Al-Qa’ida founder Osama bin Laden was killed during a raid by United States naval special forces on May 2, 2011, in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The successful attack by a unit popularly known as SEAL Team Six ended an intensive manhunt for the most wanted terrorist leader in the world.

The successful hunt for Osama bin Laden originated from fragments of information gleaned during interrogations of prisoners over several years beginning in 2002. Believing that bin Laden retained couriers to communicate with other operatives, interrogators focused their attention on questioning high-value targets about the existence and identities of these couriers. This focus was adopted with an assumption that bin Laden and other Al-Qa’ida leaders would rarely communicate using cell phone technology as a precaution against being intercepted by Western intelligence agencies.

Early interrogations produced reports that a personal courier did indeed exist, a man whose given code name was Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti. In about 2007, intelligence officers learned al-Kuwaiti’s real name, located him, and eventually followed him to a recently built compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. U.S. intelligence operatives observed the compound locally from a safe house and concluded that it concealed an important individual. Based on other surveillance and circumstantial intelligence information, officials surmised that Osama bin Laden resided at the compound with his couriers and their families.

Options for assaulting the compound included a surgical strike by special forces, deploying strategic bombers to obliterate the compound, or a joint operation with Pakistani security forces. The latter two options were rejected because of the possibility of killing innocent civilians and distrust of Pakistani security agencies. Approximately two dozen SEAL commandos practiced intensely for the assault, and were temporarily detailed to the CIA for the mission. A nighttime helicopter-borne attack was commenced on May 2, 2011. The courier al-Kuwaiti and several others were killed during the assault, and women and children found in the compound were bound and escorted into the open to be found later by Pakistani security forces. Osama bin Laden was located on an upper floor of the main building and shot dead by SEALs. Four others were killed in addition to bin Laden, whose body was taken away by the assault team. He was subsequently buried at sea.

Al-Qa’ida threatened retribution for the attack and named Ayman al-Zawahiri as bin Laden’s successor in June 2011.
This chapter reviews policy options for responding to acts of political violence. The question of how to respond is traditionally regarded as a choice between so-called hard-line and soft-line responses. Hard-line responses include using military and paramilitary measures to punish or destroy the terrorists. No compromise is desired, and no negotiations are accepted. Soft-line responses are a more complicated approach. They incorporate diplomacy, compromise, and social reforms as possible options. Regardless of which category a particular policy option falls under, the key consideration for policy makers is the practicality of the counterterrorist option. In other words, will the option work? Will the terrorists’ behavior change? Can the terrorist environment be co-opted or suppressed?

Before addressing these bottom-line questions, it is important to consider what is meant by responding to terrorism and engaging in counterterrorism or antiterrorism.

Responding to terrorism is defined here as any action taken by a targeted interest in reply to a terrorist incident or terrorist environment. These actions range in scale from very passive to highly active responses. For example, options can be as passive as simply doing nothing, thus calculating that the terrorists will be satisfied by inaction. More intensive responses include covert campaigns to disrupt or otherwise destabilize hostile movements. Very intensive responses include symbolic military strikes against groups and their sponsors, as well as campaigns to completely incapacitate the terrorists.

Counterterrorism refers to proactive policies that specifically seek to eliminate terrorist environments and groups. Regardless of which policy is selected, the ultimate goal of counterterrorism is clear: to save lives by proactively preventing or decreasing the number of terrorist attacks. As a corollary, antiterrorism refers to target hardening, enhanced security, and other defensive measures seeking to deter or prevent terrorist attacks.

Much of our discussion will focus on categories of responses. Most experts agree that counterterrorist options can be organized into several policy classifications. Examples of these classifications include the following:

- Diplomacy, financial controls, military force, intelligence, and covert action
- Legal, repressive, and conciliatory responses to terrorism
- Targeted and untargeted prevention

These are theoretical groupings of policy options that many experts have identified as possible responses to terrorist incidents. However, they should not be considered exact templates for every terrorist contingency, for there are no exact theories of responses or counterterrorism. The fact of the matter is that terrorist environments are in many ways idiosyncratic, as are many terrorist groups. The implications of this for counterterrorist policy are that some methods will be successful in only a few cases, whereas others will be adaptable to many cases. Significantly, some policy options often seem to make perfect theoretical sense when they are developed, but subsequently they make little practical sense. Nevertheless, the categories of available options are fairly clearly drawn; it is the adaptation of these options to specific scenarios that can become less certain.
Responding to Terror: The Scope of Options

Regardless of which label is attached to an option or which categories are developed, there is consensus among policy makers that they have available to them several basic counterterrorist options and suboptions. For the purposes of our discussion, options and suboptions will be classified as follows:

Use of Force

This is a hard-line policy classification that allows policy makers to use the force of arms against terrorists and their supporters. The objectives of deploying military and paramilitary assets can range from symbolic punitive attacks to the systematic destruction of terrorist personnel and infrastructure. The following are examples of military and paramilitary repressive options:

- **Suppression campaigns** are military strikes against targets affiliated with terrorists. The purpose of these strikes is to destroy or severely disrupt terrorist personnel and infrastructure. Suppression campaigns can include **punitive strikes** and **preemptive strikes**, which are attacks that punish terrorist targets. The former occur in response to terrorist attacks, and the latter occur in anticipation of terrorist attacks. Both can be symbolic strikes that cause limited damage or that are launched to destroy specific facilities or personnel.

- **Covert operations** (coercive) are secretive operations that include assassinations, sabotage, kidnapping (known as extraordinary renditions, discussed in Chapter 14), and other quasi-legal methods. The purpose is to wage low-level and secretive war against terrorist movements. **Special operations forces** are the principal assets used to carry out coercive covert operations. These are specially trained units that specialize in irregular missions against terrorist targets.

Operations Other Than War

Repressive Options

Repressive responses include nonmilitary operations selected from a range of options that are flexible and can be adapted to specific terrorist environments. The following are examples of nonmilitary repressive options:

- Covert operations (nonviolent) are secretive operations that include a number of possible counterterrorist measures, such as infiltration, disinformation, and cyberwar. Nonviolent covert programs require creative and imaginative methods that are adapted to each terrorist environment.

- **Intelligence** refers to the collection of data. Its purpose is to create an informational database about terrorist movements and to predict their behavior. This process is not unlike that of criminal justice investigators who work to resolve criminal cases.

- **Enhanced security** refers to the hardening of targets to deter or prevent terrorist attacks. Security barriers, checkpoints, and surveillance are typical security measures. These are critical components of antiterrorism.

- **Economic sanctions** are used to punish or disrupt state sponsors of terrorism. Sanctions can either selectively target specific economic sectors or generally restrict trade. The purpose is to pressure state sponsors to modify or end their support for terrorism.

The successful use of nonmilitary and nonparamilitary assets to suppress terrorism requires the effective deployment of technological and organizational resources. The primary objective of using nonmilitary resources is to disrupt and deter terrorist organizations and their support apparatuses. Nonmilitary options thus require the development of creative security measures and the use of new technologies.
Conciliatory Options

Conciliatory responses is a soft-line classification that allows policy makers to develop a range of options that do not involve the use of force or other repressive methods. The objectives of non-repressive responses depend on the characteristics of the terrorist environment. Examples of these responses include the following:

- **Diplomacy** refers to different degrees of capitulation to the terrorists, which is engaging with the terrorists to negotiate an acceptable resolution to a conflict. Diplomatic solutions can be incident specific, or they can involve sweeping conditions that may completely resolve the conflict.
- **Social reform** is an attempt to address the grievances of the terrorists and their championed group. The purpose is to resolve the underlying problems that caused the terrorist environment to develop.
- **Concessions** can be incident specific, in which immediate demands are met; or generalized, in which broad demands are accommodated.

Legalistic Options

Nations developed legal protocols to employ in dealing with terrorism. Some of these protocols were implemented to promote international cooperation, and others were adopted as matters of domestic policy. The overall objective of legalistic responses is to promote the rule of law and regular legal proceedings. The following are examples of these responses:

- **Law enforcement** refers to the use of law enforcement agencies and criminal investigative techniques in the prosecution of suspected terrorists. This adds an element of *rule of law* to counterterrorism.
- Counterterrorist laws attempt to criminalize terrorist behavior. This can be done, for example, by declaring certain behaviors to be criminal terrorism or by enhancing current laws such as those that punish murder.
- **International law** relies on cooperation among states. Those who are parties to international agreements attempt to combat terrorists by permitting them no refuge or sanctuary for their behavior. In some cases, terrorists may be brought before international tribunals.

Table 13.1 summarizes activity profiles for these counterterrorist policy categories. The discussion in this chapter will review the following responses to terrorism:

- Warlike Operations: Counterterrorism and the Use of Force
- Operations Other Than War: Repressive Options
- Operations Other Than War: Conciliatory Options
- Applying the Rule of Law: Legalistic Options

**Warlike Operations:**

**Counterterrorism and the Use of Force**

The use of force is a hard-line policy approach used by states and their proxies to violently suppress terrorist environments. The goals of this approach are case specific, so that the decision to use violent suppression is based on policy calculations peculiar to each terrorist environment. When states decide to use force against terrorists and their supporters, coercion and violence are considered to be justifiable and desirable policy options. The underlying rationale for many decisions to use force is to
demonstrate the state’s ability to disrupt the operational capabilities of terrorists and, if necessary, to eliminate them. The process of eliminating terrorists refers to incapacitating them by disrupting, isolating, capturing, and killing as many cadres as possible.

This policy option requires the deployment of military or paramilitary assets to punish, destabilize, or destroy terrorists and their supporters. Military assets are defined as the recognized and official armed forces of a nation. Paramilitary assets are defined as irregular armed units or individuals who are supported or organized by regimes. Paramilitaries include irregular civilian “home guard” units armed by the government and stationed in their home villages and towns. A paramilitary asset can also be an individual trained in the use of explosives, small arms, assassination techniques, and other applications of violence.

States have waged military and paramilitary counterterrorist operations domestically and internationally. A comparison of these operational venues may be summarized as follows:

- **Domestic operations** involve the coercive use of military, police, and other security forces against domestic threats. States justify this type of deployment as being necessary to restore order. Unfortunately, historical examples show that a great deal of civilian “collateral damage” occurs in these environments. A number of governments have readily used domestic force when threatened by dissident insurgents, terrorist campaigns, or other antigovernment political movements. In extreme circumstances, some governments have adopted official policies of indiscriminate repression and state-sponsored terrorism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorist Policy Classification</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
<th>Typical Resources Used</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use of force</strong></td>
<td>Symbolic strength</td>
<td>Punish or destroy the terrorists</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Operations other than war: repressive options</strong></td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
<td>Disruption of the terrorists</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Destabilization</td>
<td>Coercion of supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations other than war: conciliatory options</strong></td>
<td>Resolve underlying problems</td>
<td>End immediate crises, Forecast future crises</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Legalistic options</strong></td>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td>International cooperation, prosecution, conviction, and incarceration of terrorists</td>
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International operations involve the overt or covert deployment of security assets abroad. These deployments can include ground, air, or naval forces in large or very small operational configurations. The scale of the deployment is, of course, dependent on the goals of state policies and the type of counterterrorist action to be carried out. In some cases, units will be deployed to an allied country that is willing to serve as a base of operations. If a host country is unavailable, or if it imposes restrictive conditions on the deployment, nations with sufficient military resources (such as the United States) will use naval units as seaborne bases for launching military strikes. Or air assets can be flown over long distances from home bases or friendly third countries to attack designated targets.

The following discussion explores several use-of-force options that are commonly adopted by nations.

**Maximum Use of Force: Suppression Campaigns**

Counterterrorist campaigns can be undertaken by military and paramilitary forces. These are long-term policies of conducting operations against terrorist cadres, their bases, and their support apparatuses. Suppression campaigns are uniquely adapted to the conditions of each terrorist environment and are usually of indeterminate duration. They are launched within the policy contexts of war or quasi-war and are often waged with the goal of utterly defeating the terrorist movement.

For example, in 2002 and 2003, Israel began a concerted effort to disrupt Hamas and destroy its capability to indefinitely sustain its trademark suicide bombing campaign. Israeli policy included assassinations (discussed later in the chapter under coercive covert operations); military incursions; and a series of raids that resulted in arrests and gunfights with Hamas operatives, as well as many deaths. A sustained military incursion in the West Bank, designed to suppress Hamas activity and called Operation Defensive Shield, began in April 2002. In one typical raid, eight Palestinians were killed in an operation in Gaza that resulted in the arrest of Mohammed Taha, one of the founding leaders of Hamas. In another raid in Gaza, 11 Palestinians were killed and 140 wounded when Israeli tanks and troops attacked a refugee camp after a Hamas suicide bomber killed 15 people on a bus in Haifa. By 2004, the Israeli government credited these operations and other measures with weakening Hamas’s infrastructure and reducing the incidence of Hamas bombings.

**Military Suppression Campaigns**

Nations sometimes resort to the use of conventional units and special operations forces to wage war against terrorist movements. The goal is to destroy their ability to use terrorism to attack the nation’s interests. Military campaigns require the deployment of troops to bases in friendly countries or (in the case of nations with significant seaborne capability) offshore aboard naval vessels. Israel’s Operation Peace for Galilee (1982 Lebanon) and the United States’ Operation Enduring Freedom (2001 Afghanistan) illustrate the nature of military suppression campaigns.

**Case in Point: Operation Peace for Galilee (and Aftermath).** In June 1982, the Israeli army invaded Lebanon for the second time to root out Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) bases of operation. The operation was called Operation Peace for Galilee and was launched in reply to ongoing PLO attacks from its Lebanese bases. During the invasion, the Israelis fought and won a war with Syria that lasted 6 days and drove northward through Lebanon to West Beirut by mid-June. The

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6Only the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and France have the capability to deploy large numbers of seaborne troops.

7The first invasion occurred in 1978 with the same goal of driving out PLO fighters. A third Israeli invasion took place in 1996 and was directed against Hezbollah.

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city was surrounded, and a 3-month siege of trapped PLO and Syrian troops began. The United States brokered an agreement that allowed the PLO and Syrians to withdraw from Beirut in August. The outcome of this phase of the invasion was the successful neutralization of PLO forces south of Beirut. Many Lebanese opposed to the PLO presence had welcomed the Israelis, but this goodwill ended in mid-September. When Israeli troops entered West Beirut, Christian Phalangist militiamen massacred hundreds of Palestinian civilians for 3 days in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. The Israeli army did not intervene, its army remained in Lebanon, and Lebanese resistance against the Israeli presence began to grow. The Israelis eventually withdrew from most of Lebanon in 1985, establishing an occupation zone in southern Lebanon that was maintained until their withdrawal in July 2000. During the incursion and occupation, Hezbollah became a prominent symbol of anti-Israeli resistance. Hezbollah’s prominence and reputation in this regard were greatly enhanced in July 2006, when the movement fought the Israeli army to a standstill during a large-scale incursion into Lebanon, which had the stated purpose of breaking Hezbollah.

**Case in Point: Operation Enduring Freedom.** The United States declared itself at war against global terrorism after the attacks of September 11, 2001. It was joined by a number of allies who agreed to commit their armed forces and domestic security services to the new war. Dubbed **Operation Enduring Freedom**, the operation began with the October 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and was defined from the beginning as a long-term suppression campaign. It was also made clear from the outset that the war on terrorism would require extended deployments of U.S. and allied troops around the world, as well as an intensive use of special operations forces, commandos, Marines, and other elite units. The immediate objectives were to destroy Al Qa’ida’s safe havens in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, collect intelligence, disrupt the terrorist network around the world, and capture or kill as many cadres as possible. The long-term goal of the campaign—which policy makers stated would take years to achieve—was to degrade or destroy the operational capabilities of international terrorists. Interestingly, Operation Enduring Freedom was allegedly first called **Operation Infinite Justice** but was renamed after a negative reaction in the Muslim world (the Muslim stance being that only God can provide infinite justice).

**Paramilitary Suppression Campaigns.**

In some suppression campaigns, military and paramilitary units actively coordinate their operations. A typical policy used in this type of counterterrorist environment has been the government’s arming and support of paramilitaries in areas where the military does not have a strong presence. The following examples illustrate the nature of paramilitary suppression campaigns.

**Case in Point: Paramilitary Suppression in Algeria.** Algeria was beset by intensive terrorist violence from *jihadis* belonging to several radical Islamic groups. The Algerian government was unsuccessful in suppressing the rebels and was accused of committing human rights violations. Many thousands of civilians were killed, mostly at the hands of the *jihadis*. During the suppression campaign, the government organized and armed paramilitary home guard units.8 These units, which were used as local self-defense forces, effectively staved off attacks from the rebels, thus reducing their operational effectiveness in the countryside. In part because of the paramilitary policy, as well as government-initiated programs and brutal suppression, the rebellion eventually ended in a negotiated amnesty settlement in 1999.

**Case in Point: Paramilitary Suppression in Colombia.** Paramilitaries such as the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) fought against the Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN) rebels using guerrilla tactics and death-squad terrorism. Paramilitaries such as the AUC received overt and covert support from the government and wealthy

Colombians. A typical example of the AUC’s operational role and the Colombian army’s cooperation occurred in May 2002, when AUC and FARC units fought a pitched battle in the town of Bellavista. Approximately 400 AUC fighters passed through several Colombian army checkpoints on their way to the town to recapture it from FARC. During intense fighting, a FARC homemade mortar crashed through the roof of a church, killing 119 civilians (including 46 children) and wounding more than 100. The Colombian army permitted the AUC to occupy the village and did not arrive until 5 days after the fighting ended.9

**Punitive and Preemptive Strikes**

Short-duration military and paramilitary operations are usually conducted for a specific purpose under specific rules of engagement. These actions are designed to send a clear symbolic message to terrorists. The following two types of short-duration operations have been used:

- **Punitive strikes** are attacks that are launched as reprisals against terrorists for incidents that have already taken place. Successful punitive strikes require the attacker to symbolically and politically link the attacks to the terrorist incident.
- **Preemptive strikes** are attacks that are undertaken to hurt terrorists prior to a terrorist incident. Preemptive operations are launched as a precautionary measure to degrade the terrorists’ ability to launch future attacks. Symbolic and political linkage between the attacks and a real threat is often difficult.

Punitive strikes are used more commonly than preemptive strikes. These attacks can be justified to some extent, as long as links can be established between the attacks and a terrorist incident. Linkage must also be made between the specific targets of the reprisal and the alleged perpetrators of the incident. This latter consideration sometimes goes awry. For example, when the United States launched cruise missiles against targets in Sudan and Afghanistan in August 1998 (in retaliation for the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya), the legitimacy of one of the targets was called into question. A Sudanese pharmaceutical factory was destroyed by the missiles. The United States claimed that it was an Al Qa’ida operation that produced chemicals that could be used in chemical weapons. Many observers questioned this assertion, thus reducing the veracity of the Americans’ claim that the target was linked to the terrorist attacks.

Preemptive strikes are used less frequently than punitive strikes, partly because *preemption* by definition means that the attack is a unilateral action conducted in response to a *perceived* threat. Such attacks are therefore not as easily justified as punitive operations, which is an important consideration for regimes concerned about world opinion. Unless a threat can be clearly defined, it is unlikely that preemptive actions will receive widespread support from friends or neutral parties.

Nevertheless, some nations have adopted preemptive operations as a regular counterterrorist method. Israel has for some time preemptively attacked neighboring countries that harbor anti-Israeli terrorists and dissidents. For example, Israeli air, ground, and naval raids into Lebanon frequently targeted PLO and Hezbollah bases. In another context, the United States justified the 2003 invasion of Iraq as a preemptive war, arguing that Saddam Hussein’s regime kept relations with Al Qa’ida and other terrorists, that the regime possessed weapons of mass destruction, and that these weapons could have been delivered to terrorists.

Chapter Perspective 13.1 presents an example of a large punitive operation launched by the United States against Libya in 1986.

**War in the Shadows, Part 1: Coercive Covert Operations**

Coercive covert operations seek to destabilize, degrade, and destroy terrorist groups. Targets include individual terrorists, terrorist networks, and support apparatuses. Although covert assets

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CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 13.1: Operation El Dorado Canyon

On April 14, 1986, the United States bombed targets in Libya using Air Force bombers based in Great Britain and Navy carrier-borne aircraft based in the Mediterranean. The attacks occurred at the height of tensions between the United States and Libya, which were precipitated by a radically activist Libyan government and its partnership with the Soviet Union.

Background

During the 1980s, Libya established strong ties with the Communist Eastern bloc (Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe). It also declared itself to be a champion of people “oppressed” by the West and Israel. Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi permitted the Libyan government to build camps to train terrorists from around the world, to stockpile weapons far in excess of Libya’s needs, to acquire large amounts of plastic explosives (including powerful Czech-made Semtex), and to directly engage in state-sponsored international terrorism.

In March 1986, the U.S. Mediterranean fleet sailed into a disputed exclusionary zone off the coast of Libya. Qaddafi responded to the American show of force by declaring that a “line of death” had been drawn in the disputed waters—which the U.S. Sixth Fleet then purposefully crossed. Two terrorist bombings blamed on Libya subsequently occurred in Europe. The first bomb killed four Americans aboard a TWA airliner in Greece, and the second bomb killed one U.S. service officer at La Belle Discothèque in West Berlin. The American punitive raids—dubbed Operation El Dorado Canyon—were ostensibly in retaliation for these bombings, but they probably would have occurred in any event.

Aftermath

More than 100 Libyans were killed in Benghazi and Tripoli, including Qaddafi’s young adopted daughter. American policy makers considered the attacks to be successful because Libya thereafter temporarily scaled back its international adventurism, and Qaddafi reduced his inflammatory rhetoric. Libya then entered a second, shorter period of international activism and then pulled back—this time for an extended period of time.

It should be noted that the strike force based in Britain was forced to detour around France and the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and enter the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar, which separate Europe and Africa. This was necessary because the French and Spanish governments refused to permit the bombers to fly over their airspace.

The American air strike was unpopular in Europe. After the attack, demonstrations occurred in several countries, and many Europeans expressed outrage over the bombings. In Beirut, one American and two British hostages were murdered in retaliation for the attack on Libya.

have been developed by nations to wage “shadow wars” using special operatives, conventional forces have also been used to surreptitiously resolve terrorist crises. The following case illustrates the latter type of operation.

Case in Point: The Achille Lauro Operation

The Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro was hijacked in October 1985 by four Palestinian terrorists belonging to the Palestine Liberation Front faction of the PLO. During the hijacking, an elderly wheelchair-bound American was executed and thrown into the Mediterranean. Other Americans were terrorized aboard the ship—for example, being forced to hold a live hand grenade after the pin had been removed. The cruise ship eventually stopped in Egyptian waters, where the hostages were released and the terrorists were taken to Port Said. When the United States demanded that the terrorists be extradited, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak claimed that they had already left the country.

In fact, the terrorists were still in Egypt and had been secretly placed aboard an aircraft to fly them out of the country and to safety. Also aboard the aircraft was the Palestine Liberation Front’s leader,
Abu Abbas. U.S. and Israeli intelligence knew where the aircraft was and when it was in flight. Two U.S. warplanes intercepted the Egyptian aircraft and forced it to fly to Sicily. The final resolution of the *Achille Lauro* crisis is described later in the chapter in the section discussing legalistic responses.

Other types of coercive covert operations are more lethal, as indicated in the following examination of adopting assassination as a policy option.

**Case in Point: Assassinations**

Counterterrorist assassination is easily defined: It involves the intentional killing of terrorist leaders, cadres, and supporters. The underlying rationale for using assassinations as a counterterrorist option is uncomplicated: Because terrorism is itself a human action, the terrorism will end or diminish if the terrorists and their supporters are eliminated. The argument is that because this option is a terminal solution, those targeted for assassination will be permanently removed as threats. It is debatable whether this is an accurate assumption because there is little evidence to support the conclusion that assassinations have ever had an appreciable deterrent effect on determined terrorists; new recruits continue to enlist in movements worldwide. This is because terrorists who operate within supportive environments and who enjoy the approval of a championed group are likely to be viewed as heroes by supporters. A terrorist’s death at the hands of a sworn enemy is likely to elevate the terrorist to martyr status. Symbolic martyrdom is actively manipulated by terrorist movements to rally their followers and recruit new fighters.

Needless to say, assassination is highly controversial as a matter of policy. It is always covertly implemented—one does not broadcast when an assassination will take place. Government deniability is usually incorporated into these operations, but not always. Although most nations will readily disavow involvement in assassinations, others admit responsibility when such an admission is deemed useful. A comparison of the American and Israeli approaches is instructive.

After the Vietnam War, the United States officially declared that it would no longer use assassination as a tool of statecraft. In December 1981, President Ronald Reagan’s Executive Order 12333 expressly prohibited employees of the United States from assassinating adversaries. This prohibition, which followed President Gerald Ford’s prohibition outlined in Executive Order 11905, also forbade U.S. personnel from using anyone hired as an agent to commit assassinations. This prohibition was applied during the political and terrorist environment that existed prior to the September 11, 2001, homeland attacks. After the attacks, a counterterrorist assassination policy was adopted and carried out. For example, in November 2002 an Al Qaeda leader was assassinated by an antitank missile fired at his vehicle from a remotely controlled Predator drone aircraft in a remote area in Yemen; and in October 2011 American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki was killed by a drone strike. Such deliberate attacks greatly increased as the war on terrorism escalated. For example, in Pakistan from 2004 to mid-2011, nearly 2,000 Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and affiliates of other movements were killed by U.S. drone airstrikes. Drone strikes are discussed further in the next section.

**The Israeli Approach.** In comparison, Israel has used assassinations repeatedly in its war on terrorism, primarily targeting Palestinian nationalists. This policy has been in place for many years, and it has often been administered by the Mossad, Israel’s intelligence and covert operations agency. For example, on July 11, 1970, the Israelis attempted to assassinate two prominent members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Israeli covert operatives identified a safe house used by the PFLP in an apartment in Beirut. They rented an apartment across the street from the safe house and rigged six Katyusha rockets on a timer to fire into the PFLP apartment. Their

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11See ibid.

targets were PFLP cofounder Wadi Haddad and young Leila Khaled. Four rockets fired as planned, but Haddad and Khaled survived the attack.

In another example, a covert Israeli unit known as Wrath of God (Mivtza Za’am Ha’el) was responsible for tracking and assassinating Black September terrorists after the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre. At least 20 Palestinians were assassinated in Europe and the Middle East. The Wrath of God program went awry in 1973 when Israeli agents shot to death a North African waiter in Norway while his wife looked on; they had mistaken him for a Black September operative.

In October 1995, Israeli agents were the likely assassins of a leader of Palestine Islamic Jihad in Malta. During the Palestinian intifada, Israeli personnel targeted for assassination many terrorists, insurgents, and activist leaders. A famous case was the January 1996 assassination of Yehiya Ayyash, also known as the Engineer. An infamous case was the highly publicized September 1997 assassination attempt on a top Hamas leader in Amman, Jordan. When the attempt failed rather publicly, the Israeli government was embarrassed, Mossad was disgraced, and Israeli–Jordanian relations became severely strained. Nevertheless, the assassination campaign against intifada leaders and operatives continued. In one particularly bloody incident in July 2002, an Israeli rocket attack assassinated top Hamas leader Sheik Salah Shehadeh. The attack also killed Shehadeh’s wife and three children, as well as hitting an apartment building. A total of 14 civilians were killed in the attack.

Israel’s war against Hamas took a decidedly deadly turn in early 2004. In March 2004, Hamas founder and chief leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was assassinated by missiles fired from Israeli aircraft; this occurred about 8 days after Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyr Brigades took joint credit for two suicide bombing attacks that killed 10 Israelis. In April 2004, another senior Hamas official, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, was assassinated by missiles within hours after a Hamas suicide bomb attack. The Israeli assassination campaign against Hamas continued as a matter of acknowledged policy, so when an Israeli sniper assassinated a local Hamas commander in Gaza in July 2005, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon stated that the military would continue to act “unconstrainedly to halt Hamas rocket and mortar fire.”

In February 2008, a car bomb exploded in Damascus, Syria, killing senior Hezbollah commander Imad Mughniyah. Although Israel was widely accused of perpetrating the attack, Israel neither confirmed nor denied its responsibility for the assassination. In January 2010, Hamas operative Mahmoud al-Mabhou was assassinated in a hotel room in the Persian Gulf nation of Dubai. Mossad agents were accused of carrying out the operation, and 26 alleged suspects were identified and placed on INTERPOL’s most-wanted list. Nevertheless, the case went unsolved.

**Case in Point: The Use of Armed Drone Aircraft**

Armed, remotely controlled drone aircraft became fixtures in the United States’ arsenal during the post-9/11 era. Operated by military and Central Intelligence Agency personnel from remote locations, armed drones proved to be a deadly counterpart to other options involving targeted killings of terrorists. The deployment and use of drones was relatively modest in years immediately following the September 11, 2001, attacks but increased markedly in 2008. From 2008, armed drone aircraft were deployed extensively in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hundreds of drone airstrikes occurred and thousands of people were killed, including many terrorists. Within 3 years, the United States had launched lethal drone attacks in six countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen. In 2011, the United States began a campaign targeting the leadership of the al Shabaab Islamist militia in Somalia. The purpose of the attacks was to disrupt reportedly growing ties between al Shabaab and Al-Qa’ida, which intelligence reports indicated had been established to enhance al Shabaab’s capability to launch international attacks. Al Shabaab had previously formed links to Somali American Islamists, who travelled to Somalia for military training provided by the militia. Al-Qa’ida in the

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13The assassination of the Engineer is discussed in detail in Chapter 10.


Arabian Peninsula was also targeted, and resulted in the deaths of a number of operatives, including American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki.

In Pakistan, the United States deployed drones extensively. The number of known airstrikes in Pakistan and known Taliban or Al-Qaeda deaths, mostly by drone aircraft, escalated annually as follows:16

- 2004: 1 attack; unknown leader or operative casualties
- 2005: 1 attack; unknown leader or operative casualties
- 2006: 3 attacks; 122 leaders or operatives killed
- 2007: 5 attacks; 73 leaders or operatives killed
- 2008: 35 attacks; 286 leaders or operatives killed
- 2009: 53 attacks; 463 leaders or operatives killed
- 2010: 117 attacks; 801 leaders or operatives killed

From 2009 to 2014, approximately 2,400 people were killed, and U.S. officials reported that most were militants.17 Unfortunately, civilian casualties also occurred—at least 273 during this period18—resulting in vigorous denunciations from the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Such casualties resulted from the proximity of targeted individuals to civilian homes and neighborhoods, as well as their practice of living with their families and others in compounds and other structures. Nevertheless, drone attacks became a commonly used lethal option during operations against terrorist havens and individuals. Targeted assassinations of members of Al-Qaeda and other organizations occurred with regularity, resulting in the deaths of dozens of upper- and middle-echelon commanders.

**Surgical Use of Force: Special Operations Forces**

*Special operations forces* are defined here as highly trained military and police units that specialize in unconventional operations. These units are usually not organized in the same manner as conventional forces because their missions require them to operate quickly and covertly in very hostile environments. Operations are frequently conducted by small teams of operatives, although fairly large units can be deployed if required by circumstances. Depending on their mission, special operations forces are trained for long-range reconnaissance, surveillance, surgical punitive raids, hostage rescues, abductions, and liaisons with allied counterterrorist forces. Their training and organizational configurations are ideally suited to counterterrorist operations.

Special operations forces today have become fully integrated into the operational commands of national armed forces worldwide. Their value in counterterrorist operations has been proven many times in the postwar era. Most nations have included specially trained units in their domestic security and national defense commands. Many of these operatives belong to the armed forces, but not all special operations forces are military units—many are elite police forces trained to conduct paramilitary operations. Examples of these units are summarized later in the chapter.

**Special Operations Forces: Military Units**

In the modern era, special operations forces have become fully integrated into the operational commands of national armed forces worldwide. Their value in counterterrorist operations has been

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18 Ibid.
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proven many times in the postwar era. The following cases in point illustrate the mission and configuration of special operations forces commands.

United Kingdom. The Special Air Service (SAS) is a secretive organization in the British army that has been used repeatedly in counterterrorist operations. Organized at a regimental level but operating in very small teams, the SAS is similar to the French 1st Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment and the American Delta Force. The SAS has been deployed repeatedly to assignments in Northern Ireland and abroad, as well as to resolve domestic terrorist crises, such as rescuing hostages in May 1980 inside the Iranian embassy in London. The Special Boat Service (SBS) is a special unit under the command of the Royal Navy. It specializes in operations against seaborne targets and along coastlines and harbors. The SBS is similar to the French Navy's Special Assault Units and the American SEALs. The Royal Marine Commandos are rapid-reaction troops that deploy in larger numbers than the SAS and SBS. They are organized around units called commandos, which are roughly equivalent to a conventional battalion. Royal Marines were deployed to Afghanistan in the hunt for Al-Qa’ida cadres and Taliban troops.

France. The 1st Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment (1RPIMa) is similar to the British SAS and American Delta Force. Within the 1RPIMa, small RAPAS (intelligence and special operations) squads are trained to operate in desert, urban, and tropical environments. Along with the special police unit GIGN (discussed later in the chapter), they form the core of French counterterrorist special operations forces. 1RPIMa has been deployed to crises around the world, particularly in Africa. Five French Navy Special Assault Units have been trained for operations against seaborne targets, coastlines, and harbors. Their mission is similar to that of the British SBS and American SEALs. When large elite combat forces must be deployed, the French use their all-volunteer 11th Parachute Division (Paras) and the commando or parachute units of the famous French Foreign Legion.19

Israel. The Sayaret are reconnaissance units that were organized early in the history of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Several Sayaret exist within the IDF, the most noted of which is Sayaret Matkal, a highly secretive formation that is attached to the IDF general headquarters. Operating in small units, it has skillfully (and often ruthlessly) engaged in counterterrorist operations. For example, in April 1973, a Sayaret Matkal unit killed several top PLO leaders in Beirut in reprisal for the Munich Olympics massacre. The Parachute Sayaret has been deployed in small and large units, often using high mobility to penetrate deep into hostile territory. They participated in the Entebbe operation in Uganda and were used extensively in Lebanon against Hezbollah. The IDF has also deployed undercover agents against suspected terrorist cells. Duvdevan is a deep-cover unit that conducts covert special operations in urban areas against suspected militants. Members are noted for dressing as Arabs during these operations, and among other specialized operations they are known for rendering (kidnapping) specific individuals. When large elite combat forces must be deployed, the Golani Brigade and its Sayaret are frequently used. The Golani Brigade has been used extensively against Hezbollah in South Lebanon and against Hamas in Gaza.

United States. U.S. Special Operations Forces are organized under the U.S. Special Operations Command. The Delta Force (1st Special Forces Operational Detachment—Delta) is a secretive unit that operates in small teams and operates covertly outside of the United States. This unit is similar to the British SAS and the French 1st Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment. Its missions probably include abductions, reconnaissance, and punitive operations. Green Berets (Special Forces Groups) usually operate in units called A Teams. These teams comprise specialists whose skills include languages, intelligence, medicine, and demolitions. The traditional mission of the A Team is force multiplication; that is, members are inserted into regions to provide military training to local personnel, thus multiplying their operational strength. They also participate in reconnaissance and punitive raids. U.S. Navy Sea, Air, Land Forces (SEALs) are similar to the British SBS and the French Navy’s Special Assault Units. Their primary mission is to conduct seaborne, riverine, and harbor operations, though they have also been used extensively on land. When large elite combat units must be deployed, the United States relies on the army’s 75th Ranger Regiment and units from the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marines have formed their own elite units, which include force reconnaissance and long-range reconnaissance units (referred to as Recon). These units are organized into teams, platoons, companies, and battalions.

Special Operations Forces: Police Units

Many nations have special units within their police forces that participate in counterterrorist operations. In several examples, these units have been used in semimilitary roles.

France. The GIGN (Groupe d’Intervention Gendarmerie Nationale) is recruited from the French gendarmerie, the military police. GIGN is a counterterrorist unit with international operational duties. In an operation that foiled what was arguably a precursor to the September 11 attacks, the GIGN rescued 173 hostages from Air France Flight 8969 in December 1994. Four Algerian terrorists had landed the aircraft in Marseilles, intending to fly to Paris to crash or blow up the plane over the city. GIGN assaulted the plane in a successful and classic operation.

Germany. GSG-9 (Grenzschutzgruppe 9) was organized after the disastrous failed attempt to rescue Israeli hostages taken by Black September at the 1972 Munich Olympics. It is a paramilitary unit that has been used domestically and internationally as a counterterrorist and hostage rescue unit. GSG-9 first won international attention in 1977 when the group freed hostages held by Palestinian terrorists in Mogadishu, Somalia. The Mogadishu rescue was heralded as a flawless operation.

Israel. The Police Border Guards are an elite force that is frequently deployed as a counterterrorist force. Known as the Green Police, it operates in two subgroups. YAMAS is a covert group that has been used extensively during the Palestinian intifada. It has been used to neutralize terrorist cells in conjunction with covert IDF operatives. YAMAM was specifically created to engage in counterterrorist and hostage rescue operations.

Spain. In 1979, the Spanish National Police organized a counterterrorist and hostage rescue force called GEO (Grupo Especial de Operaciones). Its training has allowed it to be used in both law enforcement and counterterrorist operations. Most of the latter—and a significant proportion of its operations—have been directed against the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorist movement.

United States. At the national level, the United States has organized several units that have counterterrorist capabilities, all paramilitary groups that operate under the administrative supervision of federal agencies and perform traditional law enforcement work. These units are prepared to perform missions similar to Germany’s GSG-9, Spain’s GEO, and France’s GIGN. Perhaps the best known is the FBI’s Hostage Rescue Team (HRT). Not as well known, but very important, is the Department of Energy’s Emergency Search Team. Paramilitary capabilities have also been incorporated into the Treasury Department’s Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Secret
Service. At the local level, American police forces also deploy units that have counterterrorist capabilities. These units are known by many names, but the most commonly known designation is Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT).

Both military and police special units have been deployed to resolve hostage crises. Table 13.2 summarizes the activity profile of counterterrorist options that sanction the use of force.

Table 13.2 Counterterrorist Options: The Use of Force

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorist Option</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
<th>Typical Resources Used</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Practical Objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suppression campaigns</strong></td>
<td>Symbolic strength</td>
<td>Destruction of the terrorists</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Punitive measures</td>
<td>Disruption of the terrorists</td>
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<td>Preemption</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coercive covert operations</strong></td>
<td>Symbolic strength</td>
<td>Disruption of the terrorists</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Destabilization</td>
<td>Deterrent effect on potential terrorists</td>
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<td>Preemption</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Special operations forces</strong></td>
<td>Coercive covert operations</td>
<td>Disruption of the terrorists</td>
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<td>Destabilization</td>
<td>Deterrent effect on potential terrorists</td>
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CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 13.2: Hostage Rescues

When hostage rescue operations succeed, they seem to be almost miraculous victories against terrorism. There have been a number of hostage rescue operations in which well-trained elite units have dramatically resolved terrorist crises. However, there have also been cases when elite units have failed because of poor planning or overly complicated scenarios. The fact is that when they fail, the consequences have been disastrous.

The following cases illustrate the inherently risky nature of hostage rescue operations.

Successful Operations

The Betancourt Rescue (“Operation Jaque”). In July 2008, Colombian special forces rescued 15 hostages held by FARC rebels. Prominent among the hostages, which included three Americans, was former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt. Betancourt, who held dual French-Colombian citizenship, had been taken hostage in 2002 while campaigning in rebel-held territory in Colombia’s interior region. The three Americans, who were contractors, were captured in 2003 when their antinarcotics
surveillance plane went down. The operation, which was accomplished with exceptional stealth and deception, resulted in no casualties. Colombian military intelligence had previously identified the location of the hostages, infiltrated a FARC unit that controlled a group of hostages, and designed an intricate rescue plan. The leader of the FARC unit *(nom de guerre “Cesar”)* had been told that the hostages were to be flown to a meeting with another FARC leader aboard a helicopter operated by a human rights organization. The helicopter arrived, the crew assisted in binding over the prisoners, and the aircraft departed. In fact, the story was a ruse. After the hostages and FARC guards entered the helicopter, the guards were overcome and the group was flown to freedom.

**Entebbe.** In June 1977, an Air France Airbus was hijacked in Athens while en route from Tel Aviv to Paris. Seven terrorists—two West Germans and five PFLP members—forced the plane to fly to Entebbe in Uganda. There were 248 passengers, but 142 were released. The remaining 106 passengers were Israelis and Jews, who were kept as hostages. Israeli troops, doctors, and nurses flew 2,620 miles to Entebbe in Uganda. There were 248 passengers, but 142 were released. The remaining 106 passengers were Israelis and Jews, who were kept as hostages. Israeli troops, doctors, and nurses flew 2,620 miles to Entebbe, attacked the airport, killed at least seven of the terrorists and 20 Ugandan soldiers, and rescued the hostages. Three hostages and one Israeli commando died. One British-Israeli woman who had become ill was moved to a Ugandan hospital, where she was murdered by Ugandan personnel after the rescue.

**Mogadishu.** In October 1977, a Lufthansa Boeing 737 was hijacked in midair while en route from Mallorca, Spain, to Frankfurt. The hijackers took the aircraft on an odyssey to Rome, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and East Africa. The four Palestinian terrorists demanded a ransom and the release of imprisoned Palestinian and West German terrorists. The plane eventually landed in Mogadishu, Somalia. Throughout its odyssey, the aircraft had been shadowed by a plane bearing elite West German GSG-9 police commandos. In Mogadishu, the unit landed, attacked the hijacked aircraft, killed three of the terrorists, and rescued the hostages. None of the hostages or rescuers was killed, and only one person was injured. As a postscript, several imprisoned West German terrorists committed suicide when they learned of the rescue.

**Unsuccessful Operations**

**Operation Eagle Claw.** During the consolidation of the Iranian Revolution in November 1979, Iranian radicals seized the American embassy in Tehran. Some hostages were soon released, but more than 50 were held in captivity. In April 1980, the United States launched a rescue attempt that was led by the Delta Force but that included units from all branches of the military. The plan was to establish a base in the Iranian desert, fly commando teams into Tehran, assault the embassy compound, ferry the hostages to a soccer field, and then fly everyone to safety. Gunships and other aircraft would provide air cover during the operation. The operation did not progress beyond its first phase. As helicopters approached the desert site—dubbed *Desert One*—they flew into a massive dust storm. Because they were under orders not to exceed 200 feet, they tried to fly through the storm; two helicopters were forced out of the operation, as was a third helicopter that later malfunctioned. On the ground, a helicopter drove into one of the airplanes, and both exploded. Eight soldiers were killed, and the mission was ordered to be cancelled.

**The Munich Olympics.** In September 1972, members of the Black September terrorist organization captured nine Israeli athletes and killed two others at the Olympic Village during the Munich Olympics. They demanded the release of Palestinian and Red Army Faction prisoners, as well as one Japanese Red Army member. West German officials permitted the terrorists to transport their hostages to an airport, using the ruse that they would be flown out of the country. In reality, the plan called for five Bavarian police snipers to shoot the terrorists when they were in the open. At the airport, five terrorists, one police officer, and all of the hostages were killed in a firefight with the Bavarian police. Three terrorists were captured and imprisoned in West Germany, but they were later released and flown to Libya. Israel’s Wrath of God program later hunted down and assassinated two of the terrorists.

(Continued)
Operations Other Than War: Repressive Options

Nonmilitary and nonparamilitary repressive responses can be effective in the suppression of terrorist crises and terrorist environments. The purpose of these responses is to disrupt and deter terrorist behavior. They are unlikely to bring a long-term end to terrorism, but they can reduce the scale of violence by destabilizing terrorist groups and forcing them to be “on the run.”

War in the Shadows, Part 2: Nonviolent Covert Operations

Nonviolent covert operations encompass a number of options, and they are often quite creative. They are inherently secretive, and their value lies in manipulating terrorist behavior and surreptitiously taking terrorist groups by surprise. For example, covert operations can create internal distrust, fear, infighting, and other types of discord. The outcome might also be a reduction in operational focus, momentum, and effectiveness. Typical covert operations include the following options.

Infiltration

The successful infiltration of operatives into extremist groups can result in the disruption of terrorist operations. Ideally, infiltration will increase the quality of intelligence predictions as well as the possible betrayal of cadres to counterterrorist forces. However, in the era of the New Terrorism, infiltration of terrorist organizations is more difficult because of their cell-based organizational profiles. There is no hierarchy to penetrate, cells are close-knit, they are usually autonomous, and they have few links beyond their immediate operational group.

Disinformation

The manipulation of information can be a powerful counterterrorist tool. Disinformation uses information to disrupt terrorist organizations. It is used to selectively create and deliver data that are calculated to affect terrorist behavior.
to create disorder within the terrorist group or its support apparatus. For example, disinformation can be designed to create dissension and distrust or to otherwise manipulate the group’s behavior. It can also be used to spread damaging propaganda about terrorist organizations and cadres.

**The Electronic Battlefield: Cyberwar**

In the digital age, information is recorded and transferred in forms that can be intercepted, altered, and destroyed. Bank accounts, personal records, and other data are no longer stored on paper but instead in digital databases. Terrorist movements that maintain or send electronic financial and personal information run the risk of having that information intercepted and compromised. Thus, new technologies have become imaginative counterterrorist weapons. They have also become a new mode of warfare, with a hidden and potentially potent array of cyber weaponry and defense systems.

In June 2011, President Barack Obama signed executive orders approving guidelines for military applications of computer-initiated actions against adversaries. The guidelines governed a range of options, including espionage and aggressive cyberattacks. The overall objective of the executive orders was to embed cyber technology into American warfighting capabilities—in essence, to link cyberwarfare to traditional modes of warfare. Examples of using weaponized cyber technologies include uploading destructive computer viruses, hacking secure sites, and carrying out massive attacks to neutralize communications systems, defense networks, and power grids. A natural corollary to the wielding of weaponized cyber technology is the necessity for creating new cyber defenses to protect friendly computers, networks, and grids against attacks from terrorists or hostile nations.

**Modern Surveillance Technologies.** Electronic surveillance has moved far beyond the days when law enforcement officers literally tapped the telephone wires of criminal suspects. In the modern era, digital technologies, fiber optics, and satellite communications have moved state security agencies into the realm of technology-based surveillance. Surveillance can be conducted quite remotely, literally from facilities on other continents.

Some technologies are visible and taken for granted by residents of major cities. For example, remote cameras have become common features on London streets and Los Angeles intersections. Other technologies are neither visible nor well known. For example, biometric technology allows digital photographs of faces to be matched against those of wanted suspects; such technology is especially useful for antiterrorist screens at ports of entry, such as airports and border crossings. Interestingly, biometrics was used at American football’s 2001 Super Bowl championship, when cameras scanned the faces of fans as they entered the stadium and matched their digital images against those of criminal fugitives and terrorists. The game became derisively known as the “Snooperbowl.”

Surveillance technologies are central components of counterterrorist systems. It is technologically feasible to access private electronic transactions, including telephone records and conversations, computer transactions and communications (such as e-mail), social networking media, and credit card records. Digital fingerprinting and facial imaging permit security agencies to access records virtually instantaneously. The FBI has used biometric technologies to collect and analyze unique human traits. These technologies permit the storage of data such as iris scans, facial recognition, fingerprints, hand geometry, speech verification, and vascular recognition.

Because such technologies are inherently intrusive, they have been questioned by political leaders and civil libertarian organizations. The application of these and other technologies in efforts such as the U.S. National Security Agency’s PRISM and XKeyscore data-mining operations (discussed further in Chapter 14) have been criticized by civil libertarians as overly broad and intrusive. Nevertheless, surveillance technologies are considered to be invaluable counterterrorist instruments.

**Case in Point: Echelon.** The National Security Agency manages a satellite surveillance network called Echelon. The NSA’s network is apparently managed in cooperation with its counterparts in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and New Zealand. Its purpose is to monitor voice and data communications. Echelon is a kind of global “wiretap” that filters communications using antennae, satellites, and other
technologies. Internet transfers, telephone conversations, and data transmissions are among the types of communications that can reportedly be intercepted. It is not publicly known how much communications traffic can be intercepted or how it is done, but the network is apparently very capable. How the traffic is tapped is unknown, but it is likely done with technologies that can pinpoint keywords and interesting websites. It can also be done the old-fashioned way: In 1982, an American listening device was reportedly found on a deep-sea communications cable; it was never discovered whether this was an Echelon-style operation.

Chapter Perspective 13.3 explores the utility of monitoring private social networking media by homeland security and emergency response authorities.

**CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 13.3: The Utility of Monitoring Social Networking Media**

Modern social networking media technologies allow users to upload and post information electronically on provider websites. Popular providers include Twitter, Facebook, and dating enterprises, and users typically employ provider websites as social networking resources. Users upload information about themselves that may be accessed by other users and the public. Information typically includes photographs, videos, statements of interest, and personal information.

Social networking media have proven to be very useful systems for disseminating information when natural or intentional disasters occur. Real-time information about the effect of hurricanes, tornadoes, and other natural events has assisted the media and emergency responders in assessing the magnitude and geographic location of critical incidents. Similarly, social media have alerted the public to unfolding terrorist events, such as what occurred in the aftermath of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing.

Unfortunately, criminals also utilize social media technologies. For example, confidence artists and sexual predators of children have been known to target unknowing potential victims.

Social media provide intelligence and law enforcement officials with resources to monitor individuals and investigate crimes. Law enforcement agencies have found social media information to be a useful forensic tool for pursuing active investigations, and for framing “sting” operations to take criminals into custody. For example, undercover law enforcement officers posing as children online have successfully captured adult predators. Similarly, intelligence analysts are able to examine the use of Web-based social media by extremist individuals and organizations. This can be useful for projecting the intentions of violent extremists. For example, increased “chatter” could suggest an increased likelihood of actual activity by extremists, especially when combined with increased activity on social networking media websites.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How should the examination of social media be regulated?
2. Within which scenarios should homeland security authorities be given broad authority to examine social networking media?
3. What kinds of civil liberties issues arise when social networking media are monitored by homeland security authorities?

**Knowing the Enemy: Intelligence**

Intelligence agencies involve themselves with the collection and analysis of information. The underlying purpose of intelligence is to construct an accurate activity profile of terrorists. Data are collected from overt and covert sources and evaluated by expert intelligence analysts. This process—intelligence collection and analysis—is at the heart of counterterrorist intelligence. The outcome of high-quality intelligence collection and analysis can range from the construction of profiles
of terrorist organizations to tracking the movements of terrorists. An optimal outcome of counterterrorist intelligence is the ability to anticipate the behavior of terrorists and thereby to predict terrorist incidents. However, exact prediction is relatively rare, and most intelligence on terrorist threats is generalized rather than specific. For example, intelligence agencies have had success in uncovering threats in specific cities by specific groups but less success in predicting the exact time and place of possible attacks.

**SIGINT—Signal Intelligence**

Intelligence collection and analysis in the modern era require the use of sophisticated technological resources. These technological resources are used primarily for the interception of electronic signals—known as SIGINT. Signal intelligence is used for a variety of purposes, such as interceptions of financial data, monitoring communications such as cell phone conversations, and reading e-mail messages. The use of satellite imagery is also commonly used by intelligence agencies, and sophisticated computers specialize in code breaking. However, the practicality of these technologies as counterterrorist options is limited in the era of the New Terrorism. Because of the cellular organizational structure of terrorist groups and their insular interactions (i.e., based on personal relationships), technology cannot be an exclusive counterterrorist resource. Human intelligence is also a critical component.

**HUMINT—Human Intelligence**

The collection of human intelligence, also referred to as HUMINT, is often a cooperative venture with friendly intelligence agencies and law enforcement officials. This sharing of information is a critical component of counterterrorist intelligence gathering. Circumstances may also require the covert manipulation of individuals affiliated with terrorist organizations or their support groups, with the objective of convincing them to become intelligence agents. The manipulation process can include making appeals to potential spies' sense of justice or patriotism, paying them with money and other valuables, or offering them something that they would otherwise be unable to obtain (such as asylum for their family in a Western country). One significant problem with finding resources for human intelligence is that most terrorist cells are made up of individuals who know one another very well. Newcomers are not openly welcomed, and those who may be potential members are usually expected to commit an act of terrorism or other crime to prove their commitment to the cause. In other words, intelligence agencies must be willing to use terrorists to catch terrorists. This has been a very difficult task, and groups such as Al-Qa'ida have proven very difficult to penetrate with human assets.20

**Intelligence Agencies**

In many democracies, intelligence collection is traditionally divided between agencies that are separately responsible for domestic and international intelligence collection. This separation is often mandated by law. For example, the following agencies roughly parallel one another's missions:

- In the United States, the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** performs domestic intelligence collection, and the **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** operates internationally. The United States' extensive intelligence community is discussed in detail in Chapter 14.
- In Great Britain, **MI-5** is responsible for domestic intelligence, and **MI-6** is responsible for international collection.
- In Germany, the **Bureau for the Protection of the Constitution** shares a mission similar to MI-5 and the FBI, and the **Military Intelligence Service** roughly parallels MI-6 and the CIA.

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Hardening the Target: Enhanced Security

Target “hardening” is an antiterrorist measure that makes potential targets more difficult to attack. This is a key component of antiterrorism, which attempts to deter or prevent terrorist attacks. Enhanced security is also intended to deter would-be terrorists from selecting hardened facilities as targets. These measures are not long-term solutions for ending terrorist environments, but they serve to provide short-term protection for specific sites. Target hardening includes increased airport security, the visible deployment of security personnel, and the erection of crash barriers at entrances to parking garages beneath important buildings. In the United States, the digital screening of fingerprints and other physical features is one technological enhancement at ports of entry.21

Typical examples of target hardening include the following:

- Vehicular traffic was permanently blocked on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House because of the threat from high-yield vehicular bombs in the aftermath of the 1993 World Trade Center and 1995 Oklahoma City bombings. The area became a pedestrian mall.
- During the 1990s, Great Britain began to make widespread use of closed-circuit surveillance cameras in its urban areas. The police maintain these cameras on city streets, at intersections, and on highways. The purpose of this controversial policy is to monitor suspicious activities, such as abandoned packages or vehicles.

Modern infrastructure security and target hardening recommendations typically include the following procedures:

- Design buildings with an underlying goal of increasing security. For example, dense building clusters allow planners to concentrate and simplify security options. Dispersed building clusters spread out and complicate security options.
- Install recommended “mitigation features” in new building designs to reduce the effects of explosions. In existing buildings, the installation of new mitigation features is recommended to reduce explosive effects.
- Create distance between an infrastructure target and a possible blast. This refers to creating “standoff” distance between a target and a terrorist threat. For example, place buildings back and away from where traffic passes, and at a distance from where terrorists may launch an assault.
- Install building designs in anticipation of terrorist attacks that are also effective against non–domestic security incidents. For example, design ventilation systems that expel intentional and accidental releases of chemical, biological, and radiological hazards. Also, install windows that resist flying debris from explosions as well as from natural events such as hurricanes.
- Design road access to buildings and parking facilities with the purpose of minimizing velocity and “calming” traffic. This can be accomplished using uncomplicated measures such as speed bumps, winding roads, and barriers.

These and other options harden structural targets against terrorist attacks. They cannot completely prevent attacks, but they can deter and minimize possible attacks.

Two examples of target hardening on a grand scale involved the building of extensive security walls around entire regions:

Morocco’s Desert Wall

The region now known as Western Sahara in northwest Africa was called Spanish Sahara until 1975, when Spain agreed to withdraw from this last imperial outpost in Africa. After Spain’s withdrawal

in 1976, the territory was divided between Mauritania and Morocco. Saharan nationalists, called Polisario, fought a guerrilla war against the division, eventually forcing Mauritania to withdraw its claim. Morocco then occupied the entire Western Sahara, and Polisario began a protracted guerrilla war against the Moroccans' claim. To defend its occupied territory, Morocco began building a long fortified sand and earthen wall in 1981. The wall stretched for more than 1,200 miles, encircled most of the Western Sahara, and included strong points and electronic sensors. Polisario was unable to effectively breach the wall. The parties began a long period of negotiations after a 1991 cease-fire agreement.

**Israel’s Walls on the Border**

During the initial stages of its conflict with the PLO, Israel built a network of fences and surveillance posts along its border with Jordan to prevent Palestinian fighters from infiltrating into Israel. Later, during the *intifada*, Israel adapted this concept to its border with the West Bank after scores of bombings and other attacks killed hundreds of Israelis. A long fence was constructed to seal off the West Bank, which had become the main infiltration route for suicide bombers. The Police Border Guards had primary operational jurisdiction. Both the Jordanian and West Bank fences used mounds of razor wire, electronic sensors, patrol roads, and high electronic fences. There were also strips of soft sand to aid in the detection of footprints. The idea of “walling off” the West Bank became a literal goal when the Israelis began construction of a 410-mile wall as a barrier between the West Bank and Israel proper. In March 2005, Israeli officials finalized plans for the eventual route of the wall, which winds along Israel’s border with the West Bank.22

**Long-Term Coercion: Economic Sanctions**

Although counterterrorist policy is largely aimed at terrorist organizations, the problem of terrorist states must also be addressed. It is agreed that counterterrorism policy must take into account states that “support, facilitate, or practice terrorism, or whose help is needed in combating it.”23 Economic sanctions are a precedent counterterrorist method directed against governments. Economic sanctions are defined as trade restrictions and controls that are imposed to pressure sanctioned governments to moderate their behavior. Used as a counterterrorist option, sanctions serve several purposes:

- Sanctions symbolically demonstrate strong condemnation of the behavior of the sanctioned regime.
- Sanctions are an exercise of the power of the sanctioning body.
- Sanctions potentially bring to bear considerable pressure on the sanctioned regime.

Unlike many other counterterrorist options, sanctions inherently require sanctioning nations to commit to a long time line to ensure success. The reason for this commitment is easily understood: Economic pressure is never felt immediately by nations, unless they are already in dire economic condition. Trade restrictions require time to be felt in a domestic market, particularly if the nation produces a commodity that is desired on the international market. For example, economic sanctions were imposed against Iraq during the 1990s, but Iraq is a major producer of oil, and this caused trade “leaks” to occur.

**Conditions for Success of Economic Sanctions**

For economic sanctions to be effective, they must be imposed in an environment of long-term cooperation. Examples of these conditions for success include the following requirements:

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International cooperation must remain firm.
Trade leaks in the economic sanctions must be controlled.
The sanctioned regime must be made to suffer.

When evaluating these conditions, one can readily ascertain several fundamental problems inherent in using economic sanctions as a counterterrorist option. These problems include the following:

- **Sanctioned regimes rarely suffer—it is their people who suffer.** Because these regimes are often violently authoritarian, there is no mechanism for the people to petition for changes in policy. Sanctions against Iraq did not appreciably diminish the government’s authority or its ability to suppress dissension.

- **Sanctioning coalitions do not always remain firm.** In fact, economic sanctions sometimes become nothing more than symbolic condemnation because the sanctioning nation or nations are alone in their demonstrations of disapproval. U.S. sanctions against Cuba were not strongly coalitional, so trade and tourism kept the Cuban economy from completely destabilizing.

- **Leaks in trade embargoes are difficult to control, and sanctioning policies sometimes become quite porous.** The attempted cultural and trade embargoes against South Africa during the apartheid (racial separation) era failed because there was never broad support from the world community or private industry.

An example of a successful policy of economic sanctions is found in the case of Libya. Economic sanctions imposed on Libya were led by Great Britain and the United States in the aftermath of Libyan sponsorship of international terrorism during the 1980s, including the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. When Libya refused to extradite two men suspected of having planned the Lockerbie bombing, the United Nations Security Council imposed economic sanctions. In March 1982, the United States prohibited importation of Libyan oil and controlled U.S. exports to Libya; these sanctions were expanded in January 1986 and were gradually lifted when Libya renounced terrorism and other interventions. In May 2002, Muammar el-Qaddafi offered to pay $10 million in compensation for each victim of the bombing, provided that all economic sanctions were lifted. By 2004, most United Nations and U.S. sanctions were lifted after Libya dismantled its weapons of mass destruction program and opened itself to international inspections. Unfortunately, Qaddafi again became an international pariah when he ordered Libyan security forces and mercenaries to violently quash a rebellion inspired by the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. In this case, the international community responded with diplomatic pressure and NATO military intervention, which directly degraded the fighting capability of pro-Qaddafi forces.

Table 13.3 summarizes the conditions for success, as well as problems that commonly arise, when attempting to impose economic sanctions. Table 13.4 summarizes the activity profile of repressive counterterrorist options other than war.

\[\text{Operations Other Than War: Conciliatory Options}\]

Conciliatory responses are soft-line approaches for ending terrorist environments. They apply policies designed to resolve underlying problems that cause people to resort to political violence. Diplomatic options such as negotiations and social reform are typical policy options and can sometimes be very effective. There are also concessionary options, but these are more problematic.

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### Table 13.3 Economic Sanctions: Conditions for Success and Problems

Economic sanctions can theoretically pressure state sponsors of terrorism to moderate their behavior. However, successful sanctions require certain conditions to be in place and to remain firm during the sanctioning process. The following table summarizes several conditions, problems, and case studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions for Success</th>
<th>Common Problems</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bring pressure to bear on sanctioned regime.</td>
<td>Economic pressure is passed on to a politically powerless population.</td>
<td>Sanctions against Iraq beginning in the early 1990s; regime remained strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain strong international cooperation.</td>
<td>International cooperation can weaken or dissolve.</td>
<td>U.S. sanctions against Cuba; perceived by world community to be a relic of the Cold War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control leaks in the sanctioning policy.</td>
<td>When leaks occur, they cannot be controlled.</td>
<td>Uncoordinated sanctions movement against South Africa during apartheid era; failed to affect South African policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 13.4 Operations Other Than War: Repressive Options

The purpose of repressive responses other than war is to degrade the operational capabilities of terrorists. The following table summarizes basic elements of repressive options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorist Option</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonviolent covert operations</strong></td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intelligence</strong></td>
<td>Prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enhanced security</strong></td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic sanctions</strong></td>
<td>Deterrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destabilization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part IV
Securing the Homeland

Reasoned Dialogue: Diplomatic Options

Diplomatic options refer to the use of “channels of communication” to secure a counterterrorist objective. These channels range in degree from direct talks with dissidents to formal diplomatic overtures with nations that can influence the behavior of terrorist groups. The characteristics of these overtures are case specific, so the style of interaction and communication between the parties is unique to each example. Peace processes and negotiations are typical diplomatic options used to establish channels of communication.

Peace Processes

In regions with ongoing communal violence, long-term diplomatic intervention has sought to construct mutually acceptable terms for a cease-fire. Peace processes often involve long, arduous, and frustrating proceedings. Contending parties are always suspicious of one another, and they do not always represent all of the factions within their camps. For example, the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (governing body) during the 1990s was condemned by hard-liners on both sides. Hamas tried repeatedly to violently derail the process. The same was true of the Northern Ireland peace process of the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the Real Irish Republican Army and Continuity Irish Republican Army factions rejected the peace process.

A comparison of the cases of the Israeli–Palestinian and Northern Ireland peace processes is instructive.

Israeli–Palestinian Peace Process. The Israeli–Palestinian peace process began to fall apart in 2000, and it completely collapsed during the escalating violence of 2001 and 2002. The cycle of suicide bombings and Israeli reprisals during subsequent years led to hundreds of deaths and made the peace process an irrelevant consideration for most people on both sides. As civilians on both sides bore the brunt of the violence, distrust and hatred became generalized in both communities. Nevertheless, a February 2005 cease-fire agreement was reached between Israeli and Palestinian leaders at a summit conference in Egypt. However, the cease-fire proved to be difficult to maintain when Hamas fired repeated rounds of rockets and mortar shells in Gaza. The attacks illustrated the fact that hard-line factions have been quite successful in exploiting and exacerbating tensions between the two communities.

Northern Ireland Peace Process. In contrast to the Middle East, the peace process in Northern Ireland enjoyed a significant turning point when the so-called Good Friday Agreement of April 10, 1998 (also known as the Belfast Agreement), was overwhelmingly approved by voters in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland in May 1998. It signaled the mutual acceptance of a Northern Ireland assembly and the disarmament, or decommissioning, of all paramilitaries. Despite the fact that groups emerged that tried to derail the peace process—the Real Irish Republican Army killed 29 and injured scores in the August 1998 Omagh bombing—the Good Friday Agreement began a long-term process of building a nonviolent political framework in the troubled North. In July 2002, the Irish Republican Army surprised all parties in the peace process by issuing a formal apology for all of the people it killed during “the Troubles.”24 Although the IRA and paramilitaries failed to disarm by the May 2000 deadline, the scale of violence markedly decreased. Nevertheless, in May 2005, the Independent Monitoring

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Commission—a watchdog group established by the British and Irish governments—reported that the Irish Republican Army and Protestant paramilitaries continued to maintain weapons caches and recruit members. These caches, which contained tons of weapons, became a major hindrance to the peace process. The peace process did not collapse, however, because the IRA maintained as its official position a shift from violence to political struggle. In July 2005, the leadership of the IRA announced an end to armed struggle and ordered its paramilitary units to cease engaging in political violence. For the first time in 3 decades and after more than 3,000 deaths, the Troubles were officially declared ended.

**Negotiations**

Conventional wisdom in the United States and Israel holds that one should never negotiate with terrorists, never consider their grievances as long as they engage in violence, and never concede to any of their demands. The rationale for this hard-line approach is that perceived concessionary behavior on the part of a targeted interest will simply encourage terrorists to commit further acts of violence. Nevertheless, history has shown that case-specific negotiations can resolve immediate crises. Not all negotiations end in complete success for either side, but they sometimes do provide a measure of closure to terrorist crises. These crises include hostage situations and manhunts for fugitive terrorists.

The following familiar cases are examples of negotiations between states, terrorists, and third parties that successfully secured the release of hostages:

- **The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) hostage crisis of December 1975 in Vienna, Austria,** was resolved when the terrorists were permitted to fly to Algiers, Algeria, with a few hostages in tow. The hostages were released when a $5 million ransom was paid for Palestinian causes, and the terrorists were permitted to escape.
- **The odyssey of TWA Flight 847 in June 1985 ended with the release of the remaining hostages after negotiations were conducted through a series of intermediaries.** The Lebanese Shi'a hijackers used the media and the Lebanese Shi'a Amal militia as intermediaries to broadcast their demands. The hostages were freed after the United States negotiated with Israel for the release of more than 700 Shi'a prisoners.

The following cases are examples of negotiations (and bribery) between states that successfully secured the capture of terrorist suspects:

- **Ilich Ramírez Sánchez ("Carlos the Jackal")** was “purchased” by the French government from the government of Sudan in August 1994. When the French learned that the Sudanese had given Sánchez refuge, they secretly negotiated a bounty for permission to capture him, which they did from a Khartoum hospital room. Sánchez was eventually sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering two French gendarmes.
- **Johannes Weinrich,** a former West German terrorist, was also purchased—this time by the German government from the government of Yemen. Weinrich was sent to Germany in June 1995 to stand trial for the 1983 bombing of a French cultural center in Berlin, in which 1 person was killed and 23 others were wounded. Weinrich, who had been a very close associate of Sánchez, was convicted in January 2000 and sentenced to life imprisonment. The bounty paid for his capture was presumed to be $1 million.
- **Abdel Basset al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhima,** alleged members of Libya's state security agency, were suspected by Great Britain and the United States of being responsible for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. After years of negotiations and United Nations sanctions, an agreement was signed in 1998 between Libya, the United States, and Great Britain to try

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Responding to Grievances: Social Reform

Under the assumption that the causes of terrorism lie in political conflict between contending ideologies, ethnonational groups, and religions, it is logical to conclude that solutions to terrorism lie in resolving these political conflicts. A reduction in sources of tensions that lead to intergroup violence would seem to be a long-term solution to political violence. Thus, social reforms attempt to undercut the precipitating causes of national and regional conflicts. Reforms can include the improvement of economic conditions, increased political rights, government recognition of ethnonationalist sentiment, and public recognition of the validity of grievances.

It should be noted that social reforms are rarely the only stratagem used by states to end terrorist campaigns. They are usually used in conjunction with other counterterrorist responses, including violent options. The following cases are examples of social reforms that successfully reduced the severity of terrorist environments.

**Case in Point: Peru and Shining Path**

Social reform was one element in the government’s response to Shining Path’s terrorist campaign. When Shining Path’s leader, Abimael Guzmán, was captured in 1992, he subsequently renounced violence, and thousands of his followers accepted the terms of a government amnesty. The Peruvian government also began a social reform campaign in the countryside. Programs included land reforms, political rights, and rural improvements. These new programs successfully undercut peasant support for Shining Path.

**Case in Point: Spain and ETA**

Ethnonational sentiment in the Basque region had been repressed during the regime of Francisco Franco. After his death in 1975, Spanish democracy was restored, and Basque semi-autonomy was granted. Nationalism was permitted to be openly discussed, political groups were recognized, labor organizations became independent, and civil liberties were protected. ETA’s political party was legalized. Nevertheless, ETA’s most violent period occurred immediately following the restoration of democracy. ETA has since continued to strike from time to time, but Basque sentiment turned against the group during the 1980s. In addition, many ETA members returned to civilian life after accepting the terms of a reintegration program during the mid-1980s. Over time, Spanish commitment to social reforms undercut Basque support for ETA. In May 2006, ETA formally declared a permanent cease-fire after 40 years of seeking independence from Spain. More than 800 people had died during their campaign.

Giving Them What They Want: Concessionary Options

Granting concessions to terrorists is widely viewed as a marginally optimal counterterrorist response. The reason for this is obvious: Giving terrorists what they want is likely to encourage them to replicate their successful operation or perhaps to increase the stakes in future incidents. In other words, many extremists and those in the general population should be expected to conclude that concessions simply reward extremist behavior. Concessions include the following policy decisions:

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27See Chapter 7 for a discussion of the Falangist code of self-sacrifice.

• Payment of ransoms
• Releases of imprisoned comrades
• Broadcasts or other publications of extremist propaganda
• Political amnesty for dissidents

Table 13.5 summarizes the activity profile of the conciliatory counterterrorist options just discussed.

### Table 13.5 Operations Other Than War: Conciliatory Options

The purpose of conciliatory options is to resolve the underlying grievances of the terrorists. This can be done by addressing immediate or long-term threats.

The following table summarizes basic elements of conciliatory options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorist Option</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diplomatic options</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rationale</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolve terrorist crises</td>
<td>Negotiate case-specific agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiate long-term agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social reform</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practical Objectives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrade terrorist environments</td>
<td>Win support from potential terrorist supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decrease effectiveness of terrorist propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concessionary options</strong></td>
<td><strong>Typical Resources Used</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolve terrorist crises</td>
<td>Negotiators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degradate terrorist environments</td>
<td>Economic concessions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Applying the Rule of Law: Legalistic Options

Legalistic responses are law enforcement and law-related approaches for ending terrorist environments. These apply policies designed to use norms of criminal justice and legal procedures to investigate and punish those who commit acts of political violence. Legislation, criminal prosecutions, and incarceration are typical policy measures.

The “law enforcement” approach to combating terrorism has had some success in disrupting conspiratorial networks, and it has brought closure to criminal cases arising out of terrorist attacks. For example, law enforcement investigations in the United States quickly and effectively brought to justice the key perpetrators of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1995 Oklahoma City attack, and the 1998 bombings of the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. In another investigation, the FBI used an informant to break up a *jihadi* conspiracy to bomb landmarks in New York City in 1993. International cooperation between law enforcement officials has also proven to be effective. For example, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks, European and Southeast Asian police uncovered a number of Al-Qaeda and other *jihadi* cells in Spain, Germany, Singapore, and elsewhere.
Law Enforcement and Counterterrorism: The Global Perspective

Because acts of terrorism are considered inherently criminal behaviors under the laws of most nations, law enforcement agencies often play a major role in counterterrorist operations. The organizational profiles of these agencies vary from country to country, with some countries having large national police establishments and others relying more on local police.

The Police and Terrorist Environments

Prior to the formation of terrorist environments, the primary mission of police agencies is to serve in a law enforcement capacity. After terrorist environments become established, the law enforcement mission of the police is transformed into an internal security mission. In these cases, the police become responsible for day-to-day civil protection operations. Internal security missions require law enforcement units to be stationed at strategic locations and to perform security-focused (rather than crime-focused) patrols. These responsibilities are sometimes threat specific and mirror the terrorist environment of the times. For example, because of the threat of airline hijackings, many nations commonly place law enforcement officers aboard aircraft to act as sky marshals. Great Britain began placing undercover armed marshals aboard aircraft in December 2002. Other security duties include promoting airport security, securing borders, tracking illegal immigrants, looking out for fugitives and other suspects, and conducting surveillance of groups and people who fit terrorist profiles.

In many environments, police officers are the front line in the war on terrorism because they are the first officials to respond to terrorist incidents. This role has become quite common in the terrorist environments that exist in Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel, and many other countries. In the United States, 60 New York City police officers died during the September 11, 2001, homeland attacks when they were deployed to the World Trade Center site.29 The police are also the first to stabilize the immediate vicinity around attack sites and are responsible for maintaining long-term order in cities suffering under terrorist campaigns. Thus, the role of law enforcement agencies varies in scale and mission, depending on the characteristics of their environment, and can include the following:

- Traditional police work, in which criminal investigations are carried out by detective bureaus
- Specialized services, in which duties require special training (e.g., defusing and removing explosive ordnance by bomb disposal units)
- Order maintenance (e.g., securing attack sites and stabilizing terrorist environments with large and visible deployments of police personnel)
- Paramilitary deployment using highly trained units that include hostage rescue units and SWAT teams

Chapter Perspective 13.4 provides perspective on the concept of an international police force for combating terrorism.

Police Repression

Ideally, the security role of the police will be carried out professionally, within the context of constitutional constraints and with respect for human rights. However, the reality is that many police agencies around the world are highly aggressive and sometimes abusive—particularly those in authoritarian and weakly democratic countries. They are less concerned about human rights than about order maintenance. This is a key distinction because policies protecting human rights also constrain the behavior of the police, whereas policies of order maintenance are more concerned with protecting the integrity of the state.

The consequences of ideologies of order maintenance are that police agencies operating in authoritarian environments perform a very different mission compared with the professionalized police forces found in most stable democracies. For example, police in Brazil and Colombia have been implicated in practicing “social cleansing” against undesirables. Social cleansing involves the intimidation of a range of defined social undesirables, including political dissidents, supporters of political dissidents, morals criminals (such as prostitutes and drug users), and marginal demographic groups (such as homeless children). Deaths and physical abuse have been documented during social cleansing campaigns.

**Domestic Laws and Counterterrorism**

An important challenge for lawmakers in democracies is balancing the need for counterterrorist legislation against the protection of constitutional rights. In severely strained terrorist environments, it is not uncommon for nations—including democracies—to pass authoritarian laws that promote social order at the expense of human rights. Policy makers usually justify these measures by using a balancing argument in which the greater good is held to outweigh the suspension of civil liberties. Severe threats to the state are sometimes counteracted by severe laws.

**Counterterrorist Courts in Algeria**

During the 1990s, several Islamic terrorist movements waged a campaign of terror against the Algerian government. By the time the most severe fighting ended in 1999 (when an amnesty was offered), about 150,000 Algerians had died. During the emergency, special courts were established by the government to prosecute suspected Islamic terrorists and their supporters. The purpose of these courts was to establish a nonmilitary option in their war against terrorism. During a 2-year period from October 1992 to October 1994, 13,770 persons had been judged by the special courts and 3,661 of them, or 25 per cent of those appearing, had been acquitted. There had been 1,551 sentences of death, 1,463 of which had been passed in absentia, and 8,448 sentences of imprisonment.30

The special courts and special prosecutions were used in conjunction with a brutal suppression campaign. It can be argued that the Islamic rebels had been forced into an untenable no-win situation.  

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by the time the 1999 amnesty was offered. In March 2006, the Algerian government freed a group of
Islamic militants as part of a program to pardon or end legal processing for more than 2,000 convicted
or suspected terrorists.

**Qualified Amnesty in Italy**

Italy suffered thousands of terrorist attacks during the heyday of the Red Brigades terrorist cam-
paign in the 1970s and 1980s. As part of its effort to combat the Red Brigades, the Italian government
adopted a two-pronged strategy:

1. The first prong required the Italian law enforcement establishment to continue to root out ter-
rorist cells.

2. The second prong offered Red Brigades cadres terms and conditions for reductions in their
sentences; all that was required of them was that they “repent” their terrorist past.

The latter prong—the so-called *repentance laws*—offered Red Brigades members qualified
amnesty for demonstrations of repentance for their crimes. Repentance could be established by coop-
erating within a sliding scale of collaboration. Thus, those who collaborated most generously had a
proportionally large amount of time removed from their sentences, whereas those whose information
was less useful had less time removed. A significant number of the roughly 2,000 imprisoned Red
Brigades terrorists accepted repentance reductions in their sentences.

**Case in Point: The Capture and Arrest of Mir Aimal Kansi**

On the morning of January 25, 1993, a man armed with an AK-47 assault rifle began firing on
employees of the Central Intelligence Agency who were waiting in their cars to enter the CIA’s head-
quar ters in Langley, Virginia. Two people were killed and three were wounded.

The person responsible was **Mir Aimal Kansi**, a Pakistani who had been a resident of the United
States since 1991. After the shootings, he immediately fled for sanctuary in Pakistan and Afghanistan.
He apparently traveled between the two countries, though he found refuge among relatives and local
Pakistanis in Quetta.

The United States posted a $2 million reward for Kansi’s capture and distributed wanted post-
ers throughout the region. His photograph was distributed on thousands of matchbooks, printed in
newspapers, and placed on posters. The hunt was successful, because still-unidentified individuals
contacted U.S. authorities in Pakistan and arranged Kansi’s capture. In June 1997, Kansi was arrested
by a paramilitary FBI team and, with the permission of the Pakistani government, flown to the United
States to stand trial in a Virginia state court.

At his trial, prosecutors argued that Kansi had committed the attack in retaliation for U.S. bomb-
ings of Iraq. He was convicted of murder on November 10, 1997. Kansi was executed by lethal injec-
tion at the Greensville Correctional Center in Virginia on November 14, 2002.

**Case in Point: Outcome of the Achille Lauro Incident in Italy**

American warplanes had intercepted an Egyptian aircraft that was transporting Palestine
Liberation Front terrorists to safety, and the aircraft was diverted to an airport in Sicily. In Sicily,
U.S. counterterrorist troops were flown in to take control of the plane and its passengers.

After the Egyptian plane landed, an American special operations unit disembarked from its
aircraft and rushed toward the Egyptian craft. Italian troops and security officers on the ground
positioned themselves between the U.S. troops and their target. The Italians refused to permit
American special operations troops to take control of the airliner or its passengers. Tensions ran
high during the standoff. The terrorists were eventually placed in Italian custody and tried before
an Italian court. Their leader, Abu Abbas, successfully claimed diplomatic immunity and was
permitted to leave Italy for Yugoslavia. Three of the hijackers received long sentences, and Abu Abbas was sentenced to five life terms in absentia in 1986. When one of the terrorists (who had been sentenced to 30 years’ imprisonment) was later released on parole for good behavior, he promptly fled the country.

An Italian judge made sympathetic comments in open court about the plight of the Palestinian defendants. He essentially said that their behavior was understandable because they had been forced to grow up in harsh conditions in the Palestinian refugee camps. He also noted that they had no prior criminal records. The judge’s comments and Abu Abbas’s release occurred within the context of a political environment in Italy that granted the PLO diplomatic status. Technically, Abbas’s release was legal (and even mandated) under Italian law, and the terrorists’ criminal culpability was considered to be a matter for Italian courts to resolve. The Italian government’s refusal to transfer the prisoners into American custody was fully within their legal purview, regardless of whether the decision angered the Americans.

Abu Abbas was finally captured in April 2003 near Baghdad by American forces. Italy immediately sought his extradition to serve his sentence for the *Achille Lauro* incident. Abbas died in March 2004 while in U.S. military custody in Iraq.

**International Law: Legalistic Responses by the World Community**

International law is based on tradition, custom, and formal agreements between nations. It is essentially a cooperative concept because there is no international enforcement mechanism that is comparable to domestic courts, law enforcement agencies, or crimes codes. All of these institutions exist in some form at the international level, but it should be remembered that nations voluntarily recognize their authority. They do this through formal agreements. Bilateral (two-party) and multilateral (multiple-party) agreements are used to create an environment that is conducive to legalistic order maintenance. These formal agreements include treaties, which are defined as contracts or bargains which derive all their force and obligation from mutual consent and agreement; and consequently, when once fairly made and properly concluded, cannot be altered or annulled by one of the parties, without the consent and concurrence of the other.31

Nations enter into treaties to create predictability and consistency in international relations. When threats to international order arise—such as hijackings, kidnappings, and havens for wanted extremists—the international community often enters into multilateral agreements to manage the threat. The following examples illustrate the nature of multilateral counterterrorist agreements.

**International Conventions on Hijacking Offenses**

In response to the spate of airline hijackings that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the world community enacted a number of international treaties to promote cooperation in combating international terrorism directed against international travel services. These treaties included the following:

**Tokyo Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft.**

Enacted in 1963 as the first airline crimes’ treaty, it required all signatories to “make every effort to restore control of the aircraft to its lawful commander and to ensure the prompt onward

passage or return of the hijacked aircraft together with its passengers, crew, and cargo.”

**Hague Convention of 1970.** This treaty required signatories to extradite “hijackers to their country of origin or to prosecute them under the judicial code of the recipient state.”

**Montreal Convention of 1971.** This treaty extended international law to cover “sabotage and attacks on airports and grounded aircraft, and laid down the principle that all such offenses must be subject to severe penalties.”

**Protecting Diplomats**

In reply to the spate of attacks on embassies and assaults on diplomats in the late 1960s and early 1970s, several international treaties were enacted to promote cooperation in combating international terrorism against diplomatic missions. These treaties include the following:

**Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes Against Persons and Related Extortion That Are of International Significance.** This was a treaty among members of the Organization of American States that “sought to define attacks against internationally protected persons as common crimes, regardless of motives.” The purpose of the agreement was to establish common ground for recognizing the absolute inviolability of diplomatic missions.

**Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents.** This was a multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations in 1973. It sought to establish a common international framework for suppressing extremist attacks against those who are protected by internationally recognized status.

**Extradition Treaties**

Nations frequently enter into treaties that allow law enforcement agencies to share intelligence and operational information that can be used to track and capture terrorists. Examples of this collaboration are INTERPOL and EUROPOL, discussed in Chapter Perspective 13.3. Another example is extradition treaties, which require parties to bind over terrorist suspects at the request of fellow signatories. Strong extradition treaties and other criminal cooperation agreements are powerful tools in the war on terrorism.

When properly implemented, extradition agreements can be quite effective. However, these treaties are collaborative and are not easily enforceable when one party declines to bind over a suspect or is otherwise uncooperative. When this happens, there is little recourse other than to try to convince the offending party to comply with the terms of the treaty. For example, when FALN leader William Morales was captured by Mexican authorities, the government refused to extradite him to the United States. Morales was allowed to seek asylum in Cuba.

**International Courts and Tribunals**

The United Nations has established several institutions to address the problems of terrorism, genocide, torture, and international crime. The purpose of these institutions is to bring the

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53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.
perpetrators of crimes against humanity to justice. They are international courts, and their impact can be significant when nations agree to recognize their authority. Examples of United Nations authority include the following institutions:

**International Court of Justice.** The **International Court of Justice** is the principal judicial arm of the United Nations. Its 15 judges are elected from among member states and sit for 9-year terms. The court hears disputes between nations and gives advisory opinions to recognized international organizations.

**International Criminal Court.** The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** was established to prosecute crimes against humanity, such as genocide. Its motivating principle is to promote human rights and justice. In practice, this has meant that the ICC has issued arrest warrants for the prosecution of war criminals.

**International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.** The **International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)** has investigated allegations of war crimes and genocide arising out of the wars that broke out after the fragmentation of Yugoslavia during the 1990s. The fighting among Croats, Muslims, and Serbs was exceptionally brutal and occasionally genocidal. Several alleged war criminals, including former Yugoslavian president Slobodan Milošević, have been brought before the court. Others remain at large but under indictment.

**International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.** The **International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)** has investigated allegations of war crimes and genocide that resulted from the breakdown of

### Table 13.6 Counterterrorist Options: Legalistic Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorist Option</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Practical Objectives</th>
<th>Typical Resources Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancement of security apparatus</td>
<td>Day-to-day counterterrorist operations</td>
<td>Police personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Demilitarization of counterterrorist campaign</td>
<td>Bringing terrorists into the criminal justice system</td>
<td>Specialized personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic laws</td>
<td></td>
<td>Criminalization of terrorist behavior</td>
<td>Enhancement of criminal penalties for terrorist behavior</td>
<td>Criminal justice system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bringing terrorists into the criminal justice system</td>
<td>Legislative involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International law</td>
<td></td>
<td>International consensus and cooperation</td>
<td>Coalition response to terrorism</td>
<td>International organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
order in Rwanda during the 1990s. Hundreds of thousands died during the campaign of terror waged by mobs and paramilitaries. The indictments against suspected war criminals detail what can only be described as genocide on a massive scale.

Table 13.6 summarizes the activity profile of legalistic counterterrorist options.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed options for responding to terrorism within the context of several categories and subcategories. The decision-making process for selecting counterterrorist options is predicated on several key factors:

- The characteristics of the terrorist movement
- The nature of the overall terrorist environment
- The political goals of the counterterrorist actor

When assessing the practical utility of resorting to the use of force, it must be understood that many of these responses are inconsistently effective against determined terrorists in the long term. Successes have been won against domestic terrorists—especially when governments have been unconstrained in their use of force and coercion—but this is not a universal outcome. Internationally, short-term successes have resulted in the resolution of specific terrorist incidents. However, long-term successes have sometimes been difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, the use of force has produced some success in disrupting terrorist groups and reducing the intensity of terrorist environments.

Repressive operations other than war include a number of options. Intelligence collection and analysis are extremely useful for building activity profiles of terrorist groups and for understanding the dynamics of terrorist environments. Intelligence is also useful for generalized prediction but is less useful for predicting the precise location and timing of specific terrorist attacks. Regarding enhanced security, because target hardening usually involves the erection of fixed barriers, surveillance technologies, and security posts, determined terrorists can design methods to circumvent these precautions. Nevertheless, there is an increased potential for failure from the terrorists’ perspective, and it should be presumed that enhanced security deters less determined and less resourceful terrorists.

Conciliatory responses have achieved both short-term and long-term success in ending terrorist environments. There have also been a number of failed conciliatory operations. Diplomatic options have enjoyed marked success in some cases but have been frustrated by entrenched hostilities and uncooperative parties in other cases. Social reforms have enjoyed long-term success when reforms are gradually accepted as legitimate by target populations. Concessionary options are risky because of the perception of appeasement of the terrorists, but these options are sometimes successful.

Legalistic responses are in many ways the front line for counterterrorist policies. Law enforcement agencies are usually the first responders to incidents, and they are responsible for ongoing civil security and investigations. Problems arise when repression or miscarriages of justice discredit police agencies. Nevertheless, security-oriented police duties have successfully resolved or controlled terrorist environments. Domestic laws are adaptations of legal systems to domestic terrorist crises. Some of these adaptations—both authoritarian and democratic—have been quite successful. International laws and institutions have likewise enjoyed some success, but because they are inherently cooperative in nature, parties to treaties and other agreements must comply with their terms. Otherwise, international laws and institutions have very little enforcement authority.

In Chapter 14, readers will explore the concept of U.S. homeland security and associated civil liberties considerations.
Chapter 13  Counterterrorism: The Options

Key Terms and Concepts

The following topics are discussed in this chapter and can be found in the glossary:

- Achille Lauro
- antiterrorism
- biometric technology
- Bureau for the Protection of the Constitution
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
- coercive covert operations
- concessionary options
- conciliatory responses
- Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes Against Persons and Related Extortion That Are of International Significance
- counterterrorism
- covert operations
- cyberwar
- decommissioning
- Delta Force (1st Special Forces Operational Detachment—Delta)
- diplomacy
- Duvdedan
- Echelon
- economic sanctions
- 11th Parachute Division (Paras)
- Emergency Search Team
- enhanced security
- European Police Office (EUROPOL)
- Executive Order 12333
- extradition treaties
- 1st Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Force 777
- Foreign Legion
- French Navy Special Assault Units
- GEO (Grupo Especial de Operaciones)
- GIGN (Groupe d'Intervention Gendarmerie Nationale)
- Golani Brigade
- Good Friday Agreement
- Green Berets (Special Forces Groups)
- Green Police
- GSG-9 (Grenzschutzgruppe 9)
- Hague Convention of 1970
- Hostage Rescue Team (HRT)
- human intelligence
- intelligence
- intelligence community
- International Court of Justice
- International Criminal Court (ICC)
- International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)
- international law
- Kansi, Mir Aimal
- law enforcement
- legalistic responses
- MI-5
- MI-6
- Military Intelligence Service
- Montreal Convention of 1971
- Mossad
- nonmilitary repressive options
- nonviolent covert operations
- Operation El Dorado Canyon
- Operation Enduring Freedom
- Operation Infinite Justice
- Operation Peace for Galilee
- Parachute Sayaret
- paramilitary repressive options
- peace processes
- Police Border Guards
- Polisario
- preemptive strikes
- punitive strikes
- RAPAS
- repentance laws
- repressive responses
- Royal Marine Commandos
- Sayaret
- Sayaret Matkal
- Sea, Air, Land Forces (SEALs)
- signal intelligence
- sky marshals
- social reform
- Special Air Service (SAS)
- Special Boat Service (SBS)
- Special Operations Command
special operations forces
suppression campaigns
terrorist profiles
Tokyo Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft
Weinrich, Johannes
Wrath of God
YAMAM
YAMAS

Discussion Box: The Utility of Elite Counterterrorist Units

This chapter’s Discussion Box is intended to stimulate critical debate about the purpose of elite antiterrorism units.

Elite military and police counterterrorism units have been mustered into the security establishments of many nations. Many of these units include highly trained professionals who can operate in a number of environments under extremely hazardous conditions. Their missions include hostage rescues, punitive strikes, abductions, and reconnaissance operations.

When elite units perform well, the outcomes include rescued hostages, resolved crises, and disrupted terrorist environments. However, these units sometimes find themselves involved in ambiguous political situations or tenuous operational conditions. In other words, special operations are often high-risk, high-gain situations.

Nevertheless, proponents of elite counterterrorist units argue that conventional forces are not trained or configured to fight “shadow wars”—only special operations forces can do so. Critics of these units argue that conventional forces can accomplish the same objectives and goals and that, aside from the very good special operations units, other elite units have not proven themselves to be very effective.

Historical examples suggest that the deployment of special operations forces is a high-risk and high-gain option.

Discussion Questions

• How necessary are elite counterterrorism units? Why?
• How effective do you think these elite units are?
• What other counterterrorist options do you think can be effective without resorting to the deployment of elite units?
• Which counterterrorist options work most efficiently in conjunction with elite units? Which options work least efficiently?
• In the long term, what impact will elite units have in the war against international terrorism?

On Your Own

The open-access Student Study Site at http://study.sagepub.com/martin5e has a variety of useful study aids, including eFlashcards, quizzes, audio resources, and journal articles. The websites, exercises, and recommended readings listed below are easily accessed on this site as well.
Recommended Websites

The following websites provide information and data about counterterrorist policies and options:

- iCasualties.org, Iraq Coalition Casualty Count: http://icasualties.org/
- International Rescue Committee: http://www.rescue.org/
- Office of Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State: http://www.state.gov/s/ct/
- United Nations International Court of Justice: http://www.icj-cij.org/

Web Exercise

Using this chapter’s recommended websites, conduct an online investigation of counterterrorism.

1. Compare and contrast the services described online by the referenced organizations. How do their services differ?
2. How important are the services provided by organizations that monitor terrorist behavior and fugitives? Why?
3. In what ways do you think the Internet will contribute to the counterterrorist effort in the future?

For an online search of counterterrorism, readers should activate the search engine on their Web browser and enter the following keywords:

- “Antiterrorism”
- “Terrorism and Counterterrorism”

Recommended Readings

The following publications provide information about counterterrorist units and intelligence agencies:


