Counter Terrorism In Changing World

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Introduction

Terrorism is a way of using intentional violence strategies to create fear and achieve an ideological, political, or financial aim. On the other hand, to prevent or demolish terrorism, the government makes certain strategies to fight against those forces that intentionally create violence. Much research has been conducted, and scholars have said that terrorism is an effective coercive strategy, but no study has been conducted on a broader level to show whether it is a coercive strategy or not. The article written by Max Abraham on “Why Terrorism Does Not Work” tried to explain the above-stated question. In his study, he took twenty-eight of the most important terrorist organizations from the US Department of Securities. Abraham found that the most important element of the success of terrorist activities done by these organizations is based on the selection of the target. Terrorist attacks made on the military and attacks made on civilians are different; some case studies showed that attacking civilians increases the chances of achieving whatever the terrorists are demanding from the government. The notion that terrorism is an effective coercive strategy is backed by some case studies and small articles but has never been studied comprehensively on a broader scale. There has been evidence that proves that terrorism is one of the most effective strategies to gain political objectives. In the article, it has been analyzed that activities done by terrorists to force the government to change its policies for money or to release prisoners who are valuable to terrorists are the most effective strategies. The effectiveness of terrorism can be measured by comparing its objectives with the outcomes it has achieved from its policies. Anti-terrorism activities have been performed on a larger scale after the 9/11 terrorist attack in the USA.

Discussion

In my view, terrorist activities can be curtailed. However, it is not possible for terrorist activities to be stopped fully. All those countries that are experiencing major terrorist activities are trying to curtail these activities. Although they are not doing this on their own, they are doing it mostly in collaboration with the USA. Most of the people working in terrorist organizations believe in the implementation of Islamic laws and rules in Islamic countries, plus other purposes related to things that are not according to the terrorist organizations in the world. Terrorist organizations like Al Qaida and ISIS, especially in their operations around the world and in Pakistan, had the same purpose: to let the world know about them and fear them. They take responsibility for whatever violent activities are going on in the country. The study revealed that target selection is the key element for terrorists to

meet their goals; sometimes, the goals of terrorists cannot be coded. It has also been shown that attacks on civilians outnumbered attacks on the military.

There are two types of groups in terrorism: the first consists of terrorists who only target civilians, and the second consists of those who target the military but eventually attack civilians. Some of the major terrorist activities done in the past include the attack of 11 September 2001, the 1999 apartment bombing in Russia, and the First Intifada in Israel. All of the above-stated activities are major terrorist activities that have changed the course of the world. It has been said that violence is one of the key elements that can help achieve political and financial gains. All of these attacks involved civilians, who were the most valuable people in the country. Many factions of popular support are experienced inside a populace that they declare to symbolize (Bueno & Dickson, 2007). The campaign of terrorism can either rise or fall with this level of support. Empirically, it has been evident that counter-terrorism activities enable people to stay positive and motivated that the government is really taking care of the terrorists. The United States Armed Forces help countries to reduce the terrorist activities going on in their respective countries (Arce M & Sandler, 2005).

After 9/11, the US establishment worried about national security. Al Qaida was one of the most brutal terrorist organizations at that time, and the attack on the World Trade Center changed the course of the world (Cronin, 2015). For years, the government of Iraq had been telling the world that it was taking control of the terrorist organizations, but nothing changed until the USA sent its troops inside Iraq (Kilcullen, 2016). Thousands of documents published by Edward Snowden in 2013 revealed that America was spying on its own people by keeping a record of the phone calls they made, the emails they sent, and the conversations they had with everyone. This happened after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. The main purpose of doing this was to know who was responsible for carrying out terrorist activities in America so that they could overcome them. Many countries are trying the same methods to prevent terrorism in their respective countries.

PRISM is one of the surveillance programs used by America to maintain checks and balances on chat histories, phone calls, data mining, etc., to prevent terrorist activities. It proved efficient when it really stopped one of the major terrorist incidents that was about to be executed shortly. This program was introduced after the 9/11 attack because, at that time, surveillance was inefficient and ineffective (Houston, 2017). From the article, I have observed that terrorist organizations always target places where the target audience is present in large numbers. By targeting those areas, they know that the government of that particular country will accept the terms they want accepted. In Islamic countries, the purpose of terrorist organizations is the implementation of Islamic rules and regulations. In other countries, the purpose of terrorist organizations is to get their demands fulfilled by the government. According to the article, terrorism cannot be stopped fully but can be reduced to a lower level by establishing significant strategies and by having meetings with terrorists to see if their demands can be fulfilled so that they all would come to the same page.

Terrorist Groups, Objectives, and Outcomes

By looking at the twenty-eight most wanted terrorist organizations in the world issued by the United States, it seems that some of them have some success in meeting their objectives, but most of them failed in fulfilling their main objectives. Al Qaida, Hamas, Islami Jihad, and Tamil Tigers have had some success in achieving the objectives they established for their organizations. If we look at the stats given in the article, one can clearly see that, in a broader way, terrorism has not impacted the world, but some of these organizations did affect it in a smaller way, like Hezbollah, a Lebanese terrorist organization that had the main objective of expelling peacekeepers and Israel. Its target was not civilians but the military, and the outcome was remarkable as it had huge success in fulfilling its objective. This organization abandoned Israelis and cut off all those who were in favor of peace. A study has shown that the ultimate goals of terrorist groups must be distinguished from their other goals, which are strategic ones. In order for the government to take serious counter-actions against terrorism, it must find out the pattern from its strategic goals (Plumper & Neumayer, 2014).

Organizations like Hamas, Al Qaida, and Tamil Tigers all had the same target, that is, civilians, and all of them had some success in their objectives. Of the twenty-eight terrorist organizations, few of them have succeeded. Fourteen percent of the total twenty-eight organizations have succeeded, while the remaining did not. I agree with the validity and success of terror attacks on civilians. Civilians are the main concern of any government. The government would do anything to protect its civilians and its prestige. Terrorists knew this weakness of the government, so they targeted these civilians to achieve their ultimate objectives. Mostly, by targeting civilians, terrorists want to frighten the government so that they can get whatever they want; it could be the release of a prisoner, money, etc. A few of my father's friends were working in the World Trade Center when it was attacked, and I know how it feels to be scared to death. At the time of an attack, nothing matters; the only thing that matters is saving one's own life. After the attack, there was fear among people going to their offices. This happened to me as well while going to my classes, and it could be possible that the next target for Al Qaida was my school. The government can do anything, and I mean anything, to protect its civilians. Most of the supporters of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Kashmiri Harakat ul-Mujahidin claimed that they had served efficiently in US-Israel relations.

Most of the studies conducted on terrorism failed to answer the question of whether terrorism is effective. It has been found evident that civil wars last longer than wars. For larger political objectives, terrorist rebel groups are more likely than other known terrorist groups. In the context of democracy, terrorism is ineffective and will not win ever (Fortna, 2015). Researchers have shown that limited issues can be resolved more easily than highly complex issues. Issues like Kashmir between Pakistan and India cannot be resolved. The main purpose behind terrorist groups can be either that they want control over the country or that they want to expel the country from occupying another country. In the maximalist approach, the demands of a terrorist group can be either to attack a country to transform its political system or to destroy the country against its values. So far, I do not completely agree with the author that attacking civilians is not effective. Countries like America, Canada,

Australia, and Russia take great care of their civilians. They can do anything to protect their civilians. From all that I have learned from the case study and my research on various topics related to terrorism, I totally agree with Abraham's saying that terrorism is ineffective if terrorists target civilians.

Russia's Response to the 1999 Apartment Bombings

An apartment bombing in Russia killed 300 people and wounded hundreds of others. The author of the article said that attacking civilians is strategically ineffective, and I agree with him. Before the news spread all over Russia, there was widespread agreement that Chechen objectives were only limited to creating an independent Chechen state. After the bombing, the people of Russia started distancing themselves from the Chechen people because, due to the fact that Russia did not let them create their own independent state, they started destroying Russia by carrying out terrorist activities. The first Chechen war started in 1994 and ended in 1996; during this war, Russians recognized that the objectives of the Chechens were only limited to self-determination. These objectives were named territorial by the Russian government. The second Chechen war started in 1999 and is still present. Russians ignored the policy demands by Chechens in response to the terrorist attacks.

A significant poll was conducted, which showed that only 15% believed Chechen people were fighting for their independence; the remaining 85% believed they wanted to destroy Russia. Russians, after the bombing, concluded that the objectives of the Chechens had become maximalist, and the poll indicated that the Chechens' main motive now was to kill Russians. According to the Public Opinion Foundation, about 71% of the Russians were in favor of trading land for peace, but they did not consider Chechen people trustworthy. In the first war, Russians were in favor of giving out land to create peace, but this reversed after the apartment bombings. After six months of bombings, about 73% of Russians wanted Russian forces to invade Chechnya. When the Soviet Union was separated in the late 1980s, the objectives of the Chechens remained the same as they were for establishing a separate independent state. The war won by Russians against the Chechens impacted the daily lives of the Chechen people (Dube, 2016).

The US Response to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks

I agree with Max Abraham that attacking civilians is strategically ineffective. One of the biggest activities done by Al Qaida was the attack on the World Trade Center that changed the course of the world. After this terrorist attack, America did not put its focus on Al Qaida but rather focused on the aftermath of the attack. This changed the course of Al Qaida, and they changed their violence into policies. The main motive behind Al Qaida's attack was to let America know about the effects of the

unpopular foreign policies it makes on the Muslim world. Bin Laden said that human rights and policies of America are likely to have an unfortunate and inescapable outcome. In 1985, when bin Laden declared war against America, the main motive behind this war was to remove American troops present in Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden also wanted to end the military interventions that kill Muslims around the world. After 9/11, a poll was conducted, which showed that most Americans believed that Al Qaida was not responding to unpopular foreign policies.

One in five respondents said that America's policies toward the Muslim world led terrorists to carry out violent activities like they did on 9/11. In another poll, only 15% of Americans believed that this attack was mainly due to American policies. In response to the 9/11 attack, America took different steps, such as increasing the troops in the Gulf, strengthening military relations with Muslim rulers, supporting counterterrorism acts in different countries, and becoming a partial mediator between the conflicts in Israel and Palestine. After 9/11, Americans declared a social war on Muslims residing in America. They started attacking people wearing hijabs or having beards. Even Muslims who were born there were targeted because, due to their names, Americans believed that every Muslim was a terrorist (Lichtblau, 2016).

Israel's Response to the First Intifada

I agree with Abraham that attacking civilians is strategically ineffective. In the history of modern terrorism, the mass uprising of the West Bank and Gaza was a moderate period. The main purpose behind the first Intifada was to end the occupation of the territories. In the first Intifada, 15% of the demonstrations were cruel, although 80% of Israelis believed that the methods employed by Palestinians to destroy Israel were mainly violent. One of the main violent acts was throwing big rocks at the defense forces in military territories. Another consensus of Israelis resulted in 93% of them believing that the first Intifada was directed toward the army and civilians. Eighty-five percent of the respondents believed the purpose of the initial Intifada was to cause injury and damage. However, the remaining 15% believed that it was for protest. The study found that the corrosive influence of terrorism on political tolerance is much more powerful amongst Israelis who identify with the right, who have additionally grown to be much more sensitive to terrorism over the years (Peffely et al., 2015).

Conclusions

Terrorism has changed the course of the world. Every major country's efforts towards the elimination of terrorism are creating a solid impact on it. All the countries that are the most targeted by terrorism, in collaboration with the United States, have taken serious steps in eliminating terrorism. They have created strategies, formed military alliances with other countries, and worked collaboratively with other countries so that the world would get rid of this disease, which is breaking its bones.

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