Counterterrorism Reading List

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Annotated Bibliography: Counter-Terrorism

Arie Perliger, October 2010

Explaining the Shaping of Counter-Terrorism Policies

- How does the polity’s institutional characteristics influence and shape its counterterrorism policies?
- How are the characteristics of terrorism associated with the counterterrorism policies employed?
- How do the polity’s history and cultural tendencies influence its response to terrorism?


The article argues that counter-terrorism policy is not just a response to a security threat but a reflection of the domestic political process. Focusing on the American case, the author shows that in the executive branch, the specific interests and capabilities of the different security agencies are the main factors shaping the counter-terrorism policies. On the congressional level, the influence on counter-terrorism policies is mainly manifested in the molding/modifying of presidential initiatives. Finally, the author provides examples of how external interest groups attempt to influence the policies according to their own interests.


The article is interested in explaining why two countries (UK and France), facing the same type of threat, and conceptualizing this threat and the measures needed to confront it effectively in the same way, eventually ended by adopting different organizational reforms in their security establishment. The main focus is the different methods of coordination which evolved in the two countries in order to synchronize the operations of the police, intelligence, prosecution and judicial bodies. After a meticulous examination of the reforms conducted in the two countries, the main conclusion is that inter-institutional conventions and organizational routines are the most influential factors in explaining the differences. These conclusions are in line with similar findings of studies conducted in other countries such as Israel and Germany.

The article strives to explain why, in contrast to what would have been expected according to IR neorealist theories, two similarly placed states in the international system, such as Germany and Japan, adopted different counter-terrorism policies. Via analysis of German and Japanese counter-terrorism policies, the article concludes that the main factors shaping counter-terrorism policies are not materialist nor do they refer to the characteristics of the international system, but rather stem from governments' perception regarding the use of violence, the public perception of the threat, and how threats are constructed politically.


The article attempts to portray conditions under which the US government would prefer to engage in a military counter-terrorism operation by analyzing three case studies: the 1986 Operation El Dorado in Libya; the response to the 1993 Iraqi attempt to assassinate President Bush; and the response to the 1998 bombing of two US embassies in Africa. The qualitative analysis indicated several factors that fostered the American military response. Among them were: those responsible for the attacks were clearly identified and had previous tended to aim at American targets, the attacks were clearly directed against US civilians and armed forces, and the terrorist organizations were particularly vulnerable to military retaliation.


The article challenges the usefulness of rational actor models for understanding the factors shaping government response to terrorism via a detailed analysis of the 1970 October crisis – the first use of military measures against domestic terrorism in Canada. In line with similar work conducted in other Western democracies, the author concludes that organizational culture and dynamics as well as agencies' internal interests are the major factors in the decision making process shaping the response to the terrorist threat.

The authors identify differences between US and European counter-terrorism approaches. The US declared a ‘global war on terrorism’ and directed the full resources of a ‘national security’ approach towards the threat posed by a ‘new terrorism’ while European countries’ military forces have attempted to encourage peacekeeping, reconstruction and security sector reform, as well as partaking in grueling counterinsurgency operations. Domestically, legal changes relating to surveillance and civil rights have been less sweeping, while the enhancements to internal security architecture have been more modest. The article suggests that counter-terrorism policies are shaped by strategic culture, institutional memories and state self-conception. Hence, the article reviews the history of counter-terrorism in the US and Europe, explaining its evolution by using strategic culture as a dependent variable. While providing some strong evidence, the article still fails to explain how strategic culture interacts with other factors to influence counterterrorism policies, as well as how these policies develop over time.


The book analyzes, and tries to explain, the factors that shaped the Reagan administration response to terrorism. The first two chapters introduce the Reagan administration's anti-terrorism doctrine, the main actors responsible for its implementation as well as the dynamics and differences between these actors regarding key questions such as what kind of forces should be used, whether the influence of counter-terrorism policies of close allies (Israel) should be taken into consideration, and how to deal with issues concerning the ‘democratic dilemma’. The rest of the book analyzes the formulation of the US response to five terrorist attacks, concluding that the president's de-centralized management style, the diversity of perspectives among high government officials regarding the appropriate response, and the structure of power distribution within the government, are the main factors explaining the fundamental differences observed in the response to the analyzed terrorist attacks.

**Analyzing Effectiveness/Practice of Specific Counter-Terrorism Measures/Policies**

- How can we assess effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures?
- What factors determine the effectiveness of counter-terrorism policies?
- Which governmental agencies/proxies are more suitable to counterterrorism and under what conditions?
The authors utilize ‘game theory’ models in order to explain the tendency of governments to resort to deterrence rather than to preemptive attacks despite the greater social gains usually associated with the latter (deterrence deflects the attacks to less protected targets while proactive preemptive attacks have the potential of eliminating the threat). Their models confirm that (within the basic game theory model) defensive policies of deterrence and hardening targets generally dominate many proactive policies, except for intelligence and infiltration. Hence, governments are predisposed to engage in too little proactive effort and too much defensive effort.


The article uses formal modeling in order to explain why the level of terrorist violence often increases following government concessions. The model presented in the article confirms that government concessions often lead to an increase in the militancy of terrorist organizations because they draw moderate terrorists away from the terrorist movement, leaving the organization in the control of extremists. It also answers the question of why governments make concessions considering the increased militancy they engender. The government probability of succeeding in counter-terrorism improves following concessions because of the help of former terrorists that directly improves counter-terrorism measures and leads the government to invest more resources in its counter-terrorism efforts. Thus, terrorist conflicts in which concessions have been made are more violent but shorter. Finally, the article demonstrates how the ability of former terrorists to provide counter-terrorism assistance to the government can solve the credible commitment problem that governments face when offering concessions.


The literature on combating terrorist financing (CTF) is relatively limited. The article tries to fill some of this gap by examining the EU’s and other international bodies’ efforts in this regard. The first part is dedicated to the initiatives of the UN and the G7 during the last decades to thwart terrorist financial activities and to confiscate assets. The second part details the main CTF tools used by the EU and tries to assess their effectiveness. It stresses several obstacles for efficient CTF in the framework of the EU including a vague legal basis, little cooperation of the member states and structural and slow processes of administrative planning within the EU.


The short report reviews the structure, internal division of power and role in the counter-terrorism efforts of the intelligence communities in four countries – Australia, France,
UK and Canada. In all countries the intelligence services focus on preventive intelligence gathering rather than direct law enforcement, and recently all have extensively invested in long-term doctrines and the honing of special skills and qualities for improving their counter-terrorism capabilities. Lastly, in all cases there is an increased reliance on HUMINT. On the negative side, the authors emphasize the lowering of the democratic threshold (the intensification of the use of practices violating basic rights), the failure to penetrate Islamic networks efficiently as well as inefficient information dissemination.


The chapter provides a broad perspective on the different facets of the "criminal justice model" for countering terrorism and how it should be integrated with military elements in order to produce more holistic models of response. The first section of the chapter reviews the evolvement since the 1970s of anti-terrorism legislation and tries to suggest what special roles could be filled by military units in cooperation with the police and the intelligence agencies. The second part looks into the attempts of the EU to devise effective measures and cooperation in the war against terrorism.


The article tries to assess the advantages and problems in the implementation of a conciliatory model, mainly direct negotiations, during hostage taking incidents. The first part of the article reviews different cases of governmental response to hostage taking incidents, showing that since the mid-1970s there has been a continuous decline in the willingness of democracies to negotiate and to accept terrorists' demands, and a shift towards the implementation of rescue operations and other military measures. In the second part of the article, the author provides some insight regarding the conditions under which negotiations could be tolerable and how the formation in advance of protocols and models of crisis management could improve the response to hostage taking incidents.


The article examines US counter-terrorism policies and looks into conflicts between state legislation and federal counter-terrorism legislation, and the possible implications. After a short introduction, the article reviews three types of state legislation - against support for international terrorist organizations, thwarting funding, and defining terrorism. The subsequent sections look at the conflicts between state legislation and constitutional principles, as well as clashes with federal legislative measures and how these could harm the effectiveness of the latter. This is definitely one of the most comprehensive analyses of US anti-terrorism legislation.

The article employs rational choice perspective in order to formulate hypotheses regarding terrorist groups’ operational decision-making process and the effectiveness of anti-terrorism measures. These hypotheses are tested via vector auto regression models, using data on transnational terrorism between 1968-1988. The main conclusions are that military operations lead to a backlash and an increase in the level of violence (operation El-Dorado), that following fortification of embassies, terrorists have resorted to assassination in order to target politicians/diplomats, and that metal detectors are effective preventive measures against skyjacking, but have led to an increase in alternative hostage taking incident scenarios. Overall, governments must take into account not just the direct preventive impact of the counter-terrorism measures, but also the implications of substitute tactics that will be potentially adopted by the terrorist groups.


The most comprehensive review to date about hostage taking incidents and rescue operations. After providing a short historical briefing about the history of political hostage taking, the book provides extensive coverage of cases in which governments have accepted or refused the terrorists demands, cases of failed and successful rescue operations as well as a chapter dealing with the psychological and mental dimensions of the hostages’ experience. The concluding chapter assesses future developments, including the use of WMD, in the response to hostage taking events.


The article tries to examine the effectiveness of the targeted killings policy by assessing how the utilization of this policy by Israel impacted the level and nature of Palestinian terrorism. Employing time series analysis, the authors utilize logistic and regression models in order to conclude that the policy did not produce any deterrence effect and no significant backlash effect. They also found little support for the contention that targeted killings lowered the professionalism and operational capabilities of the Palestinian organizations (disruption) or that they are effective as supplementary measure to other military operations. Hence, they suggest that the massive employment of defensive measures, including the gradual completion of the separation wall, has been the main reason for the decline in Palestinian terrorism during 2004-2006.
Assuming that a violent response to terrorism tends to breed another round of violence, as well as leading to immoral actions, the book strives to present diverse options for non-violent counter-terrorism strategies and to assess their effectiveness and applicability. In general, the author differentiates between immediate and long-term non-violent strategies. Among the former, he includes smart sanctions (affecting only or mainly the perpetrators rather than the community at large), using mediation for effective quick negotiations that are intended to prevent rapid escalation of the violence, and effective use of international law. The long-term strategies mainly include the creation of social, political and economic conditions that will reduce the motivation of ethnic and ideological groups to engage in violent tactics. While presenting a somewhat provocative and unconventional approach, overall the book’s framework and contentions are not fully convincing due to the absence of sufficient empirical support.


This is one of the first attempts to analyze the effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures. After presenting a typology which includes five main counter-terrorism policies (conciliatory measures, improving economic conditions, reforms, collective punishment, administrative and legal measures, and military operations) it analyzes their effectiveness by looking at how they are correlated with the level of violence in five arenas (UK, Uruguay, Cyprus, Italy and Spain). Some of the main conclusions are that military operations were effective mainly in the short term, but rarely led to the elimination of the terrorist groups in the long term and tended to result in a backlash effect. In contrast, in Italy and Uruguay, administrative measures were effective in the long term. Lastly, negotiations and periods of truce do not tend to yield resolution of the conflict and are utilized by the terrorists groups to reorganize and regroup.


The article discusses the utility of “de-radicalization” programs (re-integration of terrorists into society) as viable counter-terrorism policies. The first part of the article describes five different programs (early release schema of the “Good Friday agreement”; Columbia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia), while reviewing the challenges in assessing their successes. The second part of the article reviews the advantages of multi-attribute utility technology (MAUT) in assessing the effectiveness of each risk reduction initiative.

By analyzing almost 300 cases of leadership decapitation, the author tries to explain under what conditions leadership decapitation is effective in eliminating the group or leading to its collapse, as well as if in cases in which the groups survive the decapitation, whether it influences group operational capabilities. The main conclusions are that bigger and more veteran, and religious organizations are more immune to the effects of decapitation than smaller, younger, and ideological groups. Nonetheless, there is no clear indication that decapitation accelerates collapse of the group. Finally, the results do not provide clear indications regarding the long term influence of decapitation on the group operational capabilities.


Based on interviews with former intelligence officers active in Northern Ireland, the article tells the story of the fight against terrorism in Northern Ireland from the intelligence point of view, concluding that proactive counter-terrorism measures are heavily dependent on the gathering of high quality intelligence. The article reviews the structure, modes of operation and effectiveness of the police and military intelligence, the heavy reliance on UMINT, the use of surveillance techniques and the way the intelligence was translated into counter-terrorism operations. Although a-theoretical, this is definitely one of the most in depth documentations of intelligence work in the field of counter-terrorism.


The article analyzes the threat of bio-terrorism and the different facets of the US government preparations for these kinds of attacks. The first section of the article includes a review of different potential scenarios and operational dimensions of bio-terrorist attacks. The second part of the article focuses on US preparedness programs, looking at the role of different actors (first responders, law enforcement agencies, hazardous material teams and medical infrastructure), the role and initiatives of the DHS, funding of bioterrorism preparedness, programs to improve detection and recognition of bio-terrorism, response to large scale contaminations as well as the medical system responsibilities. Overall, this is one of the most comprehensive texts on the different angles of the US government preparations and response to bio-Terrorism.

The article uses the British experience in Northern Ireland to test deterrence-based and backlash models. The analysis includes six counter-terrorism interventions between the years 1969-1992 and uses Cox proportional hazard models to estimate their impact on the risk of new attacks. In general, the results tend to provide more support for the backlash theories as three of the six models produced significantly greater chances of future attacks and just one (comprehensive military operation) reduced the hazard for future attacks. This implies that under some conditions harsh legislative and military measures could be counter-productive in the struggle against domestic terrorism.


The book provides a historical review of the international community counter-terrorism initiatives. After providing a short introduction to the concept of multilateralism and counter-terrorism, the book covers three phases of multilateral counter-terrorism efforts: the League of Nations’ efforts to counter anarchist group terrorism after World War I, the UN initiatives from the end of WWII until 9/11, and the UN anti-terrorism efforts after the events of 9/11. The last chapter reviews cooperation in the realm of counter-terrorism initiated by international organizations and forums outside of the UN framework. While the book is an important source of information about the international community response to terrorism, it has more limited relevance to those interested in understanding the effectiveness and the processes shaping the international community response.


The book challenges the prevailing perception that Israel's past and present offensive counter-terrorism policies were/are highly successful, showing that terrorism against Israelis has only intensified and become more deadly over the years. In order to explain the failure, the author analyzes the role of Israel’s intelligence agencies and Special Forces in the struggle against Palestinian and Islamic terrorism, and provides evidence for their continuing inability to adapt and to provide solutions for the changing nature of the terrorist threat, as well as the inability of policymakers to understand these organizations/units' limitations. While the book focuses on the Israeli case - including the war against the Fedayeen attacks, aviation terrorism, Hezbollah and religious Islamic groups, the analytical and theoretical framework it presents for explaining and analyzing the role of intelligence services in the struggle against terrorism could be utilized effectively in other arenas as well.

The article challenges the recent tendency of democracies to expand their reliance on military and semi-military forces in their struggle against terrorism by arguing that under some conditions and against specific types of terrorism (such as domestic and urban based), the reliance on the special capabilities and skills of the police forces could provide better results. This argument is supported by an empirical analysis that is based on the Israeli experience in anti-terrorism intelligence gathering, thwarting suicide attack and hostage taking incidents, and in employing defensive counter-terrorism measures.


The chapter reviews the role of intelligence in counter-terrorism as well as making an attempt to point out the main challenges and limitations facing US agencies which aim to enhance their counter-terrorism intelligence capabilities. The first section of the chapter covers the various analytic contributions of intelligence to the struggle against terrorism ranging from exposing future plots, uncovering sponsors, evaluating response options, and providing tactical operational information. The second part of the chapter reviews the US intelligence community response to 9/11, and provides a critical assessment of other ideas which were proposed in order to strength the counter-terrorism intelligence work.


The article practices soft quantitative analysis and uses the case of El Dorado Canyon operation (the US air raid on Libyan targets in April 1986) in order to examine the applicability of deterrence in the struggle against state-sponsored terrorism. The results reveal a statistically significant decrease in the number of attacks initiated by groups linked to Libya in the post-raid period as well as fewer attacks directed at American targets (despite a short surge in the number of anti-American attacks in the weeks following the attack). In contrast, changes in the overall patterns of transnational terrorism were not found. While in general the findings support the deterrence theory, the exclusion of other potential explanatory variables in the analyses is problematic.


The author, a well known and established federal judge, provides his views on the reforms in the American intelligence community and counter-terrorism policies following 9/11. The first part of the book examines the reform in the intelligence community, the progress in its implementation, and the benefits it generated (in particular more efficient coordination). The author also points out some deficiencies caused by the reform, mainly the absence of standardization and clear criteria regarding who should have access to
classified information (over-classification) as well as ineffective intelligence gathering on domestic groups. The second part of the book evaluates other counter-terrorism measures, mainly the legal ones, concluding that the latter have limited value in the struggle against the new types of terrorist groups.


The report evaluates the justifications for the “war on terrorism” in international law. More specifically, by analyzing the specifics of the threat presented to the democratic world by Al-Qaeda, and the measures used to thwart this threat, the text examines (1) if indeed there is a case for the ‘self defense argument’; and if yes, (2) do the counter-terrorism measures exercised correspond with the International law guidelines regarding the appropriate response in case of ”self defense” (such as proportionality, necessity, prevention or defeat of an ongoing attack).


The article analyzes the potential and the challenges in adopting a conciliatory counter-terrorism model. After conceptualizing and presenting the main pillars of the conciliatory model, the article presents several factors which influence the chances of conciliation processes to succeed. Among them are the characteristics of the groups (broad based nationalistic groups with limited political goals and relatively complex structures are more prone to participate, and end their violence via a conciliation process); the relative representativeness of the terrorist group; the level of concessions proposed; and the willingness of the élites and the public to support and provide legitimacy to the conciliation efforts.


The book attempts to assess the effectiveness of preemptive force as a counter-terrorism strategy. After presenting conflicting theories regarding the effectiveness of forceful military measures as well as the strategic rationale beyond them, the author utilizes quantitative analysis (mainly time series) to examine how the global war on terrorism influenced transnational terrorism. The findings indicate that the war on terrorism yielded an increase in frequency of terrorist attacks, in dispersion (number of countries afflicted with terrorism) and in lethality (number of victims), hence supporting theories of strategic interaction, mobilization and backlash effect.
One of a series of articles published in the last few years testing the effectiveness of the method of targeted killings. After looking into the legal basis of this counter-terrorism method, the article explains its strategic rationale and provides soft quantitative evidence to epitomize that in Afghanistan, the elimination of prominent terrorist activists and leaders, while not always leading to a decrease in the level of overall violence, has had a negative impact on the level of professionalism of terrorist groups as well as on the success rate and on the number of attacks demanding clear prior planning and logistical capabilities (such as suicide attacks).


The edited volume aims to introduce the readers to quantitative and formal research methods potentially useful in the study of counter-terrorism measures' effectiveness. The first section of the book looks into the potential implementation of game theories and their utility in predicting outcomes of different counter-terrorism policies. The second section is dedicated to the issue of biometric authentication and how statistical and formal models could help predict false match and the probability of missed match. The last section deals with how different statistical methods can assist in monitoring and managing data streams of bio-surveillance. The book is highly technical and demands extensive knowledge in statistical and formal statistical techniques.


The edited book looks into the different facets of the conciliatory model and especially the challenges and implication of negotiating with terrorists. The issues covered in the book include hostage taking incidents, the challenges of negotiating with revolutionary extreme actors, the conditions which determine the negotiation results as well as several analyses of case studies (such as the Moscow theater attack and siege on the Church of Nativity). The book effectively mixes informative/descriptive chapters and more theoretical/analytical ones.

*General Studies Focusing on Presenting Comprehensive Theoretical/Analytical Frameworks*

- General studies focusing on different facets of counter-terrorism, in most cases striving to present a strategic and tactical framework for the struggle with the terrorist threat.
- Studies presenting a comprehensive summary of the theories and literature in the field.

The concise article examines the Western response to terrorism during the 1970s, emphasizing that most countries were unable to develop effective offensive measures and to thwart activities of emerging terrorist groups. The second part of the article suggests what the strategic objective of Western countries should be in the counter-terrorism arena, and provides a framework for explaining what kind of future counter-terrorism policies will allow the West to achieve these strategic objectives.


The book focuses on the tactical level of the state response to terrorism and provides extensive useful information for practitioners and security personnel seeking to prepare, prevent or respond to a terrorist attacks. The book covers issues such as risk assessment and analysis, responding to a bomb threat, response to hostage taking incidents, response to the practice of WMD in terrorist attacks and cases of kidnapping. Overall this is not an academic book but a collection of guidelines and practical information for law enforcement forces.


The article attempts to evaluate how the end of the Cold War influenced democracies' approaches to the threat of terrorism and as a result, their counter-terrorism policies. By using a series of typological models and anecdotal examples, the author shows that the concept of terrorism has gone through conceptual stretching to include organized crime and drug trafficking due to the fight by the relevant agencies for budgetary allocation in times of cost cutting budgets. The operational consequences are the blurring of the boundaries between the war model and the criminal justice model, and internal and external security. The article offers a refreshing outlook on the dynamics shaping counter-terrorism policies but it is relatively weak in terms of empirical support.


The article is a very comprehensive review of the counter-terrorism literature until the early 1990s. It begins with a presentation of the different typologies developed in the literature for counterterrorism measures. The second section reviews the different counterterrorism models adopted by Western countries and the shift in the West from the criminal justice model to a more military (or expanded criminal) model in the late 1980s. In this context, the change in the American strategy during the Reagan administration is examined closely and in detail. Finally, the authors review different strategies for
thwarting the terrorist attempts to win the minds of the general public, acknowledging that eventually terrorism is psychological warfare.


One of the most comprehensive texts about the dilemmas and challenges facing policymakers in democratic states who seek to shape effective and democratically acceptable counter-terrorism policies. Although somewhat a-theoretical, the book effectively covers the challenges in defining the threat of terrorism and the concept of counter-terrorism, dilemmas which evolve when developing legal counter-terrorism measures, the difficulties in creating effective deterrence, the social and political implications of different offensive and defensive measures as well as methods for thwarting the psychological impact (on the general public) of terrorist attacks.


While the first part of the book provides an introduction to the phenomenon of terrorism, the second section looks into different facets of counter-terrorism and covers issues such as political measures, punitive measures, judicial measures as well as the role of the different actors responsible for the execution of these measures (military, police, intelligence agencies). While the book misses a real in depth analysis of most of the topics discussed, it could be useful for those interested in an overview of the main themes and analytical frameworks in the area of counter-terrorism.


The article utilizes a qualitative comparative analysis of seven case studies in order to draw the main elements crucial for formulating effective governmental response to terrorism. The latter include effective routines and mechanisms of coordination, legislation addressing the social and political causes of terrorism, centralized intelligence, effective international collaboration and effective use of specialized counter-terrorism units.


The article's main argument is that towards the end of the last decade, counter-terrorism policies gradually became more and more dependent on the support and participation of the civilian population in counter-terrorism efforts. By analyzing the evolution of the US and UK counter-terrorism policies and legislation in the last few years, the authors demonstrate that the public has become active in the efforts to thwart terrorist activities and uncover terrorist groups (termed the “stakeholder approach”) sometimes no less than
the conventional law-keeping forces. Examples provided to show the civilian involvement are government encouragement of civilians acting as scouts and engaging in surveillance practices, participation in community-based counter-terrorism initiatives and preparing the public on how to react when attacked.


This somewhat eclectic book strives to contribute to the discourse on the morality of counter-terrorism measures from the standpoint of applied philosophy. The first part of the book reviews five main political conflicts that have included parties using terrorist tactics, and utilizes these case studies to discuss conceptual framing of terrorism and the moral aspects of this strategy. The second part of the book looks at the moral dimensions of counter-terrorism measures used in the five case studies, including targeted killings, torture, use of military and police forces and the practice of ‘state of emergency’ legislation. The author attempts to provide a framework detailing the appropriate conditions under which forceful measure should be employed, as well as what kinds of measures are fundamentally unacceptable in the framework of a liberal democratic system.


The article claims that the traditional typology of counterterrorism models is problematic since the models suffer from low resolution, a fact that sometimes makes it difficult to attribute different types of countermeasures to a specific model. As a solution, the authors offer a tertiary model that lies between the military and criminal models, i.e., “the expanded criminal justice model,” which has included measures such as the use of semi-military policing forces, administrative detentions, or the legal proscription of political movements. To enforce their argument they analyze three cases of response to Jewish terrorist campaigns in Israel and show the necessity of the “tertiary” model for understanding the current Israeli response to terrorism.


The book discusses the role of the police forces in countering terrorism. After introducing three models of policing terrorism: community intelligence, belonging and social cohesion, the authors mainly use examples from the Australian arena in order to discuss the characteristics of the different models and to epitomize the special advantages of the police in gathering intelligence in closed, dense urban communities; in enhancing the trust between civilians and the security forces and in identifying hostile elements within
the community. The book also discusses the challenges facing modern police forces such as the need to confront cultural diversity, scarce resources and insufficient training.


One of the first texts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the different models of counter-terrorism and the challenges and dilemmas involving their implementation in democratic countries. While the first part of the book, which defines the concept of terrorism and details its historical trends, is outdated and somewhat pedestrian, the strength of the book is in the second part. The latter provides important and eye opening insights into the main difference between the war model and the criminal justice model and how they correspond with democratic-liberal principals, the importance of public legitimacy (for the regime and the CT policies) for the effective execution of counter-terrorism policies, as well as on the main challenges that intelligence agencies face when trying to thwart terrorist group activities.

*Studies Focusing on the “Democratic Dilemma”*

- On how democracies balance between the need to enhance the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism measures and at the same time refrain from undermining political freedoms and pluralism, which are basic foundations of the democratic system.


The article presents the complexities of the democratic dilemma, and mainly the implications of authorities’ overreaction to the terrorist threat. It asserts that any democratic response must be based on the government commitment to sustain and preserve the constitutional system of legal authority. By analyzing three case studies in which the governmental authorities chose not to abide by this principle (Italy, Spain and Peru) the article epitomizes the peril that counter-terrorism policies will undermine the democratic nature of the state, dramatically lessen the legitimacy of the political system and of the struggle against terrorism, as well as eroding the societal solidarity.


The article reviews the arsenal of violent, judicial and political responses available for liberal democracies struggling with terrorism. Basing most of his conclusions on the European experience with counter-terrorism, the author examines under what conditions conciliatory measures such as negotiations, counter propaganda and political reforms are effective. Later he looks at the challenge of formulating anti-terrorism legislation that while not undermining the liberal-democratic nature of the polity, still will be effective.
In the final section the author indicates the problematic implications of using military and police special units against domestic terrorist groups.


This theoretical article discusses the different facets of the democratic dilemma (the necessity for democracies to balance between their desire to develop effective counter-terrorism measures and to ensure their citizens’ safety on the one hand, and preserving political and ideological pluralism and civic freedoms which are the basis of the democratic system, on the other hand). The article further illustrates that while democracies possess several characteristics which inherently lessen group/individual motivation to utilize political violence, after the eruption of violence, the unique distinctions of the democratic polity in many ways make it inferior in terms of effective response to the violence in comparison with non-democratic countries, as the basic freedoms characterizing democracies provide terrorists with a convenient environment to operate.


The author looks at how different moral theories correspond with the actions of the coalition military forces during operation “Enduring Freedom.” The article initially introduces the concepts of pacifism and of “just war.” After demonstrating the impracticality of the first, it elaborates the principles of the second, mainly the requirements for Jus at Bellum (just causes for the use of violence) and for Jus in Bello (criteria of how to conduct war – basically not deliberately arming civilians). The second part of the article analyzes “Enduring Freedom” and looks how it corresponds to these two principles of “just war.” It concludes that at least Jus in Bello criteria were not kept entirely (civilians were victimized) and this was justified by using alternative philosophical concepts (such as Walzer’s “War is hell”).


This is an expanded and updated version of the author’s classic text from the 1980s regarding the dilemmas and challenges faced by democracies when fighting terrorism (Terrorism and the Liberal State). After conceptually framing the phenomenon of terrorism and briefly discussing its history, the book reviews the three traditional counter-terrorism models (the criminal justice model, the warfare model and the conciliatory model) and how they correspond with the desire of the democratic regime to protect civic rights, basic freedoms and political pluralism. The insufficient reference to new perspectives and theories of counter-terrorism as well as the decision to focus on types of terrorism which were mainly popular in the 1970s (aviation terrorism, hostage-taking incidents) while putting less emphasis on prominent current characteristics of terrorism, illustrate that the text is still somewhat outdated.

The author's main claim is that two interrelated assumptions foster the perception that civil liberties must be undermined in order to effectively face the terrorism threat: 1. Terrorism is a far more serious threat than other threats; 2. Undermining civil liberties is the most effective way to combat terrorism. This article tries to prove both are false. First, it uses data about terrorism and other illegal activities and social problems to epitomize that the threat of terrorism is small compared to many other threats, but that representation of the terrorist threat by governments and the media foster anxiety and fear. The fear of terrorism is as much a product of counterterrorism rhetoric as it is of terrorism itself. Hence, it argues in its second part that terrorism does not pose a threat sufficient to justify the kinds of counterterrorism legislation currently being enacted, especially since the effectiveness of this legislation is dubious. The text concludes that eventually many of the existing counterterrorism measures pose a greater threat to individuals and communities than to terrorism.

Regional Studies of Counter-Terrorism


The edited volume aims to provide an overview of the policies and measures practiced to counter ideological support for organizations/movements advancing extreme and sometimes revolutionary agendas, mostly Islamic ones. While the book covers a large variety of arenas, the main drawback in some chapters is the over-analyses of the characteristics of the radical organizations/movements ideology in comparison to the more limited emphasis on the effectiveness/implications of the responses adopted to counter these ideological threats. Hence, while the book is highly valuable for those interested in expanding their knowledge on the ideological foundations of different current extremist movements, in some cases its contribution to the understanding of how to counter them lacks some depth (although the summary chapter tries to address the problem).


The book is a comprehensive collection of speeches, policy papers, monographs, statements, testimonies and other documents produced by American policymakers, diplomats, and high level bureaucrats regarding US counter-terrorism policies and related issues. Some of the chapters focus on specific people (Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, and Colin Powell) while others are thematic chapters (intelligence, Iraq, legislation, and homeland security).

The article discusses British counter-terrorism policies under the Blair Labor administration, identifying a shift from Northern Ireland centered counter-terrorism legislation to legislation focusing on international terrorism. The historical review includes the terrorism legislation prior to 9/11, the peace process in Northern Ireland and other conciliatory approaches utilized, and the intensification of counter-terrorism measures against internationally based terrorism while assessing the implications of differentiating between the two types of terrorism.


The article’s first part provides a historical overview of terrorist activities in the UK since the early 20th century including profiles of the main groups responsible for the terrorist campaigns. The second part details the UK response to terrorism and it is divided into several sections: legal counter-terrorism measures utilized by the UK, including those limiting suspects' basic rights and those expanding the authority of the law keeping forces; financial measures employed to limit resources available to the terrorist groups; and political measures and military strategies that were used in Northern Ireland. The final section provides some information about the organizational structure of the British counter-terrorist agencies and forces, as well as some insights about their future role in the struggle against terrorism.


While relatively many texts have analyzed the evolvement of the Spanish counter-terrorism policies in the 1980s and 1990s, this article fills a lacuna by reviewing the Spanish counter-terrorism policies post-November 2003 Madrid attacks. The article epitomizes that, in contrast to expectations, the socialist government which came to power after the Madrid attacks eventually escalated the measures employed against ETA and the extremist Muslim groups. After some initial attempts to utilize conciliatory measures whose effectiveness was dubious and led to intensification of the extremist presence in Spain and a rise in Basque violence, the Spanish government adopted a more punitive approach. To conclude, on both fronts the author does not see any significant successes.


The book provides an extensive overview of the struggle of European democracies against terrorism from the early 1960s up to the mid-1990s, as well as detailed
information on EU counter-terrorism efforts, especially as they are manifested in the Maastricht third pillar. While the book focuses mainly on the struggle with domestic terrorism and successfully describes the different mechanisms utilized by European democracies in order to overcome the democratic dilemma, it has limited success in using the comparative frameworks in order to determine the short and long-term effectiveness of different counter-terrorism policies and how future political/social developments (i.e. immigration) will shape current and future European counter-terrorism policies.


The article analyzes Canada's counter-terrorism policies from the 1970s until the early 1990s. The first two sections of the article review the structure of the Canadian government and the main campaigns of terrorism initiated in Canada. The subsequent sections look at the political and administrative responses to terrorism, including reforms in the structure of the executive branch and legislative reforms. The main lacuna in the article is the absence of analysis of the operational measures utilized in Canada and of the 1970 October crisis, which led Canada to implement the war model in Quebec.


The article analyzes Italian counterterrorism policies in the 1970s and 1980s, their effectiveness and their influence on the democratic nature of the Italian republic. After a short introduction to the main Italian terrorist groups, the article analyzes four periods (1970-1974; 1974-1976; 1977-1982 and 1982-1989), emphasizing that just after the introduction of special AT police forces and special legislation which included restriction of suspects rights (1974-1976), the first wave of left wing terrorism was suppressed. However, the second wave in the 1980s declined only after the implementation of political measures intended to reduce the motivation of left wing groups to engage in violence. The article emphasizes that harsh legal and operational responses, while effective in the short term, are not always effective in dealing with the core causes of terrorism.


Although somewhat outdated, this article is still an important source for anyone interested in a comprehensive review of US counter-terrorism measures employed since the 1960s. The article divides the measures into four dimensions - international diplomacy, US coercive measures in the international arena (military operations and political sanctions outside the US), domestic legislation and the enhancement of domestic security measures. The concluding section tries to evaluate how the US has dealt with the democratic dilemma, implying that the preference for enhanced security measures over
democratic norms, could eventually lead to backlash and escalation, and as a result, intensification of the violence against US targets.


The article analyzes the German Republic response to the terrorist campaign of the Red Army faction during the 1970s. It shows how the German government directed most of its legislation efforts towards preventing RAF leaders from gaining any opportunity to disseminate the principles of their revolutionary doctrine. Laws were passed allowing court procedures to try suspects in absentia, as well as preventing a number of accused of the same offense from being represented by the same attorneys. In this way, it could prevent collaboration among the accused, an option that would have made it easier for them to effectively present their arguments to the courts and particularly to the general public. In addition, prisoners were isolated and their conditions worsened in order to prevent them, as much as possible, from making contact with the outside. The article emphasizes the relations between the terrorists' ideology and the state response. As in this case, the strong revolutionary ideological elements of the RAF prompted decision makers in Germany to dramatically escalate its steps against the group in order to prevent it from igniting a revolutionary dynamic in the country.


This is probably the most comprehensive analysis of Australia’s counter-terrorism policies. The book looks into the evolution of Australia’s security agencies and arrangements, the different models of counter-terrorism models implemented and the factors shaping them. Throughout the book, the correspondence between the counter-terrorism measures utilized and basic democratic values is assessed, mostly with a critical tone emphasizing that, through the years, most of the measures have reflected overreaction that has led to the undermining of Australia’s democratic value-system.


The author examines the Israeli counter-terrorism strategy and the homeland security doctrine by looking into the different facets and dimensions of the Israeli security system. Echoing conclusions of similar studies in other Western countries, the author concludes that the civilian population is not a passive but rather an active actor in the counter-terrorism efforts and that Israeli counter-terrorism policies are a reflection of the security agencies’ organizational culture, routines and history. While a bit technical, the article still provides interesting insights into the routines and practices of the Israeli security agencies.

A concise report, detailing federal agencies' counterterrorism research and development initiatives, priority setting and coordination mechanisms. It is an important source of information for those interested in understanding the way in which governmental resources are being utilized to enhance counter-terrorism research as well as how these are being used by the government to direct and influence the future research directions in the field.


Using analysis of the UK counter-terrorism policies in Northern Ireland, the article discuss the need of democracies to balance between their desire to enhance the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism measures on the one hand, and their desire to protect civil rights and political freedoms on the other. The author emphasizes eight prominent measures which violated basic human rights in Northern Ireland – targeted killings, use of plastic bullets to control riots, torture or degrading treatment, ill treatment by the police, internment without trial, administrative detention, the use of the diplock courts and banning of political organizations.


The book reviews the responses of the US to international terrorism since World War II. While not academic in nature, the book provides important and unique information on major events in US counter-terrorism history as well as elaborating on the changing role of governmental agencies, the changes in the approaches of different presidential administrations to the threat of terrorism and the processes that have led to the current state of affairs.


The article analyzes how the dramatic political changes in Spain during the 1970s and the 1980s (the shift from a dictatorship to a democratic system) shaped the country’s counter-terrorism policies. The first section reviews the collapse of Franco’s authoritarian regime and the consolidation of the democratic framework and how these changes influenced terrorist activities in the country. The second section of the paper considers the changes in the counter-terrorist policies through the years, mainly the different attempts to balance between forceful violent measures and more democratically acceptable political measures in the late 1980s and 1990s.

The article analyzes the responses to terrorism in Quebec and in Northern Ireland and tries to explain the difference in the outcomes. First, the author indicates the many similarities between the two conflicts and subsequently presents the similarities and the differences in the responses of Canada and the UK to the political crises in these regions. The author claims that three elements which were present in the Northern Ireland conflict but absent in the Quebec crisis were responsible for the different outcomes of the usage of military forces in these regions (in the UK, leading to further violence, while in Quebec, to the end of violence) – the absence of popular legitimacy for the law keeping forces, the perception that the conflict was a zero sum game and the violent political culture/heritage.


The first part of the article provides a historical overview of waves of terrorist activities in Italy during the 1970s and 1980s. The second part details the different political, legal and operational measures utilized as a response. The article emphasizes that the specialization and quality of the police forces and intelligence services, the level of coordination between them and other law-keeping agencies, as well as the political system's willingness to provide legal tools to the operational forces were the main factors in determining the effectiveness of the counterterrorism policies.


In one of the best resources for anyone interested in understanding the EU counter-terrorism policies, the author argues that in the face of the changing nature of terrorism, the European Union may not be the best framework for developing European countries' future counter-terrorism policies. With a detailed and meticulous analysis of the different attempts to develop unified and coherent European counter-terrorism policies, the article explains why the EU institutions were highly ineffective in initiating, advancing and coordinating counterterrorism policies in Europe. The reasons are diverse and include the reluctance of member countries to accept the European Union as their principal vehicle for fighting terrorism, the lack of real executive power within the EU, lack of intelligence cooperation and limited legitimacy for coercive counter-terrorism measures.

The anthology reviews the evolution of counter-terrorism policies in six democracies and includes a chapter on the West’s struggle with Al-Qaeda. While not consistent in their quality and scope, most of the chapters provide useful information about the legislative and military counter-terrorism initiatives in each of the countries discussed. Taking into consideration that most of the countries chosen for analysis have already been covered extensively in the counter-terrorism literature, one could suggest that adding less conventional and more original case studies, such as India, Sri-Lanka, Australia and others, would have elevated the value of this edited volume. Even the concluding chapter focuses mainly on issues which have been overwhelmingly discussed in the literature (democratic dilemma) without bringing significant new ideas.