

## New risks for US allies

may simply deny their role while lowering their level of support until the most recent counterblow has faded from memory. In the absence of publicly presentable evidence of continued support for terror by the target nation, a US administration would have a difficult time explaining further action on its part.

Sponsors of terrorist attacks might increase their support but redirect it toward other targets. This shift in target is to be expected in any case since security measures usually aim at improving security for the last type of target attacked. But the shift in the type of target might also involve a shift away from direct attacks on United States citizens, toward attacks on US allies. The ambiguity inherent in state sponsorship for terrorism is its primary defence in the face of compellent responses.

If terrorist attacks are in fact redirected, the United States may feel its policy has succeeded. This is true especially since counter-terrorist compellence is almost certain to be a domestic political victory whatever its effects on the target polity. Faced with this new security problem, the NATO allies may be moved to higher levels of coercion, or, what is more likely in light of previous experience, may seek to distance themselves from the US in relevant areas of policy.

## Sharing the burden

We are likely to see a more frequent use of compellence by the United States in its relations with Third World adversaries. The responses are more apt to be violent than conciliatory. But the terrorist violence may well be deflected toward America's NATO allies, in the expectation that they will carry the message to the alliance leader and be less likely to retaliate. From the US perspective, this "sharing of the burdens of the alliance" may be an unintended but not wholly unwelcome benefit of compellence.

But from the perspective of some other members of NATO this new cost of membership in the alliance may be an additional reason to question the value of the alliance as it is now constituted. After all, membership in NATO is not a commitment to defend US interests outside the alliance area. Counter-terrorist compellence is apt to be decided upon by US policy makers without any possibility of veto by the NATO members. Thus some may feel that compellence is being used to impose new commitments upon them, commitments that do not contribute to the goals of the alliance. In that event, the use of compellence by the United States against states that it identifies as sponsors of terrorism could seriously weaken the cohesion of NATO. □

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