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**Barnathan, Jack**

ASPECTS OF TERRORISM, THE POLICE AND THE MEDIA, A STUDY OF  
COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

*City University of New York*

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ASPECTS OF TERRORISM, THE POLICE AND THE MEDIA,

A STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

by

JACK BARNATHAN

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in  
Criminal Justice in partial fulfillment of the re-  
quirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,  
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Criminal Justice in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Abstract

ASPECTS OF TERRORISM, THE POLICE AND THE MEDIA;  
A STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

by

Jack Barnathan

Advisor: Professor Robert J. Kelly

This study sought to determine the interrelationships between the police and media in their handling and presentation of terrorist events. A major question guiding the research concerns the extent to which distortions in the promulgation and dissemination of terrorist activities by law enforcement and media outlets exists and what factors combine to induce them.

Another focus of the study concerned the degree to which there may be differences in emphasis on factual content in media presentations of terrorist acts as compared with the information provided by law enforcement agencies.

A content analysis of the terrorist reporting by a major television network news program was undertaken and contrasted with the information disseminated by the Public Information Division of the New York City Police Department. In addition, key personnel in both agencies were extensively interviewed about their methods of gathering, assembling for distribution and evaluating news and crime data relating to the phenomenon of terrorism.

The analysis revealed that both the police and the television media do not, cannot, objectively transmit information about terrorist events as they occur and unfold. Rather, law enforcement and media shape and manage information in a variety of ways in response to complex organizational and legal pressures characteristic of their respective institutions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a word of explanation and apology to specialists of the various parts of my complex subject. It is obviously impossible to know as much about media, police and terrorism as can be known about them by individual scholars whose field of study and research is less wide. I have no doubt that my treatment of police organization, the structure and dynamics of media operations, and the phenomenon of terrorism is better known to many students and researchers than to me. If, however this were considered a sufficient reason for respectful silence, it would follow that no one should undertake to examine no more than some ludicrously narrow strip of social life.

On such grounds I ask that indulgence of those who find my knowledge of this or that portion of my subject less adequate than it would have been if there had been no need to remember "time's winged chariot."

This work owes its existence to the enthusiastic cooperation of the American Broadcasting Company (WABC-TV) and its many competent employees, to the Police Department of the City of New York, and to countless others who provided information, critiques, opinions, ideas and sources of insight into the issues discussed here.

To my children for their silence, to my wife, Christa, for her patience, to Bob, Ed, and Greg, for their ears, to Professors Barbara Price and Charles Winick for their knowledge, to Professor Robert J. (Bob) Kelly, for all his time, input, but most of all his friendship many many thanks.

## Table Of Contents

1. THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF Media-Police ON TERRORISM	1	
Backround of the Study	4	
Statement of the Problem	13	
Theories of Mass Communication	21	
Methodology	24	
2. AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF TERRORISM	32	
Origins and Roots of Modern Terrorism	33	
Ideology, Terror and Political Crime	37	
Terrorism, Psychopathology and the Criminal	43	
Cuba and Vietnam: Two Cases of Inadvertent Terrorism	53	
Psychological and Sociological Aspects of Terrorism and Terrorists	58	
Terrorism, Nationalism and Class Conflict: "The Weapon of the Weak"	62	
Ideology and Terror: Utopian Thought and Action	70	
Terrorism in the United States	80	
Counterterrorism: Strategies, Tactics and Prospects	93	
3. THE POLICE AND TERRORISM; NEWS DISSEMINATION		101
Guidelines For Disseminating Information	103	
Terrorist Incidents	105	

## contents

Constructing Images of Crime and Terrorism	112
Reticular Information Schema Between the Police and Media	117
Hostage Negotiations: Police Department, City of New York	120
The Control and Consequences of Information Flow	122
Public Information Division Notes	127
4. THE MEDIA AND TERRORISM A CASE STUDY	128
Media, Power and its Influence:1	132
Media Power and its Influence :2	
Theories of Communications	134
Terrorist Use of the Media	138
Terrorism as a System of Communication; or Political Terrorism	
Recent History	142
Terrorism Against Israel	145
U.S. Terrorist Groups Use of the Media	146
Media Orientation Towards "News"	152
Media Codes	157
The Irish Case	161
The U.S. and its Media Relationship	164
Against Censorships	169
5. EFFECTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF POLICE AND MEDIA DISSEMINATION OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES	183
Conflicts Between Police and Media	185
Interactions Between the Police and the Media on Appropriate Public Information	190
Media Dependence on the Police and it's Consequence	197
The Structure of Information Between Police and Media	200
6. IMPRESSIONS-OBSERVATIONS-CONCLUSIONS; WHO IS USING WHO? AND WHY	204
APPENDIX A	
QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS FOR POLICE AND MEDIA PERSONNEL	214
APPENDIX B	
NETWORK GUIDELINES ON ACTS OF TERRORISM	233

Contents

LIST OF REFERENCES 237

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	From Terrorist Incidents to Terrorist News	14
2.	Terrorist Incidents	29
3.	Suspects Reported in Police Releases and Television Newscasts	30
4.	Victims Reported in Police Releases And Television Newscasts	30
5.	Information Sources Cited in Newscasts	31
6.	Major Incidents of Terrorism 1970-1984	81
7.	Types of Terrorist Incidents 1970-1984	81
8.	Terrorist Uses of the Media	151
9.	Behaviors and Acts Labeled Terroristic by Media Personnel	159
10.	Negative Outcomes of News Embargos on Terrorism	166
11.	The Pros and Cons of Censorship Debate on Media Coverage of Terrorism	168
12.	Network Coverage of the Hanafi Muslim Incident-Washington, D.C. 1977	176
13.	Number of Stories on Terrorism	179
14.	Average Time of Individual Stories on Terrorism	179
15.	Primary Broadcaster of Stories on Terrorism	180
16.	Media Sources of Information on Terrorism	183
17.	References to Terrorist Incidents in Two Reporting Schemes	192
18.	Characteristics of Terrorist Participants as Found in Police and Media Reports	193
19.	Characteristics of Terrorist Participants as Found in Police and Media Reports	193
20.	Ideological Orientations	194
21.	Terrorist Participant Motives	194
22.	Terrorist Targets as Found in Police and Media Reports	196
23.	Characteristics of Terrorist Victims as found in Police and Media Reports	196

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.	Terrorist Incidents Aimed at Americans 1985	83
2.	Terrorist Incidents Aimed at Americans 1986	84
3.	Staff Organization of the Public Information Division of the New York City Police Department	111
4.	The Communications System	135
5.	Network News Organizational Structure	172
6.	An Overview of the Transformation of Terrorist Activities into Reportable Events and News Items	199
7.	Channels and their Interrelationships	201

## CHAPTER 1

### The Interrelationship of Media-Police On Terrorism

There is no denying the international significance and concern with terrorist activities and movements in the world today. In the media and in public debate and discussions, the differences between terrorist acts and incidents and other forms of political violence are often blurred and obscured by a lack of clear-cut definition as to what is and what is not terrorism. Even among scholars, the phenomenon of terrorism is beset with serious definitional disputes.

Attempts to examine the ideas, beliefs and programs that motivate and generate violent actions in the name of some political ideal are complicated by many factors. Terrorism and acts of terrorism are not the exclusive practice of illegal political organizations: historically, many "legal", above-ground political groups have not hesitated to resort to terror tactics in order to achieve some political goal when opportunities to carry on non-violent agitation for change were or were perceived to be exhausted or frustrated. Two examples will suffice to suggest the vagueness and conflict surrounding the concept of terrorism. Bassiouni, a student of the phenomenon, defines terrorism as:

...forcible resistance to the government administration... acts which cripple or prejudice industry, acts which cause general dislocation, disturbance or disorder, acts which hamper or deter any person from assisting in the maintenance of law and order. any act which embarrasses the administration of the state, will be construed as acts of terrorism. (Bassiouni 1975:25)

Still other approaches to terrorism emphasize its political dimensions. For instance, The National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals Report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism distinguishes various categories of terrorism. Political terrorism is defined as "violent criminal behavior designed primarily to generate fear in the community, or a substantial segment of it, for political purpose." Non-political terrorism is construed by the Task Force as fear and intimidation which is designed to achieve some individual or collective gain which is non-political in nature. Then there is official and state terrorism in which the employment of methods of intimidation is rooted in a government policy which is designed to deter opposition and to sustain a group in the seat of power (Byrne 1976:3-6).

In 1973, The United Nations attempted to provide a definition of terrorism as part of its effort to prevent and punish such acts through its member states. Proposals which characterized terrorism as a violence intended to damage the operations of national states were challenged by

others who wished to focus on a concept of terrorism which accentuated the repressive policies of states and governments against groups seeking redress of grievances or change in the form of national liberation struggles. Apparently, for the superpowers such as the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, anyone attempting to undermine the legitimate power of a government is a terrorist; whereas, for the "underdeveloped" nations, it is the oppressive superpowers and their actions designed to maintain their power over others that constitute terrorist activity.

It should be clear that there is no single, widely accepted definition of terrorism. One of the basic confusions that seem to be widespread among political leaders and media is the difference between revolutionary guerrilla activity and terrorist activity. While it is true that revolutionary groups often use terrorist tactics there are important distinctions to be made between terrorist organizations and revolutionary groups. In short, revolutionary guerrilla organizations discriminate in their use of violence. Terrorists, on the other hand, are typically indiscriminate in their employment of violence. This means that not only civilians might be hurt or killed but that such anti-civilian violence is an essential part of

intimidating a population. Where the guerrilla tends to exclude the civilian population from violent attack (except to frighten it into the belief that the government cannot protect it), the terrorist creates mayhem and fear throughout the civilian populace by diffused and blanket attacks and threats against all.

The point of these distinctions is to indicate something of the depth of the problem this area of investigation will concentrate on. The term "terrorism" is ambiguous; it is used to characterize many different groups and actions carried out allegedly for political reasons and applied indiscriminately in such a manner that innocent and noncombatant persons are hurt or killed, not because of unfortunate accident but as part of terroristic intimidation.

#### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The public's need for information about crime, about the criminal justice system, and about terrorism issues which relate to public safety and public policy is abundantly clear. Too often, the media deals in a sensationalized manner with criminal justice matters. Despite the number of crime stories covered by the media, the criminal justice process remains something of a mystery to most of the general public. Most television stations and newspapers do not even have a regular criminal justice journal-

ist on their staffs. This study will attempt to explore the complex way in which the "social reality of terrorism" is constructed from media reporting methods.

The subject is important because media presentations of terrorism might be a major source of information for many Americans. Greenberg's (1969) discussion of the importance of studying media presentation of violence is related here:

The vast majority of our exposure to violent acts has been indirect as communicated through the mass media. What we have seen in the way of violent acts, what we know of violence and its general consequences has occurred primarily through an indirect media process.

The same statement could be made concerning information about crime in general and about terrorist acts in particular.

This study will ask if there are distortions in the presentation of terrorist activities by media outlets and, if there are, what pressures and factors combine to induce them?

The study of terrorism organizations poses problems of access for police, media and researchers. Terrorist groups are habituated to the practices of secrecy and engage in clandestine activities which makes the generation of reliable data about it difficult, but not necessarily insurmountable.

In order to study police-media relationships about terrorism, the investigation will focus on terrorist incidents so that some determination can be made as to what extent the media accurately and faithfully report what has happened. It must be pointed out that the study begins with the assumption that the law enforcement agencies are more likely to possess the actual facts of such occurrences, terrorist events, than the media organizations. While media can gain access independently of the police in the case of some terrorist activities, in most cases, but not all, it is law enforcement that has the primary data.

A key question in this study is the degree to which there may be differences in emphasis on factual content of media presentation of terrorist activities by media as compared with that of law enforcement agencies.

It is an article of faith among network news editors and producers that individual newsmen and newswomen, electronic journalists, are autonomous "professionals" who make their decisions about the shape and content of stories independent of the needs, expectations and hierarchy of the organization for which they work (Epstein, 1973). It is clear that this claim does not quite square with the facts of broadcast journalism. Nevertheless, how coverage of specific types of events such as terrorist incidents is organized, managed and broadcast has not been studied in depth. This research will seek to examine the relationship

between the coverage of terrorism on television network news and the actual occurrence of such events in reality.

As with all communications from law enforcement to representatives of the press and television news concerning cases involving terrorist incidents, law enforcement personnel must take special case to avoid disclosures that may prejudice those accused of such actions or that may jeopardize the integrity of the police investigative process or, finally, that may produce an unpredictable impact on a public threatened by extraordinary violence. At the same time, however, law enforcement agencies neither wish to nor can suppress media coverage of these events and incidents. In fact, apart from the public's right to know, law enforcement agencies often encourage media coverage because widescale dissemination of the details of incidents and their participants may aid the police.

The risk of sensationalism are particularly acute with respect to cases of terrorism. The manner in which information about terrorist incidents is collected and the form of its presentation to the public will affect the conduct of the agencies and persons involved in coping with it officially. In addition, these factors may be critical influences on the growth or spread, if any, of terrorist incidents (Task Force Report on Disorder and Terrorism, 1976).

It also appears that the approaches taken by the media to news-gathering and reporting will have an important cumulative effect on public attitude towards the phenomenon of terrorism, the groups who participate in it, and the official measures taken in response to it. Media intrusions are not unknown and may produce in on going events a "Heisenberg Effect," wherein the act of coverage and reporting itself changes the character of the events. Terrorists seeking publicity, whether for personal or selfless political reasons, may be emboldened to occupy a facility, or raise the level of demands because of the visible presence of a prominent news team.

The difficulties posed by adherence to a principle of providing the public with a balance, uninflamatory coverage of terrorist's incidents are potentially far more numerous than might be encountered in other forms of news-gathering. Added to the problems faced by law enforcement agencies and media organizations is the element of self-censorship which is alien to the traditions of American journalism. The public interest in receiving full information about such events, even when the disclosure of that information may place innocent lives at risk, is a real one; it is also likely that the risks increase rather than diminish with the passage of time (Bagdikian, 1968).

With the rising frequency of terrorist activities in the United States, Western Europe, and the Middle East in the 1970's, many broadcast news organizations realized that they needed guidelines for the coverage of such situations. Officials at both local and national levels of government publicly called for restraint and self-censorship by television networks believing that terrorists depend upon the exposure that television provides and amplifies. Limited television coverage, or no coverage, it was argued, would make the act of terrorism futile, and fewer incidents would occur if access to television were denied (Westin, 1982).

Queries of television newspeople show a range of opinion about the nature of their coverage of terrorist incidents (More, 1977).

Some broadcasters feel that live coverage of terrorist activities in effect cooperates with the terrorists giving them an opportunity to influence a large audience for the threat of violence and intimidation. In short, live, unrestricted coverage of terrorism makes the broadcaster an accomplice of sorts to the terrorist.

For others, on the other hand, the public's right to know and the freedom of the press is paramount. Some television journalists put the question in blunt terms: since terrorist incidents are news, now matter how fear-provoking and distasteful, it is their "professional" obligation to

cover news even if they may play into the hands of terrorists. They have no choice but to provide as much information as possible of what is actually going on. Nevertheless, many police and law enforcement officials believe that media presence can and has produced unfortunate consequences in the resolution of terrorist incidents (Bolz, 1977).

The effects of television media coverage cannot be underestimated. An observer of broadcast media suggests in this connection that

[The Iranian hostage story]...where the network news was watched [became] an important factor in foreign policy calculations, some columnists, in fact, suggested that the Carter Administration was pushed to try the abortive helicopter rescue mission in part because of the constant high visibility given the hostages on the evening news (Diamond, 1982:110).

The issues are of serious concern to the electronic news-gathering organizations. In the wake of the Hanafi Muslim hostage incident in Washington D.C. in April, 1977, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) News president Richard S. Salant promulgated guidelines for the coverage of terrorist incidents (More, 1977:21).

While Mr. Salant opposed the total suppression of coverage, he stipulated the conditions under which restraint must be exercised, and strongly urged that live coverage of such incidents be avoided lest television broadcasting become a platform for terrorist propaganda and demands.

This study will attend to television news presentations of terrorism, rather than print media (daily newspapers or news-magazines) for several reasons. Studies indicate that the average American now relies on television as his or her primary source of news and spends less and less time with daily newspapers (Mankiewicz & Swedlow, 1984). Television news has an immediacy that is simply unparalleled (Lewis, 1984). And its immediacy makes television news vulnerable to mistakes and errors in judgment that go on the air. Whereas newspaper editors and reporters can put some time and distance between themselves and the events they are reporting, and have the luxury of more time for clarification, reflection, detail and perspectives; television compresses the processes of verification, fact checking and perspective. In its live and continuous coverage formats of a breaking story, for example, the broadcast tends to take on a life of its own. The system in the network and local stations does not provide for a detailed review of material. Much of what pours in is raw data edited on the spot; interviews may be done with eyewitnesses whose own credibility is unchallenged and unchecked. The choices become brutally simple: either accept the material or reject it (Westin, 1982).

Newspapers and newsmagazine reporters and editors can fill in the blanks in their stories by calling them back

before going to press. In television news much remains immutable: pictures taken by a camera crew are fixed on tape or film; questions asked by a correspondent are recorded on a sound track; and the accompanying narration--the "background filler"--is, for all practical purposes, unchangeably contained on the audio tape. Omitted or overlooked questions cannot be inserted by simply telephoning the interviewee and asking for amplification. Of course re-shooting and re-interviewing can be done but takes time and money and in the highly charged competitive atmosphere of television journalism, delays and the loss of spontaneity means that one's competitors gain the advantage in rating and "scoops"--facts which figure prominently and constantly in the determination of jobs, careers and commercial advertising which is the life-blood of the industry (Altheide, 1982).

Whether newspaper and general print media coverage of crime, and terrorism in particular, is related to the incidence of crime and terrorism in reality has been the focus of only limited research efforts. Far less information exists concerning the prevalence and dimension of crime news on television, and there are virtually no studies to date of the treatment of terrorism by television news. The bulk of the research on crime news on television is limited to mainly focusing on crime in general. (Dominick, 1978).

The main issues surrounding the studies of crime reporting in television for the purpose of this research have to do with the ways in which television news either over-emphasizes or distorts crime news. Another question which has guided a number of studies of television crime news concern the degree of concentration on sensational or violent crimesd at the expense of other news items (Gans, 1979).

Despite the growth of research interest in television and radio broadcasting, there have been no significant studies on television news coverage of terrorism. Therefore, in view of the limited, anecdotal data on terrorism and television news coverage, a more detailed look is needed at this phenomenon and its presentation in a medium that the public increasingly relies upon for it view of mojour social and political events.

#### Statement of the Problem

The available research makes it clear that mass media, especially television, plays a major role in the creation and dissemination of beliefs about crime (Roper, 1985). Similarly it may be argued that information about terrorist incidents becomes largely knowable primarily through the electronic mass media. And as with crime in general, those interested in learning about terrorism from the mass media are treated to incidences of it but at such a superficial level of description that it is difficult

for them to develop an analytical comprehension of it.

Within the body of research on crime and the dissemination of it in the media, there is a stream of work that has established that crime presented in the mass media is not the same as crime in actuality (Sherizen, 1978). The same may be said of terrorist acts and incidents: they are not presented on television broadcasts in all of their details exactly as they occur or unfold. Rather, one gets a truncated version of events and images which perhaps crystallize the main points of the incident for the viewer in terms of the broadcaster's expectations and orientations based on their perspectives.

Other research on the dynamics of mass communications indicates that television broadcasting follows rules or conventions which inform its selection process of crime events and by analogy, terrorist events. This implies a sorting out process and filtering of the incidents that take place so that viewers see crime events which are somehow "representative" or "characteristically" paradigmatic of numerous crime events that are not reported over the airwaves. The point can be illustrated graphically in this fashion:

Table 1.1: From Terrorist Incidents to Terrorist News\*

- (a) Terrorist Incidents
- ↓
- (b) Terrorist incidents known to police
- ↓
- (c) Newsworthy Terrorist Incidents
- ↓
- (d) Terrorist incidents broadcast as news

(it should be noted that compared to street crimes, terrorist incidents are vastly fewer in number and are more likely to be known to the police and media since the incidents themselves are designed to attract public notice. Secondly, because they are "public events" and relatively infrequent, they tend to be newsworthy by definition. Thus, it may be expected that most terrorist incidents, if not all, will appear as newsworthy items.)

For the purpose of this research, this means that the selectivity and molding of terrorist incidents for presentation in broadcasts has less to do with determining those among many that seem characteristic or representative of all known terrorist acts than with shaping an incident, editing coverage of it in which various aspects are deleted or augmented in order to make it suitable by some standards for television presentation as a new occurrence.

Given the relative infrequency of terrorist acts as compared with crimes in general, the research will not examine broadcaster decisions to report and present some specific terrorist acts rather than others. Instead, the study will look at two aspects of the television reporting

of such events. First, the investigation will describe how information is obtained from law enforcement agencies, especially the New York City Police Department (NYCPD), and then proceed to delineate to present various dimensions and features of a terrorist incident rather than some possible others that are excluded. In Hypothetical form, this may be put as follows:

Hypothesis I:

The organizational features of television newswork influence the presentation of terrorist incidents in broadcasts.

Hypothesis I is designed to provide a detailed picture of the production context (i.e. the way in which terrorist events become newsworthy) rather than the audience context (i.e. the manner in which television news of such events is received and used by the audience of viewers) through which terrorist incidents are reported.

The "organizational features" of network in a television news operation consists of both bureaucratic and occupational factors that effect broadcasting production. These include but are not limited to: the location of sources, interviewing informants and sources, taping, script preparation, timing the report, editing it, and positioning it in a news broadcast. These and other elements of the television news process and its structure function as "Gate-keeping criteria" that determine what elements of an

incident appear on a broadcast, and what aspects of the event are highlighted.

Hypothesis I suggests a range of subquestions to be explored in the study. For example, does television news coverage of terrorist incidents distort them, or introduce a bias either in favor of or opposed to them in its presentation? Does the time and amount of coverage of terrorist incidents suggest a tendency among television broadcasters to sensationalize such events in response to pressures in order to enlarge their viewing audience? Is television coverage "event-oriented" portraying the violent element of the incident out of proportion to other dimensions of the event? Or is television coverage more "issue-oriented" - in which the motives and reasons that precipitate the incident are examined along with other aspects of it? Or, finally, is television coverage a mixture of both of these and therefore fair and balanced?

The second major research theme of the study concerns the content of the broadcasting of terrorist incidents. Here, the study will attempt to discover the recurring patterns of information about terrorist incidents that appear regularly as well as to identify elements and bits of such events that tend to be excluded. In order to make such an analysis, police sources will be closely examined to see what elements, if any, tend to be regularly excluded

or suppressed by television broadcasts. Also, the extent to which television broadcasters rely on police and law enforcement agencies as sources of information or reach out elsewhere to supplement the flow of information coming from official sources or challenge it in some ways will be investigated. It is expected that in the case of terrorist incidents, the main source of information is the law enforcement agencies.

Hypothesis II:

Television news coverage of terrorist incidents focus primarily on their criminally violent dimensions and their threat to public safety.

Hypothesis II suggests that the political motivations and ideological aspirations of terrorists are subordinated to the sensational violent and criminal aspects of the incidents themselves. Interpretations and presentations of terrorists incidents as extreme forms of protest staged by powerless populations that believe they can communicate their plight only by engaging inviolent activities, are transformed into social disorder stories. Further Hypothesis II posits that whether terrorists acts are staged (sometimes referred to as pseudo-events) or spontaneous is less important than whether or not they appear in the news.

Admittedly, television news stations are put into a difficult position when terrorist groups or individuals

commit crimes in order to attract attention to themselves or their demands from a large audience. A decision to ignore them is not only selective censorship but could lead to an escalation of terrorist acts, for the terrorists might then commit crimes of a magnitude which no journalist or television broadcaster could afford to ignore.

In the process of presenting terrorist incidents, it would appear that television news coverages take the event out of its context and embed it in a news report and thereby change its meaning and significance. This process of "decontextualization" relates to the contingencies of television news reporting and the major sources of information available to news operations. As noted in Hypothesis I, the organizational features of news operations make events which are relatively easily moldable more attractive to broadcasters. The unpredictability of the amount of news available to fill in the broadcasters.

A third and final hypothesis to be considered in this research concerns the sources of information about terrorist incidents available to television broadcasters and newswriters. As with crime in general, the main sources of information about terrorist incidents would seem to be the police and other law enforcement agencies (e.g. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Secret Service, etc.). If this is the case, then it is to be expected that the criminal

aspect and dimensions of terrorism are likely to be emphasized. As a Hypothesis, this can be stated as follow:

Hypothesis III:

In television news coverage of terrorist incidents, news people derive their information mainly from official law enforcement sources.

If news people obtain most of their information about terrorist acts from police and other law enforcement agencies, they may then serve as conduits for official views of terrorism while presenting these views as objective reporting. By accepting a particular version of terrorist events, television news workers make objective what is truly an official interpretation of terrorist incidents.

The research will attempt to determine to what extent television news workers rely on police and other law enforcement sources for their information.

Hypothesis I relates to the internal structure of television news organizations and the way in which its structure affects its capacities to assimilate, generate, and disseminate information on terrorism. Hypothesis II concerns the nature of the description of terrorist incidences on television and the nature of the foci television brings to the phenomenon. Hypothesis III concerns the way in which the facts of terrorist incidents are gathered. From the point

of view of the broadcaster, the study will ask if the police and law enforcement agencies act as "prompters" of terrorist news by helping to make terrorist occurrences available to television news workers. If that is in fact so, then it may be expected that police-generated information about terrorist incidents will be limited to police activities excluding to a significant degree the political, cultural and ideological dimensions motivating the terrorist acts. The situation may be similar to one which (Fishman, 1978) described in his study of news reports of a crime wave against the elderly that appeared to occur in New York City in the fall of 1976. According to Fishman, the "crime wave" occurred in news reports not in the crime statistics.

#### Theories of Mass Communication

Many theories have been put forth about the organization and selection of news stories and the dynamics of newswork. One theoretical perspective suggests that newswork is journalist centered: it argues that the news is shaped by the professional judgments of journalists and broadcasters (Altheide, 1982).

Another theoretical orientation focuses on the organizational requirements of the news operation as an important influence in what news is broadcast (Molotch and Lester, 1975). Here the commercial imperatives of the news

firm are emphasized. Other theories are more concerned with news organizations themselves and look at how their structures and division of labor effect their reporting and broadcasting.

Still another theoretical approach is even-centered: the "Mirror theory," as it is sometimes referred to, posess that events determine story selection with news workers simply holding up a mirror to them and reflecting their image to the audience (Friendly,1976).

Finally, there are theories that attempt to explain the dynamics of newswork as a consequence of forces outside the news organization (Tuchman,1978). These theories may be delineated in terms of their special doct. In some that might be defined as Marxist theories, Newswork is treated as a propaganda appendage of corporate and business elites who use mass communications media to push their version of events in terms of their ideologies and values (Gouldner,1976).

In cultural theories, newswork is seen as reflecting and shaping news in accordance with either the personal values of the news workers or of those of the national society (Bensman and Lulienfeld,1971).

Doubtlessly in all the theoretical approaches there is some degree of truth and much that is exaggerated or simply a falsely slanted depiction of newswork. But each is

valuable for the kernel of insight is provided about a complex process of communicating events in the real world.

The research will seek to cull insights from these theories and develop a distinctive approach of its own—something, perhaps more eclectic than those proposed thus far. Do journalists apply news judgments as individuals or as members of a profession and profit-seeking organization? Are they free agents unfettered by organizational constraints? Are their news decisions and those of producers, editors and firm executives made on overtly ideological grounds about terrorist acts? These and kindred questions will be posed and pursued in both field work and content analysis of news broadcasts.

Whether news workers simply reflect events (the mirror theory) is probably not so; nonetheless, the theory—as do the others—remains useful for it reminds us that news workers do not make up the news but begin with what is deemed an empirically graspable external reality. But also, whatever the nature of the events, it is arguable that news workers operate with their own concepts and may, therefore, "construct the reality of terrorism."

The general theoretical orientation from which the three hypothesis derive will be treated as to its efficacy as a useful description of the reality of terrorism as it is transmitted to the public. It is one which sees news of

terrorist acts as information first which is then transmitted from sources (mainly the police) with news workers—who are both employees of a bureaucratic, hierarchically structured commercial firm and members of a profession—summarizing, refining and altering what becomes available to them from sources in order to make information suitable for their audiences as they and the news workers, perceive them.

### Methodology

Most of the data in the study has been collected using two research techniques: participant observation and content analysis. To learn how news is organized, managed and presented, observations of what news workers do was conducted. Similarly, interviews and observations of police personnel in the office of press relations of the NYCPD and the Hostage Negotiation Unit of the NYCPD augmented the collection of information about the processing of information and its transformation into news.

In the course of the field work with the NYCPD and the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) television questions pertaining to the past and current work of news workers, their colleagues and their organizations were asked (see appendices). In addition, interviews with news and corporate executives, producers, editors, reporters, writers and research department personnel rounded out the analysis of

the structure and operations of the news creation process concerned with the coverage of terrorist incidents.

Most of the interview time was devoted to those involved in story selection and organization, with those who actually produce the stories, and with field reporters and correspondents who compile the primary information. The purpose of the field work was to generate as much data as possible on the division of labor in the news office, how information originates, what the relationships are among news workers and sources, what methods news personnel employ to verify source information, how a story for broadcast is mounted, how the processes of story selection work, and how, finally, the suitability and positioning of stories were determined.

The field work consists of several stages. The observations sought to gather information on organization; the interviews were designed mainly to glean as much information as possible on the factors that enter into the work of news creation and broadcast; how time schedules, and commercial interests impinge on the selection of stories for broadcast, how also the delicate nature of the terrorist incident affects its presentation. A unique feature of reporting terrorist incidents is that they tend to be, with rare exceptions (such as the early warnings about the marine garrison in Lebanon, and the Embassy in Teheran),

what news people call "breaking stories." These are stories that occur without prior warning, that occur spontaneously- although much time and labor goes into their planning and execution by their perpetrators- and evolve in unpredictable ways. As such, "breaking stories" interrupt the normal flow of activity in the news room and require the mobilization of many different workers if the incident is to be covered adequately. live coverage may well be attempted if the event is local and sufficient staff can be marshalled to handle the incident.

Since the research cannot expect a terrorist incident to occur during the period of field work, interviews with those who have been involved in the coverage and reporting of these was done in order to learn how a news agency responds to them and presents them through a broadcast. Further, analysis of as many relevant documents and tapes concerning the incidents was carried out to supplement, and in a sense comparatively evaluate, the information that is ascertained through interviewing.

The second phase of the research process involved a content analysis of videotapes and files of broadcasts of terrorist incidents. The analysis proceeded on the assumption that broadcasts of terrorist news contain a particular picture among other possibilities of incidents. It is expected that a recurring pattern in the broadcasts can be

found as well as a structure in its content. That structure, it is further contended, is not solely a figment of the analyst's work but represents a selection process exercised by journalists and other news workers who must decide to present some aspects of an incident from many others that they could possibly choose.

The broadcasts were looked at in terms of general categories deliberately constructed to abstract specific stories from their immediate contexts. The content analysis methods employed in the study were designed to examine the news releases and broadcasts in a systematic manner in order to measure certain message variables as these relate to the three hypotheses.

The steps in the analysis of news regarding terrorist incidents are as follows; releases of information from the office of press relations of the NYCPD were coded. Likewise, the news presentations of a television station (ABC-TV) were similarly coded.

When the terrorist incidents were coded a comparison of the content of the police news release with the broadcast of the event was made in order to determine what elements in the event have been deleted, augmented, edited or taken verbatim from the police account. In addition, the analysis attempted to examine any follow-up procedures the news firm used.

The purpose of the analyses are to clarify the extent to which news releases are significantly altered in order to meet the exigencies of broadcasting; whether the broadcasters merely repeat the police versions and accounts of terrorist incidents; the nature of the emphasis on terrorist motives; the importance attached to the incident in terms of its placement and time devoted to it in a broadcast.

The categories of race, sex, religion, class, age, ideological orientation, and ethnicity will enable us to determine what is considered "newsworthy" by broadcasters. These categories and divisions appear in the population, and it is relevant to the research to determine if those societal divisions are correspondingly reflected in the news.

The collected data made it possible to construct an index of shrinkage or expansion of news items in television broadcasts as compared with police accounts. It is expected that differences and variations in emphasis on particular aspects of the terrorist incident will depend upon the organizational demands made upon both police and television broadcast firms. However, because of the high public image of terrorist incidents and the fact that many who engage in activities do so to prompt television coverage, the variations in details reported by television

broadcast firms may be less than that involving other types of crime. Broadcasters are aware of the possibility that they may be exploited by terrorists and may be expected to have muted their independent investigative coverage of such events accordingly.

Nevertheless, it will be possible to chart through the categories and aspects of the terrorist incidents and participants in order to determine the extent to which television coverage is dependant upon police accounts. Thus, with regard to motivations, for example,

#### TERRORIST INCIDENTS

Table 1.2

#### Terrorist Motivations

<u>and Reasons</u>	<u>Police News Release</u>	<u>TV News Coverage</u>
Political		
Religious		
Racial/Ethnic		
Personal		

Also the content analysis will allow us to compare the ways in which differences, if any, are illustrated by the focus of victim of terrorist incidents and those alleged to be suspects and perpetrators.

For example:

Table 1.3

Suspects Reported In Police Releases And TV Newscasts

	<u>(POLICE)</u>	<u>(NEWSCASTS)</u>
By Name		
By Address		
By Age		
By Area		
By Sex		
By Race		
BY Political		
Affiliation or		
Association		
By Organization		
membership		

Table 1.4

Victims Reported In Police Releases And TV Newscasts

	<u>(POLICE ACCOUNTS)</u>	<u>(NEWSCASTS)</u>
(Same Categories)		

Finally, as an example of what sort of data the content analysis coupled with field work will yield, it will be possible to test hypothesis III to some extent through an analysis of data concerning information sources about terrorist incidents reported in television newscasts. This will help us see to what extent television newscasts are dependent upon police sources.

Table 1.5

Information Sources Cited In Newscasts

Police

Prosecutors

FBI

Witnesses

Victims

Experts/Consultants

"Leaks"

This same analysis will allow a determination of the extent to which non-police sources are quoted or even mentioned in television accounts of incidents. To what degree are victims quoted or sought out? Are the terrorists themselves a source of vital information through messages, or use of the media? Are the emphasis on the incident and its details presented mainly from the police view of the act? This is an important consideration because the sources of information are very likely to influence the content of the reporting of the incident.

## CHAPTER 2

### An Historical Sketch of Terrorism

Terrorism is not a new social phenomenon. Its origins are traceable to early antiquity. (Suetonius 1957) for example, recounts in rich detail the plots, counterplots, conspiracies and terrorist organizations that dominated Imperial Roman politics for centuries. Then as now, there was confusion as to the causes and motives of terrorists. Some factors which promoted the eruption of violence against political, social or cultural leaders seem to form a persistent pattern through time and across political terrains. "Terrorism from below" appears to have been as common as "Terrorism from above" throughout most of history.

In first century Palestine, a fanatical religious group, the Sciarii, struggled against the established theocratic power structure; in eleventh century Persia and Syria, the "Assassins" appeared and openly terrorized local monarchies courting death and martyrdom in ways analogous to the Hizbollah and Shiite sects of modern Islam. Deluded notions of divine inspiration or purely social altruistic motives have guided those determined to change a government, its policies or its personnel through contemporary times. Terroristic acts, of course, were not and are not limited to Southern European or near Eastern societies. A "Salvation Frenzy" seems to have been characteristic of

premodernist types of terror: fanatical zealots seek spiritual self fulfillment, selfishly perhaps, through acts of suicidal destruction and violence. The historical record is to what Han Morgenthau has aserted that terrorism is a new violent activity, "it is new in modern history that a group of citizens would band together challenging the monopoly of organized violence in the hands of government. The very fact that a group of citizens would choose not just to violate legal order but challenge its validity points to a drastic and, in modern history, unprecedented weakening of the authority of government " (Morgenthau 1977).

A Number of scholars suggest tha the use of such violence is deeply rooted in the history of human conflict. Walter Laqueur, for example, alaims that terrorist tactics can be found in Arcient Greek and Roman History and in the middle ages (Laqueur 1977). Another student of the phenom-enon observed that "Terrorism is a historical phenomenon that appears to recur at regular intervals throughout recorded history and in most parts of the world" (French 1978).

#### Origins and Roots of Modern Terrorism

The nineteenth century saw the rise of movements, secret societies, and doctrines which may be considered as the harbinger of systemic modern terrorist activities. The process of state-making in conjunction with industrializa-tion throughout Europe produced rapid and profound trans-formation in most European feudal social systems (Skocpol

1979).

In periods of great social, economic or political upheaval, individuals and groups are ripe for mobilization into movements which seek to carry through programs of change or restore the status quo or return to earlier forms of political structure (Mannheim 1936). But above all, the immediate and concrete effects of radical change are such that life for large segments of a population becomes a historical and non institutional. People see themselves drifting through a succession of situations linked only by mere propinquity or surface symbolic consistency; the movement and rhythm of life sprawls and lacks the familiar punctuations provided by the large architecture of culture which preserves meanings and structures events, thereby attenuating if not preventing the dissolution of social action into episodic sheads (Kelly 1973).

Sweeping through collapsing social systems, revolutionary movements and political elites seeking to maintain or prop up the extant system complete for power and legitimacy. Or, in cases of the retreat of Imperialist colonial empires, a struggle emerges among indigenous, bourgeois bureaucratic attuned to the machinery of government, and new revolutionary elites attempting to fill the power vacuum left by departing regimes. Terrorism from "below" and "above" characterizes much the struggle for power in developing states and is justified in the name of freedom; or as a response of "voiceless masses" to the horror of oppression; or when implemented by ruling elitist regimes, conducted as an expedient to eradicate criminal elements masquerading as political patriots (Selden 1971).

### Russian Anarchism

The first large-scale modern example of terrorism occurred in conjunction with revolutionary strategies in the nineteenth century. The Russian anarchists and opponents of the czarist regime inspired by the writings of Bakunin and Nechaev bombed and assassinated leading members of the Tsarist government. They deliberately avoided endangering the civilian population preferring to risk their own lives rather than threaten harmless people. As an exponent of violence as a means of resisting what they perceived as tyranny, Bakunin proposed the doctrine which is perhaps at the heart of twentieth century terror; "Our mission is to destroy, not to construct" (Camus 1958).

Russian terrorism advocated by intellectuals and affluent bourgeoisie operated with handful of enthusiasts against a background of a silent and ambivalent populace. The fastidiousness with which the Narodnik launched their campaign against the czarist regime was somehow pathetic; a small group of men and women lost in the Russian masses choosing to live as executioners in the name of life, points up the paradox of terrorist philosophy. They could hardly justify taking lives violently much less when the victim was chosen because he or she was merely accessible rather than for reasons of their oppressive authority or power within the machinery of the state. Many ironically felt contempt for their own lives while respecting human life in general.

Unlike many contemporary strategies, Russian terrorism developed in several stages (Nomad 1959). It began with sporadic acts of

armed defense in resisting arrest and as a violent reaction to what we would characterize as a police brutality. With Sergei Kravchenko's announcement of "a death for a death"-for every revolutionary murdered, a police official or member of the government in the Tsarist regime would be assassinated, it then proceeded to become more grim and desperate (Lacqueur 1977).

Armed struggle became the general mood of the rank and file nineteenth century Russian revolutionaries. Some leaders of the radical Narodniki movement, composed of young intellectuals and guilt-ridden upper class Russian aristocrats (not unlike the "Weather Underground" of the Student Democratic Society (SDS) in the United States in the sixties), advocated political assassination of key leaders as acts of revenge, as means of sensational agitation to arouse the politically moribund Russian masses, and as a decisive blow at the center of the entire system of a centralized autocracy (Chermiansky 1969).

For some segments of the leftist Tsarist opposition, terror would fragment and eventually destroy the government. Whether a popular uprising would follow terrorist episodes and lead to the conquest of power by masses was never clear. Even many of the pre-Bolsheviks leaders and theoreticians of the social revolutionary and liberal constituencies who warned against gratuitous violence gave their blessings to some terrorist actions, but remained ambivalent as to its true value (Deutscher 1965).

E.H.Carr describes some Russian terrorists' rationales that justified their actions as humanitarian. Romanenko stated that

terrorism costs infinitely fewer lives than a mass struggle, and if an oppressive regime could be toppled with a minimum of sacrifice of the oppressed, so much the better. The Narodniks movement, the Decembrists and Social Revolutionaries must see terrorism not as immoral but as an expedient and also as a safety valve lest a bloody explosion occur from below where the masses might engage in indiscriminate violence (Carr 71).

In short, Russian terrorism was an aspect of the formation of the revolutionary character of the socialist movement and symptomatic of the general crisis in Russian society.

The Russian social revolutionaries were not alone in promulgating terroristic ideas. As Laqueur observes, the main focus of terrorist thought in the nineteenth century was anarchism (Laqueur 1978). Prince Pyotr Kopotkin and Johann Most, the social democratic deputy in the German Reichstag advocated terrorist action. Johann Most migrated to the United States and openly agitated among trade union movement activists. Similarly, many of those in the Irish Nationalist Movement who embrace terrorist tactics against British rule fled to the United States where sympathetic Irish Americans supported them. The Molly Maguires, a radical Irish segment within the coal miners union movement, bombed and killed mine owners and opponents in the Pennsylvania coal fields.

#### Ideology, Terror and Political Crime

One of the most influential ideological justifications of violence and fanaticism to appear in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century was George Sorel's Reflections on Violence

published in 1908 (Sorel 1961). Sorel was a revolutionary intrigued by syndicalist ideas - a form of social corporatism in which the overarching structure of the state - its bureaucracies, agencies and police would be abolished in favor of small scale, humanly meaningful organizations in which members would have a vigorous role to play in the decision-making affecting their lives. The romantic utopianism of his ideas, however, did not arouse as much attention as his advocacy of violence as a purifying action necessary to erase the cumbersome oppression of state government which functioned in Sorel's view to serve only the interest of the governing elites. Sorel's work is an amalgam of impatience and despair; an engineer, a bourgeois without the freedom of a comfortable inheritance, financial worries and survival were constant irritants in his life (Hughes 1958).

Unlike Marx and Engels and their progeny, within the French intellectual community, Sorel's ideas were designed to produce change in practical efficient ways rather than merely chart the evolutionary character of social revolution. In this respect, Sorel departed from the ideas of Marx and Engels, who considered terrorist acts as counter productive, except as part of an ultimate attack on the structure to bring it crashing down. For Marx, terrorism absorbed resources and indispensable revolutionaries sacrificed in suicidal acts or victimized by intensified police repression. Trotsky's objections to terrorism were more specifically detailed than those of Lenin. Lenin's opposition to terror was more tactical

than principled. Lenin would not reject political violence and murder per se it might under the right conditions, he reasoned, prove useful (Tucker 1977).

Trotsky argued that the anarchists, Marodvikii, and social revolutionary attacks on ministers, officials and notables of the establishment would not bring it down. The capitalist state, which the Tsarist regime was evolving rapidly into, did not rest upon personalities alone and could not, therefore, be destroyed with them. New men will always be found (Trotsky 1959). Nevertheless, Trotsky's career as War Minister and creator of the Red Army during the civil war with the "whites" demonstrated that he could be militant and resort to violence as a means of struggle. Even early on when the Bolsheviks contended for power in 1917 against the provisional government, Trotsky reminisced:

The plan conducted and realized by me consisted in this: that in the process of mobilizing the masses under the slogan of the Congress of the Soviets as the supreme organ of the country, and under the cover of this legal campaign we prepare the insurrection and strike the blow at a propitious moment proximate to the Congress of the Soviets, but by no means after the opening of the Congress (Trotsky in Daniels 1967).

Terror is not unknown among other Communist led movements, but following Lenin and Trotsky, the substitution of terror for political works and change, because in many instances not merely a military expediency but an end in itself. Again this tendency, revolutionary leaders themselves have often cautioned their followers. No practicing and self-respecting revolutionary would, in Che Guerara's estimation disagree with the general proposition that

"terrorism is a negative weapon which produces in no way the desired effects which can turn a people against a given revolutionary movement, and which brings with it a loss of life among those taking part that is much greater in return" (Guerara 1961)

In more recent revolutionary liberation wars in Cuba and in Vietnam in particular a feature of Guerrilla training was the stress on scrupulously correct and just behavior toward civilians. The rebel army code of the Vietmin and Vietcong carried severe punishment for rape, robbery, and damage to property and crops. Political work, according to General Giop is "the soul of the army." An Army indoctrination "is primarily aimed at training troops and cadres to act in such a way that they will gain the total support of the people (Kelly 1973).

The guerrilla's use of terror must be sociologically and psychologically selective. Within the historic wars of national liberation, fought primarily in this century in Third World countries prior to 1960, the guerrilla's application of terror was designed to disrupt the inertial relationships between incumbent ruling bodies and the mass of the population. By attacking the symbols of the state (for example, blowing up government buildings, sabotaging transport systems and assassinating political leaders) the rebels reveal the weakness of the government frameworks and institutions to ensure protection and security for the population. Tactical considerations, however, required discrimination in the use of terror, so it had to be limited to those who are popularly defined as the enemies of the

people, officials, landlords and informers. In order for terror to be effective, it had to be regarded by the people as an extra-governmental effort to dispense justice long overdue. Part of the revolutionary ideology's content, therefore, had to contain an elaborate labelling and defining machinery, a set of codes which could be invoked to explain and interpret both insurgent and governmental action as Pye observed:

Any government faced with a violent challenge to its authority must provide a public interpretation interpretation of the causes of the insurrection. The hypothesis about the causes of insurgency must not only be plausible, but they must have the government in an effective position to carry on the struggle. Few governments can accept the view that their own policy deficiencies drove people to violence. Governments prefer to picture insurrection as caused by misguided people lured by false prophets or evil conspiracy. Such a characterization has the virtue of making officials appear to be on the side of reason and their enemies essentially fools (Pye 1964).

Counteracting these strategies which enable the government to define the conflict and thus, in many ways, to control it the revolutionary ideologists must endeavor to create violent and terroristic options poised against the military and police power of the state—options that are justifiable and that can be legitimated as means of struggle in the clash with their opponents.

Propaganda campaigns are instituted which either discredit or minimize the effects of criminal labelling by recasting the actors in opposite roles. Propaganda is spread which portrays the government and its agents as villains and criminals (whose wickedness points up the goodness of the guerrilla hero); and a "David -

Goliath encounter is manufactured in which a little man upsets a big man" (Klapp 1970).

The government, its policies, agents, and allies are reflected through rebel propaganda and depicted as criminals, freeing the guerrilla from guilt and criminal culpability for his actions. Through this mechanism of symbolic reversal acts of violence and criminality are transformed and become acts of liberation - blows against the empire; conversely, the actions and policies of the government take on criminal and traitoristic dimensions.

Historically, many revolutionary activities defined by governments as criminal and traitoristic did not result in killing, murder or in acts characterized as terroristic. Such acts often originated in the need to sabotage a government's belated efforts to engender popular support and thus perpetuate its isolation from people. The revolutionary's account of reality, his definitions of the situation, gained currency and cumulated support if their "parallel government hierarches" and revolutionary instructures carried out education and welfare programs; implemented land reforms and generally relieved conditions of privation and misery. To insure these policies materialized, terror was directed against selected government agents and administrators. Egbal Ahran reports that government school teachers and health workers were the favorite targets of the Vietcong. Many were kidnapped or underwent indoctrination. "In June 1962" Ahmad notes, "A South Vietnamese observer at the United Nations (UN) informed UNESCO that the Vietcong had kidnapped more than 1200 teachers; the government's malaria eradication

program collapsed after twenty two health officers had been killed and sixty kidnapped"(Ahmad 1962).

#### Terrorism, Psychopathology and the Criminal

Often, if not invariably, psychopathic personalities have joined or become associated with political liberation movements in order to pursue their criminal careers under its protective canopy—especially when the movement enjoys widespread sympathy and has the tacit and sometimes open support of the population. However, others, men like Lee Harvey Oswald, Sirhan Sirhan, and John Hinckly, seek through criminal acts, presumably motivated by their political convictions, the fulfillment of an unsuccessful or inconclusive life. For these individuals, personal failure would seem to be dramatically transcended in one long supreme "political" gesture. Doubtless, a great number of violent acts that we may be inclined to label "terroristic" committed against police and other representatives of government are simply reactions to power, privilege, prestige and success. Typically, in these instances, the chief offenders are members of the lower classes exposing latent hostility toward those in power. The protagonists do not proceed deliberately and consciously from resolute political principles. Blind lashing out by the disillusioned and the personally defeated tends to enhance the power of the clandestine services of the police administration and expands the role of governmental agencies.

In comparison to the psychopath engaged in nominal political violence and crime, the typical political criminal has no criminal

self-concept. He violates the law more often, not out of conscience, but out of a set of convictions that arise from a desire for a better society in his view; or to correct perceived injustices, or to change profoundly the nature of society.

Most Western terrorists fit into the category of political criminal; few have previous records of crime but are not politically motivated or politically oriented; they rarely have an established history of criminality or a criminal career. At first, the terrorist is likely to begin as a nonconformer, in contrast to someone psychologically aberrant. He or she announced publicly and participates openly in dissent and protest. The scenario unfolds in which the political dissident becomes increasingly frustrated with the lack of action by government to address grievances. Next they begin to embrace groups with more radical political programs and philosophies. The very legitimacy of the government and its laws may be challenged rhetorically or by symbolic protests. They may then seek to change the norms that are challenged ideologically. At this point, conventional members of a polity are likely to acknowledge the dissident as departing from the prevailing norms of political discourse and debate not for what he may derive personally but for disinterested philosophical ends. The rebel, revolutionary or insipient terrorist usually lays claim to a higher morality, one which contains the means to break a political stalemate or impasse that can revitalize and rejuvenate a flagging decaying political structure (Wallace 1960). Because dissidents may become increasingly committed to a vision of a social order that differs markedly from

the existing one, and their commitment to it, they may become willing, even eager, to engage in criminal behavior in order to further the goals of the movement. In this connection Elliott has noted that

"Although some political offenders are persons without integrity who have yielded to the extensive bribes paid either by foreign powers or local groups, but as the majority are conscientious adherents to a political philosophy which threatens the existence of the government they are opposing. Political offenders represent a paradox for they are criminals who carry on their illegal activities in pursuit of their ideals. They are not imbued with the sort of schemes for extracting vast sums of money from unsuspecting victims, nor are they motivated by basic desires to kill or destroy. Although these crimes may be necessary in the pursuit of their ideals. They are generally idealists devoted to a cause" (Elliott 1951).

The political criminal has been studied in some depth since Elliott's observations. Turk, for example, examined studies of political crime and criminals, tracing the development of terrorist organizations such as the Boader-Meinhof gang of West Germany and found that their developmental path from youthful protest to "the politics of nihilism" was such that nothing short of the collapse of all western social structures (including Soviet Marxism) would be tolerated (Turk 1982). The leaders of the German group Andreas Boader and Ulrika Meinhof began their careers as radicals and participated, along with thousands of other young Germans in specific campaigns against American involvement in the Viet Nam War, against the nuclear arms race, and against university authoritarianism. But Boader and Meinhof were unsatisfied with ensuing reforms. Their militancy increased rather than diminished (Becker 1977).

Thereafter, the group they formed and headed engaged in the kidnappings of prominent West German industrialists, bombings, and spectacular prison escapes of political radicals. This led eventually to imprisonment and death of the principal members of the organization. As with their American counterparts, the SDS and Black Liberation Army, Baader-Meinhof never reached the level of alienation and disaffection found among Palestinian nationalists or other non-western revolutionaries. While there are some hazy links between these groups, the evidence of a trans-national terrorist network, sharing arms, personnel and information, has not been convincingly substantiated despite astute efforts to do so (Sterling 1981). It was in the United Red Army, the Japanese Rengo Sekigun where alienation reached extreme levels and where impatience with intellectual debates over the nature of repression and capitalist societies reached a critical juncture. For the Japanese Red Army, discussion was ended: all elements of the bourgeois social system that sustained repression must be obliterated. The Japanese Red Army defined as "enemies of the people" and "world revolution" anyone who accepted or contributed to the culture and perpetuation of the economic system of capitalism, thus they did not hesitate to engage in suicidal violence and indiscriminate massacre as in the Lod Airport attack, in Tel Aviv in which Puerto Rican tourists were killed. The Puerto Rican Nationalists (FLN) terrorist organization would have labeled the tourists as victims of capitalist repression, rather than its supporters. According to McKnight, the Japanese Red Army does not hesitate to violently chastise its own membership when

they are perceived as reverting to old cultural habits and practices. "Members have been tortured and put to death for displaying bourgeois tendencies by wearing makeup and showing affection for the opposite sex and asking for the luxury of a Kleenex tissue, while enjoying the bourgeois warmth of a sleeping bag" (McKnight 1974).

Other examples of what might be called psychopathic behavior and terroristic violence have occurred in state sponsored institutional settings, and have had if not overtly been through acts of complicity, open support from officials. During World War II, in the midst of global conflict in which atrocities by the allies (indiscriminate bombing raids over Axis cities) and the Axis powers were commonplace. One particularly heinous activity was orchestrated by the Nazi regime against Jews, Slav, Catholics, political opponents of the Third Reich and deviants in general. The concentration camps were not; however, unique to Nazi Germany; Japan utilized detention and punishment prisons extensively throughout occupied territories in Malaysia the Philippines and Micronesia (Irving, 1977). Nevertheless, Nazi Germany shocked the world in 1945 when in defeat the evidence of systematic mass extermination of European Jews came to light.

Of Course, not every German citizen, nor most members of the *Whermocht* and *Schutzstaffel* (SS) were cognizant of the "final solution". The racial psychosis of Himmler, Rosenberg, Hitler, and of the leaders of the Nazi Party - within the armed forces and in the Gues of the occupied territories, reached its height in 1943-45, when hundreds of thousands of Jews from Hungary, the Balkans and the northwestern European states were rounded up and shipped to

extermination camps. The names of Dachau, Auschwitz, Birkenau, Mauthausen and others vividly remind us that terror and the motive forces behind it are not limited to politically marginal dissident groups. Mass indiscriminate murder was state policy in Nazi and later appeared in Kampuchea in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge revolutionary war in Cambodia. The motivations of the Japanese Red Army or the Khmer Rouge, an anti-capitalist, anti bourgeois war of attrition are different from the factors which fueled the Nazi extermination project against Jews and others. For the victims, obviously, the motives are incidental and irrelevant. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to examine the connections between political ideology and individual behavior. In a study published in 1982, Robert J. Lifton examined the behavior of Nazi doctors in the murder machine in Auschwitz. An important dimension justifying mass murder in a Nazi ideology, Lifton found, was the belief in a "thousand year Reich". The realization and maintenance of which was widely disseminated in the propaganda of Goebbels and in Hitler's many speeches to the German public. Because of the widespread demoralization and confusion following Germany's defeat in World War I, the idea of a stable society revitalized by a cultural renaissance rooted in Germany's Teutonic history and tradition appealed to individuals in all social strata of German society. The explanation of the causes of defeat and economic duress stressed the pernicious role of Jews in the failed war effort and in the subsequent collapse of the post war German economy. Thus, groundwork for mass murder was laid.

The interesting and tragic dilemma Lifton discovered in his research was that the logic of the revitalization in Nazi culture, led to the incredible doctrine that,

"...Killing was done in the name of healing. It is not too much to say that every action an SS doctor took was connected to some kind of perversion or reversal of healing and killing. For the SS doctor, involvement in the killing process became equated with healing. This then, is what I call the 'healing-killing paradox',..." (Lifton 1982).

The Nazi regime characterized by Lifton as a "biocracy"- a government in which the leaders ruled in the name of biological principle - racial purity - as the means of national salvation and power - were able to produce a climate of collective violence against specific segments of Germany's, let alone Europe's populations. As with other terrorist groups, the Nazis perceived their survival and ascendancy in terms of the destruction, utter destruction, of another.

In the Nuremberg trials at wars end, the charge "crimes against humanity" was leveled against the surviving Nazi leadership. Dispute has raged since then over the legitimacy and meaning of the terms "crimes against humanity". For some critics, it presupposes a worldwide consensus of opinion, a global cultural covenant that specific acts by Mores that are universal (Arendt 1963). Despite support for the Nuremberg tribunals, they did not set a precedent which might have produced international constraints or legal mechanisms for world judiciary bodies or international organizations (UN), to declare as criminal, acts of mass violence implemented against entire peoples. The concept of genocide retains meaning as a

sociological and historical reality; it is not a legal tool or concept in the adjudication of disputes on a trans or international level. Today, there is evidence that a Facist right wing, still a tiny minority, has embraced Nazi philosophy on questions of racial purity and mixed these with fundamentalist interpretations of the Bible producing a version of white supremacist doctrine that is violent prone and paranoid (Holden 1986).

Many terrorist organizations - especially those in opposition to the state - have attracted criminal elements at one time of another. The process of armed political struggle has produced several anomalies in which the distinction between armed political struggle and criminal behavior is blurred. Notwithstanding, the characterization of the terrorist as a "political criminal" whose main objective is the realization of political goals via extra - and illegal means, criminals (in the ordinary sense of the term) have joined and operated within the ranks of terrorist groups (Laqueur 1977). Historically, Mafia bands have been predominantly criminal and apolitical but occasionally pursued political interests. During World War II, for example, Mafiosi assisted in the allied invasion of Sicily and Southern Italy and enabled the Allied Provisional Military Government to rout out Fascist political administrators and collaborators (Lewis 1964). In the post-war period, Mafiosi actively and violently resisted the trade union movement proselytizing by communist led and inspired organizers. It resulted in a massacre of peasants on May 1, 1947. Intimidation through violence and mayhem of the peasantry continued through the 1948

general election with Mafiosi murdering communists and socialists in trade union organizing centers in Corleone, Caccamo and Viterto Sicily (Serradio 1976).

The dividing line between crime and politics is by no means obvious. Complicity, complicating the issue of whether terrorists are politically motivated or criminals seeking their own end masquerading as political rebels, is the fact that criminals are often patriotic or instinctively rebellious. During World War II, the United States Navy obtained the assistance of leading underworld figures in protecting the Eastern coast waterfront against sabotage (Block 1986). In another case, which is slightly different, but substantiates the main point, ex-army officers, dissatisfied with President DeGaulles concessions to the Algerian Revolutionary Movement - which itself had engaged in mass terror tactics in Iran and Algiers and had Murdered Colon settlers in the agricultural regions of the country - organized the secret group of French army officers opposed to Algerian independence (OAS). The OAS in mainland France and in Algeria engaged in assassinations, bank robberies and the disruption of the colonial administration and attempted, unsuccessfully, the assassination of President DeGaulle himself (Wolf 1969). In effect, a politically inspired opposition resorted to criminal activity in order to pursue its political programs. We have seen this phenomenon earlier with the Russian revolutionaries involved in crime in order to marshal resources for the political struggle. Today, in Northern Ireland, in the basque region of Spain, and in Latin America, terrorist organizations have not been deterred

by the criminal definition of some of their acts. Rather, these are defined as necessary operations, regretfully, but nonetheless imperative in their movement to sustain itself in political work.

In the United States at the turn of the century, the Molly MacGuires, and later the Western Union of Mineworkers - a kind of "working class" terrorism - broke out in the coal fields of the midwest and Pennsylvania. Assassinations, robberies, bombing, extortion and theft was associated with the labor wars (Quiney 1977). Labor management struggles were very violent and involved the use of gangsters and hoodlums on both sides: criminal elements were openly employed by trade unionists and business entrepreneurs as strike breakers and as intimidators of employees (Hofstadter 1955).

In the late sixties and early seventies radical minority militants, the Black Liberation Army (BLA), the Puerto Rican Independence Movement and the Weather Underground ( a violent offshoot of the Students for a Democratic Society ) engaged in terrorist tactics against the police, corporations, universities, military bases and research installations, and indiscriminately against the public. Generally, these groups were composed of "political deviants and criminals" - those who participated in disruptive activities in the name of revolution, the end of racism, the freedom of oppressed peoples, or the disenfranchisement of the working class.

Where some might see criminals tearing apart law and order in a cascade of Molotov cocktails, others may see freedom fighters liberating themselves with blood and fire (Mouledoues 1967).

Nonetheless, the Black Panthers and other radical groups did attract criminal elements. Criminals have historically joined the ranks of terrorists groups in times of unrest when there were good opportunities for looting. "The Symbineze Liberation Army" (SLA) like earlier terrorist sects deliberately enlisted criminals; They, this small sect led by a "Field Marshal Cinque" who was a former inmate of the California prisons, did not go to the underground for weapons and assistance. Liked with some middle class disenchanting white revolutionaries, the SLA kidnapped, robbed stores and a bank, and demanded "reparations" in the form of massive food distributions in the Latino and Black ghettos in Los Angeles. The SLA ended violently in a gun battle with the police (Bacciocco 1974). It is difficult to know with any degree of accuracy to what extent terrorists who announce political objectives but carry out common crimes are motivated by revolutionary or nationalist fervor, or by any political causes at all. Some undoubtedly are; for others, the political canopy is a useful disguise for a criminal career.

#### Cuba and Vietnam: Two cases of Inadvertent Terrorism

In November 1982, Eduardo Arocena wrote the following letter to his wife:

"Miriam...

You must not consider this a confession, it is simply an explanation of my conduct.... if today I am a fugitive, it is not because of any criminal action, but only because it is my privilege to fulfill my duty and fight for the liberation of my motherland, Cuba. It is true I have sacrificed you for over 12 years; it is also true that I have denied you the warmth of family life...  
Be careful. I know that you are very cowardly and I am

sorry to tell you this, but it is better that I[say so] than another... Beginning at this moment,I do not trust even you. Do not feel badly, it must be so.... (Cummings 1985).

Eduardo Arocena was a Cuban exile who clearly saw himself as a patriot. However, in the eyes of the United States government, which hunted Arocena down and convicted him, he was, purely and simply, a gangster, a criminal, who dealt in death, drugs, and mayhem, and headed an organization, like many terrorist groups, that was a veneer for criminal activity.

Omega 7 was typical of most terrorist groups operating in the United States. Arocena formed the group in 1974 and called it Omega 7 because "Omega" is the last letter in the Greek alphabet, a symbol that this was the final instrument to rid Cuba of Castro as other anti-Castro exile groups herein the United States and in Latin America had failed to do.

According to Cummings,"for more than eight years Omega 7 killed and maimed, often leaving a "communique" signed "Omar", a code name for the leader of Omega 7, to take credit for their acts. Included in the Omega 7 reign of terror were thirty bombings in New York and Miami and two machine gun murders" (Cummings 1985).

Like their leader Arocena, Omega 7 members were average and sometimes non-descript characters, with delusions of grandeur - a fruit and vegetable peddler, a car salesman, an insurance agent. For Federal authorities, Omega 7 was as much of a menace as a major crime family. Initially, the motives of the group, as Arocena's painfully revealing and delusional letter suggests, may have been honorable and high minded. Omega 7 may have been a determined little

band bent on arousing the exiled Cuban community whipping it into an anti Castro frenzy that the Federal government in Washington could not ignore. Lacking the political skills - irrespective of the political will - the group degenerated into a murder/extortion machine, bombing Cuban and Soviet UN missions, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Airport; assassinating the Chief of Chilean intelligence in New York, and threatening emergent businessmen with violence if monetary support was not forthcoming. As with Mafia and Black Hand extortionists in the turn of the century immigrant communities, Omega 7 parasitically fed off the Cuban refugee communities in New York, Miami, Newark and Union City, New Jersey. Even groups within the Cuban community misread and misinterpreted the political agenda of Omega 7 - which was never clearly articulated beyond extremist anti Castro slogans. Omega 7 accused another group, the Cuban Nationalist Movement, as pretending to be a revolutionary movement against Castro when it engaged vigorously in drug trafficking. In time, criminal elements within the Cuban enclaves suspected the same of Omega 7 and offered it a fee for "protection" of its drug trade. Omega 7 obliged.

To be charitable, it might have been true that Omega 7 was launched amid the intoxicating atmosphere of strong anti Castro sentiments in the Cuban community and in Washington D.C. When it became clear that more than desire was needed to operate a serious political movement, when it lost its purpose, it quickly degenerated into a criminal group with no other goals other than coercion and

intimidation of those least able to resist its depredations.

On a larger scale, My Lai and the instances of indiscriminate killing of civilians in Vietnam, illustrate how the confusions and contradictions of a political agenda or program can rapidly dissolve into gratuitous violence. As with Omega 7, the purpose of the American involvement in Vietnam was not only challenged, but lost in a profusion of motives, objectives and ambiguities surrounding a cold war ideology. "Characterized by a sense of absolute American virtue and equally absolute Communist depravity - along with a peculiarly American brand of technological pragmatism which views the whole situation in Vietnam as no more than "a job to be done' with the help of 'American know-how'"(Lifton 1971).

Fighting in an environment that was alien and bereft of the most elementary rules or structures of meaning, surrounded by an elusive enemy that was indistinguishable from the population at large, the Vietnam war evolved inevitably into a genocidal situation in which professional soldiers and troops from an advanced industrial society embarked on a dubious "geopolitical commitment" to an ally, got caught up in a counterinsurgency warfare against guerrillas representing a national liberation movement. As might be expected, fighting for unclear goals or military objectives that were senseless in an alien place and culture, with which he could not identify and which became therefore, unpredictable and dangerous, the typical American soldier in Vietnam experienced a combination of inner confusion, helplessness and terror. His reactions were predictable.

Seeing fellow soldiers ambushed, mutilated and killed, he may have experienced the desire for revenge but this was frustrated by the enemy's ability to melt away into the countryside, or in the congested masses in the cities. In an "ordinary " war, combat can be conducted in accordance with rules of engagement, with identifiable opponents situated in discernible zones of fighting. But in Vietnam there was none of that - not lines to breach, fortifications to destroy, enemy strongholds to eliminate. Here, the concept of the "enemy" is not even clear; he is everyone and no one, rarely visible, and, with rare exceptions, indistinguishable from the ordinary peasant (Fall 1967).

But his friends and fellow soldiers were killed and maimed by the inscrutable enemy. Frustrations and rage mounted with a potential for racism and dehumanization mobilized so that the Vietnamese people as a whole, not only became the enemy, but they were increasingly defined as inferior, as subhuman creatures - "gooks", in a word. Coupled with the saturation bombing in free fire zones and massive destruction of the hamlets and villages, soldiers became inured to suffering and pain; they no longer empathized with Vietnamese as human beings. In great numbers, American soldiers experienced what Lifton called "psychic numbing" not unlike that which the SS personell in the Nazi concentration camps, and atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima went through as they witnessed death and destruction on a so massive a scale that their minds shut down; their moral scruples disintegrated in the face of such general brutality (Lifton 1982).

Is it any wonder how in the midst of indiscriminate killing in a war that is seemingly purposeless or subject to serious question, it is possible for men to become desensitized and capable of horrendous acts against the helpless and harmless? In Vietnam, as may be the case in other places and for other states pursuing policies of repression, the policies of a regime or government may directly provide for terrorist actions or, as in the case cited here, indirectly and inadvertently precipitate acts of terrorism.

#### Psychological and Sociological Aspects of Terrorism and Terrorists

The feature that is common to all terrorist movements in all historical periods and circumstances, is youthfulness. Members of terrorist groups have been young, and this fact does not require lengthy explanation or examination. Calls to action do not usually fire the imagination or the physical enthusiasms of the middle aged and elderly. Apart from the youth of terrorism, be they Red Brigades, Palestinians, Puerto Rican Independent fighters, or SDS Weathermen, they share little else in common. Some are emotionally disturbed; others remarkably sane; some are drawn into terrorist activities from the minorities and oppressed classes. In fact minorities are prominently represented in terrorist movements.

Often within terrorist groups seeking redress and change for the oppressed, upper-class, affluent participants are significantly represented. In the United States, the SDS Weather Underground, an organization demanding radical socialist oriented economic change, among other things, was composed almost exclusively of upper-

middle class youth - the children of the oppressor class, as they were inclined to characterize bourgeois managerial elites and professional groups in America. Similarly, in Italy, the Red Brigades which too demanded revolutionary re-organization of the Italian economy favoring worker and lower class interests were mainly an upper-class university-educated elitist group led by a professor and funded heavily by a prominent business man (Pisano 1980).

A Rand Corporation study attempted to "profile" the typical twentieth-century terrorist based on data developed about apprehended or identified members of terrorist groups. The social class and status characteristics available enabled Jenkins (1980) to construct a typical picture of the terrorist similar to that mentioned above by Pisano in his discussion of the Red Brigades. Terrorists, with some exceptions, tend to be young males, in their twenties, who are single, well educated from middle or upper-class families. There are more questions than answers about the psychology of the terrorist. How one becomes a terrorist? Or why? What propels one to join or embrace a terrorist political philosophy or immediate, radically uncompromising action? The evidence is inconclusive about the sorts of individuals emotional attributes that predispose a person to terrorism: not all revolutionaries or revolutionary movements practiced terrorism; terrorists are found across the spectrum of political ideology.

Are terrorists emotionally disturbed or psychotic? Some are; most are not. Within the same organizations, according to Jenkins,

just about every type of personality type and psychological orientation towards the self, government and politics may be found (Jenkins 1980). Perhaps one characteristic that all terrorists share is the tendency to philosophical and political absolutism. That is, terrorists (with the exception of criminal types who cynically exploit the optimism and naivete of radical political groups) are true believers passionately clinging to beliefs and convictions about the nature of society that are virtually unshakeable. For them, picking up a gun in order to produce change and impose a societal blueprint is more emotionally gratifying than the painfully slow politics of compromise and bargaining. But if so politically disaffected or alienated persons go underground and accept violence as a means of change it is not reliably terrorism.

Can we talk about "born terrorists"? There does not seem to be any evidence that terrorists exhibit special or peculiar emotional traits, nor do they share common political experiences. Some however operate from a set of religious or materialist sentiments such as the IRA and PLO. In the case of the latter, it appears that a mixture of religious and materialist objectives have merged to produce individuals and groups committed to direct immediate action. Off shoots of the complex and changing PLO such as Black September and Anti-Al Fatah factions within the , Palestinian militant groups have created a politics of revenge and revolution that is grandiose.

Through terror they seek a retributive justice for the degradations of the Palestinian people that can never be achieved. Abee Nidal, the leader of the Achille Lauro incident and the bloody

attacks of terrorists at the Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985, was recently found guilty and sentenced in absentia to life imprisonments by Italian courts. In an interview with the German Magazine Der Spiegel he is quoted as saying; "If we have the chance to inflict the slightest harm to Americans, we will not hesitate to do it. In the months and years to come the Americans will think of us" (Miller 1986).

Abee Nidal's ("Father of the Struggle") real name is Sabri Khalil Al-Banna. Born in Jaffa, Palestine, he fits the terrorist profile developed by Jenkins and others; he was born into an affluent family and attended French and Islamic schools before the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War in 1948. In the 1960's he was drawn into the politics of the Palestinian resistance movement and joined Al Fatah. By the mid-seventies Nidal was committed to the use of international terrorism as part of the Palestinian strategy opposing Israel. By 1984, Nidal had effectively broken with what he believed were the conciliatory policies of Yasser Arafat and had embraced the Libyan approach to international Middle-East problems: indiscriminate terror against Israel, her allies, and those Arab states that seemed friendly towards the United States. Above all, Nidal is anti-Zionist more so than anti-imperialist and anti-bourgeois. And as with the IRA provos, Nidal's nationalist fervor works as a rationale justifying for him, at least, the violence and death he and his organization have perpetrated in the name of Palestinian nationalism. The IRA Provos have similarly explained their actions, their bombings and murders as efforts to call attention to the plight of the

oppressed minority which they allegedly represent. In both cases, neither Nidal nor the IRA Provos represent any sizeable constituency with any real power. Perhaps they will destroy and intimidate until they themselves are destroyed.

There is nothing particular or peculiar to Islamic theology that would explain the rash of terrorism in the Middle-East which has spilled over into Western Europe. Doctrinally, Islam is traditional, conservative and not evangelically messianic (Willis 1984). Perhaps because of the appearance of an alliance against Arab / Islamic states, Moslems may see themselves in much the same way as Christians did in the era of the Holy Roman Empire where Europe was virtually synonymous with "Christendom" and aggressive crusades were launched against the spread of Islam into Southern Europe. And as with Christians (with which Islam has close theological ties), Moslems see his life as a gift from Allah to be used in God's service and to help others. Further, like Christians, Moslems may be called upon to "defend the Faith" and have not hesitated to sacrifice their lives in its name. Today, Islam is for many a revolutionary alternative to western culture that has been harnessed to the nationalist struggles in the Middle East.

#### Terrorism, Nationalism and Class Conflict: "The Weapon of the Weak"

Not all terrorist groups share similar objectives and goals. In fact, many are diametrically opposed to each others political programs. Terrorist groups range along the political/ideological spectrum from radical left to radical right extremists. Kersteter

presents a useful typology of terrorist organizations in terms of their objectives, strategy and tactics (Kersteter 1983). According to him, terrorists may be classified as "Xenofighters" that is, those whose aim is the withdrawal or elimination of a foreign power occupying a country, or the realignment of political boundaries in a nation-state. The bourgeois, the Vietcong, the FLN in Algeria, the PLO and the IRA may be characterized as anti-colonial terror organizations struggling for some form of national sovereignty and independence. Ordinarily, such groups lack the resources for full-scale military operations against an occupier whether it is the British Army, the French Foreign Legion or the Israeli Armed Forces. Instead they resort to a battle of attrition attempting to impose a series of disruptions and small but enervating costs on the enemy wearing down his will, determination and resources to continue the struggle.

The foreign "tenants of power" force a modern operendi that is orchestrated to attract sympathetic international attention to a war of liberation that constitutes a revolutionary situation. In this case, terror rather than open warfare is the recourse of Xenofighters because of the imbalance of forces and resources. The terror may take either of two forms--and often both as circumstances warrant--that of "direct terror" where officials, army personnel, government installations and symbols of power are attached; and "indirect terror" which consists primarily of acts that demonstrate that a government can not protect the people or its property, can not maintain law and order. The reaction indirect terror is supposed to produce is one that shows, in short, the government is not fit to

govern at all. Through the class of indiscriminate bombings, sabotage, kidnapping and the like, the government's ability to insure the basic safety of the public is jeopardized (Hyans 1974).

The other type of terrorist organization that is not specifically nationalist in orientation or objectives are "homofighters". They seek popular support, like the xenofighters in overthrowing the current government in order to obtain improved social, economic, political or religious conditions for the population as a whole or for specific groups within the population. Consequently, "homofighters" typically refrain from activities that would include the general populace and adopt specific strategies intended to obtain popular support. In Italy, for example, the Red Brigades made selective attacks on business and government figures rather than indiscriminate attacks on the general public. In the United States the Weathermen also attacked government installations and facilities deeming those the symbols of class oppression.

In the period 1966-1970, in the United States, France, Italy and Western Germany, events conspired to create conditions conducive to types of terrorism that fit under the category "homofighter" (Pepper 1979). In America, students were radicalized by racial unrest and the growing destructiveness and inconclusiveness of the Vietnam War. In France, students rose in 1968 against the stifling policies of the Gaullist regime, and in Italy it was more a question of personal economic survival that prompted a turn to radical politics and violence. Many Italian students felt like outcasts, as did many German students, in an economy that was destructively

inflationary and in a German society that was changing its ethnic composition rapidly (Habermas 1979). Indifference to their needs, corruption in government and- in the case of Italy especially - a near bankrupt economy produced joblessness and despair. In Italy, of the one million and more jobless in the late 60's, half were under 30. Universities in Italy, Germany, France and the United States became way stations for millions of restive youths whose alternatives to school and its festering radical politics were military induction or meaningless, poor-paying jobs. The mounting frustrations exploded in a series of revolts against the educational system; students seized buildings, wrote manifestos, forced rectors to resign and imposed radical changes on teaching methods (Birnbaum 1971).

Out of this period of uncertainty and unrest rose the SDS and later Weathermen in the United States. The Red Brigades in Italy, and the Boader-Meinhoff gang in the Federal Republic of Germany. Initially, student politics were oriented toward radical reforms in the class structures of those Western European industrial democracies. Typically unlike "xeofighters" much as the IRA or the PLO nationalist-separatist, the "homofighters" were concerned with reorganizing through reform politics the impact of capitalist economies on the working classes. As with many Latin American radical movements such as the Typanonos or Uruguay and the Marteneros of Bolivia, the terrorism that evolved among the Western European and American groups (comprised mainly of bourgeois and middle-class students) was a reaction to economic stagnation and administrative

inertia (Halperin 1976). In terms of class origins, "xenofighters" representing nationalist anti-colonial movements tend to be composed of a wide spectrum of participants. Within the Vietcong, PLO, and IRA, for instance, the social backgrounds of participants include peasants, rural and urban-class proletariats, middle class university trained members of the elite classes and the disenchanting sons and daughters of the ruling factions within these societies. Among "homofighters" terrorist organizations, the contrast is significant: most are from the middle classes with few lower and working class participants. Whether "xenofighters" or "homofighters" convictions as to the justice and legitimacy of the cause, however bloodstains run deep. The resort to violence is not capricious. It occurs when other alternatives for peaceful changes fail. The point of view that is widely used by terrorist organizations to justify their violence against what they define as oppressors and criminals is the "doctrine of the just war" (Anscombe 1981). It is essentially amoral rationale for violence, a response to inaction and continued repression and a strategy to transform political conflict into military conflict which will further alienate the masses and erode popular faith in the legitimacy of the political system. "Just Wars" are therefore not merely moral responses to unrelieved oppression but politically oriented catalysts for action.

On the other hand, what cannot be ignored is the possibility that in some cases, the Weathermen in the United States and typanomas in Uruguay for example may reflect a form of political pathology rather than an understandable and even reasonable reaction

to perceived oppression. Contrasting the Weathermen with the Red brigades, or the Typanonas with the Viet Minh and Viertcon makes the point clearer. A withering portrayal of the Weathermen characterized them as:

... the children of affluence. Its post-scarcity origins and its total alienation from the American working-class meant that it was cut off from the traditional sources of left-wing militancy. The roots of the new radicalism lay instead in a vicarious self identification with black militants and foreign revolutionaries and a whole destructive urge to tear down the fabric of American society. The Weathermen agreed on a terrorist strategy designed to create "strategic armed chaos" in the major cities. Members of the group were to be given carte blanche to undertake terrorist actions as the opportunity arose. "Our Political objective is the destruction of hankiness". In hip vernacular, this appeared to mean the end of the way of life of the families from which the Weathermen had sprung (Moss 1972).

Guilt seems to be an overriding if unstated and perhaps unconscious motive of the American Weathermen. That may explain their precipitous decline as well. With the end of the Vietnam War, the oppositionist forces within American society faded and enthusiasms for massive social reform on behalf of a reluctant and befuddled working class fizzled. Right-wing opinion seemed justified in contending that middle-class prerogatives were threatened by the war and it instinctively and misleadingly proceeded to protect its prerequisites by mounting an opposition to foreign policy that included the working classes. When the threat ended so did the interest in the working class.

To claim that radical politics and the terrorism it engendered rested on the hypocritical and duplicitous motives of the affluent

says nothing about the coherence of the ideological justifications underlying them. That ideology and sincerity of motive are separable needs no discussion. While it may be true that white affluent terrorism in the United States was an answer to boredom as much as it was to the profound structural problems within the economic sector of the polity, in other times and in other places ideology and sincerity were deeply ingrained in those who participated in violence.

Frustration and genuine despair may not have played a significant psychological and cognitive role in the formation of the Weathermen but they seem to be important ingredients in the origination of terrorism elsewhere, and for some groups operating in the United States such as the FALN and Black Liberation Army. One of the most important and relevant insights that have emerged from the research on terrorism is that it is an outgrowth of forces operating in communities and among groups enveloped in frustration who feel beleaguered and ignored at home in their indigenous societies and abandoned by the international community. Perceiving themselves under siege, politically aware segments in such communities may tolerate extreme behavior in the name of localized ethnic, racial, religious or nationalist causes. A sure sign that terrorism is imminent is the unwillingness of local leaders to condemn their own extremist elements for fear of losing popular support. The Sikhs in India. Catholics in Northern Ireland, Shiite Muslims in Lebanon and the Palestinians throughout the Middle East are examples of how endogenous social and political factors contribute to terrorism.

Rightly or wrongly, these communities seem to have concluded that just about every channel for getting a message heard and addressed has been exhausted. Violence then is a tactic, an instrument to break through the indifference and ignorance of the international community. It may galvanize internal support, awaken the sympathetic support of the international community, and in still otherways revitalize a stagnant social order.

Because terrorist acts in general are rooted in community issues and causes, attempting to deal with terrorism on an individual basis tends to be futile. In numerous instances, individual terrorists who are arrested, jailed or killed or executed become heroes that may motivate and inspire others within their communities. In fact, acts and behaviors that may appear irrational or self-defeating become sensible when the specific audiences for whom the terrorist act is undertaken are identified. Some terrorist acts are designed solely to motivate perceived constituents, or to demonstrate to others that their local government is incompetent, ineffective and impotent. In other cases the sheer desperation of the act is meant to convey its seriousness of the cause in whose name things are done. In still other cases, terrorist acts are self-clarifying: it helps the terrorists to measure the responses of their audiences, to determine the effectiveness of their strategies and tactics (Jenkins 1982).

As for the seriousness and sincerity of terrorists, be they right or left wing is not to be denied. In the case of Russian terrorism and in some segments of the Arab terrorist groups, there

is a mystical element at work. Even among fascists their commitments were deep and abiding. Not only Mandniki, but in the United States, Black Liberation extremists—those ready to kill and bomb for the sake of the cause of racial liberation—are convinced revolutionaries prepared to become martyrs for their faith, willing to risk death, imprisonment and exile (Jackson 1971).

In addition to endogenous, internal factors that facilitate terrorism and provide a favorable climate for it, a number of other factors are at work that make it increasingly plausible as a method of handling political and social questions. First the worldwide and ever burgeoning uncontrolled system of competitive arms sales make weapons more easily available. Secondly, the spread and sophistication of mass communications assures instantaneous publicity for terrorist acts. Third, border controls not only in the Western Hemisphere but throughout Europe have deteriorated to such an extent that it is relatively easy to move about undetected. Quite apart from the sociological and psychological factors that enhance the conditions for terrorism, there is another element, ideology, that provides the intellectual impulse for violence.

#### Ideology and Terror: Utopian Thought and Action

According to Minogue, the essence of ideology lies in struggle. "Ideologies explain the world, and are thus distinguished from other political doctrines which merely develop reasons recommending such desirable things as liberty, stability and democracy" (Minogue 1985).

Minogue describes the distinguishing features of ideological thought that give it a special cast:

Ideologies were distinguished from other sorts of intellectual production by the fact that advanced proposals and also nominated a special class to whom the tasks was entrusted of bringing those proposals about. Each doctrine nominated what it imagined to be its natural bearers. The problem would soon appear that the nominated bearers turned out to need instruction in the doctrines which constituted their natural consciousness. Proletarians had to be taught to think like proletarians, women like women, Aryans like Aryans, and the members of nations sometimes had to be taught the very language of their nation from scratch (Minogue 1985).

Apart from revealing this secret of the human condition and coronating the bearers of the message, ideologies attempt to explain the world and also offer blueprints for "ideal" types of societies and social order. It is possible to develop a typology of terrorist groups in terms of the content and scope of their utopianism. From a sociological perspective terrorism repeats in violent forms a mystical scenario requiring suffering testimony, martyrdom, and a purifying bloodbath. In a sense, many terrorist groups may be little more than atheistic millerian movements whose rhetoric and ideological fervor generates a sense of mission and gives the groups a psychological cohesion (Eco 1986). What binds together its membership - which are often disparate in terms of status background culture, and occasionally language) - is an ideology that structures roles and actions and gives the groups, whether anti state or state-sponsored, a purpose and a mission.

Following Mannheim (1936) we can distinguish at least three types of utopian thought which form the basis of terrorist ideology:

a) Utopias of Nostalgia

consists of ideas, agendas and programs that seek the restoration of an earlier bricollic and more orderly society. A kind of rustic romanticism confects the schemes of past society seen as simpler, more heroic, more comprehensible. This kind of ideological thinking is expressed in the rhetoric of movements that are nationalistic, that seek the return of ancient homelands, that seek the revitalization of an old distinctive, idealifying language and homeland. Basque terrorists in Spain have made the issue of political autonomy and linguistic preservation part of their program for change. Similarly, the IRA in Ireland exhibits nostalgic sentiments along these lines. It interprets Irish history as a systematic oppression by the English in which Irish language and custom—those cultural elements that define the Irish as an ethnic group—were systematically erased. (Sagarin and Kelly 1972).

b) Utopias of Reconstruction

are as Mumford writes, "a vision of a reconstructed environment which is better adapted to the nature and aims of human beings who dwell within it than the actual one; and not merely adapted to their actual nature, but better fitted to their possible developments" (Mumford 1971).

Most terrorist organizations geared toward something more than retrieving a lost homeland (PLO), or staking claims to territory snatched from them (Armenians) are committed to this type of utopian thinking. It's enactment and realization can be murderous and bloody. The Khmer Rouge destruction of the State of Cambodia and the

establishment of the ancient nation/state of Kampuchea was not only based on nostalgic utopian thought seeking a return to a simpler, superior, rural agrarian life, but was an attempt violently achieved to destroy the urbanization and modernization trends established by Sihanouk with aid from the West. The Khmer Rouge modeled their ideal society on a communism through to be a life-style free of the enervating and corrupting influences of modernization and urban life. Cities were destroyed; the bourgeoisie was decimated; and the entire population was resettled in the hinterland in communes to pursue a pre-industrial way of life (Mahbulani 1983).

c) Utopias of Escape

a utopia of this type offers "escape or compensation; it seeks an immediate release from the difficulties or frustrations of our lot" (Sklar 1967). What comes immediately to mind and which may be only peripherally related to the more conventional and familiar types of terrorism being considered here is the Jonestown episode with its tragic mass suicides. The overtures of terror are surely there but internal to the group. There Jones and his followers destroyed "outsiders" (a visiting Congressman investigating charges of coercion) but the Temple and its jungle outpost/paradise sought to literally cut itself off from the world. It is worth considering Jonestown and the People's Temple cult as a form of terrorism because it manifests the very same features that give rise to and sustain terrorist organizations that are strictly political in orientation and purpose. According to the Cosers, the cult was born

in a movement of crisis (spiritual, social, economic) attracting on the one hand the truly poor and on the other some "rich" with a self-punishing syndrome; it announced the end of the world and the coming of the Anti Christ (Jones, not unlike the Weathermen, expected a fascist coup d'etat and nuclear holocaust). It started with a program of common ownership of property and convinces the initiates that they are the elect. The leader, endowed with charisma, subjects everyone to his own psychological power and for the common good (as he defines it), exploits both the material devotions and the willingness of the faithful to be mystically possessed. Not infrequently drugs or forms of self-hypnosis are employed to create group cohesiveness. Jones proceeded through successive stages of divinization. The group went from self-flagellation to violence against the unfaithful and then to violence against themselves in their desire for martyrdom. On the one hand a persecution delirium raged, and on the other the group's address actually unleashes genuine persecution which accused the group of crimes it had not committed (Coser and Coser 1979).

Jonestown was, not unlike terrorist movements, born out of social insecurity and exploded in a movement of historical crisis. In other countries, and possibly had circumstances been right in the United States, a millenarianism like the People's Temple could have acquired other structural forms - revolution, conquest, struggle against the tyrant, even nonviolent pursuit of martyrdom - and launched a radical, violent campaign against the government, the corporation, Wall street, the ruling elite, and so on.

Since late 1984, several terrorist organizations in various Western European countries (West Germany, Italy and France) have adopted a common propoganda line. "The Red Arm Faction"(FRG) calls this cooperative program "lines of aggression" in which target priorities are set. Their first line of aggression is directed against legal authorities - organizations of repression, in their idiom - with a second line focused on all the institutions of the armed forces. Red Army Faction offensive campaigns are to launched against:

- 1) Armed forces (USA,NATO &FRG) - the"institutuins of imperialism".
- 2) Security forces (criminal jistice agencies, i.e police, court and correctional facilities - the 'instruments of imperialistic politics"
- 3) Legal authorities-those agents of repressive state policies (Prosecutors, police, military personnel); and
- 4) Firms and commercial enterprises making up the economy.

The strategy is based on a rationale to create an "anti-imperialists front" from which war against the state can be launched.

In February 1978, the Red Brigades produced a document "The Strategic Direction Resolution" which presented among other things, their justifications for attacks on the multinational corportations. The purpose at least which eluded no one, was to demonstrate that the Red Brigades were not a bunch of desperados lashing out at random, but must be seen, wish to be seen, as the vanguard of a movement justified in the context of the international situation. Their intention to attack the communicating system of the multina-tional corporate giants is based on this reasoning: first,communi-

cations is the lynchpin for international and repressive domination; and second, therefore it is important to destroy communications and the technical personnel that direct them if the repressive economic deviation of the corporations is to be unhinged (Kelly 1986).

The Red Brigades position is a good illustration of how ideological extremism, how a kind of single-minded obsessiveness results in a ruthless, fanatical policy of systematic murder and destruction. If this was how things stood, one cannot react by simply declaring that the strategic direction document is raving, mad. The reasoning commences from fairly lucid premises but reveals the fatal theoretical and practical weakness of the Brigades and other terrorist groups committed to this kind of thinking.

The Strategic Direction Resolution, again, similar to the Weathermen communiques in their organ of propaganda, Prairie Fire, contains a highly acceptable premise and translates, even if in a fairly sketchy way, a thesis that all European and American culture, from the students of '68 to the Marxist theoreticians of the Monthly Review, has constantly repeated. If terrorist groups are in the grip of "paranoia", it lies not in the premises but in the practical conclusions drawn from them. By positioning the multinational corporations at the core of economic domination and repression, the Red Brigades have moved beyond the RAF in identifying the source of social malaise. For them, international planetary policy is no longer determined by individual governments but by a network of productive interests which decides local politics, wars and peace, and, again, establishes the modes vivendi between the capitalistic world, and the second and, third worlds.

If anything, what is interesting is that the Red Brigades have abandoned their Disney-like mythology in which one can side on the wicked corporate scrooges, and on the other the Beagle Boys, a cheating rabble, true, but with a certain crazy amiability because they stole to the tunes of proletarian confiscation, from the stingy, egotistical capitalist.

The confused idea that motivated terrorism (of the Western European kind discussed here) is a very modern principle and a very capitalistic one (for which classical Marxism found itself unprepared) a principle of systems theory. The great systems are headless. There are no Fords and Carnegies; there are no protagonists and they do not live on individual egoism, either. Therefore they cannot be struck-as Trotsky and Lenin knew-by killing the King; they are struck when they are made unstable through acts of harassment, exploiting their own logic: if corporations depend on communications, they will not be upset by the death of their owners or directors but rather by disruption of their communication network.

Modern terrorism exemplified by the Red Brigades. the terrorism of class conflict as opposed to nationalist terrorism has changed. In an earlier period, the Brigades spoke of "striking at the heart of the State" cultivating on the one hand the idea that the adversary has a heart, or a head, as in the battle of bygone ages, when if you could strike the King, riding at the head of his troops, the enemy army was demoralized and destroyed. It will be remembered that this was the strategy of Russian anarchism and of the European anarchist radicals in Western Europe in the nineteenth Century.

In this their latest communique the Red Brigades abandoned the idea of heart, of state, of wicked capitalist of "Murdering" ministers. Now the adversary is the system of the multinationals who use politicians as their pawns. What is the error in their reasoning especially when the Brigades and others appeal against multinational capital to multinational terrorism?

First, ingenuousness. Once they grasped the idea of economic corporate systems whose "tentacles" are like those of an octopus reaching beyond national borders, they promptly mythologize it, insisting that the multinationals have "secret plans" which a few highly placed government officials and prominent business people would know. In reality, the corporate interlocks have no secrets, and how they operate is well known. (Heilroner 1980). If the multinational corporations oppose left-wing governments in Italy, or anywhere for that matter, it is childish to think that they would send Craxi a form letter telling him how to defeat the working class. It would suffice, perhaps, to stir up something in the London Stock Exchange, or upset the diamond market in Amsterdam, influence the course of the dollar, and thus cause a lira crisis.

Second ingenuousness. Terrorism is not the enemy of the corporate system; on the contrary, it is their natural counterweight, accepted, anticipated and planned for. Corporations such as IBM allocate more than \$200 million a year for security (Kelly 1986). A factory may be destroyed, an executive kidnapped—these losses are miniscule compared to the effects of wide-scale society-wide revolution and rebellion. Corporations can maneuver against factions and tiny terrorist groups of true believers. Wherever it is struck on

the scale in which terrorists operate today, the corporate international system has displayed an astonishing capacity to stabilize and recover from shocks. If the general manager is killed in a foreign subsidiary, such an incident is statistically acceptable, though, regrettable, like highway deaths. Were terror to become a mass phenomenon as it does in Lebanon, there would be, and is, serious trouble. But too many have something to lose in a general situation of mass terror. Beyond picturesque and daring feats such as the attacks in Vienna on the OPEC ministers, the blows of terrorist groups can be absorbed.

Ideologies play a crucial formative and operational role in the structure and composition of the terrorist groups. The rhetoric and propaganda, the "line of analysis" the terrorist articulate attracts members and adherents and creates a cadre of sympathizers; it also functions to instill ideals in the neophyte and inflame the passions of the committed. Ideologies serve as well as legitimatory mechanisms for violent actions against closer targets. A group's ideology promotes values, objectives and pictures of a social reality that is to be smashed or dismantled and one that is to be erected and protected. From the standpoint of groups structure and organization, ideologies define the collective group boundaries (ethnic, racial, political, religious); help to create and maintain some solidarity and unity. Further, aside from its strictly ideational dynamics and functions explaining motives, defining permissible action. On an individual level ideologies enable the initiate to form an identity in accordance with a set of political roles and activities

that emerge from the assumptions made about society and forces within it.

In addition to those internal functions, ideologies are deliberate constructs of ideas, both critical and therapeutic, about the nature of the society and its ills which are addressed to an audience of the "noncommitted" that amorphous fractionated mass public. Every terrorist group desires to change the thinking and loyalty of a population to its government. As we have seen, some resort to violence and fear to break the hold over the people. Thus attacks against the public are not uncommon, even though they may appear wanton. So far the discussion has touched upon terrorism in the United States only intermittently to illustrate points in the analysis. Now we shall look in more detail at the realities and prospects of terror in the United States.

#### Terrorism in the United States

A decade ago, the world experienced an average of ten incidents of terrorist violence per week, assassinations, bombing, air hijackings, kidnappings, maimings or attacks on facilities. The average now is nearly ten per day.

According to Risk International, Inc., of Alexandria, Virginia terrorists struck 22,171 times from 1970 until the start of 1985, killing 40,394 persons and wounding 24,588. Americans or their property were targeted 3,032 times. In 91 percent of attacks since 1970, terrorists appeared to have accomplished their objectives.

TABLE 2.1 MAJOR INCIDENTS OF TERRORISM 1970-1984

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>INCIDENTS</u>
1970	293
1972	206
1977	1,257
1979	2,585
1982	2,838
1984	3,525

Source: U.S. News and World Report (July 8, 1985).

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TABLE 2.2 TYPES OF TERRORIST INCIDENTS, 1970-1984

<u>TYPE OF INCIDENT</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>
A) Bombings	10,207
B) Attacks on facilities (Go't. Bldgs., corporate HQ, Military)	6,884
C) Assassinations	3,774
D) Kidnappings	1,027
E) Hijackings	142
F) Maimings	137

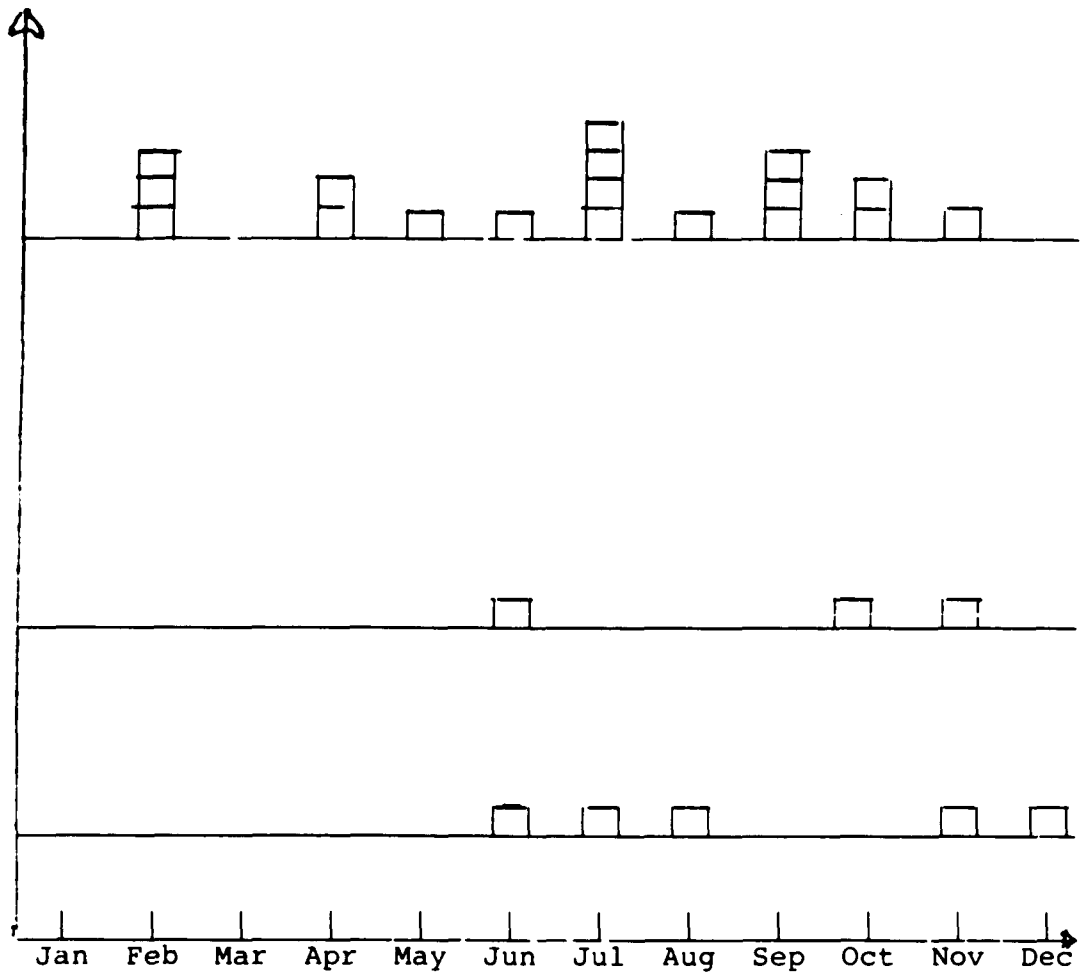
SOURCE: Risks International Inc. 1985.

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The data in Tables 1 and 2 show first an increase in terrorist activities worldwide. Typically the victims of bombings attacks which are the most frequent because they entail the least amount of exposure and risk and therefore, detection and arrest-have been business establishments, banks, utilities, government offices and military installations. Secondly, those who are the objects of assassinations have been police personnel, government officials including diplomats, military people and corporate executives. In their professional and occupational roles such individuals symbolize the forces of oppression and power that anti-statist terrorist oppose. The data show a pattern of terrorism - one that can be found when data on terrorism in the United States are analyzed as well; incidents that involve close contact with victims are fewer in number, and far more dangerous to execute, than attacks against physical objects and facilities that represent the state or the government.

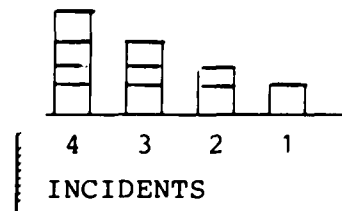
Figures #1 and 2 show over a two year period (1985-1986) a decline in some types of incidents. In 1985 for example there were some five bombing attacks as compared with seven in 1986 through April, and no assassinations or attempts through the first four months of 1986. The frequent invocation of the "steady growth of terrorism" to be found not only in the popular literature is not borne out by the facts and figures. If in this respect, a mistaken impression has prevailed, especially for terrorist activities in the United States, it is probable that the dramatic character and the enormous publicity given to individual terroristic exploits have caused it, as has, on the other hand, the indiscriminate use of the term "terrorist". (See pages 83 and 84 ref. Figure #1 and 2)

FIGURE 2.1: TERROR INCIDENTS (AIMED AT AMERICANS (1985))



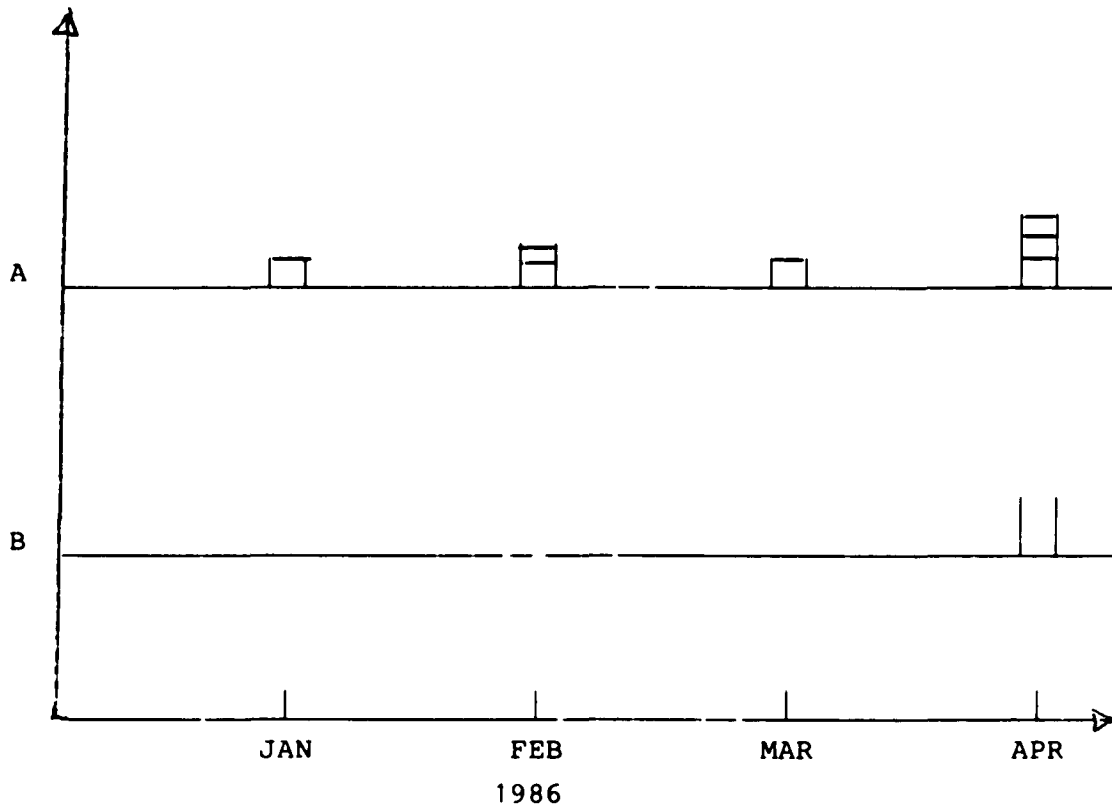
1985

KEY { A= Bombing  
 Inci- { B= Hijacking  
 dent {  
 Type [ C+ Assasination or Attempt



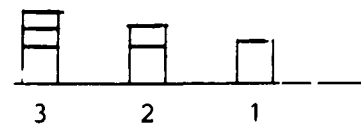
Source: UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT

FIGURE 2.2: TERROR INCIDENTS AIMED AT AMERICANS (1986)



key  
 Inci-  
 dent  
 Type

A= Bombing  
 B= Assassination or Attempt



{  
 { INCIDENTS  
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Source: UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT

Today, almost any form of political violence from shootouts with the radical racist Posse Comitatus in Missouri in which police and perpetrators were kidded, to police encounters with the black militant Republic of Africa cultists in Philadelphia where several cult members were killed and an entire neighborhood engulfed in fire caused by the police assault is likely to be characterized by the media as a "terrorist incident". Nevertheless, the United States has not been immune to terrorist violence. Other data, reported by Jenkins (1980) show that in the ten year period 1968-1978, "the United States is at or near the head of the list of nations most affected by terrorism. Kerstelter (1983) reports data that conforms Jenkins:

Beginning in 1966, the number of international incident increased sharply. Between 1968 and 1970 they doubled, and they doubled again between 1970 and 1980, reaching the annual total of 800. There were more than 6,700 incidents between 1968 and 1980, with slightly more than half of them occurring in Western Europe. Although only 10% of the entire number took place in North America, citizens Of the United States and Canada have accounted for almost 40% of the victims in such attacks.

The attacks have become more deadly, and the political complexion of the terrorist groups involved have become more varied. Given the fact that the United States and its citizens have been regularly victimized by terrorism, how do we account for the fact that until the last couple of years the impression has been fostered that we are somewhat removed from the scene of struggle and the heat of violence? Jenkins offers several cogent reasons. First, it is not the number of incidents within our borders as to our citizens so much (although since 1983 there were some 387 U.S. casualties alone, Office of Counter Terrorism, 1984) as it is the spectacular nature of the acts themselves that arouse consternation and public fear. The Hearst kidnapping and sequelae; the 1976 hijacking by Croatians; the

1977 Havafi Muslem building seizure in Washington, D.C.; and more recently the murder of Klinghoffer aboard the Achille Lauro were major media events.

Coverage perhaps more than the severity of the events themselves may explain the intensified interest in terrorism. Second, the foreign terrorist have threatened innumerable times to begin operations in the United States but have not carried through. After the recent bombing over Libya threats were uttered about blood running in the streets of American cities but nothing happened. The United States has witnessed nothing to compare with the West German embassy seizure in Stockholm or the OPEC headquarters attack in Vienna. Third, as the Figures in 1 and 2 indicates, terrorist violence in the United States has been less lethal than elsewhere. Most of the incidents have been bombings, the main terrorist action in the United States, and these have been directed at buildings, not persons. Fourth, ironically, the high level of violent crime in the United States overshadows the comparatively low level of political violence. The rate of violent crime in the United States per 1,000 population in 1984 is 31 - about 6 million persons - 3.2% of all Americans are victims of violent crime each year (Crime and Justice Facts 1985). Thus, an average of 20-30 incidents a year in the United States would hardly seem significant (New York State Report on Terrorism, 1985).

It might be supposed that in a society so heavily armed and so prone to violence and ethnic and racial divisiveness that more terrorist groups and violent incidents would occur. Clearly,

ideology motivates terrorist in Western Europe and Latin America; somehow despite the abrasive quality of our racial and interethnic relationships separatist movements of size and impatience have not developed significant followings. Even the Black Muslims which theologially preach separatism and racial armageddon remains quiescent (Landers and Quinn 1985). Neither Marxism nor fascism took deep root in American politics, and the American political system has structural capacities in co-opt potential disrupters of its system. In contrast to other political systems,

"Political violence in America is oriented on specific issues rather than ideologically motivated. Violence has accompanied almost every major economic, social, or political movement in the twentieth century. The Galor movement in the early part of the century, the Civil Rights movement, The Anti- Vietnam War movement all spawned on their fringe tiny groups determined to use violent means. In each case, the political system co-opted the movement's programs leaders, and members depriving the bomb throwers of potential sympathizers from which active support and future recruits might be drawn. As a result terrorist organizations have tended to be short-lived, unable to increase their permanent membership beyond a single cohort of entrants" (Jenkins 1980).

Fortunately, the United States has so far experienced little terrorism from abroad. With the exception of Palestinian groups who are involved in more incidents outside the Middle East, other terrorist groups tend to operate close to home (Office of Counterterrorism 1985). Several explanations have been suggested to explain the avoidance of the United States as a locale for Arab/Moslem terror. "Palestinian terrorism operating outside the Middle East has expressed itself mainly in Western Europe where there are relatively large Arab student and guest worker settlements. In these population enclaves, terrorists may find support, potential recruits and pro-

tection" (Kelly 1986). Dependence on Arab oil and fears of retaliation from Palestinians seem to have pressured some Western European governments to look the other way as Palestinian terrorist organizations proliferated in Italy, France, West Germany and elsewhere. Further, many Palestinian leaders had attended European universities and were familiar with Western radical intellectuals and their milieu. In contrast, the United States is geographically remote with a small Arab population whose links with dissident American intellectuals are not durable. Also American Jewish groups and the Israeli lobby have vigorously and successfully made the case against Palestinian claims. Quite apart from better security arrangements at American airports, the Palestinians appear to have adopted a strategy aimed at wooing rather than alienating American public opinion. These factors may explain, in part, America's comparative immunity to terrorism originating outside its boundaries.

Table-2 show bombing by far are the most frequent method of terrorist attacks. If a traditional weapon of terrorist can be identified, it would be the bomb. The high percentage of bombings reflects some sociological and organizational realities of terrorists organization and group composition. For one, compared with other terrorist methods and technologies, bombing demands relatively little technical expertise (Yakuel 1985). While bombs have exploded in the face of some terrorists, ordinarily if instructions are followed carefully, and if the proper materials are obtained, a reasonably intelligent person can with little risk construct such a deadly device. Another reason that bombs are attractive to terrorists is

that they entail little risk to the perpetrator, it can, in effect, be a one-person operation. With the exception of the Symbianese Liberation Army and Black Liberation Army while successfully carried out some bank robberies and assassinations, few terrorist groups in the United States have succeeded in complex operations involving the seizure of facilities or kidnapping which require arms proficiency, planning skills, hideouts and safe houses. This suggests that most terrorist groups in the United States are small and unsophisticated in the technology of ballistic and requisite criminal skills.

Given the enormous media coverage of terrorist events (see Ch.4), it is easy to conclude that terrorism in the United States is a very formidable problem when, in fact, a handful of groups account for the majority of all terrorist incidents recorded in the last decade. Such groups as the Weather Underground, Puerto Rican separatist, Anti-Castro Cuban organization, the Jewish Defense League and New World Liberation Front - an offshoot of the Black Liberation Army - have accounted for most of the terrorist incidents. There are other groups, of course. The Aryan Nations, the Fosse Comitatus, the Ku Klux Klan and other fringe groups dot the American political landscape, but these are not viewed as an imminent threat to public safety yet.

The groups defined as terrorist in the United States are those which emerged out of the extreme elements of the Civil Rights and Anti-Vietnam War movements of the 1960's. Those groups promoted their causes through Marxist rhetoric and a commitment to violent revolutions, however improbable its chances of success. The Black Liberation Army which declared open warfare on police was composed of an

odd mixture of ex-convicts street-wise hustlers and disillusioned black intellectuals. Some middle and upper-class whites also joined their ranks (New York Report on Terrorism (1985). The Weather Underground, a faction within the SDS, that espoused guerrilla warfare waged "war" against the capitalist system of the United States. Since 1978-79, both groups have been inactive or dispersed by arrests and imprisonments.

Both groups and other even smaller radical organizations, emerged during the turbulent period of American history. Events at home in the ghettos, and abroad in Vietnam created a fascination with guerrilla war. Ho Chi Minh, Che Guerrera, became cult heroes; the radical political postures of Malcolm X and the military of the Muslims and Black Panthers coupled with the writings of Regis Delry, Franntz Faver and Moa Tse Tung transfixed the imaginations of students and others committed to social change. But since the mid seventies, the political atmosphere has changed. The Vietnam War is over, internal militancy in the name of racial justice has undergone a transformation as civil rights legislation has enabled many thousands of black to acquire position and prestige in society. And prospects for mobility have not diminished.

With the United States, there are other groups, non-indigenous groups, that pursue causes which are ethnically-based against foreign governments or foreign problems. Included here are the Anti-Castro groups. Croations and Jewish Defense League. None unlike the Weather underground or the BLA, seeks the overthrow of the United States government, nor do they desire to alter the political system

of the United States through violent means. As noted above, these groups became impatient with American foreign policy seeing it as naive or too conciliatory, however well meaning. In many respects, the United States is for them merely a safe haven, a base of operations to pursue operations in exile against other governments. Omega 7 and other Cuban exile groups have conducted operations against the representatives of the Cuban regime not only in the United States but in other countries as well.

One of the more interesting organizations is the Jewish Defense League (JDL). At first, living out its slogan, "Never Again!" militant young Jews vowed to resist anti-semitism wherever and whenever it surfaced (Kahane 1975). The JDL originated as a vigilante group, guarding Jewish shopkeepers in transitional neighborhoods where older Jews were often victims of Black and Puerto Rican youth groups. In time, the JDL confronted international anti-semitic and became deeply involved in the plight of Soviet Jews and the defense of Israel. Bombing of Soviet embassies and missions, the intimidation of Soviet diplomats and Arab missions was the stock and trade of the JDL.

One of the more violent groups operating in the United States and unlike other ethnically-based organizations in that it is in opposition, direct opposition, to United States policy is the FALN. In 1950, the Puerto Rican independence movement attempted to assassinate President Harry Truman; and in 1954, a group of Puerto Rican nationalists attacked the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress wounding five Congressmen, with gun fire. Only this

year, 1986, were the perpetrators released from custody. The independence campaign has continued over the years despite the fact that the people of Puerto Rico have regularly voted to remain a commonwealth possession of the United States.

The FALN represents a remnant and a political distillation of splinter nationalist groups that operated in the United States and Puerto Rico since 1960. Such groups as the "Armed Comandos of Liberation" (CAL) and the "Armed Revolutionary Independence Movement" (MIRA) bombed United States companies sporadically in New York and Puerto Rico and sought to discourage mainland tourism and investment in the island. After a series of arrests and bombings stopped. The surviving members reorganized themselves and ultimately the FLAN appeared in the 1970's which renewed attacks on United States government buildings and corporate headquarters (Fitzpatrick 1971). Its most deadly acts of violence occurred in 1975 when a bomb detonated in Frances Tavern, a popular Wall Street restaurant, in New York City, killing four and injuring three. Since then, there have been acts of violence against U.S. Military personnel and corporate headquarters in New York, Chicago and in Puerto Rico. The FLAN has been hunted by the FBI with some of its key leaders jailed. Despite its small size and virulent Marxist rhetoric, there would appear to be some popular support for the movement even though Plebiscites and Referenda show that the vast majority of Puerto Ricans do not desire independence and nationhood.

In general, there does not appear to be a significant internal terrorist threat in the United States at this time. Apart from the

FALN and random attacks on government facilities by radical political groups, the major cause of concern focuses on terrorism from groups outside the United States.

Counterterrorism: Strategies, Tactics and Prospects

In the 1980's the rampant terrorism in the Mideast - much of it targeted at Americans - has generated fear that the epidemic of violence may soon spread to the United States. Never before have authorities been so alarmed about the potential for terrorist attacks within this country's borders. Concern about groups such as the FALN is compounded by three ominous developments overseas: First, the emergence of fanatically anti- American Shiite Moslems in the Mideast spurred on since the Iranian revolution led by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Robert B. Oakley, Director of the Office for Counterterrorism and Emergency Planning in testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and on the Judiciary said:

"...terrorists attacks are likely to be increasingly violent. Even with a ...sustained U.S. Government (anti-terror/commitment, unless and until other governments are willing and able to make the same commitment the unfavorable trend experienced (in 1984) cannot be reversed. Without this international cooperative effort, the terrorist and those behind them, will continue to be successful, which will encourage others to utilize terrorism too achieve their own political and ideological goals" (Oakley 1985).

Oakley goes on to enumerate the unilateral measures being pursued by the U.S Government to protect its facilities and personnel. Some of the precautionary measures are such that in some locales in Washington D.C. there is a fortress-like appearance to many government facilities. According to Oakley, physical security at Embassies and missions around the world is being stepped up dramatically Employees,

travelers and American businesses abroad are being urged to keep a low posture and de-emphasize their American nationality. Efforts are being made to monitor the travel of well-known terrorists and to pressure states who have supported terrorists groups or are sympathetic to them with trade restrictions. These are some of the unilateral actions being undertaken by the United States. Bilateral and multilateral agreements are being studied by states who have themselves been victimized by terror. Quite apart from its strong support of Israel in the Mideast- which in itself makes the United States an enemy as much as Israel is an implacable foe of Shiites and Palestinians- America has in Wilkinson's words,

"... a high profile in the world. It is after all, the leading power in the Western Alliance. Marxist groups and anti-Western groups generally see the United States as the key target in the revolutionary struggle against the West. You also cannot underestimate the Cold-War dimension in the support given terrorism. States which are bitterly anti-American such as Cuba, Libya, Vietnam, North Korea, and clearly using terrorism against America's allies against American presence in other countries. The third factor is that America, as the greatest of the democracies, has the free media which these terrorist groups hunger to reach. They know that if they hit an American target the attack will be reported worldwide through modern media technology and either cause will get the maximum publicity" (Wilkinson 1984).

Wilkinson's last point about the role of the media and the conscious exploitation of it by terrorists is one that is constantly repeated by those who contend with terrorism in either an official or scholarly way. For Wilkinson, terrorism is nothing less than murder, a bloody criminal act, and it is the task of the media, therefore, to guard against glamorizing or condoning terrorism.

The policy of the United States government is related in spirit to Wilkinson's suggestions. The President of the United States made it unmistakably clear how the United States will deal with terrorists. On June 18, 1985 he said that, "America will never make concessions to terrorists - to do so would only invite more terrorism - nor will we ask or pressure any other government to do so" (Risk 1985). The government's policy is as blunt as the President's remarks: no concessions, no ransom payments, no releases of prisoners, no changes of policy.

That is the substance of the United States government's reactions to terrorist attack or threat thereof. At the same time it has launched an anti-terrorist campaign abroad- a proactive response to terror. At the London economic summit in June, 1984, the Western Allies including Canada, Great Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and representatives of several other countries issued a "Declaration on International Terrorism". It was the outcome of an effort to achieve a consensus on how to deal with international terrorism. The statement goes beyond platitudes and notes that since the Declarations of Bonn (1978) Venice (1980), and (Ottawa) 1981 hijacking and kidnapping had declined. As Secretary of State Schultz observed in his testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs concerning the London summit of 1984:

"In earlier summit meetings we had addressed specific issues such as aircraft hijacking and protection of our diplomats. We have made considerable progress in these areas. But on this occasion we discussed the basic political problem of states engaging in terrorism, and we acknowledge the international

character of the problem. We noted in our respective countries we have gaps in legislation for combatting terrorism" (Schultz 1984 emphasis added).

The London summit introduced several new ideas about terrorism and contained proposals which were accepted by the signatories. First, the summit called for close cooperation and coordination between national police and security organizations in the exchange of intelligence. Secondly, it called for actions by states to review weapons and firearms sales to states identified as supporting terrorism. Third, the signers of the London Declaration agreed to cooperate on the expulsion and exclusion from their countries of known terrorists, including those with diplomatic status. The most important item mentioned by Schultz was that of the concept of the "terrorist state". In 1985 President Reagan followed up Schultz's testimony about terrorist states-that is nations engaged in terrorism, or there actively supporting terrorist activities- in a speech before the American Bar Association. In it, president Reagan identified Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua and Libya as "terrorist states" as a version of "murder Inc." whose objectives and strategies purposes are to:

"...discriminate the United States, to disrupt or alter our foreign policy, to sow discord between ourselves and our allies, to frighten friendly Third nations working with us for peaceful settlements of conflicts, and finally to remove American influences from those areas of the world where we're working to bring stable and democratic government. In short to cause us to become "Fortress America" (Reagan 1985).

A year earlier in a speech before the Institute's second conference on International Terrorism, Secretary of State Schultz spoke of "active defense - about defense (against terrorism) through appropriate or preemptive actions against terrorist groups before

they strike" (Schultz 1984 emphasis added).

Thus, the policy prerogatives of the Administration and its definition of the nature and causes of terrorism were made clear before the Libyan bombing incident in 1986. Throughout 1984, when Schultz and Reagan laid out the principal pieces of their policy, the political climate for Mideast terrorism festered with anti-Americanism. In September, 1984 another suicide bombing against American installations occurred in Beirut. In the aftermath of the attack - whose basis was perceived as one which sought to neutralize the American presence in the Mideast because of its ties to Israeli policy and its lack of fairness - commentators called for retribution without specifying precisely how this was to be implemented (Norton 1984). Then the attacks in the airports of Rome and Vienna; finally the Achille Lauro incident. American public opinion was outraged. The President seemed poised to act, decisively, and he did.

The context in which the President ordered the air strike against Libya needs to be noted. For the first time ever, the Soviet Union joined in a statement of the UN Security Council condemning terrorism - this, after the hijacking of the TWA 847 flight and the Achille Lauro incident. And Yasser Arafat himself solemnly assured American television audiences that he deplored this sort of thing. The air strike was launched at several military targets on the eastern and western coasts of Libya flanking the Gulf of Sidra with its famous "line of death" border. Reports indicated that the United States attacks inflicted a significant number of civilian casualties. American public opinion was supportive of the President's action.

But the question remains, "Is direct response, military response, likely to discourage terrorism?" Earlier in 1985, the Battleship USS New Jersey shelled Druse positions in the Lebanese foothills. Loss of life and destruction among the Druse was high but their fortitude to continue their struggle remained undiminished. Informed opinion was filled with reservations and in some cases, opposition to the air assault on Libya. Lisa Anderson (1986), an expert on Libya contended that:

"In the short run, this campaign of intimidation serves simply to prolong Khadafy's rule. American policy, paradoxically, has been strengthening a regime near collapse. If the United States truly wants to see a change of regime in Libya, it's time to let the Libyans themselves topple a government they intensely dislike".

Anderson's diagnosis of the Libyan situation suggests that had Libya been left alone, disgruntled Libyans themselves could have soon taken care of the Colonel-through a coup d'etat. It now seems certain that in the aftermath of the attack that Libyan nationalism will experience a resurgence that will counter the internal unhappiness with Khadafy and at the very least delay the ultimate goal of the Schultz/Reagan counter-terror policy: to get rid of Khadafy and others once and for all. The widespread dissatisfaction with Khadafy's foreign policy and its drain on the Libyan economy has not eroded patriotism and national pride. On the contrary, the bombardment of Libya may have lead the opposite effect of strengthening Khadafy's control.

Assuring that the attack on Libya did produce the desired outcome - the toppling of the Khadafy's regime - would that have

spelled the end or significant reduction of the activities of the "Network of terrorist states"? Is retaliation in Israel the best way to counter terror? Despite many success in recent years against the Red Brigades in Italy, against the Meinhoff gang in West Germany, against the IRA Provos in Northern Ireland and against the FALN and Weather Underground in the United States - despite these achievements, terrorism persists, even grows.

Negotiations in the past have produced mixed results with terror abating in some cases but erupting elsewhere; "target hardening" in which physical security and surveillance is accelerated has led to the selection of new victims by terrorists; and armed retaliation - as the Israeli experience attest - only deepens the resolve of the terrorists to continue their struggle. Nor do pragmatic political solutions succeed. The view that if only major grievances of a particular group can be discussed and a political formula stitched together, terror will disappear - this approach has often backfired too. In attempting to cope with terrorism in Corsica, Mitterand suggested an autonomous government for Corsica - self government in effect but in which matters of foreign policy and economic policy would be handled in consultation with Paris. What happened was that the Front for the National Liberation of Corsica called it a "sellout" and continued their campaign of terror in Corsica and southern France (Wilkinson 1985).

Political initiatives, resort to international law, efforts to "isolate" terrorists groups by depriving them of their proclaimed right to represent a people, groups or cause may, in the long run, succeed incrementally. The fact that terrorists in the short run are

able to resist non-violence counter measures frustrates the natural and powerful appetite for revengeful action against them. Retaliatory efforts may be immediately gratifying psychologically but they engender further terrorist attacks - as Khadafy promised - requiring still further military action. As Jenkins observes "Isn't this how the United States became a participant in Lebanon's factional fighting? Is the United States willing to enter a terrorist war which the public may be unwilling to suffer or support? (Jenkins 1984). What Schultz announced in his policy statement concerning the agreements at the London summit on international cooperation where intelligence is exchanged; joint security undertaken; and states identified as harboring or supporting terrorists possessed, may prove more effective than military options.

What seems odd in view of the American experience with non violent conflict resolution in the Civil Rights Movement most recently is the fact that the United States has not sought to tap its considerable experience in this regard and export it into those volatile regions of the world where we have interest. Americans have a long tradition of bargaining negotiation and compromise in labor dispute, racial and religious unrest. In this century alone, new national strategies to produce change in the face of a determined opposition succeeded. The Rev. Martin Luther King was able to adapt Gandhian non violence to the American racial turmoil and produce very significant gains with a minimum of violence. Perhaps, that experience and these techniques might prove more effective than Rapid Deployment Forces and Massive assault forces.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Police and Terrorism; News Dissemination

With few exceptions, the police are usually first on the scene of a terrorist incident. When a determination is made as to the nature of the crime scene - that, in fact, it involves a terrorist or terrorist type - of action, the Public Information Division (PID) of the New York City Police Department (NYCPD) is contacted as are the appropriate federal agencies (FBI, Task Force on Terrorism, etc.) organized to handle such incidents.

The PID of the NYCPD functions as a clearing-house for information released to the media and the public (see Appendix A ). Its official functions and operations include facilitating release of information about the department to the media and the public. The PID also handles requests for information pertaining to various operational components of the NYCPD.

In terrorist incidents, the PID arranges the following activities:

- 1- Maintain a liaison with the media.
- 2-Gather, obtain and disseminate information concerning ongoing events.
- 3-Review and respond to general inquiries both written and telephonic.

When an incident occurs, the PID prepares a preliminary summary of the event (referred to as an "Action Sheet" in operational direc-

tions, Appendix A) detailing detailing location, time and type of occurrence. If there is a question as to the sensitivity of the incident, PID personnel consult with superior officers who then make a determination as to what should or should not be released to the media.

The issue of the "sensitivity" of an event, and whether information about it, its participants, targets, purpose and so on, is released to the media depends upon several criteria. One is the determination of "newsworthiness" - a concept that has no clear - cut parameters but would seem to depend on a general impression on what is of public interest as measured by the frequency of media coverage. More importantly, however, release of information, and the kind of information disseminated is shaped by Police Department regulations and guidelines. For example, while acknowledging the right of the public to be informed, the department is at the same time cognizant and cautious that information disclosed to the media does not defeat the ends of justice or infringe upon the individual's right to privacy.

Judicial procedures, in short, must be safeguarded. In order to improve cooperation with the news media and remain mindful of the need not to jeopardize judicial procedures or investigations, the department subscribes to a set of guidelines promulgated by The New York Fair Trial Free Press Conference, (NYFTFPC). The NYFTFPC is a voluntary group of criminal justice professionals (lawyers, judges, enforcement officials and journalists) who work together to balance

constitutional guarantees under the First and Sixth Amendments, and the needs of an informed public with unfettered access to information. Since 1969, the NYFTFPC has worked to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings between the criminal justice system and the media.

Guidelines for Disseminating Information

The following kinds of information are released, as part of department policy and conference guidelines, and made available for publication when and after an arrest has been made:

1-The name, age, residence, employment, marital status and other background information of an accused;

2-The substance of the text of the charge of the complaint, indictment, information and, where appropriate, the identity of the complainant.

3- The identity of the investigating and arresting agency, and the length of the investigation.

4- The circumstances surrounding the arrest, including the time and place of arrest, whether there was any resistance offered, whether weapons were possessed and used, and a description of items seized at the time of arrest.

What is not released without a specific clearance from the PID are:

1- Statements as to the character or reputation of an accused or a prospective witness.

2- Any admissions, confessions or the contents of statements or alibis attributable to an accused.

3- The performance or results of tests, or the refusal of the accused to take a test.

4- Statements concerning the credibility or anticipated testimony of prospective witnesses.

5- The possibility of a guilty plea, or other disposition.

6- Opinions concerning evidence in the case, and whether or not it is anticipated that such evidence will be used at trial.

When a situation is not clearly covered by guidelines, law enforcement personnel are encouraged to call the PID for clarification and referral.

The NYCPD, as well as other law enforcement agencies, have a vested interest in cooperating with the media. In fact, the PID has urged department personnel to refer media to their personnel. It is recognized by the PID that if the media is closed off or denied access to information, then they will seek out other sources. This can create problems. Media personnel may begin to speculate or embellish information derived from unreliable sources; or question individuals who provide biased or one-sided accounts of what has transpired.

In numerous cases, pre-trial or premature disclosure of information has caused serious delays in trials. One of the functions of the PID, therefore, is to regulate information flow in order to secure the integrity of prosecutions and investigations.

Of course, the media can and does resort to other sources of information. A persistent problem for law enforcement - and one that the PID seeks to control to the extent that it is possible to do so - is the "leaking" of information by members of the department to media contacts. Media may interview victims, and families; relatives

of the accused, and so on. The PID has no jurisdiction over media in this respect.

### Terrorist Incidents

The procedures of the NYCPD and its PID section do not vary much when faced with terrorist incidents. How the NYCPD decides that an incident should be characterized as terroristic depends upon a number of factors. According to R.Burke, former Commanding Officer of the PID, information from detectives at a crime scene or incident or information provided by the Police Department's Hostage Negotiations Team is assembled. It is then decided if an incident should be labeled as terroristic. If it is, the appropriate federal agencies are informed and consulted (Interview R.Burke Dec.21,1985 see Appendix A).

When a terrorist incident occurs, such as a hostage situation, a bombing or threat of one, or a shooting incident, the PID is immediately informed (as are other relevant federal and state agencies) by local law enforcement at the scene. The Deputy Commissioner of Public Information, the Commanding Officer of the Division and as many officers from the PID that may be needed, participate in the operations. All information concerning the incident - if the New York City Police Department is in charge of the scene and has jurisdiction - is cleared before release with the officer in charge and/or the hostage negotiator.

It is the policy of the NYCPD, in accordance with Conference guidelines, that media are always permitted at a terrorist incident.

Media people are, however, subject to the directions of the police at the scene. Considerations of safety dictate control of media movements as much as anything else. Controlling access of media movements is not designed to restrict media information gathering or "funnel" information through the police; rather the main task of the police is to insure the safety of all those at the scene and to secure the area perimeter so that police personnel can work unhampered by distractions.

The PID does not hesitate to consult media for any information they obtain independently of the law enforcement agencies. On occasion, terrorists, whose purpose are primarily to attract public attention, will attempt direct communications with news papers or television broadcast stations. It is police policy to request letters or communiques from groups claiming responsibility for a terrorist act and to interview recipients. Also, terrorists may ask for air time or space in a newspaper in order to present their cause, its justification, or explanations for an action they have initiated. The police policy here is flexible: all factors are weighed and then a decision is reached as to whether the department will endorse a request from a terrorist group for media access to the public. Clearly if lives are dependent upon direct media involvement, law enforcement is very likely to consent to the transmission or publication of a statement by terrorists.

The NYCPD does not have a special unit to deal with terrorist threats or organizations. It participates actively in the federally sponsored Task Force on Terrorism by providing expert personnel, in-

telligence data and legislated resources. Various NYCPD units (Emergency Service, Hostage Negotiations, Bomb Disposal Unit) may be called upon for assistance.

At the scene, the PID gather the relevant information from the officers in charge and prepares comment and briefings for the press and media. No information is released to media that might endanger an operation or personnel; further, the PID might not, depending on the nature of the incident, disclose its methods and tactics in handling a situation. Before a press release is made, members of the NYCPD Legal Bureau and other law enforcement agencies may be consulted.

In order to avoid charges that police are "suppressing" or withholding information from the media, the PID may brief media "off the record" and update the information they disseminate. The purpose of this is to create a sense of cooperation with the media lest they seek out independent sources (which they often do) or build up an account of an incident from a slim, unreliable base of information. The PID has asked media to withhold release of a story during an incident in the interest of safety for all involved. However, this has not always worked. Three years ago, during a hostage incident at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, N.Y., a television station interviewed the hostage-takers brother on camera. It was feared that the presence of the brother on television might upset the hostage-taker and destroy the work of the hostage negotiators who had sought to defuse the tension at the scene and gain the release of hostages. In general, the PID functions as a buffer between the media and members of the Police Department who are trying to ease tensions and

terminate an incident without a loss of life or property.

Are there advantages in media coverage of terrorist incidents? The PID's former Commanding Officer sees little. Media coverage in the opinion of this official is generally accurate: the facts are reported as they occurred with no distortions. However, there is the fear that television coverage may encourage others; that it may publicize the group and its goals; and that the media are extorted by terrorists and in effect, lose control over their own operations. Print journalism appears to be less "sensational" than live coverage. Apparently, the immediacy and vividness of live coverage has a greater impact on viewers than comparatively more abstract verbal accounts found in newspapers. Finally, the interviewee thought that post incident coverage could effectively satisfy the public's need to be informed.

The overall mission of the PID is to coordinate public and press relations for the NYCPD and to facilitate the release of information concerning official department business. As the liaison and interface agency for the department the PID performs a number of functions: it acts as an advisory agency to the Police Commissioner and prepares and edits public statements, when requested to do so, by the Commissioner's office. The PID has the responsibility for issuing police press cards and supervising departmental relations with the press in general. In addition it is expected to keep the public informed of new police procedures and administration changes occurring within the department and communicating to the public departmental needs for civic cooperation on special problems.

The PID has two major functional and operational tasks to perform. One is internal. The PID operates as the department's "clearing house" for information concerning major law enforcement activities in the city. It structures the process of information flow both to and from the public as best it can. It advises and aids officers on the scene of major events (both criminal and non-criminal): in their effort to inform the press and the public.

Externally, the PID supervises press relations and determines what media personnel are authorized to receive and exercise the privileges accompanying a police press card.

The importance attached to the PID is clear from its size and level of ranks in administrative positions. The division (Fig.1) is headed by a Deputy Commissioner who is answerable directly to the Police Commissioner. Customarily, the post of Deputy Commissioner of Public Information is occupied by a civilian with experience and demonstrated expertise in the media field. The department personnel in the division are recruited for certain skills and background. College educated officers and those with writing ability are sought out. Members are expected to develop skills in public speaking and training: the PID produces a departmental newsletter and a radio program "Police Forward".

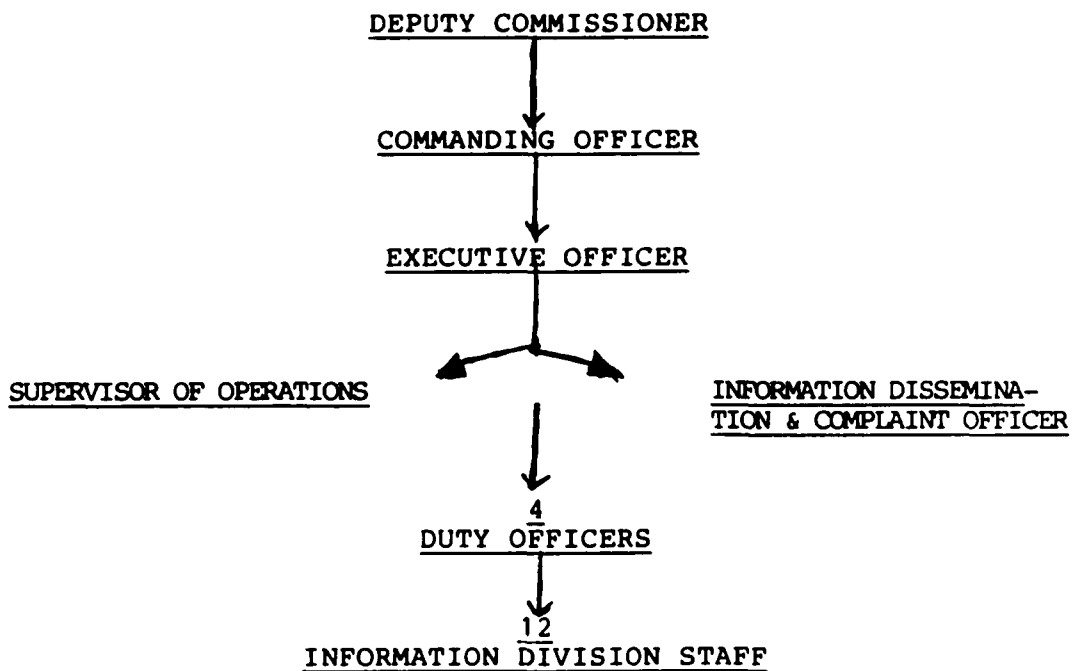
The personnel recruited into the PID tend to be a selective group compared with the bulk of personnel within the Police Department. Further, the PID conducts an intensive in-service training program through the Police Academy. Instruction in the mission of

the agency, its procedures and routines, are handled by the command echelon of the PID. The focus of the training is on media relations: how electronic and print media generate; department policy on information releases; coordination of information at crime scenes; and promulgation of details on terrorist incidents.

The PID functions as an informational dissemination system, a "gatekeeping" mechanism deliberately designed to insure that the NYCPD retains as much control as possible concerning the flow of information about incidences and criminal activities in which it is involved.

FIGURE 3.1

Staff Organization of the Public Information Division of the  
New York City Police Department



Source: Organization Guide, NYCPD (1982)

### Constructing Images of Crime and Terrorism

Two basic concerns appear to underpin the rationale for the PID and its operations; managing public order and managing the image of the Police Department. Apart from its stated objective of being an "Advocate" for the media and the department - a bridge, as it were, between potentially conflicting bureaucratic organizations - other research has demonstrated that news organizations know of the world they report almost exclusively through legitimated institutions (Fishman 1980).

A good deal of what we see and read in the news is the result not only of what journalists do, but also of accounts that other agencies produce in the course of enforcing laws. The police -are of these "legitimated" institutions - produces accounts which become, in effect, the journalists / news persons raw materials.

As the routine source for crime and criminal justice news, law enforcement agencies formulate for the media what is "out there" and what can be said about it (Sherizen 1978). News organizations may choose what crime to report, but the variety and number of occurrences from which they draw tends to be pre-selected within Police Departments. The issue here is not so much the relationship of individual media reporters or editors and their police sources but how they get their accounts of terrorist acts.<sup>1</sup> This entails an examination of the ways a law enforcement bureaucracy monitors itself.

### Public Information Division Media Relations

In general, crime news is news of individual occurrences. Almost anywhere one finds crime news one finds police departments supplying news organizations with an assortment of crime incidents everyday (Kelly 1978). In urban areas of large size such as New York City, the media rely on the police for a summary of such daily incidents. This method simplifies for the media the news gathering process. Further PID and similar agencies are able to provide the most recent information or fresh data concerning an on-going event as well as provide more details about a case. As noted above, the PID takes pains to appear accommodating and helpful to the media.

The "press wire"-the daily summary of incidents is dispatched to the major media by the PID's operational section. It is the principal means by which news organizations first learn of crime in the city. To determine how the press wire and operations section of the PID functions, and how information of incidents is selected for transmission and dissemination, an interview with the Commanding Officer of the PID was conducted. Information that goes out across the press wire originates from the Operations Section of the PID. In essence, the PID is the NYCPD's central informational command post which keeps track of principal incidents and events throughout the city twenty-four hours a day. Reports of incidents are funneled into the Operations Section from two major sources: an "Incident Log" and "the field." The press wire is made up in the process of monitoring these two sources.

The incident log is a teletype which continuously prints brief summaries of emergency phone calls from citizens who dial 911 for police assistance. Because it produces an enormous volume of messages (about 7,500 every day), this source is very quickly scanned for only a few types of incidents: certain "serious crimes" (mainly homicides) and emergencies (hostage taking , bombings, shootings) which either requires rapid mobilization of large number of police (e.g. looting, major accidents) or requiring notification of other city agencies (e.g. power failures , significant transit disruption). However, the main source of incident for the press wire are reports received from "the field."

The NYCPD requires officers to report any unusual occurrences "or one which receives heavy press attention" (NYCPD Patrol Guide 1983: Ed. The "field" consists of precinct police who in the course of their work look for events that the PID would want to know about.

Although the Police Department issues official guidelines concerning how incidents are to be handled, the notion of "news-worthy incident" is either vague to be use in actually deciding whether any given happening is sufficiently important and of interest to the media to warrant intensive coverage. Apparently, both precinct police and PID personnel have developed a modus vivendi- set of informal criteria for identifying incidents that are of interest to the media.

Public order crimes appear to be evaluated as "unusual" and therefore, deserving media attention, on the basis of a least three considerations: The frequency with which police encounter a particu-

lar type of incident, their estimation of its seriousness, and their anticipation of its news worthiness. There is a sense, and intuitive sense based on experience and buttressed by statistical data that certain types of crimes are "normal"- that is their frequency of occurrence tends to be fairly stable over time (Sudnow 1965). Muggings, assaults, personal theft in public places happens with great frequency. The perception of unusualness ( in the sense of the frequency of occurrence) varies from area to area. Clearly, what is unusual in one neighborhood is not unusual in another. There are for various categories of offense, high and low crime areas. Despite this variation among precincts, something can be said about what kind of troubles in the public sphere generally are reported to the PID as unusual.

Some types of incidents are considered "unusual" or uncommon no matter where they occurred. Homicides, bank robberies, race riots, looting and bombing and hostage situations - these last two being part of the general understanding of terrorist events - do not happen every day in any one precinct.<sup>2</sup> Thus, if an incident is one of the above, simply because it was one of these types it would be reported to the PID and in turn, would place it on the police wire. The process is virtually automatic.<sup>3</sup>

Crime incidents such as muggings, robberies and burglaries of businesses, not including gun fire or gunshot wounds, vandalism, larcenies, auto thefts and other non-fatal assaults which are common in most precincts are not seen as unusual enough to be reported to the PID and placed on the press wire. Bombing and hostage situations

do not happen everyday, muggings do. If a mugging involved for instance, the death of the person assaulted or if it was one of a series of muggings in a locale within a limited time frame, then it would be noted and disseminated to the media.

The police scene of "something special" determines the seriousness of an incident. In most precincts only muggings with extensive injuries would be serious enough to warrant an unusual report which the PID would become involved in. Similarly, only robberies and burglaries involving large sums of money or valuables or supererogatory violence would be reported as unusual. In contrast, a terrorist bombing would be reported as unusual whether or not there were injuries or extensive damage. In general, the police scene of seriousness appears to be based on the most visible or quantifiable consequences of an incident: the number of deaths, the extent of injuries, the dollar amount stolen, and so on.

Whether an incident is unusual is one consideration in deciding to disseminate the information to media through the PID. The unusualness of an incident does not simply depend on its measurable consequences. News worthiness is also involved. Here subjective elements play a determinative role in figuring whether media are likely to pick up on an incident. Any incident which the police anticipated the media might want to cover was considered unusual regardless of whether the incident met the other criteria of frequency or seriousness. As long as an occurrence appears to be that which the media would "pick up", precinct police would notify the PID. Newsworthiness has priority over criteria for judging an incident's unusualness.

How do the police, the local precinct police, know what is news worthy? For the most part, police anticipation of media interest seem to be based on their reading and reviewing of television. As with other news consumers, the police infer that the press is interested in any bizarre or ironic incident; the police as individuals and as professionals possessing "stacks of knowledge" accumulated over time, through experience and contact with media, infer that any crime involving a celebrity, for instance, is of interest to the press (Nesbett and Ross 1980).

Most of the time however, the police provide the media with news worthy incidents of a different sort. As the interview data indicates, PID personnel (and most NYCPD officers) are aware of current themes in crime and law enforcement being covered in print and broadcast media. For instance, in the aftermath of the Bernard Goetz subway incident involving the shooting of four alleged youthful assailants, media coverage was quite heavy on such events. When local police or transit police and PID personnel found occasions which could be seen as instances of these, attacks by youths on subway riders, the (PID) put them on the press wire with greater frequency than they would ordinarily.

#### Reticular Informational Schema between Police and Media

An interesting interactual pattern has developed between the police and the media with regard to news importance of occurrences. If a report were not made for an incident which had already come to the attention of the media, then a wave of unanswered (and potentially embarrassing) questions could sweep through the department's

chain of command. One of the reasons, perhaps, why the PID was originized as a major command structure may have been based on past experiences when the department was forced with a barrage of questions that could not be readily answered. With the formation of the PID, media makes inquiries directly to its office with a feeling of fiduciary relationship. If the PID knows nothing of the question that is imposed to them by the media, PID gets its operations section on it, to gather and formulate a press release. With terrorist incidents, the Task Force on Terrorism information officer would be contacted by the operational section, told that the media was asking ref. a "terrorist" act and obtain any information that could be disseminated without interfering with the Task Forces investigation. If the event involved a local hostage situation, the PID would coordinate media news releases with that unit.

One of the rationales for the PID is meant to obviate this problem by anticipating, to the extent that it can, those matters about which the police are likely to get inquiries. Further, the ramifications of the existence of a PID are such that it collects information on a pool of occurrences that could be disseminated to the media before the media knew of any specific happenings in detail. If media then contacts the PID for additional information on the subject that came across the police wire, the PID would have an account available. Thus the PID allows the police department to define for media the set of possibly interesting criminal acts of the day and formulate for media "what happened" in any one of these incidents. Such a procedure gives the police considerable control over their own image in the media. Not only can the department publicize examples of "good police works" but they are also prepared with explanations of

potentially embarrassing situations.

The PID from an institutional standpoint, enables the police department to sustain an image of itself as a competent bureaucracy. More importantly, the existence of the PID tends to relieve individual officers of the burdens of explaining an on going incident to reporters. What is strengthened by the PID is the media's dependence on the police for accurate accounts of crime and their solutions. In general, the PID is a way that the Police Department cements its relations with the media and maintains its position as a routine source for news. The Deputy Commissioner in charge of the PID, who is appointed by the Police Commissioner, has for the past 25 years, been a person drafted from the media. Then he, or as it is now she, is knowledgeable in the area of mass media, and gives credence to the PID.

The anticipation of news worthiness as a criteria for transmitting occurrences of interest to the press has a curious effect on the overall crime reporting system. Paradoxically, the expectations and anticipatory behavior of the PID creates a situation in which what is considered news worthy by the media determines what is news worthy for the police. On the other hand, its selection of crime news appears to be predicated on the assumption that the police supply the media with only the most important crimes of the day. Without this assumption (around which much of the television newsroom activity is organized), media would not take the police wire and the PID seriously enough to make it their main source for crime stories.

Thus, the press selection of crime news is based on what the police make available to them. And what the police make available is in large part based on what the media reports. In a sense crime news recreates itself. This circularity of the reporting system keeps the same sort of crime in the news. Despite this seemingly cul-de-sac nature of the system, it would be a mistake to conclude that the sorts of incidents available to the media do not change and that, therefore, crime news continually reproduces the same image of crime. But crime news does change, within limits. The facts are that new kinds of crime appear in the media, and periodically, new categories of incidents receive continuous and heavy publicity. Another way of expressing this is that crime incidents occur, such as terrorist incidents, which impress on the public new social concerns and issues which insure the existence of new categories for years to come.

Hostage Negotiations: Police Department, City of New York

Since 1974 when the NYCPD put together a hostage negotiating team, it has responded approximately twenty situations annually. (Commanding Officer of the Hostage Negotiations team interview March 14, 1986). Strictly speaking "hostage incidents" cover a broad range of events involving the police, that do not necessarily involve terrorist incidents. Nevertheless, the Unit goes into field when alerted that a kidnapping, bomb threat, barricade scene, or some other problem, be it terrorist or not - is underway which requires extraordinary measures and expertise not available or utilizable from among patrol force resources.

The reactive procedures, depending on the nature of the incident, are predicated on a policy of immediate containment. That is, the police wish to gain control over the incident and eliminate its potential for spreading, inciting or sparking other occurrences. Particularly in terrorist incidents, which the police operationally define as any incident or violence or mayhem designed to disseminate a political message, the effort is to "close down" the situation and narrow the contacts of the perpetrators to authorize law enforcement authorities on the scene, and that means the hostage team and other units of the Special Operations Division, (Emergency Service, Aviation, Harbor, Bomb Disposal) that they may be designated by the on scene hostage coordinator as needed. Further, locationally relevant and appropriate police officials and other law enforcement personnel become involved. "At a minimum, according to the Commanding Officer of the Hostage Negotiating Unit, "...the Patrol Borough Commander's office and the Precinct Commander becomes involved. The Terrorist Task Force and additional city, state and federal agencies would come into the situation as appropriate" (Lauden interview, 1986).

The purpose of inputs from other law enforcement agencies such as the Terrorist Task Force, which is composed of officials from a variety of law enforcement agencies is to provide information and intelligence that informs the process of "Cooling down" or neutralizing the immediate threats which enables the team to develop lines of approach to the incident participants. In line with the containment orientation of the Department at large, the hostage coordinator briefs the PID Deputy Commissioner's officer on the

scene after consultations. This pre-empts the release of information that may be detrimental to negotiations or operations in progress. It is assumed, especially with incidents that are decidedly "political" in intent or style that the perpetrators may have access to news media.

#### The Control and Consequences of Information Flow

Shutting down and physically isolating the scene, is a precaution, not only necessary to maintain the integrity of police operations and the safety of police personnel, as well as others, it is also a crisis management strategy designed to afford-in the case of a terrorist incident only a "half-life" to the event. That is, the principal function of a terrorist event is the ability of the terrorist to attract attention on a large scale so that their message, agenda, grievances or demands are brought to a broad constituency of supporters and sympathizers; or in the case of their opponents, mounting an incident demonstrates the determination of the terrorists to intimidate and coerce their enemies and show the strength of their forces. Because terrorist activities, at least in New York City over the past decade, have usually involved groups not indigenous to this country with the exception of the SDS Weather Underground and the Black Liberation Army, the Hostage Negotiating Unit (HNU) solicits information from other nations and their law enforcement agencies on a regular basis, to keep abreast of groups, trends and potential threats.

The Hostage Negotiating Unit and the PID are under no illusions as to the nature of terrorism. There is a recognition that terror-

ists are prepared to resort to the violation of human sensibilities, to an appalling extent, and if it succeeds, it is self-legitimizing. The terrorists need a public platform and outrageous acts of random violence, which are incidental to their purposes, providing context for the presentation of the message (Sagarin and Kelly 1986). The terrorists, consequently, seek extensive media coverage. Analysis of terrorist incidents that are covered in depth and with few constraints on media personnel reveal that "ideas travel through the normal news media...people watching and listening to the reports get ideas about doing the same thing themselves" (Clutterback 1975). Another way of putting this is to say that the more publicity given to bomb scares, the more bomb scares there are likely to be; similarly, by extension, reports about hijackings, kidnappings, assassinations, are likely to lead to more hijackings, kidnappings and assassinations. Whether the "imitation effects" are indeed valid is a gamble that the police choose not to take.

The terrorist use of media confounds law enforcement problems in coping with it because suppressing news altogether, which may take the steam out of terrorist planning - leave the police open to charges of impinging on constitutional guarantees of a free, unfettered press. To urge, as William E. Simon, former Secretary of the Treasury did in the aftermath of an assassination attempt in California on President Ford's life by a Manson "family" member "Squeaky" from that "its the responsibility of the press, certainly, to tell the American people indeed what is happening...But when these people are glamorized on the front page of our national

magazines, I think that this has to be thought of as doing great harm (Simon 1975).

The dilemma is all the more troublesome because the equivocations of political leaders who insist on the viability of a free press also find the coverage of terrorism harmful. The Hanafi Muslim incident in Washington D.C. in 1977 provided a good illustration of some of the problems police experience in their relationships with media coverage and their objective to bring the incident to a close without loss of life. An internal dispute within the radical Muslim faction based in the United States made up of mainly Black American radicals, led to the seizure of three office buildings in the Nation's capital. The men who carried out the seizure in which hostages were taken, demanded that another Muslim faction leader be brought to the buildings so that he could be properly punished for murdering relatives of the seizure leaders family. The incident was sparked by the desire for personal revenge and it quickly became a major media event. The coverage was so excessive that the media became part of the event itself. Fear of the "contagion effect" apparently was not carefully considered. As one observant noted of the events and their denouement:

Typical reporting of a terrorist event in the United States might reach an audience of say conservatively, 40 million people. What's the chance that it may come to the attention of some borderline psychopath who may be stimulated to take part in some future episode? If we were to consider just one-tenth of one percent of the audience or borderline psychopaths, that would be 40,000 potential maniacs. If we took one one-thousandth of one percent we've still got 400, if we took one one-hundred thousandth of one percent we would still have the four that are necessary to carry out a typical terrorist episode (McEwen in Alexander 1979).

To see terrorism as a form of theater, as many law enforcement experts do, is to interpret the phenomenon as one which seeks mainly to attract notice and attention. In such a case, coverage becomes problematic and may indeed interfere with police operations. The interactions of media and police agencies in terrorist situations create tensions. As a result, as we have seen police agencies try to "gatekeep"; control media access and the flow of information as they manage a siege event. During the Hanafi incident in Washington, D.C., for example, the media unwittingly worked at cross purposes with law enforcement actions which interfered with ongoing operations. The on sight television coverage furnished direct intelligence to the terrorists on police force dispositions; further, direct telephone calls to the terrorists for interviews tied up communications between police negotiators and terrorists thereby hampering decision making. As one hostage at the scene subsequently reported:

"...(a) television reporter who caught sight of a basket, lifted by ropes to the fifth floor, where, the world would later learn, some people evaded the round-up and barricaded themselves in a room. Their presence was apparently not known to the gunmen, who held their prisoners on the eighth floor until late Wednesday afternoon. The gunmen were probably informed of the television reporter's scoop by their fellow Hanafis who monitored the news media outside the captured buildings (Frenyvesi 1979).

Media coverage of terrorist incidents is not always detrimental. This makes the control of media participation only more complex and difficult. Insofar as terrorists seek publicity and outlets for ventilating their hostilities, television and print coverage

provides, in many ways, outlets for the frustrations and needs to communicate. Nevertheless, police officials surveyed on the issue of media coverage agree with the NYCPD officials that:

- A- Live television coverage has the effect of encouraging terrorism.
- B- Delayed television coverage acts in the best interest of the police and the public's need for information.
- C- Communication between media people and terrorists should be conducted only through police officials.

Complete abolition, no coverage at all, is universally rejected as unthinkable by media. Nor do the police believe that the gains in coping with and managing an event would improve dramatically thereby. What is preferred is a modus vivendi in which media and police cooperate and reinforce each others' roles.

PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For a study of "police beat" reporters and their relationship to the law enforcement bureaucracy they cover, see (Tillman 1976).

<sup>2</sup>In some precincts, murders occur virtually every day in the week. Nevertheless, the PID considers all homicides unusual and because they monitor 911 calls to the police, they, PID, are likely to know of murders even if local precincts (such as in the South Bronx which has a very high incidence of homicides) may not bother to report them as unusual.

<sup>3</sup>Usually the PID would already know of the occurrences before a precinct called to report them, because PID monitors 911 phone calls. The PID in the case of homicides uses a "Homicide Question Guide" to structure the inquiries of PID personnel of precinct police. In the event that a homicide could not be verified as such, or if the police determine that publicity might hamper their operations or in the case of hostage/terrorist events—escalate the incident, such incidents would not immediately be reported to the press.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Media and Terrorism; A Case Study

#### Introduction

Beginning in the late nineteenth century radio and later television helped to create a new kind of society and economy. Much of the contemporary discussion on the impact of mass media - especially the electronic media - concentrates on the questions as to whether media has functioned more as a mirror of reality than a "Mindbender" responding to the political and social reality of American culture more than stopping it (Schudson 1986). Does media reinforce the realities of our lives, or does it impose on us its particular version of the reality of events.

Little is known about the impact and effect of mass media as an institution of communication. Broadcasting words and pictures clearly influence some viewers but to what extent: how powerful are they? Has television replaced the newspaper in transmitting information to citizens, a function vital to the political health of the society? Among media professionals there is a tendency to belittle the effectiveness and persuasiveness of media, despite examples such as the Orson Wells Martian Invasion Hoax to the country (Cantril 1947). Within the television broadcast world the debate on the impact of media continues. In 1977 interviewer, Walter Cronkite, considered by many the "dean" of television news journalists, takes exception to the view that media - and television in particular -

heightens, intensifies, and thereby distorts news events "We cannot control the events that need to be reported", Cronkite said. "All we can do", he continued,

...is to be responsible in reporting the events that occur. When we start worrying about the consequences we're beginning to play another role other than that of reported. We're beginning to play God. And I don't think I'm equipped to do that" (Broadcasting 1977).

Exacerbating the problem of media influence on public opinion is the growing sophistication of media technology (Dominick 1978). The evolution of equipment and the accumulation of experience of the past three decades has made it far easier for networks to cover events live while they are occurring. With light, easily mobile equipment broadcasters can be on the scene of an event very quickly. These technological advances pose problems of their own, however. First, there is the danger of unwittingly putting the inflammatory, the slanderous and the obscene on the air. Operating "live" means split second decisions, with little time to review the effects of what is being aired. Second, there is the constant danger of being exploited by those who create an event or crisis primarily to obtain media coverage. Third, the pressures of live broadcast make the possibilities of transmitting misinformation and rumor quite real. When John Hinkley attempted to assassinate President Reagan in 1981, but succeeded in only wounding him, ABC-TV went on the air with a report that the President's Press Secretary James Brady had been killed when in fact he had only been seriously wounded (Caplan 1984). Clearly, in the live broadcast the difficulties of checking the

accuracy of reports are immense. Fourth, contemporary media coverage with more and more emphasis on live broadcast may engender a crisis atmosphere when there is none. During the TWA flight 847 hijacking over Athens, the special reports and live coverage gave its own momentum to the event. In a sense, the networks rather than Washington may be said to have controlled the public level of interest. It is not difficult for television to construe conflict in dramatic terms by transforming what is essentially a political issue into a personal drama - one of hostages and hostagetakers, captors, militiamen, innocent American travelers and so on. In other ways television has shown that it too can engage in diplomacy: in the seizure of the 39 hostages aboard TWA flight 847, the Shiites grasped the limelight of the picture; the coverage pre-empted State Department initiatives and interfered with the government's ability to deal with the situation as a political problem. Some commentators on the scene vied with each other for interviews with the hostages and then captors. In order to do so some even implied a "moral" equivalence" among the antagonists. They suggested that the kidnapping of the 39 was, in effect, no different than the removal to Israel of a group of some hundreds of Shiite Moslems detained by Israeli troops. The live television coverage conveyed the kidnappers demands permitting them to appeal directly to the American people over the head of government. Thus live television coverage enhanced the bargaining capacity of the terrorists. The lack of restraints of television news teams and networks may be the consequence of competition for ratings which, according to some critics, takes

priority over national needs and interests and common decency.

In the wake of all this the networks have developed guidelines specifically designed to handle terrorist actions (See Appendix B). Even those accused of terrorist actions or of supporting them directly with manpower, weapons and resources, or indirectly by encouraging terrorists through religious support, blame the media for intensifying the problem and distorting it. "I believe that you(the television and press) tell the American people what to think" asserted Iran's Ambassador to the UN said Rajarje Khorrossani 1986, in a television interview, Nightline, concerning terrorism in the Mideast.

You...point the finger at Iran as behind the Islamic Jibad in Lebanon, and the American people follow...It is a fact that Moslem freedom fighters unfurl the banner of Ayatollah Khameini. So what? They find religious inspiration in Khameini for their just cause...that does not mean that Iran supports terrorism. A more important point is that you choose to call the unsophisticated actions of some Lebanese "terrorism"...I prefer to see the attacks by land, sea, air, by rockets and bombs--the sophisticated war technologies of the Israelis and the United States as terrorism against those feebly --trying to defend themselves".

Khorrossani's point is that the media are not content to provide the facts, but rather media coverage is an illusion, a dangerous one, with the real purpose to manipulate audiences. Persuasiveness rather than the faithful presentation of the content of a political issue is rewarded by television. There is no viewer or consumer "sovereignty", the belief that viewers, listeners and readers of media should and do control the networks and newspapers through their patronage and through their government.

Media, Power and Its Influence: I

No doubt Walter Cronkite is sincere in his modern appraisal of the role of the reporter (Broadcasting 1977). Nevertheless, the facts suggest that news broadcast and newsprint have a profound effect on the public's perception of affairs and events. Cronkite can not speak for all journalists when he contends that their job is to get the facts straight and convey them as they are. Journalists and broadcasters often create a great stir. Drew Pearson a Washington based newspaperman and political columnist who died in 1969, during a career that spanned 40 years produced eight syndicated newspaper columns a week with a total circulation of forty million. Add to this at least twenty million listeners on radio, the long-term audience totals about sixty million people. Pearson said of his role:

"It's the job of a newspaperman to spur the lazy, watch the weak, expose the corrupt. He must be the eyes, ears, and nose of American people. Yes the nose is important for no matter how much stench a newspaperman is exposed to, he must never lose his smell" (Pearson quoted in Pilat 1973).

For others with a taste for crusading, the media is a platform not merely to promote a political point of view but to insure social control and conformity to the status quo. Some Marxist critics and observers of American media argue precisely that: media represent the interest of the dominant institutions and sway perceptions inadvertently or deliberately, in favor of the economic and political elite (Ewen 1976). In a Marxist oriented empirical study of the 1977 electrical power failure in New York City, (Karmen 1978) points out

the negative characterizations of looters varied greatly from their defendant profiles upon arrest and prosecution. Clearly, the manner in which the media defined the participants in the blackout and looting aftermath affected the public's reaction to the event.

Two major views dominate discussions on the media. One, an anti-McCullan thesis argues that media act as thermometers reporting a rise in public temperature; they reflect or mirror the reality they confront. The other view, following McCullan's revolutionary thesis in some respects that "the medium is the message" suggests that media are actually part of the fuel that keeps the furnace going. The networks themselves have acknowledged to some extent that they are part of the news process, the image-making processes of reality. Guidelines (see Appendix B) have been promulgated concerning how field and studio personnel are to handle terrorist activities. Perhaps they respond to official and public pressures. In 1976, the Report of the Task Force on *Disorder* and Terrorism noted:

"The media can be most influential in setting the tone for a proper response by the civil authorities to disorders, acts of terrorism and political violence. It can provide an outlet for the expression of legitimate public concern on important issues so as to act as a safety valve, and it can bring pressure to bear in response to public sentiment...to redress grievances and to change official policies.

And then the Report offered the following observation:

"The immediacy and intrusiveness of modern communications systems, especially the television networks, impose special responsibilities on those whose duty and privilege it is to inform the public, as well as upon those authorities that collaborate in this necessary tasks. A true democracy places the highest value upon the freedom of expression it allows to all. Yet this very freedom is fragile and vulnerable to terrorists attacks and to perversion to terroristic purposes.

The capture of the mass media for the purpose of disseminating the terrorists message is a first priority of any organized groups. Sometimes the assault is brutal and direct, as where the broadcasting of some message or manifesto is demanded by terrorists as part of a ransom price. At other times, more subtle inducements are held out to the terrorist's purposes".

In view of the vulnerability of media to terrorist exploitation, the Report recommended that certain initiatives be undertaken by law enforcement to assist media in its coverage of terrorism. Urging full and fair reporting of all matters of public interest, it recommended that police and others in the criminal justice system cooperate in this endeavor. Apart from suggesting that "media centers" or "agencies" within criminal justice be established and staffed by personnel trained to handle media professionals, the Report's recommendations are vague. It calls on media to regulate themselves in the public interest observing that there is disagreement on how directly the reporting of terrorist incidents influences this occurrence or extent to which the public is unduly alarmed or demoralized by these reports.

The media have complied. Before looking at the realities of terrorist manipulation of the media, it is useful to examine the theories of communications that underpin the government's recommendations and network guidelines.

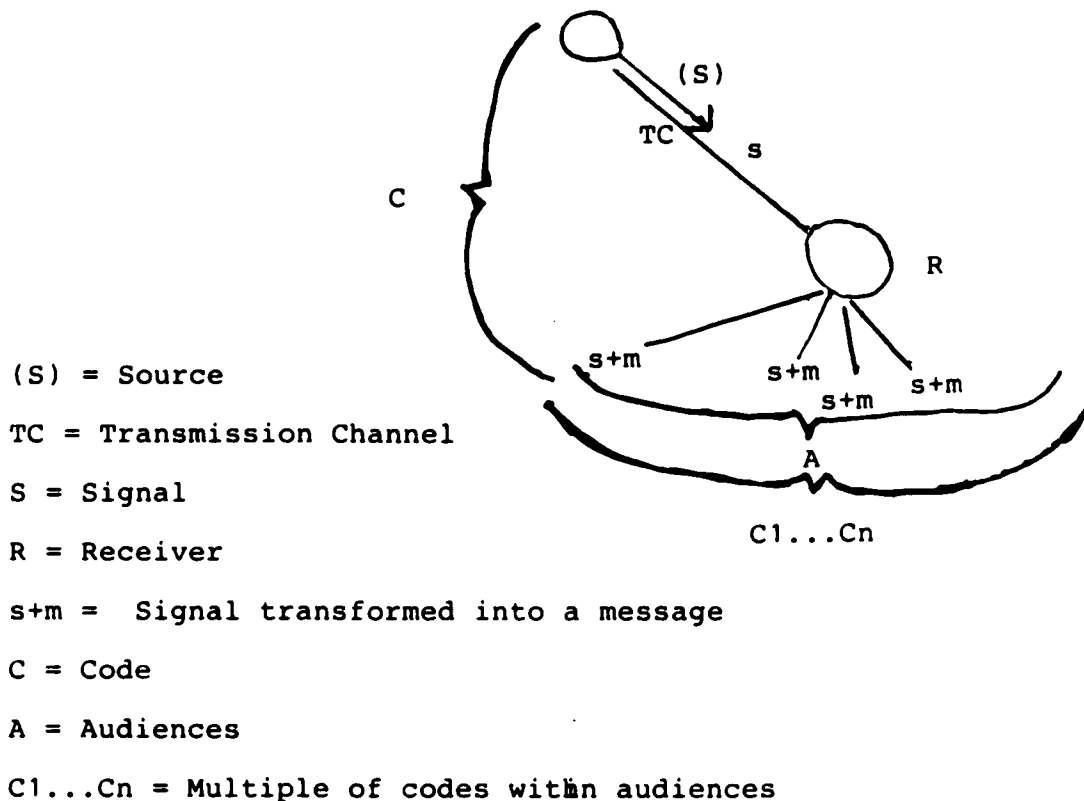
#### Media Power and Its Influence:II; Theories of Communications

Some of the leading theorists of mass communications agree that media have, at best, mixed effects on the audiences - effects which do not yield easily to quantitative measurement (Barthes 1970, Eco 1984).

Messages cannot be assumed to have uniform effects on their audiences. There is a freedom in a way that is unintended or different from the anticipations of the message sender. According to Barthes and Eco, even though mass communication means the "mass production of images and their discharge into the mainstream of the common symbolic environment"(Gerber 1972), it cannot be assumed that the receiving audience share the same understanding.

FIGURE 4.1

The Communications System



Briefly the sociological frameworks of communications are as follows. In figure 1, the communications system in terms of the content and structure of inflammation is diagrammed. The chain of communication contains a source (S) that emits a signal  $S$  a channel of transmission  $TC$  -TV, radio, cinema, newspapers, etc. At the end of the channel, the signal is transformed into a message  $s+m$  through a receiver R. In order to insure that the message is not disturbed by or interfered with by noise, that it is transmitted clearly, a code C shared by the source (S) and the audience A operates across the entire communications system. The code or the language presumed to be widely shared in the communications environment is an established system of meanings for symbols which, when the message  $s+m$  is transmitted redundantly, enables the audience to know the signal is intentional. Thus, the meaning of the message may change according to the code with which the audience interprets it.

The receiver transfers the signal into message but the message is empty until the audience applies a code which attributes various meanings to it. In broadcasting a terrorist event, it may be safely assumed that the significance attributed to the images and words by law enforcement personnel or government officials will be different from those of terrorist sympathizers or the victims of the terrorist. In the case of the terrorist supporters and their antagonists, the government interpretations are likely to be mainly political; in the case of the victim's relatives, primarily psychological and emotional. As Eco puts it:

"The mass communications universe is full of...discordant interpretators. I would say that the variability of interpretation is the constant law of mass communications. The messages...arrive in distinct sociological situations, where different codes operate. For a Milanese bank clerk a TV ad for a refrigerator represents a stimulus to buy, for an unemployed peasant in Caladria the same image means the conformation of a world of prosperity that doesn't belong to him and that he must conquer. This is why I believe TV advertising in depressed countries functions as a revolutionary message" (Eco 1986).

— Thus, the claim that mass media, television especially, is ideologically committed pales in the face of this analysis. It is not so much the coloration or twist the media give events but more the political milieu and sociological realities that shape the codes of the audience that counts. It is not so much that the "Medium is the message" or even that "the medium is not the message" but rather that the message depends on the code of the particular audience.

Who regulates the audience and its codes? Increasingly, audiences and their codes are diverse and "public opinion" is accordingly, less susceptible to centralized control. Paradoxically a sure-footed knowledge of audience codes can permit a potential group; terrorists for example, say, to manipulate the message and change the meanings attributed to it by the source. Conceivably part of the propaganda analysis and strategy of terrorist organizations is geared in this direction - to utilize the media to project images it chooses to communicate to the adversaries and others: fear. This raises the question to what extent terrorist organizations utilize the media in their campaigns and actions, and what their motives are for doing so.

### Terrorist Use Of The Media

Bassiouni writes that "The relationship between terrorism and the media appears to be symbiotic: perpetrators of acts of terror - violence rely on the media to serve their terror - inspiring purposes and the media utilize such incidents as rewarding new items"(Bassiouni 1981). In an interview with TV Guide Dr. Frederick Hacker, a California psychiatrist experienced in negotiations with terrorists remarked that:

"If the mass media did not exist, terrorists would have to invent them. In turn the mass media beckons after terroristic acts because they fit into their programing needs: Namely, sudden acts of great excitement that are susceptible, presumably of quick solution"  
(Haden in Hickey 1976).

Another related view of the problem sees terrorism as dependent "almost entirely on the amount of publicity it receives. It is not the magnitude of a terrorist operation that counts so much as the publicity it can generate"

Terrorism can be conceived as a means of communication as a way, a method of attracting public attention. This is by no means the only or the most common means of terrorism, but it may constitute a mode of analysis which helps to explain the use of terrorist incidents in recent years" (Kelly 1986).

Especially in the West. with its means of public communication largely in the hands of private entrepreneurs (supervised and regulated rather loosely in most instances by federal commissions and agencies named by industry executives, for the most part), there is intense competition for audiences within the news broadcast enterprise. Violence and its forms have important news value. Whatever

the basis of audience interest in violence - be it vicarious and symbolic relief or frustration, safe and relatively harmless surrogate outlets for pent-up aggression through psychological identification with violence or depicted in the media - it is doubtful that in the short run the viewing public can be persuaded or coaxed into non-violent presentations as sources of information and entertainments.

The relevance of the validity of violence in the media and the exploitation of this fact by terrorists is clear in the strong incentives to gain access to the media. In short, terrorist organizations are terrorist in large part because of the media's appetite for violence. Put differently, if terrorism is treated as something more than senseless acts of violence, if terrorism is viewed as a violent language resorted to not necessarily out of desperation to get media attention but out of a deliberate policy in which the acts of violence and mayhem are orchestrated to fit into the dramatic formats of the media, then much of it can be understood as a type of political behavior that has emerged in response to modern communication techniques. Without the forms of mass communication as they exist today, there would be no terrorism as we know it.

Terrorism cannot be understood only in terms of violence. The terrorist does not murder merely to kill someone but to obtain an effect upon others. As with courtrooms in the recent past which were transformed into forums for political radicals, so too the media today serve in a way as a publicity mechanism for terrorist organizations (Sagarin and Kelly 1974). Construing terrorist acts as partly

media events, the victims can be understood as instruments who are not central to the act. For the terrorist the message matters, not the victim.

By viewing terrorism as a communication strategy that involves violence mainly because of its high media value, it is possible to reconstruct terrorist events in terms of communication theories and perspectives. In these terms, there is a message sender (the terrorist), a message generator (the victim), and a message receiver (the public or targeted audience). The power and importance of the message may be dependent upon the degree of atrociousness of the act and the fear the act inspires. To see terrorist acts as merely intended for revenge by frustrated political radicals or as attempts to produce acute fear in the victims or in certain targeted audiences is to miss this dimension of terrorism. Fear is only an effect. Behavior and attitudinal changes in the target audiences, purpose of terrorist acts. The terrorist may want to arouse specific groups out of political apathy or set in motion a reexamination of political opinions held by influential states and their peoples.

The view of terrorism as a media event was first espoused in the doctrines of Mao Tse-tung on guerrilla war (Schram 1969). Mao turns around Von Clausewitz's notion that great military victories gain favorable public opinion by contending that widespread public approval and support were the requisite preconditions for great military victories of any enduring substance. For Mao, if public opinion could be manipulated and won, then the ultimate defeat of the enemy was assured. The aim of the guerrilla war in Mao's view, was first and foremost to win the minds and hearts of the people to

the cause "A fish in the sea," was the metaphor Mao used to train his cadres in the elementary lessons of a political craft that understood the need for an extensive and loyal structure which could supply support, resources, and security against militarily superior forces. The aim of war was above all to create psychological effects on the people; fighting the enemy in the early stages of conflict was incidental to the greater objective.

As noted above, Mao was the great innovator in guerrilla war, terror and propaganda. For Mao, attacks on the enemy were staged not primarily to achieve territorial or military results over the enemy but psychological results and victories with the people. In other words, the effect of a violent act rather than the violent act itself mattered (Jenkins 1975).

Contemporary terrorist activity would appear to draw heavily from Maoist thought. The PLO, in particular, appears to have taken Mao's doctrines seriously, PLO exploitation of the media in Munich, in Israel and elsewhere has managed to gain worldwide attention and the support of the Arab nations. The Japanese United Red Army, some of whose factions participated in an attack on civilians at an Israeli airport has indicated that, "We want to shock people everywhere... It is our only way of communicating with the people" (quoted in Schreiker 1978). The Palestinians themselves have defined their activities along these same lines. Zhedi Terzi, the PLO chief observer at the United Nations stated:

The first several hijacking aroused the consciousness of the world and awakened the media and world opinion much more-and more effectively-than 20 years of pleading at the United Nations (Hickey 1976).

More dramatically, one PLO member claimed that "WE would throw roses if it would work" (Kelly 1986).

Within four years after their formation, the Red Brigades began kidnapping prominent financial and political figures culminating in the sensational kidnapping and murder of Minister Aldo Moro. Broad coverage of the case in the Italian and world press and television made the Red Brigades an internationally known organization. Their use of "communiques" and "trial" with subsequent "public confessions" were covered and disseminated avidly by the media. By reporting the exploits of the Red Brigades, the life histories of its leading figures, their grievances, political programs and agendas, the media lent air of legitimacy to the terrorist organization. Attempts by the government to suppress such media accounts were met with protests from the Red Brigades that the government was practicing censorship (Schmid and deGraff 1982). Thus, the real concern of the Brigades was unfettered publicity in order to insure that their strategy would work unimpaired by government interference. In effect, the media played the role the terrorist had assigned them.

Terrorism as a System of Communication; or  
Political Terrorism Recent History

These examples suggest that it may be profitable to examine terrorism as a communication system amplified by violence in order to attract the attention of the media which it seeks to manipulate for its own ends. In this sense, an act is terroristic if the victims cannot through their own doing save their lives by capitulation, cooperating, or imploring their captors. Secondly, if the

victimization is done for its effects and not against the victims specifically, then the terroristic nature of the act is further strengthened. Acts committed for personal gain, or psychic gratification are either criminal or pathological; if, however an act of violence or the threat of it is committed for collective, impersonal motives, then it may be thought of as a case of political terrorism.

The change in the Algerian Front for National Liberation (FLN) struggle against France is illustrative of the argument that terrorism is, if not primarily, then at least deeply concerned with media attention. After fighting a little-noticed guerrilla war in the Algerian countryside against the French army, the FLN turned to terrorist tactics and this strategic decision arguably brought them closer to a political- but not military-success in 1962. Abane Randane, an FLN leader, asked: "Is it better for our cause to kill ten of the enemy in the countryside of Telergma, where no one will speak of it, or one in Algiers that will be mentioned the next day in the American press?"(Quoted in Fairbarin 1974). The location of foreign press correspondents had become one of the determinants for struggle's locale. The logic seems impeccable: small-scale violence such as terrorism witnessed by many can have effects greater than large-scale violence witnessed by only a few.

During Fidel Castro's revolutionary campaign fought from the hills of the Siene Maestre mountains against the Batista regime, the goal was to alienate American public opinion and force the cessation of support of the Cuban dictator's regime by the American government. In order to attract world attention, the movement kidnapped the world

famous racing car driver Jean Manuel Forgio. For some weeks, Batista's security forces could not locate the abducted South American racer. Not only was Batista humiliated before the World because of the bumbling inefficiency of his police, but Forgio, released unharmed, was full of praise for the Cuban guerrillas.

Latin American terrorism and guerrilla war has had many astute theoreticians who have sketched strategies that involve the use of the mass media as an important instrument in the struggle. The polemical pamphlets and instructional manuals, Marighela, who headed the National Liberation Action) (ALN) in Brazil, spelled out how media should be exploited for the cause:

"Modern mass media, simply by announcing what the revolutionaries are doing, are important instruments of propaganda. The war of News- or the psychological war- is a fighting technique based on the direct or indirect use of the mass media...Its purpose is to demoralize the government. But if we can spread false, a contradictory, information by sowing anxiety doubt and uncertainty among the agents of the regime"  
(Marighela 1971).

In Marighela's thinking, simply by reporting news of guerrilla/terrorist activities the media would provide free publicity for the revolution. Another Brazilian revolutionary explained that the bourgeois press, "...was greedy for news that increases the role of its papers" (Quartin 1974). Thus it would play the game the terrorist had devised.

The ground work for the exploitation of the media for political revolutionary purposes was laid in Latin America a decade earlier by the seizing of prominent people, government officials, the British Ambassador and an American foreign aid official that was widely re-

ported in the international press and media. Here too, the publicity and the kidnappings was to impress public opinion that the government was incapable of stopping them while they built up a counter-state (Evans 1977).

### Terrorism Against Israel

Over the past two decades, the most effective manipulation of mass media by terrorists has been the various groups and factions making up the Palestinian Liberation Movements. As with the Algerian FLN, the war in the countryside waged against the Israelis produced no significantly sympathetic international reaction to their cause. When however, the struggle was carried into Israel and into the West, they were able to command media attention (Paine 1975). Their leaders achieved some degree of celebrity; Yasser Arafat was invited to address the UN General Assembly dressed in feyadeen clothes and brandishing a side arm. Thereafter, the PLO managed to get a vote against Zionism as a form of racism and have a permanent observer at the UN. Links were formed with Western European radical groups, and aid flowed from Arab nations who applauded the acts of terrorism against Israel and its supporters as acts of "Freedom - fighters". The most spectacular terrorist action undertaken by "Black September"- a Palestinian group - occurred on September 5, 1972 when eleven Israeli athletes were seized at the Munich Olympic Games. Before an estimated audience of 800 million, Black September members demanded the exchange of 200 Palestinian detainees, for the Israeli athlete. The Israelis were killed when the German Police attempted to thwart the departure of the Black September people. But their real purpose had been accomplished, As one Arab pointed out:

"We recognize that sport is the modern religion of the Western World. We knew that the people of England and America would switch their television set from any programme about the plight of the Palestinians if there's a sporting event on another channel. So we decided to use their Olympics, the most sacred ceremony of this religion, to make the world pay attention to us. We offered up human sacrifices to your gods of sport and television. And they answered our prayers. From Munich onwards nobody could ignore the Palestinians or their cause" (Paine & Holsen 1977).

These words were prophetic. Militarily, Munich was a disaster for the Black September but not politically. Five of the terrorists were killed, and three were apprehended; the eleven Israeli hostages were all killed, and no exchange of prisoners took place. But, the sheer suicidal nature of the attack, hopeless from the start, made a major impact on the West and Arab world. World opinion was mixed. Many people reacted with unqualified condemnation, but many in the West wondered at the dedication of the Palestinians: there had to be something in their cause for them to sacrifice themselves. Further, among Third World peoples and others in the West who were deeply involved in nationalist struggles, Black September's actions seemed plausible, even laudable to many. In the Arab world itself, yet another "audience of constituents" for the PLO, their action raised the political and social consciousness of many thousand's and produced thousands of recruits for the struggle (Bell 1978).

#### United States Terrorist Groups Use Of The Media

Without question, the United States has led the world in technological developments in media. It is also a society with the highest concentration of media and a society with relatively little censorship over privately owned public media which is by far the

most common form of ownership. Coupled with the high levels of violence in American society, it would seem that the United States would be the society most open to terrorist uses of media. However, the apparent lack of Class consciousness and the virtual absence of ethnic separatists movements - apart from the comparatively benign American Indian movement - has not produced typical forms of terrorist activity found in Latin America, Western Europe, The Mideast, and Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, though few in terms of well-organized, dedicated numerous members, some groups which fit into the terrorist pattern such as the Weathermen, the Black Panthers, and their offshoots and the FALN Puerto Rican Nationalists have been active and have cultivated media attention.

Since economic and political conditions in the United States provide a variety of channels for the redress of grievances as compared with other contries in which terrorism has erupted, it may be that a "Contagion Effect" has operated in the United States with the effect that media attention to terrorism encourages further incidents and may inspire other groups to adopt terror tactics as a way of generating public attentior. (Bassiouni 1981). Although the contagion hypothesis has not been empirically verified, it has enormous intuitive appeal. A Rand Cirportation study prepared for the State Department a decade ago stated, "It is hard not to conclude that terrorism judged on its own terms- as a way to get attention and arouse alarm-has been a success, and that highly visible success is likely to head to further incidents of terrorism (Hickey 1976 ). If there are rewards in the exploitation of media, common sense

dictates some degree of limitation. Since mass media can, "confer status upon the individual or an event merely by presenting them" (Krattemaker and Powe 1978). media attention may be an irresistible lure for certain groups and individuals.

The Black Panthers and the Black Power movement offer a good illustration of media use by politically radical and violence prone activities in the United States. Huey Newton and Bobby Seals, the Oakland-based leaders of the Black Panthers launched the Black Power movement in 1966 by cleverly using the media. Newton sent Eldridge Cleaver, "Minister of Information" with thirty armed Panthers to the state capitol in Sacramento, California when legislators were debating a bill what would outlaw the carrying of loaded guns in the city. The media had been invited and the scene of the armed Panthers in the legislative chamber gallery observing the debate made the headlines and prime-time newscasts all over the country. From that piece of "political theater" the Panthers became nationally-known and influential in left-wing political circles. They admitted that they staged actions with the television cameos in mind: "Millions and millions of oppressed people...will gain through an indirect acquaintance with the proper strategy for liberation via the mass media..." (Methrin 1973).

The media-conscious Yippie (Youth International Party) demonstrated an even more adroit use of the media. One of the Yippie "leaders" Jerry Rubin outlined how the organization related to mass media:

"Every reporter is a dramatist, creating a theatre out of life...A revolution is news; the status quo is not. The media does not "report" news it creates it. An event happens when it goes on TV and becomes myth. The media is not "neutral". The presence of a camera transforms a demonstration, turning us into heroes... you can't be a revolutionary today without a television set-it's as important as a gun! Every guerrilla must know how to use the terrain of the culture that he is trying to destroy!"(Rubin 1970).

Media imperatives required an acceleration of action. From the mischievous behavior of the Yippies protest evolved into the Weather Underground bombings. Sensing that television was by the 1970's the country's main transmitter of reality those groups capable of outrage got attention. The one group that marched along the road to terrorism was the Weatherman, the splinter group of the Student for a Democratic Society (SDS). They bombed highly symbolic targets of official authority, like the Pentagon and the National Capitol, but placed warning calls before the detonations so that nobody would be hurt."The very fact that they issued warnings was indicative that their aim was not military but psychological" (Karber 1971). Another instructive case of terrorist use of the media in the United States was the Haragi hostage-taking in Washington, D.C. in 1977. One hundred thirty-four people were seized in three buildings and held for thirty-nine hours by a Muslim sect. Sixteen hostages were injured and a radio reporter was shot. The handling of the situation was complicated by newspeople on the scene. Some sought live interviews with the terrorists; others unnecessarily antagonized them. According to one of the hostages, the role of the media was despicable:

"...beneath the resentment and anger of my fellow hostages toward the press is a conviction gained..that the news media and terrorism feed on each other, that the new media, particularly TV, create a thirst for fame and recognition. Reporters do not simply report the news. they help create it. They are not objective observers, but subjective participants actors, script-writers and idea men" (Fenyese 1977 emphasis added).

On the heels of the Harafi incident, U.S Ambassador to the UN, Andrew Young suggested that the First Amendment of the Constitution guaranteeing the freedom of the press, should be "clarified by the Supreme Court in the light of the power of the mass media" (Broadcast Journalism 1977). President Carter's office was queried as to whether they agreed with Ambassador Young's suggestions. The President was non committant. The fact that the issue was raised showed that terrorist use of media had begun to intrude into the very fabric of government.

Table 1 summarizes some of the characteristic uses of terror tactics in the United States and elsewhere.

(see page 151).

TABLE 4.1Terrorist Uses Of The MediaTYPES OF USE

## (A) ACTIVE COMMUNICATION TACTICS

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 1-Promulgation of fear messages to mass audiences
- 2-Attracting new members and converts
- 3-Utilizing media as conduits for threat and demands
- 4-Generating publicity for a particular cause or set of grievances
- 5-Arousing public opinion and polarizing it around issues defined by terrorists
- 6-Announcing further actions
- 7-Inciting the public against government
- 8-Demonstration through their actions the incompetence of government to cope with terrorist

## (B) PASSIVE COMMUNICATION TACTICS

CHARACTERISTICS:

- 1-Media serve as an external, large-scale communication network between terrorists
- 2-Learning new techniques and methods via media presentations of coercion and manipulation
- 3-Obtain information on Anti-terrorist methods of security forces
- 4-Obtain information on the public reaction to terrorist actions

### Media Orientation Towards "News"

Many journalists and broadcasters embrace a philosophy which assumes that there is a reality out there in the world which it is their job to mirror accurately and recapture in all its detail so that an "objective" representation of the real world gets presented to their audiences. A closer look at the content of news broadcasts, however, suggests something else. "Reality" is filtered through an elaborate (and at times exceedingly complex) gatekeeping mechanism which screens and edits news content. Some news is, in effect, better than other news. Broadcast network always keep an eye on ratings, on their competitors and on the tastes and changing interests of the audience. Crime news in particular has always sold well, and terrorism with its dramatic visual effects is perfectly suited for television. While it would be unfair and simplistic to explain media interest in terrorism in terms of commercial profit and motives alone, it is a factor that cannot be ignored. Behind media preoccupation with terrorism is public interest sustaining it.

AS H.H. Cooper has observed, "Terrorism has unfortunately become a form of mass intertainment" (Cooper 1977). And Epstein notes that it may well be the structure and nature of network broadcasting itself that favors violent news:

Network news stories must...be self-contained; there must be a beginning in which the protagonists are identified in a few words and pictures, a climax in which some visual action takes place, and a denouncement in which the conflict is resolved. Finally, to retain the interest of the national audience stretching from Main to Hawaii, Network news must be constructed around visual elements that have universal appeal (Epstein 1975).

It is as if the collaboration between the terrorists and media is instinctive. Both have common interest, both need, above all, the mass audience; both have parallel needs to get the attention of that valued mass audience and hold it. The symbiosis is striking.

The rule and guidelines governing media coverage of terrorist events appear to depend primarily on the proximity and dimensions of the action. The closer the terrorists are to the media and its audience, the more intensive the coverage is likely to be. The Hanafi Muslims incident in Washington D.C. in March, 1977 is a good example of that fact.

The media's devotion to the coverage of insurgent terrorism and its comparative neglect of state terrorism may be partly the result of the lower visibility of the latter coupled with possibility the media executives and elites share similar political orientations, class backgrounds and life styles with those in the state policy apparatus.

While terrorists may in some respects dictate the script of an event that they have staged and determine the priorities of news coverage, the media is not without opinions and some leverage of its own. If the media allows itself to adopt the rhetoric of the terrorists and their understanding of the act, then the terrorists win an important psychological victory.

The effect of media presentations depend significantly on the choice of language used to describe and explain the major actors in an incident. Under some circumstances, terrorists exert little influence on media reporting. With the exception of reproducing messages, announcements, manifestoes, communiques and the like ver-

batim, terrorists cannot inform the public in ways they deem desirable. Thus self-styled "revolutionaries" may be describe as "criminals" masquerading as political radicals; a "freedom fighter" may be caricatured as a "murderer or assassin". What constitutes "revolutionary justice" in the eyes of the terrorists may be depicted as wonton, cold blooded murderer; a dedicated "anti-imperialist" might be portrayed as an "extremist" or a "fanatic". On rare occasions, the media may fully assume the terrorist view. But these occasions are few, indeed. The picture of Aldo Moro shortly before his assassination at the hands of the Red Brigades, standing before flag of the Brigades with the caption, "...we have carried the attack to the heart of the State..." was reproduced in the Italian newspaper La Repubblica in March 1978. Circulation figures in the immediate aftermath of Moro's murder and picture soared (Schmid and deGraff 1982).

What the media chooses to present of a terrorist event influences the opinions of it audiences. To what extent audience opinion and attitudes towards terrorists are molded by the media remains to be studied. It is clear that the authority, prestige and power of the media render it an influential agent of opinion. If governments are the chief sources of information about insurgent terrorism, they are then in an excellent position to shape the news of such actions and the attitudes about them.

The Western media are in an uninviable situation of juggling conflicting interpretations of the constitutive elements of terror-

ism. The high visibility of terrorism in the media in spite of the violence associated with it and the threat to public order -perhaps because of these very features - may be understood not because of any moral or political sympathy or affinity with terrorist causes but because of the high news value of violence in general. The direct participants in terrorism, the government and the instigators of the actions themselves seek to exploit the media for their own advantage. Likewise, the media pursues its own self-interest and it too seeks to sell the high story as effectively as it can even if in some circumstances this entails the loss of melodrama. Since the media does little investigative research on its own, it is largely dependent on government sources or the terrorists themselves for information.

Clearly, "objectivity" is, at best, difficult to approximate much less achieve. In any case, the manner in which the media present terrorist news through their editing and selection processes, in which some facts are deemed relevant imply or assert exist concerning the causes and outcome of terrorism, media can have a profound influence on the public understanding. It can, if they are prone to sensationalism and mangering, create conditions for public hysteria.

#### Media Codes:

Since Ambassador Young's suggestions that some serious evaluation of media coverage of terrorist events be done, other officials have urged similar proposals in recent years. In 1985, Prime minister Thatcher and then Attorney General Edwin Meese asked for voluntary codes of media restraint in their countries. According to

Prime Minister Thatcher, democracies must "find ways to starve the terrorist and the Hijacker of the oxygen of publicity on which they depend" (Quoted in Corry 1985). The question is whether the media surrender their editorial discretion and sovereignty for the sake of an exclusive piece of sensationalist journalism. A great deal of "film" was produced in Beirut about the Shiite Awal militia who seized TWA flight 847; Nabid Beiris "coverage" had little journalism and editorial works. According to Corry, network anchormen resurped the role of the U.S.Ambassador to Lebanon through their omnipresence and endless interviewing. Little news emerged from Beirut except for the interruption of regular network programming to report that "...the captain of the hijacked jet had an infected spider bite" (Corry 1985).

The media spend hundreds of thousands of dallars on reporters, photographers, producers and technicians. "Chartered planes", a producer of World news tonight (WABC-TV) said,"carried tapes out Beirut and telephone lines were held open around the clock to New York City". She went on to say that:

When the Achille Lauro thing happened, it was on a boat at sea and was totally...not going to help you much in terms of publicity if you were a terrorist. We couldn't make contact with people. We couldn't get pictures. That's the recent thing you start thinking about: after figuring out how to get access... then you consider where you're going to get pictures, and how we're going to arrange for our people to get there, or to get pictures from an independent source...A lot of things that decide what kind of importance we give to a story has todo with logistics" (Cohen interview,1986 empahsis added).

Cohen's critique of media sensationalism might be perceived as "armchair journalism" or Monday morning quarterbacking: for there in

the trenches, producers, reporters, technical directors, the nuances of editorial finesse and finally honed scripts from "remotes" (field transmissions by broadcasts) are luxuries; getting the basic facts and issues out, however crudely or tasteless, is the bottom line. The main objective for the producer was to make certain that her network was on the scene, and able to broadcast the basic issues and facts.

#### The Media View Of Terrorism

With few exceptions, what the public knows about terrorists is learned through the news media. And much of what the media reports and presents is derived from law enforcement sources. It could be argued that since terrorism is so media conscious, what is reported is, by and large, what actually happened. In other words, terrorists organize their actions with media in mind so that what is done will be broadcast and not cut out by editors. Terrorist events are then consciously managed and staged to insure that the pictures, words and participants are likely to get maximum coverage. However, while law enforcement must react to criminal acts, the media exercised discretion in deciding what's news, what is "newsworthy".

As noted above, even though journalists in print or electronic media strive for objectivity - to exclude their personal biases and personal preferences - for their reporting. A selective process goes on - as producer Cohen points out - for very practical reasons. The avalanche of events day in and day out compete for limited space and time in the daily newspaper or nightly newscast (Davis op cit 1979)

found that "news" is not simply a chronicle of random events. Davis' research revealed certain patterns in reportage and presentations - which he called "Knowns" and "Unknowns". Thus, what constitutes "news" is information selected by news agencies that relates to known public figures and government activities that dominate the preferences in the selection process. The category of "Knowns" includes: elected government officials, notorious lawbreakers, government agencies, proposals and changes and the recurring themes of crime, business activity, and the racial/religion conflicts threatening the cohesion of the society (Davis op cit 1979). "Unknowns" refer to everybody else unless and until an individual or group does something unusual like engaging in terrorist actions.

The problem of attracting media attention is not as clear as it may seem. Not everyone agrees on the way the term is defined. Therefore, it is relevant for those who seek national media attention to construct actions which fit the ways in which the phenomenon of terrorism is understood by both the law enforcement community and the media. Increasingly, media have embraced law enforcement and governmental definitions of terrorism. In a series of reports on terrorism World News Tonight (WABC-TV) open its report with a statement by anchorman Peter Jennings:

The State Department presently defines terrorism this way: "Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against man-ambivalent targets by non-governmental groups or clandestine state agencies." And in this year's definition the state department has added that it is usually intended to influence an audience "(Jennings 1985).

A questionnaire concerning terrorism was constructed to elicit

information from news personnel as to what kinds of violence, among other things, broadcast editors and workers commonly label as terroristic.

TABLE 4.2

Behaviors and Acts Labeled Terroristic By Media Personnel

<u>ACT/BEHAVIOR OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE</u>	<u>ORDER OF DECREASING FREQUENCY</u>
Indiscriminate Bombing	1
Hostage Taking	2
Hijacking for escape or for coercive bargaining	3

The reactions of the production staff show that they share the values of the society at large regarding dastardly acts. Bombings in which innocent and unsuspecting civilians are killed or injured qualify in their eyes - as for the public at large - as especially unmitigated expressions of gratuitous violence. Media personnel - in this instance, the executive producer of World News Tonight - share the definition of terrorism promulgated by the U.S. Department of State. But there is a recognition that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. In its final report on terrorism, World News Tonight undiscovered this very point. "Because one Man's terrorist is often another man's freedom fighter" Barrie Dunsmore reported "...international attempts to curb terrorism have substantially failed.

Retaliation may provide some temporary satisfaction

of the violence. History suggests that terrorism is ended when the political and social conditions which produced terrorists are somehow changed"(Dunsmore 1986).

The concept of terrorism presented to news executives for evaluation was defined this way:

Terrorism is the use of violence or the threat of it to force,coerce or intimidate either government, individuals or the public at large. It may be employed in order to achieve directly or indiscriminately 1-social and political changes, 2-to change the policy of a minority upon a majority, or 3- to bring about the civil rights to specific political, religious, racial or ethnic groups within a society (Terrorism and Media Questionnaire Appendix 1).

production staff found this definition not entirely adequate because it does not take note of the indiscriminate violence that frequently results in the killing of innocent civilians. Also what respondents did not specify was the absence in the definition of any references to terrorism, the issue is clearly raised by correspondents and reporters:

To President Reagan the guerrilla fighting the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan are freedom fighters.However, on Soviet Television they are American sponsored terrorists. To President Reagan the Contras fighting the Cuban-supported Nicaraguan government are freedom fighters. Nicaraguan President Ortega says the Contra's actions against economic and civilian targets make them terrorists. It is...in the Middle East where the distinction between terrorist and freedom fighter actually depends on whose side you are on" (Dunsmore 1986).

Still, despite the apparently "objective" approach of the reporting staff reactions to definitions of terrorism, it suggests a pro-government bias. In many cases, media adopt the terminology of the government that informs them, or constitute their source of information. In his study of American newspapers,Schudson says: "The process of news gathering itself constructs an image of reality which rein-

forces official viewpoints. One analyst after another has made the point that the tradition of objectivity in journalism has favored official views, making journalists more stenographers for the official transcript of social reality (Schudson 1978). "Objectivity" seems to be more of a strategic ritual than a practice which news-people use to defend themselves against mistakes and criticisms. Objectivity appears to be more of a set of concrete conventions that are resorted to in order to deflect a culpability for news content away from journalists themselves.

In Epstein's content analysis of newspaper reporting on terrorism he found a pro-government orientation in stories of political violence in Latin America (Epstein 1977). The term "terrorism" was more often used to describe left-wing extremism and non-state or insurgent anti-government organizations than the kidnappings, assassinations and detentions initiated by repressive governments. Further, and this is one of Epstein's most interesting findings, media coverage of terrorism is sometimes placed in a political context but at other times for no discernible reason, in a criminal context.

#### The Irish Case

A good illustration of Epstein's findings in the print media are also found in the electronic media in Northern Ireland. From the beginning, the disturbances in Northern Ireland were reported in the United States media in political terms. Perhaps this is because many Americans feel for a secessionist political movement that has close parallels with the American Revolution of 1776. Also a large Irish-

American population in the United States has sentimental ties to Ireland and sees the IRA as a gallant band of heroic freedom fighters and not terrorists like the PLO. In fact the PLO, has been treated in the American media as criminals in comparison to the treatment of IRA guerrillas who have often been depicted as revolutionaries - however misguided (Hill 1974: Schlesinger 1978).

British media, especially the BBC, has experienced controversy over its coverage of Northern Ireland and the IRA. On the issue of interviewing IRA spokesmen, opinion was divided - not unlike that recently provoked when WNBC-TV (in New York City) interviewed the notorious Abu Nidal in a secret location. NBC refused to divulge his whereabouts arguing that such concealment was part of the agreement they reached with the Palestinian terrorist. In the BBC case, Conor Cruise O'Brien argued that since the IRA are essentially criminals, they need not be treated or accorded the right of free speech to promote their views. The otherwise liberal and humanistic social scientist contended that:

The force used by a democratic state is legitimate while the violence of terrorist is not legitimate. The terms "force" and "violence" are...like "terrorists" and "freedom fighter" largely emotive propaganda terms; which we use about a given act depends, not on the degree of force or violence, but on a view of its justification (O'Brien 1977).

For O'Brien then, a controlled political discourse is an essential part of a liberal-democratic state's fight against its enemies. In this formulation the IRA's campaign of violence is not justified because liberal democracies are embodiments of rationality while terrorists being violent are quintessentially irrational.

(time factors, schedules, accessibility of persons and actions, competition and commercial pressures), often supervene doctrines of national security and rocks the boat, so to speak. Nevertheless, by and large, at least in the case of Northern Ireland, British media relied heavily on official sources of information; they have tended to simplify violent incidents and have tended to avoid the historical background of situations they cover (Elliott 1977).

The situation with British media coverage and its claims to impartiality are quite complex. In the view of Schlesinger who examined the problem carefully, it seems that the state has in general been successful in inducing the broadcasting organizations to censor themselves under the guise of "responsibility".

"...at a time when the British Army became increasingly involved in direct conflict with the IRA...as state pressure for "responsible" broadcasting mounted, the broadcasting authorities began to develop detailed internal guidelines for reporting the conflict. These included a virtual ban on interviews with members of illegal organizations, one which has been so effective that only four such interviews have taken place on the BBC to date. More importantly, Irish Republican views, without knowing which the conflict cannot be understood, have received little serious analysis. The BBC has developed a system of "reference upwards" under which editors and reporters wishing to produce stories about Northern Ireland had to take their requests to the highest editorial levels of the organization" (Schlesinger 1984).

The effect of the "reference Upward" policy and governmental pressures to curtail contacts with IRA activists, has inhibited the public examination and debate to the political character of the crisis which has undoubtedly contributed to the prolonged violence and the media focus on the violence. The concentration on violence reinforces the state view of the essential irrationality of anti-

state political activity.

#### The United States and its Media Relationship

In the United States, the networks do not have a relationship with the government as that of BBC a semi-official state supported programming network. In the United States privately owned networks are regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and operate under a set of guidelines and rules by which licenses are issued, usually reviewed, revoked or suspended. While there is theoretically, more flexibility and freedom to report what they wish, under great pressures, many American newspapers and television networks have adopted guidelines in reporting on terrorist incidents. Like their British counterparts, the American networks have chosen to restrain themselves under enormous pressure from official agencies and law enforcement groups. In a study of television coverage of terrorism it was found that police chiefs in the United States overwhelmingly believed that live coverage encouraged terrorist acts (See chapter 3). A majority (60%) in the survey approved of delayed or video-taped reporting, and some 67% of these surveyed thought that television journalists should communicate with terrorists only after obtaining official consent (Criminal Justice Newsletter 1978). Frank Bolz, former commanding officer of the NYCPD's Hostage Negotiating Team, concluded that, "terrorists... ninety-nine percent of the time do their thing to get attention" (More 1977). Bolz continued "that the media personnel should take direction from police and law enforcement on the scene and not approach the situation on their own". This view is consistent with

present Police Department policy.

The television newsmen seem split on the live coverage of terrorism. Some editors, news directors and reporters thought that acquiescing to police requests to suppress a story about an on-going incident, is a mistake. Wayne Vriesman, News Director of WGN-TV (Chicago) indicated that,

"...I will never black out a story, That would lead the public to think that we will black out other major stories. I would draw the line, though, on passing police plans to a terrorist, but I can't say flat that I would follow police requests" (More)1977).

A leading authority on mass communications holds a different point of view. From Gerber's perspective terrorist actions are sui generis; they are quite unique in that media coverage is not incidental to them but dependent upon coverage for their effectiveness:

"The most pervasive effect on broadcast violence is not the imitation of violence, but the speeding of intimidation, of the fear of victimization. Terror can only succeed if the act is conveyed to the audience whose behavior the terrorists are seeking to influence. The media is conveying the terror, are cooperating . This makes them accomplices. If terror were not conveyed by the media, this fear of victimization would not be so pervasive. The press is directly responsible (Morw 1977).

Survey responses of WABC-TV personnel show that there is recognition that terrorism can encourage further terroristic acts. William Lord, executive producer of World News Tonight, indicated that, "our coverage always has a cost... those dispersed to such acts might be encouraged... but the value of free truthful information to our citizens is such that no reasonable limitation should be placed on it" (Lord Interview 1986 emphasis added). Lord did not believe an "embargo" on news coverage of terrorist actions is likely

to reduce their frequency even though he acknowledged that they are theatrical performances for the most part that are dependent upon television coverage.

Regarding the limited potential of terrorist coverage (the contagion hypothesis) Lord conceded that there is a slight danger. He was emphatic in his conviction, however, that the suppression of coverage of terrorism (as advocated by many government officials and academic experts) would leave the public with a false sense of security, and that, as a consequence, the public would be unprepared to deal with terrorism when directly faced with it. And as other newspeople agree, Lord believed that other negative consequences flowed from the control and suppression of reporting on terrorism.

TABLE 4.3

Negative Outcomes Of News Embargos On Terrorism

- 1- Lack of public awareness creates a public distrust in the media and in the political situation.
- 2- The political authority is undermined by the deprivation of vital information.
- 3- Claims of terrorists that democratic states are not really free, gains credibility if media suspend coverage.

Strengthening the case for uninhibited but prudent coverage (as newspeople are quick to point out) are these considerations. First, media coverage may have the opposite effect on the viewing audiences. Aside from intimidation, coverage may have a cathartic effect on potential perpetrators of terroristic acts. Media coverage

of an event may dampen an individual's motivation to engage in terror. These psychological effects are likely to be produced by portraying the failure of terrorist acts due to the effectiveness of law enforcement. Thus, the effect of contagion may be counteracted or neutralized by the effect of deterrence media coverage creates. Clearly, no quantitative analysis could establish an empirical foundation that could satisfactorily predict the extent to which an individual's behavior is influenced by competing or countervailing motivations but it can be reasonably concluded that media coverage does have consequences that may influence behavior either way. Secondly, the consensus in the law enforcement community opposing media coverage that is not under the supervisory control of police and law enforcement officials, argues that media help spread the climate of intimidation that is precisely the objective of the terrorists. There is no question that most people increasingly rely on electronic media in order to acquire information and construct pictures of the world. By providing pictures of the outside world, the media influence the way people view the world and consequently, through their behavior respond to it. But will the presentation of terrorist incidents intimidate and thereby enervate the public understanding it and destroy its cohesiveness? It is doubtful, as Bassiouni points out, that "...isolated incidents (of terroristic violence) could...produce a ubiquitous psychological impact. Rather it is the repetitive dissemination that produces the impact" (Bassiouni 1983). Furthermore, as Mendelsohn has written media-created anxiety need not be always dysfunctional when it,

"...readies individuals to cope with realistic dangers in realistic ways. It is where the mass media offer false standards of judgment by which readers, listeners and viewers may misinterpret the news that the danger lie. Whether through ignorance, guile, vested interest or irresponsibility-where some sectors of the media create dysfunctional anxiety, we have a serious problem on our hands"(Mendelsohn 1963)

The initial reaction of images of violence and gratuitous mayhem may be fear and anxiety, producing a high level of mass vulnerability. However, the recurrent projection of such images, as terrorists continue their activities, may lead to a social reaction in which antipathy towards the terrorist develops and a resolve to combat such conduct take hold, Israel is perhaps a good example of this phenomenon. Numerous agreements and speculations, some of whose substantive content has been reproduced here, for and against media censorship of terrorist coverage, have been made. Table 4 summarizes the major themes in this discussion.

TABLE 4.4

The Pros And Cons Of Censorship Debate On Media Coverage  
Of Terrorism

FOR CENSORSHIP

- 1- Media are used by terrorists as a platform for political propaganda
- 2- Media exposure helps terrorists recruit new members
- 3- Since terrorists need publicity, suppression makes terror a less effective strategy
- 4- Media presence can endanger hostages
- 5- Reporting terrorist acts promotes imitative acts

TABLE 4 (con't)

- 6- Terrorists get public attention only because they use violence and this legitimates the use of violence as a means of social change
- 7- Media reports of terrorism might prompt vigilantism, revenge and uncontrollable mass violence; and
- 8- Negative news reporting demoralizes the public confidence in social control institutions.

AGAINST CENSORSHIPS

- 1-Boycotting terrorists might accelerate or increase their violence
- 2- Lack of media coverage of terrorism engenders the spread of rumor and unfounded inflammation
- 3- Media censorships of terrorists leads the public to suspect that other things are suppressed as well; credibility in the trustworthiness of both media and governmental authority will decline
- 4- Concealing or suppressing news on terrorism might leave the public unprepared to deal with it when directly confronted by it
- 5- Terrorist claims that democratic states are not as free as alleged would constitute a "self-fulfilling prophecy" were the media's right to report it is controlled by governmental authorities or if the media imposes strigent guidelines of self-restraint; and
- 6- If terrorism is treated with silence, government is left free to label all sorts of political opponents and dissenters as terroristic; uncontrolled government actions and suspension of rights and liberties in the name of "national security" and "public safety" may result.

One way of assessing positions for or against censorship of terrorist news is to ask in whose interest is it? Terrorist, paradoxically might benefit from suppression policies because such policies would close down the open nature of society, forcing the government to adopt the very policies it is accused of. Further, public suspicious of government motives, fear and distrust are likely to be heightened. Then, censorship might be construed as in the public interest the collective reaction to threats and acts which might be so disruptive and so damaging to the public morale, that it is prudent to suspend coverage. The media usually defend their freedom to report by citing the public's right to know. But the public's "right to know" in the United States is no right at all. It is not specifically indicated in the Bill of Rights; it has no legal standing in the courts. The "right to know" is a specious plea, when the media interest are threatened or jeopardized, the rationale is trotted out. In fact, media do not primarily concern themselves with what is in the "public interest". Other realities intrude. William Lord, executive producer of World News Tonight, admitted that his mighty national news broadcast did indeed respond to audience interest and tastes in presenting coverage of terrorist incidences. The time allotments and positioning on a broadcast is determined to some extent by estimation of audience interest levels (Lord Interview 1986)

Av Westin, an executive producer with experience at all the major networks has pointed out in his book Newswatch that the details of a story which do not fit into the editor's framework

because they are boring, commercially uninteresting, or contrary to the interests of the medium, are left out or relegated to a passing notice even though some segment of the public might wish to know them. This should surprise no one. The candor of Lord and Westin is refreshing. Networks are market-oriented enterprises and they broadcast what is generally profitable for them to make public. Obviously, what is profitable for media is not always good for segments of the public. It is, therefore, somewhat dishonest if the public's "right to know" is selectively invoked by the media to justify the presentation of information that is likely to attract, but not necessarily inform, an audience.

#### The Presentation of Terrorism in Newscasts

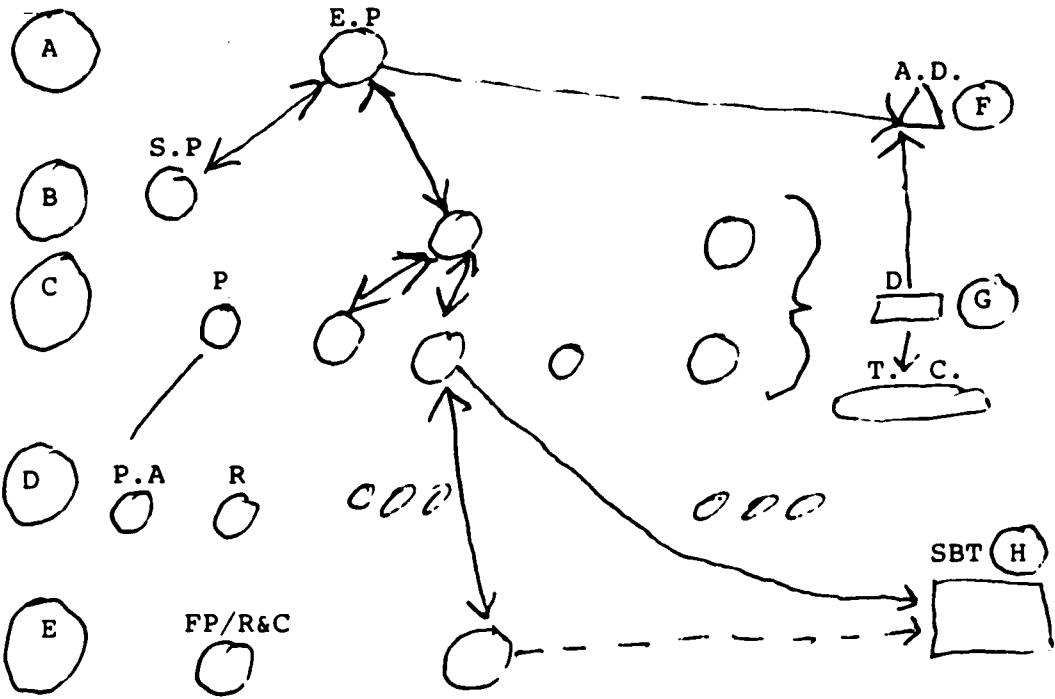
Roone Arlege, President of American Broadcasting Company (ABC)

News, describes how a news broadcast is put together;

"Bureau news hooks up to ABC each morning and executives and producers are informed about what is happening in each area, what stories are breaking and a preliminary list of a "Line up" is developed for the nightly broadcast. As the day progresses, that list can very well change as world events dictate. The "Line up" is a list of stories to be broadcast on the evening national news. If all goes well, the lineup we made at noon that day will stand up at 6:30 P.M.

But here comes Lynn Ahern (a reporter for ABC-TV national News) with a news item from Mexico City which is "Breaking" If she's not "Camera ready" (scripts and delivery, interviews and film prepared) we will talk Peter Jennings (anchor, World News Tonight through, via his ear piece, and he will simply talk the story line - at least until we can get the remote hookup and put Lynn (Ahern) on the air" (ABC Notebook 1986).

Figure 4.2 NETWORK NEWS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



KEY

- . E.P.=EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
- A.D.=ASSIGNMENT DESK
- S.P.=SENIOR PRODUCER
- P.=PRODUCER
- P.A.=PRODUCTION ASSOCIATES
- R.=RESEARCHERS
- D.=DIRECTORS (program, film, sound, editing, etc.)
- T.C.=TECHNICAL CREW (camera people, film & video editors)
- F.P.=FIELD PRODUCERS
- R&C =CORRESPONDENTS & REPORTERS
- SBT =STUDIO BROADCAST TEAM(anchor 7 in-studio correspondents)

Source L.Cohen Interview 3/86; Westin op. cit. ABC Notebook May 1986.

Figure 2 illustrates the teamwork-like character of television news coverage. In contrast to newspapers where one person could, if need be, cover a story, write and edit it, and with modern technology, even set it in type, nothing in television news comes close to such individualized action. Field producers and correspondents rely on camera and sound crews, producers, tape and film editors, graphic artists, production associates and researchers, program and technical directors. In short, each person in the organization provides some essential input into the process that gets reports on the air. Correspondents and reporters gather the facts (usually after the assignment desk has determined the stories of importance), and field producers and in-house producers help assemble the picture and edit the scripts with the help of production associates, researchers and technical people so that a coherent report emerges. The directors command the technical staffs, bring together all the elements of words and pictures into a smoothly executed collage of camera shots, film and tape inserts, graphic displays, interviews and commercial breaks - all meticulously timed by a stop watch. The Executive Producer is the coordinator of a staff of some 150 people, and his or her role is to decide what stories go into the broadcast after consulting with the News Association teletype and assignment desk personnel, how long they will run, and in what order they will be broadcast. Time is a merciless control factor

in television - one not slowed to the same extent by newspaper colleagues. Apart from print "deadlines" newspaper production is sufficiently feasible to allow a few more pages if events warrant the coverage. The equivalent of a "few pages" in television news - more minutes cannot be added. At best, a special report varying from fifteen minutes to one-half hour will have to be mounted. The broadcast schedule of shows will have to be interrupted. Television schedules are rigidly timed to the second. Everything must be compressed to fit and this creates a process of elimination, condensation and selection not equally experienced in the print media.

Time, therefore, affects content. Lengthy narrations and "talking heads" (interviews with officials and personalities) do not provide dramatic focus; pictures tell the story. Events involving violence have built-in appeal for television coverage. First, they are graphic; second they are easy to present. There is not much editorial judgement or reporting skill required in covering a bombing in Beirut or a hostage scene somewhere in the Middle East. In contrast television coverage of Congressional Committee hearings or a Presidential Press Conference must be filmed and then carefully edited coupled with a great deal of narrative comment. Thus, the availability of casualties, corpses, violence, crashes, and the like, often drives out efforts to cover the less visually dramatic treatment of economics,

education, labor news and politics. "Police Blotter" coverage attracts and holds viewers.

It may be supposed that terrorism is widely, sometimes obsessively covered for these reasons as well as others. Among the other reasons is the fact that the government itself through its spokespeople and numerous statements has indicated that terrorism is among the most serious problem confronting the country despite the fact that comparatively few incidences have occurred here. Terrorism sells. The public demand to be informed about it and rightly so as it is a dire and immediate threat (Epstein 1977).

"coverage of terrorism is done to titillate the audience. It's yellow journalism on T.V. The news departments justify the coverage by saying that "news is news" and the (advertisements) sales department is thrilled to death" (Ferrante in More 1977).

A more serious assessment of the apparent fixation of television news with violence in general and terrorism in particular may be found in Epstein's analysis of the structure of television news-casting,

"Network news stories must...be self-contained, there must be a beginning in which the protagonists are identified in a few words and pictures, a climax in which some visual action takes place, and a denouncement in which the conflict is resolved. Finally, to return the interest of a national stretching from Maine to Hawaii, network news must be constructed around visual elements that have universal appeal. For example, fire, riots, bloodshed, and armed confrontations, no matter where they occur, can be comprehended at a very basic level by viewers in all parts of the country (Epstein 1975).

While it may be an overstatement to claim that terrorists are consciously performing for an audience, that they are basically "entertainers", they may very well be the unwitting allies of television news. The terrorists and the television producers may have

what Molotch and Lester refer to as "parallel event needs"(Molotch and Lester op.cit.). They have a common interest in reaching large audiences, so that they collaborate instinctively. The terrorist, as Bell notes, creates visual facts which favor the event needs of television, as the executive producer, Orv Westin, mentioned. The drama of villians, violence, heroes, victims, scoundrels, the good and the bad, in a sensational mix which Epstein sees as essential to television news. While terrorism has about it the elements of theatre, it is also crime and politics (Jenkins 1975) There is a three fold confluence of real life and death spectacle, high politics and crime which is ideally suited for the media which cannot resist giving it full exposure.

TABLE 4.5

Network Coverage Of The Hanafi Muslim Incident

WASHINGTON, D.C. 1977

(Average time of Hanafi Muslim Incident Average)

<u>NETWORK</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL EVENING NEWS TIME</u>
NBC	35.5 Min.	53.2%
ABC	65.6 Min.	40.0%
CBS	70.0 Min	31.2%

Coverage involved three days over which the incident occurred.

The data are for evening network broadcasting only.

Source (Herbert A.Terry 1978).

The Hanafi incident was the lead item in all network broadcasts. The positioning of the story, at the top of the broadcast attests to the importance attached to it as something with high news value and audience interest.

Something equivalent in nuclear physics to the "Heisenberg Effect" may be occurring in television news coverage of terrorism. Before the development of television, news gathering and dissemination entailed a time lapse between the occurrence of the event and reporting about it. Even with "scoops" and resourceful reporters and high-speed newspaper production, the time between occurrence of an event may have substantially run its course (Kelly 1986). With the electronic communications technology of today, (mini cars, Helicopter and jet travel, satellite communications) however, more and more reporting occurs while an event is running its course. The Heisenberg principle states that the very method employed to find the position of a moving electron (hitting it with a high-intensified beam of light) causes the electron to change its velocity. Applied to television news coverage, this principle may be reformulated as follows: the very act of reporting and coverage changes the character of the events reported.

The content of news reporting in general is influenced or determined by the complex interactions of the organizational processes involved in news selection and assembly. As one producer put it.

"A lot of things that decide what kind of importance we give a story have to do with logistics. We have to figure out how we're going to get camera crew there, our producer there, passports, access,

whether we're going to be able to transmit film because we have to get the pictures once they're been shot...Then to get a correspondent there.

...now you want to get the background, so you have researchers who are going to start pulling together different kinds of research, one is written research, other stories and background material, who these people are, what they want, ...you try to interview some people that will be able to explain what's going on - experts or authorities, who have been there, former diplomats, ... ambassadors - that kind of thing.

and you assemble all that together and you hopefully have a correspondent or somebody out there who's been able to be on the scene interviewing whoever is available" (Cohen interview op. cit.).

And of audience interest?

...if there has been a great deal of reporting on something and the public's interest has been aroused by it, it's going to gain a certain amount of importance than if nobody knows anything about it..." (Cohen interview op. cit.).

These processes that effect content are important because as poll after poll show television is considered the most credible and reliable source of news (Graber 1980; Harris 1984). Television news may significantly influence not only what elites and masses think about, but ultimately the national agenda of political priorities. As "gate keepers" the question of whether media merely mirror reality or participate as active players, in the creation and construction of news. Research conducted by (Wirth-Hough 1983) on the early television networks focus on terrorism is very informative on this question. Wirth-Hough shows that from 1968 through 1971 the network coverage of terrorism events did not manufacture a "tide of terrorism".

TABLE 4.6Number Of Stories On Terrorism

	Aug-Dec	Jan-Jun	July-Dec	Jan-Jun	July-Dec	Jan-July	July-Dec	Total
<u>NBC</u>	8	18	2	6	18	7	7	66
<u>CBS</u>	8	24	5	10	18	8	4	77
<u>ABC</u>	4	18	2	7	24	7	5	67
<u>AVG.</u>	7	20	3	7	20	7	5	

Source: (Writh-Hough Sandra 1983) "Network News Coverage of Terrorism: The Early Years" Terrorism vol. 6 no.3: p.408

Using (Mickolus 1980) data base of 340 transnational terrorist events a year in this time frame, clearly the averages suggest that television news did not overreact, nor did they generate an atmosphere of crisis. Other factors indicating the emphasis media attach to a story and the importance it has is the length of time devoted to it and whether an anchor person does the story either alone or in conjunction with a reporter.

TABLE 4.7Average Time Of Individual Stories On Terrorism

	<u>Jan- June, 1971</u>	<u>July- December, 1971</u>
NBC	65 seconds	66 seconds
CBS	119 seconds	180 seconds
ABC	127 seconds	124 seconds

Source (Writh-Hough op.cit.: 411).

TABLE 4.8Primary Broadcaster Of Stories On Terrorism

	NBC	CBS	ABC	TOTALS
Anchorman alone	31	54	29	114
Anchorman with film	13	14	12	39
Reporter alone	0	0	0	0
Reporter with film	22	9	21	52
Commentary	0	0	5	5
				210

Source:(Wirth-Hough op.cit.: 412)

Mr. Westin has articulated the informal rules governing time devoted to a story: "The audience has a very short attention span and...welcomes the change...The result is that the audience never gets bored or finds its attention span taxed as the newscast switches from time, place, and subject to provide a sense of forward movement" (Pattern and McClure 1976). Wirth-Hough notes that a typical news story "averages slightly over a minute on the air, with "in-depth" coverage lasting one minute and forty-five seconds" (op.cit.:410). Media violations of these routines would seem to suggest that a news item is of primary importance. In Table 7, the average time coverage of terrorism, it may be assumed, that the topic was perceived as a major one by each network.

Another clue to the importance networks attach to a news item is whether an anchor person introduces, presents or involves himself or

herself in the coverage. The anchor person is the hub of the broadcast - usually a distinguished figure whose attractive image lends credibility to the news presentation. Combining an anchorperson with film (tape) makes the seriousness of the story even more powerful. In Table 8 it shows that approximately 73% of stories on terrorism involves anchorpersons alone or with film.

While the evidence indicates that media may not have overreacted and created a "wave of terrorism" - that is portraying the frequency of its incidence in excess of its actual occurrence, it distorts it for other reasons. The organizational exigencies and constraints on broadcasting "black out history" in Barber's 1979 apt phrase. What is missing in the coverage - for reasons which are understandable but not necessarily acceptable - is historically clarifying information. The focus is on the action events; the gun-toting hooded terrorists, the tragic aftermath of a bombing, and so on. Such dramatic effects destroys much of the vital resemblance to the real world. Funt describes the scene in Teheran during the early stages of the hostage-taking:

"...there were daily demonstrations outside the U.S. embassy building in Teheran. And night after night American television viewers saw footage of the anti-American protests. The pictures themselves were not distorted, but some reporters who covered the story now believe the image was. Less than two blocks from the embassy, they wrote, there was business as usual in Teheran. Yet American viewers might have easily imagined that the entire city was in turmoil" (Funt 1960).

So much for the "mirror" theory of coverage. The television pictures may not themselves betray a reality, but the editing can "Decontextualize" a reality. In Teheran one got the erroneous impres-

sion of the omnipresence of violence when there was none. Thus by taking a news event such as terrorism out of its context and embedding it in a general news report, the meaning and significance of the terrorist event is thereby changed.

## CHAPTER 5

### Effects and Consequences of Police and Media Dissemination of Terrorist Activities

Unlike other types of criminal behavior which participants wish to conceal, terrorists construct and carry out their actions hoping for the public exposure that only mass media can provide. Consequently, media do not have to rely exclusively on law enforcement for their information. Aside from the terrorists themselves who do not hesitate to contact television and radio stations directly, announcing their actions and identifying their organizations, the media rely on many sources.

TABLE 5.1

#### Media Sources Of Information On Terrorism

<u>Rank Order Of Importance</u>	<u>Source</u>
1	Interviews with government officials
2	Open, non-classified government documents
3	Interviews with terrorists
4	The press news service
5	Scholarly books and articles

[The category, "Government officials" includes law enforcement agencies and officials]

Source; William Lord Interview, May 7, 1986, ABC Network News.

In addition, broadcasters find the data generated by these groups very useful in their reporting and coverage techniques. In this chapter we will return to some of the issues raised in the preceding chapters and summarize the findings.

The terrorists themselves tell the world their motives and intentions. The flames of the Marks and Spencer London department store had barely cooled in August 1966 after a Palestinian incendiary attack, when George Habash, a leading theoretician of the PLO, said that the attack was worth as much as burning two Kibbutzin in the Israeli countryside, "...because we force people to ask what is going on" (Fallaci 1970). Those sympathetic to the political issues that stimulate some terrorist activities are likely to construe Habash's remarks as indicative of the problem politically disenfranchised people face. Such an act may be seen as a desperate appeal for help and as a drastic challenge to the disinterested and ignorant. Impotent people with real grievances cannot get into the media, they cannot be seen or heard. This sense of frustration, when coupled with the knowledge that without media attention, issues are not considered important, perhaps one of the factors that leads to terrorism. The situation in Northern Ireland is another example of how the voices of extremism - both IRA and Ulster Unionists omitted from the air, made public exposure and examination of the problem difficult. The consequence: violence which overshadowed the messages of Irish Republicanist and Ulster conservatism. The media placed so much attention on the deeds themselves that the intended messages were lost in the hysteria. It seems clear that where individuals or ethnic and revolution-

ary minorities cannot get their grievances redressed or even aired via mass media the chance that some will resort to terrorism will be high. However, it is important to stress some caution with this information. All terrorism cannot be interpreted as an attempt to get access to the mass media. While all acts of terrorism contain implicitly for a mass communication component, not all acts are aimed at the mass media. In a war of religious liberation, as is currently underway in Sri Lanka between the Tamils minority and the Buddhist majority, where most of the population is illiterate and without radios, access to the local media is not a prime objective. However, winning of favorable foreign publicity might be a goal. To a limited extent, this occurred in Indonesia and China during their revolutionary phases. As Bagdikian put it some fifteen years ago:

"News is the peripheral nervous system of the body politic, sensing the total environment and selecting which sights and sounds shall be transmitted to the police... Where once priests and kings decided what the populace would hear the proprietors of the mass media now decide... For most of the people of the world, for most of the events of the world, what the news system does not transmit did not happen. To that extent the world and its inhabitants are what the news media say they are" (Bagdikian 1971).

#### Conflicts Between Police And Media

While network guidelines (Appendix B) are quite explicit about how media personnel are to deal with law enforcement in terrorist situations, the police nevertheless worry about the media dissemination of information useful to terrorists. Media may unwittingly serve the intelligence needs of terrorists as the terrorists, are equipped with radios and televisions. Media may broadcast police operational activities - as has happened in incidents in the United States

(Revzin 1977). Incidents involving hostages or stand-offs that may last many hours, may generate information that endangers lives and contributes little, if anything, to the public interest.

Areas of conflict arises when media interfere with law enforcement responses to terrorism. Direct media contact with terrorists while a police action is in progress can interfere with law enforcement responses in a number of ways. For example; If the terrorist know the media is present, they will attempt, at least, to get their side of the story aired. Terrorists have in the past injured and killed while the media was broadcasting. Major networks in their guidelines have promulgated instructions to their field personnel in this regard.

A careful examination of network guidelines reveals that the media retain the right to exercise their judgements concerning contacts with terrorist perpetrators. Apart from the possibility of interfering with police communications, the media retain the right to use their discretion. Aside from tying up telephone lines, direct media contact may coax terrorists into precipitous action under the spotlight of television attention; some lines of questioning may disrupt delicate police negotiations; and the presence of media may aggravate, fatally, a precarious psychological balance. The 1977 Harafi Muslim episode in Washington D.C. illustrates the adverse effects of direct media contact and communication with terrorists.

Still another set of conflictful conditions between media and police concerns crowd control. Cameras, lights, equipment and the numerous technical personnel need for video transmission may interfere with the mobility of the police by attracting crowds and generally

getting underfoot. Constant probing by the media for update reports may distract law enforcement decisionmakers and participants at critical moments. In general, the presence of the media may transform a news event into a spectacle attracting large numbers of onlookers and thereby increasing the volatility of the situation. Survey data on police attitudes about live media coverage indicates that the police believe it is ultimately harmful (More 1977). Yet, total media curtailment and banning coverage of terrorist events is not a very attractive solution because it diminishes the public's ability to monitor law enforcement activities and may arouse distrust and suspicion of government.

There are some advantages in media coverage of terrorism. In the Iranian hostage seizure, which went on for more than a year, the media provided federal law enforcement and government with information that was otherwise unavailable. Media coverage for a long time was the only source of news out of Tehran. It was not until January of 1980 that U.S. journalists were expelled from Iran but their absence was quickly offset by journalists from other countries. Secondly, media coverage (which many terrorists desire) can become an effective bargaining chip for law enforcement negotiators. Either permitting cameras or excluding them can determine the outcome of some situations.

When media coverage threatens to enhance terror-violence by glamorizing it, tensions between law enforcement and media personnel are heightened. In these circumstances of distrust and animosity, the potential for cooperation between these groups decreases and the public suffers. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, police worry about media intrusions into their work and media people fear

the implementation of restrictions. The obvious question, in the United States, concerns whether government in response to law enforcement pressures and some segments of public opinion could impose restrictions on the media consistent with the First Amendment. It would seem that even the media recognizes the unique characteristics of terrorism and have developed some self-restraints.

So far, media regulatory schemes have consisted of:

- a- self-restraint voluntarily adopted by the major national networks;
- b- restrictions curtailing the media's access to ongoing terrorist attacks;
- c- Some time, place, and manner regulations; and
- d- limited and voluntary content regulation on reportage.

The government has not sought prior restraints upon media in the form of legislation, nor has it attempted to monitor content and impose criminal or civil sanctions on media dissemination of information practices (Bassiouni 1981).

What if, however, circumstances change and terrorism reaches epidemic proportions? Will stringent controls be applied to the media? Freedom of speech is not an absolute doctrine, even with protected speech, the Supreme Court has recognized exceptions under the "clear and present danger" doctrine. The Report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism spelled out the burden of the media:

"A heavy and difficult responsibility rests with who, in our society, enjoy freedom of expression, for by its incautious or unintelligent exercise they may well be contributing to its eventual demise at the hands of imprincipled extremists. The representatives of the media must make an urgent, searching reappraisal of their own values and responsibilities. Only by facing realistically the choices of potential harm, both to principles and to the community interest, can a proper balance be struck" (1976).

The attitude of the press expressed in the slogan, "the news is the news is the news" will not do. The media enjoy extraordinary and valuable rights under the First Amendment. Such rights and privileges carry with them correlative duties and obligations, however, an expert on terrorism writes:

"If the media indeed attributes to the terrorist problem, it is not too much to hope that it can also contribute to its solution. It cannot do so if...the attitude of those, in either the public or private sector, who became media managers, is one of hysterical distrust bordering on paranoia. The terrorist has simply seen the chink in modern society's armor and is seeking, not unnaturally to exploit that knowledge...What the media needs is a sense of proportion, and this cannot be acquired by government fiat anymore than an individual can do so by such means..." (Cooper 1976).

Ideally, both the media and law enforcement act in the public interest. As the Task Force on Terrorism observed, it is in the interest of law enforcement to cooperate with the media because generally, "...it is more- and more balanced coverage-rather than less coverage that will best promote both crime prevention and public confidence in law enforcement" (1976). The Police Department of the City of New York has established a Public Information Division (PID) and send their personnel to many incidents while it is in progress. The PID and its policies are designed to facilitate the release of official information to provide a clearinghouse and centralized location where media personnel can verify information and be advised of the significance of their reportage in terms of incident outcomes.

The very fact that media have devised guidelines demonstrate increasing awareness that during terrorist incidents they must balance their responsibility to provide full and fair coverage with their obligation not to increase the threat of life or impede effec-

tive enforcement. But even the guidelines do not address the problem of institutional seduction: how is the media to avoid becoming an instrument of the terrorists?

In Chapter three, the New York City Police Department (NYCPD), along with other law enforcement agencies was found to urge a delay in reporting details that could become inflammatory and aggravate an incident. The police encourage delay, not suppression, until the incident has played itself out. The law enforcement community, and the NYCPD in particular, believes that there often is a lack of balance in terrorist coverage. Too often, factual background in some depth is missing, from the dramatic pictures; and all too often there is little interest in follow-up reports tracing the consequences and impact of an incident on the lives of victims and perpetrators. Above all, the NYCPD insists that its specific strategies and tactical capabilities are minimized in media coverage in order to insure that terrorists are not aided in planning future attacks.

The Task Force Report , the NYCPD and most law enforcement agencies in the United States have requested cooperation from the media in terrorist situations, but competitive factors within the media have not produced resources in order to minimize intrusiveness on police operations.

#### Interactions Between the Police and the Media on Appropriate Public Information

No system of news can conduct continuous surveys of the world's entire population of some 4.7 billion people and their 168 or so governments. There are simply not enough potential reporters and news organizations to do even a cursory job of reflecting in a very

general way major trends in social, political and economic events. Not only is the communication capacity insufficient, consumers of news would never have the time to meaningfully examine the results. Put differently, a truly democratic mass media system is a technical impossibility. A major consideration affecting the amount and type of news media transmit is production costs. Few newspapers and even fewer electronic news networks scatter correspondents across the United States and in every country of the world. Broadcasting is a very expensive method of communicating. Consequently, networks are constantly seeking sources that are easily available, relatively inexpensive, and provide news items that are intrinsically interesting to their viewing audience. Countless surveys by social scientists and market researchers show that violence has a fascination and appeal for large numbers of people (Gordon 1973; Moloch 1977). Crime news is news that repels and fascinates the American public. "Crime news is easy news", according to (Gordon and Heath 1981).

The basic elements of crime news and terrorist news are conveniently available from the "police wire". In New York City, as (Fishman 1978) reports, getting the facts - or those facts that fit neatly into the broadcast format - has been simplified for the media by the police who themselves prepare summaries and stories. PID, in effect, "pre-packages" news of terrorism in particular and crime in general.

TABLE 5.2

References To Terrorist Incidents In Two Reporting Schemes

<u>TYPES OF INCIDENTS</u>	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Pre-announced</u>		X
<u>Post-announced</u>		X
<u>Locale</u>	X	X
<u>Time</u>		X
<u>Duration</u>		X
<u>Hostage-taking</u>		X
<u>Bombing</u>	X	X
<u>Assassination</u>	X	X
<u>Arson</u>	X	X
<u>Assault</u>	X	X
<u>Weapons discharge</u>	X	X
<u>Building occupation</u>		X
<u>Product contamination</u>		X*

KEY

X= indicates that television report contains references

\*= on occasion such information is withheld or suppressed until an incident is over.

As Table 2 indicates, police delete information which might compromise or interfere with an investigation, arrest or a prosecution. Media, in contrast, are less hesitant. However in Table 3 and 4, media will not report the details of religion, education, ethnicity, occupation and such if these seem especially relevant to police inves-

tigation. If such disclosures are likely to arouse the ire of religious, racial and ethnic groups. Further, media may accommodate the police and suppress details if they can be persuaded that police works as informants would be jeopardized by reports and disclosures.

TABLE 5.3

<u>Characteristics Of Terrorist Participants</u>		
<u>As Found In Police And Media Reports</u>		
	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Age</u>	X	X
<u>Sex</u>	X	X
<u>Race</u>	X	
<u>Religion</u>		X*
<u>Education</u>		X*
<u>Ethnicity</u>		X*
<u>Occupation</u>		X*

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TABLE 5.4

<u>Characteristics Of Terrorist Participants</u>		
<u>As Found In Police And Media Reports</u>		
	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Political memberships</u>		X
<u>Religious memberships</u>		X*
<u>Ethnic identification factors</u>	X*	X*

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The police and the media are more inclined to indicate the politics of terrorists primarily because the terrorists often make a point of their politics and ideologies. Again, in Table 5, police reports may or may not reveal the ideological orientations of terrorists if it widens investigations or if it might harm other's with some tangible connections to the terrorist acts (relatives, foreign governments, etc.). It also seems that for the police the "Why" and "Who" of events are more important than the political motivations and causes in whose name incidents are carried out.

TABLE 5.5

Ideological Orientations

	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Leftist Marxist</u>	X*	X
<u>Rightist Conservative</u>	X*	X
<u>Seperatist Movement</u>	X*	X
<u>Indigenous Politico Religious Movement</u>	X*	X
<u>Foriegn Based Political Movement</u>	X*	X

(As Found in Police And Media Reports).

Likewise, police must decide if the public interest is served by revelations of the terrorist motives.

TABLE 5.6

Terrorist Participant Motives

	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Political</u>	X*	X
<u>Religious</u>		X
<u>Financial</u>	X	X

(As Found in Police And Media Reports).

If in the judgement of law enforcement officials, public hysteria is likely to be heightened, the police may not report it. Above all, the police seek to maintain a posture of political neutrality; they are extremely sensitive to accusations of racial, ethnic bias and political favoritism. The media seem less sensitive to such charges; media are not constrained in their reporting by considerations of prosecution and the political ramifications of their actions. Finally, police do not freely disseminate, unrelated information of no legal consequence to law enforcement. Thus, the educational backgrounds of terrorists and their occupation are of peripheral interest to the police but may be quite germane to media accounts whose purpose is to present the "human interest" side of events.

We know that media do not rely exclusively on the police for their information, and as a result, there is not an isomorphic structural relationship in the reports of the police and the media. Factors which explain the differences in the content of the two reporting schemes have to do with the objectives and goals of each group, the institutional structures in which they operate, and the sources of information available to each. Interestingly, the police often seek out, and use information from the media.

TABLE 5.7

<u>Terrorist Targets</u>		
<u>As Found In Police And Media Reports</u>		
	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Military Installations</u>	X*	X
<u>Corporate Offices</u>	X	X
<u>Religious Groups</u>	X	X
<u>Ethnic Groups</u>	X	X
<u>Racial Groups</u>	X	X
<u>Law Enforcement Agencies</u>	X	X
<u>Public Officials</u>	X	X
<u>Private Citizens</u>	X	X
<u>Political Parties</u>	X	X
<u>Government Instutions</u>	X*	X

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TABLE 5.8

<u>Characteristics Of Terrorist Victims</u>		
<u>As Found In Police And Media Reports</u>		
	<u>POLICE REPORT</u>	<u>T.V. REPORT</u>
<u>Persons Killed Or Injured</u>	X	X
<u>Employees Of Certain Targeted Instutions</u>	X	X
<u>Race, Sex, Age, Of Victims</u>	X*	X

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Another factor affecting law enforcement disclosures about terrorist incidents has to do with jurisdictional issues which do not affect media. The NYCPD may be privy to terrorist information that falls within the purview and authority of federal government agencies. In that case, the police will not release the information to the media. Many media journalists see themselves as physicians of the state, offering mirrors for the leaders and the public seeking to postpone the widening gaps between the rulers and the ruled. Many journalists roles are two-fold:

- 1- reporting the facts and
- 2- providing interpretations of them in terms of the historical realities to which all governments are subject.

In contrast, the police and the law enforcement agencies in general do not engage in "interpretive work".

#### Media Dependence On The Police And It's Consequence

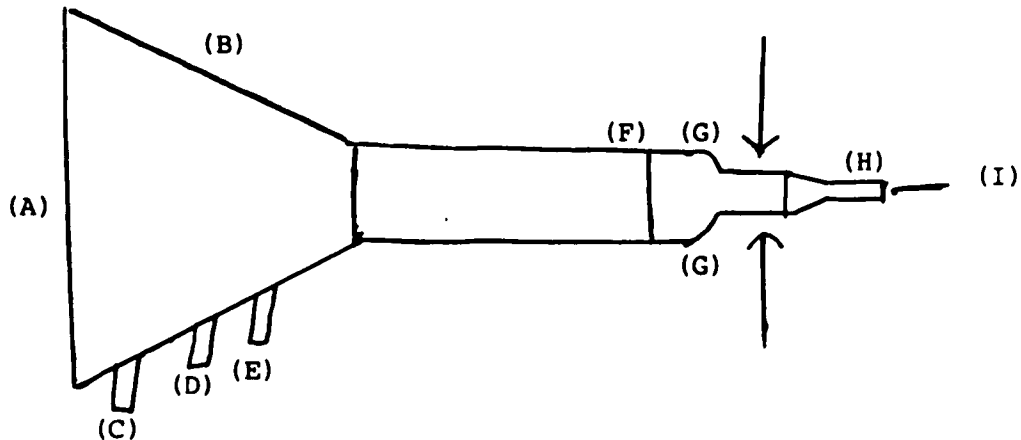
One of the consequences of media coverage of terrorist events is that the law enforcement community rather than media personnel (reporters, editors, etc.) has become the primary "Gatekeepers". What media obtain and what the public can know is dependant largely on the police. The dependence on law enforcement and the police for terrorist news is important for several reasons. First, not all terrorist incidences are known to, or reported to the police - although when compared with crime in general, by their very nature and purpose - many more terrorist events come to the attention of the police (Heath, Gordon, and LeBailly 1981). Thus, reliance on law enforcement and police reports may lead to an under-representation

or distorted view of the terrorist situation by the media and the public. Second, if law enforcement groups are the "traffic Managers" of terrorist information, media may never learn of all the details of terrorist incidents. The point has been made that police are not inclined to release information that they deem relevant to their works: investigations may be jeopardized, prosecutions flawed, informants compromised, victims and witnesses intimidated, and the public aroused into hysteria. Aspects of police and law enforcement works make full, unfettered disclosure problematic at best.

Within the media organizations bureaucratic arrangements and the dynamics of the broadcast market function to further filter terrorist news. The "Newsworthiness" of a terrorist event is not automatic. For instance, the competitive situation among networks figures into the variety of news items broadcast, their placement in the news, the amount of time devoted to them, and the personnel and background supportive material in the presentation. Judgements as to whether a terrorist incident will be aired depends also on the frequency of the occurrences, the manner in which other networks are treating the incident and the audience reaction. Thus, endogenous factors affect the presentation of terrorist incidents. These factors can be diagrammed as follows, on page 199:

FIGURE 5.1

An Overview Of The Transformation Of Terrorist Activities  
Into Reportable Events And News Items



KEY

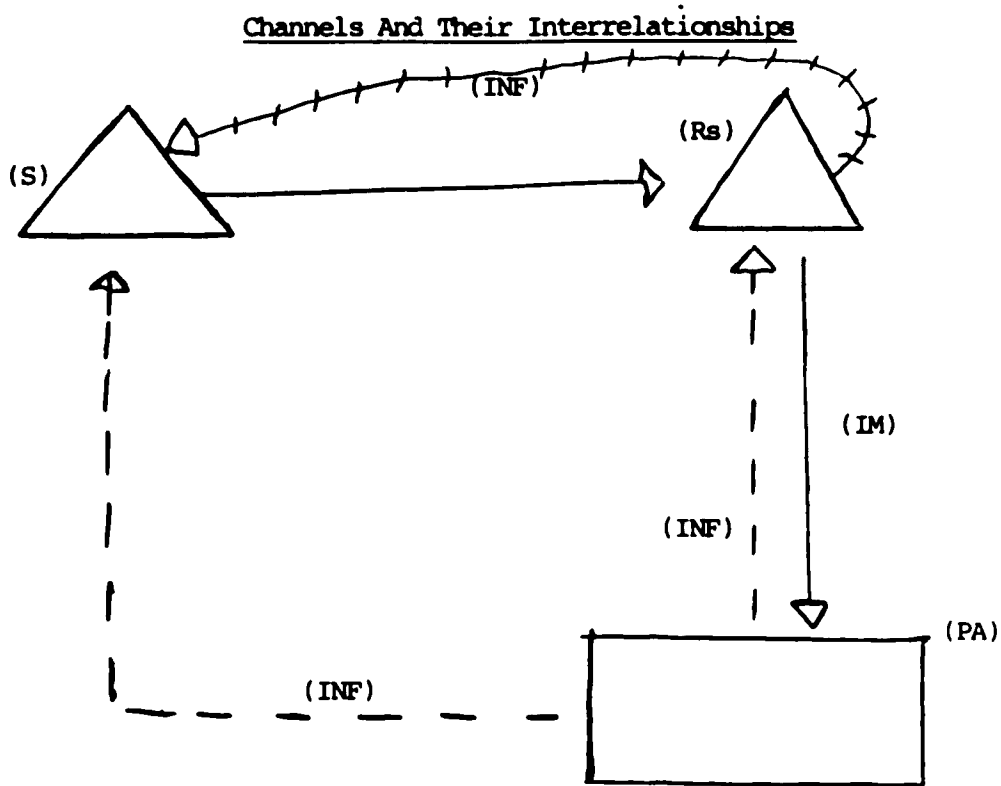
- (A) Occurrences of terrorism
- (B) Law enforcement investigators, arrests, prosecutions, etc.
- (C) Persons involved but not arrested
- (D) Alleged perpetrators released without prosecution
- (E) Charges of terrorism dropped or dismissed
- (F) Reportable terrorist events (news items filtered through the law law enforcement system and disseminated to the media, press and public)
- (G) Data and information about terrorism from other sources (Press Association, Informants, media generated sources, government officials, scholars and consultants, terrorists themselves)
- (H) Network News Broadcast Content (news items from multiple sources filtered through the editorial and broadcast formats - e.g. length of time on air; "live" or remote coverage; position of item on broadcast, persons (reporters and anchor) handling presentation; determination of film and commentary accompaniments)
- (I) The news of terrorism

Figure 1 illustrates the various elements affecting the decision to broadcast and the composition of the broadcast itself. In much the same way that audience reaction and interest enters into the decision - making and newsworthiness of any item; police too are sensitive to public reactions in what is released to the media. Fear of terrorism, attracts and repels audiences.

#### The Structure Of Information Between Police And Media

The data from police and media personnel indicate that a simple "order-receiver" model in the order of information is not applicable to the relationships and structure of terrorist incidence reporting. What exists is a reticulated structure of information in which "senders" and "receivers" play both roles simultaneously. A more empirically accurate depiction of the process of the flow of information between police and media is as following: on Page 201.

FIGURE 5.2

KEY

(S) Sender (police)

(Rs) Receiver (media)

(IM) Information and Messages professionally produced

(PA) Public Audience

(INF) Information

Figure 1 represents the standard "output" model of information affected by internal structural conditions in the law enforcement and media institutional arrangements. Figure 2 characterizes how media and police relate realistically in covering terrorism. The sender (S) in this case the police and law enforcement community provides the mass media (television, radio and newspapers) the receiver sender (Rs) with its information about terrorism. In turn, this information is transformed into informational messages (IM) which are broadcast to the public and the media audiences (PA) that comprise the network markets or viewing audiences. However, media have cultivated independent sources of information from their contacts and correspondents and the media also receives information from their audiences. In a sense, the receiver (Rs), the media, can and do often lend information (INF) to the police and law enforcement agencies. At the same time, the media audience (PA) provides information directly to the police. What exists is a system of inputs, outputs and through points where information circulates up, down and across the structures that generate and transmit information.

For most of those in the media audience, the public, message verification is very limited. Most are not themselves information suppliers and have no access to the newsmaking process or the investigative enforcement process of the police. With the media, on the other hand, information (INF) generated by the audience tends to be an individual activity compared with the collective actions of groups within the police and the media. There is a standardized quality about police news releases and broadcast news. Events are couched in

careful language which is denuded of slanderous references or allusions; such messages are worded and presented in a context that attends to the legal implications and ramifications of the claims and assertions made.

The reciprocity in information flow that has been observed exists between media and police. The messages are, for reasons indicated above, a constructed sampling of the reality of terrorism which the audience cannot be expected to fully appreciate. Informational messages flow from institutions and their organizations to individuals - from the center of events to the periphery as it were, where the audiences, cut off from each other, receive identical messages - which may be interpreted differently depending on their codes. From this design the public develops its experiences and understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism.

## CHAPTER 6

### Impressions - Observations - Conclusions; Who Is Using Who? And Why

The picture of the relationship between the media, the police and terrorism is admittedly incomplete; it cannot at the moment be otherwise. Further research should generate more data and refine the explanatory/descriptive models presented here by confronting them with concrete data which will strengthen their plausibility or require their modifications.

An important question still lingers. Why the focus on violence by the media? Why is violence so heavily emphasized in its reporting? The media provide the answer to these questions and do so without, it seems embarrassment or anxiety about the implications. The answer afford some insight into the culture of the press, into the news values that form the basic structures of its institutions. It must be remembered that the samples upon which the discussion is based are quite limited and therefore cannot be representative, they are merely suggestive. An executive at ABC-TV has indicated, violence is better television than nonviolence (Westin op.cit.). Other research has shown that television is attuned to violence and its concomitant features. Mander, for example has listed what he calls "bias" in broadcasting. Among them are a predilection for violence, for:

"...political movements with single charismatic - leaders...when a movement has no leader or focus, television needs to create one...Death is easier (to - report) than life. It is specific, focused, highlighted, fixed, resolved and has a meaning aside from context. Life on the other hand, is fluid, ambiguous, process oriented...Violence is better TV than nonviolence" (1978).

Media coverage reacts to drama and conflict-aspects of events and situations that are perfectly suited for a visual medium. Mander's research is persuasive. Approximately one billion people in the world are currently undernourished. However, in 1979 when three imprisoned terrorists of the German Red Army Faction went on a hunger strike, it became international news. The billion people did not make the news. Starvation is a process, while hunger strike is an event filled with drama and conflict. One billion people are intellectually inconceivable faceless masses; three German terrorists are individuals. Thus the hunger strike is attractive television. Assuming that television coverage is inherently predisposed to events and groups that are violent prone, then of the social movement essentially seeking the same political goals but with different means, one violent, the other nonviolent, it is safe to suppose that the media will cover the violent movement more extensively. Because of its uneven coverage and tendency to favor the violent or terrorist - oriented movement over the nonviolent one, the media coverage may predetermine two political cultures:

- 1- the mobilization and recruitment potential of each movement; and
- 2- the discouragement of the nonviolent movement because of its lack of publicity.

In this way, media coverage intervenes indirectly in the political process.

The empirical evidence to support this inference is not available in a way that would constitute a test of the arguments. The closest case that comes to mind is the Northern Ireland Peace movement of 1976.

The movement was led by two Irish Catholic women who sought a non-violent solution to the conflict. Protestants were welcomed into the movement and for a while it rivalled the IRA terrorist for media attention (Schelsinger 1983,op.cit. 1978). Of course, the fact that the IRA is strong while the peace movement has practically ceased to exist cannot be completely blamed on the media. It may be rather that the peace movement existed outside the media. It had no solid constituencies nursing grievances; its basis in the palpable substances of poverty and oppression was weakly organized; only the massive, but limited, media attention bestowed on the movement made it look for a time like a serious alternative to the terrorist-based IRA.

One strand of the analysis on violence and the media must be considered that violence has been the most common method of engaging the attention of the media. The genesis of much of the insurgent terrorism that has erupted since the 1960's may be seen primarily as an outgrowth of minority strategies to get into the news and on television. To the extent that this choice is deliberate implies that the significance of parliaments as political machineries for the redress of grievances and the venting of protests may be seen as on the decline. If indeed parliamentary democracies cannot respond adequately to challenges, then it is reasonable to expect more and more instances of groups resorting to tactics and strategies that will attract public attention. Politics may take to the streets again.

Much terrorism may be seen as a series of what Boorstin in another context refers to as "pseudo events". These, according to

Boorstin possess the following characteristics:

"...(they) are not spontaneous, but came about because someone has planned, planted or incited them. (they are planted primarily (not always exclusively) for the immediate purpose of being reported or reproduced. Therefore, (their) occurrence is arranged for the convenience of the reporting or reproducing media. (Their) success is measured by how widely (they) are reported...The power to make a reportable event is thru the power to make experience" (1976).

Many acts of terrorism would qualify as "Pseudo events". "Pseudo" means fake, meant to deceive. The indiscriminate bombing of the mathematics building at the University of Wisconsin by opponents of the Vietnam War, or the bombing of the Bologna Railroad stations by Red Brigades were, of course, real enough for their victims. They were staged not to kill per se but to attract the media. These terrorists acts served publicity purposes far more effectively than they served local political or psychological purposes.

It was argued earlier that media coverage of terroristic events has a paradoxical effect to some degree - one that reverses the very outcome the terrorists seek. Attention to terrorism in the form of special law enforcement agencies, Task Forces and Officers at the highest levels naturally generates media interest. Media coverage intensifies as a result. With increased coverage and public exposure to terrorist incidents, the public develops an apathy occasioned by the frequency and predictability of terrorist threats and acts. Day after day coverage of Beirut terrorism, for example, has produced a boredom with it (Kelly op.cit.): thus, the level of violence necessary to elicit and inspire fear or attention must increase in order to overcome the dulled perceptions of a public inundated with such news. Arguably, more groups may resort to violence in general as a result

of the familiarity and social tolerance of terror. But more and higher levels of violence can outrage the public and blind it to the political grievances and causes in whose name acts are perpetrated. In order to awaken the public to injustice but at the same time not to outrage it, the terrorist wants "balanced coverage" that will open up the official channels of discourse to resolve conflicts and redress grievances but not trigger strong negative societal reactions and opposition.

At this juncture, several conclusions and observations from the analysis emerge that warrant research that extends the works presented here. First, terror activities consist primarily of violence for effect. The violence is directed not only or mainly at its immediate victims but at a wider audience with the purpose of arousing fear and attention. Second, in this sense terrorism has about it the characteristics of political theatre - at least in the incipient stages. Third, terrorists deliberately seek to manipulate the mass media for their intended ends. Fourth, terrorists may succeed to a degree in manipulating the media because the broadcast industry is a commercial enterprise loosely regulated by government. The major and overriding industry objective is to maximize profits and compete successfully in the mass audience markets that have developed around television and radio. Violence and terrorism are defined as newsworthy by the media because they attract audience interest and because such acts fit into the basically visual medium that constitutes modern broadcasting. Fifth, there is some cause for concern that media coverage may impede or intrude into the work of law enforcement agencies thereby jeopard-

dizing investigations and police control. Sixth, attempts to impose outside controls by government on media coverage of terrorism may force terrorists to escalate their violence in order to attract attention. Moreover, the imposition of external controls on coverage may arouse public suspicions of government and undermine public confidence and trust in governmental responsibility and authority. This is precisely what terrorists wish to achieve in many instances. Seventh, the media and the police do in fact exchange information and knowledge about terrorism and the cultivation of these relationships enables law enforcement to cope more effectively with terrorism and at the same time, enable the media to do their work more accurately and responsibly.

It is clear that some form of relationship exists between the news media and perpetrators of spectacular terrorist incidents. One of the most important aims of terrorist acts is to gain publicity for their particular cause. In some cases, publicity is the sole aim, The presumed primary objective of the news media is to inform. However, it is at least as important in practice to entertain, shock, amuse or otherwise effect the emotions of the audience. This is particularly true of television. Competition between media organizations seem to heighten the necessity to focus on the emotion-generating as opposed to the purely informational aspects of news reporting. Terrorists are well aware of the phenomenon and consciously "script" live action spectacles; news events which cannot be ignored by the media. Specifically, it has been seen that media coverage of terrorist events, even when filtered through the institutional mechanism,

devised by the police have some or all of the following effects:

- a- Media, primarily television, provide a platform for the expression of extremist views expressed through violence;
- b- Media coverage sometimes hinders or interferes with effective police operations and may place the lives of hostages and police in jeopardy;
- c- The extent of media coverage of a terrorist incident tends to reinforce the terrorist's sense of power and, particularly, in the case of deranged terrorists, may contribute significantly to the prolonging of an incident or to the increase in its serious consequences;
- d- The reporting of spectacular terrorist incidents has a "contagious effect" which increases the probability that other groups or individuals will emulate the violence being reported;
- e- Related to the "contagious effect" is the claim that excessive detail of both terrorists and counter-terrorists operations supplies disaffected groups with tactical and strategic information and technical knowledge which makes the resolution of future incidents more difficult;
- f- The competitive nature of the news-gathering industry places an undue emphasis on the sensational aspects of terrorist events and risks making entertainment of public violence rather than disseminating information; and
- g- The instantaneous reporting of terrorist incidents coupled with some news-gathering practices (such as telephone contacts with terrorists) makes reporters participants in, rather than observers at, terrorist events. The result can be a diminution in the ability of the media to report objectively.

Forced with the realization that terrorism is largely geared to media as its source of communication, major networks have sought to exercise self-restraint but not censorship. Because problems of misinformation and error increase as the technology for live broadcast becomes more sophisticated, and because the media can be subjected to manipulation, guidelines were developed to help the networks accomplish several objectives. The major networks, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and American Broadcasting Company (ABC), have each agreed not to broadcast live pictures and words of terrorists but to tape, edit and paraphrase their demands or conditions. Secondly, under the agreement, direct telephone contacts with terrorists are to be sharply circumscribed and conducted only with the knowledge and approval of official authorities on the scene. Thirdly, personnel assigned to terrorist : are not to operate independently of law enforcement official at the scene (see Appendix B). The guidelines set down by some newspapers media are also consistent with the major television companies. Both official and public dissatisfaction would seem to have prompted the self-examination of network policies and practices. At the same time, the evidence that terrorists deliberately set out to exploit the media may have been another powerful factor affecting the networks' decisions to modify procedures.

As terrorism hysteria mounted in the later part of the 1970's guidelines for the coverage of terrorist events were promulgated by government agencies. The major networks themselves, however, also recognized the need to balance their coverage and to inform rather

merely entertain. The guidelines adopted by the three major national networks represent a pragmatic common sense approach, giving no advice about moral standards but rather attempting to make explicit and concrete reporting connections. Similarly, the charge that law enforcement agencies were overly secretive and too sensitive to media coverage led many government agencies and the police to establish or include special provisions within their media liaison unit (such as the NYCPD's Public Information Division) to assist media in the coverage of police actions, including terrorist incidents.

At least in the near future, prospects for greatly improving the interactions between media and police regarding terrorist incidents seem slight. Even with closer working relationship between media and police the structure of mass communications itself vitiates against deminishing terrorist violence. With satellite television, with the efficiency of production and marketing of television sets, television is increasingly available in the most remote and poorest parts of the world. As a result, more and more disadvantaged groups will come to be acquainted with the tactics of terror through viewing the television reports. Further, greater access to remote locations makes it more likely that terrorist violence at unheard of places will be widely publicized, thus adding to the impression of widespread violence and danger. However, given the extent of news coverage which is already possible, it seems unlikely that future developments in communication technology will add significantly to the terrorist threat. Perhaps a plateau has been reached which will not be exceeded

in the foreseeable future.

Finally, it should be noted as this study suggests, that as the revolution in communications works itself out, developments within the news industry have not been all favorable to terrorists. The law enforcement community has exploited the media to its advantage as well and has persuaded news professionals that certain news gathering practices and presentations play directly into the hands of terrorists.

Specifically, within any particular jurisdiction it is possible to obtain, store and retrieve information about individuals engaging in terrorism on a scale not possible in the past. On a larger scale of operations, the expanding and sophistication of network sources and rapid communication between law enforcement agencies, both inter- and intra-nationally, allows information about terrorist movements to be transferred between governments and their agencies.

On balance, then, it would appear that the threat caused by terrorism has been made significantly greater by the improvements in the technologies of mass communications. At the same time this revolution is enabling law enforcement to improve its capacities to respond to terrorist activity.

## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaires And Interviews For Police and Media Personnel

The questionnaires were developed to generate information about police and media procedures in handling and reporting terroristic-type events.

#### Public Information Division, Of The NYCPD Questionnaire And Interviews

Members of the NYCPD Public Information Division (PID) were solicited directly for information. The Deputy Inspector, Commanding Officer, with some twenty years experience, agreed to interviews and filled out a questionnaire.

The information generated by the interviews and the questionnaire instrument formed the basis for the discussion in Chapter three and provides the data for analysis. In addition, documents from the NYCPD concerning the official business of the PID, and copies of internal guidelines for disseminating information, training personnel, field work, inter and intra departmental relations, were obtained from the division.

In order to clarify their role in terrorist operation, interviews were conducted with members of the Task Force on Terrorism in New York City and with the Commanding Officer of the Hostage Negotiating Unit of the NYCPD. These discussions and data basis winded out the picture of how, locally, law enforcement agencies in the community cope with terrorist activities.

Because of the fears aroused by the ominous threat of terrorism

with vivid pictures of it filling television broadcasts, law enforcement agencies have responded by creating specialized units to deal with it as with the threat of terrorism to local communities potentially most vulnerable to it.

In New York, The Task Force on Terrorism was created to coordinate procedures with the NYCPD, NY State Police, and other Federal agencies whose activities involve to some extent terrorism. Composed of FBI agents, personnel from the City and State police as well as others, the Task Force functions as a clearing house for information on terrorist or radical groups in the area. It also initiates investigations and conducts anti-terrorist undercover operations.

Interview with the director of the Task Force were conducted in March of 1985 concerning the organizations, objectives and operations. The Task Force works closely with local police sharing information but it is primarily associated with the U.S. Attorneys Offices where prosecuting of terrorists are undertaken. For reasons of security, the Task Force Director would not permit taping the meeting, nor would he fill out a questionnaire. He did not however, decline when asked to discuss what the Task Force considered the impediments to successful Counter-terror strategies.

The Task Force on Terrorism is very cautious in releasing information to the local or national press. The Director felt that the PID unit of the NYCPD was an excellent device to control the flow of information to the press - especially sensitive information, regarding terrorist incidents. The Task Force has a press information office but nothing as large as the PID. Consequently its communica-

tions with media are funneled mainly through the office of the U.S. Attorney - after the fact, of investigations and arrests.

The questionnaire developed to elicit information from the PID of the NYCPD is designed to augment interviews with personnel and the analyses of operational orders, training manuals, and mission statements of the division.

The instrument consists of four main parts pertaining to the agency's organizational structure; how information concerning law enforcement activities and terrorist incidents are gathered and assembled by the office; how the PID releases information; and what PID personnel think of the media's method of presenting terrorist incidents.

Clearly, terrorist incidents are sensitive matters, as are many law enforcement issues: there is always consideration of the right of those involved in police matters; the need to protect the integrity of police and prosecution processes, and so on, which imposes, at least initially, some restraints on free and easy access to information flowing from the PID.

But that is its role and purposes: a bridge linking the public, the media, and law enforcement through information. PID is obliged, therefore, to at least appear willing to assist media in getting facts and information out to the public. It is tempting to accuse the PID of being a public relations gimmick of the police department. No doubt it does public relations work for the department by engineering images of its work and structure which, emphasize the departments strengths and successes. At the same time, the PID, by its very

existence, can be a thorn in the side of the department because it is expected to be its major information channel. And as such, it may in the case of scandals of internal corruption be forced to disclose information that is painful to reveal.

The real problem and tension the PID confronts concerning decisions to disclose either fully or partially information about issues that are enveloped in secrecy and confidentiality - issues and events such as terrorist incidents. It was anticipated that PID would not and could not divulge all the facts at its disposal about terrorist activities. PID personnel said so as well. In this respect, their candor was refreshing. PID personnel bridle at descriptions of their operation that suggest that it is merely public relations designed to gloss over the gritty and sometimes seamy side of police department activities. Their defensiveness is understandable and they justify themselves and their work passionately. As the Deputy Inspector in charge of day - to - day operations indicated, the PID seeks to cultivate close relations with media explaining its role, the requirements on releases of information, and the need for circumspection. Above all, in the view of its administrators and working staff, PID enables the department to fulfill its responsibility to keep the public informed; and it thinks it does so efficiently. The sheer size and scope of police department activities in New York City warrants a central clearing house for information. Were police on the scene expected to provide accounts of events and incidents (as they do quite often) without the benefit of the PID, the public might receive conflicting, contradictory and incoherent accounts of what happened

depending on the paper read or the television broadcast viewed. Consequently, much energy would then be expended explaining discrepancies in police reports, and the public might be more confused than enlightened. More importantly, in the immediate short run as events are unfolding, PID coordinates information among officials and officers at a scene insuring that everyone involved is kept abreast of developments. Command functions and operations depend to a great degree on the smooth flow of accurate information in the absence of which police procedures could be seriously impeded or thwarted.

In its relations with the media, PID attempts to deal with the charge - whether implicit or explicit - that it suppresses or withholds information by pointing out that it constantly updates information and disseminates it across the police wire and to reporters from the major newspapers and television stations assigned to Police Headquarters. Further, PID conducts "off the record" briefings providing background information on events such as terrorism that arouse intense public concern. The purpose of "off the record" briefings is to lay out the often complex contents of events so that the media gets a better grasp of situations and the way in which law enforcement is handling them. The PID considers its function as one, among others, which frees police on the scene from the distractions of media probing (or hectoring) which may interfere with operations. Finally, information division of the NYCPD is not just an advocate of the department, nor is it simply an informational disseminating agency: it actively seeks out information from a variety of sources including the media which bear on department operations. Especially with terrorists activities, media are often an important resource as

many of its people are experienced and knowledgeable about terrorism. Moreover, terrorists use media to promote their causes and frequently contact news people in advance of their actions or in the course of them, explaining why they are bombing, shooting or kidnapping. PID would be negligent if it did not construct relationships with the media since it is an important input. Thus, PID interacts regularly with media exchanging information beneficial to both.

( Media Questionnaire and Interviews )

Any research effort that focuses on questions and issues concerned with crime is handicapped by the confidentiality that surrounds it . With media, the competition for "scoops" and exclusivity parallels law enforcement self-consciousness about inadvertent leaks and disclosures with the result that news agencies become protective of sources, reluctant to reveal some of their contacts and news gathering techniques. Further, because media are part of a highly competitive- some would say ruthlessly competitive- business, information is the currency and highly prized commodity in this marketplace of facts and knowledge. Therefore, devoting time to researchers and fielding questions concerning their methods for generating, evaluating, and presenting news are potentially dysfunctional to media organizations. This is the context in which the research effort on media was initiated.

Requests for interviews and cooperation from one news organization ABC-TV in New York City began with letters to various executive producers and division heads of the network. ABC-TV was chosen as the research subject for several reasons. First, its convenient location

in New York City from which its national evening news broadcast (World News Tonight) originates, was attractive. Second, the outstanding reputation of World News Tonight and its anchor man, Peter Jennings, was an incentive for selecting ABC-TV. Jennings is an expert on Middle Eastern Affairs and has spent time in the field as a foreign correspondent in several European and Asian countries. His experience and knowledge would naturally influence the level of sophistication and depth to terrorist coverage. Third, ABC-TV itself showed interest in the proposed study and good contacts in the network were established through previous associations and projects. The research effort could depend on more than ritualistic and perfunctory cooperation from the news staff and principal producers of the broadcast.

The key challenge of this phase of the study was to interview and interrogate professional interviewers - those highly skilled not only in eliciting information from those reluctant to provide it, but equally capable at detecting and exposing hypocrisy and subterfuge. These skills could be used as defensive tactics against the probing and intrusions of interviewing in areas that are delicate and sensitive.

ABC-TV cooperated with broadcast transcripts and interviews; documents concerning the organizational structure and operations of the news show, and videotapes of broadcasts specifically covering terrorism. One of the executive producers of World News Tonight was interviewed and provided scripts of broadcasts. The Vice-President and Executive producer of World News Tonight filled out the Questionnaire submitted to the network in lieu of an interview. Overall, coop-

peration by the network was satisfactory.

The questionnaire consists of two main sections. Part I contains questions about the phenomenon of terrorism and some of the major theories about its origins, purpose and structures. Part II consists of questions about sources of information available to the network; how terrorists utilize and exploit media; how networks cope with terrorist exploitative tactics; and questions about the propriety of certain styles of reporting.

The Purpose of the questionnaire and the interviews was to generate information on the consequences of media coverage of terrorism - its impact on the lives of those intimately involved as participants, hostages, or victims in other ways. Another objective was to determine what perspectives and theories of terrorism consciously inform the news gathering and preparation process. Theories and perspectives on terrorism shape the understanding of the phenomenon and significantly effect the kinds of data defined as relevant to it. Thus definitions deriving from theories formulate the boundaries, dynamics and characteristics of the phenomenon and serve as a mechanism that rejects, excludes and evaluates information as either germane to or unconnected to terrorist activities.

For the media who, like the police, aim at a general audience, the sensitive issues of censorship and sensationalism are never far from the surface in any discussion or analysis of their activities. Political violence, of which terrorism is a manifestation, and its portrayal and diffusion can now be accomplished more extensively and rapidly than ever before. In addition, the relatively easy access to media

and the increased reliance on it as the principal source of information for most people, renders their psychological impact on their viewers more pervasive and more persuasive than in the past. And these facts have not escaped the attention of those who employ strategies of violence and use media to announce their socio-political objectives. In many ways, as media people are acutely aware, the modern terrorist is a creation of the mass media.

It was in the context of these daunting realities that the questionnaire was created.

AGENCY ORGANIZATION  
NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION

1- Structure of Office

a-Chain of Command

b- Number of Personnel

2

a- Why is the office in existence?

b- What are the rationales for an office of Public Information?

3- When a terrorist incidence occurs;

a- How do you (your command) decide that it is in fact an act of terrorism?

b- What personnel are assigned to the scene, if any?

c- Does your command consult with other law enforcement agencies before releasing information to the media?

d- Are personnel at the scene (NYCPD Personnel) instructed to defer to your office for the particulars of a terrorist incident?

e- Who decides if the media is or is not permitted at a terrorist incident and why?

Information Gathering by Office

- 1- Is there a unit (command) within the NYCPD that specializes in handling terrorist incidents?
- 2- How is the information layed out by your command, before being released to the media? And who gets the information together in the Command?
- 3- Before a release is given to the media:
  - a- Are there guidelines that must be followed?
  - b- Are other commands consulted? Legal Bureau,etc.?
- 4- Does your command use the media as a source of information?
  - a- How is the Media utilized in terrorist situations?(some examples)
- 5- Does your office actually work up the "press release" or does it merely disseminate it?
- 6- Do personnel in your command go into the field to personally gather information at the scene?
- 7- Do personnel in your command go to the scene of a terrorist act to work with the members of the force at the scene to:
  - a- control the medias movements?
  - b- Disseminate releases to the media as they ahppen?
  - c- Be the buffer between the media and the members of the force who are trying to terminate the terrorist incident?

8- How does your command verify (if in fact it does) what took place?

a- Do members of your command interview members of the force (m/f) at the scene and take statements?

b- If not, from where does your command obtain it's information?

#### Agency Dissemination Procedures

1- How does your command avoid disclosing information about terrorists that may jeopardize the integrity of an investigation?

2- What is done to avoid charges that your command is withholding or suppressing information to the media?

3- Is the Press (television) ever informed "off the record"?

4- Has your command ever confided in the news people and asked them to withhold a story during a terrorist crisis? If so why, when? (details if possible).

5- Does your command see any advantage in television coverage of terrorist incidents? (Please explain).

6- Is there a "Police Wire" where news is released to the media?

a- Is information of terrorist activities released on these wires?

#### Assessment of Perspectives on Terrorist News Coverage (Media)

1- In general do TV broadcasts cover terrorist events accurately?

a- Are the facts as they occurred?

b- What shortcomings, if any, are seen in television coverage?

c- What strengths, if any do you see in television coverage?

## Terrorism and Media Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into two principal parts; one dealing with questions concerning your views of terrorism and concepts about it and the other, Part II, concerns the relationship and impact of media on terrorist themselves and on their activities or behaviors and motivations.

### PART I - Concepts and Theories of Terrorism

We begin with a definition of Terrorism:

Terrorism is the use of violence or the threat of it to force, coerce or intimidate either governments, individuals or the public at large. It may be employed in order to achieve directly or indiscriminately 1) social and political changes, 2) to change the policy of a minority upon a majority or 3) to bring about the civil right for a religious, ethnic or political minority or 4) to deny civil rights to specific political, religious, racial or ethnic groups within a society.

1- Do you find this definition of Terrorism acceptable?

1.1 Yes \_\_\_

1.2 Not entirely \_\_\_

1.3 No \_\_\_

If you selected 1.2 or 1.3 please elaborate on what in your view are its deficiencies or shortcomings:

While writers and researchers on Terrorism have their own views the actors, the terrorists themselves also have their own strategies and theories. In this connection what are your views on the goals and targets of terrorism?

2. What are, in your experience, the main goals and objectives of:

2.1 Left Wing terrorists (e.g. Red Brigade, Baader Meinhoff Gang, Japanese Red Army, Nicaraguan Contras)

2.2 Nationalists terrorists (e.g. IRA, PLO, Montaneros, FALN).

2.3 Ethnic terrorists (e.g. Basque ETO, Armenians, Croations, South Morracans).

Terrorism and Media Questionnaire -continued (2)

3. What are in your experience the main targets of terrorism?

3.1 Targets of violence (e.g. victims):

3.2 Targets of demands (e.g. government, state officials, etc.):

3.3 Targets of attention (e.g. mobilized public opinion, attitudinal change towards government):

4. What are in your views the main trend of Terrorism in the 1980's?

PART II- Source of Information

5. Where do you obtain your information on Terrorism. Please rank in declining order of usefulness the following sources:

5.1 Interviews with government officials \_\_\_\_.

5.2 Classified government documents \_\_\_\_.

5.3 Open non-classified government documents \_\_\_\_.

5.4 Interviews with terrorists \_\_\_\_.

5.5 Documents originating from terrorists and sympathizers \_\_\_\_.

5.6 The Press/News Service \_\_\_\_.

5.7 Scholarly books and articles \_\_\_\_.

5.8 Other \_\_\_\_, Please specify;

6. Have you generated data on your own on Terrorism?

6.1 Yes \_\_\_\_

6.2 No \_\_\_\_

If yes please describe these, indicating something about the methods you employed, the size and nature of your data base.

Terrorism & Media Questionnaire -continued (3)

7. What terrorist individuals or groups or movements have you studied in depth? (Please identify these and indicate if the results of your research have been broadcast ).

8. Which data collections generated by others do you find useful in your work?

8.1 Data and research compiled by other broadcasters \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)

8.2 Data and research from News Service (UPI, AP) \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)

8.3 Data and research generated by scholars and academics \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name them)

8.4 Data and research generated by government agencies \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name them)

8.5 Data and research generated by law enforcement groups \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name them)

9. In your opinion how do terrorists use the broadcast media? Please rank, indicating the relative importance of each by number.

9.1 Communication of fear messages to a mass audience \_\_\_\_\_

9.2 Polarizing public opinion \_\_\_\_\_

9.3 Making converts, attracting new members to the terrorist movement

9.4 Demanding the broadcasting of manifestoes under threat to harm victims or hostages \_\_\_\_\_

9.5 Using media as a conduit for threats, demands and bargaining messages \_\_\_\_\_

9.6 Use media as a counter tactic to neutralize government propaganda against terrorist organizations \_\_\_\_\_

9.7 Use media to announce goals and objectives \_\_\_\_\_

9.8 Use media to announce further actions \_\_\_\_\_

9.9 Use broadcasters or journalists as negotiators in bargaining situations \_\_\_\_\_

9.10 Use media presence as insurance against subterfuges by government security forces.

9.11 Use media to create fear of the strength of the terrorists \_\_\_\_\_

9.12 Use media to gauge public reaction to terrorist acts \_\_\_\_\_

Terrorism and Media Questionnaire- continued (4)

10. In your opinion what kinds of political violence media broadcasts commonly label terroristic? (Please indicate in order of decreasing frequency).

10.1 Hijacking for escape purpose or for coercive bargaining \_\_\_\_\_

10.2 Indiscriminate bombings \_\_\_\_\_

10.3 Assassinations \_\_\_\_\_

10.4 Hostage taking \_\_\_\_\_

10.5 Urban guerrilla warfare \_\_\_\_\_

10.6 Sabotage \_\_\_\_\_

10.7 Kidnapping \_\_\_\_\_

10.8 Torture \_\_\_\_\_

10.9 other \_\_\_\_\_ (specify)

11. Do the media cover Terrorism extensively?

11.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_

11.2 No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, why do you say so (comment)

12. To what extent do you consider live/immediate coverage of terrorist acts a threat to hostage safety?

12.1 Minimal threat \_\_\_\_\_

12.2 Moderate threat \_\_\_\_\_

12.3 Great threat \_\_\_\_\_

12.4 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to comment on your answer:

13. Do you believe TV coverage of terrorist acts encourages terrorism?

13.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 13.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 13.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, would an "embargo" on news of terrorist actions reduce their frequency? (comment)

Terrorism and Media Questionnaire- continued (5)

14. Do you believe that detailed coverage of incidents by the media provides potential terrorists with a model that increases their chances of success in their own acts? Can reporting of terrorist incidents produce imitative acts?

14.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 14.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 14.3 Don,t known \_\_\_\_\_

If yes please elaborate (comment)

15. Are media reports on terrorist acts likely to lead to vigilantism and uncontrolled acts or the demand for acts of revenge against either the terrorists themselves or those they allegedly speak for?

15.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 15.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 15.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes,please elaborate (Comment)

16. Is it possible that without the coverage terrorists might resort to killing their victims?

16.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 16.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 16.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please elaborate (comment)

17. Would the supression of news on Terrorism leave the public with a false sense of security? Would the public be aunprepared to deal with Terrorism when directly faced with it?

17.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 17.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 17.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please elaborate (comment)

18 Might the lack of public awareness create a public distrust in the media and in the political situation?

18.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 18.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 18.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, please elaborate (comment)

19. Could the feeling of being deprived of vital information create a public distrust in the political authority?

19.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 19.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 19.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please elaborate (Comment)

Terrorism and Media Questionnaire- continued (6)

20. Would the claims of many terrorists groups that democratic states, such as the United States are not really free, gain added credibility if media suspended coverage or had coverage of news suppressed?

20.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 20.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 20.3 Don't know

If yes, please elaborate (Comment)

21. Do you respond to audience interests and tastes in presenting coverage of terrorist incidents? Is the time allotment and positioning on a broadcast determined to some extent by your estimation of audience interest levels?

21.1 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 21.2 No \_\_\_\_\_ 21.3 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please elaborate (Comment)

## APPENDIX B

### Network Guidelines on Acts of Terrorism

#### American Broadcasting Company (ABC) II.9 Coverage of Terrorist Acts

Reporting on acts of terrorism, especially those involving hostages, requiring strict adherence to the same general principles and many of the specific guidelines developed for covering riots and civil disorders. We must take care that our actions do not unintentionally make a sensational situation even more sensational. We must do nothing that could jeopardize the lives of hostages, or interfere with efforts by authorities to secure their safe release. We must guard against efforts by terrorists to use, or manipulate us for their own ends.

Here, now, are the specific guidelines:

- 1- No such incident should be broadcast live except in the most compelling circumstances, and only with the approval of the President of ABC News or a designated Vice President. (This policy does not prohibit live and live-to-tape reports by correspondents at the scene.)
- 2- telephone interviews with hostages and/or terrorists during the incident should be handled with great care and undertaken only after ascertaining that ABC's use of telephone lines does not interfere with the authorities' communication, or further jeopardize the safety of hostages.
- 3- Demands of the terrorist(s) should be reported as an essential ingredient of the story. But we must avoid becoming a platform for propaganda and rhetoric. In most cases this means we will condense, edit or paraphrase the demands and explain the background against which they are made.
- 4- ABC News personnel assigned to the story should obey all instructions issued by police or other competent authorities. But they should report to their supervisors any such order that appears intended to manage or suppress the news.

Even when all the principles and guidelines are scrupulously applied, it may still be said that news coverage aggravated a particular situation or contributed to the "contagion" of terrorism. Mindful as we are of this, we cannot regard suppression of such reporting as being justified. To suppress news of terrorism would raise serious questions about our credibility on other issues. ("What else are they keeping from us?"). To suppress the news would surrender objective reporting to whatever rumors were being circulated. And to suppress the news for whatever reason, good or bad, violates the fundamental principle that governs a free press in a free society.

Columbia Broadcasting System News Production Standards

Because the facts and circumstances of each case vary, there can be no specific self-executing rules for the handling of terrorist/hostage stories. CBS News will continue to apply the normal test of news judgment and if, as so often they are, these stories are newsworthy, we must continue to give them coverage despite the dangers of "contagion." The disadvantages of suppression are, among [other] things, (1) [its] adversely affecting our credibility ("What else are the news people keeping from us?"); (2) [its] given free rein to sensationalized and erroneous word of mouth rumors; and (3) [its] distorting our news judgments for some extraneous judgmental purpose. These disadvantages compel us to continue to provide coverage. Nevertheless, in providing for such coverage there must be thoughtful, conscientious care and restraint. Obviously, the story should not be sensationalized beyond the actual fact of its being sensational. We should exercise particular care in how we treat terrorist /kidnaper.

More specifically:

1- An essential component of the story is the demands of the terrorist/Kidnaper, and we must report those demands. But we should avoid providing an excessive platform for the terrorist/kidnaper. Thus, unless such demands are succinctly stated and free of rhetoric and propaganda, it may be better to paraphrase the demands instead of presenting them directly through the voice or picture of the terrorist/kidnaper.

2- Except in the most compelling circumstances, and then only with the approval of the President of CBS News, or in his absence, the Senior Vice President of News, there should be no live coverage of the terrorist/kidnaper since we may fall into the trap of providing an unedited platform from him. (This does not limit live on-the-spot reporting by CBS News reporters, but care should be exercised to assure restraint and context.

3- News personnel should be mindful of the probable need by the authorities who are dealing with the terrorist for communication by telephone and hence should endeavor to ascertain, wherever feasible, whether our own use of such lines would be likely to interfere with the authorities' communications.

4- Responsible CBS News representatives should endeavor to contact experts dealing with the hostage situation to determine whether they have any guidance on such questions as phraseology to be avoided, what kinds of questions or reports might tend to exacerbate the situation, etc. Any such recommendations by established authorities on the scene should be carefully considered as guidance (but not as instruction) by CBS News personnel.

5- Local authorities should also be given the name or names of CBS personnel whom they can contact should they have further guidance or wish to deal with such delicate questions as a newsman's call to the terrorists or other matters which might interfere with authorities dealing with the terrorist.

6-Guidelines affecting our coverage of civil disturbances are also applicable here, especially those which relate to avoiding the use of inflammatory catchwords or phrases, the reporting of rumors, etc. As in the case of policy dealing with civil disturbances, in dealing with a hostage story reporters should obey all police instructions but report immediately to their superiors and such instructions that seem to be intended to manage or suppress the news.

7- Coverage of this kind of story should be in such overall balance as to length, that it does not unduly crowd out other important news of the hour/day.

CBS News Production Standards

Coverage of terrorists

In, Terrorism The Media And The Law. Edited by Abraham H. Miller,  
Transnational Publishers, Inc. Dobbs Ferry, NY p 143-144.

National Broadcasting Company

Coverage Of Terrorist And Hostage Situations

In view of a recent proliferation of terrorist attacks, hijacking and hostage crises, NBC News has reviewed and updated its guidelines to guard against undue risks and possible exploitation when reporting such stories. Major points:

1- The best guidelines are professionalism and common sense. NBC News has to carefully balance three obligations: to keep the public informed, to avoid being used, and to avoid exacerbating or sensationalizing the situation.

2- NBC News is in the business of covering news of interest and important to the public, and cannot subscribe to the proposition that curbing news coverage will make a crisis go away. It is against any government-imposed or government-proposed before-the-fact agreements for automatic reprobatorial restraints or delays.

3- As it has in the past, NBC News will impose its own voluntary restraints when deemed necessary to safeguard lives for the national security reasons.

4- To avoid becoming "part of the story," NBC News should cover only what is happening, and not be involved as a participant in any way. Equipment and personnel at the scene of a disturbance should be kept as inconspicuous as possible, and withdrawn if it appears they might exacerbate the situation. No civil disturbance will be covered live, except in extraordinary circumstances with the prior approval of NBC News Management.

5- Interviews with hostages or terrorists should preferably be taped and edited. If urgent circumstances require live transmission, NBC News correspondents, should keep the audience apprised of the background, circumstances and context of what is being shown.

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