its sanctions. At the same time, Cuban relations with the Soviet Union were good, meaning that no threats were being delivered. And Cuba had resumed trade with some Latin American countries, lessening their dependence on Soviet largesse, or in other words decreasing the capability of the USSR to deliver an intolerable sanction. These developments added up to a decrease in accountability, which, as the theoretical model would predict, was followed by a resurgence in Cuban support for terrorism throughout Latin America, beginning in the late 1970s.

American efforts to normalize relations with Cuba began with secret talks at the end of 1974, when State Department officials William Rogers and Lawrence Eagleburger met with Cuban representatives in Washington and New York. The talks ended because of the Cuban intervention in Angola, which stirred up American official and popular feeling against Cuba.¹⁰⁶ But this did not long prevent the US government from returning to the issue. In July of 1975, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger publicly announced that the US government intended to discuss normalization of relations with Cuba, stating that he would like to “move in a new direction.”¹⁰⁷ In August, the US trade embargo was modified to allow foreign subsidiaries of American companies to engage in trade with Cuba.

Castro apparently decided to test the limits of US patience. In October of 1975, Cuba deployed an additional 35,000 troops to Angola. More importantly, Cuba again began sponsoring Puerto Rican terrorist groups seeking independence from the United States, the BP

¹⁰⁶ Kathlyn Gay, *Leaving Cuba: From Operation Pedro Pan to Elian* (Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books, 2000), 133-4.

¹⁰⁷ Schwab 1999, 15.

and the FALN. On December 20, US President Gerald Ford declared that the US would no longer be attempting to improve relations with Cuba, because of the Cuban military intervention in Angola and because of Cuba's support for Puerto Rican terrorists.¹⁰⁸ Castro pushed further, and two days after Ford's announcement, he publicly declared his support for revolutionary movements in Angola and Puerto Rico. This provocation got no further response from the US, and although the Ford administration never again discussed normalizing relations with Cuba, this changed in 1977 when President Jimmy Carter took office, and accelerated the process tremendously.

In March, the Carter administration lifted the prohibition on American travel to Cuba by allowing US citizens to spend up to \$100 in Cuba. In April, the United States and Cuba signed an agreement on fishing rights and maritime boundaries. In September, the United States opened an American 'interest section' in Havana, and Cuba did the same in Washington.¹⁰⁹ Although these were not formal embassies, it was the highest level of diplomatic contact that the two countries had experienced in 17 years. In January 1978, the US Coast Guard and Cuba's Border Guard held talks in Havana on increased cooperation in rescue operations, as well as in fighting narcotics trafficking and terrorism.

The Carter administration believed that improved relations with Cuba would lead to changes in Cuban foreign policy. In some ways, this was correct. The Coast Guard talks in Havana led to Cuba lifting a ban on the Coast guard operating in Cuban airspace and Cuban

¹⁰⁸ Gay 2000, 134

¹⁰⁹ Gay 2000, 134.

waters.¹¹⁰ And for a time in 1978 and 1979 Castro allowed US citizens and their families to leave Cuba— including about a thousand political prisoners— and allowed Cuban-Americans to return to visit their families.¹¹¹ Yet, Cuba did not cease its support for terrorism. And the US continued to relax the sanctions regime. The changes in American policy may have been intended to change the US-Cuban relationship, and thus eliminate Cuba’s motive for sponsoring terrorism, but it appears that Cuba perceived these changes as a demonstration that America lacked the will to continue to enforce its sanctions. This hurt credibility, a necessary component of accountability.

Cuba was also emboldened by years of good relations with the Soviet Union. Soviet influence on Cuban foreign policy is evident in the history of Cuba’s involvement in Ethiopia.¹¹² Throughout much of the 1970s, Ethiopia faced conflict on two fronts: an invasion of the Ogaden by neighboring Somalia, and an insurgent independence movement in Eritrea. Cuba had supported the Marxist Eritrea People’s Liberation Front when they fought against pro-Western Emperor Haile Selassie, but this changed in 1974 when Selassie was deposed by a socialist military junta led by Haile Mariam Mengistu. In 1975, Castro spoke of his regret for a “situation in which two causes of progressive trends are confronting each other,” but still referred to the Eritreans as a “national liberation movement.”¹¹³ Cuba deployed tens of thousands of troops to Ethiopia, but Castro tried to prevent them from being used against the Eritreans, urging

¹¹⁰ Dominguez 1989, 228.

¹¹¹ Dominguez 1989, 228.

¹¹² Shearman 1987, 53.

¹¹³ Dominguez 1989, 160.

negotiations between the two sides.¹¹⁴ (Of course, even the deployment of Cuban troops to the Ogaden hurt the Eritreans because it freed up Ethiopian forces.¹¹⁵) Domestic Cuban propaganda still spoke of Eritrean oppression and exploitation under Selassie, saying nothing of the current regime's effort to subdue the territory or of the role of Cuban soldiers in that effort.¹¹⁶ However, by 1978, Mengistu was boasting publicly of Cuban military aid, and the presence of Cuban military personnel was being reported in the West.¹¹⁷ Castro's reversal "served to further ingratiate Castro with the Kremlin."¹¹⁸ This closer relationship may have led to Castro and other Cuban leaders losing their fear of being held accountable by the Soviet Union.

However, there were other reasons for Cuba to believe that the USSR would not punish them for sponsoring foreign terrorism. In the late 1970s, the Soviet Union seemed less interested in amicable relations with the United States than they had a decade earlier. Brezhnev was aging, suffering from strokes, succumbing to alcoholism and sleeping pills, and increasingly interested in matters of vanity, such as being given the Lenin Prize for Literature and being honored as Marshal of the Soviet Union. Foreign affairs came to be managed by other Soviet leaders, including KGB Director Yuri Andropov, who were more comfortable contemplating conflict

¹¹⁴ Lewis H. Diuguid, "Castro seen seeking to avoid troop commitment in Eritrea," *Washington Post*, April 27, 1978, A24.

¹¹⁵ Dominguez 1989, 160.

¹¹⁶ Karen DeYoung, "Troops' role in Africa gives Cubans at home a cause," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1978, A22.

¹¹⁷ Murrey Marder, "Ethiopia launches drive against Eritrean rebels," *Washington Post*, May 17, 1978, A1.

¹¹⁸ Benemelis 1990, 145.

with the West. This came to a head with the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which effectively ended detente between the superpowers.

With the Soviet Union no longer interested in restraining Cuba's adventurism, and the United States lacking both capability and credibility to impose an intolerable sanction, Cuba was free to sponsor terrorism again. And they did. During the late 1970s, Cuba once again welcomed terrorists and guerrillas from all over the hemisphere to Cuba, where they trained and received instruction from Cuban leaders. This led to the emergence of the 'internationalists,' a loose network of mostly Latin American leftist terrorists who were connected through Cuba.

The greatest triumph of Cuba and the internationalists was the 1979 Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, which removed right-wing dictator Anastasio Somoza and placed Cuban-trained and funded operatives in power. Somoza was brutal, unpopular, and isolated. In 1977, US President Jimmy Carter sent an envoy to demand that Somoza implement human rights reforms, and then cut off aid when Somoza failed to comply. Without his superpower patron, and in poor health, Somoza was then seen as highly vulnerable.¹¹⁹ Cuba saw an opportunity to overturn the regime, but so did many other people, especially as the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) became a viable opposition force.

Cuban support for the Sandinistas was hotly debated in the United States. Some believed that Cuban involvement was simply propaganda put forward by Somoza in order to recapture American support. But many in the President Carter's administration, including National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and his Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, believed the

¹¹⁹ Bernard Diederich, *Somoza and the legacy of U.S. involvement in Central America* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981), 144-5.

Cubans to be behind the FSLN.¹²⁰ The disagreement was at least in part because of the chaotic nature of the insurrection. Many different groups participated, including “organized Christian groups, student organizations, labor unions (often associated with other left parties), and national bourgeois groupings,” that were “not necessarily under [the] direct control” of the FSLN.¹²¹ And the revolutionary movement swept up many ordinary people who were not members of any group. As one participant in the Monimbo uprising recalled,

... we knew that the Sandinista Front was coming here, but there were those of us who imagined that they would come in columns or something like that. It wasn't until later that we realized that the Sandinista front was us; that they came to orient us, but that it was us, alongside them, that had to fight. That day the red and black handkerchiefs began to come out. For the first time all of us began to participate in the fight.¹²²

Many Nicaraguans who participated in the revolution thus called themselves Sandinistas without formally belonging to the FSLN organization. However, the FSLN was the core of the revolutionary opposition, and Cuba was the power behind the FSLN.

After the Sandinistas took power, Cuba used Nicaragua as a base to support other insurgents throughout Latin America, especially in Central America and the Caribbean. In neighboring El Salvador, Cuba supported the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), FPL (Popular Forces of Liberation), and FARN (Armed Forces of Popular Resistance). In Guatemala, Cuba supported the (Guerrilla Army of the Poor). In Jamaica they trained and

¹²⁰ Diederich 1981, 282.

¹²¹ Bruce E. Wright, “Pluralism and vanguardism in the Nicaraguan revolution,” *Latin American Perspectives* 17:3 (July 1990), 42.

¹²² Maria Chavarria, as quoted in Pilar Arias, *Nicaragua: Revolucion: Relatos de combatientes del frente sandinista* (Mexico, DF: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1980), 154.

armed individuals for urban combat, hoping to spark a conflagration that would lead to revolution.¹²³ In Grenada, Cuba supported the New Jewel Movement (NJM), a Marxist party which took control of the island in a 1979 revolution. This touched off US fears that Grenada, like Nicaragua, would be used as a base for the invasion of nearby islands, or to support terrorism in Venezuela and elsewhere.¹²⁴

Initially, the United States did little to attempt to hold Cuba accountable for these actions, despite Castro's increasing political vulnerabilities due to economic difficulties. In the summer of 1980, tens of thousands of Cubans set sail from the port of Mariel, after Castro announced that anyone who wanted to leave Cuba could do so. The United States initially welcomed the 'Marielitos,' but stopped in October after it became clear that Castro was emptying his prisons and insane asylums. The US also condemned terrorist attacks on Castro by Cuban exiles.¹²⁵

All this changed after US President Ronald Reagan assumed office in 1981, and shortly afterward announced a number of highly publicized steps to increase pressure on Cuba. The import of newspapers and magazines from Cuba was banned under a World War I era act, travel restrictions on Cuban diplomats in the US were reimposed, and the naval maneuvers were ordered for the Caribbean. In September, the Reagan administration plans to establish a radio station called Radio Marti after Jose Marti, a Cuban freedom fighter. This station would broadcast anti-Castro propaganda to the Cuban people, which Reagan hoped would hurt Castro's domestic legitimacy. Castro dismissively asked what Reagan could know of Marti, and Cuba

¹²³ Fontaine 1988, 86-90.

¹²⁴ Weisburd 1997, 234-5.

¹²⁵ Gay 2000, 135.

blocked the transmissions.¹²⁶ In fact, none of these efforts had a great impact on Cuba or its sponsorship of foreign terrorism.

Reagan did not give up. In 1982, the administration put an end to charter flights linking Miami and Havana, and restored the travel ban by again prohibiting US citizens from spending money in Cuba.¹²⁷ Cuba was also placed on the State Departments list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, which carried with it automatic trade sanctions. In the case of Cuba, these were already surpassed by existing sanctions, which made the act a symbolic gesture. Castro made no change to Cuban policy, and promised continued support for revolutionary regimes and movements throughout Latin America, making frequent mention of Nicaragua. In a speech in 1983, he warned Reagan that if the United States tried to oust the Sandinistas, their revolution would only “spill over into the rest of Central America.”¹²⁸ The US sent aid to the Contras, a loose association of Nicaraguan opposition groups, but did not intervene directly.

In 1983, the US did intervene in Grenada, evicting a regime that was friendly to both Cuba and the USSR. The Marxist NJM, which had seized power four years earlier, was in the process of building an airstrip that American intelligence feared would have military purposes. Neighboring Caribbean states assembled a joint task force, to which the US contributed nearly twenty thousand troops— an enormous number considering the population of Grenada was only a

¹²⁶ Quirk 1995, 813-4. Despite the announcement, Radio Marti did not actually begin broadcasting until May of 1985. Gay 2000, 136.

¹²⁷ Gay 2000, 135

¹²⁸ Quirk 1995, 818.

hundred thousand.¹²⁹ Some Cuban forces on the island were killed in the assault, and afterwards, the new Grenadan authorities expelled East Germans, North Koreans, Libyans, and over seven hundred Cubans. In a speech honoring those Cubans who had died in the assault, Castro denied “the idea that Grenada had been turned into an arsenal to supply subversive and terrorist organizations, as the current U.S. Administration likes to call all national liberation and revolutionary movements.” Further, although he had been somewhat at odds with the most recent NJM leader, Castro condemned the American invasion:

Where is the glory, the greatness, and the victory of invading and conquering one of the smallest countries in the world, with no economic or strategic significance? Where is the heroism of fighting against a handful of workers and civilian collaborators, whose heroic resistance despite the element of surprise, the scarcity of ammunition, the disadvantage of the terrain, being at a disadvantage in number of and in weapons, facing the forces of air, sea, and land of the most powerful imperialist country in the world?¹³⁰

Castro did not plan to reduce Cuban support for terrorism, and in fact reiterated a commitment to insurgents in Guatemala and El Salvador. In 1985, Latin America would surpass Western Europe as the region with the most attacks on US targets.¹³¹ Nonetheless, President Reagan declared that the US victory in Grenada was a blow to Cuba and its “network of surrogates and terrorists.”¹³²

In contrast to repeated, albeit ineffective, US efforts at increasing Cuban accountability

¹²⁹ Quirk 1995, 821.

¹³⁰ Fidel Castro, “Funeral ceremony: Cubans who died in Grenada,” (November 15, 1983), University of Texas-Austin Latin American Network Information Center, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19831114.html> (accessed August 6, 2011).

¹³¹ Hudson 1988, 4.

¹³² Quirk 1995, 822.

for its support for foreign terrorism, the Soviet Union made no attempt to influence Cuban policy during the early 1980s. Brezhnev was ailing, and Moscow was distracted by events in Afghanistan. After Brezhnev died in November 1982, the Soviet Union was governed by Yuri Andropov until his death fifteen months later. He was succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko, who lived only thirteen months. The Politburo knew that younger leadership was required, and 54 year old Mikhail Gorbachev was chosen as General Secretary in March 1985. For the previous several years, Cuba had been left largely to its own devices, with little Soviet oversight. But with Gorbachev, this would change.

Cuba 1986-1993

During this period, Cuba faced greater accountability, and correspondingly its support for foreign terrorism declined, as the theoretical model would predict. Before 1990, this increased accountability came primarily from the Soviet Union, which under Mikhail Gorbachev sought a new relationship with the West. Gorbachev was also faced with domestic political and economic problems which imposed limits on Soviet foreign policy,¹³³ a problem that he sought to solve by sharing it with states like Cuba, which had previously solved such problems with Soviet subsidies. Cuba was less vulnerable to Soviet pressure than it had been twenty years before, because it had built economic relations with other states in Latin America and Europe. Accordingly, Cuba was somewhat slower to respond, and although its sponsorship of terrorism declined, it did not cease. After 1990, this increased accountability took a different form. As the

¹³³ Melvin Allan Goodman, *Gorbachev's retreat: The Third World* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1991), 25.

Soviet Union began to collapse, Cuba lost its superpower patron. This left Cuba highly vulnerable to US and multilateral sanctions. Cuba therefore cut off its support for foreign terrorism almost completely.

Initially, Gorbachev seemed interested in friendlier relations with Cuba, quickly sending Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to Havana to convey his “warmest wishes” to Castro and the Cuban people.¹³⁴ However, Gorbachev had shown little interest in Cuba before coming to power, examining it primarily as an example of American relations with Latin America.¹³⁵ Gorbachev wanted a new Soviet approach with both the United States and with Latin America and there he wanted a new direction. Cuban support for terrorism stood in the way.¹³⁶ In 1986, Gorbachev signaled this divergence from Castro’s revolutionary policies by “actively courting” the support of influential Latin American states, such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico— none of them Marxist.¹³⁷ And in a major speech in March, Gorbachev failed to mention Soviet support for national liberation movements— the first time a Soviet leader had done this in twenty years.¹³⁸

This time, Cuba was slow to abandon its support for terrorism. Before Gorbachev’s visit to Cuba in 1989, a Cuban official announced that Cuba would continue to support revolution

¹³⁴ Walter Raymond Duncan and Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahl, *Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1990), 199..

¹³⁵ Mervyn J. Bain, *Soviet-Cuban relations, 1985 to 1991: Changing perceptions in Moscow and Havana* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 46.

¹³⁶ Goodman 1991, 74.

¹³⁷ Hudson 1988, 63.

¹³⁸ Bain 2007, 48.

abroad because the US supported counter-revolutionaries in Nicaragua and elsewhere.¹³⁹ But the Soviet Union had come to accept American dominance in the Western Hemisphere, and Gorbachev pressured Castro to abandon terrorism and other attempts to export revolution. Castro pushed back, declaring that perestroika was against Marxist-Leninist principles. But when Soviet shipments began arriving late, as they had in 1967 and 68, Castro understood that Moscow was trying to increase the pressure.¹⁴⁰

In 1990, things got worse for Cuba. As the Soviet Union exercised less control over its Eastern European clients, Cuba had to renegotiate their trade agreements with each state separately, all of which fought hard for better terms than had been imposed by the Soviets.¹⁴¹ In February, the Sandinistas were defeated in elections in Nicaragua, leaving Castro without a socialist ally in the hemisphere. Throughout Latin America, military dictatorships were being replaced not by Cuban-style revolutionary regimes, but by democracies. Cuba was isolated. Twenty times more flights were landing in San Juan, Puerto Rico, than in Havana.¹⁴² Then, later that year, Soviet oil shipments stopped.¹⁴³

Castro declared the beginning of a ‘Special Period in Time of Peace.’ With no Soviet crude oil coming in, there would be no gasoline. “Someday, we might be thankful for this

¹³⁹ Stephen Blank, “The end of the affair: Moscow and Havana, 1989-1992,” in *Cuba and the future*, ed. Donald E. Shulz (Westport, CN: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1994), 102-3.

¹⁴⁰ Blank 1994, 103.

¹⁴¹ Quirk 1995, 830.

¹⁴² Jiri Valenta and Frank Cibulka, *Gorbachev’s new thinking and Third World conflicts* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 112.

¹⁴³ Gott 2005, 286.

situation. We are going back to the ox, the noble ox,” said Castro.¹⁴⁴ As Cuba struggled for its economic survival, any material support for foreign terrorism became impossible. Although some ETA and FARC terrorists continued to find sanctuary there, Cuba stopped providing weapons to terrorist groups in Colombia and other Latin American countries.¹⁴⁵ There was simply no money for it.

In 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved. Cuba had already lost Soviet economic support; now it lost the protection of a nuclear-armed superpower. There was now nothing standing between the United States and Cuba but good will. The United States would no longer have to settle for economic sanctions; military intervention became a real possibility for the first time since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Even if Cuba had the money to support terrorism, to do so under these circumstances would have been profoundly unwise. Once again, the United States was capable of imposing an intolerable sanction. Avoiding accountability was no longer an option. In 1993, the US State Department reported “no evidence” of significant Cuban support for terrorism.

Cuba’s decline in support for terrorism from 1986 to 1990, and its virtual cessation after 1990, is in keeping with the predictions of the model, in that Cuba’s changed behavior corresponds to a change in accountability, the key variable in the theory. Cuba is still motivated for conflict. Cuba has pressing strategic concerns, and although international Communism is much diminished, Castro remains an important figure in the inchoate anti-Western movement. Cuba is still constrained against pursuing conflict directly. In fact, after 1990, Cuba was more constrained than ever before; without Soviet aid it was weaker, economically and militarily.

¹⁴⁴ Quirk 1995, 831.

¹⁴⁵ Byman 2005, 35.

However, the potential for accountability vastly increased, with the disappearance of Cuba's superpower patron.

Cuba, 1994 - 2010

From 1994 to the present, State Department reports have noted no material support for terrorism, but Cuba has remained on the list of state sponsors. Only the most minimal support for terrorism has been alleged: safe haven for suspected or indicted terrorists, ties to other state sponsors of terrorism, rhetoric, and lack of cooperation with the United States. Cuba remains on the list of State Sponsors of Terror, even though it is no longer a significant sponsor of foreign terrorist groups, because it gives the United States leverage on other issues. Two other legislative measures during this time period expanded American sanctions against Castro's Cuba. In 1992, Congress passed the Cuban Democracy Act. In 1996, Congress passed the Helms-Burton Act. Neither of these were directly aimed at Cuban sponsorship of terrorism, which had essentially ended.

In the last decade, there have been some relaxations of the American sanctions regime. In 2000, Congress passed the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, which relaxed US sanctions against Cuba. In 2009, the US relaxed the travel ban. And the OAS reinstated Cuba as a member.

These changes should not be expected to bring about a resurgence in Cuban sponsorship for terrorism, as happened in the late 1970s. Cuba may still be motivated to pursue conflict, and is still constrained from pursuing it directly, but the potential for accountability is too great. Even though the United States can not threaten an intolerable economic sanction, renewed trade

relationships would offer an enormous benefit. Additionally, the United States has proved, with numerous post-Cold War military interventions, to be very capable of regime change— if not of skillful management of occupied states afterward. During the administration of President George W. Bush, two regimes which supported terrorism to one degree or another were deposed, making future US interventions against state sponsors of terrorism a more credible possibility. Given Cuba's close proximity to the United States, regime change remains an option if Cuba were to give the US a good reason.

Case analysis and evaluation of the theory

As can be seen from this historical overview, all three causal variables from the theory were present. Castro's Cuba had powerful personal, ideological, and strategic incentives for conflict with the United States and its allies. Although all three varied somewhat, the changes in Cuban support for terrorism over these decades best correlates with changes in accountability. Neither Cuba's motivations or its constraints changed substantially until 1991, but Cuba's support for terrorism varied dramatically. This correlates best with variations in efforts to hold Cuba accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents— especially Soviet efforts.

Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union protected Castro militarily and economically, making it easier to avoid being held accountable by out-group powers like the US and the Organization of American States. However, this left Cuba vulnerable to in-group pressure. When the Soviet Union withheld or delayed oil shipments, Cuba decreased its support for terrorism (in some cases shifting to guerrilla or mainstream political movements). Further, when the Soviet Union collapsed, Cuba lacked the resources to maintain its commitments, and its support for

revolutionary terrorism essentially ceased in the early 1990s.

The US also enacted numerous economic and diplomatic sanctions against Cuba—beginning even before the revolution was complete. However, in most cases these sanctions were not enacted as a reaction to Cuban sponsorship of terrorism, but as reactions to other Cuban actions, such as the nationalization of the sugar industry. In no case is it clear that US sanctions had the effect of reducing Cuban support for terrorism. The best that can be said is that US and OAS sanctions did have the effect of making Cuba completely dependent on the Soviet Union, which made Soviet sanctions effective.

Considered on their own, however, US attempts to increase accountability, through diplomatic and economic sanctions, do not seem to have had much effect on Cuba. In other words, the case evidence is not congruent with the third hypothesis, that target states can best alter the behavior of sponsor states through accountability. A glance at the timeline indicates that most of the important changes in Cuba's behavior do not come on the heels of important changes in US policy, but rather at times when the United States is simply continuing past policies. For example, Cuba's decision in the late 1960s to reduce their support comes at a time when there has been no meaningful change in American policy for several years, making it very unlikely that any causal link exists. More problematically, the earliest US sanctions predate Cuba's sponsorship of terrorist groups; indeed the most likely causal link is that US sanctions gave Cuba security concerns which were a motivating factor in Cuba's decision to begin supporting terrorism.

A careful examination of the timing of US sanctions and Cuban sponsorship of terrorism does reveal three possible causal links. First, in the mid-1970s, there was a relaxation of sanctions: in 1975, the OAS ended its multilateral trade embargo, and in 1977, the Carter

administration loosened restrictions on American travel to Cuba. This was followed by the renaissance of Cuba's support for terrorism. It is important to note, however, that most of the sanctions regime stayed in place during this time. And without better evidence, such as internal memos, it is impossible to say that this loosening of sanctions played a part in Cuba's decision. But it certainly fits the model.

The second possible causal link between US accountability efforts and Cuban support for terror comes in the mid-1980s. Cuba's decision to once again decrease their sponsorship of terrorism came during the Reagan administration, after the trade embargo had been strengthened and Cuba had been placed on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. However, the largest increase in American accountability is all before Reagan's reelection in 1984, and in those four years Cuba was not decreasing their support for terrorism. US efforts may have had some minor impact on Cuba's decision, but again, Soviet policy is a better fit.

The third instance in which Cuban decisions on state sponsorship may have been causally linked to US accountability efforts was in the early 1990s. After Congress passed the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act, the State Department reported (in 1993) that Cuba appeared to have completely abandoned their support for foreign terrorism. From those two data points, the timing seems to fit perfectly, but there are reasons to dispute this possible causal link. The primary problem with this timeline is that although the US did not report until 1993 that Cuban support had completely ceased, the sharp decline began in 1990 or 1991, when Soviet aid dried up and Cuba entered its 'special period.' Additionally, the 1992 Act was not focused on eliminating Cuban support for terrorism, as is evinced by the act remaining in force to this day. And given the already crushing economic sanctions the US had imposed, it is difficult to believe that this straw

broke the camel's back.

Why were US sanctions ineffective in holding Cuba accountable? One answer is lack of credibility. Especially during the Reagan administration, American officials discussed the possibility of military reprisals or intervention to effect regime change. But these military sanctions could not be credibly threatened as long as Cuba was a client state of the Soviet Union, a nuclear superpower. Highly defense-dominant environments thus appear to reduce accountability by removing direct military confrontation as an option for victim states.

The fundamental reason for the failure of US sanctions, though, is that the United States lacked the capability to enact intolerable sanctions. In large part, this is because US sanctions were generally unilateral.¹⁴⁶ The US did attempt to persuade other states to join it in multilateral sanctions, and succeeded with the OAS in 1964, which resolved for member states to impose sanctions as a punishment for Cuba's aid to the FALN in Venezuela. But these sanctions were likewise ineffective. This not only failed to dissuade Cuba, but precedes a time of enormous expansion in terrorism sponsored by Cuba. Again, these sanctions, though multilateral, did not reach far enough to affect Cuba's most important economic relationships.

Conclusion

Cuba's varying support for terrorism, during the decades of Castro's rule, is highly congruent with the first and second theoretical hypothesis. When Cuba met all three necessary conditions, it sponsored foreign terrorism. When one of these conditions— lack of accountability—

¹⁴⁶ The Helms-Burton Act, which attempts to impose a multilateral sanction unilaterally, came after the State Department had reported the end of Cuban support for terrorism.

changed, Cuba stopped. This is strong evidence in support of these hypotheses, given the tight fit in the timeframe.

As the third hypothesis proposes, accountability seemed to be the key variable, in that changes in this variable fit both Cuba's initial support for terrorist groups and its later cessation of support. The third hypothesis is further supported in that the US did, in the 1970s, attempt to change a different variable— Cuban motivations— to little avail. Castro and other Cuban leaders saw American efforts to bring about a less adversarial relationship as a sign that American threats were no longer credible. However, the case evidence does not fit the third hypothesis in that it was Cuba's patron state, not its target state, that was able to hold it accountable.

This failure by the US offers a caution for other states which are the targets of terrorism and wish to persuade the sponsor states to cut off their support. Not all attempts to hold sponsor states accountable will be successful. To successfully hold a sponsor state accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, a target state needs four things— knowledge of the relationship, the capability to enact intolerable sanctions, a clear commitment to impose sanctions, and perceived credibility. The US tried diplomatic sanctions and economic sanctions on Cuba for decades, to little effect. Much smaller Soviet diplomatic and economic sanctions achieved much greater results, because the Soviet Union had the capability to impose intolerable sanctions, which the US did not..

Finally, the case evidence is somewhat congruent with the fourth hypothesis, in that Cuba failed to completely sacrifice either control of its terrorist agents or credit for their actions. And Cuban accountability did increase after the mid-1960s, when Cuba was attempting to gain more control over leftist movements in Latin America, and after the early 1980s, when Cuba claimed

the credit for the success of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua. However, it does not appear that Cuba took operational control over any of the terrorist groups that it sponsored. Neither did it claim credit for any specific acts of terrorism. And there is no direct evidence linking these increases in accountability to Cuba's waning interest in sacrificing control and credit.

Chapter Four

Libya, International Terrorism, and United States Foreign Policy, 1969-2010

Introduction

Libya under the direction of Muammar Qaddafi became the heart of a vast network of international terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s. The Libyan decision to sponsor terrorist groups throughout the world as a central part of their foreign policy is congruent with the hypotheses described in chapter two.

Specifically, Libya met all three conditions hypothesized to be necessary for state sponsorship of terrorism. Libya under Qaddafi was: first, highly motivated to pursue conflict with America and the West; second, highly constrained against pursuing conflict directly; and, third, not effectively held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents. Further, Qaddafi's decision to stop supporting terrorism in the 1990s fits the hypothesis that a change in one of these three variables would lead to a change in state behavior. In this case, Libya ceased to sponsor terrorism in the mid 1990s after it was held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, via multilateral diplomatic and economic sanctions, spearheaded by the United States.

The evidence of the Libyan case does not entirely fit the third hypothesis, since the efforts of the target state alone to increase accountability were insufficient to change the behavior of the sponsor state— even though the US efforts were substantial. Only when the United States supplemented its unilateral efforts with a regime of international sanctions, formalized in a UN Security Council resolution, did Libya begin to reduce its support for terrorism. Thus, although

accountability was crucial in changing the behavior of the sponsor state, it required more than the actions of the target state.

The fourth hypothesis is congruent with the evidence presented in the Libyan case in that Libya's efforts to increase operational control over the actions of its terrorist agents were instrumental in bringing about an effective multilateral accountability regime. However, the case does not fit the hypothesis in that Libya on several occasions claimed credit at some level for terrorist attacks without suffering any meaningful increase in accountability.

Terrorism, delegation, and accountability

In this dissertation, I ask four questions: Why do states sponsor terrorism? Why do states cease to sponsor terrorism? How can states be persuaded to end their support for terrorism? How can state sponsors of terrorism avoid being held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents?

To answer the first question, my theory begins with an assumption that state-sponsored terrorism is an act of foreign policy delegation. Then, my theory argues that for a state to delegate a portion of its foreign policy to a terrorist agent, three necessary variables must be present. First, a state must have strong motivations to pursue conflict. States may be motivated by strategic concerns, ideology, or domestic politics (following Daniel Byman's typology of motivations for state sponsorship of terror). The decision to sponsor terrorism may also be determined by the personal motivations of state leaders, particularly in autocratic states.

The second necessary variable is that a state must be prevented from pursuing conflict through direct, conventional means. A state can be prevented in three ways: (1) an intractable

opposition to conflict either domestically or among allies, (2) a mismatch in military capabilities, or (3) the perception (correct or incorrect) of a defense-dominant environment. If both of these variables are present, the state is frustrated— at once impelled toward conflict and prevented from it.

For a frustrated state to sponsor terrorism, a third necessary variable must be present: the belief that accountability can be avoided. State leaders must believe that they will not be held responsible for the actions of their terrorist agents. Successfully evading accountability depends on preventing the target state from gaining knowledge of the relationship between the sponsor state and its terrorist agents. Keeping this secret is most likely when a sponsor state makes two important sacrifices: sacrificing control over the actions of the terrorists, and sacrificing recognition and credit from the state's in-group for the actions of the terrorists. States which do not make these sacrifices are unlikely to be able to evade accountability

Thus, my answer to the first question is that states sponsor terrorism because they are frustrated in their desire to pursue conflict and because they believe that they can evade accountability through the illicit delegation of foreign policy authority to terrorist agents. My answer to the second question flows from the first. Because my theory argues that all three variables are necessary, the removal of any one must lead the erstwhile sponsor state to end their sponsorship.

The third question is how to persuade states to cease their sponsorship. The question may be re-framed by asking which of the three necessary variables a state should attempt to remove. Motivations for conflict are difficult to erase, especially in the short term. Constraints against conflict are desirable and are thus best left in place. This leaves accountability as the key

variable. How can target states hold sponsor states accountable? Successful accountability requires four components: (1) the target state's knowledge of the sponsor state's responsibility; (2) the target state's capability to impose an unacceptable sanction on the sponsor state; (3) the target state's communication of the threat to the sponsor state; and (4) the sponsor state's perception of this threat as credible.

This theory explains why Libya under Qaddafi sponsored terrorism, why Libya stopped sponsoring terrorism, and why US efforts to persuade Libya to stop were largely unsuccessful until the sanctions became multilateral.

This chapter begins by reviewing the three necessary variables for sponsorship of terrorism, and showing that Libya was motivated for conflict, prevented from pursuing that conflict, and had a belief that accountability could be avoided. Then the chapter examines Libyan sponsorship of terrorist organizations, divided into several time periods, during which Libya's support activities vary, as do the efforts of the United States to persuade Libya to cease supporting terrorists.

The chapter ends by examining each hypothesis derived from the theory in light of the evidence presented in this case study. In this context, the actions of American policymakers regarding Libya will be evaluated as to their efficacy and prescriptions will be drawn for future policymakers facing similar circumstances.

Libya: Motivated towards conflict

Qaddafi's Libya demonstrated powerful motivations for conflict. Daniel Byman's work on state sponsored terrorism has developed a typology of motivations, divided into three

categories: strategic motivations, ideological motivations, and motivations arising from domestic political considerations. I add a fourth category, by arguing that individual psychological factors and selfish interests can shape leaders' tendency to sponsor terrorism. Of these four categories, Libya was strongly motivated by strategic concerns and ideology, very little by domestic politics, and strongly by Qaddafi's own personal motives.

Byman lists four strategic concerns which might motivate a state to sponsor terrorism: (i) to destabilize or weaken a neighboring state, (ii) to project power, (iii) to change a regime, and (iv) to shape an opposition movement in another state. As will be demonstrated, all of these four strategic concerns contributed to Qaddafi's decision to sponsor terrorism.

Libya clearly exhibits the first strategic concern which motivates states to pursue terrorism: under Qaddafi, Libya repeatedly sought, through subversion and through armed conflict, to destabilize and weaken its neighbors and other states in the region. Libya has had territorial disputes with all six of its immediate neighbors, including ongoing disagreements with Niger, Algeria, and Tunisia. With five of its six neighbors, Libya's border disputes have escalated to armed conflict.¹ One example is the conflict with Egypt. As a self-professed admirer of Egyptian President Gamel Abdel Nasser, Qaddafi had sought close relations with Egypt while his idol was alive. After the death of Nasser, Libya's relations with Egypt deteriorated rapidly. Qaddafi disliked Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, and resented being

¹ Libya has had no war with Niger; this may be due to Niger's policy of "accommodation" toward Libya. Craig R. Black, "Muammar Qaddafi and Libya's strategic culture," in *Know thy enemy: Profiles of adversary leaders and their strategic cultures* ed. Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post, 2nd ed. (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: USAF Counterproliferation Center, 2003), 255. However, Qaddafi has consistently advocated autonomy for the Tuareg minority and has been accused of providing aid and sanctuary for rebels. STRATFOR 2011.

excluded the planning of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Despite being militarily weaker than Egypt, Libya engaged in years of subversion and border skirmishes. These actions ultimately culminated in a 1977 invasion by Egypt, an embarrassing defeat for Libya, and a twelve year suspension of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Libya's most important (and longest-lasting) military conflict since Qaddafi came to power has been its involvement in the civil war in Chad. This conflict, too, has its roots in Libya's attempts to weaken and destabilize its neighbor. In 1970, Libya first gave its support to the Muslim National Liberation Front of Chad (FROLINAT), a rebel group that controlled much of the countryside. Although Qaddafi's support was mostly rhetorical at first, before long Libya was supplying rebels with arms, weapons, training, and safe haven. In 1972, Libya began occupying the Aouzou strip, a disputed region on the border between the two countries. Libya also sponsored coup and assassination attempts against the president of Chad. When this failed to achieve results, Libya deployed its own military to Chad, at first only as support troops, but eventually for combat duty. At the height of the intervention (the so-called Toyota War of 1987), Libyan expeditionary forces included more than 8,000 soldiers and 300 tanks. Libyan forces were accused of using poison gas, as well as napalm. In 1994, the conflict was officially resolved, when Libya signed an agreement announcing its withdrawal from the Aouzou strip and referring its border dispute with Chad to the International Court of Justice. Libya's involvement in Chad's internal conflicts, although largely military, and not terrorist, nonetheless shows the degree to which Libya desired to weaken its neighbor.

Libya has also attempted to weaken and destabilize many states with which it does not share a border. Libya has been accused of subversion by states as far away as Morocco, Jordan,

and Saudi Arabia. Libyan support for insurgent groups fueled immensely destructive civil wars in Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and elsewhere— wars which devastated these societies.² Even West African states have feared Libya’s disruptive influence: Senegal, Gambia, and Ghana have all at times severed relations with Libya.³

In addition to destabilizing neighboring states, Qaddafi’s desire to project Libya’s power further afield conforms to the second strategic concern which motivates states to pursue terrorism. Military power was a “crucial component” of his foreign policy objectives, and he sought to make Libya’s armed forces “capable of projecting power throughout the Middle East and North Africa.”⁴ However, Libya was never able to achieve great results with conventional force. In 1978, Libya deployed troops, artillery, tanks, and planes to aid Idi Amin of Uganda in his invasion of Tanzania. The invasion failed, Uganda was defeated, and Idi Amin was deposed—later taking refuge in Libya.

Qaddafi has also attempted to project power in economic struggles against his adversaries in the West. Accordingly, Libya played an important innovating role in the use of oil as an economic weapon. For example, after securing his hold on power, Qaddafi began in the early 1970s to renegotiate existing contracts with foreign oil companies. Later, he nationalized much of Libya’s oil industry (along with many other foreign business and industrial interests in the

² Pascal Ngoga, “Uganda: The National Resistance Army,” in *African guerrillas* ed. Christopher S. Clapham (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 95-6. Stephen Ellis, “Liberia’s warlord insurgency,” in *African guerrillas* ed. Clapham, 160. Ibrahim Abdullah and Patrick Muana, “The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone,” in *African guerrillas* ed. Clapham, 175-7.

³ John K. Cooley, “The Libyan menace,” *Foreign Policy* 42 (spring 1981), 76.

⁴ Pollack, 360, fn. 3

country). Both the renegotiations and the later nationalization of oil were seen as victories over imperialist forces.⁵ In October 1973, Libya was the first state to declare a complete oil embargo against the United States in retaliation for its support of Israel in the 1973 October War, leading to the larger oil embargo of OAPEC (the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries) in 1973-4.⁶ After other Arab countries ceased their embargo, Libya continued. Libya's participation in the embargo, let alone its leadership, was remarkable, given that oil was (and remains) essentially Libya's only export and source of wealth⁷— and that the United States was one of its chief trading partners.

In addition to desiring to weaken neighbors and project power, Libya has demonstrated a tendency toward conflict motivated by an interest in achieving regime change— Byman's third strategic concern. Libya's relations with Sudan provide an excellent example. The countries were initially friendly after the 1969 coup— Qaddafi helped foil a plot against President Nimeiry in 1971. As Sudan's anti-Western stance softened, however, Libya became more hostile. In 1972, Sudan accused Libya of sponsoring a coup attempt. In 1976, Libya again attempted to replace Nimeiry through a coup. In defense, Sudan sought closer relations with Egypt, which led to Qaddafi supporting plots against both Nimeiry and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Libya also gave financial aid to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a rebel force which

⁵ Congressional Quarterly, *Continuing energy crisis in America* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1975), 29. See also ElWarfally 1988, 52-7; Cooley 1981, 82-3.

⁶ Qaddafi's "actions galvanized the region and seemingly confirmed [his] stature as Nasser's heir." Vandewalle, 76.

⁷ In 1970, oil "provided Libya with 98.7 percent of its revenues and made up 99.82 percent of its exports." Vandewalle 1998, 74.

controlled much of southern Sudan. This aid ceased in 1985, when Nimeiry was deposed in a coup. After this change of regime, Libya and Sudan once again had friendly relations.

One other way in which Qaddafi's Libya has pursued a kind of regime change is by proposing to unite his country with others. Qaddafi has proposed over a dozen unions with other states in the region, primarily Arab states, all of which have failed.⁸ The primary reason for Qaddafi's lack of success in these repeated attempts has been his neighbors' perception that these unions are attempts to annex or dominate by disguise.⁹ After President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia rejected a Libyan proposal of union, he alleged that Libya attempted revenge through terrorism, assassination plots, and attempts to incite armed rebellion.¹⁰ For Qaddafi, union and subversion seem to be two ways to get the same thing— control over other states— and are often used in close concert.

Byman also lists a fourth security concern which could motivate states to sponsor terrorism, which is to shape opposition movements in another state. Sponsor states may wish to moderate or radicalize an opposition movement, to weaken the movement and “subordinate it to their will,” or to offset the influence of another state which has sponsored its own proxy.¹¹ Libya,

⁸ Mohamed Berween, “The political belief system of Qaddafi: Power politics and self-fulfilling prophecy,” *The Journal of Libyan Studies* 4:1 (summer 2003), 51. See also: Edmund Jan Osmanczyk and Anthony Mango, *Encyclopedia of the United Nations and international agreements*, 3rd. ed., Vol. 1 (New York: Routledge, 2003), 119.

⁹ Notable exceptions include Libya's attempts to unite with Egypt in the 1970s, which ultimately fell apart because Sadat perceived Libya as weak and Qaddafi as erratic, and could not see a way to turn the situation to Egypt's advantage. Simons 1996, 270-1. See also el Shazly 2003, 94-6.

¹⁰ ElWarfally 1988, 68. Davis 1990, 10. Stanik 2003, 21.

¹¹ Byman 2005, 40.

like many other Arab states, sought to undermine Arafat's leadership of the PLO by supporting factions that were opposed to Arafat's Fatah. Qaddafi's sponsorship of the most aggressive and confrontational groups and factions helped him both to radicalize the Palestinian movement, and to weaken Arafat, whom he saw as a rival for the leadership of the Arab world. Libya's desire to shape the strength, aims, and ideology of the PLO motivated Qaddafi to sponsor groups like Black September and the Abu Nidal Organization, which also launched terrorist attacks against America and the West.

In addition to these security-driven motivations, Byman discusses two motivations for state sponsorship of terrorism which are rooted in ideology: enhancing international prestige, and exporting a political system. Without question, Qaddafi did see terrorism as a way to enhance Libya's international prestige, especially among his in-group— those states and societies whose approbation he craved for ideological reasons. Qaddafi idolized Egyptian President Nasser, and adopted one of Nasser's central tenets: pan-Arabism, which has as its goal “the gradual coalescing of the states of the Arab nation.”¹² Like Nasser, Qaddafi believed that the division of the vast Arab nation had been arbitrarily divided by Western imperialists into many small states, none of which were powerful enough to face their former colonial masters as equals, even after independence.¹³ As a pan-Arabist and an anti-imperialist, Qaddafi had a strong ideological motivation to enhance Libya's prestige among Arab states and in the third world. Libya's foreign

¹² Simons 1996, 266.

¹³ In other words, pan-Arabism is essentially a nationalist movement, in that it is actuated by a desire to see the Arab political and national units become congruent, and therefore legitimate. See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1, 79.

policy “was an outcome of his desire to create a new order in which Libya would become the center.”¹⁴ Rallying public support for Libya and for Qaddafi himself in the Arab world was a key reason for his decision to support terrorists organizations— especially Palestinian terrorist organizations.¹⁵

As for the second ideological motive, although Qaddafi often talked of the virtues of his own political system, he made no attempt to use terrorism to export this system to other countries— perhaps in part because no terrorist groups espoused this system. In fact, many of the groups which received support from Libya advocated political systems which Qaddafi opposed such as Communism and Islamism. In fact, Qaddafi imprisoned Communists and Islamists for advocating domestic political change, but had no problem giving money, weapons, training, and sanctuary to groups advocating these same changes in other countries.

There are two domestic political motivations for state sponsorship of terrorism in Byman’s typology: to aid ethnic groups in foreign countries in order to gain the support of domestic co-ethnics, and to strengthen the terrorists so they can aid in repressing domestic enemies. Neither was important in this case. Qaddafi did support Tuareg groups in Niger and elsewhere order to gain support from Libyan Tuaregs, but this motivation seems to be relatively unimportant given that Tuaregs received only a tiny fraction of total Libyan support for terrorism. And although Qaddafi certainly had a great number of foreign terrorists inside his borders, he did

¹⁴ Abadi 2000.

¹⁵ “Qaddafi regarded the Arab-Israeli conflict as an issue that could rally Arab public opinion behind him and provide him with the opportunity to challenge Egyptian leadership of the Arab world.” Jacob Abadi, “Pragmatism and rhetoric in Libya’s policy toward Israel,” *The Journal of Conflict Studies* 20:2 (August 8, 2000). Available online at: <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/viewArticle/4313/4928>.

not use them to punish our counterbalance domestic political foes.

Libya's choice to delegate aspects of its foreign policy to terrorist groups was not just determined by the interests of the state— it was heavily driven by Qaddafi's own personal desires. Although Byman does not discuss this, some leaders also have their own idiosyncratic or selfish reasons for viewing terrorism in a positive light and preferring it as a policy instrument. Qaddafi seemed to genuinely admire terrorists, repeatedly referring to them as heroes and martyrs. And he believed in force and strength as the means for determining the answers to political problems.¹⁶ For such a man, asymmetric warfare must seem the only sensible way for a weak state to attempt to advance its interests. Qaddafi also seems to have been animated by a deep-seated hatred for Western imperialist powers. At first, this vendetta did not extend to the United States, but after repeated American hostile actions, especially the 1986 American bombing which killed his adopted baby daughter, he felt the US owed him a blood debt.¹⁷

In addition, supporting terrorism had selfish benefits for Qaddafi. Internationally, he wanted to be recognized as the leader and spokesman of the Arab world, and Libya's foreign policy in some respects appears to have been crafted not to further national interests, but rather his own selfish interests to acquire international prestige and recognition for himself as an individual. Domestically, he also used terrorism and its consequences to rally political support and strengthen his own position as leader. By creating the specter of powerful foreign enemies,

¹⁶ “[I]n reality, the strong always rule: that is to say those who are strongest in society hold the [reins] of government.” Muammar Al Gathafi, *The green book: The solution to the problem of democracy, the solution to the economic problem, the social basis of the third universal theory* (Ithaca: Ithaca Press, 2005), 27.

¹⁷ Stanik 2003, 9.

he unified the Libyan people, while also distracting the public from Libya's domestic difficulties— an economy dependent on a single resource with a volatile price, an educational system that left many illiterate and unable to contribute to the industries that mattered, a political system that promised public involvement in the mechanism of government but delivered widespread oppression. These strategies did not always work, but inasmuch as the Libyan government had legitimacy, Qaddafi's defiant personal image and his support for wars of liberation against Western imperialism were its primary sources. By setting himself up as the emblem and icon of confrontation with the West, Qaddafi has been able to stay in power for more than four decades.

In sum, Qaddafi's Libya had powerful motivations to pursue terrorism. First, surrounded by states that were largely unfriendly, Libya had security concerns, including a perceived need to weaken its neighbors and overthrow unfriendly regimes, as well as a desire to project power abroad and to shape the character of the Palestinian resistance. Second, because of the pan-Arab and anti-imperialist ideology espoused by Qaddafi and his ruling Jamahiriya movement, Libya was motivated to enhance its international prestige, particularly among Arabs and third world peoples. Third, Qaddafi personally approved of terrorism as a method and saw it as a way to gain personal recognition at home and abroad. And fourth, Libya supported terrorism to shore up the legitimacy of the state and to distract from the state's inadequacies, both of which helped secure Qaddafi's position as head of state

Libya: Frustrating constraints

In addition to motivations for conflict, for a state to sponsor terrorism, it must also be

hampered by frustrating constraints which prevent it from pursuing conflict directly and openly. I identify three such constraints: (1) constituents or allies strongly opposed to conflict, (2) absolute or relative military weakness, and (3) the perception of a defense-dominant environment. Particularly in its relations with the United States, Libya was weakly constrained (if at all) by the first, but strongly constrained by the second.

First, the desires of constituents and allies served as, at best, a weak constraint. Terrorism and the larger struggle against Western imperialists has not always been as popular as Qaddafi would like.¹⁸ However, Qaddafi has for four decades maintained a tight grip on power.¹⁹ Libya had neither a free press nor an electoral system which could effectively punish Qaddafi for defying public opinion. Like many other successful dictators, he has ruthlessly stamped out any possible rival or political opponent. Further, Qaddafi is uniquely hard to remove from office since he has held no formal office in the government for much of his time as head of state. Although in the 1969 coup he was ostensibly just one member of the Revolutionary Command Council, there has never been any doubt who was in charge.

The 2011 civil war may spell the end of Qaddafi's tenure as Libya's head of state, but Qaddafi has so far shown no inclination to leave. After mass demonstrations of discontent, President Ben Ali of Tunisia (Libya's western neighbor) fled the country. After similar waves of

¹⁸ "By summer 1971, several offices were opened in Libya, in order to recruit volunteers to fight for the Palestinian cause, but the number of the volunteers remained so low that the Libyan leader was compelled to state that it was the example, not the numbers that mattered. His scapegoats were the members of the PFLP-GC, whom he blamed for frightening away many Libyans." Abadi, 2000.

¹⁹ This began shortly after the 1969 coup, when Qaddafi "dismissed, arrested, or executed every officer above the rank of colonel in the Libyan armed forces as well as a number of lower-ranking officers," whose loyalty was suspect. Pollack 2004, 360.

protest, President Mubarak of Egypt resigned, after which he was placed under arrest for damaging the national economy and for his role in the deaths of demonstrators. Qaddafi faced similar popular dissent, but neither fled nor resigned. After protestors took control of Benghazi (Libya's second city), he sent elite forces, including mercenaries, to recapture the city. They failed, and protests spread to Tripoli, but Qaddafi and his forces continued to fight. The UN authorized a no-fly zone, and an international coalition came to enforce the resolution and to bomb pro-Qaddafi ground forces. After four months of fighting, Qaddafi remains in control of Tripoli and much of the rest of the country, while many members of the international coalition seem ready to abandon the effort. To this date, the entire episode has shown just how resilient Qaddafi's rule is.

The desires of allies and peer states have helped induce some restraint. However, Qaddafi has never hesitated to denounce or abandon old friends for what he perceives as acts of betrayal, and has likewise been quick to embrace former enemies when they make suitable changes.²⁰ In 1974, after the PLO approved a new ten point program which might permit the end of conflict with Israel, Qaddafi was instrumental in the creation of the 'Rejection Front' of Arab states who refused to countenance any accommodation with Israel, even sponsoring assassinations of leaders who had favored the program.²¹ Neither constituents nor allies could have constrained Qaddafi's Libya from pursuing direct conflict.

Second, Libya was constrained (much more effectively) by its own weakness. Libya is a

²⁰ Asteris Huliaras, "Qadhafi's comeback: Libya and sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," *African Affairs* 100:398 (January 2001), 8-9.

²¹ Ensalaco 2008, 71.

small state with a history of being dominated by larger powers, including Italy, the United Kingdom, and the US. Even relative to its neighbors, Libya's military is weak. When Qaddafi took over, "the Libyan armed forces were a paltry organization, virtually incapable of conventional military operations."²² Qaddafi worked hard to upgrade his forces, spending enormous sums to acquire sophisticated weapons systems, including Mirage III fighter jets. This was noted by an Egyptian general visiting Libya in 1973, just prior to the October War, who wrote that Qaddafi "had made Herculean efforts to build modern and powerful armed forces," but further reported that "Libya had... not the personnel or technological base," to make use of their newly purchased equipment. In the end, he wrote that "Gaddafi's own forces were so small that they had nothing of value to us...certainly no major units."²³

Qaddafi redoubled his efforts after 1973, but although Libya had money, Libya's people lacked the necessary education and technical skills— as was also true in the oil industry. Thus, this military "buildup far outstripped the ability of [Libya's] population or its armed forces."²⁴ Libyan forces were poorly trained— and often illiterate. Few of the new tanks or planes had personnel to crew or pilot them. Libya's lack of trained personnel also meant they had difficulty keeping their new weapons systems in working order. "Libyan maintenance practices were appalling. Routine upkeep was regularly neglected, contributing to extremely low operational

²² Pollack 2004, 360.

²³ Saad el Shazly, *The crossing of the Suez*, revised English edition (San Francisco: American Mideast Research, 2003), 134-5.

²⁴ Pollack 2004, 362

readiness rates.”²⁵ One final reason Libyan armed forces remained weak was that Qaddafi, like many other dictators who had come to power through coups, feared a strong military. He accordingly “took a number of other measures to try to hinder the ability of the military to move against him. Most were harmful to Libyan military effectiveness.”²⁶ In practice, Libya’s armed forces were never capable of defeating Libya’s third-world neighbors, much less capable of launching overseas military operations.

Libya was further constrained by a very difficult strategic environment, in that it had to pit its pitiful forces against a large number of adversaries. This was not so in 1969, when Qaddafi came to power. However, due to Qaddafi’s extremely aggressive foreign policy, Libya was soon encircled by enemies, including the United States and its NATO allies.²⁷ Considering the combined might of all its adversaries, Libya was tremendously outmatched. However, Libya’s inferiority in conventional military capabilities must still be regarded as a weak constraint, given that this did not always suffice to prevent Libya from pursuing direct conflict.

A good example of Libyan aggression in the face of superior power is when Qaddafi provoked (and lost) a border war with Egypt. Libya is smaller and weaker than Egypt, but during the mid-1970s, Egyptian border guards were being routinely harassed by the Libyans. In response to these provocations, Egypt redeployed troops, tanks, and aircraft to its western border, causing the Libyans to deploy additional forces of their own. Libya also launched a “full-fledged

²⁵ Pollack 2004, 364.

²⁶ Pollack 2004, 364.

²⁷ Jack Snyder, *Myths of empire: Domestic politics and international ambition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 6-7.

campaign of subversive actions and sabotage” in the summer of 1976, placing explosives in government buildings in Cairo.²⁸ Over the next year, Libya trained “Egyptian dissidents as terrorists and deployed them across the border to stir up unrest... Border skirmishes grew in frequency and intensity... In May 1977, the Soviets warned Libya...that the Egyptians were planning a major invasion of Libya.”²⁹ Qaddafi ignored the warnings, neither increasing preparations for conventional war nor ceasing his provocations. On July 21, 1977, Egypt invaded. Over the next few days, Libya lost 10-20 Mirage jets, 30 tanks, 40 APCs, and 3-400 dead.³⁰ After some prodding by Algeria and the PLO, Egypt declared a unilateral cease-fire. Libya accepted, but the peace process broke down; less than four months later, Tripoli broke diplomatic relations with Cairo when Sadat accepted an invitation to visit Israel.³¹

The war with Egypt demonstrates Qaddafi’s strong bias towards conflict, as well as either a high tolerance for risk or a dangerous inability to see the possible negative consequences of his aggressive behavior. Qaddafi has shown a willingness to pick fights he would lose. However, attacking Egypt is not the same as attacking a European country, even a weak one such as Italy, which lay directly to the north. Although Italy may have been similar to Egypt in its overall

²⁸ Mary-Jane Deeb, *Libya’s foreign policy in North Africa* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1991), 98.

²⁹ Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at war: Military effectiveness, 1948-1991*, paperback edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 364-5.

³⁰ Pollack 2004, 368. See also: Jacob Bercovitch and Richard Jackson, *International conflict: A chronological encyclopedia of conflicts and their management, 1945-1995* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1997), 178-9.

³¹ John E. Jessup, *An encyclopedic dictionary of conflict and conflict resolution, 1945-1996* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1998), 428.

military power, it had two important advantages which put it in an entirely different class. First, Italy was across the Mediterranean Sea. To launch an attack, Libya would need to use its air force or navy, both of which were in even worse condition than its army, or to launch an amphibious assault, a difficult task even for a first-rate military. Second, assuming that Libya could somehow manage to attack Italy, it would then have to face retaliation from all of Italy's allies. Egypt fought Libya alone, but Italy could have invoked Article 5 of the NATO treaty.

Even this enormous disparity in power was not have been enough to deter Libya from pursuing limited conventional military action. For example, Libyan forces did provoke engagements with US carrier battle groups three times in the Gulf of Sidra in the 1980s. However, even in this instance, Libya was merely defending an area that it defined as part of its sovereign territory. This conforms to the "status quo bias" implied by prospect theory, which predicts that states may be "willing to fight to defend... territory that they would not have been willing to fight to acquire."³² It is highly improbable, almost unthinkable, that Libya would have attempted to launch large-scale conventional military operations against the United States or other industrialized Western states. Indeed, it may not have been possible. In all likelihood, this relative weakness was enough to determine Libya's choice to sponsor anti-Western terrorist groups as opposed to pursuing the same foreign policy objectives through war.

The third possible constraint against direct conflict is the perception of a defense-dominant security environment. Secure nuclear second-strike capabilities, such as those possessed by the United States and its NATO allies are one example of a technology which can

³² Jack S. Levy, "Loss aversion, framing, and bargaining: The implications of prospect theory for international conflict," *International Political Science Review* 17, no. 2 (April 1996): 186.

strongly tilt the balance against offense.³³ Although there is no direct speech evidence from Qaddafi about American nuclear weapons making a direct attack unthinkable, Libya showed its respect for nuclear deterrent forces by attempting to develop its own weapons of mass destructions (WMD). However, Libyan WMD programs never got far enough for Libya to feel protected, and therefore able to launch conventional offensives without fear of unconventional reprisal.³⁴ Therefore, Libya was likely constrained by the defense-dominant international environment— meaning assured destruction by Western nuclear retaliatory capabilities— and frustrated in its desire to wage war against the United States and other imperialist powers in the West.

In sum, direct conflict with the West was not ruled out by the peaceful desires of Libya's public, or Libya's allies. However, Libya was strongly constrained by its conventional military weakness, both in absolute terms and relative to its adversaries. Libya was also likely constrained by Western nuclear deterrent forces. These strong constraints, in combination with strong Libyan motivations towards conflict, made Libya a frustrated state. Powerfully desirous to confront the West, and unable to do so directly, Libya was a good candidate for indirect confrontation.

³³ Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of war: Power and the roots of conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 253-255.

³⁴ This freedom to pursue conventional war because nuclear war is unthinkable is an example of the stability-instability paradox. See Glenn H. Snyder, "The balance of power and the balance of terror," in *Balance of Power*, ed. Paul Seabury (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965), 185-201.

Libya: Perception of unaccountability

The third necessary variable for a state to sponsor terrorism is the belief that it will not be held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents. For a state which is the target of state-sponsored terrorism to hold the sponsor state accountable, four elements are necessary. The target state must (1) know of the sponsor state's actions, (2) be capable of enacting intolerable sanctions, (3) clearly communicate the threat of sanctions, and (4) be perceived as credible in its threat. For a sponsor state, the only one of these elements that is in its control is the first: knowledge. Thus avoiding accountability successfully is about denying the target state knowledge of the sponsor state's relationship with the terrorist agents— or in other words its support— and therefore its responsibility for the actions of these agents.

Denying the target state this knowledge depends on sponsor states being willing to make two sacrifices. First, sponsor states must be willing to sacrifice prestige. When terrorist groups are successful in their attacks, they are praised by sympathetic peoples and states. A sponsor state may wish to claim credit for these actions, and thus gain prestige from their in-group. However, doing so makes it very difficult to deny responsibility to the out-group. Second, sponsor states must be willing to sacrifice control over their agents. The tighter the leash, the easier it is to see who holds it. Because both of these sacrifices in some way cut against the purpose of the delegation, states usually find it difficult to maintain them in the long term.

In the long run, Qaddafi proved unwilling to accept either of these sacrifices. The first sacrifice to be cast aside was in-group recognition. As a pan-Arabist and a long admirer of Nasser, Qaddafi had strong personal and ideological reasons to seek the approval of his fellow Arab states. It is thus unsurprising that Libya claimed the credit for the actions of its terrorist

agents. It is also understandable that Qaddafi could think this sacrifice was unnecessary. During this time period, other leaders in the Arab world, such as Yassir Arafat, proved adept at compartmentalizing their audiences— speaking of peace and negotiation to the First World, and of struggle and war to Communist countries and the Third World.

Libya had no problems— at least initially— with sacrificing control over its terrorist agents. Qaddafi did not have a well-defined ideology as much as he had a list of enemies, and so the Libyans were indifferent to the grievances, methods, and targets of the groups they sponsored— so long as they were fighting the West somehow. As time went on, Qaddafi grew unwilling to sacrifice control over his terrorist agents. This is most clearly manifest in the use of state operatives to perform or directly support acts of terrorism, instead of delegating as much as possible to non-state agents. For example, Libyan agents were involved in the 1986 bombing of the Berlin discotheque. This direct involvement meant that Libya was no longer able to deny their responsibility for the actions of their terrorist agents. The United Nations held Libya accountable, by passing resolutions demanding the extradition of the Libyan officials implicated in the Pan Am 103 bombing, and imposing intolerable economic and diplomatic sanctions. This frustration, combined with Qaddafi's confidence that Libya would not be held accountable for the actions of terrorist and insurgent groups, led to Libya's decision to sponsor terrorism.

Thus, when Qaddafi's Libya sponsored terrorism when it possessed all three of the necessary variables: (1) strong motivations for conflict, (2) frustrating constraints, and (3) a belief that accountability could be avoided. When one of these variables, the belief that accountability can be avoided, changed, so did Libyan behavior.

Case overview

From 1969 to 1971, I find no evidence of substantial Libyan support for terrorism, although Muammar Qaddafi and others vocally supported their efforts. From 1972 to 1978, Libya supported terrorist groups with little international consequence. From 1979 to 1987, the United States attempted to hold Libya accountable for its actions, beginning with placing Libya on its (inaugural) list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. From 1988 to 1993, after the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, the international community joined with the United States in holding Libya accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents by constructing a regime of multilateral economic sanctions. From 1994 to 1999, this multilateral accountability continued and Libyan support for terrorist groups declined and then ceased. From 2000 to 2010, there is no evidence of substantial Libyan support for terrorist groups, and the regime of multilateral economic sanctions was dismantled. (See Table 4.1, below.)

Table 4.1. Libyan support for terrorism, 1969-2010

<u>period</u>	<u>years</u>	<u>sponsorship</u>	<u>accountability</u>
0	1969-1971	no evidence	none
1	1972-1978	increasing support	rhetorical
2	1979-1987	high support	unilateral economic and military sanctions
3	1988-1993	high support	multilateral economic sanctions
4	1994-1999	declining support	multilateral economic sanctions
5	2000-2010	no evidence	sanctions regime dismantled

As the following discussion demonstrates, Libya's support for terrorism flourished during the time periods when it was either unaccountable, or only held accountable by a few states; its

support likewise diminished and ceased during the time periods when it was held accountable by a wide-ranging coalition.

Libya and terrorism, 1969-1971

Self-styled Colonel Muammar Qaddafi seized power from King Idris of Libya in a coup in 1969, as head of a Revolutionary Command Council. In the first public proclamation after the coup, Qaddafi immediately announced a radical break with Libya's pro-Western past:

To execute your free will, to realize your precious aspirations, truly answer your repeated call demanding change and purification... your armed forces have destroyed the reactionary, backward, and decadent regime... [T]he era of reaction, bribery and intercession, treason and treachery— was dispersed. ...[S]tand together against the enemy of the Arab nation, the enemy of Islam, the enemy of humanity, who burned out holy places and shattered our honor. Thus we will build glory, revive our heritage, and revenge an honor wounded and a right usurped.³⁵

Proclaiming Libya a “free sovereign republic,” Qaddafi cut ties with many Western nations and renegotiated existing agreements with others.

The United States, had maintained an air base near Tripoli since the second world war. Qaddafi demanded that the base be closed and turned over to Libya, although the US had an agreement with the previous government granting them use of the base for two more years. Major Abdessalam Jalloud (a childhood friend of Qaddafi and a member of the Revolutionary Command Council who in 1972 would become Libya's prime minister) promised US ambassador Joseph Palmer that a voluntary American departure would help improve relations. The US agreed to withdraw, but after the evacuation was complete (June 11, 1970), Jalloud “told

³⁵ “Proclamation of the Libyan Republic on 1 September 1969,” quoted in Geoffrey L. Simons, *Libya: The struggle for survival*, 2nd ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 375.

Palmer that Libya would never have good relations with the United States because of its support for Israel... and senior Libyan officials broke off contacts with the envoy.”³⁶ In a 1972 speech, Qaddafi commemorated the US evacuation as a Libyan victory over imperialism, and said: “Britain and the United States will pay dearly for the wrongs and perfidy they inflicted on us.” He also said he would “fight Britain and United States on their own lands.”³⁷

Qaddafi’s rhetoric was not consistently anti-American, however. In his first few years as the head of state, Qaddafi’s vocal opposition to communism and the Soviet Union caused some to believe he was an American puppet.³⁸ Further, Qaddafi occasionally indicated an interest in better relations with the US. In 1972 in Cairo, he stated that his antipathy for European imperialists did not extend to the United States, because “unlike other great powers, the U.S. had not shared in the accumulation from colonialism.”³⁹

Some scholars of the Middle East believe that Qaddafi’s major grievance was the American domination of Libya’s oil industry since its discovery during the reign of King Idris, and that the relationship between the two countries could easily have been repaired and even improved after the 1969 coup simply through cooperation on this one issue. From this point of view, the “stumbling block” was US support for Israel, and relations between the two countries

³⁶ Brian Lee Davis, *Qaddafi, terrorism, and the origins of the U.S. attack on Libya* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), 34.

³⁷ Associated Press, “Premier says Libya aids ‘revolutionaries’ in Ulster; Qaddafi announces support for blacks in U.S. and Moslems in Philippines,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1972, 1.

³⁸ Davis 1990, 34.

³⁹ Mahmoud G. ElWarfally, *Imagery and ideology in U.S. policy toward Libya, 1969-1982* (Pittsburgh: the University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 64.

reached a “turning point” in 1973 during the October War.⁴⁰ However, Qaddafi’s decision to sponsor terrorism was not reached in one turning point. It was the accumulation of many small decisions, including the death of Egypt’s President Nasser in September 1970, which left a void at the head of the pan-Arabist movement. Qaddafi saw an opportunity to place himself at the head of the movement, but this was not possible for Libya to achieve on the battlefield. If Libya wanted to stand up to Israel and the West, he would have to do it another way. Terrorism was the obvious solution.⁴¹ And so, at least a year before the October War broke out, Libya began to support terrorism, including terrorist actions specifically targeting Americans.

Libya and terrorism, 1972-1978

Beginning in the summer of 1972, Libya began to support terrorist organizations. But until 1978, there was little effort to hold Libya accountable for this support.

The first act of terrorism for which there is good evidence of Libyan support is one of the most infamous in history: the September 1972 hostage crisis at the Munich Olympics, which captured a world-wide audience for the Palestinian cause. The operation was carried out by the Black September Organization (BSO), a publicly unacknowledged arm of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).⁴²

Libya supported this operation in at least three ways. First, Libya financed the Black

⁴⁰ ElWarfally 1988, 66, 64.

⁴¹ Abadi 2000.

⁴² Reeve 2000, 33-35.

September Organization.⁴³ Libya gave \$30 million a year to BSO, and American intelligence believed that Salah Khalaf (aka Abu Iyad), the deputy chief of the PLO and alleged member of Black September, received “an independent subsidy” directly from Qaddafi himself.⁴⁴ Second, Libya trained BSO operatives for the mission. The six men chosen to carry it out were flown to Tripoli for a month of “advanced military training.”⁴⁵ During this time, the Black September terrorists became close: “We got to know each other during training in Libya; we were all alike, children of the refugee camps with a shared cause and a shared aim.”⁴⁶ When their training was complete, they flew from Tripoli to Rome to Munich and carried out their mission, capturing eleven Israeli athletes, and the attention of the world.

Libya’s support for BSO was not known at the time, although Qaddafi, a passionate advocate of Palestinian statehood and the eviction of European Jews from the Middle East, was known to be sympathetic to their cause. During the hostage crisis, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt “contacted Kurt Waldheim, the UN Secretary-General, to ask if he could arrange for Colonel Qaddafi of Libya to act as an intermediary. Qaddafi agreed and, in turn, notified Mohammed Daghley, the Libyan Ambassador to Bonn.”⁴⁷ This was only one of the options the

⁴³ Kelidar 1973, 419. Abadi 2000.

⁴⁴ David A. Korn, *Assassination in Khartoum*, an Institute for the Study of Diplomacy Book (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 49.

⁴⁵ Simon Reeve, *One day in September: The full story of the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2000), 42-46.

⁴⁶ Reeve 2000, 46.

⁴⁷ Clive C. Aston, *A contemporary crisis: Political hostage-taking and the experience of Western Europe* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 70.

German government pursued in hopes of breaking the siege and securing the release of the hostages. In the end, this option proved fruitless. There were delays, and “by the time Dajhley was able to contact the crisis center in Munich, he was told that the German government was ‘in the process of finding another solution.’”⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the Germans were unable to resolve the crisis peacefully, and five of the eight hijackers (along with all nine of the remaining hostages) were killed in a failed hostage rescue attempt.

Third, the Libyan government supported the terrorists by honoring them in death as martyrs, even after the operation failed. The bodies of the BSO operatives were flown from Germany to Libya, where Libyan national radio “called them martyrs and heroes.”⁴⁹ Thirty thousand mourners or more assembled in Martyrs’ Square in Tripoli, “which rang to vengeful speeches as well as prayers.”⁵⁰ From there, tens of thousands of “mourners followed a swollen procession... to Sidi Munaideess Cemetery” where the terrorists were buried.⁵¹

Fourth, and finally, Libya offered sanctuary for the three surviving Black September terrorists. On October 29, 1972, BSO hijacked a Lufthansa flight and offered to release the passengers and crew in exchange for the freedom of their comrades languishing in prison in West Germany. “The Germans acceded without hesitation,” and the three terrorists “flew to a hero’s

⁴⁸ Reuben Miller, “Game theory and hostage-taking incidents: A case study of the Munich Olympic Games,” *Conflict Quarterly* 10:1 (Winter 1990), 20.

⁴⁹ Christopher Dobson, *Black September: Its short, violent history* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 87.

⁵⁰ Serge Groussard, *The blood of Israel: The massacre of the Israeli athletes, the Olympics, 1972* (New York: Morrow, 1975), 452.

⁵¹ Reeve 2000, 147

welcome in Libya.”⁵² This clearly linked Libya to Black September, but the US did not attempt to hold Libya responsible— not surprising, given that no Americans were killed in Munich, and that there was no physical evidence showing that Libya was supporting Black September, as opposed to simply being sympathetic.

Libya continued to support the BSO, however, and this support made the link between the two more clear. On March 1, 1973, the Saudi Arabian embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, was hosting a party for George Moore, an American diplomat. BSO terrorists stormed the embassy and took five hostages. They killed three of them, including two Americans. The weapons used in the attack had been smuggled into Sudan in Libyan diplomatic pouches.⁵³ A later raid by Sudanese authorities on PLO offices in Khartoum revealed that it “had been supported financially by Colonel Gaddafi of Libya.”⁵⁴ Unlike the Munich massacre, American citizens had been killed and there was physical evidence linking the attack to Libyan financial support, if not necessarily Libyan operational planning. The United States still did not respond directly, but did turn a “blind eye” to planned Israeli incursions into Lebanon in order to punish the Palestinians.⁵⁵

Later in the spring, Qaddafi told a Lebanese journalist “The Palestinian resistance movement does not exist any more. It has been destroyed with the Arabs in cooperation with the

⁵² Korn 1993, 49.

⁵³ Sicker 1987, 113.

⁵⁴ Reeve 2000, 177-8.

⁵⁵ Reeve 2000, 178.

Israelis.”⁵⁶ At first glance, this statement could sound like a rift had emerged between Libya and the Palestinian terrorist groups. However, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, Qaddafi meant by this statement that Arab states like Syria, Jordan, and Egypt were ultimately damaging the Palestinian cause by fighting for the recapture of the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war, instead of fighting to liberate the entirety of Palestine and evict the European Jews entirely. It was a subtle dig at the mainstream strategy of the Arab states to fight Israel and the West through conventional military means, even as Egypt and Syria, with their allies, were preparing for the war they would launch in October.

By continuing to sponsor terrorism, particularly Palestinian terrorism, Qaddafi attempted to show the merits of his own unconventional strategy. However, these efforts met with little success. In July of 1973, Wadie Haddad and a group of terrorists from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - Exterior Operations (PFLP-EO) and the Japanese Red Army (JRA) attempted to hijack Japan Airlines flight 404.⁵⁷ An accidental explosion led to the death of one of the terrorists, and the terrorists flew to Benghazi, where the hostages were released, as were the terrorists, despite Libyan authorities’ promises to try them according to Islamic law.⁵⁸ In September, five Arab men in Rome were arrested in possession of surface-to-air missiles. The missiles had been supplied by Libya in order to shoot down an Israeli passenger jet, but the

⁵⁶ Abbas Kelidar, “The Palestine guerrilla movement,” *The World Today* 29, no. 10 (October 1973): 412.

⁵⁷ Ensalaco 2008, 79.

⁵⁸ Michael Newton, *The encyclopedia of kidnappings* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2002), 148.

terrorists' capture marked another failure.⁵⁹

On October 5, Yom Kippur, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel. Early on, they were successful enough that many feared Israel would be defeated or even destroyed. Israel fought back, however, with the aid of a herculean supply effort from the United States, and the war ended with a cease-fire on October 25. Despite the fact that Israel remained not just extant, but in possession of the occupied territories, many Arabs counted this a victory. After the humiliating 1967 defeat, they had shown the world that Arab armies could win on the battlefield against Israel. Qaddafi, on the other hand, was enraged. He was furious that his own military had played almost no role, and that he himself had not been consulted in any meaningful way in the planning or operations of the war. Further, Sadat's perceived victory was his loss, in that only one of them could be the most prominent hero of the Arab world. And Sadat's methods were proving more effective than his own. And finally, Qaddafi was enraged that the United States had stepped in to rescue Israel, both by supplying them and also by imposing a cease-fire.

Qaddafi suffered another perceived betrayal in June of 1974, when a meeting of the PLO approved a ten point program for the future which allowed for the possibility of a two-state solution— meaning peaceful coexistence with Israel. Radical Palestinian factions rejected the plan and formed a Rejectionist Front, which Libya supported, along with Iraq and Yemen.⁶⁰ Qaddafi was continuing to position himself and Libya not just as anti-Western, but as the radical alternative to mainstream Arab anti-Western resistance and conflict. This continued rhetorical

⁵⁹ Mark Ensalaco, *Middle Eastern terrorism: From Black September to September 11* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 58.

⁶⁰ Ensalaco 2008, 71.

and material support for terrorism made Libya one of the destinations of choice for airplane hijackers, as with British Airways flight 870 in 1974.⁶¹

However, Libya's support for terrorism stirred up discontent among many Libyans, and in the twelve-man Revolutionary Command Council which ostensibly ruled Libya. In August 1975, Qaddafi announced that he had prevented an attempted coup against him, led by four RCC members and nine other military officers from the Free Officers Movement which had overthrown King Idris with Qaddafi in 1969. The man accused of leading the coup, Major Umar Abdullah el Mihayshi, Libya's Minister of Planning, blamed Qaddafi for wasting money on foreign adventures instead of local development.⁶² Mihayshi fled to Tunisia, and then Egypt, claiming that he had simply wanted Qaddafi to step down, because he "had fast been becoming a 'despot' and a 'psychopath,' ...'spreading intellectual terrorism by imposing his beliefs on the Libyans.'"⁶³ After the failure of the coup, there were "widespread purges widespread purges of the armed forces to weed out any officers... suspected of disloyalty."⁶⁴ The RCC was reduced to five members, and Qaddafi further developed his own cult of personality by publishing his Green

⁶¹ Brian M. Jenkins and Janera A. Johnson, *International terrorism: A chronology (1974 supplement)* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, February 1976), 17. See also: Ensalaco 2008, 77.

⁶² Nicholas Hagger, *The Libyan revolution: Its origins and legacy: A memoir and assessment* (London: O Books, 2009), 103-4. See also Vandewalle, 110.

⁶³ David Blundy and Andrew Lycett, *Qaddafi and the Libyan revolution* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), 118. See also John Keegan, *World armies* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 374.

⁶⁴ Pollack 2004, 364.

Book, which laid out his governing philosophy.⁶⁵

With his hold on power more secure than ever, Qaddafi was free to pursue sponsorship of terrorism, including sponsoring one of the most famous terrorist attacks in history. In December 1975, OPEC's oil ministers were meeting in Vienna, when terrorists led by 'Carlos the Jackal' (nom de guerre of Illich Ramirez Sanchez of Venezuela) burst in and took over sixty hostages. The mass kidnaping may have been retribution for OPEC ending the oil embargo in March 1974, over Qaddafi's objections.⁶⁶ The hostages were loaded onto a hijacked DC-9, which then flew to Tripoli, where Carlos "released some of his hostages, including the Libyan OPEC minister."⁶⁷ Qaddafi attempted to conceal his support for the operation by refusing a request from Carlos for a Boeing 707, a longer range plane in which Carlos could fly to other Arab capitals and collect ransoms for the other hostages. But "Qaddafi could not grant a demand [other leaders] had denied without appearing to aid and abet."⁶⁸ Qaddafi denied that he had funded the attack or that he had granted Carlos sanctuary, and attempted to further distance himself from the operation by promising to "prosecute him for the murder of a Libyan national [during the assault] in Vienna," if Carlos ever set foot in Libya again.⁶⁹ Since Carlos was living in Libya at the time, Qaddafi's denials carried little weight. In fact, Carlos was so closely linked to Libya as a result of this

⁶⁵ Hagger 2009, 104. See also Ali Abudllatif Ahmida, *The making of modern Libya: State formation, colonization, and resistance* 2nd ed.(Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), 158.

⁶⁶ Benjamin Shwadran, *Middle East oil: Issues and problems* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1977), 74-5.

⁶⁷ Ensalaco 2008, 90

⁶⁸ Ensalaco 2008, 90

⁶⁹ Ensalaco 2008, 91.

incident that “In March 1976, just two months after Vienna, the Egyptian weekly Al Mussawar reported that Libya now had a new leader, Carlos.”⁷⁰ Carlos and Qaddafi were the face of the Rejection Front.

In June of that year, Air France flight 139 was hijacked by PFLP terrorists led by Wilfred Boese, a sometime associate of Carlos the Jackal. Although Qaddafi was “careful to conceal [direct] involvement,” the flight was diverted to Benghazi, Libya, where it was welcomed for refueling before continuing to Entebbe, Uganda.⁷¹ There, Israeli commandos famously resolved the crisis, with a daring assault that freed 103 hostages (4 died). This infuriated Qaddafi. He planned reprisals against Israel and the United States, including terrorist attacks on the Republican and Democratic party conventions that year. He recruited terrorists “from Latin America, Turkey, and Iran,” but in the end they refused to carry out the operation and it was cancelled.⁷²

In December 1977, “Qaddafi invited the leaders of the Palestinian factions to Tripoli, not as representatives of the PLO, but as chieftains of their separate movements. It was a rebuke to Arafat,” for his continued relations with Egypt’s President Sadat after Sadat’s November visit to Israel to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and address the Knesset.⁷³ Qaddafi wanted to play a substantial and visible role the Arab resistance. He accordingly aligned himself

⁷⁰ John Follain, *Jackal: the complete story of the legendary terrorist, Carlos the Jackal* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1998), 101-103.

⁷¹ Ensalaco 2008, 96

⁷² Martin Sicker, *The making of a pariah state: The adventurist politics of Muammar Qaddafi* (New York: Praeger, 1987), 114.

⁷³ Ensalaco 2008, 118.

with the most radical Arab states and groups, opposing both mainstream states pursuing direct military conflict, like Sadat's Egypt, and anti-Western terrorists which Qaddafi found too 'moderate,' like Arafat's faction within the PLO. With Libya's oil revenues at his disposal, Qaddafi sought to replace Arafat and exploit pre-existing divisions between the many Palestinian terrorist groups, getting them to compete for his support.

America, for its part, continued its policy of inaction. Despite mounting evidence of Libya's sponsorship of international terrorist organizations, the United States did nothing to attempt to hold Qaddafi's Libya accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents. In the United States, terrorism was a nuisance, a low priority.

Libya and terrorism, 1979-87

This changed in 1979. In September, the United States passed the Export Administration Act of 1979, which provided in section 6 (j) for exports to be restricted to any country if the Secretary of State determines that its government "has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism."⁷⁴ This required the State Department to draw up a list of states that sponsor terrorism. The first list had four states: Libya, South Yemen, Syria, and Iraq.

Not long afterward, the ongoing Iranian revolution brought terrorism to the forefront of American public opinion. On November 4, a group of Iranian students stormed the US embassy in Tehran, taking about sixty hostages. For the next 444 days, Americans were glued to their television sets, monitoring the plight of the hostages. The Iranian hostage crisis raised the

⁷⁴ *U.S. Code, Title 50: Appendix– War and national defense*, section 2405 "Foreign policy controls," http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode50a/usc_sec_50a_00002405----000-.html (accessed September 12, 2011).

American public's awareness of the threat posed by international terrorism. It also gave legitimacy to the new policies that had passed earlier that year, and impetus to the new administration of Ronald Reagan to push for even stronger responses to state-sponsored terrorism.

Libya was first on the list to be challenged by the administration's new, tougher approach to state sponsors of terrorism. Libya claimed a 12 mile extension of its territorial waters in the Gulf of Sidra. American naval forces challenged this claim with "freedom of navigation" operations. President Reagan ordered a naval exercise in the gulf for the summer of 1981. A Libyan official accused the United States of planning this exercise to coincide with Egyptian maneuvers near the Libyan border. The US denied this charge, and Egypt cancelled their exercise.⁷⁵ On August 18, two US aircraft carriers and other vessels deployed in the gulf. Dozens of Libyan fighter planes approached the carrier groups in mock attacks, but no weapons were fired. The following day, two F-14s on a combat air patrol were ordered to intercept two Su-22s sent from near Tripoli. One of the Su-22s fired, and both were shot down. (According to US Navy reports, both Libyan pilots ejected.)

The State Department issued a statement calling the incident an "unprovoked attack against American naval aircraft operating in international airspace," and warned against further attacks.⁷⁶ Senior officials from Libya's ministries of oil and heavy industry met with American executives the day after the incident, promising them that Libya would not nationalize American

⁷⁵ Stanik 2003, 48.

⁷⁶ "Protest note by the U.S.," *New York Times*, August 20, 1981, A8.

oil companies, embargo the sale of oil to the US, or attack American expatriates in Libya.⁷⁷ Qaddafi, however, was furious. In a meeting with Haile Mariam Mengistu, the Marxist military dictator of Ethiopia, three days after the Gulf of Sidra incident, Qaddafi reportedly vowed to have President Reagan killed.⁷⁸

This might have been dismissed as the empty threat of a leader known for his fiery (and unpredictable) discourse,⁷⁹ but for three things. First, there were numerous intelligence reports received in the latter half of 1981 which “lent plausibility” to the threat.⁸⁰ Second, Reagan had already survived John Hinckley’s bullet in March of 1981, and CIA Director William Casey was determined to protect the president from any other threats.⁸¹ Third, the October 1981 assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, one of Qaddafi’s most hated foes, was believed by many to have been sponsored by Libya. Television news show Nightline invited former US President Jimmy Carter, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and former CIA director Richard Helms to appear after Sadat’s murder and theorize about the identity of the killer. “All

⁷⁷ Stanik 2003, 62.

⁷⁸ Bob Woodward, “The vulnerable presidency: After Reagan was shot, a sense of peril guided Casey and policy,” *Washington Post* (September 28, 1987), A1.

⁷⁹ It is an understatement to affirm that “many of his public utterances are the product of the moment.” Ronald Bruce St. John, “The ideology of Muammar al-Qadhdhafi: Theory and practice,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 15, no. 4 (November 1983): 472.

⁸⁰ Stanik 2003, 66. See also 67-8. Later analysis by the CIA noted that all information after the initial report of the conversation with Mengistu came “from sources with only indirect access, whose credibility is open to question. It is possible that some of the reporting may have been generated because informants are aware we are seeking this information.” The State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research added that “reporting breeds reporting where the U.S. is perceived to have an interest.” Woodward 1987, A1.

⁸¹ Woodward, 1987, A1.

suspected the complicity of Libya's Muammar Qaddafi whose rivalry with Sadat was dangerous," rather than Islamist militants.⁸² In the White House, President Reagan also saw Libya as possibly responsible. Determined to turn up the heat, he signed a secret directive mandating increased military cooperation with Sudan and Egypt, Libya's enemies.⁸³ Domestically, the administration talked openly about the rumors of Libyan "hit squads" sent to kill Reagan and other officials.

Whether or not the rumors were true, they proved useful, and helped build consensus for broader sanctions against Libya.⁸⁴ With public opinion highly in favor of strong measures against Libya, the Reagan administration enacted a "comprehensive set of military, diplomatic, and economic measures" over the next six months "that were designed to increased Qaddafi's international isolation, embarrass his regime, and exploit his many political weaknesses."⁸⁵ In late November 1981, Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive 16 (NSDD-16), which "established an interagency task force to implement the newest measures regarding Libya."⁸⁶ In December of 1981, the US invalidated all US passports for travel to Libya. The State Department issued a statement which reiterated "Libya's well-known efforts over the course of many years to undermine U.S. interests and those of our friends as well as Libya's support for

⁸² Ensalaco 2008, 130.

⁸³ White House, "Security considerations in Egypt and Sudan," National Security Decision Directive No. 14 (October 8, 1981), <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-014.htm> (accessed September 12, 2011).

⁸⁴ Stanik 2003, 71-2.

⁸⁵ Stanik 2003, 68.

⁸⁶ Stanik 2003, 68.

international terrorism,” warned all Americans that they were in “imminent danger,” and advised them to leave the country as soon as possible.⁸⁷

Two months later, American pressure increased. In February 1982, in a meeting with the NSC, the administration decided to move ahead with plans to embargo oil from Libya. Secretary of State Al Haig reportedly said that this embargo would be “phase two” of the administration’s plan to isolate Libya, with the travel ban being phase one.⁸⁸ This came despite a study from the GAO assessing that an embargo would likely have little impact on Libya.⁸⁹ On March 9, the administration issued NSDD 27, which outlined the details of the new measures, including a complete US ban on the importation of Libyan oil, and new limitations on American exports to Libya. The embargo went into effect the next day.

The implementation of these sanctions constituted a dramatic change in policy for the United States. As has been shown, America was happy to do business with Qaddafi in his early years, despite his anti-imperialist rhetoric. Even his sponsorship of international terrorism had little impact on US-Libyan trade. Economic relations between the two countries began to deteriorate when Libya began taking steps to deepen its economic relationship with the Soviet

⁸⁷ “Text of the administration’s statement on policy toward Libya,” *New York Times*, December 11, 1981, A12.

⁸⁸ Bernard Gwertzman, “U.S. decision to embargo Libyan oil is reported,” *New York Times*, February 26, 1982, A1.

⁸⁹ The report allowed that “Libya could experience a small, short-term loss of oil revenues,” and that there might be problems “producing at full capacity without U.S. service companies and technicians,” but concluded that in the end the loss of revenue would not be “large or of long duration,” and that there would be “little permanent detrimental effect on Libya’s ability to produce oil beyond a temporary adjustment period.” General Accounting Office, *Possible energy effects of a U.S. ban on Libyan oil imports*, EMD 82-43 (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, February 24, 1982), 8-9, 25.

bloc. In 1974, Libya began supplying oil to Eastern bloc states; in 1976, Libya signed an arms pact with the Soviet Union.⁹⁰ Still, as late as 1980, Libya had provided more than ten percent of US oil imports.⁹¹

This comprehensive set of sanctions failed to change Libyan policy. Indeed, if anything Qaddafi seems to have escalated Libyan involvement in terrorism. By the mid-1980s, Libya was spending more money than ever to support international terrorism.

Estimates of the total amount of Libya's contribution to terrorism vary from \$40 to \$250 million a year. An Israeli intelligence report stated that the sum was a \$1 billion. A document published by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in 1982, argued that at the Baghdad Arab conference of October 1978, Libya promised to provide the PLO with \$39.3 million a year and also offered support to Ahmed Jibril's organization, although Qaddafi delivered only a small part of the amount promised.⁹²

Israeli intelligence claimed that more than 7,000 terrorists were being trained in Libya in the mid-1980s, and the Pentagon estimated that there were 34 bases in Libya being used for this purpose.⁹³

Libya gave material support to terrorist groups around the world, including Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in South Africa, the New People's Army (NPA) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the Philippines, Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) in Spain, and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the UK. Among Palestinian terrorist groups, Libya

⁹⁰ Robert G. Weinland, "Land support for naval forces: Egypt and the Soviet Escadra 1962-1976," *Survival* 20:2 (March 1978), 77, fn. 24. See also Cooley 1981, 85-6.

⁹¹ Cooley 1981, 90.

⁹² Abadi 2000.

⁹³ Abadi 2000.

aided the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) the PFLP-General Command (PFLP-GC), and others. Qaddafi didn't have a well-defined ideology as much as a list of enemies, and so the Libyans were indifferent to the grievances, methods, and targets of the groups they sponsored. So long as a terrorist group was fighting the West somehow, it might receive support from Libya.⁹⁴

The United States contemplated further military actions, including the use of ground forces. On April 3, 1984, President Reagan signed NSDD-138, which approved of preemptive attacks against terrorists and their state sponsors.⁹⁵ The directive stated: "whenever we have evidence that a state is mounting or intends to conduct an act of terrorism against us, we have a responsibility to take measure to protect our citizens, property, and interests."⁹⁶ In the end, little came of this directive. In the summer of 1985, the United States also considered the possibility of a preemptive attack against Libya, conducted jointly with Egypt. National Security Advisor John Poindexter visited Cairo to discuss the possibility with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, but Mubarak rebuffed him: "When we decide to invade Libya, it will be our decision and on our

⁹⁴ Qaddafi gave little support to the most doctrinaire Communist and Islamist groups, but many of the groups he did sponsor had Communist and Islamist elements.

⁹⁵ Carol Winkler, "Parallels in preemptive war rhetoric: Reagan on Libya; Bush 43 on Iraq," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10, no. 2 (summer 2007): 306.

⁹⁶ http://printfu.org/read/extract-of-nsdd-138-pdf--d41d.html?f=1qeYpurpn6Wih-SUpOGumKqnh7Hn6tfVy9mQ4c-Oworm5sZKdoq6FnLiptpuLqeegp6eH4OOYoOeilqGsi9jp2ena1by_29HZiqDjrJqolsyXqNimpKyfltDZ5OKjnaPd7OST0-brk9nM2p_w1-HV2NjVzuKexLi1raeyobfBtau3r5qhnuTY2MyWo6qX3tjMl6ji

timetable.”⁹⁷ The plan was scrapped. The President also authorized the CIA to support Egypt, Algeria, and Iraq in their efforts to aid anti-Qaddafi groups in Libya, but the plan was leaked and the administration abandoned it.⁹⁸

In September 1985, Qaddafi declared that, “We have the right to fight America, and we have the right to export terrorism to them.”⁹⁹ Two terrorist attacks underscored this commitment to international terrorism and the ineffectuality of American attempts to dissuade or deter. On October 7, four men from the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF), part of the PLO umbrella organization, boarded the Italian passenger liner *Achille Lauro*, carrying 201 passengers, including 14 Americans. The hijackers sought to dock in Libya and Syria, but were denied permission. Frustrated, one of the terrorists shot Leon Klinghoffer, a wheelchair-bound Jewish American, and threw him overboard. This barbarous act galvanized American public opinion, and indeed world opinion. Qaddafi denied responsibility for the hijacking, and indeed Libya condemned it.¹⁰⁰ However, Israeli interrogation of Palestinian terrorists after the attack “revealed that Abul Abbas who masterminded the operation was paid handsomely by Libya.”¹⁰¹ There was no direct physical evidence to confirm the Libyan connection, but American policymakers

⁹⁷ David C. Wills, *The first war on terrorism: Counter-terrorism policy during the Reagan administration* (Oxford: Rowman& Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 174-5.

⁹⁸ Wills 2003, 175.

⁹⁹ Wills 2003, 175.

¹⁰⁰ Javaid Rehman, *Islamic state practices, international law, and the threat from terrorism: A critique of the ‘clash of civilizations’ in the new world order* (Portland, OR: Hart Publishing, 2005), 153-4.

¹⁰¹ Abadi 2000.

blamed Qaddafi.¹⁰² In November, the United States banned the import of refined petroleum products from Libya.¹⁰³

The following month, Libya struck back. On December 27, four terrorists affiliated with the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO) walked into the Leonardo da Vinci airport in Rome and began shooting and throwing grenades. Almost at the same instant, three more ANO terrorists carried out a similar attack at the Vienna International Airport. More than a hundred were wounded in the attack, and nineteen were killed. Qaddafi denied responsibility, but called the attacks “noble,” and declared that Libya would continue to train Arab groups “for terrorist and suicide missions, and allocate ... all the weapons needed for such missions.”¹⁰⁴ Libya had by this time become very closely linked to Abu Nidal, who had replaced Carlos as Qaddafi’s favorite terrorist mastermind. He is alleged to have paid Abu Nidal “between \$5 million and \$6 million for [the Rome and Vienna] massacres... and an additional annual fee of \$5 million to his group.”¹⁰⁵ Sources close to Abu Nidal claimed that Libya supplied the weapons for the Rome and Vienna attacks.¹⁰⁶

The Reagan administration was convinced the Qaddafi was behind the attacks, and in 1986, the US once again attempted to increase the pressure on Libya with stronger economic

¹⁰² The PLF was principally an Iraqi-supported organization, but the US government may have been loathe to cast aspersions at Saddam Hussein at that time because the US was then supporting Iraq in its war against Iran, perceived to be a greater threat.

¹⁰³ Hagger 2009, 115.

¹⁰⁴ Ensalaco 2008, 170. Davis 1990, 84.

¹⁰⁵ Abadi 2000.

¹⁰⁶ Seale 1992, 344-6.

sanctions. President Ronald Reagan issued two executive orders in January, comprehensively prohibiting trade with Libya and freezing Libyan assets in US banks.¹⁰⁷ One of these, NSDD 205, which President Reagan signed on January 8, 1986, referred to (but did not detail) “indisputable” evidence of Qaddafi’s support for terrorist attacks, specifically including the December 27th attacks in Rome and Vienna.¹⁰⁸ These executive orders were built on years of economic and diplomatic sanctions, as well as military actions, but they failed to deter Qaddafi.

Libya struck back. “On April 5, 1986, Verena Hauesler-Chanaa, a middle-aged German woman married to a Palestinian, carried a bomb into La Belle discotheque in West Berlin in her handbag.”¹⁰⁹ The state or organization that launched this attack is still disputed today. Former ANO spokesman Atef Abu Bakr “claimed that Abu Nidal was responsible for the 1986 attack on a West Berlin disco that killed two US soldiers and a Turkish woman, and wounded 260 others, provoking American air strikes on Libya.”¹¹⁰ Of course, Abu Nidal moved to Libya shortly afterward, so if he was responsible for the attack, the Libyans clearly approved.

The United States proved it was willing to hold Libya accountable for the actions of its

¹⁰⁷ White House, “Executive order 12543– Prohibiting trade and certain transactions involving Libya,” (January 7, 1986), <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/10786c.htm> (accessed September 12, 2011). White House, “Executive order 12544– Blocking Libyan government property in the United States or held by U.S. persons,” (January 8, 1986), <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/10886e.htm> (accessed September 12, 2011).

¹⁰⁸ White House, “Acting against Libyan support of international terrorism,” National Security Decision Directive No. 205 (January 8, 1986), <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-205.htm> (accessed September 12, 2011).

¹⁰⁹ Ensalaco 2008, 170.

¹¹⁰ BBC News, “Abu Nidal ‘behind Lockerbie bombing,’” August 23, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2211327.stm (accessed September 12, 2011).

terrorist agents by launching a direct military intervention. In April 1986, Operation El Dorado Canyon sent dozens of aircraft from the US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps to strike five targets within Libya. Sixty Libyans died, including– it was claimed– Qaddafi’s adopted daughter, only 15 months old.¹¹¹ Qaddafi himself would have been killed but for a telephone warning from the Prime Minister of Malta. President Reagan, speaking to American audiences afterward to apprise them of what he had ordered, said:

Today we have done what we had to do. If necessary, we shall do it again. ...
Despite our repeated warnings, Qadhafi continued his reckless policy of intimidation, his relentless pursuit of terror. He counted on America to be passive. He counted wrong. I warned that there should be no place on Earth where terrorists can rest and train and practice their deadly skills. I meant it. I said that we would act with others, if possible, and alone if necessary to ensure that terrorists have no sanctuary anywhere. Tonight, we have.¹¹²

President Reagan framed the operation as an attempt to impair Libya’s capability to support terrorism, but the strikes had little practical effect.

Reprisals followed in the aftermath of the American strikes. On April 17, 1986, 3 days after Operation El Dorado Canyon, an American and three Britons were executed by the Arab Revolutionary Cells. Another American was killed by the Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims. These “were almost certainly fictitious names. It is widely believed that Qaddafi purchased the four men from Hizb’allah in order to execute them in retaliation for the

¹¹¹ In light of recent evidence, it appears increasingly likely that this story was a lie, and that Qaddafi’s adopted daughter Hana is still alive and well. For example, see: “Qaddafi’s apparently undead daughter,” *CBS News / AP* (August 31, 2011) <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/08/31/501364/main20099663.shtml> (accessed September 12, 2011).

¹¹² Ronald Reagan, “Address to the nation on the United States air strike against Libya,” April 14, 1986, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/41486g.htm> (accessed September 12, 2011).

raid on Libya.”¹¹³ Thus the strongest American response to date only met with further Libyan retaliations.

In May, at the G-7 summit in Tokyo, the United States had better luck. Although terrorism had not been on the agenda for Tokyo, “the majority of the summit discussions [were] devoted to the issue.”¹¹⁴ These discussions allowed Americans and Europeans to bridge the gap between their preferred policy responses to terrorism.¹¹⁵ During this summit, the first G7 counter-terrorist expert group was formed, a group which has met periodically in the decades since then.¹¹⁶

At the end of the summit, the G7 issued a communique in which the seven member states pledged to adopt specific tough measures on terrorism and encouraged all other governments to do the same.¹¹⁷ In many ways, the Tokyo summit began the international dialogue on counter-terrorism and created multilateral regimes which “allowed the G8 to evolve into a forum producing ambitious, comprehensive, and detailed counter-terrorism agreements that... produced effective results” in later years.¹¹⁸ Even in the short term, states began to follow the guidelines laid out in the Tokyo Communique, and “in the next three months over one hundred Libyan

¹¹³ Ensalaco 2008, 171.

¹¹⁴ Andre Belelieu, “The G8 and terrorism: What role can the G8 play in the 21st century?” *G8 Governance* No. 8 (2002), 12.

¹¹⁵ Guelke 1995, 63.

¹¹⁶ Belelieu 2002, 18.

¹¹⁷ G7, “Statement on International Terrorism,” Tokyo summit (May 5, 1986), <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/1986tokyo/terrorism.html>, (accessed September 12, 2011).

¹¹⁸ Belelieu 2002, 19.

officials and businessmen were expelled from Europe.”¹¹⁹

The US also tried to end Libya’s support for terrorism by ousting Qaddafi through an elaborate plan developed by National Security Advisor John Poindexter. The most important component of the plan was a disinformation campaign (to be waged primarily through foreign press) which combined “real and illusionary events...with the basic goal of making Qaddafi *think* that there is a high degree of internal opposition to him within Libya, that his key trusted aides are disloyal, [and] that the U.S. is about to move against him militarily.”¹²⁰ Reagan approved this plan on August 14, in a meeting of the National Security Planning Group (NSPG).

The plan was leaked, however, and subsequently exposed in a front page story in the Washington Post written by Bob Woodward.¹²¹ President Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, and others in the administration did their best to minimize the damage. The president challenged “the veracity of that whole story,” while simultaneously asserting that “we would just as soon have Mr. Qaddafi go to bed every night wondering what we might do.”¹²² However, the exposure of the plan hurt the administration’s credibility, causing many Americans to wonder

¹¹⁹ Bruce R. Kuniholm, “El Dorado Canyon: Reagan’s undeclared war with Qaddafi,” *International History Review* 25, no. 4 (December 2003): 968.

¹²⁰ Joseph T. Stanik, *El Dorado Canyon: Reagan’s undeclared war with Qaddafi* (Anapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 223.

¹²¹ Bob Woodward, “Gadhafi target of secret U.S. deception plan; Elaborate campaign included disinformation that appeared as fact in American media,” *Washington Post* (October 2, 1986), A1.

¹²² “Excerpts from session with the president,” *New York Times*, October 3, 1986, A6.

what they could really believe about Libya and terrorism.¹²³

Libya and terrorism, 1987-93

The Reagan administration had attempted to hold Libya accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, with comprehensive economic, diplomatic, and military sanctions. These efforts met with some success, as Libya's support for terrorism seemed to drop. After sponsoring nineteen terrorist incidents in 1986, Libya sponsored only six in 1987 and again in 1988, according to the US State Department.¹²⁴ In 1987 after suffering conventional military defeats in Chad, Qaddafi even called for better relations with the US¹²⁵ However, Libya had not ceased to sponsor international terrorism, and some of the worst attacks were yet to come.

On December 21, 1988, Pan Am flight 103 exploded as it flew over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all 259 people aboard. The Reagan and Bush administrations responded by sending a horde of American law enforcement personnel to Scotland to investigate. After months of careful search and inquiry, they named Libyan agents as responsible— including an officer in the Libyan intelligence service, according to the FBI.

Another leading candidate was Abu Nidal, who had taken up residence in Libya some time before the spring of 1987. Speaking of the bombing of Pan Am 103, Abu Nidal said to an

¹²³ One editorial stated: "Great, but what about the American people? Can we now go to bed every night wondering whether information coming from the White House is true or not?" Edwin Guthman, "They call it disinformation, but it's simply lying," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 5, 1986, http://articles.philly.com/1986-10-05/news/26057410_1_journal-article-libyan-government-moammar-gadhafi (accessed July 11, 2011).

¹²⁴ Stanik 2003, 227.

¹²⁵ Stanik 2003, 225.

associate: “We do have some involvement in this matter, but if anyone so much as mentions it, I will kill him with my own hands.”¹²⁶ But as his biographer wrote, “If an American soldier tripped in some corner of the globe, Abu Nidal would instantly claim it as his own work.”¹²⁷ Atef Abu Bakr, a former ANO spokesman, said in a 2002 interview with Al-Hayat newspaper that Abu Nidal had claimed responsibility for the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 in a meeting (at an unknown date) of his Fatah-Revolutionary Council. “Abu Nidal said during an inner-circle meeting of the leadership of the Revolutionary Council, ‘I will tell you something very important and serious, the reports which link the Lockerbie act to others are false reports. We are behind what happened.’” And he threatened that if anyone leaked this information, “I will kill him even if he is in the arms of his wife.”¹²⁸ Abu Nidal was in Libya under Qaddafi’s protection. If ANO was responsible, then Libya was responsible.

After the successes of the Tokyo communique, issued at the May 1986 G-7 summit meeting, the United States tried a new tack and began building a multilateral sanctions regime, primarily through the UN. In 1991, two Libyan intelligence agents were indicted in the US and the UK. The UN Security Council passed resolutions demanding that Libya extradite the accused for trial. Further Security Council sanctions were enacted in 1992 when Libya refused to comply.¹²⁹ Libya claimed a year later that the UN travel sanctions alone had caused the deaths of

¹²⁶ Patrick Seale, *Abu Nidal: A gun for hire* (New York: Random House, 1992), 255.

¹²⁷ Seale 1992, 255.

¹²⁸ BBC News 2002.

¹²⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 748, (March 31, 1992), <http://www.cfr.org/un/un-security-council-resolution-748-libya/p11211> (accessed September 12, 2011).

over 800 people and cost the country \$2.2 billion in lost exports.¹³⁰ US and UN sanctions continued to expand during the 1990s, but it is the beginning of international sanctions which best correlates with the sharp decline of Libyan support for terrorist groups.¹³¹ US sanctions alone had been insufficient, but international economic pressure proved a decisive factor.

Libya and terrorism, 1994-2000

As the sanctions began to have an effect, Qaddafi signaled the possibility of a thaw in his anti-Western position. Some of these signals were very tentative and halting. For example, although Libya's press in 1993 condemned the ongoing Oslo peace process as "high treason" and a "new Arab catastrophe," there were reports in an Israeli newspaper that Qaddafi was "ready to announce his decision to establish diplomatic relations with Israel," and hints from Israel's Police Minister that Israel might be conducting secret negotiations with Libya.¹³² Libyan authorities denied the reports, and instead of announcing diplomatic relations with Israel, Qaddafi evicted a large number of Palestinians by way of protesting the peace process.

However, as he came under pressure to renounce terrorism, Qaddafi did make concrete

¹³⁰ "Case studies in sanctions and terrorism: Libya," *Peterson Institute for International Economics*, <http://www.piie.com/research/topics/sanctions/libya.cfm> (accessed September 12, 2011).

¹³¹ Thomas E. McNamara, "Unilateral and multilateral strategies against state sponsors of terror: A study of Libya, 1979 to 2003," in *Uniting against terror: Cooperative nonmilitary responses to global terrorist threat*, ed. David Cortright and George A. Lopez (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 83-122.

¹³² Abadi 2000.

steps to demonstrate a change in attitude in Tripoli. He put Abu Nidal under house arrest.¹³³ Eventually, Abu Nidal was expelled from Libya, and he returned to Baghdad.¹³⁴ He also signed a peace agreement with Chad in 1994, and withdrew Libyan forces from the Aouzou strip.

As the decade progressed, Qaddafi continued to alter the direction of his country's foreign policy, in two fundamental ways. First, he shifted away from armed struggle against Western imperialism and toward cooperation and economic development. By the end of the decade, Libya had completely abandoned its support for international terrorism. In August 1999,

Colonel Qaddafi told African journalists that he in fact shared an aspiration, voiced by President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, who said that people were eager to see something new from the Libyan leader.

"The world knows Muammar Qaddafi as the leader of the world revolution, which is contributing to the liberation of peoples," the Libyan leader said that President Obasanjo had told him. "And now that the liberation stage has ended, the world wants to know Muammar Qaddafi as the leader of peace and development in Africa and other countries."

"In fact, I hope that Muammar Qaddafi meets this description," the Libyan leader added.¹³⁵

Second, Qaddafi oriented Libya's foreign policy away from the Arab world and towards sub-Saharan Africa. True to form, the transition was dramatic.

[I] September 1998, Qadhafi declared pan-Arabism 'a mirage' and the state-run Libyan news agency announced that the Ministry of Arab Unity Affairs had been abolished. The Libyan state-owned radio, which had been known for three

¹³³ BBC News, "Abu Nidal 'behind Lockerbie bombing,'" (August 23, 2002), available online at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2211327.stm.

¹³⁴ Ensalaco 2008, 105. In August 2002, Abu Nidal died in Baghdad. Iraq's chief of intelligence said he committed suicide rather than be arrested.

¹³⁵ Douglas Jehl, "Libya's maverick leader, 30 years in power, makes a bid for respectability," *New York Times*, September 6, 1999, A10.

decades as the 'Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland' was renamed the 'Voice of Africa' and the daily television news bulletin replaced its background map of the Arab world with a map of Africa. Qadhafi pronounced the 'Arab world is finished' and declared Africans and not Arabs as Libya's real supporters.¹³⁶

This re-orientation reinforced the first, improving Libya's relationship not just with the West, but also with other states in the region. Qaddafi's focus on Middle Eastern and Arab politics created volatility in Libya's foreign relations with its neighbors. For example, Libya's relationship with Sudan "deteriorated sharply when Sudan supported Egypt after the Camp David accords."¹³⁷ Qaddafi's declining interest in Middle Eastern politics thus decreased the chance that Libya's relations with African states will be influenced by outside events.

The cause of this shift toward Africa and away from the Middle East was due in part to the multilateral sanctions of the previous several years, and the responses of Libya's perceived peers to these sanctions. Qaddafi's passion for decades had been to unite the Arabs, and to be their leader and spokesman, but Arab states had never returned his affection. When the UN imposed its sanctions, the Arab League complied, instead of defying them as Qaddafi had hoped. On the other hand, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) voiced consistent opposition to the sanctions, culminating in the leaders of several African states flying to Tripoli in 1998 contrary to the UN embargo against air travel to Libya.¹³⁸ This defiant gesture preceded, and may have helped to bring about, the relaxation of international sanctions and a change in attitude on the

¹³⁶ Asteris Huliaras, "Qadhafi's comeback: Libya and sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," *African Affairs* 100:398 (January 2001), 10-1.

¹³⁷ Asteris Huliaras, "Qadhafi's comeback: Libya and sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," *African Affairs* 100:398 (January 2001), 8-9.

¹³⁸ Huliaras 2001, 12-3.

part of its principal proponents, the United States and the United Kingdom.¹³⁹

As Libya changed its foreign policy approach, Qaddafi's passion for 'union' did not diminish— but he learned to temper his approach. Two examples are illustrative. First, in 1998, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) was organized in Tripoli to encourage regional cooperation on issues of economy and security. Although in its early stages CEN-SAD members appeared to be united only in their desire for Libyan patronage, it has since grown to include twenty-eight states, and has been recognized as “one of the five regional pillars of African integration.”¹⁴⁰ Second, in 1999, Qaddafi played a leading role in the process which led to the creation of the African Union (AU) as a replacement for the OAU.¹⁴¹ In both examples, Qaddafi sought a prominent role for himself and for Libya. However, he pursued his vision through international institutions rather than outright conflict, or thinly-veiled attempts at annexation. Further, these examples show the shift Qaddafi made in the 1990s from pan-Arabism to pan-Africanism.

This two-pronged change in Libya's foreign policy worked. After the OAU began to defy the UN sanctions, citing Qaddafi's changed behavior, there were indications that the Arab League would soon adopt a similar position. On August 24, 1998, the governments of the US and the UK “accepted the original Libyan position... that the two Lockerbie suspects should be

¹³⁹ Rasha Saad, “Gaddafi turns to Africa,” *Al-Ahram Weekly On-line* 400 (October 22, 1998), <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/400/re4.htm> (accessed July 2011).

¹⁴⁰ Kathryn Sturman, “The rise of Libya as a regional player,” *African Security Review* 12, no. 2 (2003), <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/ASR/12No2/C2.html> (accessed July 2011).

¹⁴¹ Evarist Baimu and Kathryn Sturman, “Amendment to the African Union's right to intervene: A shift from human security to regime security?” *African Security Review* 12, no. 2 (2003), <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/ASR/12No2/AfWat.html> (accessed July 2011).

tried in a neutral territory. After some initial hesitation, Qadhafi agreed... Almost simultaneously, the UN multilateral sanctions on Libya were suspended.”¹⁴² In April 1999, Libya extradited the two indicted men for trial in the Netherlands. The United Nations suspended its sanctions, promising to lift them permanently when Libya renounced terrorism, accepted responsibility for the bombing of Pam Am 103, and compensated the families of the victims.

Libya and terrorism, 2000-2010

The changes in Libya’s foreign policy orientation that began in the 1990s– away from conflict, and away from the Middle East– continued. Libya participated in peacekeeping operations, including being invited into the Central African Republic in 2001. Surprisingly, Libyan forces actually supported the government of democratically elected President Ange-Felix Patasse, and kept peace while they were permitted to remain in the country.¹⁴³ Libya was also involved in efforts to keep the peace in Darfur.

On May 29, 2002, Libya offered a settlement of approximately ten million dollars to the families of each victim of the Pan Am 103 bombing, totaling almost \$3 billion. Libya said that the money would be paid out in stages, with 40% released when the UN cancelled its sanctions, another 40% when the US lifted its own sanctions, and the final 20% when Libya was removed from the US State Department’s list of state sponsors of terrorism.

On August 15, 2003, Libya submitted a letter to the United Nations renouncing terrorism

¹⁴² Huliaras 2001, 13.

¹⁴³ After supporters of rebel General Francois Bozize protested the presence of foreign soldiers, Libya withdrew its forces in early 2003. Three months later, Bozize deposed President Patasse in a coup. Sturman, 2003.

and accepting responsibility for the bombing of Pan Am 103. On September 12, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1506, ending the UN sanctions against Libya. The US abstained from the vote, noting ongoing concerns about Libya's policies, including its support for terrorism, its human rights record, and its interest in weapons of mass destruction— including chemical and biological weapons, as well as ballistic missiles. Libyan officials denied that Libya had ever attempted to gain such weapons, calling the allegations “unfounded stories,” which were “no more than an invention.”¹⁴⁴

However, in December, Libya disclosed, and renounced, its nuclear weapons program. This disclosure also aided the United States, the IAEA, and Interpol in their pursuit of an international ring of criminals supporting black-market nuclear proliferation, led by Abdul Qadeer Khan of Pakistan. After inspections of Libya's uranium enrichment facilities, Interpol was able to make three arrests, and Pakistan was forced to investigate and arrest Khan himself. In January 2004, Libya signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Libya also accepted the visit of the director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to discuss how Libya could help in the global fight against crime and terrorism.¹⁴⁵ US President George W. Bush declined to lift US sanctions or unfreeze Libyan assets, but cited “positive developments.”¹⁴⁶ A few weeks later, the US sent a diplomatic mission

¹⁴⁴ AFP, “Libya denies trying to procure WMDs,” *Agence France Presse - English* (September 14, 2003).

¹⁴⁵ AFP, “Libya, UN to work together against drugs, crime and terror,” *Agence France Presse - English* (January 20, 2004).

¹⁴⁶ George W. Bush, “Letter to Congressional leaders on continuation of the national emergency with respect to Libya,” *Public Papers of the Presidents* (January 12, 2004).

to Libya, restoring limited diplomatic relations for the first time since the US embassy was closed in May 1980.

In September of 2005, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Libyan Foreign Minister Abdelrahman Shalgam issued a joint statement after meeting at the UN in New York on the state of Libyan-US relations. Shalgam reiterated Libya's previous renunciation of "terrorism in all its forms," and pledged that Libya would not "support acts of international terrorism or other acts of violence targeting civilians, whatever their political views or positions." He further affirmed Libya's commitment to "continue cooperating in the international fight against terrorism." Rice expressed American appreciation for Libya's cooperation in the global war on terrorism, and noted that US businesses were now returning to Libya.¹⁴⁷

On May 15, 2006, Secretary Rice announced the United States and Libya were fully normalizing diplomatic ties, and that the US would again open an embassy in Tripoli. Further, after a 45-day waiting period, the US would "remove Libya from the list of designated state sponsors of terrorism," because of "Libya's continued commitment to its renunciation of terrorism and the excellent cooperation Libya has provided to the United States and other members of the international community in response to common global threats faced by the civilized world since September 11, 2001."¹⁴⁸

In January of 2008, the United States accepted an official visit, for the first time since

¹⁴⁷ US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, "Rice and Libya's Abd al-Rahman joint statement," September 19, 2005, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0509/S00309.htm> (accessed July 20, 2011).

¹⁴⁸ Condoleezza Rice, "Text of Rice statement on Libya," *Agence France Presse - English* (May 15, 2006).

1972, from the Libyan foreign minister. After a closed discussion with Secretary Rice, representatives of the US and Libya signed a science and technology cooperation agreement, the first bilateral agreement since the restoration of diplomatic relations.¹⁴⁹ “We don’t speak any more about war or confrontation or terrorism,” said Minister Shalgam. “No, the contrary: wealth of the people, co-operation, investments, peace and stability.”¹⁵⁰ He added that he expected that the agreement would be of great benefit to Libya as the country embraced its new role: “I think Libya needs education, universities, rehabilitation of our infrastructure. That is the real weapon for any nation.”¹⁵¹ Rice raised the issue of unresolved claims by survivors of Libyan terrorist attacks, and urged Libya to make good on its previous promises.

Later that year, Secretary Rice visited Libya, the first visit from a US secretary of state in 55 years. On her way to Tripoli, Rice said that the visit demonstrated that, “the United States doesn’t have permanent enemies,” and that “when countries are prepared to make strategic changes in direction, the United States is prepared to respond.”¹⁵² Rice attributed these developments to “the historic decision that Libya made to give up its weapons of mass destruction and to renounce terrorism, [and] the important role that Libya can play and does play

¹⁴⁹ US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, “United States and Libya Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement,” January 3, 2008, <http://www.bilaterals.org/spip.php?article10862> (accessed July 20, 2011).

¹⁵⁰ “Libya hails relations with US; But highest-level contact in 35 years clouded by rights and compensation issues,” *Aljazeera* (January 4, 2008), <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/americas/2008/01/2008525124246932866.html> (accessed July 20, 2011).

¹⁵¹ AFP, “Rice hosts talks with Libyan FM as ties warm,” *Agence France Presse - English* (January 3, 2008).

¹⁵² America.gov, “Libya; Rice makes historic visit,” *Africa News* (September 5, 2008).

in the Maghreb, in the African Union.”¹⁵³ Qaddafi welcomed Rice at the very compound which the US bombed in 1986. The year before, in a television interview with Al Jazeera, he had lovingly called Rice “my darling black African woman,” and said he admired “the way she leans back and gives orders to the Arab leaders.”¹⁵⁴ Rice’s visit ended with a final agreement which set up a fund to compensate all American victims of Libyan terrorism, and Libyan victims of American military reprisals.¹⁵⁵ As White House press secretary Dana Perrino noted, “We have had a long and bad history with Libya, and that began to turn around when they turned away from nuclear weapons and terrorism. That country has radically changed its behavior. And Secretary Rice’s trip signifies a new chapter in U.S.-Libya bilateral relations.”¹⁵⁶

Case analysis and evaluation of the theory

What explains the changes in Libya’s support for terrorism? Why did it start? Why did it increase and decrease? Why did it end? My theory proposes three variables which are necessary for states to sponsor terrorism. The first necessary variable for state sponsorship of terrorism in my theory is motivations for conflict. Libya had strong motivations for conflict, including the desire to weaken its neighbors, the desire to project power, desire to gain international prestige among an ideologically-defined in-group, and the desire to rally domestic political support. This

¹⁵³ AFP, “Rice says Libya reconciliation came at a cost,” *Agence France Presse - English* (September 5, 2008).

¹⁵⁴ Elise Labott, “Rice meets with Libya leader,” *CNN.com* (September 5, 2008).

¹⁵⁵ John Shovelan, “Rice visits Libya,” *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* (September 6, 2008).

¹⁵⁶ America.gov, “Libya; Rice makes historic visit,” *Africa News* (September 5, 2008).

is consistent with the theory's requirements for a state to sponsor terrorism. However, Libya's cessation of support can not be explained by a change in this variable. Libya's motivations toward conflict did not change until the late 1990s, at the earliest, when Qaddafi began to show an interest in more peaceful means of projecting influence and gaining prestige. At this time, Libya had already begun to decrease its support for terrorism, so this can not have been caused by Libya's changing motivations. The relationship between these variables is most likely spurious: both the change in Libya's motivations and the change in Libya's sponsorship of terrorism are caused by another confounding variable.

The second necessary variable for state sponsorship of terrorism, according to the theory, is frustrating constraints which make direct conflict unthinkable. Libya was, in fact, constrained by its weakness relative to its numerous adversaries and by an international environment in which direct offensive military action was unlikely to succeed. This also confirms the predictions of the theory, as regarding Libya's decision to delegate part of its foreign policy to terrorist groups. However, as with Libya's motivations, Libya's constraints did not change substantially during this time period at all. It remained weak enough that direct attack against its Western enemies was difficult to the point of virtual impossibility, especially given American and NATO nuclear deterrent forces. A change in constraints can not explain the change in Libya's sponsorship of terrorism.

This leaves the theory's third necessary variable, accountability. For a state that is the target of terrorism to hold the sponsor state accountable, there are four necessary components. The target state must (1) know of the sponsor state's actions, (2) be capable of enacting intolerable sanctions or, (3) clearly communicate the threat of sanctions, and (4) be perceived as

credible in its threat. In the early 1970s, the United States and other Western countries could not have held Qaddafi accountable for the actions of his terrorist agents because they did not have knowledge of his involvement. Without knowledge, accountability is impossible; capability, communication, and credibility are irrelevant. Thus, Libya's sponsorship of terrorism during this time period is consistent with the predictions of the theory.

Unlike the other two necessary variables, accountability also explains Libya's decisions to decrease and eventually cease its support for terrorism. This began with a change in knowledge, the first element of accountability. Libya's unwillingness to sacrifice meant that the states which were the targets of its sponsored terrorism gained the knowledge of Libya's involvement. The United States knew because of Libya's attempts to gain prestige among its in-group by claiming credit for the acts of its terrorist agents, as demonstrated by their placing Libya on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1979. And Libya's attempts to gain control of their terrorist attacks by involving state officials, as in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, eventually resulted in the knowledge of their responsibility for these acts of terrorism becoming widespread, as demonstrated by the UN enacting sanctions against Libya in 1992.

The second element of accountability is capability. The United States, armed with a knowledge of Libya's responsibility, began in the late 1970s to attempt to hold Libya accountable. The United States tried comprehensive diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions on Libya for over a decade. The second and third elements are communication and credibility. The US clearly communicated its threats, repeatedly warning Qaddafi of diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions. US threats were perceived as credible, and in fact moved beyond the realm of threat as they became actuated.

Three presidents employed almost every option—aside from an invasion to overthrow Qaddafi and change the regime—to little effect. Why did US sanctions fail? The key is capability. The US alone simply did not have the capacity to enact sanctions that were intolerable to the Libyan regime. Diplomatic sanctions were unimportant to Qaddafi, until these were joined in by the Arab League. Economic sanctions were unworkable, because Libya's economy depended on oil, which many other countries were willing to buy. And military sanctions were acceptable to Qaddafi because they did not threaten to remove him from power. Thus, American attempts to hold Libya accountable resulted in only minor and temporary changes in Libyan behavior.

UN sanctions succeeded in eliciting dramatic change in a few short years because they had the capability to enact intolerable pain to the regime. Considering economic sanctions, the inability to sell oil to the United States was to Libya merely an annoyance, while the inability to sell oil at all was devastating. Multilateral diplomatic sanctions also proved more effective than the unilateral variety because they more effectively spread the pain to Libya's ruling elite. Thus knowledge and capability, combined with credible threats clearly communicated, explain the cessation of Libya's support for international terrorist organizations.

Conclusion

The case largely conforms to the four hypotheses described in chapter two. Congruent with the first two hypotheses, Libya was strongly motivated, but strongly constrained. When Libya was not held accountable, it sponsored terrorism. When held accountable, sponsorship of terrorism stopped.

The third and fourth hypotheses also fit the evidence of the Libyan case, but not as well as the first two hypotheses. Problematic for the third hypothesis is that although the United States, a primary target of Libya's terrorism, attempted on its own for more than a decade to hold Libya accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, Libyan policy did not change. This appears to be because the US lacked the capability to enact an intolerable sanction. UN sanctions, on the other hand, met all four requirements of accountability and correlate well with Libya's decision to cease supporting foreign terrorists.

As for the fourth hypothesis, half of it fits the case evidence very well, and half of it fits to a lesser degree. The adoption of economic and diplomatic sanctions through the UN after the indictment of Libyan government officials in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 is highly congruent with the hypothesis that sacrificing control over the actions of terrorist agents can help a sponsor state avoid accountability. If Qaddafi had let his terrorist groups had a longer leash, there would have been no evidence indisputably linking him to the Lockerbie explosion. Even to this day, there is a great deal of dispute about the true level of Libyan involvement in the Berlin discotheque bombing, showing that plausible deniability is an attainable goal. More problematic for the hypothesis is the fact that Qaddafi more than tried to gain prestige for himself and his country by vocally supporting terrorist acts— without suffering an intolerable sanction. However, this does correlate with American efforts to increase Libya's accountability, which is some congruence.

States sponsor terrorism because someone believes that this will be a low-cost way to achieve foreign policy goals that are highly desirable, but frustratingly out of reach. Avoiding accountability makes this seem possible. If the sponsor state is not held responsible for the

actions of its terrorist agents, costs can remain low. However, as demonstrated in these cases, accountability can only be avoided if the state accepts certain sacrifices: minimal control of their agents, and minimal recognition from their in-group of peers and allies. These sacrifices are unappealing, and the longer states manage to avoid accountability, the more they begin to believe that they will never be held accountable and thus that these sacrifices are unnecessary. However seductive this belief may be, it appears to be false. When states attempt to increase their control or their in-group recognition, they usually face higher accountability. This makes terrorism no longer cheap, and thus no longer desirable.

Chapter Five

Analysis and Conclusions

Introduction

In order to better understand the deadly threat of terrorism, this dissertation examines state sponsorship of terrorist groups. Both Cuba and Libya were influential in changing the face of international terrorism. Because of the support of these two states, there were more terrorists, more effective terrorists, and more radical terrorists. However, US and international efforts to stop Cuban and Libyan sponsorship of terrorism were ultimately successful, and in the 1990s both states abandoned their support for foreign terrorist groups.

To understand what this means, it is prudent to return to the four questions fundamental to this study. First, why do states sponsor terrorism? Second, what causes sponsor states to cease their support? Third, how best can targets of state-sponsored terrorism encourage sponsor states to cease their support? Fourth, how best can state sponsors of terrorism avoid being held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents?

These four questions were put forward in the first chapter, and the second chapter detailed my answers. These answers are built on the work of Daniel Byman and Sarah E. Kreps, who applied principal-agent theories to the problem of state-sponsored terrorism in order to propose that state support for foreign terrorist groups is an act of foreign policy delegation. This dissertation takes a further step by theorizing a specific set of conditions under which sponsor states choose to grant authority to terrorist agents in order to attack target states. My hypothesized answers to the four central questions of the dissertation follow from this

proposition, and could together be considered to constitute a rough theoretical model for state-sponsored terrorism.

Revisiting theoretical hypotheses

In answer to the first question, I hypothesize that states sponsor terrorism because three conditions are present: motivations for conflict, constraints against open conflict, and lack of accountability. Motivations can be strategic, ideological, political, or personal. Constraints can come from the sponsor state's military inferiority, a defense dominant international system, or political opposition to conflict. Lack of accountability arises when target states do not have the knowledge, capability, commitment, or credibility necessary to impose an intolerable sanction. When all three conditions are met, states are expected to sponsor foreign terrorism against their adversaries and rivals.

Since the model specifies that all three conditions are necessary, the answer to the second question is that changing any of these conditions will result in the state ceasing its support. If a state loses its motivations for conflict, it will cut off support for terrorism, and should also cease other kinds of adversarial behavior. A state that loses its constraints against direct conflict should cut off support for terrorism and instead engage in more direct forms of conflict. And a state that is effectively held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents will cease to support terrorism, although it may engage in other forms of confrontation.

In answer to the third question, increasing accountability is predicted to be the most useful way for target states to change the behavior of sponsor states. The positive predicted outcome of changing the sponsor state's motivations makes this option seem the best choice, but

altering another state's motives is difficult even among states which enjoy friendly relations. With adversaries, it may be impossible. Further, adversaries often have many motivations for conflict, and if making one change were sufficient, then it is likely that the target state would have made this change, unless such a change is so repugnant that continued terrorism is to be preferred. For example, a target state may not wish to accommodate a sponsor state's interest in changing the target state's regime or political system— or having the target state be weaker.

Removing constraints against direct conflict is even more obviously a suboptimal choice for target states. Few target states would wish to help a sponsor state develop their military capabilities, especially to the point that the sponsor could become a peer competitor. This would result in war, with a stronger foe, which would be no improvement over terrorism. Defense dominance is a system-level variable, and altering it would be beyond the reach of any target state. Even if the system could be altered, an offense dominant world is a catastrophe to be avoided at all costs, particularly in a world where nuclear weapons have been discovered. Changing political constraints might be more possible, but also undesirable. Conflict is deleterious, and constraints against it are beneficial.

This leaves the third variable in the model, accountability. Holding a target state accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents is easier than altering its motivations. Target states can hold sponsors accountable without fundamentally altering their foreign policy. And unlike constraints against conflict, there is nothing inherently desirable about a lack of accountability. Increasing accountability is therefore the most useful policy response to the problem of state-sponsored terrorism.

The model also yields one other important hypothesis, which comes from understanding

how state sponsorship is seductive, but self-defeating. From the point of view of the sponsor state, the key to avoiding accountability is denying the target state knowledge of the relationship between the sponsor and its agents. The other three components of accountability— capability, commitment, and credibility— are inherent to the target state, and so they are not directly in the control of the sponsor. State sponsors of terrorism must therefore keep their sponsorship covert.

Nevertheless, sponsor states are pushed away from the comparative safety of secrecy by two desires: the desire for greater control over their agents, and the desire for credit for the achievements of their agents. Sacrificing these desires would help the sponsor state avoid accountability; pursuing these desires makes it more likely that the target state will gain knowledge of the sponsor's activities. But the picture is not so clear as this. Sacrificing credit also means that the state fails to obtain some of what it wants from the relationship— such as in-group recognition, domestic popularity, etc. And sacrificing control increases agency loss and runs the risk that the sponsor state will be chain-ganged into war by the reckless actions of its agents, as Lebanon was in 2006 by Hizbollah.

It is understandable that sponsor states do not want to sacrifice either credit or control. However, it is impossible to sever the negative consequences of supporting terrorism from the positive consequences. States that are not willing to accept the sacrifices of credit and control tip their hand to their targets and make accountability an inevitability. States that support terrorism do it because they believe it is cheap, not just in the operational costs of terrorist attacks, as compared to conventional military operations, but in terms of the international consequences. They want to get something for nothing, which is untenable in the long term. But desperate leaders sometimes confuse what they believe to be necessary with that which is possible. If

accountability must be avoided, then it can and will be avoided— or so they think. In the long term, nothing is free.

Evaluating from the case evidence

Thus, the four questions raised in the first chapter of the dissertation were answered with the following four hypotheses, detailed in the second chapter:

H1: States will sponsor terrorism if they are motivated toward conflict, *and* constrained against pursuing conflict openly, *and* convinced that accountability can be avoided.

H2: Sponsor states will cease to support terrorism if they lose motivations toward conflict, *or* are able to pursue conflict directly, *or* are held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents.

H3: Sponsor states that cut off support for terrorism will often have been persuaded by target states increasing accountability.

H4: Sponsor states that are successfully held accountable by target states for the actions of their terrorist agents will have ceased to sacrifice control and/or credit.

These hypothesized answers were then tested in the chapters three and four, and the evidence from the case studies of Cuba and Libya in chapters three and four are generally congruent with the predictions detailed in chapter two. Each of the four hypotheses displays some degree of fit, with the first and second fitting best.

More specifically, the first hypothesis is congruent with the evidence of the case studies in that both states supported terrorism when they met the three necessary conditions described in the model: motivations toward conflict, constraints against direct conflict, and a lack of accountability. During the entire time period of the case study (1959-2010), Cuba was strongly motivated toward conflict. Cuba had serious strategic concerns which pushed them toward

conflict with other states, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuba believed that its strategic vulnerabilities would be lessened if it could weaken or destabilize threatening neighbors, and change hostile regimes, or at least shape opposition movements in neighboring states. Cuba also sought to project power abroad. The revolutionary Cuban regime had powerful ideological interests, too— desiring to export their political system, and to gain prestige among fellow socialist states. Castro also had personal reasons to desire conflict, both idiosyncratic (sympathy for leftist revolutionary terrorists and antipathy for the United States) and self-serving (international acclaim, and popular legitimacy at home).

Cuba was also strongly constrained against direct conflict. During the entire period of study, the United States was too strong for Cuba to confront openly, and the Monroe Doctrine made confronting Cuba's weaker foes risky as well. And the strong defensive bias created by nuclear weapons, unfavorable geography, robust diplomacy and alliance systems, and abundant small arms and nationalism would have made direct offensive action unwise even for a much stronger Cuba. This was also true during the entire time period of the case. Finally, the Soviet Union, Cuba's patron state, was opposed to any open conflict with the United States or its allies, because this might provoke a broader war between the superpowers, including perhaps an escalation to a cataclysmic nuclear exchange. This constraint varied in strength during the time period— it was weakest in the early 1960s and the late 1970s, when Soviet leaders were more confrontational. Even during these periods of more aggressive Soviet foreign policy, though, the USSR sought to avoid direct conflict with the United States, as can be seen from the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, etc. Thus, Cuba was constrained by its patron from provoking actual war between the two superpowers.

Cuba also lacked accountability, during two time periods in this case study. First, in the early 1960s, the United States imposed economic sanctions on Cuba, but not for terrorism, which Cuba was not yet supporting. These economic sanctions had little effect on Cuba, because the Soviet Union stepped in and took America's place as Cuba's most important trading partner. Until 1967, Cuba's economic relationship with the USSR continued to grow stronger, as the United States continued its unsuccessful attempts to hold Cuba responsible for its actions, including its support for terrorism. Beginning in 1967, the Soviet Union began to signal the possibility of imposing its own economic sanctions on Cuba, which ended the first period of unaccountability. The second period began in the middle 1970s, as the United States tentatively moved in the direction of normal relations with Cuba. This move undermined American credibility by demonstrating that the US was no longer interested in maintaining sanctions, even though many of the Cuban policies which prompted these sanctions still flourished. The Soviet Union was not interested in holding Cuba accountable either, as Premier Brezhnev became increasingly erratic and Soviet foreign policy became increasingly adversarial. Starting in 1981, under the Reagan administration, the United States again tried to hold Cuba accountable, but again failed. This second period of unaccountability did not end until after Gorbachev came to power in 1986. During both of the periods in which Cuban sponsorship of terrorism was increasing, all three variables were operating, allowing for a slight time lag. This confirms the predictions of the model.

With regard to Libya, again all three necessary conditions described by the model were present when Libya supported foreign terrorist groups. During the entire period of the case study (1969-2010), Libya was strongly motivated to pursue conflict. Libya's interests in conflict began

with its precarious strategic position. To address these vulnerabilities, Libya under Qaddafi, sought to weaken and destabilize its neighbors, to project power, and to change neighboring regimes. Libya also sought to shape opposition movements, particularly in Palestine. Ideology also motivated Libya, which sought to gain prestige among Arab states. Personally, Qaddafi was animated by both idiosyncratic and utilitarian or selfish goals. He admired terrorists of varying ideologies, and hated the imperialist countries of the West, including the United States. Qaddafi also sought to claim the mantle of Nasser and become the spokesman of the pan-Arab movement, and to secure his domestic political legitimacy through conflict with the West. Thus, the Libyan regime had important security concerns and ideological motivations for pursuing conflict, as well as Qaddafi's own personal interests.

Libya was also constrained, primarily by its own military inferiority and by defense dominance at the systemic level, against direct conflict with its enemies and rivals. In absolute terms, Libya's military was incapable of offensive military action against most of its adversaries, even weak ones; Libya had difficulty making a meaningful contribution in Uganda's invasion of Tanzania. In relative terms, Libya was completely outclassed by its opponents, including the United States. For the duration of the case study, this constraint alone would have been enough to keep Libya from launching wars with most of its adversaries. Further, the international system during the time period of the study was strongly biased against offensive action by the presence of secure second-strike nuclear retaliatory forces, as well as by nationalism and abundant small arms which greatly facilitate guerrilla resistance to foreign invaders. Diplomatic arrangements in the region also contributed to this defensive bias, with the presence of several important international organizations and alliances, including the OAU, the Arab League, and NATO.

During most of the period of the case study, including the periods during which Libyan sponsorship of terrorism was either high or increasing, Libya was not effectively held accountable for the actions of its terrorists agents. American efforts did not begin in earnest until the late 1970s, when the US placed an embargo on Libyan oil and placed Libya on the State Department's list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. However, unilateral US economic efforts failed; Libya was easily able to find new buyers for its oil and suffered no significant economic loss. The US also attempted more coercive sanctions, including the El Dorado Canyon bombings in 1986, but these efforts also failed due to Qaddafi's insensitivity to civilian casualties. Libya remained unaccountable until the US succeeded in building a multilateral sanctions regime through the UN, which finally had the capability to inflict an intolerable diplomatic and economic sanction on Libya. Thus, Libya should be considered unaccountable from the beginning of the case in 1969, until approximately 1992, when the Security Council passed a binding resolution imposing international sanctions.

Cuba and Libya both had powerful motivations toward conflict and stringent constraints, which in combination made them frustrated states. And during the periods when they sponsored terrorism, they also lacked accountability. Both cases therefore confirm the first hypothesis of the theory, namely that states will support terrorism when three conditions are met: they are motivated for conflict, they are constrained against pursuing conflict directly, and they are not (or perceive that they will not be) held accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents.

The case studies of Cuba and Libya also confirm the second hypothesis derived from the theoretical model, in that both states ceased to support terrorism when one of the three conditions changed. As is evident from the previous summary of the case studies, both Cuba and Libya

were both motivated and constrained for the duration of the period of study. These conditions did not change significantly. But accountability changed during the period of study, once for Libya and twice for Cuba. When accountability increased, state support for terrorism decreased, as the model would predict.

The third prediction of the model is that accountability is the key lever for target states, or in other words that states will be persuaded to cease sponsoring terrorism when target states hold them accountable. The hypothesis is correct inasmuch as both states were persuaded to stop by states holding them accountable. However, the hypothesis is incorrect in that it was not necessarily the target state which succeeded in increasing accountability. In the case of Libya, the hypothesis was close to correct: US unilateral efforts were insufficient to bring about a change in Qadaffi's regime, but US-led multilateral efforts did succeed in reducing, and then eliminating, Libyan support for foreign terrorism. In the case of Cuba, however, herculean US efforts accomplished little, whereas implied Soviet threats had great effects in reducing Cuban terrorist sponsorship. The best that can be said is that US sanctions, and US led multilateral sanctions enacted through the OAS, made Cuba so completely dependent on Soviet support that the USSR had tremendous influence over Cuban policy.

From the Cuban case it appears that the third hypothesis is flawed, or perhaps limited in scope. The presence of a powerful patron makes it very difficult for target states to hold sponsor states accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. However, this case does not support the argument that target states would be better off either reducing constraints (since this was not attempted). Neither does it clearly support the argument that target states would be better off attempting to alter the sponsor state's motivations. The US did in the 1970s attempt, albeit

haltingly and incompletely, to normalize relations with Cuba. The Carter administration especially seems to have done this with an eye toward reducing or eliminating Castro's interest in conflict with the United States. However, these efforts immediately precede a time period in which Cuban support for terrorism rose dramatically, which indicates that rather than changing Cuban perceptions of their own national interests, the United States only succeeded in changing Cuban perceptions of American credibility. Thus the case shows the limitations of accountability as a lever for influencing the behavior of target states protected by a powerful patron, but do not show other levers to be superior. This may be a circumstance in which, regrettably, no policy instrument is very effective.

The fourth hypothesis is that sacrificing credit and/or control are the keys for sponsor states seeking to avoid accountability. Thus, states which are successfully held accountable for the actions of their terrorists agents should have previously ceased to make these necessary sacrifices. In the two cases, there are three instances of sponsor states reducing their support for terrorism. This hypothesis is weakly supported by the evidence from the Cuban cases, and more strongly supported by the Libyan case.

In the late 1960s, the Soviet Union used the implicit threat of economic sanctions to hold Cuba accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents. Following this, Cuban support for terrorism declined. Preceding the Soviet threat, Cuba had not explicitly claimed credit for the accomplishments of its terrorist agents, in part because little had been accomplished to that point. However, in the January 1966 Tricontinental Conference, and the August 1967 conference of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity, Che Guevara and Castro delivered fiery speeches (in Che's case, by proxy) on the virtues of revolutionary armed struggle on every front, including

terrorism. Again, they did not take credit for any specific act of terrorism, but it did make their support more difficult to deny. It was also during the mid-1960s that Castro first attempted to shape leftist opposition movements throughout Latin America in his own image. This did not give Cuba control of particular terrorist operations, but it was an attempt to gain tighter control of numerous opposition movements and push them towards violent confrontation and terrorism. This effort was noticed, and along with Cuba's increasingly vocal advocacy for armed struggle, it contributed to the Soviet Union's decision to rein in Cuban behavior, especially its support for terrorism.

In the mid 1980s, Cuba was again held accountable by the Soviet Union, leading Cuba to decrease its support for terrorism. Previous to this, Cuba had taken credit for the success of the revolutionary Sandinistas in evicting the Somoza regime. Cuba had been supporting the FALN, which practiced both terrorism and guerrilla warfare, but only after they seized power in Nicaragua did Castro claim their victory as his own. However, this was years previous, and although this led to increased US efforts to hold Cuba accountable, including by sponsoring Contra terrorism, these efforts were not directly successful. They did lead, indirectly, to a new Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev, which sought to reduce tensions between East and West. Thus, Cuba's desire to claim credit for the achievements of its Sandinista agents did lead, eventually, to accountability.

Libya in the early 1990s was successfully held accountable for its sponsored terrorism by the United States, working through multilateral organizations such as the UN. Libya was taking credit for the actions of international terrorists at this time, but this was not new. Qaddafi had never believed in the necessity of sacrificing credit and prestige. On the other hand, the UN

effort was more immediately preceded by Libya attempting to gain more control over its terrorist agents. Qaddafi had been happy in the 1970s to support terrorists of all sorts, without much attempt to control their actions, but in the 1980s, he tried to direct them more closely. This trend reached its apex when Libya began to use state officials in terrorist attacks, such as the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing, and the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Subsequent criminal investigations revealed Libya's direct involvement, and was perhaps the most important reason the US was able to get UN Security Council to support a resolution imposing multilateral sanctions.

Generalizing to other cases

Beyond the specific in-depth cases considered in this dissertation, there is still the question of generalizability. How well do these hypotheses port to other cases? Briefly considered here are three other important cases of state-sponsored terrorism: East German support for international terrorism during the latter half of the Cold War, US support for the Contras during the Reagan administration, and Afghanistan's support for al Qaeda and other Islamist terrorists in the several years prior to 2001. The four hypotheses also appear to be congruent with these cases of state-sponsored terrorism.

Beginning in the late 1960s, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) supported a number of international terrorist groups, notably including the PLO and other Palestinian groups, the Red Army Faction (RAF) and other leftist European groups, and miscellaneous other terrorist groups in West Germany, including fascist groups such as the Hoffman Military Sports Group (WSG). This case is strongly congruent with the first hypothesis, in that all three

necessary conditions for state sponsorship were present during the time period in which East Germany sponsored terrorism. East Germany was highly motivated for conflict. Interestingly, East German leaders do not seem to have possessed strong personal motives. Nonetheless, the state's foreign policy goals included: weakening their larger neighbor West Germany; changing the West German regime for a friendlier one; exporting their political system; gaining international prestige among the Soviet bloc; and aiding their fellow Germans. East Germany was also highly constrained against pursuing conflict directly. It was smaller and less populous than its primary adversary, West Germany, but the more important difficulty was the highly defense dominant environment and the desires of the Soviet Union to avoid general war in Europe. With American troops on the other side of the Fulda gap, and thousands of nuclear weapons waiting to rain down on East Germany, direct conflict was unthinkable. However, for the same reasons, East German leaders perceived that they would not be held accountable for their actions. Neither the United States nor West Germany would risk a military reprisal, and neither had any economic leverage over East Germany in order to enact a meaningful sanction. East Germany was therefore strongly motivated for conflict, strongly constrained against pursuing it directly, and with good reason to believe that it would not be punished for the actions of its terrorist agents. Unfortunately, this case yields no evidence useful for testing the second, third, or third hypotheses, since East Germany ceased to be a state before it ceased to sponsor terrorism.

During the administration of President Ronald Reagan, the United States pursued a foreign policy strategy called the Reagan Doctrine, which advocated the support of anti-Communist insurgent forces in order to roll back existing Communist regimes. Among the

insurgent groups that the US supported during this time period was the Contras in Nicaragua. Less a single group than a broad coalition of anti-Sandinista forces, many of the Contras practiced urban and rural terrorism, murdering Sandinista loyalists in order to instill obedience through fear in other Nicaraguans. US support for the Contras fits the first hypothesis, in that the US had powerful motives for conflict, but was constrained from pursuing them directly, and believed that it could avoid accountability for the actions of its Contra agents. United States motives for conflict with Nicaragua included desires to: weaken or destabilize a neighbor; project power abroad; change the regime for a more friendly one; and perhaps export a more democratic political system. On a personal level, Reagan appeared to have sympathies with the Contras, and romanticized their opposition to the regime as yearning for liberty. He also sought to shore up his personal legitimacy as a champion of freedom and enemy of Communism everywhere, especially in the Americas. However, the US was constrained against invading Nicaragua outright, primarily by the opposition to war among Reagan's constituents and America's European allies, many of which already thought of Reagan as a reckless cowboy. Reagan was also constrained by a defense-dominant environment. Although there was no explicit Soviet security guarantee for the Sandinistas, nuclear weapons induce caution. In addition to being motivated for and constrained against conflict, the United States perceived that it would not be held accountable for the actions of the Contras. The United States had, in previous decades, intervened numerous times in Central America, never provoking more than disapproving rhetoric. Further, the Soviet Union would be constrained by the same environment which constrained the US, meaning that no military sanction was likely. The second hypothesis is also confirmed by this case, in that a change in accountability correlates with a change in US

behavior. Unable to stand up to US power directly, the Nicaraguan regime fought back by inviting journalists from the United States and its allies to come to Nicaragua and witness the atrocities of the Contras. As media reports began to filter back to the United States, the administration was forbidden by Congress to cease supporting the Contras through legal channels. The administration then looked for illegal channels to funnel money and arms to the Contras, and the ensuing scandal profoundly weakened the president and forced him to cut off all support. This case also fits the third hypothesis, in that Nicaragua was successfully able to persuade the United States to change its policies by increasing accountability. The fourth hypothesis is somewhat congruent with the evidence presented by this case in that Reagan's vocal support for the Contras invited scrutiny, which increased accountability.

Afghanistan under the Taliban sponsored foreign terrorists, including al Qaeda, as well as numerous other groups operating in Kashmir, Chechnya, and elsewhere. Consistent with the first hypothesis, the Taliban regime was highly motivated for conflict. They sought to project power, to export their political system, and to gain military aid from terrorists, among other motivations. On a personal level, Mullah Omar approved of conflict for unselfish idiosyncratic reasons. Further, the Taliban was constrained against pursuing conflict directly, primarily by their own military weakness. Consistent with the second hypothesis, the Taliban was not held accountable for the actions of its terrorist agents, because the only state which had the capability to enact an intolerable sanction, Pakistan, did not wish to increase Afghanistan's accountability. In 2001, after the September 11th attacks, the United States changed the Taliban regime through direct military intervention, after persuading Pakistan to stand aside. Convincing Pakistan that it was not in their best interest to keep Afghanistan under their nuclear umbrella in some ways is a

change, not in accountability, but in constraint, since this alters a condition necessary for defense dominance. This is not precisely in line with the third hypothesis, which would predict that increasing accountability would be the way for the United States to achieve a change in Afghanistan's behavior. However, in this case, the US was highly motivated enough that direct conflict was the preferable policy option. The fourth hypothesis is weakly confirmed by this case, in that before invading the US gave Afghanistan a chance to renounce any control over or credit for the actions of al Qaeda, and Afghanistan declined to do so. However, since this preceded direct conflict, rather than an increase in accountability, it does not entirely fit the predictions of the hypothesis.

Considered together, these three brief reviews of state sponsorship of terrorism demonstrate that the hypotheses detailed in chapter two have a generalizability beyond the in-depth case studies considered in this dissertation. As with the cases considered in much greater detail in this dissertation, the first hypothesis and second hypothesis fit best with these three brief reviews, and the third and fourth are less congruent.

Lessons for policymakers

The purpose of studying these cases is to better understand the phenomenon of terrorism, especially state-sponsored terrorism, in order to glean useful information for policymakers in states combating the threat of terrorism. These cases yield the following five lessons.

First, economic sanctions may be more effective than military action. States which sponsor terrorism often have state power concentrated in very few hands. In both Cuba and Libya, a single man has ruled the country for decades. These men are risk-acceptant, especially

when it comes to the lives of their constituents. They also tend to personalize state actions. In the case of Libya, military actions, including confrontations in the Gulf of Sidra and the 1986 aerial intervention, only increased Qaddafi's personal motivations for conflict. This was also true of the Bay of Pigs invasion for Cuba, as well as US interventions in the Dominican Republic and Grenada. In neither case did the US or any other state take the most forceful option, invasion and regime change. So the effects of these actions can not be known from these cases. However, short of invasion, military action seems in these cases to have been less effective than economic sanctions.

Military force is still useful, though. The United States was not able to use military force against Cuba, which was under the protection of the Soviet Union. This may help explain why the US had very little success reducing Cuban support for terrorism, despite trying for decades. And as soon as the Soviet Union disintegrated, Cuba became much less aggressive, in part because a US invasion was now a real possibility. In this case, as in other cases, the implicit threat of force makes other instruments of foreign policy more effective.

Second, multilateral diplomatic and economic sanctions may be more effective than unilateral sanctions at holding sponsor states accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. This is because unilateral sanctions lack the capability to impose an unacceptable cost. Repeated attempts by the US to hold Libya accountable for terrorism were insufficient to change Libya's behavior. Why did US efforts fail? The US had knowledge of Libyan actions and clearly communicated a commitment to punish those actions if they continued. Repeated increases in economic, diplomatic, and military pressure demonstrated US credibility. However, the US may not have had the capacity to enact meaningful sanctions because Qaddafi could easily find other

companies which were willing to help extract Libya's oil and other states to buy it. On the other hand, international sanctions made it very difficult for Libya to find a buyer for their oil, and very difficult for Libyan state officials to travel and enjoy the perquisites of their office. Libyan behavior quickly changed. Thus, a single state may be unable to hold a sponsor state accountable, but single states may be capable of spearheading a more successful multilateral effort..

Third, peer states are important in determining the success of multilateral actions. In Cuba, the key economic pressure was not from formal economic sanctions, but from informal signals from the USSR. The US had sanctions in place since 1959, and multilateral sanctions from 1964 to 1975, but it was the Soviet Union that had the leverage. Libya, too, changed its behavior after its peer states in the Arab League supported international sanctions. If Libya had been able to keep the support of its Arab peers, it may not have reduced its support for terrorism. Thus, pressure from the in-group is much more effective than pressure from the out-group.

Policymakers might be wise, therefore to avoid focusing too narrowly on the problem. Most states which are targets of state-sponsored terrorism quickly recognize that they must address not just the terrorists, but their sponsors. But they may find it beneficial to take one further step backward and look at the international network which supports the sponsor state. Instead of befriending the 'enemy of my enemy,' target states should try befriending the 'friends of my enemy.' Target states should work with the international regimes, formal and informal, utilized by the sponsor state and its peers.

Fourth, complex interdependence between target and sponsor states may render sanctions more painful, and thus the threat of them more effective. After the decision to impose an oil

embargo, further US sanctions could offer little pain, since the two countries had little else tying them together. Likewise, US sanctions against Cuba were at first devastating, but after the Soviet Union picked up the slack, any further sanctions or threats were of limited utility. Placing Cuba on the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism in 1982 was merely symbolic, given that the US already had much stronger sanctions in place. Therefore, the lack of meaningful ties may make target states less capable of holding sponsor states accountable. Better relations mean better leverage.

To be sure, this does not mean that this is the correct move for US foreign policy overall. Building economic, diplomatic, and cultural ties with states that sponsor terrorism, such as Iran, would affect many other foreign policy goals, and undermine some. Such states often deal very poorly with their own constituents, and since the days of the Carter administration, the US government has made it a goal (among other goals) to encourage other states to respect human rights, in part by having fewer dealings with states that have bad human rights records. This practice, although laudable in its ideals, may run contrary to the suggestions of this model. Only the president and other policymakers who set American foreign policy priorities will be able to say if that is stopping state-sponsored terrorism is an important enough goal to be worth the cost to other goals.

Fifth, target states should be more careful with their language, and follow their own definitions of terrorism, state sponsorship, etc. Wrongfully labeling states as sponsors of terrorism robs 'naming and shaming' of its power. It has been interesting while finishing this dissertation to watch the Libyan civil war unfold. Some commentators in support of US and NATO aid for the Libyan rebels have referred to Qaddafi as a terrorist, or to Libya as a sponsor

of terrorism or a 'terrorist state.' As is evident from the Libyan case study, this description is outdated and inaccurate. The persistence of the 'terrorist' label, and its use to refer to a state leader who we dislike for other reasons, likely undermines future efforts to persuade other state sponsors of terrorism to cease their support. If we have neither forgiven nor forgotten Libya for its past actions, why should the Iranian mullahs ever abandon Hezbollah? Likewise, keeping Cuba on the list of State Sponsors of Terror only proves Castro's charge that the list is a weapon to be used in the pursuit of US national interests. Keeping the list with greater fidelity to the statutory definitions of terrorism would give the list greater meaning.

Conclusions

This dissertation asked four inter-related questions. Why do states sponsor terrorism? Why do they cease their support? What is the best policy for states confronting state-sponsored terrorism? How can sponsor states best avoid accountability? The answers to these questions are derived from a theoretical model of state-sponsored terrorism built on principal-agent theory. First, states sponsor terrorism because they meet three necessary conditions: motivations for conflict, constraints against open conflict, and lack of accountability. Second, states cease supporting terrorism when any of these conditions changes. Third, states that are the targets of state-sponsored terrorism can best persuade state sponsors to change their behavior by holding them accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. Fourth, states that sponsor terrorism will be more likely to avoid accountability if they sacrifice both control over their terrorist agents and credit for their agents' successes.

Comparing these hypotheses to two in-depth case studies of state-sponsored terrorism—

Libya and Cuba during the Cold War— shows that each hypothesis is congruent to a greater or lesser degree with the evidence from the cases. The first and second hypotheses evince the best fit. When the three necessary conditions were present, Cuba and Libya sponsored terrorism. When one of those conditions changed (accountability increased), Cuba and Libya reduced or eliminated their support for terrorism.

The third hypothesis does not fit the case evidence as well, given the difficulty that the target state had in both cases in changing the behavior of the sponsor state. In both cases, the target state seems to have lacked the capability to impose an intolerable sanction. Nevertheless, both the Cuba and Libya cases are highly congruent with a more modest hypothesis that accountability (from whatever state or states which possess all four elements necessary for accountability) is crucial to persuading state sponsors of terrorism to cease their support.

The fourth hypothesis fits the Libyan case moderately well, and the Cuban case less well. However, it fits the case evidence in that both Cuba and Libya were more successful at avoiding accountability when they were willing to sacrifice credit and control. Further, the Libyan case is highly congruent with the portion of the fourth hypothesis which deals with sacrificing control.

All four hypotheses fit the case evidence in some way, and also appear to fit other relevant cases. This demonstrates that the theoretical model constituted by these four interrelated hypotheses has some predictive and explanatory power, and merits further investigation.

Finally, the application of this rough theoretical model to these cases yields five policy prescriptions. First, economic sanctions may be more effective than military action at holding sponsor states accountable for the actions of their terrorist agents. Second, multilateral diplomatic and economic sanctions may be more effective than unilateral sanctions, although a

single state may be capable of spearheading a successful international policy response. Third, the sponsor state's peers are crucially important in determining the success of target states' efforts. Fourth, better relations with sponsor states mean better leverage. Fifth, politicized application of the labels 'terrorist' and 'state sponsor' robs the terms of their condemnatory power and decreases their utility as rhetorical weapons. States that follow these prescriptions may be successful in persuading state sponsors to cease their sponsorship. This would reduce the overall level of terrorism, making the world a safer place.

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