

Terrorism - Not A Problem

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[Editor's Note: no added ellipses; added brackets are italic, original brackets are not.]

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GENERAL

Hyping threat from al Qaeda prolongs its survival

Prof. Audrey Kurth Cronin (PhD, professor of strategy at the National War College), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Defeating al Qaeda", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 19)

The al Qaeda movement is most likely either to implode or to transition to another form of violence. Which path it takes depends at least in part on what the United States and U.S. allies do. The al Qaeda movement can still do serious damage, but treating it as a new, monolithic threat like the Communist menace is profoundly counterproductive and makes it seem stronger and more united than it is. The most effective way to nudge it towards implosion is to confound the classic strategies of leverage being employed by the leadership.

Overreaction counterproductive

Ted Galen Carpenter (PhD in diplomatic history, vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) and Malou Innocent (MA in international relations, foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute), 2009, Cato Institute, "Escaping the 'Graveyard of Empires': A Strategy to Exit Afghanistan", <http://www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/escaping-graveyard-empires-strategy-exit-afghanistan.pdf> (page 6)

Alarmism increases the group's credibility while diverting finite economic and military resources away from increased domestic security. And, as John Mueller, Woody Hayes Chair of National Security Studies at Ohio State University argues, a national predisposition to overreact to terrorism can make the United States a more appealing terrorist target. 18 Though the United States should continue to monitor al Qaeda carefully and carry out operations against it as opportunities arise, it does not merit the strategic obsession that it currently receives.

Al Qaeda's objectives unachievable

Martin C. Libicki (PhD, senior management scientist at RAND, formerly of the National Defense University) and Prof. Seth G. Jones (PhD, adjunct professor of political science at Georgetown University), 2008, RAND Corporation, "How Terrorist Groups End", http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG741-1.pdf (page XVII)

There is reason to be hopeful. Our analysis concludes that al Qa'ida's probability of success in actually overthrowing any government is close to zero. Out of all the religious groups that ended since 1968, none ended by achieving victory. Al Qa'ida has virtually unachievable objectives in trying to overthrow multiple regimes in the Middle East. To make matters worse, virtually all governments across Europe, North America, South America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa consider al Qa'ida an enemy. As al Qa'ida expert Peter Bergen has noted, "Making a world of enemies is never a winning strategy."

SOLVENCY

Must discredit terrorists, not just combat

Prof. James Forest (PhD, director of terrorism studies and associate professor of political science at the United States Military Academy), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Terrorism as a Product of Choices and Perceptions", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 39)

From this perspective, it becomes clear that a counterterrorism strategy focuses on killing or capturing individuals and interdicting finances will not lead to victory unless combined with a concerted effort to discredit the organization, its leaders, and its ideology and to influence the perceptions of potential supporters within the community targeted by the organization.

Military Solutions: Just increase support

Martin C. Libicki (PhD, senior management scientist at RAND, formerly of the National Defense University) and Prof. Seth G. Jones (PhD, adjunct professor of political science at Georgetown University), 2008, RAND Corporation, "How Terrorist Groups End", http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG74I-1.pdf (page XVII)

Our analysis suggests that there is no battlefield solution to terrorism. Military force usually has the opposite effect from what is intended: It is often overused, alienates the local population by its heavy-handed nature, and provides a window of opportunity for terrorist-group recruitment.

Political Solutions: Not possible with al Qaeda

Martin C. Libicki (PhD, senior management scientist at RAND, formerly of the National Defense University) and Prof. Seth G. Jones (PhD, adjunct professor of political science at Georgetown University), 2008, RAND Corporation, "How Terrorist Groups End", http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG74I-1.pdf (page XVI)

Based on our analysis of how terrorist groups end, a political solution is not possible. Since al Qaeda's goal remains the establishment of a pan-Islamic caliphate, there is little reason to expect that a negotiated settlement with governments in the Middle East is possible.

Protecting Targets: Just moves attacks elsewhere

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Assessing Measures Designed to Protect the Homeland", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 104)

Building hurricane shelters in one area does not increase the likelihood of another place being struck by the hurricane. But in the case of terrorism, the displacement effect essentially means that any effort to protect, or to deter a terrorist attack on, a potential target puts other targets more at risk.

Terrorism - Not A Problem

Solving the Cause: Doesn't end terrorism

Prof. Audrey Kurth Cronin (PhD, professor of strategy at the National War College), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Defeating al Qaeda", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 14)

The first myth is that dealing with the causes of terrorism will always lead to its end. There is in fact a weak relationship between beginnings and endings, and the historical record contradicts the belief that the causes of a terrorist campaign persist throughout its course and are crucial to ending it.

Retaliatory Strikes: Just increase support

Christopher Preble (PhD in history, director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) and Prof. Paul Pillar (PhD in political science, visiting professor of security studies at Georgetown University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Don't You Know There's a War On? Assessing the Military's Role in Counterterrorism", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 66-67)

Rather than causing terrorist tears over lost facilities, retaliatory strikes have been at least as likely to be welcomed by terrorist leaders because of other consequences. One is a rally-around-the flag effect of increased support for a leader, whether of a group or a state, in the face of a foreign threat. Qaddafi enjoyed such an effect in the immediate aftermath of the 1986 strikes against Libya.

THREAT LOW: GENERAL

Threat extremely small; further spending unjustified

Prof. Mark G. Stewart (PhD, professor of civil engineering at the University of Newcastle) and Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), April 2, 2010, Foreign Affairs, "Hardly Existential", <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66186/john-mueller-and-mark-g-stewart/hardly-existential>

Over the last several decades, academics, policymakers, and regulators worldwide have developed risk-assessment techniques to evaluate hazards to human life, such as pesticide use, pollution, and nuclear power plants. In the process, they have reached a substantial consensus about which risks are acceptable and which are unacceptable. When these techniques are applied to terrorism, it becomes clear that terrorism is far from an existential threat. Instead, it presents an acceptable risk, one so low that spending to further reduce its likelihood or consequences is scarcely justified.

Threat dropping - al Qaeda weak

Ted Galen Carpenter (PhD in diplomatic history, vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute) and Malou Innocent (MA in international relations, foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute), 2009, Cato Institute, "Escaping the 'Graveyard of Empires': A Strategy to Exit Afghanistan", <http://www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/escaping-graveyard-empires-strategy-exit-afghanistan.pdf> (page 6)

Al Qaeda is not an existential threat to the United States. It is increasingly unlikely that the group could mount another attack on the scale of 9/11, much less anything larger. All of al Qaeda's attacks since 9/11 have been more modest, and they have grown more infrequent.

Terrorism - Not A Problem

Terrorist groups short-lived (empirics)

Prof. Audrey Kurth Cronin (PhD, professor of strategy at the National War College), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Defeating al Qaeda", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 16)

In doing the research for my book, I studied hundreds of groups. I was careful about how groups were selected, omitting those that had only one attack or one small set of attacks, for example. Of the 475 (of 873) groups in the RAND/MIPT (Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism) database that deliberately targeted noncombatants and engaged in a series of attacks (thus a campaign), the average life span was only about eight years. Estimates given by others are even shorter: long-standing terrorism expert David Rapoport argues that 90 percent last less than a year.

Minimal terrorist presence in the U.S.

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Assessing Measures Designed to Protect the Homeland", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 100-101)

By 2005, however, after years of well funded sleuthing, the FBI and other investigative agencies concluded in a secret report that they had been unable to uncover a single true al Qaeda sleeper cell anywhere in the United States, a finding (or nonfinding) publicly acknowledged two years later.

Al Qaeda deserves special attention here because, as stated by Glenn Carle, a 23-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency, where he was deputy national intelligence officer for transnational threats, it is "the only Islamic terrorist organization that targets the U.S. homeland."

[later, in the same context:]

In assessing dangers presented by international terrorists, then, policymakers should keep in mind Carle's warning: "We must see jihadists for the small, lethal, disjointed and miserable opponents that they are."

Terrorists unskilled and divided

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Assessing Measures Designed to Protect the Homeland", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 101-102)

Political scientist Michael Kenney has interviewed dozens of officials and intelligence agents and has analyzed court documents, and he finds homegrown Islamic militants to be operationally unsophisticated, short on know how, prone to making mistakes, poor at planning, and severely hampered by a limited capacity to learn. Another study documents the difficulties of network coordination that continually threaten operational unity, trust, cohesion, and the ability to act collectively.

Terrorism - Not A Problem

A/T "must value terrorism more than other deaths": Still not worth the cost of prevention

Prof. Mark G. Stewart (PhD, professor of civil engineering at the University of Newcastle) and Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), April 2, 2010, Foreign Affairs, "Hardly Existential", <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66186/john-mueller-and-mark-g-stewart/hardly-existential>

In order to deal with the emotional and political aspects of terrorism, a study recently conducted for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security suggested that lives lost to terrorism should be considered twice as valued as those lost to other hazards. That is, \$1 billion spent on saving one hundred deaths from terrorism might be considered equivalent to \$1 billion spent on saving two hundred deaths from other dangers. But even with that generous (and perhaps morally questionable) bias, or even with still more generous ones, counterterrorism expenditures fail a standard cost-benefit assessment.

THREAT LOW: BIOTERRORISM

Beyond current terrorist capabilities

Milton Leitenberg (senior research scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Assessing the Threat of Bioterrorism", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 168-169)

For two decades, we have been told that bioterrorism would be perpetrated by terrorist groups with an international presence and international political objectives. As noted, however, these groups have little or no scientific competence, little or no knowledge of microbiology, and no known access to pathogen strains or laboratory facilities. The most recent U.S. National Intelligence Council terrorist assessment makes no reference to any of these capabilities. The report of the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism, released in December 2008, states, "We accept the validity of intelligence estimates about the current rudimentary nature of terrorist capabilities in the area of biological weapons."

Hyping bioterror makes it more likely to actually happen

Milton Leitenberg (senior research scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, Cato Institute, "Assessing the Threat of Bioterrorism", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 165)

A message from al Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, to his deputy, Muhammad Atef, on April 15, 1999, noted, "We only became aware of them [BW]s [biological weapons] when the enemy drew our attention to them by repeatedly expressing concerns that they can be produced simply with easily available materials." In a similar vein, terrorism expert Brian Jenkins of the RAND Corporation has been at pains to point out "We invented nuclear terror." If in the coming decades we do see a successful attempt by a terrorist organization to use BWs, [biological weapons] blame for it can be in large part pinned on the incessant scaremongering about bioterrorism in the United States, which has emphasized and reinforced its desirability to terrorist organizations.

THREAT LOW: NUCLEAR TERRORISM

Nuclear terrorism is science fiction - easier to launch Bin Laden into space

Adam Garfinkle (PhD in international relations, served as a staff member of the National Security Study Group of the U.S. Commission on National Security), May 2009, Foreign Policy Research Institute, "Does Nuclear Deterrence Apply in the Age of Terrorism?", <http://www.fpri.org/footnotes/1410.200905.garfinkle.nucleardeterrenceterrorism.html>

There have, of course, been several novels, dozens of action movies, and countless television shows featuring terrorists who had somehow gotten their hands on a nuclear device. But none of these dramas ever explains credibly how a bunch of ragtag dropouts and narcissists get their hands on or figure out how to build a useable nuclear weapon. This is because they can't. It is, to understate the matter, not an easy thing to build a nuclear weapon, given the physics, metallurgy, and engineering involved. It takes a fairly large space, a lot of people with different kinds of specialties, and a fair amount of time and money. The material involved is not easy to hide or move, and it certainly isn't easy to deliver a bomb to a target even if one could be fabricated or stolen. Some of the more imaginative depictions of potential catastrophe would have us believe that terrorists could put a nuclear bomb in a suitcase. This is nonsense. You've got to be very sophisticated technically to get a nuke into a suitcase. If you're al Qaeda working in a cave somewhere, even if you have some metallurgy experts and scientists trying to help you, getting a nuclear device into a suitcase is even less likely than being able to launch Osama bin Laden into orbit.

One-in-a-million to one-in-three-billion chance of success - calculation

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, The Cato Institute, "The Atomic Terrorist?", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 152)

One might begin a quantitative approach by adopting probability estimates that purposely, and heavily, bias the case in the terrorists' favor. In my view, this would take place if it is assumed that the terrorists have a fighting chance of 50 percent of overcoming each of the 20 obstacles displayed in Table 8.1, though for many barriers, probably almost all, the odds against them are surely much worse than that. Even with that generous bias, the chances that a concerted effort would be successful are less than one in a million, specifically 1,048,576. If one assumes, somewhat more realistically, that their chances at each barrier are one in three, the cumulative odds of their being able to pull off the deed drop to one in well over three billion - specifically 3,486,784,401. Moreover, all this focuses on the effort to deliver a single bomb. If the requirement were to deliver several, the odds become, of course, even more prohibitive.

Risk consistently overestimated

Bruno Tertrais (PhD in political science, senior fellow at the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris, and a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies), April 2010, The Washington Quarterly, "The Illogic of Zero", http://www.twq.com/10april/docs/10apr_Tertrais.pdf (page 128-129)

The risk of nuclear terrorism in particular, which is at the forefront of current U.S. concerns, has been consistently overestimated over the years. Despite the dire previsions of many experts since 1945, no serious, elaborate, and well-funded attempt to organize such an act of terror is known to have ever taken place.

Terrorism - Not A Problem

Al Qaeda can't support nuclear terrorism

Adam Garfinkle (PhD in international relations, served as a staff member of the National Security Study Group of the U.S. Commission on National Security), May 2009, Foreign Policy Research Institute, "Does Nuclear Deterrence Apply in the Age of Terrorism?", <http://www.fpri.org/footnotes/1410.200905.garfinkle.nucleardeterrenceterrorism.html>

So if al Qaeda is capable of strategic reasoning, says it wants nukes, and actually made an effort in 2002-04 to obtain them in cahoots with the A.Q. Khan network, shouldn't we be extremely afraid? No. Just as it would be irresponsible to ignore the threat of terrorism, it is irresponsible to exaggerate it. Thus, for example, contrary to what some believe, al Qaeda is not stronger today, thanks to the supposed recruiting windfall provided by the Iraq war, than it was in 2001-02. It is, not least, nearly broke, or its spokesmen would not be asking for money every time they put out an Internet message. Al Qaeda has been fractured, too, which can cause new problems but which, on balance, is a good thing. It's also vastly more unpopular throughout most Muslim societies because of the arrogant and murderous way it has conducted itself in Iraq and elsewhere. Exaggerating the terrorist threat gives terrorists more credit than they deserve, empowering them as avatars of anti-Western grievances, real and imagined. It also diverts our attention and resources away from other problems where they could do more good. Moreover, the threat of nuclear terrorism is very remote. The reason why, back in the 1970s-80s, people studied the possibility of nuclear terrorism was because of a worry that nuclear weapons powers would give fissile material or a bomb to a terrorist organization that would then use it against a mutual adversary with a "no fingerprints" effect. The fear was that we wouldn't necessarily be able to track back the attack to its real source in some state authority, hence nuclear use would be more likely.

Requires government assistance

May 2008, Harvard Law Review, "Note: The Incentive Gap: Reassessing U.S. Policies To Secure Nuclear Arsenals Worldwide", 121 Harv. L. Rev. 1864, http://www.harvardlawreview.org/issues/121/may08/notes/the_incentive_gap.pdf (page 1865-1866)

In order for terrorists to launch a nuclear attack on the United States, they must first acquire a completed nuclear weapon or the fissile material necessary to build a bomb from scratch. Both of these options require some state involvement, whether intentional or unwitting. With respect to completed nuclear weapons, nine countries currently control the entire global arsenal: the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France, Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea. n6 In order to obtain one of these weapons, terrorists would have to steal it from state storage facilities or convince a state government to transfer or sell it to them voluntarily. A similar dynamic applies for terrorist groups seeking to build a bomb from scratch. Nuclear bombs require either HEU or plutonium, neither of which occurs naturally. n7 There is widespread consensus among experts that even the best funded and most technically advanced terrorists will not be able to produce HEU or plutonium without state assistance. Both the uranium enrichment and plutonium paths to nuclearization require complicated and costly [*1866] facilities, sophisticated technologies, "a sizable and scientifically knowledgeable labor force, significant industrial resources, and time," making it "virtually impossible for terrorists to create their own nuclear material, regardless of which ingredient they use." n8 Even if weapons expertise becomes widely available and costs fall due to technological advances, terrorists will still need physical space to build reactors and reprocessing facilities, meaning that a state must either fail to notice or acquiesce to its land being used for these illicit activities.

Terrorism - Not A Problem

Nuclear security much improved

Bruno Tertrais (PhD in political science, senior fellow at the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris, and a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies), April 2010, The Washington Quarterly, "The Illogic of Zero", http://www.twq.com/10april/docs/10apr_Tertrais.pdf (page 129)

Nuclear stockpiles are also generally much safer than they were 20 years ago. The oldest U.S. and Soviet "tactical" weapons, which did not include the most sophisticated security locks, have been retired. Efforts under the Nunn-Lugar program and the 2002 Global Partnership have secured most ex-Soviet materials.

Deterrence: Works - prevents government assistance

David B. Rivkin, Jr. (JD, MA in Soviet Affairs, expert member of the United Nations Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights), Fall 2005, Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy, "The Virtues of Preemptive Deterrence", http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlpp/Vol29_No1_Rivkin.pdf (page 91-92)

[For impacts, see "Requires government assistance", above]

Although terrorist groups such as al Qaeda are beyond deterrence, maintaining robust deterrence remains a vital task for American statecraft because state sponsors of terror still have much to lose. Convincing these states' rulers that embarking on a particular course of action will trigger a swift regime change may well dissuade them from supporting terrorism. Even rogue regimes that do not exercise full control over their territory will probably try to cooperate if sufficiently persuaded that the United States will not tolerate their support for terrorism. Thus, an explicitly preemptive American strategic doctrine is not antithetical to deterrence. Rather, the threat of U.S. preemption broadens the range of conduct that may be deterred. Such broadening is particularly desirable given the nature of modern terrorist threat scenarios, in which seemingly benign activities, such as supporting religious charities or pursuing "peaceful" nuclear activities, seamlessly morph into terrorist attacks and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) programs. Significantly, preemption robs terrorist patrons of their greatest asset: deniability of culpability, or the ability to offer and later deny aid to terrorists. In response, the new salutary strategic arithmetic created by the U.S. preemptive posture is deliberately somewhat hazy to potential enemy states, nudging them toward demonstrating that they do not harbor terrorists, rather than forcing the United States to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that they do.

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Deterrence: UN resolution allows retaliation/provides deterrence

May 2008, Harvard Law Review, "Note: The Incentive Gap: Reassessing U.S. Policies To Secure Nuclear Arsenals Worldwide", 121 Harv. L. Rev. 1864,
http://www.harvardlawreview.org/issues/121/may08/notes/the_incentive_gap.pdf (page 1870)

Perhaps the most important source of international nuclear security obligations is U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 n35 (UNSC 1540). Sponsored by the United States and adopted unanimously by the Security Council, UNSC 1540 legally binds "all States" to refrain from supporting efforts by nonstate actors to acquire, transfer, or use weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to adopt "appropriate effective" laws that prohibit nonstate actors from seeking and using WMD, and to "establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation" of WMD. As part of this third requirement, the Resolution commands states to "establish appropriate controls over [WMD-]related materials," meaning that states must "develop and maintain appropriate effective measures to account for and secure such items in production, use, storage or transport" and implement "appropriate effective physical protection measures."

This resolution has the potential to have a greater impact than previous multilateral agreements for two reasons. First, unlike the other conventions on physical material protection, UNSC 1540 provides an explicit mechanism for monitoring implementation. It establishes a Committee of the Security Council charged with examining implementation progress and creates a reporting requirement that all States provide the Committee with a summary of the "steps they have taken or intend to take to implement [the] resolution." Second, because the Security Council passed the Resolution under its Chapter VII authority, it can theoretically respond to violations with a wide range of military and nonmilitary actions to "restore international peace and security." This distinguishes UNSC 1540 from the multilateral instruments discussed above, which create legal obligations without explicitly providing for any enforcement mechanisms.

Deterrence: US preemption helps keep governments from allowing terrorism

Adam Garfinkle (PhD in international relations, served as a staff member of the National Security Study Group of the U.S. Commission on National Security), May 2009, Foreign Policy Research Institute, "Does Nuclear Deterrence Apply in the Age of Terrorism?",
<http://www.fpri.org/footnotes/1410.200905.garfinkle.nucleardeterrenceterrorism.html>

As to deterrence through punishment, we could say, and have said as a matter of declaratory policy (Bush Doctrine version 1.0), that we will attack not only terrorists who strike us (if we can find them) but any state or state agents that helped terrorists by providing them safe haven or other resources. The idea here is to provide incentives for responsible state agents, or merely self-interestedly prudent ones, to distance themselves from terrorists who would harm Americans and others. This amounts to a sort of reverse extended deterrence via a threat of punishment: instead of using the threat of force to protect friends once removed, one uses the threat of force to make enemies vulnerable once removed.

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A/T "easy to make a simple bomb": Very hard - the so-called 'experts' are wrong

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, The Cato Institute, "The Atomic Terrorist?", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 146)

Los Alamos research director Younger has made a similar argument, expressing his amazement at "self declared 'nuclear weapons experts,' many of whom have never seen a real nuclear weapon," who "hold forth on how easy it is to make a functioning nuclear explosive." Information is readily available for getting the general idea behind a rudimentary nuclear explosive, but none of it is detailed enough for "the confident assembly of a real nuclear explosive."

A/T "stolen nukes": Useless without high-tech maintenance

Prof. John Mueller (PhD in political science, professor of political science at Ohio State University), 2010, Terrorizing Ourselves, The Cato Institute, "The Atomic Terrorist?", ISBN: 978-1-935308-30-0, <http://books.google.com/books?id=HIsLQgAACAAJ> (page 141)

However, both Russian nuclear officials and experts on the Russian nuclear programs have adamantly denied that al Qaeda or any other terrorist group could have bought such weapons. They further point out that the bombs, all built before 1991, are difficult to maintain and have a lifespan of one to three years, after which they become "radioactive scrap metal." Similarly, a careful assessment conducted by the Center for Nonproliferation Studies has concluded that it is unlikely that any of these devices have actually been lost and that, regardless, their effectiveness would be very low or even nonexistent because they (like all nuclear weapons) require continual maintenance.