Threats to Democracy: A Judgment and Decision-Making Perspective

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Democracy as a political form of social organization offers humanity its best prospect for freedom and peace. Today, it faces deliberate threats from totalitarian movements that rely on terrorist tactics. Democracy also faces threats from its own leaders because of the consequential nature of their judgment and decision making. This article examines how threats to democracy are perceived and managed. It is proposed that perception and management of threats to democracy represent a case of judgment and decision making under uncertainty. Relevant factors that influence policy decision making as it pertains to safeguarding democracies from threat are highlighted.

There is a lot of talk these days about democracy, including the need to protect it from terrorists, to protect it from government policies that erode its fundamental commitments to civil liberties, humanitarian principles, and the rule of law, and to promote (or "spread") it—even by use of force—to areas of the world where it currently does not exist. Indeed, foreign policy thinkers across the political spectrum share in common a penchant for promoting and protecting democracy, even if they widely differ in their views on how this would best be achieved. The political left vehemently opposes the type of preemptive military operations seen in Iraq, while the political right (at least the neo-conservative right) applauds such measures as key to recent developments in the democratization of the Middle East. Conversely, whereas the political right is wary of international laws that bind its use of force, the political left views such laws as central to any long-term solution to protecting and promoting democracy. In spite of the differing views, much of the foreign policy analysis that one reads these days suggests that democracy is a good thing. Thus, it is worth asking up front: What is it about democracy that makes it

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so valuable? Why do we care if it is threatened? And, why should it be promoted? To answer these questions, we must first briefly consider what democracy is and what it stands for.

In this article, I begin by discussing some of the key features of democracy, the continuing threat that democracy faces from totalitarianism, and the core constituencies from which threat arises. The latter part of the article draws on research from the field of judgment and decision making in an attempt to show how policy makers' perceptions and responses to threat represent instances of judgment and decision making under uncertainty, which can themselves pose threats to democracy. I conclude by outlining some guidelines for decision making that policy makers should observe as they plan for the protection and promotion of democracy at home and abroad.

Democracy's Legacy is Freedom

Most political theorists (e.g., Dahl, 1971) agree that the core requirements for democracy include the universality of adult suffrage; an election process that is regular, free, and fair; a political party system that has at least two serious candidates; and a socio-political environment that allows access to alternative sources of information. Moreover, the main goals of democracy include political and civil freedom, popular sovereignty or control over government officials, political equality, and good governance. Democracy is therefore a multidimensional construct for social governance, and there are many ways in which the quality of a democracy can be gauged (see Diamond & Morlino, 2004).

Still, if the essence of democracy had to be distilled down to a single word it would undoubtedly be *freedom*. Natan Sharansky well summarized the quintessential difference between pro-democratic and anti-democratic societies when he said, "We must understand the difference between fear societies and free societies, between dictators and democrats" (Sharansky, 2004, p. xxvi). Like other dissidents, Sharansky, a political prisoner in the Soviet Union for 9 years, came to understand that the right to dissent, which democracy provides for, is much more important than the content of dissent. In short, threats to democracy matter because they undermine any healthy prospect for human freedom.

Democracies also provide the best prospects for peace. During the first nine decades of the 20th century, 90% of the 142,902,000 civilian deaths caused by "megamurdering" states (i.e., states that killed over one million civilians in cold blood aside from warfare) are attributable to totalitarian regimes (Rummel, 1994). Moreover, of the 353 wars fought between 1816 and 1991 (defined as any military action in which at least 1,000 were killed), 198 involved non-democracies versus non-democracies, 155 involved non-democracies versus democracies, and 0 involved democracies versus democracies (Rummel, 1994).

Democracy's Nemesis is Totalitarianism

Since 9/11, terrorism is often described as the central threat to democracy. While it is true that terrorism poses unique challenges for democracies seeking to preserve their national security without undermining their commitments to civil liberties, human freedom, and the rule of law, the greatest threat has less to do with the means of attack—with whether warfare is symmetric or asymmetric—than with the underlying objectives and ideological challenges of militant Islamist fundamentalism. If, as Harris (2002) conjectured, 9/11 were the result of an al Qaeda fantasy come true and nothing more, then as horrific as the event was, it would not pose a fundamental threat to democracy. Nor would it justify many of the "lesser evils" carried out in the name of national security (Ignatieff, 2004). But 9/11 was more than a realized fantasy. It was an act of terrorism by people committed to totalitarianism. Their objective, which required years of planning, was not only to "feel good" seeing the twin towers collapse, but to weaken strong democratic (as well as some autocratic) states and to strengthen their totalitarian movement based on militant fundamentalism—one that is intolerant not only of democratic ideals but also of all moderate forms of Islam (e.g., Boroumand & Boroumand, 2002).

Thus, it remains that democracy's greatest nemesis today, as throughout the 20th century, is not terrorism but totalitarianism—whether it takes the form of Nazi fascism, Soviet communism, or militant Islamist fundamentalism. Totalitarianism is based on the ideology of absolute power over others and, hence, on the negation of personal freedom. As I have discussed elsewhere (Mandel, 2002b), totalitarianism is based on the psychology of totalism, which reduces all conflicts to Manichean struggles between forces of good and evil. Moreover, the consequences of those struggles are construed by the totalitarian as all-encompassing and of ultimate importance. This poisonous combination of attributing superlative importance to conflicts that are perceived in rigid "black-or-white" terms lends itself to moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999) from those who believe or act contrariwise. From there, it is a small step to the moral exclusion that presages genocide and other forms of collective violence (Staub, 1990).

None of the preceding statements of course denies that even the best democracies are imperfect in many respects. Democracy is not utopia, and leaders of democracies can sometimes be prone to their own Manichean visions (Mandel, 2002a). The day after 9/11, President George W. Bush stated, "This will be a monumental struggle of good versus evil. But good will prevail" (White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2001b). However displeasing this type of rhetoric may be, one runs the risk of losing moral clarity if this type of statement is equated with militant Islamist edicts against "the infidels," "the Great Satan," and the like. To be sure, President Bush promised to "hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts" (White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2001a), but he

never sought to attack the Islamic world or violate the *principle of discrimination*, which prohibits making non-combatants the target of violence (Elshtain, 2002). Nor did he incite American civilians to violence. By contrast, consider a representative excerpt from the World Islamic Front's edict, which Osama bin Laden and others signed on February 23, 1998: "The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilian and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it" (Federation of American Scientists, 2001). However imperfect democracies may be, they provide better guarantees of the right to security for the world's civilian population than any real or aspiring totalitarian regime.

Sources of Threat to Democracy

Most threats to democracy stem from the translation of human judgment and decision making into behavior. For example, the 9/11 hijackers who knowingly killed themselves in well-coordinated attacks had decided at some point to join al Qaeda, to train for their "martyr's mission," and to carry it out in the end. Their evolving views of the enemy reflected their judgments, values, and beliefs, which were likely shaped by a combination of individual and social psychological factors, ranging from confirmatory thinking processes that bolster one's cherished beliefs to pressures to conform to the frequently articulated world view of their Hamburg cell peers. These judgments, values, and beliefs, in turn, largely determined their decisions and behaviors—and their tragic outcomes.

The players in the unfolding drama of world politics that affect the fate of democracy fall into three main categories. The first constitutes the instigators and perpetrators of collective violence—individuals and groups, especially those with totalitarian aspirations, which conspire to attack the foundations of democracies around the world. The instigators of threat from this group may include leaders of non-democratic states, but more often than not, they are not state leaders, although their influence can extend across many states—bin Laden is a prime example. Today, threat from this category stems primarily from militant Islamist fundamentalists, who not only threaten the security of democracies, but also undermine the prospects for democratizing Middle Eastern and Asian autocracies by fomenting their further deliberalization (Brumberg, 2002).

The second category, largest in numbers, is the citizenry of both democratic and non-democratic states. Whatever captures their hearts and minds of citizens in non-democratic states in the current war of ideas will have a dramatic effect on the capabilities of non-democratic and democratic leaders alike to achieve their strategic objectives. This is why the use of "hard power" alone cannot succeed in protecting democracies (Errera, 2005). Unfortunately, even the most successful military operations by the United States and its allies in the "war on terror" will catalyze an already strong propensity toward violence by followers of radical

Islam, many of whom were taught as schoolchildren to hate "Crusaders" and Jews (Lewis, 2003). This radicalized education system funded by Middle Eastern oil money (Friedman, 2005) and increasingly controlled by fundamentalist clerics sympathetic to terrorist tactics creates what Thomas Friedman (2004) referred to as a "suicide supply chain" of PMD—*people* of mass destruction. Dealing with this crisis will be one of the greatest social influence problems of the century, and social psychologists should use their expertise to aid policy makers in finding effective solutions.

The second category also includes the citizenry of democratic states. The wave of anti-Americanism that has swept across a broad base of the citizenry of traditional allied states is a serious, yet poorly understood, threat to democracy. Krastev (2004) suggests that, whereas the 20th century was the American century, "the era we are now entering may well come to be recalled as 'the anti-American century'" (p. 5). This is troubling not only because U.S. intervention was necessary to defeat the major totalitarian threats of the last century—Nazism and Soviet communism—but also because, as Krastev points out, public opinion surveys reveal that hostility towards the United States is positively correlated with hostility toward democracy and hostility toward Jews. Social psychological research could profitably examine why such a large proportion of citizens in traditionally friendly states have been seduced by anti-American rhetoric and why it has become politically correct to disparage the United States. This is not to say that U.S. foreign policy should not be carefully scrutinized and appropriately challenged. Nevertheless, the number of democratic state citizens that feel a deep-seated animosity toward the United States, that reject its policies simply because they *are* U.S. policies, and that rely on what might be called a "superpower therefore evil" heuristic, is increasing. And, with this increase the democratic world risks losing the ability to judge the difference between real and spurious threats to democracy.

The third category consists of the leaders, policy makers, and high-level planners of democracies themselves. These individuals can pose threats to democracy because of the power they wield over the very systems they are responsible for protecting and because of the consequences of their judgments and decisions. Their potential to threaten democracy thus exists even when they have the best intentions of defending it. In the remainder of this article, I explore a few of the judgment and decision-making issues that pertain to this select group of individuals, who face many difficult and consequential challenges in these early, yet turbulent, years of the 21st century.

The Perception of Threat as Judgment under Uncertainty

According to the New Oxford Dictionary of English, *threat* refers to "a person or thing likely to cause damage or danger ... the possibility of trouble, danger, or ruin (2001, p. 1930). To ascribe the status of threat to an object, therefore, an

individual must somehow assess the probability, or at least the possibility, that the object poses danger. This suggests that threat perception is a case of judgment under uncertainty (Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982). Here, *uncertainty* refers not only to relevant outcomes, but also to their probabilities of occurrence. For example, if terrorists attacked a major city using a "dirty bomb," how many lives would likely be lost? Given the number of factors that might influence such a threat, a forecaster might envision an array of possible outcomes (e.g., 0–50 deaths, 50–100 deaths, and so on) or an array of outcome minima (e.g., 10 or more deaths, 100 or more deaths, etc.). For each of these possible outcomes, it is almost certain that forecasters will be unable to assign a precise probability value. Rather, in each case, the forecaster might be able to provide a probability range that reflects his or her confidence (Kunreuther, 2002). For example, one individual might forecast that the probability of 100 or more people dying from a dirty bomb attack in L.A. would be between 20% and 70%, whereas another more certain individual might judge the lower and upper bounds to be 30% and 50%.

These judgments of possibility, probability—and I would add *propensity* (Kahneman & Varey, 1990)—in turn, are likely to depend on an individual's counterfactual, covariational, and causal judgments of past situations as they pertain to current and future threats (see Mandel, 2003). When the threat involves human agents, these analyses will likely address questions regarding both motivations and capabilities (Heider, 1958): Why would X want to act in a hostile manner toward us? How might X be able to translate those goals or behavioral intentions into hostile behavior? When would X be most likely to conduct a particular type of attack? Where would such an attack most likely be carried out? Answering such questions may involve formulating causal explanations for past events by the same or similar actors. It may also involve generating hypothetical or "prefactual" scenarios in order to forecast what these agents might achieve through hostile action (and thus what might motivate such action) and how they might implement a plan of attack. Much like frequency estimates can be based on the availability heuristic (i.e., how easy it is to recall instances of the judged event), perceived threat may be influenced by the ease with which particular scenarios can be mentally simulated. While scenario thinking can assist in fleshing out possibilities and examining connecting principles, it also has its pitfalls. Tetlock and Henik (2005) review the findings of several studies of experts on world politics and find that their use of scenario thinking tends to confirm their preexisting causal theories. Thus, mental simulations can provide the illusion of having gained new evidence regarding threat when, in fact, their net effect in many cases may be to over-inflate confidence in existing causal beliefs.

Threat perception is also influenced by the emotions that one is currently experiencing (e.g., Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001). Positive emotions tend to elicit more optimistic risk assessments than negative emotions, even when the affective source is unrelated to the focal risk (Johnson & Tversky, 1983).

Negative feelings of dread or fright can lead people to overweight the probability that a threat stimulus will occur (Rottenstreich & Hsee, 2001). Indeed, dread is one of the key determinants of risk perception (Slovic, 1987). The desire to avert what we dread can become a proxy for its probability by various substitution processes. The magnitude of dread felt may substitute for the degree of probability assigned to a threat. Moreover, the ease of bringing dreadful possibilities to mind may influence probability via the availability heuristic (Kahneman et al., 1982). Threat is not only likely to be influenced by the valence and magnitude of emotion, but also by the specific *type* of emotion that is evoked at the time of judgment. Emotion type is an important factor because distinct emotions are associated with distinct cognitive appraisals. For instance, fear is associated with appraisals of uncertainty and situational control, whereas anger is associated with appraisals of certainty and personal control (Lerner & Keltner, 2001; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; Tiedens & Linton, 2001). Given that uncertainty is a key determinant of risk perception (Slovic, 1987), one might expect fear to increase perceived threat and anger to decrease perceived threat. This is precisely what Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, and Fischhoff (2003) recently found. Participants who were primed with a fear-inducing stimulus perceived greater risks of terrorist attacks than participants who were primed with an anger-inducing stimulus.

Another core facet of threat perception among democratic leaders, policy makers, and high-level planners concerns the distributed team context in which their judgments and decisions about threat are made. Much of the information these individuals receive is itself the result of other teams of individuals' judgments about what is relevant to convey. Decision makers not only have to weigh their confidence in the conclusions they draw from the information they receive, they also have to weigh their confidence in the sources of that information and any advice or assessments that they receive from others. Although it is possible, in principle, for information providers to communicate their level of confidence in the information or in their assessments to those higher up the decision-making ladder, confidence estimates are seldom communicated in a systematic manner and they are likely to be lost or disregarded by those making key decisions. Literature on advice taking suggests that confidence will be based on three psychological factors. The first is the decision maker's level of trust in an advisor, which is more easily influenced by instances of poor advice giving than of good advice giving (Yaniv & Kleinberger, 2000). The second factor is the degree to which advice received is consistent with the decision maker's own attitudes, beliefs, or opinions (Yaniv, 2004), or with the consensus of other advisors (Harries, Yaniv, & Harvey, 2004). As the similarity in judgments between an advisor and advisee increases, so will the advisee's confidence in the advice received. The third factor is a decision maker's level of *over* confidence: as it increases, advice is less likely to be sought and used (Sieck & Arkes, 2005). Ironically, then, decision makers are most likely to be receptive to advice in cases where it has the least impact—namely,

where it simply reinforces what they already believe and when they are better calibrated.

Assessing threats to democracy will also depend on how the object of judgment—*democracy*—is construed. As Asch (1940) demonstrated long ago, disagreements in evaluation do not necessarily stem from different judgments of an object that is perceived in the same way by all parties. Rather, disagreements may arise from variations in construal that lead the same stimulus to be perceived as different objects of judgment by different parties (or by the same individual on different occasions). Given the multidimensional nature of democracy, different individuals will likely conceptualize it in alternative ways that, in turn, will suggest different vulnerabilities and threats. For instance, to civil libertarians, *democracy* may stand for the protection of individual rights and freedoms as embodied in the rule of law, and especially international covenants. To conservatives, the same term may stand for the need to protect free states and to promote free-market economies. The different threats that these groups perceive thus may stem from the alternative meanings that they assign to *democracy* in addition to any differences that arise from their judgment processes. In effect, civil libertarians and conservatives are likely to be evaluating quite different objects of judgment.

Managing Threat as Decision Making under Uncertainty

Leaders, policy makers, and planners not only have to judge the type and severity of threats to democracy, they also have to decide how to manage these threats. Like many important decisions, deciding how to deal with threat is difficult because the stakes are high, and there are multiple, conflicting objectives that give rise to the need to decide on a course of action (Keeney & Raiffa, 1993). These objectives can lead to different ways of prioritizing the attributes used to evaluate a set of considered options. Each alternative prioritization may suggest a different course of action. Even if this is not the case, if the salient attributes cannot be translated into a common metric; that is, if they appear incommensurable, decision makers may vacillate, trapped in a limit cycle of indecision until the objective of deciding forces a resolution to the conflict. Moreover, once a decision is made, it still needs to be translated into a plan of action.

In the context of managing threats to democracy, the stakes are exceptionally high both for the decision makers themselves and for the democratic institutions and citizens they are responsible for protecting. In large measure, this stems from the consequential nature of their choices. Will the decisions made effectively safeguard societies against further terrorist attacks and curb the spread of militant fundamentalism? Will they, at the same time, ensure that the spirit of democracy—its commitment to the rule of law, civil liberties, and other humanitarian principles—is not violated any more than absolutely necessary? Decision makers care deeply about the outcomes of their choices partly because these out-

comes are consequential. They want to maximize outcomes that will reap benefit and minimize those outcomes that will bring harm, but beyond that, decision makers may also want to minimize future blame and regret (e.g, Zeelenberg & van Dijk, 2005). Especially when choices are subject to public scrutiny, decision makers will also care about outcomes because they know that others will evaluate them by the favorability of the outcomes they facilitate. The stakes may also be high because decision makers realize that their choices can have important moral or prosecutorial consequences. In short, decisions can be consequential for any number of reasons that fall within a broad social-functionalist framework for judgment and decision making (Tetlock, 2002).

Much like threat perception is an example of judgment under uncertainty, managing threats to democracy is an example of choice under uncertainty. The outcomes of various possible decisions are unknown, as are their probabilities of occurrence. Ignatieff (2004) describes the policy task as an exercise in moral risk taking because each of the key objectives of threat minimization has a strong moral dimension. For example, if one believes that civil liberties are contingent on national security, then maintaining the latter will likely be viewed as a moral imperative for leaders to follow. Conversely, if one believes that civil liberties must be fully defended especially in the most treacherous of times, then the moral imperative will be seen quite differently. As Ignatieff puts it, "For one side, what matters fundamentally is that democracies prevail. For the other, what matters more is that democracies prevail without betraying what they stand for" (2004, p. 6). Ignatieff's position is that neither moral value ought to trump the others. Decision makers concerned with threat reduction must somehow weigh these and other moral objectives in light of what is known (or believed to be known) about past, present, and future threats and what the pragmatic and moral consequences of alternative courses of action would likely be. This "compensatory" view comes closest to both prescriptive theories of choice (e.g., subjective expected utility theory; Savage, 1954) and to some descriptive theories of choice (e.g., prospect theory; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) because it requires the decision maker to consider the probable benefits and drawbacks of alternative options along various dimensions and to integrate these values so that the option that maximizes subjective expected utility can be selected.

The manner in which various pragmatic and moral considerations are weighed in formulating policy can impact the nature of threats that democracies face. The temporal perspective that a decision maker adopts will likely influence the weighting process. Short-term considerations of democratic health will tend to weigh the security of the majority over the civil liberties and human rights of minorities, especially following a surprise attack against the state. Long-term considerations are likely to shift the focus back to rights and freedoms because it is clear that their abridgement is only justified as a short-term measure and should not be permitted to extend beyond the period in which such measures are judged to be necessary.

According to construal-level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2003), this "pendulum effect" (see also Matthew & Shambaugh, this issue) may occur because concrete attributes and means tend to be assigned more weight in the short term than the long term, and the opposite tends to be true for abstract attributes and goals. Thus, if national security is seen as a requirement for the preservation of rights and liberties, then a short-term perspective would draw attention to security (means), whereas a long-term perspective would draw attention to the preservation of rights and freedoms. These not only represent ultimate goals of democracies, but also goals based on relatively abstract principles.

Minimizing Threat in Policy Decision Making

Decisions to limit the rights of individuals deemed to be threatening are most likely to undermine the quality of democracies in cases where they meet one or more of the following conditions. First, threats to democracy will follow from rights limitations that are not accompanied by clear control procedures for re-enfranchising those rights. For example, passing special legislation that permits the invasion of privacy should be accompanied by sunset clauses that specify how and when rights limitations would be restored. Second, the quality of a democracy will be lessened if the objective of rights suspensions is not clear to the public, or in cases where the abrogation of rights is motivated by emotion or the desire for revenge. The expected benefit for threat reduction must be evident if rights restrictions are to have any moral justification. Third, democratic values will be compromised if the intended benefits of rights restrictions are not realized—good intentions alone do not safeguard democracy from the negative consequences of policy decisions. The detention camp at Guantanamo Bay is a case in point. Hundreds of civilians were effectively given indeterminate sentences without being charged or tried and the intelligence information derived from this process has proven to be of little value in combating terrorism. Fourth, the quality of a democracy will be lessened in cases where policies are adopted that violate moral principles, which the international community has agreed must be adhered to even in times of war (e.g., violation of international humanitarian laws prohibiting the use of torture).

The abrogation of rights under the preceding circumstances presents an immediate threat to democratic values by selectively restricting the rights and freedoms of a certain minority of individuals. However, rights restrictions under these conditions also pose long-term threats. First, careless restrictions establish dangerous precedents. For instance, the evolution of international humanitarian laws is a slow and fragile process. The weight of such laws depends on the proportion of states that adhere to them and the extent to which they do so consistently over time. Violations of these standards not only make it easier for past violators to repeat their actions, it also provides cover to engage in similar practices for those who otherwise may not have been willing to break ranks with the international

community. Second, poorly justified violations of democratic values can mar leaders' and citizens' moral and ethical values. Research indicates that trade-offs in moral domains are often regarded as taboo and non-compensatory (Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Lerner, & Green, 2000). While violations of morally charged policies such as adherence to international humanitarian laws will likely provoke some people to be morally outraged and morally cleansed by more fervently defending humanitarian values, it can also lead others to question whether human rights are indeed "fundamental." A recurrent process of justifying policies that violate individuals' rights and freedoms is likely to breed cynicism regarding democratic ideals. Finally, democratic leaders should expect to receive less trust for pro-democratic initiatives that they pursue if they have haphazardly allowed or even encouraged violations of basic democratic principles in the past.

Avoiding these pitfalls of decision making are not easy, especially when leaders face uncertain threats from hostile actors that have proved their lethality in the past. In some cases, the need to protect the majority may require temporary restrictions of rights. However, because rights restrictions usually offer only probable benefits in exchange for some certain immediate drawbacks and some probable long-term drawbacks, policy decision makers may do well in such cases to ask themselves whether their choices represent knee-jerk reactions that may be overly influenced by surprise, fear, or anger.

As 9/11 also made clear, a democracy can be vulnerable to a particular type of threat even if the related risk is relatively low (Kunreuther, 2002). That realization has triggered a process in many countries designed to plug existing vulnerabilities. Doing so represents an important step in protecting democracies, but decision makers also need to be made aware of the tendency to overweight vulnerabilities that were exploited in the past. As the 9/11 Commission Report concluded, threats that are incongruous with past experience tend to be underestimated due to a failure of imagination. For example, as the report states, "Even [Richard] Clarke's note challenging [Condoleezza] Rice to imagine the day after an [al Qaeda] attack posits a strike that kills 'hundreds' of Americans. He did not write 'thousands'" (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United Stated, 2004, p. 344). While the magnitude of threat posed by al Qaeda was clearly underestimated, the "failure of imagination" attribution is at best ambiguous and at worst misleading because it suggests that policy makers did not imagine the possibility of al Qaeda launching an attack on the United States. We now know this was not so. Perhaps a more accurate reading is that policy makers did imagine this possibility but, having done so, they found it incongruous with their past experiences and expectations. Accordingly, they underestimated the probability and severity of threat as well as the urgency of implementing a response.

The issues examined in this articles only scratch the surface of the possible contributions of a judgment and decision-making perspective to the topic of managing threats to democracy. Given how consequential our democratically elected

leaders' decisions are to our security, freedom, and liberty, one would hope that they and their policy makers would draw on the knowledge garnered from the decision sciences and that they would ensure the adequacy of funding for such research. Moreover, more research in the decision sciences ought to be directed toward addressing the important socio-political problems of our time.

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