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Deterring or Mobilizing? The Influence of Government Partisanship and Force on the Frequency, Lethality and Suicide Attacks of Terror Events

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Michael Koch and Benjamin Tkach

Abstract

The ability of a government to prevent violence and threats against the state and its citizens depends on the government's ability to deter enemies from engaging in such tactics. Because deterrence relies on both capabilities and credibility it is not clear that governments that emerge within the same state are similarly effective at deterring attacks. We examine whether partisan politics and the decision to use force against an enemy or those thought to be associated with an enemy—in our case terrorists—affects successful deterrence. We test our expectations using data from the Israeli-Palestine conflict between the years 1979 and 2003. The results suggest that governments of the right are more effective at using force to deter future terrorist attacks.

KEYWORDS: deterrence, terrorism, Israeli- Palestine conflict

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

Introduction

Can governments deter terrorism? The research on terror deterrence is not clear about the effects of government crackdowns on terrorists' actions. On the one hand, research suggests that effective counter-terrorism requires governments to take a hard-line when responding to a terrorist event and demands (Dershowitz 2002; Enders and Sandler 2005; Bueno de Mesquita 2005; Sandler, Tschirhart, and Cauley 1983). Thus, a common policy is one of deterrence (Frey and Luechinger 2004). Deterrence aims at raising the cost of terrorist acts by severely punishing actors engaging in terrorist activities, making them less likely to engage in future acts.

Others argue that crackdowns increase terrorist mobilization and terrorist activity (de Figueiredo and Weingast 2001; Rosendorff and Sandler 2004; Wilkinson 1986). This body of research suggests that deterrence and government crackdowns are of little use against terrorists. It appears that deterrent policies involving the use of force have two possible effects. Force can decrease a terrorist group's effectiveness and raise the costs of carrying out threats and future attacks. Alternatively, deterrent policies provide incentives for others to join the cause and increase mobilization as terrorist groups foment opposition against the target government (Arce and Sandler 2002; Bueno de Mesquita 2005; Rosendorf and Sandler 2004). If crackdowns and uses of force can lead to opposite outcomes, what conditions whether the use of force is a credible deterrent or a catalyst for more terrorism?

We argue an important, unaccounted factor is the political orientation of the government, at least among democratic societies. We argue that terrorists derive their expectations about the resolve and likely policy responses of democratic governments, in part, from the beliefs and policy preferences attached to the target government's partisan orientation. We propose that government partisanship conditions the deterrent effect of military force as a counter-terror strategy. Specifically, we test whether the partisanship of the Israeli government, when coupled with military force, deters future terrorist attacks. We test our expectations using data drawn from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between the years 1979 and 2003.

The Israeli-Palestinian case provides several advantages when examining if government partisanship conditions deterrence effectiveness. First, this case is appropriate because the roots of the conflict are similar to many other conflicts about territory and self-governance such that conclusions derived from the models

should be somewhat generalizable (Berrebi and Klor 2008). Second, the long history and relatively rich data has entrenched the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a widely acceptable case for work on terrorism (Berrebi and Klor 2008; Bueno de Mesquita 2005; Kydd and Walter 2002). Third, the duration of the conflict as well as spatial conditions make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ideal for this study because it is highly likely that terrorist groups will know not only who is in government but also the types of policies that they advocate (Gould and Klor 2010). Israel's proportional representation system facilitates the development of distinct political parties allowing for a test of partisanship as a component of reputation. The results suggest that the political orientation of the Israeli government conditions subsequent terror responses to governmental uses of force. Consequently, right political parties such as Likud or Kadima (which split from Likud in 2005) may actually be in an advantageous position to deter terrorism through force.

Deter or Mobilize?

Does taking a hard line stance against terrorist events deter future attacks? Does the use of force by governments lead to declines in terrorism or mobilizes greater responses by terrorist organizations? For example, Bueno de Mesquita (2005b) argues that government crackdowns can have a deterrent effect on future attacks. However, if the negative externalities of the crackdown are sufficiently high, then deterrence can act as a motivation for sympathizers to mobilize against the government. Specifically, he states that crackdowns against terrorists will increase mobilization if the damage is greater than expected. Similarly, Rosendorf and Sandler (2004) present a game theoretic account of how proactive uses of force can either inhibit spectacular terror events or lead to an increase in such events. They argue that governments with lower costs for using force are likely to engage in proactive responses. This alters the terrorists' perceptions and can lead to an increase in spectacular terror events. These models underscore the role of terrorist expectations and subsequent behavior. When the costs associated with the use of force by the government are greater than what the terrorist expects, terrorists groups may be mobilized into action.

These models attempt to solve the question of whether using force deters or mobilizes terrorists by relying on terrorists' expectations about the government's behavior and perceptions about whether using force is more or less costly for the target government. Thus, the models focus on terrorists' perceptions of government behavior.

In addition to more theoretically oriented research, empirical work specifically on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict reveals patterns between government uses of force and terror events. In a series of articles, Jaegar and

Paserman (2006, 2008, and 2009) demonstrate that violence in the Second Intifada is not a reciprocal process between Israeli and Palestinian actors. Their general conclusion is that previous violence by Palestinians can predict Israeli responses but Israeli responses can both decrease and increase terror activity. Other work examines specific policy responses to terrorism. For example, two policy responses to suicide terrorism adopted by Israeli governments are targeted killings and house demolitions. Jaegar and Paserman (2009) show that targeted killings may only reduce levels of Palestinian violence in high frequencies of assassinations (three or more a month), but such high frequencies of assassinations are rare occurrences, even during the Second Intifada. The authors instead find that low levels of targeted killings actually increases *intended* Palestinian violence but not from the district in which the assassination occurred—suggesting that targeted killings do incapacitate terrorist organizations. Benmelech et al. (2010) found that punitive home demolitions are effective in reducing suicide terrorism, but precautionary demolitions increase suicide attacks. This research shows governments can deter terrorism under certain conditions. Israeli counterterrorism efforts benefit from discriminate policies that differentiate between terrorists and civilians, while indiscriminate Israeli response can generate more terrorist attacks (Benmelech et al. 2010) and terrorist activity (Jaegar and Paserman 2009). [1]

However, absent from both the larger theoretical work as well as the more targeted work on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is how government partisanship may influence these processes. Below, we argue that a key factor that induces expectations about government behavior in foreign policy is the partisan orientation of the government in power. Because of the salience of the Palestinian conflict to the Israeli electorate, established political parties (and politicians) maintain foreign policy positions, which condition reputation and perception.

Hawks, Doves; Right, Left

A key element that creates expectations about democratic governments' behavior is partisanship. We argue that the government's political orientation affects the perceptions about whether governments are hawkish or dovish. This perception then affects whether the use of force is likely to deter or mobilize terrorists. Specifically, the perception of a hawkish government creates expectations by

[1] Some previous empirical research on counterterrorism (i.e. Enders and Sandler 1993), Zussman and Zussman (2006) use changes in the stock market as an indirect measure of counterterrorism effectiveness. They find that the stock market, in anticipation of retaliation, decreases following an assassination of senior political leaders. Additionally, support for the argument that discriminate counterterrorism policies are more effective is reflected in the increase in stock market values following the assassination of senior military leaders.

terrorists groups about the counter-terror responses they are likely to incur. That is, uses of force by the government, either proactively or in response to other events, will likely be costly and harsh. Conversely, if terrorist groups perceive the government as more dovish then they are likely to expect less costly or damaging counter-terror or proactive measures.

To explain how perceptions of government behavior affect terrorist behavior we apply Schultz's (2005) theory of cooperative outcomes and hawkish and dovish governments to terrorist groups rather than states. Schultz asks whether hawkish or dovish governments are more likely to secure a cooperative outcome from a distrusted adversary in the international system. He argues that more hawkish governments are more likely, in the long run, to secure cooperation because they are seen as more credible in following through on threats should the other, distrusted, party defect. He notes that the perception of a government as hawkish is determined, in part, by the hawkish party's electoral base as well as the policies that they support and want enacted. Schultz argues that a leader affiliated with the hawkish party, "is likely to have higher payoffs from confrontational outcomes than does a leader affiliated with the Doves" (2005:3).

Dovish parties, on the other hand, will likely only secure short-term cooperation at best. Opponents are likely to defect against dovish governments because doves' threats are not as credible as hawkish threats. Ultimately, the opposing actor knows that if the government it is negotiating with is soft-line, then it can eventually get the temptation payoff with little fear of reprisal from the dovish government. Moreover, the electorate is less likely to reward a dovish leader engaging in confrontational policies at the polls (Berrebi and Klor 2008). Conversely, opponents are likely to see threats by hawks as credible because the electorate will reward the hawks at the polls. A consistent government policy, either threats by hawks, or offers of accommodations by doves, creates credibility and reduces dissent from opposition forces (Lichback 1987). Thus, the political orientation of the government and reputation influence policy effectiveness.

Governments policy choices are limited by policies that reflect their ideological beliefs of their supporters.[2] Failure to enact the preferred policies of one's supporters can lead to either defections from the coalition or defections within the party, both of which can cause governments to fall. As Schultz (2005: 26) notes, "Doves want peace, but they may not have the electoral security or

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

credibility to deliver it. Hawks enjoy both electoral security and credibility in attempting cooperation, but they may not want to."[3]

While differences in credibility and perception by opponents between doves and hawks affect foreign policy outcomes, does the dove-hawk distinction translate along more traditional left right partisan lines? Some research provides evidence that even when a broad national consensus exists over the primary foreign threat or issue; partisan differences exist over policy preferences (Fordham 2002; Koch and Sullivan 2010; Narziny 2003). In general, right-party constituents' primary concerns are controlling inflation, preserving access to foreign markets and resources, and increasing national security (Boix 1998). Left party identifiers mainly focus on domestic issues such as welfare, redistribution of resources, employment, and health care (van der Brug 2001). Because wars divert resources away from the domestic policy priorities of left party constituents, governments of the left may be more sensitive to the domestic political costs of using force abroad (Arena and Palmer 2009; Koch and Sullivan 2010; Palmer, London, and Regan 2004). In addition, evidence exists that left and right governments adopt different military and foreign policies. Parties with conservative political ideologies stress a strong or expanded military presence at home while liberal parties lean toward a reduced military presence (Budge and Hofferbert 1990; Eichenberg 1989; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994). In Western European democracies, "conservative" parties support increasing military spending and expanding the country's military presence abroad while "liberal" parties are less likely to so (Klingemann, Hofbert, and Budge 1994). Moreover, recent research suggests that conservative governments are more likely to use force in the international arena than are more liberal governments because of the preferences and priorities of their core constituents (Foster and Palmer 2006; Koch 2009; Koch and Sullivan 2010 Palmer, London, and Regan 2004).

Transposing these expectations from general foreign policy issues to national security and terrorism, governments of the left are likely to appear more dovish while governments of the right more hawkish. Consequently, actors—whether state based or non-state—should perceive left oriented governments as dovish, more peaceful and more likely to compromise in their approach to international relations. In the context of terror attacks, Koch and Cranmer (2007) and Berrebi and Klor (2006) find a relationship between the partisanship of a government and increases in terror events against the state. Both suggest that terrorists view right oriented governments as more hawkish. Koch and Cranmer find that the presence of a right oriented government substantially reduces the number of terror events against the state using cross-national time-series data.

[3] Shamir and Arian (1999) characterize one of the major divisions in Israel as between *Hawks*, which are considered right-wing parties, and *Doves*, which are the left-wing parties.

Berrebi and Klor find a similar relationship for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They find that terror attacks declined when right-oriented governments were in power and that right-oriented parties gain public support after terrorist attacks.

Gould and Klor's (2010) analysis of Israel responses to terrorists attacks suggests a more nuanced understanding of the interaction. They find that low levels of terrorism shifts the Israeli electorate more to the political left, inducing Israeli citizens to be more supportive of territorial concessions. However, excessive terrorist attacks by the Palestinians hardens the Israeli electorate against concessions and shifts public opinion toward right governments, ostensibly due to right governments stances towards concessions.

Combining both Schultz's discussion of hawk/dove distinctions with more recent work on partisanship, we argue that terrorists are likely to see right oriented governments as more hawkish and ultimately more credible in their deterrent threats. Conversely, governments further to the left confront a credibility problem. While these governments may be more willing to negotiate over the issues with terrorists and attempt to reach a solution, they face the problem of non-credibility about threats made should the opponent defect. Moreover, using force to display their resolve only further erodes credibility, as the opposing actor no longer believes the dovish government is sincere in its attempts to reach some accord.

We argue that terrorist calculations of the expected utility of government crackdowns and uses of force are dependent on the expected responses by governments. These expectations are a function of credibility and reputations based on the government's partisanship and partisan support. This leads to the following hypothesis: the use of force by right oriented governments will have a deterrent effect on terrorist attacks while the use of force by more left oriented governments will have a mobilizing effect.

Research Design and Data:

We employ a data set that focuses on terror events against Israel between the years 1979 and 2003.[4] Data on terrorist incidents fall into the category of event count data focusing on the frequency of attacks in a given time period and often in a specific spatial location such as a state. However, most studies that use data such as the ITERATE (Mickolus, et al.2004) or TWEED (Engene 2006), do not account for the magnitude of the events under investigation. Additionally, much of this data does not account for the government's response to terror events such as whether governments employed force against suspected terrorists or sub groups affiliated with those groups. The data we employ are machine coded from a

[4] Our period is constrained by the Levant data on one side and our use of the MPP data to derive the political-orientation of the government on the other side.

variety of media sources (see appendix). The data contains the date of a terrorist event, the lethality of the event, the target of the event and whether a suicide strategy was employed.

Dependent Variables

We use three dependent variables in the study to examine the relationship between partisan politics, governmental decisions to use force and terror events. *Frequency* and *Lethality* address the general trends in terrorist attacks where as *Suicide* addresses tactical decisions of terrorists. Frequency is a count variable that counts the number of terrorist events in a given month. Lethality is a measure of the number of Israeli civilian deaths from terror attacks. Suicide is a measure of the number of suicide attacks against Israel in a given month. *Frequency, Lethality, and Suicide* were each at their maximum during the Second Intifada in March 2002. [5]

The fluctuations in the number of attacks and their lethality are visible in Figure's 1A-1D. For ease of presentation, we dissect our temporal domain into three time-periods. Figure 1A contains the entire sample period under analysis—January 1979 to December 2003. As the reader can see, the shifts in magnitude of attacks and their lethality across time make it difficult to discern various patterns in the data. Therefore, we present the time-series as three time-periods. Figure 1B and 1C contain the period from 1979 to the beginning of the Second Intifada in September of 2000. The 1993 Oslo Accords separates these series. The disparities in the number and lethality of attacks between periods are evident when comparing the maximums of each segment. Prior to the Oslo Accords, highs in attacks and fatalities were limited—14 attacks in September of 1985 and 16 fatalities in July of 1989. The interim period between Oslo and the Second Intifada produced maximums of 7 attacks in both March and May of 1998 and 41 fatalities in February of 1994. However, when compared to the monthly totals for attacks (116) and fatalities (182) from the Second Intifada in March of 2002, the disparities between segments are clear.

The figure also demonstrates that waves of violence span both right and left governments—the shaded area are times periods of right government control. The low levels of attacks during the initial period studied highlight the difference between our data and other studies that focus exclusively on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict due to our extended timeline.[6]

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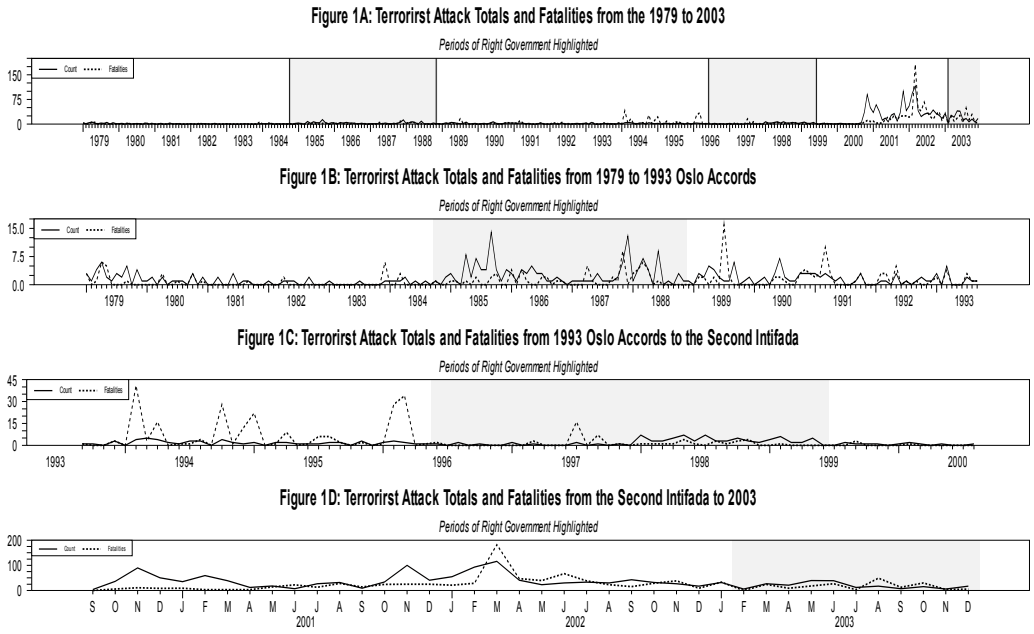
[5] See Appendix for the summary statistics of all of the variables.

[6] The most notable studies include Berrebi and Klor (2006, 2008), Bueno de Mesquita (2005), and Kydd and Walter (2002). Berrebi and Klor (2006) utilize the period from 1992 forward in one empirical test and from 1988 forward in another.

For the purposes of this study, we define terrorism as the nature of the act compared to the identity of the perpetrators. Following closely with Hoffman and Hoffman (1998), terrorism is violence or the threat of violence to generate fear within a target group—typically civilians. The actions are criminal and are designed to maximize publicity. They are designed for psychological as well as physical effect where perpetrators typically claim responsibility. Utilizing this definition in open source collection allows us to eschew disentangling responsibility for attacks, which is a recognized difficultly that often results in lumping Palestinian groups together (Brandt et al., 2008).[7]

Figure 1A-1D



[7] It is possible that right government's deterrent attempts can influence different segments of the Palestinian population disproportionately. However, we do not address this issue in this paper given our theoretical question. We recognize the difficultly of combining all Palestinian actors into one coherent side in the conflict. Obviously this is a simplification of the complexity of Palestinian society. However, media events often do not differentiate between those responsible for attacks amongst groups. We follow previous works in condensing all Palestinian actors into a single actor (Brandt et. al, 2008).

Independent Variables

To determine the political orientation of the government in power we use the Party Manifesto data (Budge et al. 2001). We calculate the mean weighted average of the government based on the Left-Right position of each party and the number of seats that party controls in the government. We then code governments that are greater than 15 a right oriented government. We label this measure *Right-Govs* (see Koch 2009).[8]

To capture the effect of the use of force on terror events we calculate the number of uses of force by the government over the past month. The variable is coded from the LEVANT database (http://eventdata.psu.edu/data.dir/levant.html). The LEVANT data delineates each action by actor, target, and type. The use of force was determined according to WEIS coding rules that were adopted by KEDS. The measure only counts actions that were coded as 223. We take the natural log of this measure given the data is heavily skewed to the right. We call this measure *Past Force*. *Right X Force* is the multiplicative term between Right Governments and Past force.

It may be the case that past successes by terrorists in terms of frequency, lethality, or suicide might affect current events. To control for such temporal effects and auto-correlation, we include lagged weighted moving averaged measures of each dependent variable.[9] They are labeled *Past Frequency, Past Lethality, and Past Suicide*. In addition, because reputations can evolve over time we code for the number of months in office. This measure is labeled *Gov Duration*. There has also been research that suggests that elections and election cycles might provide "windows of opportunity" for terrorists to seize upon (Berrebi and Klor 2006). To account for these, we include three measures: *CIEP*, which is the number of months left until the next mandated election, *Month Prior*, which takes the value of one if the current month under investigation is the month prior to when elections occur, and *Election Month*. This equals one if an election was held in that given month.

Because the dependent variables, frequency and lethality, are count variables that demonstrate over-dispersion, we employ Negative Binomial

[8] We use the measure derived from the manifesto data rather than just using the labels Likud or Labour given the complexity of various ruling coalitions over time. For example, the ruling coalition that emerged in 2001 while headed by a Likud prime minister was largely comprised of more left oriented ministers. However, when manifesto measures were unavailable Right-Govs was coded according the ruling party. This coding procedure produce three periods of right government—September 1984-November 1988, June 1996-July 1999 and January 2003-December 2003.

[9] The measure was created using a 6 month lag structure. The previous six months values for the variable are summed with the first month weighted value at 1 with the remaining variables decreasing in .2 intervals. The sixth month lagged value is weighted at .1 value.

Regression (Long 1997). *Suicide* does not demonstrate over-dispersion and as a result, Poisson regression is used. The negative binomial regression specification differs from the Poisson regression model with the addition of a dispersion parameter that models the unobserved heterogeneity among observations. Additionally, because our observations are unlikely to be independent of one another, we cluster on the Prime Minster.[10]

Results

Table 1 presents models for *Frequency* and *Lethality* without the interaction term. Model 1 presents the results using *Frequency* as the dependent variable. The coefficient for right government is positive but is not significant. The past force measure is also positive and significant. The measure of prior terror attacks is positive and significant as is the government duration measure. The month prior to the election measure suggests that frequent attacks are unlikely the month before an election. Model 2 uses the *Lethality* measure. The right government measure is not significant; however, the past force measure is again positive and significant suggesting that uses of force have a mobilizing effect. The past fatalities measure is also positive and significant. Unlike the frequency model, the duration of the government in office reduces the lethality of attacks and, if they occur during an election month, are likely to be less lethal as well. Interestingly the CIEP measure is also negative suggesting the further away the next mandated election the less lethal the attacks are.[11]

Models 3 and 4 of Table 1 include the interaction term *Right X Force.* Model 3 is the frequency model. The coefficients of the model are similar to those in model 1. The past use of force measure is significant and positive, as is the right government measure. However, the interaction term is negative and statistically significant.

[10] Note, because many Prime Ministers lose and retake office we treat each reign of office as a separate instance.

[11] To address potential endogeneity problems between right government's use of force and terror activity we conducted Granger causality tests of the key independent variable, right force, and the dependent variables. As expected, uses of force do not Granger cause the number of attacks or lethality. Suicide attacks appear more susceptible to endogeneity problems associated with right government's use of force. However, in all three cases, Granger causality is not a strict test of exogeneity and cannot fully eliminate endogeneity concerns.

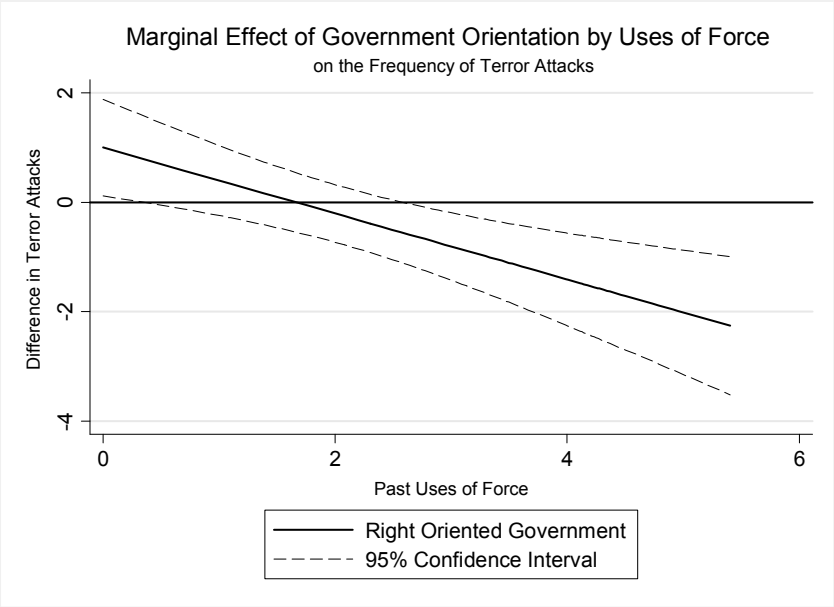
Table 1: Negative Binomial Regression Models: Frequency of Terror Events and Fatalities in Israel 1979-2002

Variable	**Model 1** **Frequency** *Coefficient Std. Error*	**Model 2** **Lethality** *Coefficient Std. Error*	**Model 3** **Frequency** *Coefficient Std. Error*	**Model 4** **Lethality** *Coefficient Std. Error*
Right Gov	.348	.009	1.80***	.999
	(.278)	(.393)	(.214)	(.534)
Past force	.585***	0.587***	.802***	.730***
	(.180)	(.134)	(.167)	(.097)
Right X Force			-.908***	-.602**
			(.209)	(.208)
Past Frequency	.074**		.049	
	(.020)		(.026)	
Past Lethality		.059**		.041**
		(.030)		(.019)
Gov Duration	.020	-.044**	.023	-.044**
	(.0127)	(.017)	(.012)	(.016)
CIEP-months	.001	-.039**	-.005	-.041**
	(.008)	(.018)	(.007)	(.015)
Election Month	-.386	-3.47***	-.574	-3.37***
	(.519)	(.485)	(.419)	(.503)
Month Prior	-.972**	-.704	-.834**	-.469
	(.380)	(.651)	(.379)	(.724)
Constant	-.725**	.939*	-1.00***	.731*
	(.308)	(.693)	(.304)	(.706)
Log likelihood	-605.125	-503.078	-588.80	-499.95
Wald Test (χ^2)	692.41***	565.14***	305.49***	2392.40 ***
Observations	282	282	282	282

Clustered standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<.05

Figure 1 shows the marginal effect of the conditional relationship between governments of the right and using force. The figure shows that governments of the right start with a higher baseline of the frequency of attacks. However, as governments of the right begin to employ force, the number of attacks declines compared to more left-oriented governments that use force.

Figure 2



Model 4 presents the results using the lethality measure. Again, the model is similar to model 2 without the interaction. As with the previous model, the constituent terms are both positive and significant while the interactive term is negative and significant.[12] Substantively, the results suggest the baseline probability of a non-right wing government experiencing an attack with at least one fatality is about 28 percent, compared to 45 percent for a right wing government. However, when the past force measure is at two, the probability of a terror attack with fatalities increases to 53 percent for more left-oriented governments compared to 50 percent for right-oriented governments. When the uses of force measure is at its maximum value of 5, a more left oriented government has an 80% chance of incurring a terror attack with casualties while a government of the right faces only a 56% chance. The substantive implications are clear: right governments are better able to deter lethal terrorist's attacks than are left oriented governments.

Suicide Attacks

The initial findings from the previous section support our hypothesis that government partisanship conditions the effectiveness of deterrence policies. The analysis shows that governments of the right that use force experience a decrease

[12] We conducted the analysis including period dummy variables for the First and Second Intifadas and the Lebanon War. The results were substantively similar, particularly concerning the use of force by right governments. The results are available in the appendix.

in the frequency and lethality of attacks compared to governments of the left. However, this baseline analysis does not address if government partisanship influences the deterrence policies effectiveness on specific terror tactics, mainly suicide terrorism. Jacobsen and Kaplan's (2007) base their game theoretical analysis on tactics utilized during the Second Intifada. They argue that increases in government preemptive action (targeted killings) against terrorists planning suicide missions increases the overall level of violence in the conflict but that 'hitting' terrorists can still be optimal for government. That is, government uses of force are conditionally effective, despite the increases in recruitment that result after Israeli uses of force (Kaplan et al. 2005).

Pape (2003) argues that a strategy of suicide terrorism is one that works best when trying to compel liberal democracies to make territorial concessions. The logic of suicide terrorism is not so much one of conventional military coercion in which the strong coerce the weak but rather one of punishment in which the weak target the strong. The overall goal, as is the case with most terrorism tactics, is to overwhelm the government with such damage as to convince the government and society that the price of retaining the territory, policy etc… is too great. In addition, because suicide terrorists are willing to die, their attacks are likely to be destructive especially given their ability to infiltrate crowded civilian areas. Moreover, suicide attacks act as clear signals that more pain is in the future should policies not change. As Pape states, "suicide itself is a costly signal, one that suggests that the attackers could not have been deterred by a costly threat of retaliation" (2003:347). Since suicide strategies are among the most destructive and deterrence is unlikely, examining the conditional effects of government partisanship provides a more stringent test of our hypothesis. Despite the unique nature of suicide terrorism, we expect that governments of the right are better able to deter suicide attacks than are governments of the left.

Table 2 presents the results of two models with *Suicide* as the dependent variable. Model 5 examines government partisanship and *Past force* without the conditional relationship. The right government measure is significant suggesting that right governments face fewer suicide attacks than left governments. At the same time, the use of force measure is positive and significant indicating that the more a government deploys force the more frequent suicide attacks. The government duration measure is again negative suggesting that the longer a government is in power the fewer attacks they face. The CIEP measure is also negative suggesting that the closer in time to the prior election the fewer attacks. The other two electoral measures are also negative and statistically significant indicating that the frequency of suicide attacks declines in the month before and of an election. Finally, the measure of previous attacks is not significant in the model.

Model 6 includes the interaction term between uses of force and right governments. The right government measure is now positive but not significant. The past force measure is still positive and significant while the interaction term is negative and significant. Substantively, this suggests that, all else equal, right governments have a slightly higher probability of confronting a suicide attack than governments of the left. However, as non-rightwing governments begin to employ force they increase the probability of a suicide attack occurring under their reign. Specifically, the probability of a non-right oriented government confronting at least one suicide attack(s) without using force is less than one percent while the probability of a suicide attack under a right wing government is about three percent. However, an attack under a non-right oriented government increases to 22 percent when the force measure equals three and almost 60 percent when the force measure equals four. Conversely, the probability of a suicide attack under a right wing government stays less than three percent regardless of how much force it uses. The other variables in the model are very similar to model 5 with only the magnitude of a few measures shifting.

Why might the probability of a suicide attack not change for governments of the right but change so dramatically for non-right wing governments? Returning to the theoretical discussion above, if governments of the right are more hawkish and less likely to negotiate with a terrorist group then it make little strategic sense for groups to use such a costly tactic. The underlying logic is the same logic that Pape and others have suggested about why democratic states make better targets. Those arguments imply that democracies are "soft" and vulnerable to attack and that they have a lower threshold for pain. When comparing governments of varying political orientation the left is often seen as either weaker, "soft" or less experienced in security issues. More importantly, these governments are also more likely to engage in the peace process, negotiate over the issues at stake or appear as more compassionate or humanitarian in their foreign policies. Governments of the right, on the other hand, have reputations as being extremely hawkish and are more likely to respond militarily and not given into or negotiate with terrorist groups.

Table 2: Poisson Regression Models: Suicide Events in Israel 1979-2002

	Model 5	**Model 6**
	Coefficient	*Coefficient*
Variable	*Std. Error*	*Std. Error*
Right Gov	-1.599	1.128
	(1.274)	(.925)
Past force	1.093***	1.138***
	(.143)	(.147)
Right X Force		-1.131***
		(.274)
Past Suicide	-.058**	-.109***
	(.055)	(.026)
Gov Duration	-.058**	-.058**
	(.023)	(.026)
CIEP-months	-.082***	-.087***
	(.022)	(.019)
Election Month	-14.026***	-15.167***
	(.768)	(.786)
Month Prior	-13.943***	-14.625***
	(1.22)	(1.360)
Constant	1.96**	-2.004**
	(.842)	(.888)
Log Likelihood	-117.75	-116.110
Wald Test (χ^2)	3886.63	5122.17
Observations	282	282

Clustered standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<.05

Public Opinion: an intervening variable

Our results provide insight into the linkages between domestic politics and terrorist attacks. As we have demonstrated, right governments can generate deterrence using force. Since Israel is a democracy, it is also important to consider public opinion's influence on Israeli and Palestinian conflict behavior. [13] More importantly for us, does public opinion also affect whether right-oriented governments will use force to deter terrorism? In the following section, we incorporate previous research that emphasizes the importance of public opinion in formulating partisan policies. We find that the ability of right governments to

[13] In addition to the lack of democratic government, the impact of Israeli uses of force increases levels of Palestinian hostility, but the hostility dissipates within a month of the incident (Jaeger et al. 2012). Jeager et al. suggests that scholars look elsewhere for explanations for secular shifts of Palestinian public opinion.

generate deterrent effects is robust to different model specifications when including Israeli public opinion.

The literature has produced several theories about the connection between domestic politics and conflict. Brandt et al. (2008) formalized the groupings into the following three categories: reciprocity, accountability, and credibility. Reciprocity suggests that cooperative behavior on the part of one actor begets cooperate behavior from the other and has been identified in various conflict situations (Axelrod 1984; Goldstien et al. 2001; Shellman, Reeves, and Stewart 2007; Ward 1982). Accountability refers to the relationship between principals and agents. In the democratic context, this is often the relationship between voters (principals) and elected officials (agents). Accountability mechanisms constrain leaders because principals can sanction agents if they fail to implement preferred policies, or if they implement unfavorable policies.

Related is the credibility model where the accountability mechanism forms the foundation of the model. Within a two level game framework (Putnam 1988), the audience costs literature highlight how credibility affects the interactions between states and leaders. According to these arguments, opposing leaders can determine the likelihood a state following through on its policy pronouncements by gauging the support or of the other leader's principals for that policy (Fearon 1994; Schultz 1999). More specifically, democracies have the capacity to transmit information in to opponents because of the more open nature of the society and the reliance on elections for maintaining office.[14] Because of the salience and highly publicized nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to both publics, elites from both sides face potential audience costs. Audience costs expectations, in turn, affects the interactions between the Israeli government and key Palestinian based groups. For example, if the Israeli government's pronouncements or policy positions do not match the public's attitudes towards the conflict, Palestinian groups might infer that the government has little intention of following through on its policies. This erodes the credibility of any promises or guarantees by the government. Conversely, if Israeli public opinion and government policy positions are congruent, then any policy pronouncements should appear as highly credible.

Brandt et al. conclude that the credibility model fits the Israeli-Palestinian case. They found that the simultaneous relationship between foreign policy events and Jewish public opinion influences behavior on both sides of the conflict. The credibility model highlights the importance of public opinion in shaping policy, which may influence the ability of the Israeli government, right or left, to deter terrorist activity. One potential criticism of our argument given this conceptualization of public opinion is that Jewish public opinion drives our

[14] Shlaim (2001) documents one such instance where Nasser was opposed to cooperative gestures due to the potential reaction of both publics.

results. That is, since Israel has an accountability mechanism—elections—it is possible that the public's view of peace will influence the behavior of terrorist groups through this mechanism regardless of whether the government uses force. Therefore, a decrease in terrorist attacks is a function of Jewish opinion and not the ability of right-oriented governments to deter.

We incorporate Israeli public opinion into our framework to test the expectation that public opinion is an omitted variable in our analysis. We include Brandt et al.'s Jewish Peace Index in our model to control for this alternative explanation.[15] The period covered is much smaller due to the data limitations of the Jewish Peace measure. This analysis covers the period April 1996 to December 2002. This period includes three partisan shifts in the government, though the left was in power for only 2 months in 1996 prior to the change in government. The results of the analysis are in Table 3. Models 7-12 demonstrate that the ability of the right to deter terrorist attacks is robust to Israeli public opinion. However, the question of whether public opinion and the desire for peace act independently on terrorism after accounting for partisanship and the use of force persists as well as whether they condition the ability of governments to deter terrorism based on the government's political orientation?

We investigate this question as it has important implications for the capacity of governments to deter or at least reduce terrorism. The results in model 7 demonstrate consistent with Brandt et al.'s conclusions, that Israeli public opinion has a dampening effect on terrorism which has the following effect: as the Israeli public's support for peace increases, the frequency of terror attacks subsides. Moreover, the significant negative marginal effect of Israeli pacific opinion remains with the inclusion of the interaction term of partisanship and public opinion. However, this result is limited, as Israeli public opinion does independently influence lethality as demonstrated in model 9 or marginally influence opinion in model 10.

[15] Jewish Peace Index is a composite variable measuring monthly Israeli support for peace from April 1996 to March 2005. See Brandt et al. page 353 for a complete discussion about survey question wording and methodology.

Table 3: Israeli Public Opinion Influence on the Terror Event in Israel 1996-2002

	Negative Binomial				Poisson Regression	
	Model 7	**Model 8**	**Model 9**	**Model 10**	**Model 11**	**Model 12**
	Frequency	**Frequency**	**Lethality**	**Lethality**	**Suicide**	**Suicide**
Variable	*Coefficient Std. Error*	*Coefficient Std. Error*	*Coefficient Std. Error*	*Coefficient Std. Error*	*Coefficient Std. Error*	*Coefficient Std. Error*
Right Gov	1.336***	.522	1.677***	8.591***	.729	6.278
	(.373)	(1.765)	(.419)	(.486)	(1.925)	(3.437)
Past force	.946***	.943***	1.039***	1.102***	.962***	.966***
	(.109)	(.107)	(.259)	(.148)	(.203)	(.201)
Right X Force	-1.147***	-1.137***	-.542**	-.527**	-.628***	-.598**
	(.131)	(.145)	(.246)	(.179)	(.194)	(.196)
Past Frequency	-.005**	-.005**				
	(.002)	(.002)				
Past Lethality			.035***	.035***		
			(.009)	(.010)		
Past Suicide					.228**	.228**
					(.095)	(.097)
JPI	-.066**	-.072**	-.077	-.038	-.038	-.031
	(.025)	(.028)	(.062)	(.055)	(.092)	(.090)
JPI X Right		.013		-.117***		-.093
		(.028)		(.035)		(.086)
Gov Duration	.061***	.061***	.001	.004	-.011	-.012
	(.011)	(.011)	(.027)	(.027)	(.022)	(.021)
Constant	2.545**	2.391**	-2.272	-.090	-1.413	-1.754
	(1.173)	(1.202)	(3.787)	(3.345)	(3.534)	(3.467)
Log Likelihood	-221.41	-221.39	-185.23	-184.55	-77.44	-77.29
Wald Test (χ^2)	1390.13***	86.82***	1066.02 ***	87.44 ***	89.29***	110.22***
Observations	81	81	81	81	81	81

Clustered standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<.05

While the partisan and force results are consistent with the prior models, the public desire for peace does not affect terror lethality. It does have a conditional affect when combined with right oriented governments. In a similar vein, increases in the desire for peace by the Israeli public also does not influence decisions to deploy suicide attacks both independently, or when interacted with government partisanship. One implication of this is that public sentiments for peace may reduce the overall number of attacks, which is somewhat in line with arguments suggesting that increases in desires for peace may help move peace negotiations forward. This should reduce the number of attacks. However, as Kydd and Walter (2006) and others note the peace process may be undermined as factions within groups may use terror tactics to stop or alter negotiations. Thus, while the gross number of attacks may shrink, the monthly lethality and the use of suicide tactics may not decline much as fringe groups ramp up their own use of violence.

Discussion

The hypothesis examined whether uses of force, conditioned by the partisanship of the government, either deterred or mobilized terrorists. The results suggest that partisanship does condition the effectiveness of using force by governments. For the frequency of attacks, the results suggest that absent the use of force, right governments face more attacks. However, increasing uses of force decreased the number of attacks when a right government was in office. Thus, for example Koch and Cranmer's (2007) suggestion that there are more frequent attacks against left-governments might bear out only because they failed to account for the use of force by the government.[16] For deadly attacks, the results show that using force increased the lethality of attacks but non right-oriented governments were likely to confront more lethal attacks than governments of the right. Finally, for suicide related attacks the findings suggest that right government's use of force has a deterrent effect on attacks.

Overall, the results suggest that uses of force by governments of the right generally have a deterring effect, while uses of force by left oriented governments have a mobilizing effect. For the Israeli case, the results suggest several things. One is that centrist or left leaning governments, *cerates paribus,* are actually less likely to be the targets of terrorist events. Once such factors as election cycles, external influences, public opinion, and uses of force are controlled the results suggest that a vote for a more moderate or liberal government is not necessarily a vote for an increase in terrorism.

[16] In addition, they examined transnational attacks as opposed to the attacks most common in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

However, problems emerge when left oriented governments start using force against sub-group populations. Left-oriented governments are likely to deploy force in response to terror events perpetrated by groups trying to extract greater concessions from the government or trying to undermine attempts at achieving some sort of lasting peace (Kydd and Walter 2002).

Alternatively, more right-oriented governments may deploy force to try to develop a reputation about its commitment of following through on threats. In either event, the outcome is likely to be one in which terrorists increase both the amount of activity as well as the lethality of those activities against the state. While more right-oriented governments are likely to engender terrorist attacks, *cerates paribus*, they are also more likely to be seen as effective and credible in following through with using force to deter future attacks. The near constant, low probability of right oriented governments experiencing a suicide terrorist attack bolsters the general conclusion that government partisanship influences the effectiveness of deterrents policies.

Returning to Schultz's argument, it suggests that non-right oriented governments may find themselves in a "catch 22" of sorts. If these governments are more dovish and want to make peace, then they need to refrain from employing force; otherwise, internal government opposition mobilizes which could lead to their replacement by a more hawkish government (Berrebi and Klor 2008). The results suggest that there are two possible paths to peace. One path is for governments of the right to engage in the peace process, often at the risk of losing office given their base of support.[17] The other is for more left-oriented governments to engage terrorist groups in such away so as they do not have to employ military tools to either deter or punish. In the Israeli case if a group like Hamas can effectively reign in terrorist activity, something Arafat and the PLO could not do, a settlement between Palestine and Israel could possibly be reached—especially if it was with a more centrist or even right-oriented government.

Conclusions

This paper examined the interaction between partisan politics, uses of force and their effects on terrorist activities in terms of frequency, lethality and tactic selection. This research provides a much more dynamic study of terror events and government choices than previous literature by focusing on multiple indicators of terrorist activities. It highlights the fact that terrorist calculations are dependent on expected responses by governments and that these expectations are in large part a function of credibility and reputations based on partisan orientation.

[17] This is similar to the policies that Sharon attempted with the settlement areas.

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

Despite the contributions of this paper, additional work remains. While a great deal of research examines the use of force and other coercive tools of states, very little research examines whether positive policies such as extending aid affect terror activities. If governments of the left are more dovish, then they might receive greater electoral rewards for extending the olive branch as Gould and Klor (2010) suggest. Future empirical research needs to account for this.

Additionally, while non-right oriented governments appear to have less success in deterring terror attacks by using force a more complete model is required. Specifically, models should include both terrorist decisions to attack and government decisions to engage in the use of force, as both decisions appear jointly dependent. Moreover, our results do not differentiate between discriminate and indiscriminate uses of force, which Benmlech et al. (2010) and Jaegar and Paserman (2009) have shown to be influential in determining counter-terrorism policy effectiveness. It remains unclear if and how partisanship determines government's decision to employ discriminate uses of force and how particular counterterrorism policies interact with government partisanship to influence terrorist decisions to attack.

Finally, it appears that election cycles matter. One avenue for future study is to examine the impact of electoral fortunes of parties in the context of terror events and the incumbent government's response to these events. Do parties, similar to the stock market (Zussman and Zussman 2006), anticipate future levels of terrorist attacks based on counterterrorism policies and adapt policies to enhance electability or do incumbent parties remain consistent to the ideological base that elected them? Future empirical research needs to investigate how incumbent parties conduct counterterrorism policies.

Appendix

The full data set spans 1968 – 2005 and contains 2780 terrorist events. Events were machine coded from the following sources:

AFP	AFX News
Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade	Al-Arabiyah Television
al-Bawaba	Al-Jazeerah
al-Masa'iyah	Al-Sharqiyah Television
Alternative Information Center	AP
Arutz 7 News	BBC
Boston Globe	Channel 1 Television
Chronology Data 1968-1997	CNN
Comtex	Daily Telegraph
DPA	FBIS Report
Financial Times	Guardian
Ha'aretz	IDF Radio
InfoProd	International Herald Tribune
IRNA	Israel Television Channel One
Izz-al Din al-Qassam Brigades	Jerusalem Channel 2 TV
Jerusalem Post	Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el
Jordan Times	KurdSat
Middle East News Online	New York Times
Nida al-Quds Network	NRG WWW
Palestine Satellite Channel TV	Palestinian Information Center
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Website	Qol Yisra'el
Quds Press	Radio Jordan
Reuters	Sol Yisrael
The Independent	The Times
TRITON	UPI
VOA News	Voice of Israel
Voice of Palestine	WAFA
Washington Post	Yahoo News
Yediot Aharonot	

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics
For Non-Right Governments (193 observations)

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	Min	Max
Frequency	6.9	17.5	0	116
Lethality	5.6	16.3	0	182
Suicide	.5	1.7	0	15
Past Frequency	3.4	7.9	0	44
Past Lethality	2.6	6.4	0	44.5
Past Suicide	.2	.7	0	4.9
Past force	1.9	1.3	0	5.4
Gov Duration	11.8	10	1	46
CIEP	24.9	13.1	0	48
Election Month	.02	.14	0	1
Month Prior	.02	.14	0	1

For Right Governments (89 observations)				
Variable	Mean	Std Dev	Min	Max
Frequency	2.5	2.8	0	14
Lethality	1.3	2.4	0	16
Suicide	.03	.18	0	2
Past Frequency	1.3	1	0	3.8
Past Lethality	.9	1.3	0	9.2
Past Suicide	.03	.1	0	.8
Past force	1.6	1.2	0	3.6
Gov Duration	15.1	.9	1	46
CIEP	25.7	14.3	-4	48
Election Month	.02	.14	0	1
Month Prior	.02	.14	0	1

Table 5: Granger Causality Tests: Right Use of Force, Lethality, Frequency and Suicide

Equation	Excluded	Chi2	D. of F.	Prob
Right Force	Frequency	.9155	2	.633
Right Force	Lethality	1.567	2	.457
Right Force	Suicide	6.619	2	.037
Right Force	All	8.449	6	.207
Frequency	RightForce	.327	2	.849
Frequency	Lethality	33.627	2	.000
Frequency	Suicide	28.375	2	. 000
Frequency	All	48.534	6	.000
Fatalities	RightForce	.032	2	.984
Fatalities	Frequency	39.328	2	.000
Fatalities	Suicide	106.04	2	.000
Fatalities	All	191.85	6	.000
Suicide	RightForce	.6550	2	.717
Suicide	Frequency	70.075	2	.000
Suicide	Lethality	92.328	2	.000
Suicide	All	152.16	6	.000

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