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FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin

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Editor's Note:

Due to the special contents of this issue, the 2007 subject and author indexes, which usually would appear in the December issue, will be in our January 2008 issue. Also, the second part of the article, "Program Evaluations: Improving Operational Effectiveness and Organizational Efficiency," will be moved to our January issue.

This issue includes our last book review. As of our January 2008 issue, we no longer will publish book reviews.



Focus on Terrorism

For the past decade, al Qaeda has been the driving force of terrorism—moving thousands of people through training camps in Afghanistan and providing the motivation, the money, and the management of worldwide attacks. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, U.S. and foreign services have made tremendous progress in weakening al Qaeda. Yet, the group has been resilient at rebuilding its leadership and creating new safe havens, and, just as dangerous, its message of violence also has inspired followers with no formal links to the group. We have increasingly seen the emergence of individuals and groups inspired by al Qaeda that will carry out attacks on their own soil.

Homegrown terrorists or extremists, acting in concert with other like-minded individuals or as lone wolves, have become one of the gravest domestic threats we face. Largely self-recruited and self-trained, these terrorists may have no direct connection to al Qaeda or other terrorist groups.

Identifying these individuals and groups is a tremendous challenge, and the role of our partners in state and local law enforcement is critical in these efforts. Local police officers, who are out on the streets, are on the frontline of the war on terrorism. They often may be the first to detect potential terrorists. The vast jurisdiction of state, local, and tribal officers brings invaluable access to millions of people and resources, which can help protect the nation and its citizens. The information gathered on the street and in our communities is one of the most powerful tools we have.

Understanding the radicalization process also proves vital to our efforts of identifying terrorists. What are the early indicators of those who demonstrate a potential for violence? How does an individual become a radical extremist, and how does an extremist then become a terrorist?

To help answer these questions, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Committee on Terrorism requested that this issue of the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* be devoted to terrorism. With the foresight to focus on terrorism before it came to the forefront of American concerns, the committee first undertook this effort in the March 1999 issue of the magazine. Because the terrorist threat has evolved dramatically during the past 8 years—especially in the wake of September 11—the committee determined that it was time to publish another focus issue and enhance our understanding of emerging terrorist threats by focusing on homegrown terrorism and radicalization. We hope that these four articles, contributed by IACP Committee on Terrorism members, will give readers a clear understanding of the challenges posed by homegrown terrorism and the importance of a coordinated response to the terrorist threats we face.

“Countering Violent Islamic Extremism” provides law enforcement with a potential approach to identify indicators for extremists who pose the greatest danger to society. The article urges law enforcement to engage Muslim communities and dispel misconceptions that may foster extremism. Complementing this article, “Words Make Worlds: Terrorism and Language” offers insights to understand and accurately describe extremist rhetoric. The article asserts that such terms as *jihadism* and *Islamic terrorism* conflate terrorism with mainstream Islam and erroneously cast all Muslims as terrorists or potential terrorists. Instead, the intelligence and law enforcement communities must understand extremist discourse and use this understanding to counteract extremist rhetoric.

Two additional articles highlight the importance that collaborative efforts play in the war on terrorism. “Operation Smokescreen” details the multiagency investigation of a terrorist cell operating in North Carolina and raising money for Hizballah by smuggling cigarettes. This case not only illustrates how interagency partnerships can address terrorist threats but also shows the critical role local law enforcement plays in detecting criminal activity that may form part of a larger terrorist plot. Further emphasizing the importance of a multiagency approach to countering terrorism, “A Look at Fusion Centers” describes the integral role state fusion centers play in assisting intelligence and law enforcement agencies in sharing information and combining their resources to understand the threat environment and address terrorism.

One consistent message resonates through each of the articles: our greatest weapon against terrorism is unity. That unity is built on information sharing and coordination among our partners in the law enforcement and intelligence communities. It is built on partnerships with the private sector and effective outreach to the public as our eyes and ears. It is built on the idea that, together, we are smarter and stronger than we are standing alone. In the past 6 years, the cooperative efforts of intelligence and law enforcement agencies have made substantial progress in detecting U.S. terrorist cells. Some notable successes this year alone include identifying and disrupting the plan to attack our military forces at Fort Dix and the plot against JFK Airport.

These successes show that no one person, no one agency, no one police department, and no one country has all of the answers. We may not always know where and when terrorists will attempt to strike. But, we do know they will try again, and we must combine our intelligence, our technology, and our resources to stop them.

Willie T. Hulon
Executive Assistant Director
National Security Branch
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Countering Violent Islamic Extremism A Community Responsibility

By CAROL DYER, RYAN E. MCCOY, JOEL RODRIGUEZ,
and DONALD N. VAN DUYN



Russell Square, London, 2005

The disruption of terrorist plots in 2006 in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, as well as the July 2005 attacks in London, generated significant attention to the concept of homegrown radicalization. But, this term does not define the real focus of concern—violent Islamic extremism. Before finding an effective solution to this problem, law enforcement

first must understand and define it.¹ What is Islamic extremism? Do radical beliefs always lead to terrorist activity? The exploitation of religion by Islamic extremists to use violence both overseas and at home is one of the gravest dangers facing the United States. Al Qaeda represents the most pressing manifestation of this problem, and the FBI still assesses attacks directed by core al Qaeda

leadership as the primary terrorist threat to the United States. Al Qaeda's influence has proliferated; its ideology and influence has spread beyond the Middle East and South Asia. It now has subsidiaries in Iraq, North Africa, and Greater Syria.² However, as the March 11, 2004, attacks in Madrid demonstrated, direct al Qaeda connections are not a precondition for successful Islamic terrorist

operations. The fact that every terrorist attack, even when al Qaeda does not claim credit, creates a debate as to whether al Qaeda in some way directed the operation signifies that al Qaeda has become a “brand” as much as an organization.

Public opinion surveys of Muslims in the Middle East and the West suggest the difficulty of countering the message of violent extremists to those inclined to hate the United States and the West for perceived oppression against Muslims.³ A survey conducted in the United Kingdom in the spring of 2006 indicated that a small but significant minority supported the July 2005 attacks there.⁴ It also revealed that a majority of Muslims in the Middle East still believe that the 9/11 attacks were a Mossad plot,⁵ even after Usama Bin Ladin publicly claimed credit. More recent findings have suggested that negative and suspicious attitudes toward the United States persist.⁶ Because of this entrenched mind-set, support for violent Islamic extremism will remain a continuous problem.

The speed with which radicalization to violence can occur and the increasing youth of those drawn to the cause pose additional challenges. Both British and Canadian authorities reported that people involved in the plotting in those countries apparently had not previously

been interested in religion but changed and became willing to carry out terrorist operations within a year. In the summer of 2006, the “Toronto 18” plot, a terrorist operation that sought to bomb several prominent buildings in the Canadian cities of Toronto and Ottawa, included five participants younger than 18. The timeframe needed to develop a plot can be disturbingly short, and the tendency to dismiss youthful enthusiasm as empty bravado may prove extremely dangerous.

Acceptance seeking, a form of extrinsic conversion, is a fundamental human motivation.

Law enforcement leaders must be able to identify individuals with the most potential to effect immediate harm, thereby controlling the operating environment and designating time to address the larger issues underlying violent Islamic extremism. Expressing dislike for the United States or lauding Usama Bin Ladin does not make an individual a terrorist. Such an approach would create a scenario simply too large to address effectively

even without First Amendment concerns about using these behaviors as indicators. But, law enforcement agencies and intelligence services around the world wrestle with the problem of predicting people’s behavior. To address the threat that violent extremists pose, the FBI developed a 2-pronged approach: 1) identify early indicators of those who demonstrate the potential for violence and 2) engage in extensive outreach to Muslim communities to dispel misconceptions that may foster extremism.

IDENTIFYING EARLY INDICATORS

Conversion to Islam is not radicalization. The FBI defines violent extremists as persons who engage in, encourage, endorse, condone, justify, or support in any way the commission of a violent act against either the U.S. government, its citizens, or its allies to achieve political, social, or economic changes or against others who may possess opinions contrary to their own radicalized ideology.

The FBI assesses the radicalization process as four stages: preradicalization, identification, indoctrination, and action. Each one is distinct, and a radicalized individual may never reach the final stage. The chart (page 6) identifies different aspects of the stages

and provides indicators to help determine when an individual likely is in a certain one.

Preradicalization

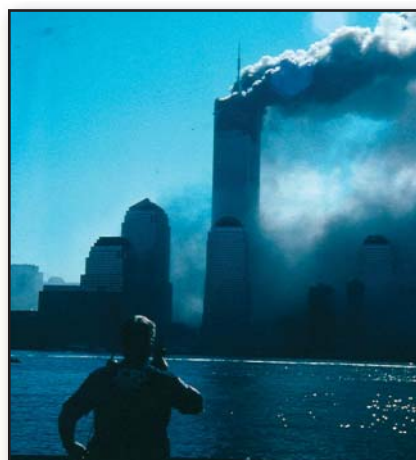
Conversion may be to a religion or a commitment to another form of the religion. An individual's motivation is critical to the process and not always static. For example, people who initially convert to gain acceptance may reinterpret their faith if the group they join is composed of Muslim extremists.

Motivation

In a jilted-believer conversion, internal frustration and dissatisfaction with the current religious faith leads the individual to change belief systems. The new system can be initially religious in tone or secular. Conversion attempts to resolve inconsistencies between what the person has come to believe and was taught to believe. For example, Adam Gadahn (aka Azzam the American), a California native who converted to Islam and supports al Qaeda and Islamic extremism, wrote in his conversion story that Jesus was, at best, the Son of God and not someone who individuals should revere and pray to.⁷

A protest conversion may be an attempt by people to identify themselves apart from or to rebel against a society or circumstances they perceive as oppressive. Additionally, faith

reinterpretation is another form of an intrinsically driven conversion where individuals alter their religious tradition through introspection and evaluation. This motivation refers specifically to those born into Muslim families but choose to follow a more extremist form of Islam, including such individuals as Faysal Galab, Tasein Taher, and



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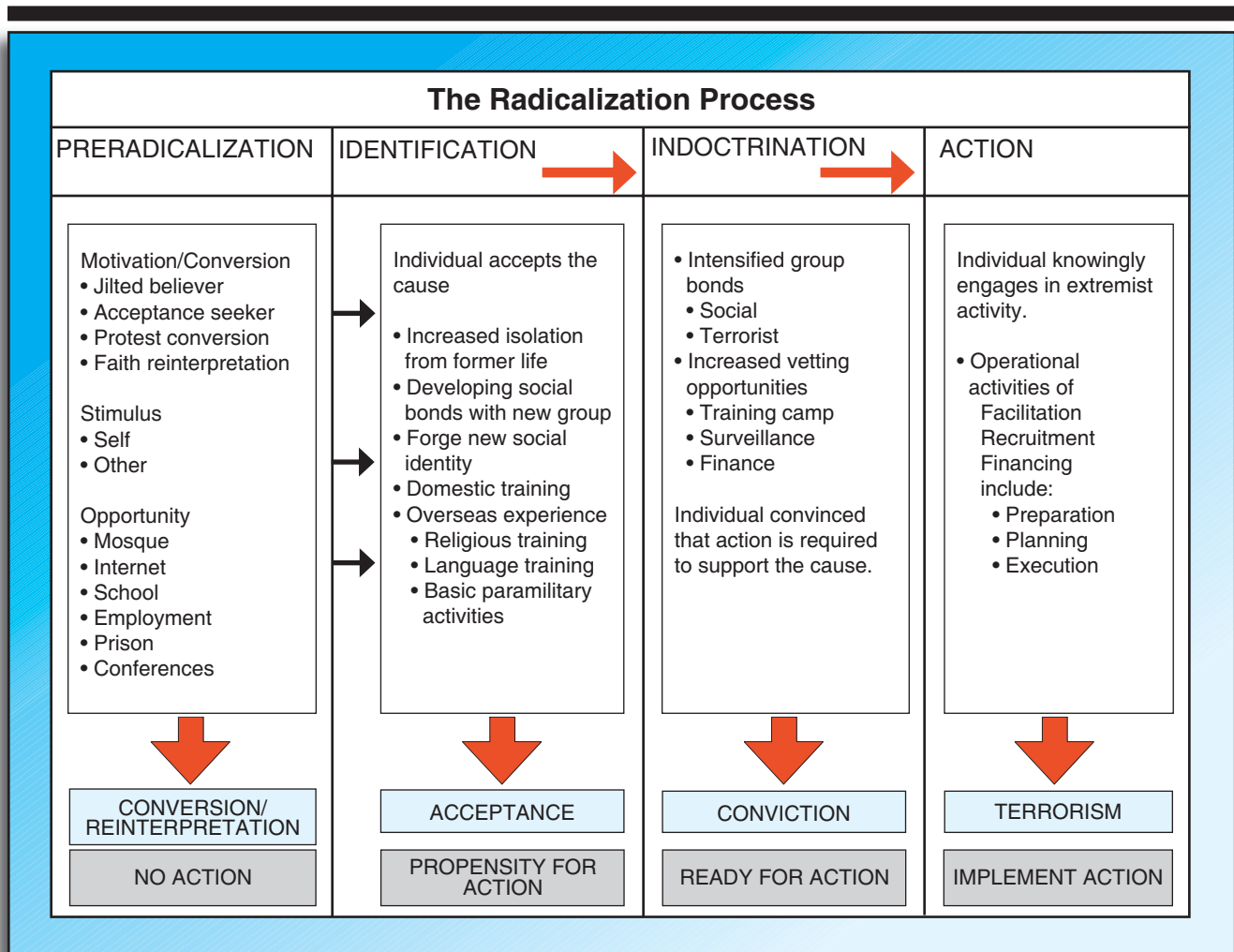
Shafal Mosed of the Lackawanna Six. Galab, Taher, and Mosed drank alcohol, used drugs, and had relationships with non-Muslim women—all forbidden by the Koran—before converting. After this transition, it was easier for Kamal Derwish, who primarily influenced their newfound Islamic path, to convince them to participate in jihad as a way of absolving their sins.⁸

Acceptance seeking, a form of extrinsic conversion, is a fundamental human motivation.⁹ Individuals have a pervasive drive to form and maintain

at least a minimum quantity of lasting and significant interpersonal relationships.¹⁰ However, the product of these relationships can have positive or negative consequences for the people involved. Those with weak social ties may benefit from the solidarity that extremist groups provide.

Stimulus and Opportunity

Converts who proceed through the radicalization process often are driven by a respected, frequently older, extremist with whom they have come into contact. Kamal Derwish played a key role in the radicalization of the Lackawanna Six. In the case of the Virginia Jihad Network, spiritual leader Ali Al-Timimi convinced a group of individuals, including a technology expert from Pakistan, a decorated Gulf War veteran and member of the National Rifle Association, a Korean immigrant, a son of a Yemeni diplomat, and a Muslim who had converted from Catholicism, to engage in violent jihad against U.S. troops. Interactions between converts and Islamic extremists can occur in a variety of venues. For example, in mosques, extremists can observe other Muslims' commitment to the faith and their reactions to the Islamic message given by extremist religious leaders. In prisons, extremist recruiters can identify a population disaffected with society and



use their operational skills and propensity for violence to further their cause. In Islamic and secular universities, they can find curious individuals who question society, as well as their own beliefs. Further, extremists can interact with others in businesses, which provide a private setting to conduct meetings and further indoctrinate new converts, and in Internet chat rooms where vulnerable individuals from around the world can gather to discuss Islamic doctrine.

Identification

In this stage, individuals identify themselves with a particular extremist cause and accept a radicalized ideology that justifies violence or other criminal activity against perceived enemies. Accepting the cause leads people to become increasingly isolated from their former lives. New converts often seek and follow guidance from imams, more senior followers, on how to live every detail of the religion, becoming more committed to the newfound

faith. Converts' social connections with other like-minded individuals can strengthen this dedication. In addition, overseas travel may accelerate the radicalization process by providing networking and experience (e.g., religious or language instruction and basic paramilitary training) that later may support operational activity.

Indoctrination

Indoctrination can involve becoming an active participant in a group or being initiated

within the recruit's self-created jihadist environment. Through various activities with the group and increasingly demanding and significant roles within it, converts see their potential as a jihadist and, ultimately, can become convinced of the need for further action to support the cause.

Formal recruitment into a terrorist group usually will occur before or during indoctrination. Recruitment plays an important role in any terrorist organization, and radicalized individuals can use their experience to spot, assess, and encourage potential recruits to follow the same path. This process also could include vouching for new recruits or helping them establish their extremist credentials. A charismatic recruiter with limited training or participation in jihad can transform that experience into a particularly enticing recruitment tool for individuals susceptible to an extremist message. Extremist Islamic clerics can play a major role because of their knowledge of Islam, their ability to provide religious justification for terrorist attacks, and the emotional hold they can have over impressionable recruits.

In the case of Jam'iyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh (JIS), Kevin James, the group's founder, propagated JIS ideology and recruited adherents inside and outside prison mainly by

disseminating the JIS manifesto and through direct meetings with inmates. James also sought new recruits without prison records who could benefit the group through their occupations, abilities, or access to sensitive locations.

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***Recruitment
plays an important
role in any terrorist
organization....***

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Action

The final stage consists of supporting or engaging in terrorist activities. Although this action can be violent or nonviolent (e.g. financing), it always intends to inflict damage on the enemy. Some individuals who reach this stage will attempt to participate in a terrorist attack.

Every action has three stages: preparation, planning, and execution. During any of these, recruits can try to stop participating. However, they may be so caught up in the group's activities that they will engage in behaviors they otherwise would not consider. Attack preparations can include target selection, casing, financing, and

forming distinct operational cells.

Facilitation, a key component of any terrorist attack, can be accomplished by operatives dedicated to the support role or waiting for a separate attack, supporters unwilling or unable to perpetrate a terrorist attack, or unwitting participants. It can include providing financial assistance, safe houses, false documents, materials, attack plans, surveillance, or travel assistance. Individuals unable or unwilling to carry out a violent terrorist attack still can further the goals to which they subscribe. For example, facilitators play a key role in obtaining funding for a terrorist operation through such criminal activities as fraud, scams, embezzlement, or theft and some may even involve violence. The JIS case included three homegrown Islamic extremists in Los Angeles, California, who robbed gas stations allegedly to fund their planned operations in support of the JIS cause.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Using this model to identify violent extremists, officers need to rely on the community. Law enforcement resources are limited, and officers may not have the intimate community knowledge to detect subtle indicators when an individual moves toward terrorist action. Only

people who reside near potential extremists can provide this capability. Police officials in Canada and the United Kingdom emphasize that fighting violent Islamic extremism must become a community responsibility in the wake of the disrupted terrorist operations in their countries. Law enforcement agencies must first build trust with individuals in these areas and then create a link for communities to share issues of concern.

In September 2001, the FBI began developing an extensive program to strengthen relations with Arab-American, Muslim, Sikh, and South Asian communities to establish trust and encourage careers in the FBI. The program seeks to dispel myths about the FBI and U.S. government policies toward these communities, particularly the notion that the government targets Muslims. The FBI established liaison with the national leaders of Muslim and Arab-American advocacy groups. For example, the FBI consulted with the American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee to develop effective communications strategies. FBI field offices regularly contact local chapters of the same groups and hold recurring meetings with community members as well. Also essential to the FBI's outreach efforts are such programs as the FBI Citizens Academy and the Community Relations

Executive Seminar Training (CREST). Members of the Arab-American community have attended the citizens academy, a popular 8-week program designed to give community leaders an overview of FBI and U.S. Department of Justice policies and procedures. FBI field offices host the CREST program, a shorter version of the citizens academy, in their local area.

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Any successful effort must involve a multifaceted approach....

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Reaching out to the community is a long-term effort. Large gaps in trust persist. According to community leaders, many members of Arab-American and Muslim communities almost unanimously feel that government agents treat them as suspects and view all Muslims as extremists.

Any successful effort must involve a multifaceted approach addressing the variety of factors that affect attitudes in Muslim communities. For example, because identifying individuals

on watchlists and conducting searches at airports continuously frustrate individuals of Middle Eastern descent, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security established its own outreach program to address the issue. Similarly, school and recreation officials can play an important role in preventing disaffected youth from espousing and engaging in extremist behaviors.

CONCLUSION

Although the most dangerous instances of violent extremism have occurred overseas, the Islamic radicalization of U.S. persons, foreign-born or native, increasingly concerns law enforcement leaders because of its potential to lead to violent action. The key to success in countering violent Islamic extremism lies in identifying patterns and trends of extremist behavior in its early stages. This delicate balance requires an approach that protects First Amendment rights. Law enforcement professionals must convey that, as part of a fair and compassionate government, they also share the interests of communities. They must respond aggressively to hate crimes and discrimination against any ethnic populations. By upholding and enhancing the community's trust, law enforcement can counter the spread of this extremist ideology. ♦

Endnotes

¹ The model the authors present in this article was derived from both classified and open source information and academic literature and reflects events that occurred up until April 2006.

² Greater Syria encompasses the present-day states of Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria before those states were formed; retrieved from http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/syria/sy_glos.html.

³ Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes, *America Against the World: How We Are Different and Why We Are Disliked* (New York, NY: Times Books, 2006).

⁴ <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=253>

⁵ The Institute for Intelligence and Special Operations, otherwise known as the Mossad, has been appointed by Israel to collect information, analyze intelligence, and perform special covert operations

beyond its borders. For more information, see <http://www.mossad.gov.il/Eng/AboutUs.aspx>.

⁶ <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brmiddleeastnafricara/346.php?nid=&id=&pnt=346&lb=brme>

⁷ <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1482394/posts>

⁸ A group of six Yemeni-Americans convicted of providing material support to al Qaeda.

⁹ Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary, "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation," *Psychological Bulletin* 117 (1995): 497-529.

¹⁰ Psychological research on terrorism suggests that psychopathology proves only a modest risk factor for general violence and possibly irrelevant to understanding terrorism. Thus, it is prudent to conclude that the current population inferred to

comes from a nonclinical sample, which would apply to all nonclinical psychological research findings to understand and predict the behavior of someone who is extreme. A distinct difference exists between extremist behavior and someone who is extreme. Blowing oneself up can be considered extremist behavior, but camping trips for the purpose of radicalization are not.

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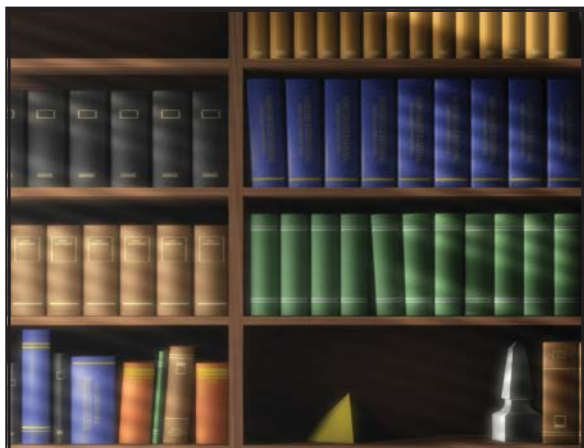


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Book Review



Bombs and Bombings: A Handbook to Protection, Security, Detection, Disposal, and Investigation for Industry, Police and Fire Departments, third edition, Thomas G. Brodie, Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Springfield, Illinois, 2005.

In this well-written and clearly presented book, the author provides a unique look at bombs and explosive-related problems from the comprehensive viewpoint of an experienced and accomplished bomb technician and investigator. The text, detailed and well researched, includes extensive data on a wide variety of related topics. Information on organizing, training, and equipping a bomb response unit is clearly presented. The author adds firsthand information about the selection of personnel and the availability of various types and sources of training plus offering valuable insight regarding the organization of such a specialized unit within a department or agency.

The proliferation of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) being used in numerous terrorist attacks, combined with individual-borne IEDs, suicide bombers, vehicle-borne IEDs, and remotely detonated massive amounts of explosives, are taking a toll on bomb technicians worldwide. This has led to some changes

in the procedures, methods, and techniques for handling bomb and explosive situations. A number of manufacturers now produce numerous new tools and innovative items of equipment and supplies for use by bomb units. Other items are being revised and updated, and many more models and varieties of robots, bomb suits, disruptors, and similar equipment have begun appearing in the marketplace.

In this new third edition of *Bombs and Bombings*, Tom Brodie, relying on his considerable background, knowledge, personal experience, research, and numerous contacts in the field, provides a detailed and in-depth look at a wide variety of the equipment and techniques suitable for use in handling and investigating these situations. In addition to vehicles and items used for the movement, transportation, safe disposal, and destruction of explosives, bombs, IEDs, ordnance items, and other hazardous materials, the textbook also discusses the latest in protective clothing and bomb suits, other specialized handling paraphernalia, and a variety of robotic equipment.

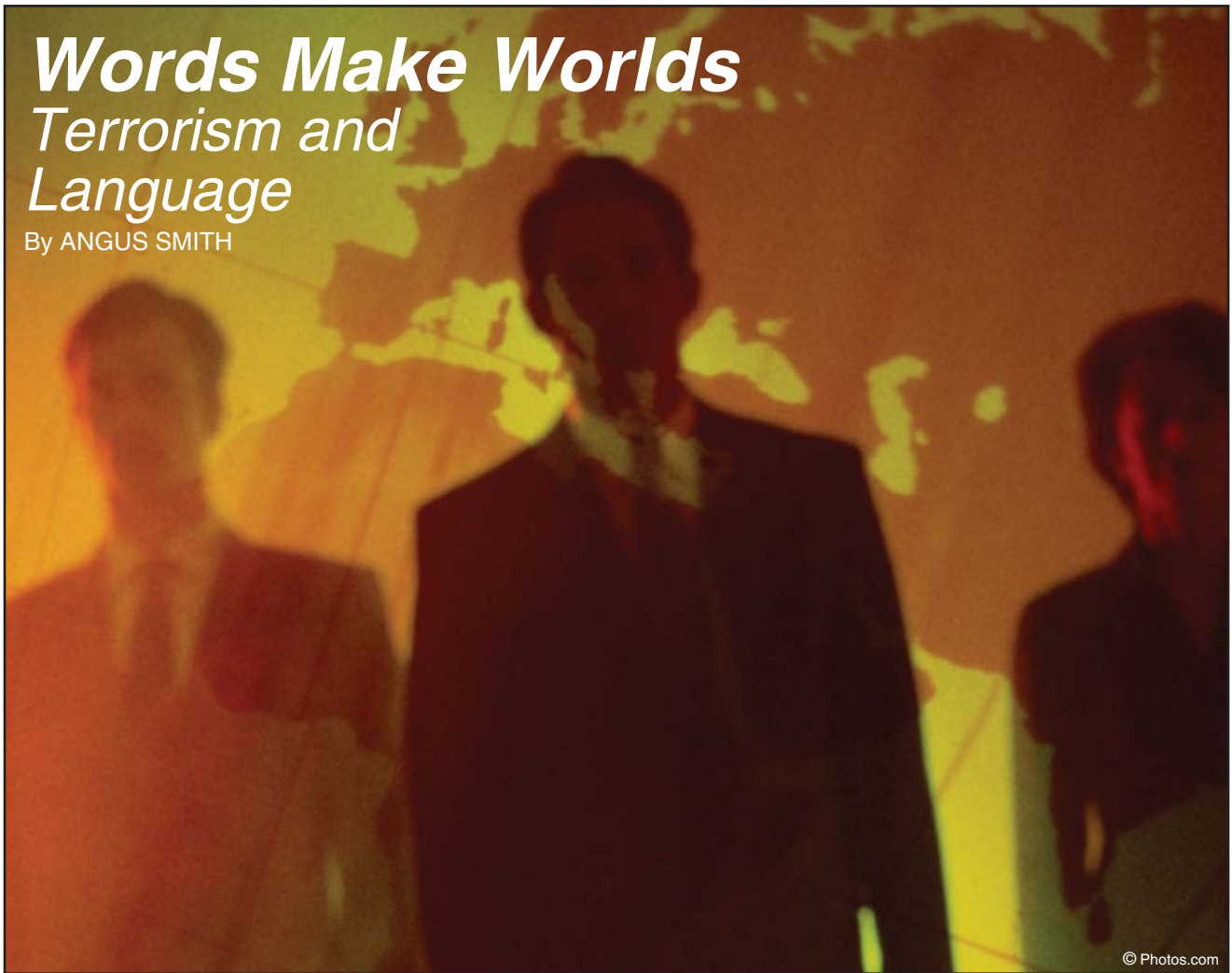
The book, expanded in content to over 300 pages of material, presents a large measure of new information, case studies, and additional photos to impart details and ideas regarding bomb detection, bomb investigation, bomb search procedures, crime scene search investigation, and evidence collection procedures. It also covers range disposal sites and personal safety, as well as environmental and noise issues and concerns.

Law enforcement officers, military personnel, security professionals, fire and emergency service workers, and other individuals involved in personal and industrial safety and security will find a wealth of information regarding commercial explosive items and products, military explosives and ordnance items, and homemade or improvised explosive devices.

Words Make Worlds

Terrorism and Language

By ANGUS SMITH



Since September 11, 2001, many Western intelligence and law enforcement agencies have received criticism for the terminology they use to describe terrorism that has an ideological basis in Islam. Inherent difficulties exist in finding appropriate language that does not imply a clash between Islam and Western religion and culture.¹ Such terms as *Islamic* or *Islamist terrorism*, *jihadism*, and *Islamofascism* fuse terrorism with mainstream

Islam, thereby casting all Muslims either as terrorists or potential ones. Although intelligence officers and analysts may understand this terminology, meanings become blurred when filtered through the media and public perceptions. Even innocuous terms and completely legitimate expressions of belief become loaded with innuendo. Yet, attempts to downplay Islamic components of terrorist conspiracies and acts by focusing on the mechanics of the

plots, rather than the religious backgrounds of the terrorists, ignore a critical element of this global threat.² To address this conundrum, the law enforcement and intelligence communities must understand extremist discourse to counteract extremist rhetoric.

Describing Jihad

Like the other Abrahamic faiths—Judaism and Christianity—the fundamental tenets of Islam are rooted in compassion,

kindness, forgiveness, and, perhaps most important, social justice. For example, one of the Pillars of Islam is *zakat* (the giving of alms to the poor), and, during the Ramadan fast, Muslims are enjoined to remember the less fortunate who fast involuntarily.³ Incorrect statements about the nature of Islam offend Muslims who try to live within those tenets. More important, distorted and inflammatory linkages between Islam and terrorism can convince Muslims that the West is their enemy.

The word *jihad*, which has become almost a catchall term for extremism of any kind, illustrates this problem. Despite widespread belief to the contrary, jihad is not one of the Pillars of Sunni Islam (in addition to fasting at Ramadan and the giving of alms, these consist of the profession of faith, daily prayer, and pilgrimage to Mecca).⁴ Translated literally, jihad means striving and often is expressed *jihad fi sabil illah*, or striving in the path of God.⁵ In this context, jihad describes the efforts to live in the way that God intends and find the inner will and discipline to live according to the basic tenets of Islam.⁶ Jihad is a duty for all Muslims, an act of piety aimed at social or personal improvement. For example, Muslims might talk about their jihad to stop smoking, raise money for a community project, or simply

become a better person. Also, in 2005, Raheel Raza was the first Muslim woman to lead mixed gender Friday prayers in Canada. She characterized the courage and determination that allowed her to persevere over the objections of conservative and traditionalist elements as a form of gender jihad aimed, ultimately, at helping all women take their rightful and scripturally mandated place as full participants in the temporal and spiritual life of the community of Muslims.⁷

But, jihad also can have a more combative interpretation. Like the basic texts of Judaism and Christianity, the Koran has numerous references to physical struggle and confrontation with unbelievers and others who represent a threat to the safety and integrity of the community

of the faithful.⁸ Combat represents one of the central metaphors of the history of early Islam, as the Prophet Muhammad and his followers battled and ultimately triumphed over those they considered idolaters and unbelievers.⁹ The canon of Islamic teachings stresses that all Muslims must defend *dar al-islam* (the land of Islam) from moral or spiritual corruption originating in *dar al-harb* (the land of war) where Islamic law does not prevail.¹⁰ Despite this, Islamic law and tradition always have favored defensive over offensive war; the importance of mercy to enemies; and the inviolability of women, children, and noncombatants.¹¹ Additionally, Islamic teachings often stress the importance of the greater (spiritual) jihad over the lesser (physical) jihad.¹²

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In determining appropriate terminology, we must remain mindful of words and their nuances.
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Mr. Smith is officer in charge, Alternative Analysis, National Security Criminal Investigations, Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The concept of jihad as an offensive war, largely a 20th century phenomenon, developed primarily in the writings of ideologues, such as Abdul Ala Mawdudi (founder of Pakistan's Jamaat-i Islami) and Sayyid Qutb (the Egyptian thinker who, in many respects, is the ideological father of al Qaeda and its offshoots). Both individuals reinterpreted the concept of jihad by framing it as an obligation equivalent to one of the pillars and transforming it from a spiritual concept to a political one. In this reinterpreted understanding, jihad became a physical, rather than spiritual, struggle and one to use against the ignorance and barbarism of those who threaten the fundamental integrity of Islam (generally interpreted as the Western world or the "far enemy" of Usama Bin Ladin) and Muslim leaders (the "near enemy") who turn their backs on the teachings of the Koran and the example of the Prophet Muhammad.¹³ Omar Bakri, the Syrian-born Islamic cleric recently barred from the United Kingdom, vividly illustrated both the thinking behind and the consequences of this form of jihad in a 2007 television interview.

The duty of jihad...had been neglected by the Islamic nation for a long time because of the arrogance and injustice of America and its allies against the Islamic

nation and because of their support for Israel...the 9/11 operations were a response to great acts of aggression by America—its attacks on Afghanistan, on Iraq, on Sudan, not to mention the historic Crusades from long ago[.]...[K]illing innocent people is forbidden in Islam. But, who is innocent—that is another question.¹⁴

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To correctly name enemies, we must learn more about them....

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This highly politicized interpretation of jihad has driven critical events in the Muslim world from the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981 to the rise of the Taliban. It also lies at the heart of a range of terrorist plots and attacks beginning with the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 through such recent threats as the "Toronto 18" plot in the summer of 2006, an operation that sought to bomb several prominent landmarks in the Canadian cities of Toronto and Ottawa.

If both interpretations of jihad are correct, they prove highly problematic from policing and intelligence viewpoints. If we use the term *jihad* to describe either terrorist activity or the terrorist mind-set, we risk alienating those Muslims for whom jihad describes either a highly personalized internal struggle or an effort to effect positive change within or beyond the Muslim community. We effectively brand them as dangerous radicals, if not as terrorists, perpetuating stereotypes that equate Islam and its adherents with terrorism. On the other hand, the combination of jihad with violence in the name of faith (or a political creed disguised as faith) is also a reality. But, by referring to extremists as jihadis—a positive component of the Muslim historical and cultural experience—we also recognize their actions as being in the path of God and, therefore, legitimate.¹⁵ In opposing jihad and its practitioners, we again risk characterizing ourselves as the enemies of Islam. Not only does this empower extremists but it also conveys a strong message that we are engaged in a struggle—not with extremism but to suppress Islam itself.

Identifying Accurate Terminology

To correctly name enemies, we must learn more about them:

how they think and how they likely will act. Those at the forefront of addressing terrorism—the intelligence and law enforcement communities—should assume a leadership role in researching and determining appropriate terminology to describe extremism and its perpetrators. To date, relatively little research exists in this area.¹⁶

Although a glossary of alternate terminology is beyond the scope of this article, more appropriate descriptions of the challenges we face do exist. Usama Bin Ladin and many other extremists are heavily influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb, who urged his followers not only to withdraw from the moral vacuum of modern society but also to destroy it.¹⁷ Qutb validated extreme violence in the cause of faith, so Islamic terrorism could more accurately be called Qutbian terrorism.

In determining appropriate terminology, we must remain mindful of words and their nuances. For example, many contemporary terrorist movements—including Afghanistan's Taliban and al Qaeda—have theological roots in Wahabbism, a sect that forms the state orthodoxy of contemporary Saudi Arabia.¹⁸ Wahabbism, a particularly strict interpretation of Islam, originated in the Salafist notion that pure Islam must be rooted in the teachings

of the early fathers, the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.¹⁹ Both “Wahabbist” and “Salafist” have been extensively used to define particular types of terrorism. While elements of Wahabbism could encourage a mind-set that includes extremist action, as September 11 demonstrated, the vast majority of Wahabbists and Salafists are not terrorists.



Understanding the People

The debate over the meaning and proper role of jihad occurs in Muslim communities around the world. Some Muslim commentators, such as Raheel Raza, emphasize the need for Muslims to speak out and take action to ensure that terrorism, extremism, and anti-Western propaganda are eliminated from Muslim discourse. For example, Raza states that Muslims must “take back the mosques” to ensure that the voices of “reasonable Muslim men and women” are heard over calls for

physical jihad.²⁰ This imperative can represent a form of jihad. The critical consideration is not what Raza says but the manner in which it diverges from other forms of Islamic discourse.

Ideological and rhetorical differences divide the larger Islamic world and Muslim communities throughout the West. Further, in Europe, where the influence of extremist ideology tends to inhibit the integration of certain segments of Muslim populations into their host societies, physical jihad exerts tremendous influence.²¹ Beyond this, ideological conflict within Islamic communities often manifests itself between two distinct cultural groupings. Muslim academic and theologian Tariq Ramadan characterizes the first as middle-class, assimilated Muslims whose Islam is sophisticated and attuned to broader social and intellectual currents.²² The second group, and necessarily of great interest to the law enforcement and intelligence communities, consists of young, unassimilated, and often under-class individuals characterized by a strong sense of specific or generalized grievance. They exhibit strong leanings toward a shared Islamic identity and a spirit of precisely Islamic activism and mobilization frequently in conflict with Western social and political norms. They reject Western culture (including Westernized intellectuals

and assimilated Muslims) as a reproach to true Islam and are drawn into historical and ideological discourse that proves the greatness of Islamic civilization. This combination of perceived oppression and the search for a dignified alternative easily translates into openness to physical, or politicized, jihad.²³ This demographic group includes the British-borne terrorists who bombed the London transportation system in July 2005 and the “Hamburg Cell” terrorists, the nucleus of the September 11 attacks.

Exemplars of Ramadan’s first group, such as Raza, tend to distance themselves from the second group that they believe has transformed the traditional concept of jihad as a form of spiritual struggle into an ideology of violence and revenge. Distortion also occurs when portraying true Islam in an unremittingly positive light. Extremism in the name of a politicized Islam is a perversion of faith but a legitimate form of discourse to its adherents, fully justifying direct action that can range from proselytizing to overt acts of terror on the scale of September 11.

The messaging, particularly the interpretation of jihad, that originates with assimilated Muslim thinkers and commentators is comforting, especially to non-Muslims who find themselves perplexed and disquieted

by the violence inherent in al Qaeda-type extremist ideology. But, those thinkers and commentators may not speak for that portion of the Muslim world disconnected, isolated, or otherwise susceptible to such ideology, making it difficult to accurately gauge the impact of their message in the overall context of Muslim discourse or to what extent it can compete rhetorically with the siren call of extremism and physical jihad.

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An understanding of the nuances of concepts like jihad is critical.

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Seeking Alternatives

An understanding of the nuances of concepts like jihad is critical. However, any attempt to promote one understanding or interpretation over another may be futile because classical texts do not necessarily speak for contemporary Muslims, and individual Muslims ultimately will make up their own minds.²⁴ With the extremist mind-set, we address a cultural and emotional

phenomenon. As one Saudi extremist exhorted, “I do not need to meet the Sheikh and ask his permission to carry out some operation, the same as I do not need permission to pray or to think about killing the Jews and the Crusaders. There are a thousand bin Ladens in this nation. We should not abandon our way, which the Sheikh has paved for you, regardless of the existence of the Sheikh or his absence.”²⁵

Even before September 11, governments and the law enforcement and intelligence communities engaged in a concerted strategy to confront extremism through a variety of means, such as disrupting conspiracies, preempting terrorist operations, forging meaningful alliances, and gaining knowledge and understanding of the threat. However, the problem continues and many indicators suggest that it is becoming worse.

Ultimately, the construction of alternative narratives designed to subvert extremist messaging may prove the most effective long-term strategy against al Qaeda-type extremism, domestic or global. We need to find ways to counter-balance the culture of death and martyrdom with one that celebrates the value of life²⁶ and determine the targets of our messaging. The United States’ cold war experience shows that messaging campaigns tend to

work best when asymmetric, focused away from the opponent's center of gravity, and aimed toward more receptive groups.²⁷ Domestically, hardened activists may be a lost cause, whereas confused and idealistic adolescents may pose real opportunities to exert far-reaching influence. Internationally, it may be possible to engage groups that remain Islamist while repudiating extremism.

The Internet is one of the most important tools available to the contemporary terrorist. Al Qaeda-inspired entities that are less groups and more loose associations of far-flung networks must rely on the Internet to recruit and train adherents, raise funds, propagandize, document their history and mythology, and organize terrorist strikes.²⁸ Further, extremists with engineering and computer training from Western colleges and universities undoubtedly find poetic justice in using the technology of the West as a means of attacking and terrorizing the societies that created that technology (e.g., the choice of civil aviation as a continuing focus of terrorist activity).²⁹ On a more practical level, few extremists have any grounding in either the history or the culture of the societies they intend to destroy. By immersing themselves in the applied sciences, they acquire a superficial understanding of the technological manifestations of



Western culture but not its intellectual underpinnings.

Conclusion

The intelligence and law enforcement communities must learn not only how to penetrate the extremist world effectively but also how to understand the discourse that defines that world. This involves gaining a much broader and deeper understanding of the cultural roots of extremism than we currently possess, not just words or rhetoric but also the meaning and symbolism underlying even sounds, colors, and images.³⁰

The creation of alternative narratives requires not just cultural understanding on our part but on the target audience's as well. To be effective, however, any large scale, cross-cultural initiatives cannot originate in a missionary sensibility that characterizes one culture as inferior to the other but, rather, should

seek to find common ground and demonstrate what is worth saving in both cultures. Extremism is a global phenomenon; no single agency or government can counteract extremist messaging on its own. Such a challenge requires a worldwide response and significant international cooperation to have any real effect. ♦

Endnotes

¹ Some political scientists have argued that individuals' religious and cultural identities will be the primary source of conflict in the post cold war world. For more on this theory, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

² See, for example, Christie Blatchford, "Ignoring the Biggest Elephant in the Room," *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 2006.

³ All scriptural references are from the M.A.S. Abdel Haleem translation of the *Koran* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2:177; 183-186.

⁴ For example, see the *Koran* (1:1-7; 2:125-129; 142-153; 196-202; 22:26-30 among others).

⁵ Douglas E. Streusand and Harry D. Tunnell, *Choosing Words Carefully: Language to Help Fight Islamic Terrorism* (National Defense University, 2006), 3.

⁶ Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (New York, NY: Random House, 2002); and Raheel Raza, *Their Jihad... Not My Jihad* (Ingersoll, Ontario: Basileia Books, 2005), 18.

⁷ Supra note 6 (Raza, 118-122).

⁸ The *Koran* (48:16-18; 2: 190-196; 8:12-20; 9:29).

⁹ Supra note 6 (Armstrong, 18-22).

¹⁰ Richard C. Martin, Said Amir Arjomand, Marcia Hermansen, Abdulkader Tayob, Rochelle Davis, John Obert Voll (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 2004).

¹¹ The *Koran* 2:190-196.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Supra note 6 (Armstrong, 168-170).

¹⁴ Middle East Research Institute, *Special Dispatch Series* 1529 (March 30, 2007).

¹⁵ Supra note 5.

¹⁶ The European Union has prepared a handbook of nonoffensive terminology to use in describing terrorism, but this remains classified. See Bruno Waterfield, "Don't Confuse Terrorism with Islam, Says EU," *The Telegraph* (March 31, 2007).

¹⁷ Supra note 6 (Armstrong, 169-170); Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2006), 28-31.

¹⁸ Robert Fisk, *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East* (London, England: Fourth Estate, 2005), 1045.

¹⁹ Charles Allen, *God's Terrorists: The Wahhabi Cult and the Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad* (London, England: Little, Brown, 2006), 210.

²⁰ Supra note 6 (Raza, 61).

²¹ International Crisis Group, "Understanding Islamism," *Middle East/North Africa Report* (No. 37, March 2, 2005), 13.

²² Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 106-107.

²³ Ibid., 107-109.

²⁴ Supra note 5.

²⁵ Jessica Stern, "The Protean Enemy," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2003): 35.

²⁶ This idea builds on those expressed by others, including Gabriel Weimann of Haifa University, cited in Joshua Sinai, "Defeating Internet Terrorists," *Washington Times*, October 8, 2006.

²⁷ Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Peter Sickle, *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Center for Middle East Public Policy, 2007), 142.

²⁸ <http://www.usip.org/pubs/special-reports/sr116.html>

²⁹ Ibid.

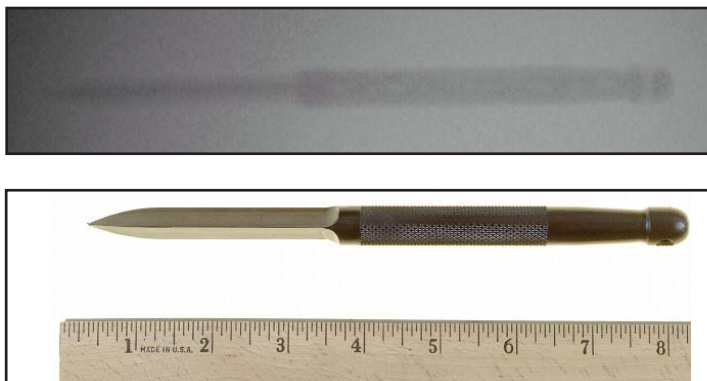
³⁰ See, for example, Combating Terrorism Center, U.S. Military Academy, *The Islamic Imagery Project: Visual Motifs in Jihadi Internet Propaganda*; retrieved from <http://ctc.usma.edu/publications/publications.asp>.

Note: The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and not necessarily those of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the government of Canada.

Unusual Weapon

Plastic Spike

Law enforcement officers should be aware of this plastic spike (dagger). Offenders may attempt to use this unusual weapon. And, magnetometers cannot detect it because of its composition.



Leadership Through Fellowship: No One Has All of the Answers

Good fellowship and friendship are lasting....

—William Wycherley

In July 2007, I gave a presentation on enlightened leadership at the 12th Annual National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE) in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. NAWLEE is dedicated to addressing the needs and issues of women law enforcement executives and those who aspire to these positions. To learn more about these, I decided to attend the conference, as well as facilitate a workshop. What a wonderful opportunity this was.

While the educational elements and professional presentations were exceptional, I found that fellowship, by far, was the greater benefit. The membership of NAWLEE consists of both male and female law enforcement professionals of every rank and type of department. These members can reach out to each other for advice, support, counseling, or mentoring. They know they do not have to have all of the answers all of the time, and they can seek guidance from others regardless of their rank, position, or department.

A recent search of the Internet revealed a multitude of law enforcement associations in every state and in nearly every city and county. There also are organizations at the national and international levels with memberships in the thousands. These groups include

those that reflect the ethnic, religious, or cultural background of officers, while others focus on regional issues. Some cater to the concerns faced by officers specializing within a field such as canine units, probation, youthful offenders, community policing, and narcotics. Many of these associations, such as NAWLEE, hold national or regional conferences. Although conference participation is beneficial, officers often are hindered by their department's lack of funding. If scholarships or other subsidized sources are not available, interested individuals still can be involved by receiving newsletters, reviewing association Web sites, and developing one-on-one relationships with other members in their area.

An effort as small as having lunch with officers from neighboring counties every few months can be the catalyst to developing valuable fellowship and liaison that can serve everyone well. The trials faced by law enforcement personnel everywhere are too many and too severe to be faced alone; officers must reach out to their sisters and brothers who just might have the answers. ♦

Deborah Southard, a leadership program specialist in the Leadership Development Institute at the FBI Academy, prepared Leadership Spotlight.



Operation Smokescreen A Successful Interagency Collaboration

By ROBERT FROMME and RICK SCHWEIN, M.A.

On a spring day in 1999, Detective Sergeant Fromme of the Iredell County, North Carolina, Sheriff's Office thought that what the two FBI agents sitting across from him at the U.S. Attorney's Office in Charlotte had just told him was something right out of a Hollywood script. Moreover, he had mixed feelings about the disclosure. On the one hand, the agents

confirmed something he had long suspected: there was much more to the group of Lebanese cigarette smugglers he had spent the last several years investigating than mere criminal activity. On the other hand, with his case ready for indictment, Detective Fromme feared that the long, painstaking investigation he had conducted alongside the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)

was about to be hijacked by the FBI in the name of national security.

The agents' startling information revealed that the suspects in Detective Fromme's cigarette-smuggling case were members of Hizballah, an international terrorist organization responsible for the deaths of more Americans than any other terrorist group in the world prior to September 11, 2001.¹

When he learned this, Detective Fromme knew that the investigation was about to take on a life of its own.²

The Cell

In 1992, Mohamad Youssef Hammoud arrived in New York City using a fraudulent visa. Over time, the FBI determined that Hammoud and several of his relatives were members of, affiliated with, or sympathetic toward Hizballah. These individuals also participated in an ongoing pattern of relatively low-level criminal activity that ranged from fraud (e.g., immigration, marriage, credit card, and identity) to money laundering (e.g., cigarette smuggling). The information developed by the FBI augmented and, in some cases, mirrored that from the criminal investigation of cigarette-smuggling activities conducted by Detective Fromme and the ATF.

According to FBI Special Agent Schwein, who conducted much of the FBI's investigation, Hammoud and the other cell members were "part-time terrorists and full-time criminals."³ The criminality of Hammoud and his confederates ultimately became their greatest vulnerability and allowed investigators to painstakingly unravel a criminal enterprise inexorably tied to terrorism, specifically fund-raising and procurement

activities directed by and conducted on behalf of Hizballah. "The case opens an important window on the small but worrisome subculture of militant Islamic immigrants who despise America, even while living in it, who flaunt its laws and actively aid its enemies."⁴

The Crime

An example of the type of open criminality practiced by the North Carolina Hizballah cell exists in the blatant manner in which the group engaged in cigarette smuggling. In early 1995, while off duty working in uniform at a tobacco shop, Detective Fromme observed something that his instincts told him went beyond a typical criminal operation. He watched while several Middle Eastern

individuals entered the store carrying plastic grocery bags containing \$20,000 to \$30,000 in cash and bought massive quantities of cigarettes.

During the next few months, Detective Fromme began to document the activities of these people as they continued to purchase large amounts of cigarettes on an almost daily basis. They carried large volumes of cash and bought anywhere from 1,000 to 4,500 cartons of cigarettes at a time. After loading their purchases in cars, vans, or trucks, they took the interstate toward Virginia or Tennessee. Detective Fromme followed them to the North Carolina state line to detail that the individuals had crossed into an adjoining state, thereby potentially violating federal law.



Mr. Fromme, a retired detective, currently serves as a senior consultant with a private firm in McLean, Virginia.



Special Agent Schwein is the FBI liaison to the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida.

He contacted Charlotte ATF agents who advised him that what he had uncovered was most likely a cigarette diversion ring, a scheme to purchase large amounts of cigarettes in states where the tax is low, such as Virginia and North Carolina, and transport them to northern states, such as Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania, where taxes are much higher.⁵ Typically, a carton of cigarettes costing \$14 in North Carolina would sell for \$28 in Michigan. Taking these cartons to Michigan by the thousands, they were making an average of \$13,000 profit per van load, and the group was capable of shipping as many as three van loads per day.

In September 1996, ATF opened an official investigation and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Iredell County Sheriff's Office, which assigned Detective Fromme to the ATF on a permanent full-time basis. This marked the first formal collaboration among law enforcement agencies in the case and resulted in an investigative framework and the collection of extensive evidence that readily augmented the intelligence investigations being simultaneously conducted by the FBI. In turn, intelligence the FBI developed supported subsequent criminal investigations by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the U.S. Department of

State's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) of possible violations of visa, immigration, and marriage fraud. As the investigation expanded and additional organizations joined, it became apparent that the efforts of the combined agencies were mutually supportive.

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Each organization worked the aspects of the investigation uniquely suited to their areas of expertise.

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The Collaboration

By the time Detective Fromme had the fateful meeting with the FBI agents in 1999, the agencies with mutual investigative interests in the subjects had begun formally sharing information. At that point, the scope of the investigation clearly was so large that no single organization or agency could effectively piece everything together. What emerged was an unprecedented collaborative effort involving more than 16 separate local, state, federal, and international law enforcement agencies and intelligence services. Each organization worked the aspects of

the investigation uniquely suited to their areas of expertise. This division of labor proved to be a highly efficient and effective way of doing business. As an example, INS and DSS handled the immigration, visa, and marriage fraud; ATF and the Iredell County Sheriff's Office focused on the cigarette smuggling and money laundering; and the FBI developed the racketeering and terrorism-related charges.

The sheer breadth and scope of the criminal activity conducted by the Charlotte Hizballah cell provided enough evidence for the U.S. Attorney's Office to charge the suspects under the racketeer influenced corrupt organization (RICO) statutes, which were designed to break up criminal enterprises and require proof of an ongoing pattern of criminal activity and evidence that the coconspirators are associated in fact. Aside from the evidence documenting the cell's ongoing pattern of criminality, the investigation also gathered information that linked individuals to each other and to Hizballah. The North Carolina cell met weekly at each others' homes ostensibly for religious prayer meetings and often watched Hizballah-produced videotapes, which cell leader Mohamad Ham-moud used to solicit donations. At these meetings, the cell also discussed and shared techniques for conducting various criminal

activities, such as cigarette-smuggling routes and tactics and procedures for committing credit card, identity, marriage, visa, and immigration fraud. Employing the RICO statutes to disrupt or dismantle an operational terrorist cell set a precedent, allowing the investigators to define the group as a Hizballah cell and to seize evidence during the execution of search warrants that could be used to prove the elements of the material support violations.

To connect the cell to Hizballah, the investigation leveraged disparate and seemingly unconnected investigative efforts to support larger operational goals. Cell member Said Harb became the linchpin between the fund-raising conducted in Charlotte and procurement activities directed by Hizballah in Vancouver, Canada. Harb came to the attention of U.S. law enforcement officials, specifically the ATF, as a result of his involvement in the cigarette-smuggling ring. Subsequent investigation by the FBI determined his heavy involvement in numerous visa, marriage, and immigration frauds and in organized identity, credit, and bank frauds. Harb attended meetings Hammoud hosted with the Charlotte cell and personally couriered money for Hammoud to a Hizballah military commander in Lebanon. One description of Harb

and his role in the group portrayed him as “a smooth talker with an innocent air.... Harb was perhaps the most versatile crook of the bunch. He had played a key role in the cell’s criminal activities, personally driving cigarettes to Michigan and raising a lot of money through bank and credit fraud. At one time, he had 12 credit cards and 3 driver’s licenses, all in different names. His cell phone had five distinct rings, each for a separate identity, and he needed to refer to a notebook to keep track of his myriad of social security numbers and bank accounts.”⁶

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) also

was scrutinizing Harb as a result of his relationship to Mohammad Dbouk, an Iranian-trained Hizballah operative. Dbouk, an intelligence specialist and propagandist, was dispatched to Canada by Hizballah for the express purpose of obtaining surveillance equipment (video cameras and handheld radios and receivers) and military equipment (night-vision devices, laser range finders, mine and metal detectors, and advanced aircraft analysis tools). CSIS could do little more than monitor his activities because Canada did not have anything similar to a material support statute at the time and Dbouk and his



Mohamad Darwiche (third from left), one of Hammoud's convicted confederates, poses with Hizballah militia.



A teenage Mohammad Hammoud poses with an automatic rifle in front of a picture of Ayatollah Khomeini. Arabic writing on the back of the photograph reads, “Mohamad at Hizballah Center.”

accomplices had not violated Canadian law. When Dbouk solicited his old friend Said Harb to assist in purchasing the equipment and to test counterfeit credit cards as a method of doing so, the dynamic changed and the Canadian cell became part of an overarching conspiracy that violated the U.S. material support statutes. Canadian authorities subsequently

provided the United States with transcripts and photographs to support the indictment and prosecution of Harb, Dbouk, and others involved in the conspiracy.

The Consequences

This unprecedented collaboration between CSIS and the FBI and the overwhelming criminal case developed

through the cooperation of a number of U.S. law enforcement agencies directly led Harb to plead guilty to violating the material support statutes and to subsequently testify against Charlotte cell leader Mohamad Hammoud. In turn, Harb's testimony helped convict Hammoud during his trial on RICO and material support charges.

Ultimately, the investigation led to the indictment of 26 individuals on charges ranging from immigration violations to RICO and material support violations. Cell leader Mohamad Hammoud was convicted at trial and sentenced to 155 years in federal prison. In addition to being the first case in U.S. history to result in a conviction of an individual charged with violating the material support statutes, as well as the first use of the RICO statutes to disrupt or dismantle an operational terrorist cell, it was one of the few cases where a friendly foreign intelligence service provided its intelligence holdings for use as evidence in a U.S. trial.

Among the other positive outcomes of the investigation, it served as the impetus for the FBI to form the North Carolina Joint Terrorism Task Force (NCJTTF). Many of the investigators assigned to work on the Operation Smokescreen case subsequently became charter members of the NCJTTF.



Mohamad Darwiche (right) and another convicted confederate count money likely collected from selling contraband cigarettes.



Mohamad Darwiche (left) and Mohamad Hammoud (right) stand at the back fence of the White House in Washington, D.C.

Detective Fromme offered this observation, "This case serves to show the importance of law enforcement agencies coming together and working as a team. I can say without reservation that everyone involved in the case left their egos at the door. It was a perfect example of how an investigation should be conducted." Detective Ken DeSimone of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and assigned to the investigation remarked about the strength of the collaboration between the agencies, "I was a little intimidated the first time I traveled with the FBI to Canada for meetings with CSIS. After all, I'm just a local cop and I find myself sitting in a big conference room at the headquarters of a foreign intelligence service discussing policy issues relating to the sharing of information and intelligence to support international terrorism operations and prosecutions. What impressed me the most is that not only did the FBI treat me as a full partner but the CSIS operatives seemed genuinely interested in my perspective and opinion as a local police officer."⁷

Conclusion

At its heart, Operation Smokescreen remains an excellent example of the kind of interagency collaboration and cooperation necessary to effectively combat transnational

crime and terrorism in today's interconnected world. As the case illustrates, terrorists do not just use major cities to carry out their activities but also can operate in small towns. Because of this, local law enforcement officers play a key role in protecting the nation because they often are first to detect criminal activity that may be part of a larger terrorist plot. But, no law enforcement or intelligence agency can have all of the pieces at hand to dismantle such a plot on its own.

**“
Ultimately,
the investigation led
to the indictment of
26 individuals....
”**

On that spring day in 1999, Detective Fromme could not possibly have imagined that his cigarette-smuggling investigation would help form the foundation of an unprecedented partnership among local, state, federal, and foreign law enforcement officials and intelligence officers. By sharing information and joining forces, such collaborative efforts represent a unified approach that aptly symbolizes America's stalwart determination to remain strong in the face of serious threats. ♦

Endnotes

¹ As the literal translation of its name suggests, Hizballah or "The Party of God" is a religious terrorist organization formed in the early 1980s to organize Shiite fundamentalists in opposition to the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. Hizballah sees the use of violence as a sacramental act or divine duty executed in response to a theological imperative. Hizballah has repeatedly shown that terrorist tactics, such as suicide bombings, airline hijackings, and kidnappings, are justifiable in furtherance of their ideology. See, Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 94. Former CIA Director George Tenet compared them with al Qaeda when he stated, "Hizballah as an organization with capability and worldwide presence is [al Qaeda's] equal, if not a far more capable organization. I actually think they are a notch above in many respects." Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage further warned of the serious threat posed by Hizballah, "Hizballah may be the 'A' team of terrorists and maybe al Qaeda is the 'B' team...they are global and can reach out when they are ready." See, "Hizballah: The A Team of Terror," *American Israel Public Affairs Committee Near East Report*, October 11, 2004, 72.

² For additional details on Operation Smokescreen, see Tom Diaz and Barbara Newman, *Lightning Out of Lebanon: Hizballah Terrorists on American Soil* (New York, NY: Presidio Press, 2006).

³ David E. Kaplan, "Homegrown Terrorists: How a Hizballah Cell Made Millions in Sleepy Charlotte," *U.S. News and World Report*, March 10, 2003, 31.

⁴ Daniel Pipes, *Militant Islam Reaches America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003), 198.

⁵ For additional information, see Dean T. Olson, "Financing Terror," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, February 2007, 1-5.

⁶ Michael Crowley, "Blood Money," *Reader's Digest*, February 2004, 200.

⁷ Detective Ken DeSimone, interview by author, June 19, 2007.

Bulletin Reports

Computer-Based Training

The National Institute of Justice offers *Incident Commander: A Training Simulation for Public Safety Personnel*, a CD-ROM that provides simulation training for public safety incident commanders in developing action plans and implementing them in various crisis scenarios through resource allocation and the assignment of tasks. The training can be done alone or with up to 16 players. Each participant can choose to manage squads from one or more agencies; take control of one or more incident command sections; or be an observer. After a tutorial on how to manage an emergency-response scenario through the provided software and computer tools, crisis situations are addressed from the perspective of the Incident Commander System. The scenarios portrayed include a school hostage situation, a courthouse bomb threat, a chemical spill, and a severe storm. Each situation offers different challenges to the players. Some scenarios emphasize law enforcement. In others, firefighting is the greatest challenge. Some may confront players with downed power lines, water-main breaks, noxious chemicals, and the media. Recognizing the greatest threats and dealing with them by effective use of the Incident Command System and appropriate deployment of responders are the keys to success and a high score in the training. Crisis scenarios are managed through detailed maps displayed on the computer screen. These maps include icons that can be selected and moved to perform certain tasks at various locations. Copies of the program can be obtained by contacting the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or <http://www.ncjrs.gov>. Also, authorized public safety agencies can register to receive the software free of charge at <http://www.incidentcommander.net/>.

Crime Victims

The Office for Victims of Crime presents *Serving Crime Victims with Disabilities*, a DVD containing two popular award-winning videos originally produced in December 2002 and no longer available in VHS form. "The Time Is Now" helps crime victim service providers reach out and serve people with disabilities. "Meet Us Where We Are" presents first-person accounts of how crime affects people with disabilities and educates disability service providers and people with disabilities about crime victims' rights and resources. These videos, along with transcripts, and DVD copies can be obtained by contacting the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or <http://www.ncjrs.gov>.

Juvenile Justice

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention introduces *Tool Kit for Creating Your Own Truancy Reduction Program*, which serves as a resource for communities striving to address the problem. The first chapter provides an overview of the issue, as well as information pertaining to the national problem of truancy, including the extent of the issue, its short- and long-term consequences, contributing factors, and the types of efforts that have helped to improve school attendance. The next chapter examines how truancy programs are defined, as well as the elements of evaluation design and data collection methods. This is followed by guidelines for program development. The third chapter begins with school policies that engage students and families. Those discussed range from modifying school grading policies related to attendance to creating alternatives to out-of-school suspension and expulsion. The fourth, and final, chapter provides practical ideas for managing truancy cases, improving school attendance, increasing parent and community involvement, creating alternatives to juvenile detention, and working with other agencies to keep kids in school. This report is available online at http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/truancy_toolkit.html or through

the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or <http://www.ncjrs.gov>.

Education

Addressing Shortfalls in Forensic Science Education, a fact sheet presented by the National Institute of Justice, describes the benefits of an accredited forensic science education program. Many crime labs find that new graduates from these programs are not properly trained. A committee led by the American Academy of Forensic Science has developed an evaluation and accreditation process to help universities improve their curriculum. An accredited curriculum gives employers, such as crime lab directors, standard criteria to assess whether an applicant is qualified. This report is available at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/216886.pdf> or by contacting the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or <http://www.ncjrs.gov>.

A Look at Fusion Centers

Working Together to Protect America

By BART R. JOHNSON



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"We are working toward an era of increasing collaboration, and fusion centers are a great example of how partnerships can achieve great success."

*—Secretary Michael Chertoff,
U.S. Department of
Homeland Security¹*

The tragic terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, highlighted the inadequacy of information sharing among many law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Since then, the law enforcement and intelligence communities have worked to combine their resources, experience, and expertise to pursue terrorists and gather intelligence to thwart further attacks. A fundamental part

of these efforts and a focal point for sharing information are state fusion centers. An overview of these facilities, along with a case example of how the New York State Intelligence Center develops a comprehensive view of the threat environment, illustrates how fusion centers play an integral role in assisting law enforcement agencies achieve their mission to protect the citizens they serve.

DEFINITION OF A FUSION CENTER

A fusion center is “a collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise, and information to the center with the goal of maximizing their ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity.”² Although fusion centers may vary from state to state, most include state and local law enforcement departments, public health and safety organizations, and federal agencies, such as the FBI, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. Bridging the gap between state and local agencies and the federal government, fusion centers facilitate real-time information sharing. Together, officers, agents, and intelligence analysts work side by side collecting intelligence, analyzing criminal trends and terrorist threats, and disseminating information.

But, fusion centers provide more than just timely intelligence. They allow agencies to see both the macro and micro view of the threat environment. Understanding the connections beyond state and national borders enhances the ability to predict and prevent crime and terrorism, rather than just reacting to such incidents. It also helps narrow the gaps between

potential threats and the ability to meet those threats.

Because fusion centers also look at information from local-level criminal activity, they can analyze it to determine whether any connection exists between seemingly typical low-level crime and terrorist activity. For example, in the summer of 2005, a group of men in Torrance, California, engaged in a series of gas station robberies. Although on the surface these appeared to be typical local crime scenes, they helped finance a larger terrorist plot to attack military and Jewish facilities. As this case illustrates, no neat lines divide criminal and terrorist activities. This shows why fusion centers are so vital in helping agencies gain a more comprehensive picture of the threats they face.

Although the more than 40 existing fusion centers share a common mission, they also have unique characteristics. The *Fusion Center Guidelines* were created to ensure that each facility is established and operated consistently.³ They respect the individual qualities while enabling the centers to operate within a common framework—similar to the construction of a group of buildings where each is unique, yet a standard set of codes and regulations are adhered to regardless of the size or shape of the structure. The guidelines and related materials provide assistance to centers as they prioritize and address threats posed in their specific jurisdictions for all crime types, including terrorism. In addition, the guidelines help administrators develop

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Colonel Johnson, deputy superintendent in charge of field command for the New York State Police, currently serves as the vice chair of the U.S. Department of Justice's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Advisory Committee.

policies, manage resources, and evaluate services associated with the jurisdiction's fusion center. Overall, these guidelines facilitate enhanced coordination efforts, stronger partnerships, and improved crime-fighting and antiterrorism capabilities.

EXAMPLE OF A FUSION CENTER

How do all of these policies and functions translate into practice? A case example from the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) shows a fusion center in action.⁴ In July 2004, the NYSIC received an anonymous call about a suspicious university student in upstate New York. The caller indicated that the student, a senior who headed the Muslim Student Association, on several occasions had expressed his hatred for America and was only in the country to teach Islamic religion. While researching the case, a New York State trooper found a link between this student and a report concerning two Middle Eastern males who claimed to be Israeli nationals inquiring about the location of a nearby synagogue because they were musicians hired for a wedding occurring there. A license plate check of their vehicle linked the registrant to the same house as the suspicious university student. The NYSIC forwarded this information to the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task

Force (JTTF) to investigate further. With access to criminal and intelligence information throughout the state, the fusion center connected these seemingly unrelated incidents.

The NYSIC serves as a nerve center for all calls coming into the statewide terrorism tip line. Those with a suspected nexus to terrorism are forwarded to the JTTF for further investigation through the NYSIC Counterterrorism Center, which

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A key to the success of an intelligence fusion center is the support of stakeholders....

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is designed to expand counterterrorism efforts by providing real-time information exchange of terrorism threats, indicators, and warnings. This reciprocal initiative has proven instrumental in improving investigative and reporting efforts by law enforcement officers statewide.

The center actively develops and disseminates law enforcement-sensitive intelligence products and supplies terrorism and criminal intelligence

services to the entire New York law enforcement community in an all-crimes environment through state, federal, public, and private information databases. Officers who suspect terrorist links can investigate those leads and contribute information regarding suspicious activities. Additionally, the NYSIC compiles data and disseminates intelligence and advance warnings to law enforcement agencies statewide regarding possible terrorist and criminal incidents.

Stakeholder Support

A key to the success of an intelligence fusion center is the support of stakeholders in regional law enforcement organizations. As a multiagency endeavor, the NYSIC has received the full support of the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, the New York State Sheriffs' Association, and many federal and state agencies.

The ability of organizers to encourage the participation and cooperation of multiple agencies represents another highly influential factor. Located near the state's capital, the NYSIC pools the resources of the New York State Police; the New York State Office of Homeland Security; and a number of other federal, state, and local law enforcement organizations to gather data in a centralized location. Agencies throughout New York

not only submit information to the NYSIC and make requests for case assistance but contribute personnel to staff the center.

Having both sworn and civilian personnel with knowledge and expertise in a variety of designated areas of responsibility, the NYSIC acts as a centralized and comprehensive criminal intelligence resource available to assist law enforcement agencies 24 hours a day,

7 days a week. It provides both analytical services and general case support, which allows law enforcement officers throughout the state to save costly personnel hours and investigative steps in their criminal cases. Because of the diverse agencies represented, the NYSIC functionally operates as part of a statewide intelligence network. Access to an extensive array of databases through a single contact

point is provided by the various components, thereby facilitating the exchange of criminal intelligence and information.

In close cooperation with its law enforcement partners, the NYSIC has undertaken an initiative recognized as an important component of the intelligence process. To that end, the NYSIC has developed intelligence collection requirements for terrorism, gangs, narcotics,

10 Simple Steps for Information Sharing

1. Recognize your responsibilities and lead by example.
2. Establish a mission statement and a policy to address developing and sharing information and intelligence data within your agency.
3. Connect to your state criminal justice network and regional intelligence databases and participate in information sharing initiatives.
4. Ensure privacy issues are protected in policy and practice.
5. Access law enforcement Web sites, subscribe to law enforcement Listservs, and use the Internet as an information resource.
6. Provide your agency members with appropriate training on the criminal intelligence process.
7. Become a member of your in-region Regional Information Sharing Systems® (RISS) center.
8. Become a member of the FBI's Law Enforcement Online (LEO) system.
9. Partner with public and private infrastructure sectors.
10. Participate in local, state, and national intelligence organizations.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, in collaboration with DOJ's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative, 10 Simple Steps to Help Your Agency Become a Part of the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan; retrieved from http://it.ojp.gov/documents/Ten_Steps.pdf for complete document.

guns, and money laundering. Through these established procedures, pertinent information is collected, allowing for it to be analyzed and disseminated to the appropriate stakeholders.

Future Initiatives

Worthwhile information sharing depends on more than just interagency cooperation; it also requires a shared technological standard that enhances the interchange among different computer systems. Participating agencies currently have access to a collective intelligence system, which stores information about criminal or terrorist activity. Data mining of multiple systems is a capability that the NYSIC has examined at length. This evolving intelligence system will be accessible not only to all agencies at the NYSIC but throughout the entire state.

Since the NYSIC began in August 2003, its role, responsibilities, and integration into the operations of agencies across the state have greatly increased. Other new programs and initiatives have expanded and will continue to increase the role of the NYSIC in law enforcement operations throughout New York.

CONCLUSION

September 11, 2001, changed the thought process of law enforcement agency heads,

supervisors, and line officers regarding the topic of information collection and exchange. With the realization that terrorists and those who support them were operational in and moving freely about the United States, departments recognized they no longer could afford to operate without standards and procedures regarding the identification of indicators and warnings of terrorist and criminal activity. In addition, intelligence and law enforcement agencies recognized that a centralized collection and analysis point must be established to ensure that criminal intelligence is exchanged in a timely, coordinated, and effective manner. The establishment of state fusion centers has been vital to meeting these real-time information-sharing needs. ♦

Endnotes

¹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence News Release No. 07-07, *Keynote Address*, First Annual National Fusion Center Conference, March 2007, Sandestin, Florida.

² U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, in collaboration with DOJ's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Fusion Center Guidelines: Law Enforcement Intelligence, Public Safety, and the Private Sector*; retrieved from <http://www.iir.com/global/guidelines.htm>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Previously called the Upstate New York Regional Intelligence Center.

Technology Update

The FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division announced the creation of the Law Enforcement Online's (LEO) 100,000th vetted member account on July 2, 2007. LEO was created in July 1995 when the FBI entered into a cooperative agreement with Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. LEO continues to provide an advanced technological resource to further the state of the art in law enforcement communications capabilities, technologies, and procedures to the international law enforcement community. LEO functions as a conduit for FBI sensitive but unclassified (SBU) intelligence information, which supports all of the FBI's missions, strategic goals, and objectives. LEO forms a cornerstone of the FBI's Information Sharing Initiative. The LEO network provides an Internet link to international, federal, state, local, and tribal police departments and agencies throughout the world. LEO is a certified and accredited system approved for the dissemination of SBU intelligence information.

The Bulletin Notes

Law enforcement officers are challenged daily in the performance of their duties; they face each challenge freely and unselfishly while answering the call to duty. In certain instances, their actions warrant special attention from their respective departments. The *Bulletin* also wants to recognize those situations that transcend the normal rigors of the law enforcement profession.



Sergeant Land

One evening, Sergeant Jamie Land of the Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Police Department responded to an emergency call involving a possible drowning at a local fitness center. Several juveniles had climbed a fence and begun swimming in the outdoor pool. Upon arrival, Sergeant Land determined that one of the youths was at the bottom of the 14-foot deep end. Quickly, he removed his duty belt and dove into the pool. Because of the boy's body weight, Sergeant Land could not retrieve him on the first dive. However, he was successful on the second attempt. By that time, emergency medical technicians and another officer had arrived, and the additional personnel helped remove the boy from the water. Sergeant Land continued with CPR until the juvenile was transported. Unfortunately, the young man died approximately 2 weeks later.



Officer McKay



Officer Rastetter

While on patrol, Officers Michael McKay and Michael Rastetter of the Canton, Ohio, Police Department observed a large amount of smoke. Subsequently, they determined that the third floor of a home was fully engulfed in flames. After getting no response at the door, the officers forced entry. They evacuated four people from the first floor and returned to rescue two teenagers asleep on the second floor. Because of the quick actions of Officers McKay and Rastetter, no one was seriously injured.

Nominations for the **Bulletin Notes** should be based on either the rescue of one or more citizens or arrest(s) made at unusual risk to an officer's safety. Submissions should include a short write-up (maximum of 250 words), a separate photograph of each nominee, and a letter from the department's ranking officer endorsing the nomination. Submissions should be sent to the Editor, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, FBI Academy, Madison Building, Room 201, Quantico, VA 22135.

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Patch Call



The patch of the Nye County, Nevada, Sheriff's Office features part of the U.S. flag; 9 of the stars and the 11 stripes are in memory of the infamous attacks. The remaining stars represent the heroes of flight 93 and the three terrorist targets. The black background behind some of the lettering honors peace officers who have given their lives. The four rays of the sun in the state seal symbolize mining, agriculture, industry, and scenery.



Incorporated in 1772, the town of Hillsborough, New Hampshire, is named after Colonel John Hill. The patch of its police department displays one of the stone arch bridges featured in the town, which boasts the largest number in New England. The one pictured spans Gleason Falls. Hillsborough is the birthplace of Franklin Pierce, the 14th president of the United States. His home, built in 1804, today serves as a living museum.