



## Consequences of Arming Rebels

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - When Malaysian flight 17 was shot down last month, fingers pointed directly at Ukrainian separatists in the region,

But a larger question remains: who provided the missiles and the training to use them? With the blame now pointed squarely at Russia, consequences are being weighed.

"Here in the united states if you provide assistance whether financial, technological, material support to a terrorist group then you can be designated as a terrorist financier," said Jonathan Schanzer of the Foundation for Defending Democracies.

But what happens when it's the United States considering getting involved? Between the intelligence, the vast training and the military might, the US is called on constantly, sometimes even by its own leaders, to get involved in the affairs of others. From Syria and now to Iraq, and from Israel to the countless other allies the US has sworn to protect, these are the ties that bind, but how much accountability should the US or any country have when its aid is misused?

The Cato Institute's Chris Preble says a strict vetting process should be priority number one. "There will be a desire to aid other people and I think that's understandable," said Preble, "but there is also an obligation to review those requests for assistance very carefully, what are the risks and what are the rewards."

Preble says the risks are not always considered, as in the case of arming the Mujahadeen to fight the soviets in the 1980's. His advice for US leaders faced with similar decisions in the future? "I think they recognize the United States' ability to influence the internal politics of foreign countries is very limited and that the military is an especially blunt instrument for doing that."

Waging war by proxy has been going on for decades but continues to be dangerous game, the outcome of which can be deadly.