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Call and Response: The Effect of Terrorist Incidents on the Way Nations Fight Terrorism

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Call and Response:

The effect of terrorist incidents on the way nations fight terrorism

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Abstract:

This paper compares the ways in which countries that have suffered from terrorist actions combat terrorism. Specifically, I compare counterterrorism policies in the United States and Spain before and after two of the most severe acts of foreign terrorism, the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001 and the attacks in Spain on March 11, 2004. These comparisons are made in two counterterrorism policy aspects: Bureaucracy and Institutions, as well as Foreign Relations and Military Intervention. Each of these sections shows both convergent and divergent choices made by the Spanish and American governments. In terms of bureaucratic institutions, Spain has a more modern and hierarchically fluid approach whereas the United States has a system with multiple agencies where specific issues are addressed by individual, specialized agencies. Both governments utilize military intervention as a part of a response to terrorism, however, here too, these nations differ, in part because Spain's foreign policy response was conditioned by the existence and actions of the European Union whereas the United States reacts more unilaterally. The United States as well, possesses a vast military network and budget which allows them to respond more dramatically and without the constraints of a multilateralism. While both Spain and the United States collaborated in the "War on Terror" in the wake of 9/11, Spain withdrew its troops from Iraq after the Madrid terrorist attacks. While the new Spanish government that came to power after the terrorist attacks continued to focus on fighting terrorism, it emphasized the importance of deterring and preempting terrorist strikes. The American government, on the other hand, has specialized in criminalizing and responding to terrorism. While America has faced terrorism from several different perpetrator groups (i.e. the Black Panthers, Ku Klux Klan, ELF/ALF, anti-abortion extremists, etc.) which have allowed the nation to holistically prepare its counterterrorism institutions, Spain has faced terrorism from

Basque nationalists (ETA) which has led to a more direct approach from the Spanish counterterrorism organization while the United States takes a targeted approach on the type of attack that occurred (GTD, 2017). In addition, the way in which Spain and the United States respond internationally changes, as well. Spain takes a far more reticent approach, in pulling back from international engagement whereas the United States exhibits a more bellicose attitude. This paper examines the internal and external elements that have led to the convergence and divergence of the Spanish and American counterterrorism paths.

Introduction:

Terrorism is widely regarded as the number one threat facing Europe and America. According to the global terrorism index which measures the number of deaths from terrorism, terrorism has increased dramatically from 2000-2014, with attacks in an increasing number of countries (Friedman, 2016). In fact, as shown in Figure VIII, deaths from terrorism in OECD have risen 900 percent since 2007 (Institute for Economics & Peace 41). On the whole, the world has become 2.14 percent less peaceful since 2008 and in the last year alone 61 percent of nations experienced deterioration in peace mostly due to terrorism (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2-4, 9, 13). Although less than three percent of the deaths from terrorism occurred in Western countries, Western publics nonetheless remain acutely concerned about terrorism (Friedman, 2016). In the United States and Western Europe, citizens are especially worried about the threat of radical Islamic terrorist groups like Al-Qaida and ISIS, seeing these groups as an unprecedented danger (Friedman, 2016). Even though these countries faced more terrorist attacks prior in the latter decades of the twentieth century and acts of terror are becoming less common, terrorist attacks are more deadly than in the last century (Piazza 62). James Piazza attributes this to the rise of religious terrorism (63). Religious terrorists, he argues, are “more

prone than secular groups to committing attacks that result in greater casualties” (Piazza 63). Piazza states that radical Islamic terrorism, which has risen through “the 1980s and 1990s [and] has significantly contributed to the lethality of terrorist attacks perpetrated by religiously-oriented terrorist groups,” is deadlier due to the ideology it represents (Piazza 64). He lists, among other aspects, four key reasons that universal/abstract terrorists are so deadly: first, they have less inhibition against attacking soft targets since they fully dehumanize their victims as infidels; second, radical religious terrorists are less concerned about losing sympathy because they focus on other-worldly rewards; third, they declare war on all cultures or societies and not specific governments and therefore have an incentive to plan attacks with large numbers of casualties, and, finally, they consider their violence as a “purifying act” for the victim(s), themselves and the world (Piazza 63-64). Figure VII in the Appendix also shows the number of casualties due to religiously targeted terrorism and supports this argument that religious terrorism is more deadly than other forms of terrorism (GTD, 2017).

Spain and the United States have both been targeted by some of the deadliest terror attacks in the occidental world. The attacks of September 11, 2001, orchestrated by members of Al-Qaida, left 2,996 fatalities and around 8,000 injured individuals (GTD, 2017). On March 11, 2004, bombs exploded on four commuter trains in Madrid, leaving 191 fatalities and around 1,800 injuries. Despite the Spanish government’s initial statements that Basque terrorists were to blame, the bombings were actually committed by members of the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigade (GTD, 2017). Both Al-Qaida and its Spanish affiliate fall into Piazza’s definition of universal/abstract terrorist groups which have broader, more ideological objectives as well as more nebulous connections to communities on whose behalf they claim to commit attacks; these features make groups like Al-Qaida “less likely to fret about generating a public backlash; they

are not as concerned about achieving an immediate and practical political objective or seeking approval from people less committed to the struggle than themselves. As a consequence of all of these attributes, these types of groups are more likely to deliberately perpetrate high-casualty attacks to draw attention to their message and demonstrate their determination” (Piazza 65). The Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigade is named after Al-Qaida’s de facto War General who was killed in a United States airstrike two months after the 9/11 attacks (UN.org, 2012; Telegraph.co.uk, 2001).

This paper is aimed at addressing the structural and political paths of the United States and Spain to understand how acts of terror on a state change or alter how that state fights terror. I analyze different ways in which countries seek to protect their citizens from the threat of terrorism, considering both preventative measures aimed at stopping terrorism as well as reactive measures that are implemented in response to terrorist attacks. For the purposes of countering terror in this paper, I define four policy options states may employ to protect against terror. These are the following: prevention, preemption, employing defensive measures, and response. This is to say that the goal of bureaucratic institutions is to prevent, or catch potential threats, and preempt, or disable terrorists before they are able to attack, while the intent of all diplomatic and military sources is to retaliate against terrorism in an act to deter any further attack is, in this case, defensive, when on domestic soil, and responsive, when abroad, to terrorism. In addition, for the purposes of this paper, the use of these military actions against “the war on terror” abroad, is considered aggressive. All four of these policies must be used concurrently and states must balance them to have a totally effective counterterrorism policy. In the cases of Spain and the United States, I argue that neither has a fully efficient counterterrorism policy. The government of Spain has shown its prowess in prevention and preemption through its experience with the Basque nationalist groups, through its coordinated bureaucratic system, whereas the

United States' counterterrorism network was created in the midst of World War II which makes it outdated and disparate, and a community where competition fosters distrust and secrecy. While the United States government historically has leaned on more ex post facto tactics like defensive and response measures through its vast foreign diplomatic and militaristic networks due to the general capability and nationalism, Spain simply does not have the monetary nor the manpower capabilities to react as intensely as the United States can in the international sphere. Spain's bureaucratic institutions and the United States' foreign relations approach stem from how these nations have chosen to combat terrorism and are the best indicators of the protective, preemptive, defensive and responsive elements of a thorough counterterrorism policy.

For the purposes of this research, I define terrorism based on three criteria presented by the Global Terrorism Database, that is (a) a terrorist attack must have a political, economic, religious or social goal, (b) the act must be intended to coerce, intimidate or convey a message to a larger audience than the immediate victims and (c) the action must take place outside of international humanitarian law (GTD, 2017). This description is neither universal nor complete; however, it is the most specific as possible for obtaining the data I had. While other authorities specify this further, it becomes hard to manipulate the information at hand to reflect the most true and complete analysis possible. While the bulk of this paper will focus on what Piazza refers to as "universal/abstract" Islamist terrorist groups (Piazza 62), this is not to say that terrorism does not exist outside of the scope of this paper. While this paper focuses on Islamic extremism, I would like to note that Islam, not unlike any religion, is a complex range of beliefs and practices which are often tied into politics and culture. By the term "Islamic extremism" I am referring to a small group of individuals who have been radicalized into believing extremism and violence benefits themselves and the world. This paper explores some of the internal and

external factors in the years leading up to and following the events of 9/11 and 11-M, respectively.

For the purposes of this research, this paper concentrates on the structures and organizational outlines of certain pieces of the counterterrorism agencies and departments of the United States and Spain as an aspect which contributes to the certain strengths and weaknesses of each state. There are certainly other factors that influence the particular counterterrorist strategy adopted by each nation; however, not all aspects can be investigated in the present paper. *Focusing on the impact of different kinds of bureaucratic organization is an essential first step to understanding different government responses.* Again, for breadth, certain agency titles and departments have been removed as they do not pertain to the exact nature of this research. Any and all charts are for illustrative purposes only and are not meant to reflect the entirety of any and all governmental structures. The conclusion of this paper offers more detail into the background of this paper and further research.

Background

Both the United States and Spain face security challenges from transnational Islamist terrorist organizations, as shown by the 2001 and 2004 events, respectively. For the most part, each nation had previously only experienced relatively small-scale acts of terrorism by nationalist terrorist groups. Spain experienced small scale terrorism from well-known Basque separatists while the United States experienced terrorism from different contemporary extremist organizations including the Black Panthers or Black Nationalists and environmental and animal rights extremists like the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Earth Liberation Front (ELF) (GTD, 2017).

Figures I, III and VI, in addition, compare the number of incidents per year, where one

can see that the United States has experienced a steady rise in terrorism since 2013 while, in the same period, Spain's rate of terrorist incidents has fallen to near zero (GTD, 2017). Specifically, however, as visible in Figures II, V and VI, the majority of this paper will be spent specifically on the temporal scope from 1990 to 2016 (GTD, 2017).

Spain:

Although the March 11, 2004 attack by Islamists linked to al Qaeda was the worst terrorist attack that Spain has ever experienced, Spain has faced a serious terrorist threats for decades (Sunderland, 2005). Basque separatists have ravaged Spain since the mid 20th century, causing over one hundred confirmed incidents since 1970 alone (GTD, 2017). The ETA attacks have killed over 800 people and caused thousands of injuries (BBC News, 2017). While the goal of the ETA is to have Basque independence, the group pledged to abandon violence in 2010, aiming to legally seek rights as a sovereign Spanish region and has given up their munitions fortifications to the Spanish government as of this year (BBC News, 2017).

As Basque terrorism is at an all-time low, the risk of Spain to Islamist extremism is at an all-time high (Celso 2009, 11). Islamic extremism, compared to the ETA, is far less predictable, more dangerous and systematically more complex due to “the explosion of the Arab population in Spain and the growth of Islamist terror networks committed to inflicting mass civilian casualties” (Celso 2006, 128). In addition, while Spain was experienced with the ETA, which usually gives warning of an upcoming attack and attempts to prevent fatalities, the attacks on 11-M by the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigade were without warning and intended to cause as much damage and lives lost as possible (Celso 2006, 140). While many argue the goals of Islamic extremists in Spain, it is clear that Spain plays an integral role in transnational terrorism, geographically and geopolitically (Celso 2009, 14). Beginning in the 1990s, Spain was “a

logistical hub for terrorist operations to recruit and send jihadis to train in Taliban Afghanistan. Spain's geographical connection to North Africa, serving as a pathway for both Muslim immigrants and drug money to finance terror operations, makes it an ideal location" (Celso 2006, 128). Indeed, Spain was the site of an important meeting between Al-Qaida operatives planning the 9/11 attacks (Celso 2006, 129).

Following 9/11, the Spanish government, led by conservative Popular Party (PP) leader, Jose Maria Aznar, strongly backed the United States in its "war on terror" and was one of few European countries to join America's "coalition of the willing" in Iraq. This policy was unpopular with much of the Spanish population and fiercely criticized by the government's opponents, led by the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE) and its presidential candidate Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero. Nonetheless, domestic rather than foreign policy dominated the campaign and the PP was expected to win thanks to economic success and support for its policies combating ETA (Ramiro 2). However, the government's response to the attacks on March 11, coming just days before the election, triggered strong criticism. The government's insistence that the attacks were perpetrated by ETA rather than violent Islamists raised protests that it was not being transparent and was blaming ETA for electoral advantage (Ramiro 3). These criticisms mobilized a large number of voters and the increased turnout produced a victory for the PSOE (Ramiro 3; Celso 2006, 128-129).

Thus, while the effect of 11-M on the 2004 Spanish election is still argued, the Aznar government's accusation against the ETA for the bombings caused widespread public criticism that Aznar was attempting to manipulate the attack for political gains in the election which inevitably played a role in the Populist Party's electoral defeat (Celso 2006, 128-129). The gain for the Zapatero regime came with a need to maintain legitimacy with Spanish citizens through a

foreign policy shift that comes in the form of less punitive counterterrorism tactics used both with the ETA and Islamic extremists and withdrawal from foreign military exercises in the Middle East and North Africa, but most notably the coalition of the willing in Iraq (Celso 2006, 128-129; Celso 2009, 13-14).

As Celso writes, “The political and electoral legacy of the 3-11 terror attacks and the sharp rhetoric between the conservative PP and the Socialists over the nature of Spain’s counterterrorism policy and whether or not al Qaeda has achieved this goal with Socialist Prime Minister Rodríguez Zapatero’s withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq have become a central controversy in contemporary Spanish politics” (Celso 2006, 128-129).

The United States:

Similarly, 9/11 was the worst terrorist attack that the United States has experienced, but the United States previously faced terrorist threats from all facets of the cultural-political spectrum. Notably, for the purposes of the data in Figure I, in the 1960s-1970s, the United States was threatened by terrorism from the Black Nationalists and Black Panther Party (GTD, 2017). Besides the Black Panther Party, the Ku Klux Klan, and other racially charged acts of terror, the United States has experienced anti-abortion extremism in the most recent years, as well as religiously- and environmentally-charged terrorism (GTD, 2017). Since 1970, all of these combined acts of terror (outside of the attacks of 9/11) have caused an estimated 700 casualties which is on par with the entirety of attacks by ETA in Spain (GTD, 2017). Although the number of terrorist strikes against U.S. citizens fell in the 1990s, several high-profile attacks heightened public concerns about terrorism and focused the U.S. intelligence community’s attention on Osama bin Laden and al Qaida. Following the bombing of the World Trade Center in February 1993, the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, Congress passed news laws empowering the

administration to pursue terrorists more aggressively (Hendrickson 202). Following terrorist attacks on U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, the Clinton administration launched missile strikes against suspected terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan, winning broad support from Congress and the American public (Hendrickson 202-206).

Despite growing concerns with terrorism during the 1990s, the attacks of 9/11 were both unexpected and unprecedented. The attacks of 9/11 caused around 3,000 deaths and 8,000 injuries (GTD, 2017). The Bush administration responded quickly with aggressive domestic and foreign policies aimed at defending against people and organizations suspected of having links to terrorism, both at home and abroad. On October 7, 2001, the United States began its military action in Afghanistan, launching a decade-long manhunt for Osama bin-Laden and killing a number of al-Qaida militants, including Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law and de-facto military leader, Abu Hafs al-Masri (GTD, 2017; Lance 104-105). On the domestic front, Congress worked quickly to change anti-terrorism laws and passed The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act or the USA PATRIOT Act in October 2001, which cut some civil liberties and privacy in order to be more proactive on the counterterrorism front (Department of Justice, 2001). This shift in policy signified a change toward a more aggressive foreign and domestic approach to fighting terrorism. As Wyn Rees and Richard Aldrich describe, "after 2001 the constraints that had hitherto made America a 'reluctant sheriff' were stripped away and replaced by a new predisposition towards pre-emptive action" (909). In addition, the United States linked its counterterrorist strategy to other global threats in its so-called "war on terror," which linked international terrorist groups to threats from rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advocated a military response, as in the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Rees and

Aldrich, 909).

Whereas Spain's historical experience with Basque terrorism reinforced a concentration on domestic responses to terrorism, including an emphasis on legal-judicial responses, America's dominant geopolitical position and strategic culture favored external, military-led responses (Rees and Aldrich 907-910). To understand these differences, it is important to investigate the different bureaucratic institutions that each country has developed to combat terrorism as well as the role that counterterrorism plays in each country's foreign policy.

Bureaucracy and Institutions:

It would be naive to expect any hierarchical governmental structure to work like a well-oiled machine. Political scientists can assume some bureaucratic red tape to emerge and argue that policies are strongly influenced by bureaucratic actors. Therefore, it is pertinent to study bureaucratic institutions in order to understand how policy is developed and implemented. In the United States and Spain, as in all countries, organizational bureaucracy plays a big part in shaping each of these nation's approach to combating terrorism. The two major types of bureaucracy are horizontal and vertical. Vertical bureaucracies are those that create a streamlined approach when dealing with issues, which, usually, begin at the bottom with a specialized organization and move upward reporting to more significant agencies and departments, usually reaching the President or lead executive office at the top. Issues from horizontal organizations usually originate from delays for incidents to work their way up through the system. Horizontal structures however have a number of less specialized organizations or lower level branches which each have a role in constructing and implementing counterterrorism policy. Horizontal structures can cause problems in information sharing and slow reaction times.

The United States did not have an exclusive counterterrorism agency until 2002.

Throughout the Cold War, the US tended to downplay the importance of counterterrorism. As Rees and Aldrich explain, “the US intelligence community was narrowly focused on the Cold War, playing to its strengths in technical collection and relying on allied expertise for coverage in areas deemed less important. Terrorism was frequently perceived as something sponsored by the Soviet bloc and was regarded as a minor subdivision of the ‘real problem’”(2005: 908). After 9/11, the U.S. government became more interested in covert action and aggressive human intelligence collection focused not only on international terrorist threats but their possible connection to “states of concern” as well (Rees and Aldrich 910). Yet despite this intensified focus on counterterrorism, the organization of the bureaucracy tasked with combatting terrorism continued to be influenced by America’s past.

In Spain, Basque terrorism accompanied the turnover to democracy from the Franco era, and therefore, when the new democracy reorganized its bureaucracy, it placed strong, centralized power in a counterterrorism agency tasked with combating ETA (Sunderland, 2005; Celso, 2009). Given the history of the Franco regime, Spaniards were more keenly aware of the trade-off “between stringent security measures against terrorism and the penalties thereby incurred in terms of human rights” and “they are more wary about investing law enforcement personnel with powers that could damage the core values of their societies” (Rees and Aldrich 916).

The United States:

The United States’ counterterrorism structure is bottom-heavy and wide-based. Anywhere in between seventeen and twenty-two agencies and departments have a hand in American counterterrorism (reports differ between direct and indirect effects of counterterrorism) (Agrawal, 2017; Simms and Gerber 21-23). American Intelligence did not exist until late 1942 in the midst of World War II (CIA.gov, 2017). President Franklin Roosevelt

created the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which, three years later, dissolved into what we now know as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and to some extent the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (CIA.gov, 2017; Simms and Gerber 2, 21-22). Over the last half-century, more counterintelligence and counterterrorism agencies have been created in response to the growing technological advancements in warfare, espionage, weapons manufacturing and globalization of politics, among others. This has resulted in dozens of counterintelligence and counterterrorism organizations, departments and agencies. Today, as shown in Figure 1, the bulk of responsibility for all counterterrorism investigations are shared between the CIA and FBI, in addition to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Federal Protective Service (FPS), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), Army Counterintelligence, Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), and others (Agrawal 2017). Some of these agencies then report to the Secretaries of Military and War, including the National Guard and the Defense Logistics Agency (DIA), and the National Security Administration (NSA) (Agrawal, 2017; DNI.gov, 2017). These Offices of the Secretaries and Agencies then report to one of sixteen respective Departments, namely usually the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS), Department of Interior (DoI), or the Department of Treasury (DNI.gov, 2017). These Departments then report to coordinating Offices, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive (NCIX) (Agrawal, 2017; DNI.gov, 2017). These Directors and Offices then report to the President of the United States (Agrawal, 2017; DNI.gov, 2017).

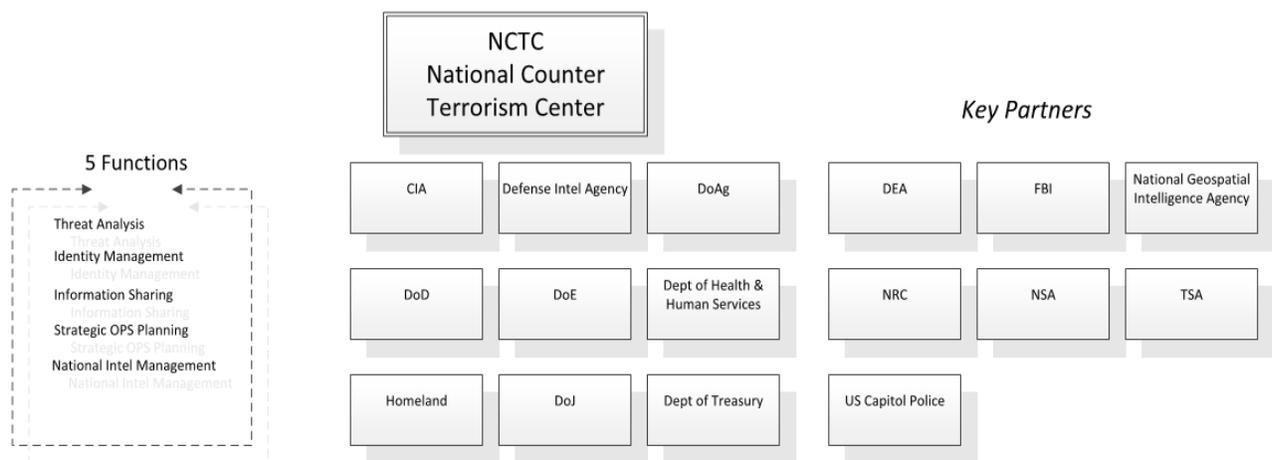
The bureaucracy and complexity of the American counterterrorism hierarchy has not only been blamed for failure to protect and defend the union, but the lack of cooperation between departments has been confirmed as a source of this failure. The Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001 was held, in part, to determine what faults in the system led to the tragedy. In this hearing, Vice Chairman Richard Shelby stated, “We now know that our inability to detect and prevent the September 11 attacks was an intelligence failure of unprecedented magnitude. Some people who couldn’t seem to utter the words intelligence ‘failure are now convinced of it’” (JOINT INQUIRY INTO INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, 2002). Unfortunately, this lack of cooperation, Vice Chairman Shelby goes on to say, led to the worst possible scenario of a gap in coverage which led to a tragedy (JOINT INQUIRY INTO INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, 2002). As argued in the Hearings, former FBI Agent Mark Rossini revealed to the public in 2015 that he was explicitly involved in this insufficient information sharing, alluding to the fact that the FBI was blocked from knowing and sharing the information about the would-be terrorist Khalid al-Mihdhar with the FBI or other intelligence agencies due to a confidentiality discrepancy (Stein 2015).

Given the intelligence community’s failure to anticipate the events of September, 11th, George Bush signed an Executive Order in 2004 to build the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) (Ex. Order 13354). NCTC was developed to accomplish five functions previously missing from the American counterterrorism system (DNI.gov, 2017). These five functions are Threat Analysis, Identity Management, Information Sharing, Strategic Operations Planning, and National Intelligence Management (DNI.gov, 2017). NCTC partners with many of the existing organizations in the counterterrorism organizational structure, but is “aligned under” the Director

of National Security (DNI) (DNI.gov, 2017). In looking at the number of terror attacks per year (Figures I & II), there is an observed decline in number of attacks in the few years after the creation of NCTC, but then the number steadily increases again beginning in 2009 (GTD, 2017) and has, as of 2016, there were more incidents in the same number of years following the creation of NCTC than in the years prior (GTD, 2017). Meanwhile, in the same time frame, Spain’s number of terrorist attacks peaked in the year 2000, and has declined to nearly zero attacks by the year 2016 (GTD, 2017).

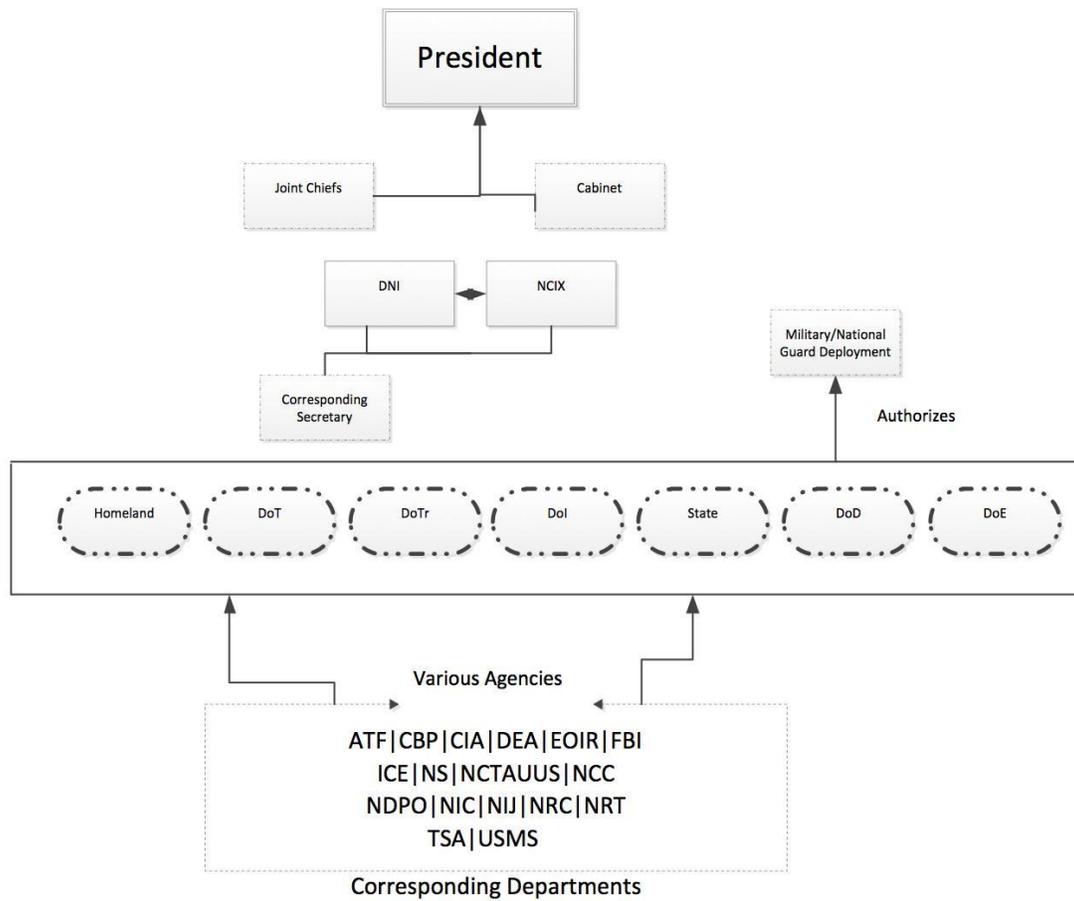
Amy Zegart gives a simple explanation to this quandary: a government can change an institution as much as it wants on paper, but people do not like to change (94, 96-97). “All organizations become more resistant to change as routines, norms, and relationships become firmly established” (Zegart 96). The American national security bureaucracy has become so firmly set in its ways that, even with the creation of the NCTC with a plan to reorganize and restructure the system, the agencies are resistant to reform (Zegart 96).

Figur



courtesy of Patricia Engber

Figure 2:



courtesy of P. Engber

Spain:

Spain, conversely, has faced a steady stream of domestic terrorism from the Basque separatist group *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA, “Basque Homeland and Freedom”) since the 1960s (Sunderland, 2005). The ETA began in the 1960s as a student resistance movement opposing militaristic dictator Francisco Franco (Sunderland, 2005; BBC News, 2017). During this time, Franco maintained repressive policies limiting the culture and autonomy of the

Basques (BBC News, 2017, Sunderland, 2005). Despite the fact that the Basque region gained more autonomy following General Franco's death in 1975, violence continued, peaking at approximately 100 deaths per year in the late 1970s (BBC News, 20017). Due to the existence and threat of Basque terrorism, as Judith Sunderland argues, the new government was prompted to form a more efficient counterterrorism organization system (2005). As illustrated in Figure 3, This system exists almost entirely under the Spanish Interior Ministry, and begins at the lowest level of authority with Autonomous Police Forces and Local Police who reports to the National Police (Sunderland, 2005; van de Linde, et al., 2002). In addition, the National Police agencies Special Security Group (GEO) and, often, the Foreign Intelligence Brigade branch of the General Commissariat of Intelligence Agency respond. From there, if the issue is deemed to be of more importance, especially with a greater possibility of terror the Civil Guard responds. From there, the subunits of the Civil Guard, accordingly: the Rural anti-terrorist Group (GAR), Special Security Groups (GES), and/or Special Intervention Unit (USI), respond. All of these organizations eventually report up through to the Interior Minister with some assistance from the Ministry of Defense (van de Linde, et al., 2002). In times of national crises, the Interior Minister, along with the Defense Minister, the President, the government spokesperson, Foreign Affairs Minister, the Secretary General, the Secretary of State, and the Director of International Defence Department, come together to form the célula de crisis (crisis cell), which responds to all major disasters (van de Linde, et al., 2002). During extreme crises, like 11-M, the Spanish PM can receive supranational assistance from the European Union's Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) or its governing bodies; this process is especially helpful in judicial extradition processes and in tracking and information sharing (van de Linde, et al. 2002). When responding to an event, the local and regional police are always dispatched and the Interior Ministry triages the severity of

the problem (van de Linde, et al., 2002).

The structure of the Spanish counterterrorism organization is far more hierarchical and orderly than the American system (Sunderland, 2005). This structure has been developed out of the need for counterterrorism in the Basque regions for the last half century (Sunderland, 2005). The changes made to Spanish counterterrorism structure post-11-M have more to do with manpower resources (Celso 2009, 15). Celso writes,

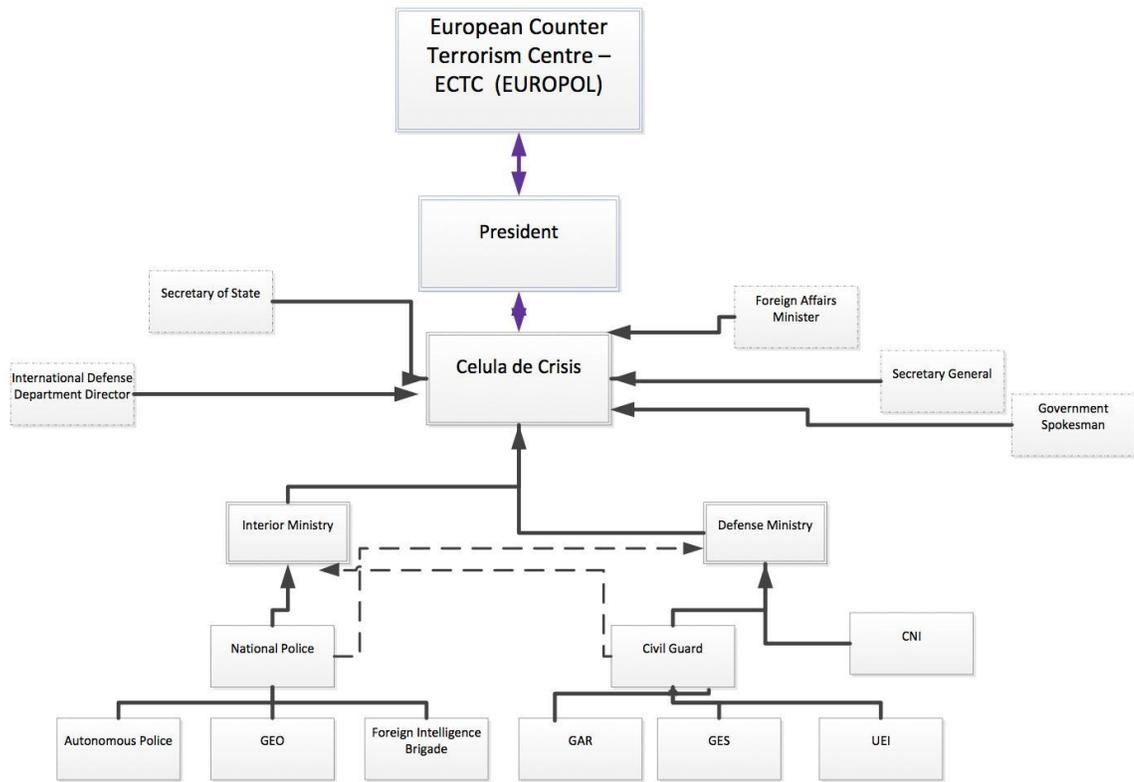
“Prior to the 3/11 attacks the Spanish government had only 150 agents devoted to the infiltration and prosecution of Islamic militants. Within this lax context, the Arab immigrants who planned, conspired, and executed the Madrid attacks were able to operate quite freely. The gravity and scale of the attacks forced the socialists to greatly increase the number of personnel and resources devoted to the hunt for radical Islamists, complete with new entities and the coordination of activities to fight the threat of Islamic terrorism. Zapatero’s early strategy, however, focused more on social and economic measures to supplement law enforcement” (Celso 2009, 15)

This oversight caused the new Zapatero administration to assign more forces to specifically Islamist extremism in the country (Celso 2009, 21).

In addition to the shift toward a greater focus on the threat of Islamist terrorism, Spain has also increased cooperation with other member states of the European Union on regional counterterrorism. Growing cooperation with Eurojust, an EU agency created to facilitate judicial cooperation in criminal matters, and Europol, an international organization that assists EU member states in their fight against international crime and terrorism, has reinforced Spain’s multilateral approach to combating terrorism (Rees and Aldrich 2005: 910; EUROPOL, 2017). In the beginning of 2016, the EUROPOL division developed the European Counter Terrorism

Centre (ECTC) (EUROPOL, 2017). Member States can now ask for and receive help from the Operational Support and/or Specialist Teams in preventing a terror attack as well as during and in the aftermath of a terrorist attack, and with legal handling of suspected and confirmed terrorists (EUROPOL, 2017).

Figure 3:



courtesy of P. Engber

Foreign Relations and International Cooperation

Both the United States and Spain have extensive foreign relations with other countries and international organizations, including the United Nations, NATO, the IMF and World Bank

and the World Trade Organization. Both nations also have been taking military action in the Middle East since 1991 in the Gulf War (CNN Library, 2016). During 2002, when the United States launched the so-called “coalition of the willing,” Spain, under the Aznar government, sent troops to participate. However, when the PSOE took over, almost immediately, they pulled out of the coalition of the willing in 2004 (Sunderland, 2005). And in 2014, when the United States launched a war on the Islamic State in Syria (ISIS), Spain had left the coalition and declined to take military action in the Middle East (Glenn, 2016). This timeline of military involvement in the Middle East shows an American front to combat terrorism abroad while Spain slowly pulls out of military coalitions. While Spain still conducts diplomacy on other, less militaristic, fronts, the United States has kept up its military presence in the Middle East while maintaining a diplomatic presence as well (Sunderland, 2005; Rees and Aldrich 909-910). Rees and Aldrich make the comparison between foreign relations policy in the United States and in European nations like Spain in four parts (Rees and Aldrich 910, 913-915). First, the United States has felt a sense of global responsibility where the European nations do not, and that European nations, including Spain find a more primary niche in the immediate European community and only developed a European Union foreign affairs policy in 1993 (910). This said, Rees and Aldrich argue that the United States tends to favor militaristic solutions over diplomatic ones where they suspect or fear global jeopardy whereas European nations like Spain will opt for more peaceful solutions (Rees and Aldrich, 914). For instance, on the issue of Iranian WMDs, the United States pushed for military action early on, while European nations argued to lend more time for inspection before sending troops (Rees and Aldrich 914). In addition, European nations usually prefer options that allow for multilateralism or consensus building where the United States seems fearful of coalitions and “veto powers” (Rees and Aldrich 914-915). Lastly, is that America

favors quick fixes to international issues while European nations have, historically, sought “long-term strategies aimed at conflict prevention” (Rees and Aldrich 915). These key differences are evident in the comparison of Spain and the United States. They outline the basis for which the United States has a stronger international reach, both diplomatically and militaristically.

The United States has been a leader in foreign relations and international cooperation for at least the last half century, spends more in defense than the next eight countries combined and has a more aggressive foreign policy than almost any other nation (SIPRI.org, 2017). In the weeks and months after 9/11, the United States launched military deployments throughout the Middle East, specifically in Afghanistan and later, Iraq. As previously mentioned, American patriotism and nationalism were high following 9/11 and this nationalistic pride turned to fueling the so-called “war on terror” Because of this high level of spending and participation, the United States has always exhibited less care and concern for the associated risk. Rees and Aldrich write, “American exceptionalism ... has given [the United States] a sense of mission in the world and a confidence that its actions are in the broadest interests of humanity. This self-belief has been allied to strategies that seek ways to leverage its vast material and technological power. It has predisposed American policy-makers towards a national security culture that privileges a military response” (908). After 9/11, the United States not only felt a global responsibility, but wanted to show resolve through military response. In addition, defense and military spending increased significantly to support military actions, specifically in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to a lesser extent, in other nations.

Spain:

While the Spanish government change is significant as far as a change in policy, it is important to note that public opinion had somehow changed in the election of 2004 (Sunderland,

2005). This public policy change is reflected in the Socialist Party's involvement with foreign affairs (Celso 2009). The Zapatero administration, as aforementioned, withdrew out of the coalition of the willing and accented policy shifts that would treat domestic terrorism, ETA, more as fighters of injustice rather than terrorists (Celso 2009, 12-13). These shifts were not well perceived by the Spanish public, who saw this as a threat to national security (Counter Extremism Project, 2017).

Spain has had its difficulty with Al-Qaida and other universal/abstract terrorist organizations, outside of its relations with the ETA (Celso 2009, 14). In terms of foreign terrorism, Spain's geographical location, coupled with a large Arab demographic, makes it susceptible to illegal activities from Islamic extremist groups (Celso 2009, 14). Spain's history with the ETA and the sheer numbers of Islamic extremist cells in the country creates an adept counterterrorism defense abroad and at home (Celso 2009, 13, 17).

Under the PSOE, President Zapatero promised to make efforts to face the problem of foreign terrorism head on (Celso 2009, 17). This included withdrawing from the coalition of the willing, exploring less punitive options to prevent terrorist activities and legally treating acts of terrorism as attacks against injustice (Celso 2009, 12). However, the Spanish government had not pulled out of European Union missions through Northern Africa and are continuing support of the EU, physically and monetarily (EEAS, 2017).

Following terrorist attacks in other parts of Europe, public opinion in Spain has shifted toward stronger support for coordinated action to counter terrorism the 2016 Eurobarometer survey of Spaniards found that 84 percent supported more EU involvement in the fight against terrorism, with 51 percent describing improved measures against financing of terrorist groups as the most urgent measure, followed by eradication of the causes of terrorism and racialization

(44%) and strengthening of outer border controls (27%) (European Commission, 2016). To this point of public opinion, scholars such as Daniel Byman, the RAND expert on terrorism, argue that Europe is more vulnerable to terrorist attacks, compared to the United States (2016). Byman argues that the Muslim and Arab populations are growing in number, but are facing more cultural and societal alienation from Europeans (Byman, 2016). A study conducted by the Sharing Perspectives Foundation, shows that this is true (Sharing Perspectives Foundation, 2017). The study asks culturally significant questions to refugees and non-refugees in Europe (Sharing Perspectives Foundation, 2017). When asked if “Immigrants are a threat to western values,” 10 percent of non-refugees answered “agree” and 3 percent answered “strongly agree” (Sharing Perspectives Foundation, 2017). When adding non-refugees who hold anti-immigration sentiments, these numbers rise to 30 percent and 13 percent respectively (Sharing Perspectives Foundation, 2017). Moreover, Figure IX shows that 59 percent of Spaniards believe that the growing presence of Islamic extremist organizations is a national security risk for Spain (Counter Extremism Project, 2017). Large numbers of Spaniards, 46 percent and 35 percent respectively, believe that Islamic radicalization and promoting Sharia law is not only occurring but is a significant threat to national security (Counter Extremism Project, 2017). In addition, the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris in January 2015 shook public opinion in Spain. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, some 64 percent of Spaniards expected another terrorist attack to occur in Spain (up from 31 percent in 2014). In addition to this increased insecurity, respondents also expressed increased support for military action, whereas in 2014, 75 percent preferred diplomacy (European Commission, 2016). The Spanish public is more anxious over foreign terrorism and is prepared for the government to combat the problem more aggressively (European Commission, 2016).

Analysis and Conclusion:

In the days and weeks following the respective 9/11 and 11-M attacks, the United States and Spain made critical choices which reflected divergences between the two countries' counterterrorism strategies. In the United States, the September 11th attacks caused shockwaves throughout America. Prior to 9/11, Americans had not experienced such large-scale terrorism in nearly a century and immediately rallied behind the nation. American flags sold out in stores across the country in three weeks, the motto "Never Forget" became the headline on all major newspapers and consumers begin to champion products advertising Made in the U.S.A. (Barnes 2001). For concrete quantifiable information, we see a modest increase in military enlistments in 2002 and around 100,000 more from 2002 to 2004, and an even higher proportion of Americans attempting to enlist (and failing to meet requirements) (Defense Manpower Data Center found in Coleman, 2015). The speech made by then-President George W. Bush on the evening of September 11th, describes the nation, people, and ideas as "great" (Bush, 2001). In the first line of the speech, Bush says, "Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts" (Bush, 2001). This speech would be the first instance of a collective American morale which would go on to help unite the nation in support of the war on terror. (Bush, 2001). That is, as long as the government supported morale no one cared if it was moral. While patriotism and nationalism spiked in the years after the attacks, Americans' perception of public policy shifted often through the next decade and a half after it became clearer that this military action would not be swift and exceeded the nation's need for immediate retribution and resolution as the action prolonged (Barnes, 2001).

Alternately, Spanish citizens have a different cultural mindset to terror due to the long history with Basque separatists (Sunderland, 2005). The last three generations of Spaniards have

lived with large-scale terrorism and have developed a sense of comparative lack of concern for retaliation for terrorist actions (Sunderland, 2005). This from a report from the Counter Extremism Project,

“According to a December 2015 survey completed by Simple Lógica, a Madrid-based polling firm that specializes in social research and market analysis, the Spanish public disapproved of military involvement in conflict areas. With regards to Spanish participation in the Western-led war against ISIS, 61% of those polled were against and only 28.8% were in favor. When asked what effect they believed the war would have on the eradication of jihadi terrorism, 58.8% thought it would have ‘little’ or ‘no’ effect. Only 21.6% of respondents noted ‘somewhat,’ ‘enough’ or ‘very impactful against jihadists” (2017)

This longstanding tradition of domestic terrorism has prepared Spaniards mentally to be strong willed against terrorism. When the train bombing occurred on 11-M, the Spanish government, headed by President Aznar, immediately blamed the ETA. This false accusation did not bode well with the Spanish public (Van Biezen, 2005; Chari, 2004). The Aznar government was not swayed in its accusation even when reports of Arabic manuscripts were found and the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigade, a terrorist organization linked to Al-Qaida, took credit for the attacks in a London-based Arabic newspaper (Van Biezen, 2005; Chari, 2004). While campaigning for the national election was called off during a statewide three days of mourning, the election still proceeded (Van Biezen, 2005; Chari, 2004). While scholars still debate ~~on~~ whether the events of 11-M changed public opinion from reelecting the Popular Party, I argue that this response by the Popular Party to the 11-M events did change public opinion. In the hours after the attacks, Spaniards were not looking for a scapegoat to blame in order to raise morale, they were looking

for the government to respond to the attacks in a transparent and moral manner.

Obviously, the counterterrorism structures from the United States and Spain are not the only options for counterterrorism policy, and there are as many counterterrorism policies as there are sovereign nations in the world. Specifically, it would also be of interest to explore the impact of the European Union membership on how Member States combat terror as well as the factor of Brexit on counterterrorism policy in the United Kingdom. In addition, it would be useful to understand the deeper historical background and how it contributes to these choices by states. This research also lends curiosity to how the events of 11-M played into the election, the exact impact of the 2004 election in Spain to the shift of policy, and vice versa. Similarly, it would be of importance to look at how the larger history of the United States and Spain play into the design of bureaucratic institutions and military operations, and the impact on other larger scale aspects on counterterrorism in these nations.

However, while many factors may affect how Spain and the United States conduct counterterrorism policies historically, politically, socially, and economically, as shown in the analysis of bureaucratic institutions and foreign affairs of Spain and the United States, neither country has a perfect counterterrorism policy. While Spain has a structurally sound counterterrorism bureaucracy, the American system struggles with its numerous institutions which suffer from information sharing and trust issues. The United States, however, has become skilled in responsive, defensive approaches to terrorism due to flaws in the bureaucratic design as well as geographically, being less likely to face foreign universal/abstract Islamic terrorism in addition to possessing one of the most intricate, sizable, and expensive militaries in the world, costing over 520 million dollars in the last fiscal year (2017), to favor instead (Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, 2017). In comparison, Spain does not have the military or diplomatic

clout of the United States and relies on more passive tactics like those employed by the Zapatero administration, and constraints by the European Union. While each has its own merits, a nation needs to adequately meet all aspects of this policy so as to totally safeguard the state. The argument is that both the United States and Spain have incomplete counterterrorism policies. This is not to say that any country has a perfect counterterrorism policy, though. This idea of a comprehensive counterterrorism policy, with a comprehensive preventative, streamlined bureaucracy and a proportionally reactive foreign policy, in addition to the countless other elements required for a safe and productive state, is likely utopian and unachievable in the current political climate.

Appendix of Graphs:

Unless otherwise specified: All graphs are taken from the GTD courtesy of the University of Maryland as of July 10th, 2017. All graphs plot the number of single incidents in a given year. All attacks must meet the three criteria specified in the paper, include ambiguous attacks and meet all three criteria that the attack was an instance of terrorism unless otherwise specified.

Figure I: Comparing confirmed terrorist attacks in the United States and Spain over all available years

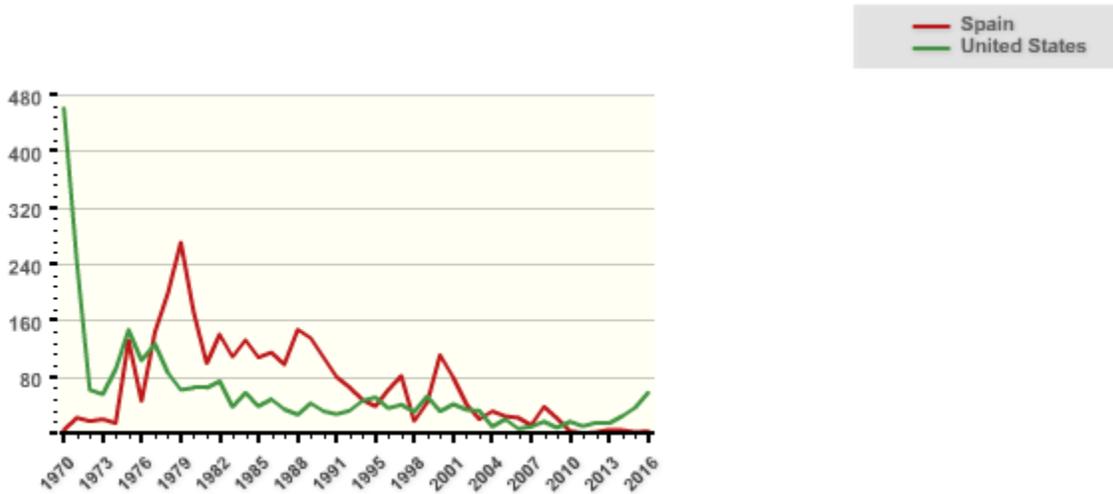


Figure II: Comparing the United States and Spain over years relevant to research (1990-2016)

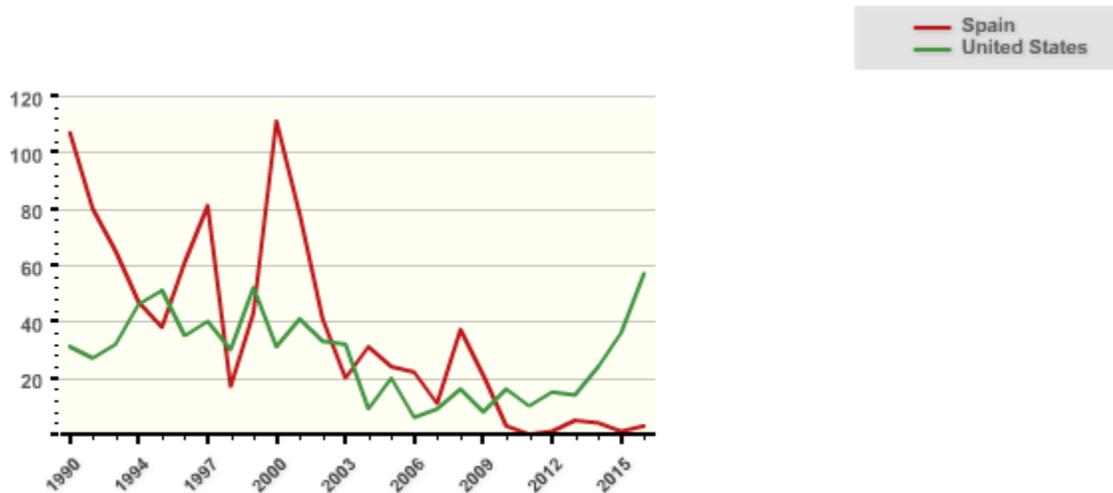


Figure III: Spain over all available years

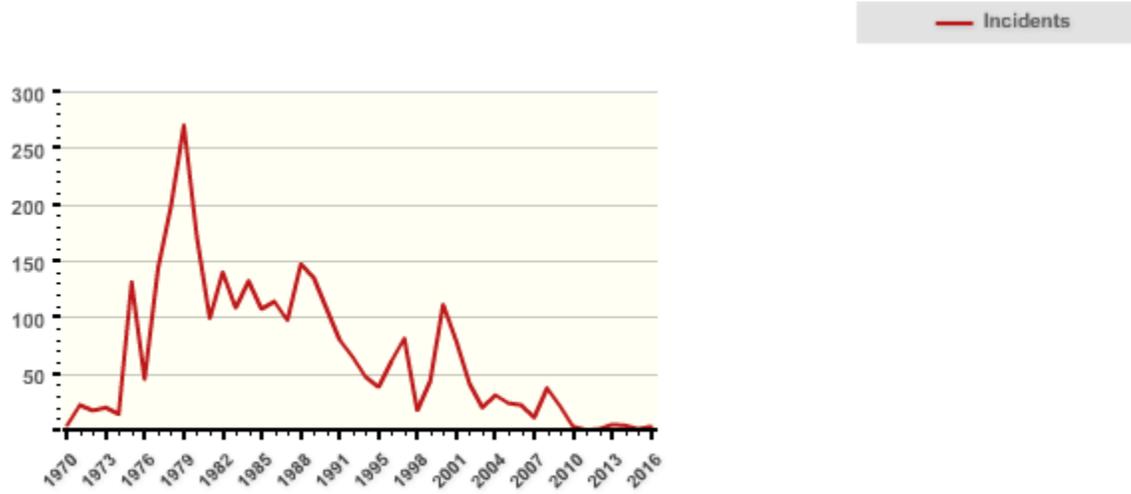


Figure IV: United States over all available years

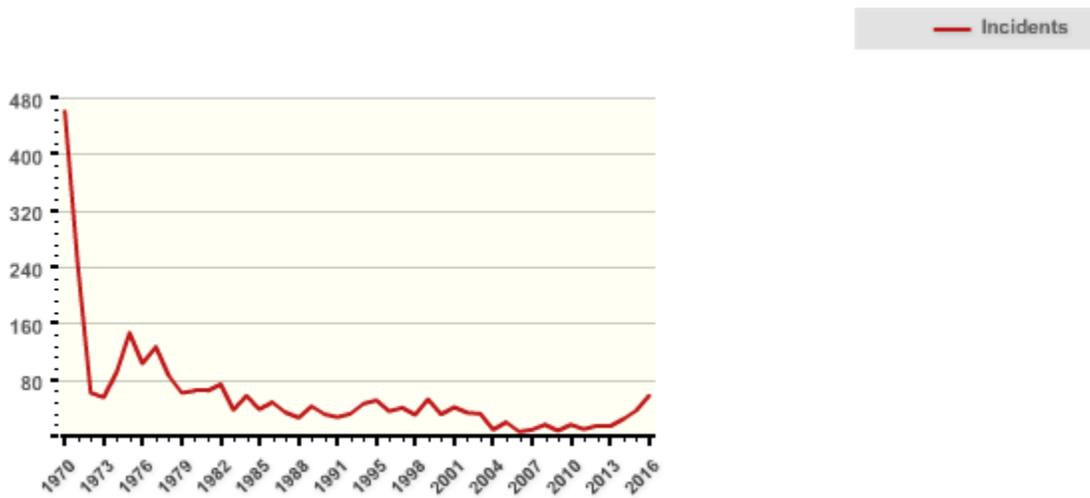


Figure V: Terrorist incidents on Spanish territory from 1990-2016

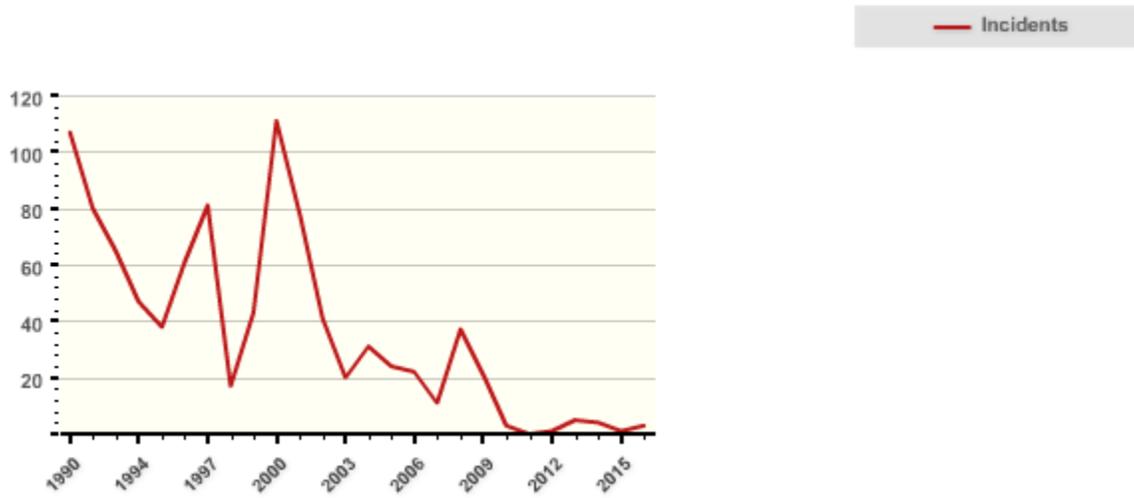


Figure VI: Terrorist incidents on United States territory from 1990-2016

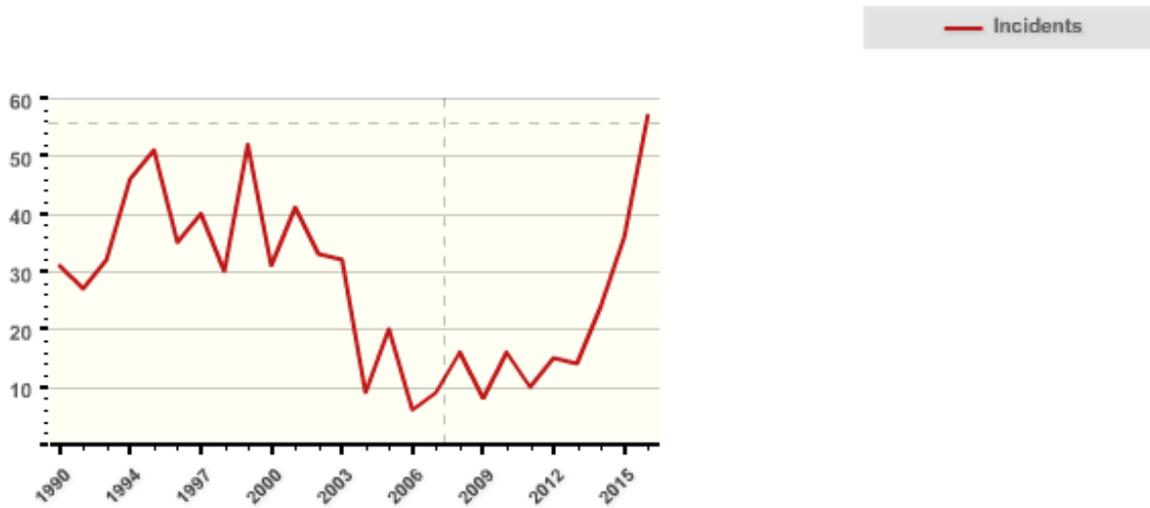


Figure VII: Attacks over time targeting religious figures and institutions

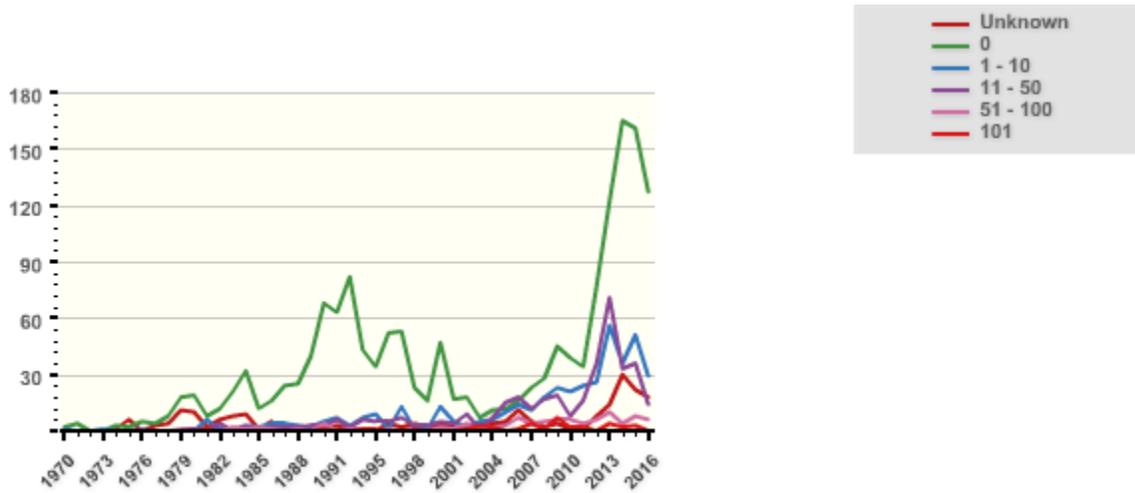


Figure VIII: Terror in OECD Countries in 2016 - sourced from the Global Peace Index 2017

with data from the Global Terrorism Database

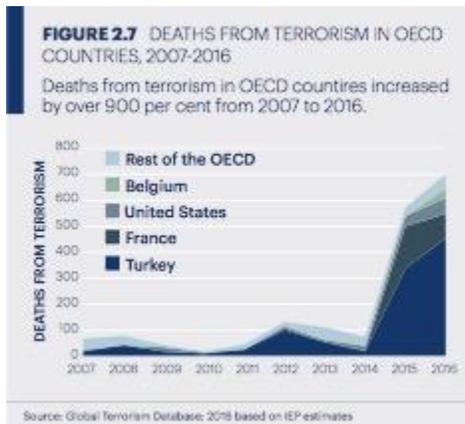
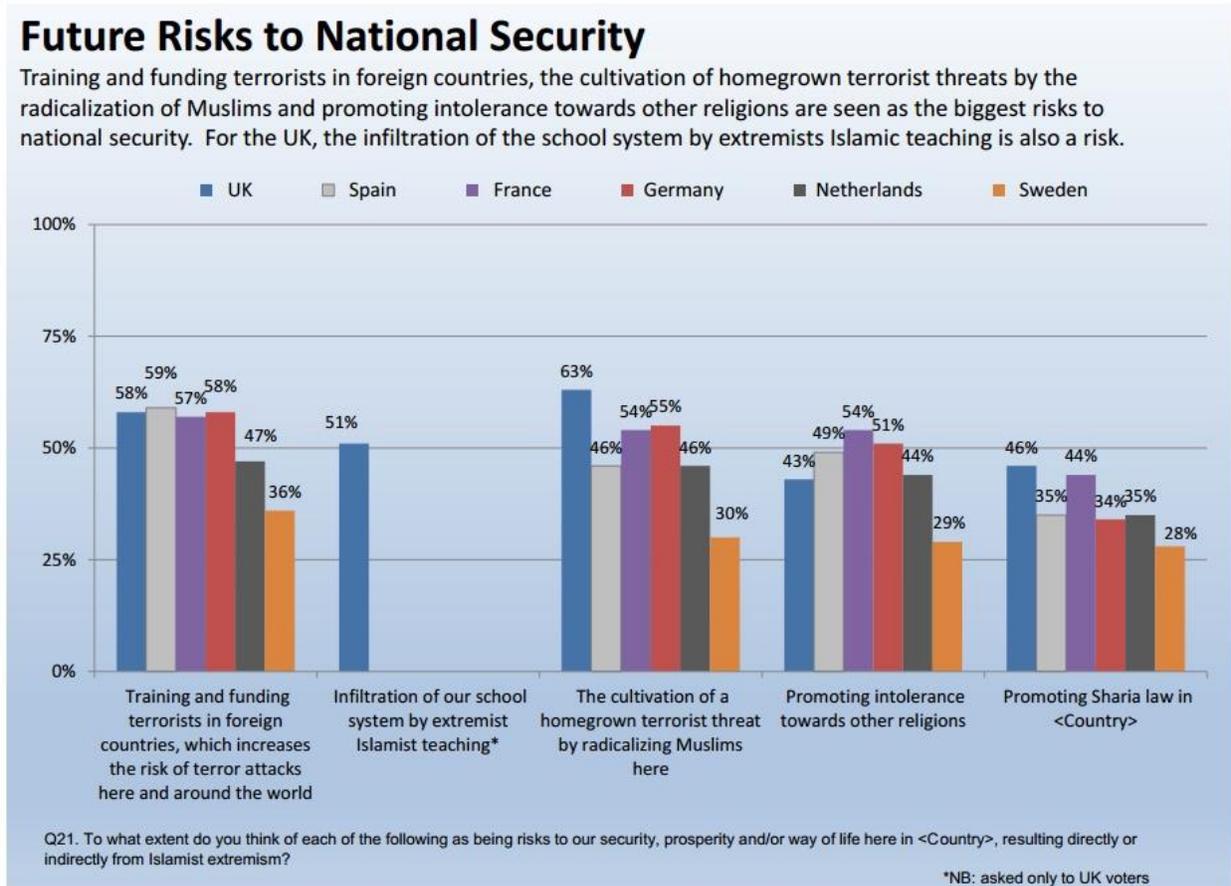


Figure IX: Future Risks to National Security - from the Counter Extremism Project, 2015



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