Academic Perspective: Terrorist Organizations and Tactics

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#ChemicalSecurity
AGENDA:
IDENTIFYING POINTS OF TACTICAL & TARGETING CHANGES

1. THE ROLE OF LEADERS IN TARGETING & TACTICS
2. SUCCESSOR TYPES & TARGETING/TACTICS
3. ALLIANCES & TACTICAL CHANGES
THE ROLE OF LEADERS IN TARGETING & TACTICS
THE CENTRAL ROLE OF FOUNDERS

Founders create the **HOW** and the **WHY** for their organization:

**HOW**
The tactics and resource mobilization that the group uses to achieve its goals.

**WHY**
The group’s objectives and the framing that explains them.
THE CHOICE FOR SUCCESSORS

To what extent will the.SUCCESSOR follow the how and why of the founder?

- **INCREMENTAL** versus **DISCONTINUOUS** change
DISCONTINUOUS CHANGE: WHAT DEFINES A SUCCESSOR

Changes to the WHY
Discontinuous changes in framing include emphasizing a new adversary as the primary enemy. It could further take the shape of expanding the cause into new ideological areas.

Changes to the HOW
Discontinuous changes in tactics and resource mobilization look like conducting operations in a new place (such as external attacks), adopting a new tactic and rendering it one of the group’s main tactics, or even creating a political party.
SUCCESSOR TYPES & TARGETING/TACTICS
# SUCCESSOR TYPES

## Leadership Archetypes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader Type</th>
<th>Change to Framing</th>
<th>Change to Tactics and Resource Mobilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>Incremental</td>
<td>Incremental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signaler</td>
<td>Discontinuous</td>
<td>Incremental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixer</td>
<td>Incremental</td>
<td>Discontinuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>Discontinuous</td>
<td>Discontinuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurehead</td>
<td>Leader absent</td>
<td>Leader absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINDINGS

Founder to First Successor Pathways

- **Killed**
- **Died**
- **Overthrown**
- **Captured/Arrested**
- **Stepped Down**

**Founder to Caretaker**
- Killed: 12
- Died: 3
- Overthrown: 2
- Captured/Arrested: 1
- Stepped Down: 4

**Founder to Fixer**
- Killed: 10
- Died: 5
- Overthrown: 3
- Captured/Arrested: 2
- Stepped Down: 2

**Founder to Signaler**
- Killed: 11
- Died: 6
- Overthrown: 4
- Captured/Arrested: 3
- Stepped Down: 5

**Founder to Visionary**
- Killed: 11
- Died: 6
- Overthrown: 4
- Captured/Arrested: 3
- Stepped Down: 5

**Founder to Figurehead**
- Killed: 11
- Died: 6
- Overthrown: 4
- Captured/Arrested: 3
- Stepped Down: 5
FINDINGS

Leadership Type Frequency

38 Founders → 112 Successors

- Caretakers: 32.4%
- Fixers: 32.4%
- Figureheads: 6.8%
- Visionaries: 18.9%
- Signalers: 9.5%
TERRORIST GROUP ALLIANCES & TACTICAL CHANGES

COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NON-RIVAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Training
- Haven
- Technology transfers
AFFILIATE RELATIONSHIPS & TACTICAL CHANGES

FORMALIZED PLEDGES OF LOYALTY BETWEEN LEADERS

- Training
- Technology transfers
- Alliance networks
- Tactical emulation
RELATIONS WITH STATES & TACTICAL CHANGES

PROXY RELATIONSHIPS

- Training
- Haven

- More desire for control/management
  - Careful technology transfers
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3. ALLIANCES & TACTICAL CHANGES
Q&A

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