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Fighting Suicide Bombers: What Works?

By [FREAKONOMICS](#)

[Efraim Benmelech](#), [Claude Berrebi](#) and [Esteban F. Klor](#) have already argued that a bad economy equals [deadlier terrorists](#). Now, the three economists have turned their attention to the effects of house demolitions on terrorism. A new [working paper](#) ([ungated version](#)) from the trio finds that “punitive house demolitions (those targeting Palestinian suicide terrorists and terror operatives) cause an immediate, significant decrease in the number of suicide attacks.” Careful, though: the authors also find that “precautionary house demolitions (demolitions justified by the location of the house but not related to the identity or any action of the house’s owner) cause a significant *increase* in the number of suicide terror attacks.”

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