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Alexandru Panait
University of New Hampshire, Durham

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Negotiating With Terrorists Considered: A Review of Scholarly Literature

Alexandru Panait

ABSTRACT

It is unrealistic to determine what is the most cost-effective counter-terrorist strategy without taking into account efficacy of all available counter-terrorist tactics. Logically the best strategy is that which allows one to construct a variety of tactics that tailors to a given situation. However such a meta-strategy is highly limited by the outright dismissal of a given tactic on the basis of moral arguments or assumptions. A practical analysis of a tactic is required first before asking whether it is worth keeping and what its best for when a terrorist situation is presented. While military and police options have been explored with many successes and failures within the United States and abroad there has been much less of a consideration given to negotiation and diplomatic relations with terrorist groups in the culture at large. In order to best ensure that a potentially vital tactic in dealing with terrorists is not being ignored, this paper will review and address the research pertaining to negotiating with terrorist groups. Specifically the results will answer whether or not governments should negotiate with terrorists and what meaningful distinctions exist between groups like al Qaeda and other terrorists in terms of negotiation. For the purposes of this paper, terrorism is the use of strategic violence or threat to incite disproportional loss of resolve or morale in a population or organization and terrorist groups are those who have been labeled or associated with the term whether self-applied, internationally, or by governments local to the groups. In addition, groups labeled as such employ such tactics as part of their repertoire for political ends as they overwhelmingly tend to act against an organized entity to enact some change.

TO NEGOTIATE OR NOT?

The argument against negotiation is simple: it rewards terrorist behavior, undermines the legitimacy of non-violent political actors, and nullifies efforts to police terrorism (Neumann 2007). An alternative like combat is preferred by governments because it, "…requires no concessions, grants no legitimacy, and is consistent with the norm of punishing illegal violence" (Pruitt 2007: 374). Indeed when a terrorist group does *not* receive wide support or is *not* tied to an ethnic/nationalist constituency they are much less likely to survive policing and military operations. However for those groups that do experience support, the group can be hidden, resupplied, given moral justification, and the population may contribute to the active members. Curfews, checkpoints, harsh policing efforts, and collateral damage contribute toward alienating the population away from the suspect government. Discontented people, ranging from inconvenienced to maimed, strengthen sympathy and support for insurgent/terrorist groups who are viewed increasingly justified or morally right. In other words, police and military options can easily create more support for such groups, effectively increasing active membership rather than decreasing it via eliminating or arresting current members (Pruitt 2006). A broader analysis of military options across nations reveals that government backlash against groups does nothing to diminish their presence, assuming they survive their initial encounter with the government. Interestingly enough, this problem does not rest exclusively with governments. Terrorism is similarly ineffective as an overall strategy for insurgent groups as well, achieving goals less than 10% of the time. As a result the circumstances encourage both sides to use negotiation to sensibly realize their goals (Miller 2011). Therefore in the cases where terrorists groups demonstrate persistence after military or policing options are attempted, negotiation may be the only viable strategy left to practically address the threat of terrorism.

The only major obstruction to pursuing diplomatic alternatives in instances of military/police ineffectiveness is then the "no-negotiation impediment" (Miller 2011:176). Essentially by entertaining

negotiations, the domestic constituency as well as political actors themselves, view the process as morally reprehensible and wrong even if the option is available. This impasse between ideal and practicality seems difficult to overcome but is not impossible. The same communication techniques used in politics can be employed to turn the perception away from concession to the practical benefit of eliminating terrorist violence through diplomacy. If anything, negotiation is simply another way to demonstrate moral and ethical superiority; indeed much employed by politicians and diplomats alike throughout history. In fact, Hoglund and Svensson (2009) mention that Norway's ongoing role as peace brokers is driven by a positive international image and national pride in third-party mediation. If attempts to use the political process to sway the public fails, back channel communication can be used instead, circumventing the public and staving moral backlash (Miller 2011). In fact, both Pruitt (2006) and Neumann (2007) have observed that despite the presence of "no-negotiation" policies, democracies have often negotiated with terrorists anyway, mainly through back channels. Even Israel, who for many decades has opposed rebel groups, talked in secret with members of its longest standing rival the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1993 and signed accords in Oslo, Norway. Britain and Spain have done the same after attacks against them in 1991 and 1988 respectively. Even Ronald Reagan's resolution never to negotiate did not prevent back channel talks with Israel to release 300 Sunni prisoners to end the Iran hostage crisis. This indicates that negotiation has been more appealing to governments than hawkish, that is pro-military, policies make it seem. However while there is dissonance between "no negotiation" in terms of proscription and practice, the policy has ultimately prevented any meaningful and systematic exploration of how to best conduct negotiations (Neumann 2007).

It may be that fears and political rhetoric against negotiation are misplaced. The general defense against negotiation, rewarding terrorist violence and giving in, is what Pruitt (2006) categorizes as capitulation. Capitulation is different from negotiation in that it is simply giving in to terrorist demands. Negotiation on the other hand is about finding out what will end the terrorists' campaign and working to compromise on a solution (Pruitt 2006). Capitulation, not negotiation, is the category of action to avoid when seeking alternatives to military or policing strategies. Placing emphasis on ending violence and using give and take as the means to that end is what distinguishes negotiation from capitulation. Again the perception can be shifted to make negotiation seem not only practically viable but politically preferable: "Since states usually demand that insurgents renounce violence temporarily (through a ceasefire) to engage in talks, and…are required to abandon violence entirely for a permanent agreement to be reached or implemented, one may argue that the norm of nonviolence could be strengthened rather than weakened" (Toros 2008:412). The resulting peace, or at the very least reduced violence, is a promising reward that can and has been used to sell counter-terrorist strategies. However, Neumann (2007) suggests that the key for negotiating governments, emphasizing democratic ones in particular, is how to best yield peaceful results while minimizing, "…the risk of setting dangerous precedents and destabilizing its political system" (P. 129). In other words, coupled with Pruitt's capitulation distinction, negotiation is a matter of execution. When handled improperly, negotiation may serve only as a means of alienating domestic constituents while simultaneously conferring legitimacy to the terrorist group. Therefore it is imperative not only to agree to use negotiation but to remain aware of what strategies are most effective and the potential pitfalls of the process. With that said, the higher costs of the alternatives, and the lack of success governments and terrorist groups alike have had employing them; the benefits to effectively pursuing a negotiation strategy are extraordinary both in reducing the threat of terrorism and improving the political image of all parties involved.

STRATEGIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

What it takes to make negotiation a viable strategy is to ensure the other party's capability of holding to negotiation agreements and to make concessions. As aforementioned, one way to ease into negotiations and retain the ability to disavow the other side, are back channel communications. Not only

does this course of action encourage future talks by displaying interest in bilateral communication, it may also establish the necessary logistics prior to the announcement of a fully public negotiation. Secret talks help avoid political backlash and shouting from hawkish politicians at the acting government for apparently lending legitimacy to terrorists. Secret negotiations also do not require ceasefires, allowing both sides to continue what they see as the preferable military option while simultaneously exercising the political alternative. Most importantly, it is a way for one side to gain knowledge of the other and determine if the other is willing or able to negotiate at the present time. Success of back channel negotiations, in effect, makes the subject of negotiation easier to broach when moving toward the question of open negotiations. However, if all negotiations are exclusively secretive agreements made within such negotiations do not form as cohesive a set of public supporters as when the results are announced. Despite the efforts made by Israel and PLO members to sign agreements, the Oslo accords eventually failed as they were all done secretly in Norway; the end announcement caught domestic Israeli and Palestinian constituents off guard which left the agreements with little civic or political support built to maintain them. Said lack of support is also partly due to the exclusion of other parties who feel they have as much a say, like Hamas in the aforementioned example. The ideal negotiation process stems from finding a balance between the advantage of back channel talks but later introducing public talks to gain a larger mass of supporters for the proposed negotiations (Pruitt 2006).

Terrorist groups are not problematic based on their ideological character but because of their use of violence (the terrorist tactic) to achieve their aims. That is, the groups believe that such a tactic is viable and preferable to alternatives given their present situation. The case with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) demonstrates that nationalism did not necessarily wane when peace talks began and accords subsequently signed; instead the political integration and negotiation process made the many decades-long violent option unattractive. Therefore negotiation entails the discouragement of terrorism while simultaneously providing for non-violent alternatives which are preferable to both parties and particularly the citizenry of the area (Neumann 2007). The situation with Northern Ireland is such that power sharing and political advocacy as an alternative to violence still results in a UK-based Northern Ireland. As a result the success of mediation is the ability to convey effective power sharing and not compromise national identity in the face of failing the ideal which in this case of the IRA is the establishment of a Northern Ireland independent of the UK. It is assumed that any further action, failures or successes, should be peaceful and political which ought to be the goal of the process (Marsden 2006). Since most, although not all, countries that face the threat of terrorism are democratic, selling the idea of power-sharing and representation ought to be easier.

In terms of constituency, moderates play a vital role in tempering the fires and lofty goals of groups once they intermingle with extremists. When moderates represent the bulk and extremists are *included*, they feel more inclined to choose a more moderate course for fear of becoming too isolated or unrepresentative. However, the reverse of this thinking is the polarizing "war on terror" mentality which often alienates moderates from the process. Successful negotiation and mainstreaming requires taking advantage of a central mass of moderates, known as a "central coalition, which embraces as many groups as possible on both sides of the conflict, to isolate the fringes and prevent them from acting as spoilers" (Pruitt 2006:380). Placing too much emphasis on one-on-one talks and concessions only serves to anger those who feel equally legitimate in the government, especially when it is considered that non-violence in the political process as apparently already been internalized. Not only must there be a balance in timing and type of communication, but also accounting for support from relevant non-violent constituents to build (Pruitt 2006).

In terms of negotiations themselves, one boon to the process is the distinction between primary and secondary concessions. Primary concessions are the political changes the group seeks to enact, while secondary concessions concern what will happen with the terrorists themselves such as decommissioning weaponry and affording aid to individual group members. This distinction is important, although not

necessary in all cases, because it can allow the negotiations to divert the primary concessions to become the goal of the political alternative. Once it has been agreed that their goals are still a possibility through non-violent political action then direct negotiations can concern secondary concessions. This avoids the apparent misgivings a democratic government may incur when seemingly surrendering to a radical change because a group was motivated enough to use violence, regardless of whether or not they renounced it. However there is not much incentive for the terrorist group to negotiate at all if their goals are considered but declared impossible. Therefore establishing the group's political alternative is paramount to satisfying both parties. By involving the terrorist group in the political process, their radical goals or group mentality may be blunted to an extent. The political process naturally brings with it limitations on hasty action, assuming the process is at least somewhat democratic (Neumann 2007).

Speaking more specifically on the political process, the key to making the process successful is ensuring effective representatives from both parties are put forward. If there is no degree of trust that either side can keep their promises, hawkish members in the government or the terrorist group can lash out with violence and/or iterate on moral apprehensions to negotiation (Pruitt 2006). Effective representatives are the only members on the terrorist side who can use persuasion to prevent splinter groups who feel that accords or negotiation do not apply to them (Neumann 2007). Once a representative is established, such as Sinn Fein who acted as the political arm of the IRA or ethnic Albanian rebels in Macedonia, the legitimacy of negotiating can be earned by ensuring concessions are met and mainstreaming becomes a possibility (Pruitt 2006). This allows advances toward establishing the peace process among the constituents of the targeted government, that is if it sees willingness and competence on the part of the radical groups to negotiate for peace. Crocker (2011) brings up what is the longer-term version of effective representation: ensuring that post-peace accords are being met by both parties. This sense of responsibility and trust has been compromised in the past when mediators have not shown a sufficient degree of competence and leadership. In essence agreements may finally be brokered but the follow-up is the key to maintaining those results.

In terms of negotiation it seems the job of a targeted government is to just be persuasive and tactically competent but it must also be willing to make concessions which may have to include release of arrested members or amnesty for terrorists at large. While it is difficult to sell to the public, the inclusive negotiation process requires such concessions be considered and seriously negotiated. Otherwise the discourse will follow a "no concessions" track that jeopardizes the process and makes it seem pointless to the terrorist group members. Neumann (2007) argues that a no concessions path is practically equivalent to being categorically against negotiation. Therefore the ability to account for both primary and secondary tracks, ensure effective representatives, and assure the public that such a process does not equate to concession is all constructive to making negotiations legitimate and preferable (Neumann 2007).

Theoretically the biggest danger to the process on the part of the government is the maintenance of a no negotiation or no concession policy, especially considered in light of contemporary events and cultural climates. The events of 9/11 brought a new wave of polarization to conflict management, in which nation states which have traditionally remained absent from negotiations have now become direct combatants against terrorism. In the instance of Northern Ireland, international anti-terrorism pressure and involvement of parties like the US may have helped push the issue enough to yield results. However the more pronounced effect of the anti-terrorist trend post-9/11 was the, "listing or proscribing of a number of conflict parties as being off limits for mediatory engagement…" (Crocker 2011:4). The expansion of anti-terror provisions coupled with the dispensation of lists pertaining names of terrorist groups have chilled negotiations. The effect has doubly caused terrorist groups to feel marginalized, governments to feel confident in military options, and third parties to feel inclined to fight with police rather than negotiate with terrorists (Crocker 2011). One case which exemplified the aforementioned consequences involved the Tamil Tigers (LTTE), a separatist group representing ethnic Tamils in the North of Sri Lanka who have used strategic and terrorist violence in their fight for an independent nation. Norway acting as a third-mediator,

attempted to introduce international supporters into the negotiations, which was successful in little more than prompting LTTE to become less inclined to believe in successful negotiations. Concurrently, the Sri Lankan government, similarly wary of negotiations, became more confident in military options, particularly due to the EU and US's strict anti-terror policies, "war on terror" declarations, and growing list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO's) which included LTTE. This was one reason the 2002-2008 process failed following the Norwegian attempted "internationalization" (Hoglund and Svensson 2009). As previously mentioned, writing negotiations off entirely and sticking to one's literal guns has proven ineffective in addressing established and entrenched terrorist groups worldwide.

Once negotiation is considered viable there are other external forces still yet to consider which may affect the success of any proposed talks. Spoiler opportunities are a great danger to the peace process. When conciliatory agreements either fall short of the ideal or represent an insult to the proposed goals of the terrorists, those unwilling to negotiate within or outside the groups commit attacks. Attacks during negotiation, or the peace process, are intended to stifle moderates' efforts and/or provoke overreaction by government. The provocation of the peace process reinforces distrust between government and moderates thereby preventing any agreements. This may occur during a peace process but elections are also a time for spoiler opportunities. Months prior to an election, attacks can influence voting patterns in favor of harder-line hawkish candidates, as was the case with 1996 Israeli general elections. Netanyahu's sudden victory following the attacks resulted in his canceling negotiations and pursuing more combative strategies (Braithwaite *et. al*. 2010). The targeted governments, mediators, and negotiating terrorist group members all should be greatly aware of spoiler opportunities and not allow them to compromise negotiations.

Another external issue is that of state sponsors. State sponsors may complicate the initial ability of the group to negotiate, especially if group members feel beholden to sponsor approval. While negotiating with the sponsor may cause a more direct addressing of the issue and isolate the terrorists, this ideal result may only come to fruition if the relationship between the group and sponsor is that transparent. If there is any sort of organizational distance between group and sponsor it may in fact be more beneficial to negotiate with the group (Neumann 2007). The state may also meddle and muddy negotiation proceedings, as was the case with India and Sri Lanka during the 2002-2008 talks with LTTE. Virtually all provisions made by the Sri Lankan government required the sign off of Indian officials, causing that much more difficulty for Norway as a third party mediator (Hoglund and Svensson 2009).

The final danger posed to negotiation processes is of a more academic nature. Since the IRA negotiations and subsequent integration of Sinn Fein into Northern Irish government represents one of the more successful and publicly known terrorist peace processes, it may be tempting to use that process as a model for all future negotiations. Numerous differences between the IRA and what seems like a similar group, the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), a separatist group representing ethnic Basques in Spain, illustrate the reasoning against using the IRA process as a model universally. The IRA's exclusive negotiator was Sinn Fein whereas Batasuna, the political arm of the group, and ETA were both involved in the process. This opens up opportunities for contradictions, such as ETA wanting political discussions which went against signed agreements between the Spanish government and Batasuna. It also showed that Batasuna could not often speak on behalf of the ETA thereby limiting its negotiating power and credibility. This is a striking portrayal of issues unearthed when primary and secondary tracks are not properly managed and effective representatives are not established. Additionally, the North Irish process had the involvement of the US which provided adequate international legitimacy and accountability, qualities which Spain did not have. Another noteworthy difference entails local political support; while Sinn Fein got about 40% of the vote, Batasuna consistently got less if not half. Finally, Spain has had a financial interest in the Basque region, representing Spain's richest areas, whereas North Ireland was not very economically important to the British. What this means is that variations in government interest, public support, power of the political

arm to influence the terrorists, and outside involvement can negatively affect the ability to use the North Irish peace process as a model (Esser and Bridges 2011).

TERRORIST GROUP DISTINCTIONS AND AL QAEDA

As of yet, the kinds of insurgent groups which have drawn disproportionate attention concerning the modern issue of terrorism has not been mentioned: so-called radical Islamic terrorism. These groups demand particular discussion largely because it's an open question in some of the articles in this review as to how the benefits, strategies, and pitfalls in negotiation processes may readily be applied to groups categorized as radical Islamic terrorists. Within this conceptual category, the group most often mentioned is al Qaeda; I would guess this is likely due to their involvement in the 9/11 attacks and such the disproportionate societal attention has subsequently trickled down into political science and criminology literature. For the purposes of this review however they typify a number of issues that are explored by a number of articles and serve to further inform how negotiation processes can better implemented.

When negotiation literature discusses al Qaeda it is in the context of a typology of terrorist groups, specifically what makes such groups more or less negotiable. The typology is simple; some terrorists being ideological, driven to achieve absolute goals which are often religious in nature or political/instrumental terrorists who have more localized goals. This distinction implies that instrumental and nationalist terrorist groups have a greater ability to be reasoned with in a bargain (Neumann 2007). Pruitt (2006) takes this distinction a step further and conceptualizes terrorism in terms of a two by two grid; with the emphasis being given to motivation. In this model the column categories are "more representative" or "less representative" of constituents and the row categories are "more ideological" or "less ideological." This places groups such as LTTE, IRA, ETA, and the PLO in the box intersecting "more representative" and "less ideological" for representing ethnic groups and largely demanding separate nations. Al Qaeda and the KKK are representative of constituents as well but also "more ideological" and abstract in their demands. Groups such as the Red Brigades from Italy, Baader-Meinhoff Gang from Germany, and Aum Shinrikyo from Japan employ an extreme ideology but do not see much support from a constituency; such groups are most vulnerable to policing efforts. In Pruitt's (2006) table are no groups that are placed in the box intersecting the less ideological and less representative categories, implying that they do not survive long enough to warrant attention or categorization. The groups that tend to last the longest and are also more "reasonable" according to Pruitt (2006), are the less ideological representative factions. He concludes however that the most potent groups are ones which represent constituents however also tend to, "…make more extreme demands and are less compromising" (P. 373).

The presence of "more ideological" elements does not necessarily exclude the existence of a predominantly less ideological base however. Groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, "derive much of their strength from their claim to represent particular ethnic groups. Not only do they have real-world constituencies they must satisfy, they have also demonstrated that they can modulate their use of violence against Israel according to more or less rational political assessments" (Neumann 2007:130). Neumann (2007) also comments on whether the model for a peace process thus far, IRA and likely the ETA, can be applied to Hamas and Hezbollah. On the basis that they may not be at the necessary strategic juncture and still find credibility in the use of violence, it will take more time before negotiations seem feasible. However, the election of Hamas into the Palestinian parliament indicates that Hamas may be farther along than Hezbollah (Neumann 2007).

Where Hamas and Hezbollah may be a matter of persuasion or timing, both Pruitt (2006) and Neumann (2007) consider al Qaeda unlikely as a negotiation partner. Neumann (2007) believes that given the primary/secondary distinction and the diffuse nature of the organization it is unlikely al Qaeda is able to negotiate. According to him it has demonstrated an unwillingness to question terrorist violence as a method and does not have a territory over which to negotiate or goals which can be addressed constitutionally.

Neumann (2007) warns against giving al Qaeda legitimacy while only gaining negative publicity in return. Without a concrete possibility of success, governments have nothing to gain and al Qaeda nothing to lose. Pruitt (2006) concludes in this respect that, "negotiation with ideologists is less common and settlements are rare, because their demands are usually extreme and inflexible" (P. 380). Pruitt (2006) prescribes isolation as the only viable strategy as, "mainstreaming is not possible with an international organization like al Qaeda; what government would they join? Furthermore, at present their strong religious and political ideology and their decentralized structure makes them unlikely candidates for a negotiated settlement" (P. 390). He does not assume future negotiations are impossible or changes cannot be positive but he cosigns with Neumann (2007), in that the structure and nature of ideology combine to make negotiations infeasible. As a result keeping back channels open is the only seemingly possible diplomatic option, given the organization's structure.

AL QAEDA RECONSIDERED

Despite Neumann's (2007) conclusion he also outlines that it is tenuous to assume al Qaeda is incapable of negotiations at all due to the nationalist/ideologist distinction. For instance,

> "if the IRA and ETA appear to be more rational than, say, al Qaeda, it is because their goals—nationalism and separatism—have a long history in Western political thought. The left-wing terrorists of the 1970s and 1980s—the West German Red Army Faction…or the Italian Red Brigades—were seen as political because Marxism was a concept familiar to their targets. Al Qaeda's aim of re-creating an Islamic empire is no more absolutist (or realistic) than was imposing a nationality on a reluctant population or turning West Germany into a Marxist workers' republic. The difference is that al Qaeda's ideology has not become part of the twenty-first century's DNA and thus remains difficult to rationalize" (Neumann 2007:129).

Similarly, although Pruitt (2006) values a "contingent" versus "absolute" typology, the possibility of subjective bias is considered as well. Al Qaeda may represent a group too extreme to compromise, however, Pruitt does recognize that, "…at one time the PLO looked like an absolute, uncompromising terrorist group; they gradually became more tractable and eventually made enough concessions to reach an agreement with Israel at Oslo" (P. 384) This distinction also fails to account for the relative flexibility or apparent extremism of a government entity. Therefore, Pruitt (2006) concludes, "a better approach is to assume that most terrorists and governments, like most negotiators in general, start with extreme demands that cannot easily be met by the other side, but that many of them become considerably more flexible as a result of circumstances" (P. 384).

Miller (2011) explicitly addresses the issues with relegating al Qaeda to this unlikely-to-negotiate category by Pruitt (2006) and Neumann (2007) both conceptually and practically. Conceptually, Miller argues that al Qaeda operates not merely as a "terrorist group" but as a *takfiri* insurgency, in which terrorism is but one tactic among many in its broader strategy of insurgency against the international community and infidels to Islam. Although to be sure this labeling issue is likely endemic of the terrorism issue as a whole. Regardless, along with terrorism al Qaeda also employs guerrilla warfare as well as propaganda which is an important consideration for any group labeled as terrorists. Negotiating, with al Qaeda in particular, should then be considered under such context. This calls for a re-introduction of the presence of rationality as a prerequisite to reasoning and thereby negotiation. Negotiation fails to be considered on the basis that ideological terrorists, such as al Qaeda, seem to operate under no sense of rationality and discrimination. The contrasting view then is ethno-nationalist terrorists are perceived to have secular and more realistically attainable goals. However throughout this inspection of the negotiation process, violence has been seen to be of use for both legitimate governments as well as terrorist groups. This fact seemingly makes al Qaeda's

use of violence no more discrediting to their ability to negotiate than any other terrorist group or government. While the question of substantive rationality of al Qaeda members remains an open question, there is nothing to indicate they lack procedural (or logistical) rationality which positively effects their negotiability (Miller 2011).

In keeping with an exceptionalist perspective, it has not stopped Western governments and their citizenry from assessing al Qaeda's use of violence, chiefly the 9/11 attacks, as an expression of violence purely for the sake of violence (Miller 2011). Miller (2011) also notes that the citation of psychological pathology or illness is often coupled with the aforementioned assumed lack of rationality. In terms of psychological research however, no indications that terrorist members were any less psychologically sound than other groups has been seen. In fact in a sociological sense it is difficult to obtain any sort of profile or specific individual typological marker excepting a general pattern of young male participants (Miller 2011). Therefore there is little to no psychological or conceptual basis to dismiss al Qaeda as non-negotiable.

Rationality is not the extent of possible conceptual issues regarding negotiability however. Another issue raised regarding diplomacy with al Qaeda is the utility of negotiating with a group with such seemingly radical stated goals. Miller (2011) in addressing this breaks down those goals into either transformational or temporal categories. A transformational goal by its very nature demands absolute societal change, which is non-negotiable. Temporal goals can be achieved and agreed upon without requiring a complete rearrangement of the power structure. Among the *stated* goals of al Qaeda is the destruction of Westernism in favor of the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate. However their principal, if not their true, goals concern US foreign policy. Ending support for Israel, "apostate" Muslim rulers, and US presence in Middle Eastern lands are temporal goals which take overwhelming precedent over any notion of an Islamic Caliphate (Miller 2011). It may be that both goal types are represented in al Qaeda's mission against the US but the question is how to navigate this mire of transformational and temporal goals to produce effective negotiation.

The unique diffuse network of membership of al Qaeda may provide a foothold for foreign policy-makers and diplomats in producing effective negotiation. The wide but disassociated net the group casts means that clusters often reflect local concerns in addition to the global *jihad* narrative. Therefore it stands to reason that transformational goals or even major temporal ones can be exchanged for localized temporal demands. Successful negotiations with local elements who have associated with al Qaeda can also lead to great breakthroughs in police action against other al Qaeda groups. This process was demonstrated with MILF in the Philippines leading to a number of arrests. Furthering that strategy, negotiators could also take advantage of the varying degrees of adherence to those transformational goals. A relatively large portion of al Qaeda's total forces are temporary or ad hoc fighters who are more reconcilable compared to their full-time counterparts. Therefore, if there is any potential to exploit local, and if need be major temporal issues in exchange or in absence of transformational ones, it stands to reason that negotiation is viable. The diffuse network may also represent more opportunities for entry and access, transitions which may allow the implementation of this negotiation strategy (Miller 2011).

Having addressed reasons al Qaeda may be negotiable and how best to initiate negotiations, the question becomes whether al Qaeda has shown signs of negotiability and what the best alternatives to diplomatic relations would be. Diplomacy is a game in which the players, despite their differences and disagreements, must concede the legitimacy of the game in order to play. For negotiation to work it requires terrorist groups like al Qaeda to also assume the same fundamental rules of govern diplomacy in order to consider negotiation. In practice, members of the Taliban and other insurgent groups have exhibited, despite troubles during negotiations, a willingness to internalize the process. Secondly, it is the case that engaging with negotiations, despite superficial signs that a group rejects its legitimacy, can foster a sense of legitimacy throughout the process (Miller 2011).

As mentioned previously in the review, the alternatives to negotiation for groups like al Qaeda and targeted governments are not ideal. The US and to a lesser extent nations in the EU and Asia have been involved in a very costly war against terror for over a decade and groups like the Taliban and al Qaeda are still operating, the latter of which has cells in Africa, Asia, and chiefly the Middle East. Similarly, the politically stated aims of al Qaeda in this case, to remove US influence, presence, and diplomatic ties with Israel and "apostate" rulers have seen little to no progress. By attacking the US al Qaeda appears to have made their position worse on all three accounts. Both situations exemplify and reiterate on points made in many of the articles reviewed which strongly advise against continuing military/policing when governments are faced with entrenched groups. Likewise for the terrorist groups themselves the violent option can be equally as ineffectual, thereby definitively encouraging the use of negotiation and diplomacy (Miller 2011).

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