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Globalization: Bad News for Antiterrorism and Counterterrorism

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Title: Globalization: Bad News for Antiterrorism and Counterterrorism

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Abstract. This article suggests that increasing globalization increases the threat of terrorism.

Globalization denotes an increasing interdependence of economic, telecommunications, social, cultural, and political phenomena. Antiterrorism comprises activities to decrease the probability a terrorist act will be attempted. Counterterrorism comprises activities to decrease the probability that an ongoing terrorist sequence--analysis, planning, operations--will be successful. Personnel in both disciplines will find their work more difficult as globalization increases.

Why? Those attempting to achieve political objectives through violence will ineluctably perceive more and more conceptual linkages to these objectives and, thus, more and more appropriate targets. So, four United States (US) citizens employed by the Houston-based Union Texas Petroleum are murdered in Pakistan--allegedly in response to the conviction of a Pakistani, Mir Aimal Kasi, in Virginia for fatally shooting two Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) personnel. So, the Pakistani murdered the two CIA personnel in Virginia allegedly to protest US foreign policy in the Middle East, the US leadership during the Persian Gulf War, the Israeli treatment of Palestinians, and the power the US and the CIA has over Islamic nations. Allegedly, CIA headquarters was a target to "convey a message to the United States."

A functional analogy relates to the recent economic downturn within some countries in Asia. Efforts by the US Congress to prevent or combat human rights violations and corruption can no longer so simply comprise economic sanctions, for such sanctions may have noxious effects for so-called innocent third parties--even the US itself--much as the Asian economic downturn has had noxious effects in Brazil.

Back to the case of terrorism. An increasingly valuable antiterrorism and counterterrorism technique in an era of globalization might be the subversion of terrorist causal attributions. Through intelligence analysis, one would identify the combinations of temporal priority, temporal and spatial contiguity, covariation, contingency, and prior experience--as well as the corresponding processes of agreement and difference judgments--that support terrorist theories of causality among political variables and the ultimate political objective. Through operational planning, one would develop information warfare initiatives to influence the above combinations and processes in a manner decreasing the number and import of targets derived through the causal attribution process. This approach also might guide terrorist planners into activities that might be more easily identified and controlled by antiterrorist and counterterrorist personnel. As well, this approach could be crafted to the unique combinations and processes underlying the causal attributions of various psychological groups among terrorists. (For example, depressed people often tend to blame themselves for noxious events; so-called normals often choose situational or circumstantial external targets; paranoids often choose other people and objects judged highly valued by these people.)

But in the meantime, political events in one part of the globe can more likely have terrorist consequences anywhere. The good news that globalization brings with it the notion that "we are the world" must be tempered with the bad news that "all politics is local" includes political violence as local subsumes the world. (See 4 Americans and Pakistani driver killed by gunmen in Karachi. (November 12,

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