



Training Support Package

159-T-0001

15 March 2008

◆ Understand Terrorist Motivations and Behaviors

Learning Activity 3 Awareness Training



US Army
Training and Doctrine Command
TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity (TRISA)-Threats

Contemporary Operational Environment
and Threats Integration Directorate



This learning activity is an orientation on:

- ◆ **Terrorist Motivations and Behavior**
- ◆ **Terrorist Goals and Perceived US Vulnerabilities**
- ◆ **Operational Intent of Terrorism**
- ◆ **Motivational Categories**
- ◆ **Influence of Ideology: Political-Religious-Social**
- ◆ **Domestic and Indigenous Terrorism**
- ◆ **International and Transnational Terrorism**
- ◆ **Individual and Group Behaviors**
- ◆ **Organizational Behaviors**



Learning Activity

Terrorist Motivation and Behavior

◆ Al-Qaida and its loose confederation of affiliated movements remain the most immediate national security threat to the United States and a significant security challenge to the international community...intent to mount large-scale spectacular attacks ...current approach focuses on propaganda warfare – using a combination of terrorist attacks, insurgency, media broadcasts, Internet-based propaganda, and subversion to undermine confidence and unity in Western populations and generate a false perception of a powerful worldwide movement.

US Department of State *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006* April 2007





Learning Activity

Terrorist Goals

- ◆ Understanding the goals of the enemy promotes an active approach to analyzing the transfer of goals to objectives, and objectives into operational plans and actions.
- ◆ Goals of individual terrorists and terrorist organizations differ throughout the world and range from regional single-issue terrorists to the aims of transnational radicalism and ideology.
- ◆ The fundamental aim of terrorism is its **psychological effect** on people and the decisions that result.

...But our war with America is fundamentally different, for the first time priority is defeating it economically. For that, anything that negatively affects its economy is considered for us a step in the right direction on the path to victory. Military defeats do not greatly effect how we measure total victory, but these defeats indirectly affect the economy which can be demonstrated by the breaching of the confidence of capitalists and investors in this nation's ability to safeguard their various trade and dealings.'

Abu Mus'ab al-Najadi
October 2005

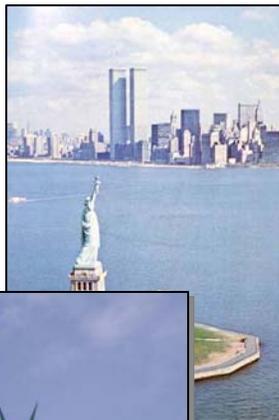


Learning Activity

Perceived US Vulnerabilities

◆ Many terrorist organizations view the US as particularly vulnerable to the psychological impact generated by terror tactics.

◆ Terrorist groups are likely to try capitalizing on what they may perceive as vulnerabilities. Beliefs may include:



◆ ... US is extremely casualty averse?

◆ ... US policy makers are overly influenced by public opinion?

◆ ... US economic performance is perception driven?

◆ ... US cannot sustain long term efforts or exhibit public sacrifice in pursuit of national goals?



Learning Activity

Operational Intent of Terrorism

◆ Terrorism is primarily a psychological act that communicates through **violence** or the **threat** of violence.

◆ A terrorist operation will often have the goal of manipulating popular perceptions, and will achieve this by influencing or dictating media coverage.



◆ Terrorist action will continue to attempt events that:

- ◆ cause mass casualties,
- ◆ damage economies,
- ◆ fracture US alliances, coalitions, and partnerships, and
- ◆ break public resolve.





Learning Activity

Motivational Categories

◆ Motivation categories describe terrorist groups in terms of their goals or objectives. Some common motivational categories are:



Beslan Hostage Crisis

◆ **Separatist** - Seek separation from existing governance entities through independence or political autonomy.

◆ **Ethnocentric** - Race is defining characteristic of a society and promotes attitude that a particular group is superior.

◆ **Nationalistic** – Promote cultural or patriotic theme to identity purpose of unity and split from a controlling government.

◆ **Revolutionary** - Overthrow of an established order and replace governance with a new political or social structure.



Learning Activity

Influences of Ideology

◆ Ideological categories describe the political, religious, or social orientation of the group.

◆ Violence used in support of an ideology can be:

◆ Discriminate. An example is the revolutionary group 17 November in Greece focused on anti-Greek, -US, -Turkey, and -NATO targets.



Taliban Execution at a Sports Event

◆ Indiscriminate. al-Qaida in Iraq or the Taliban in Afghanistan terror includes the death-injury to large numbers of civilians.

“Approximately 58,000 individuals worldwide were either killed or injured by terrorists in 2006...well over 50 percent of the victims were Muslims, and most were victims of attacks in Iraq.”

NCTC Reports of Terrorism Incidents – 2006, April 2007



Learning Activity

Political Ideology

◆ **Revolutionary** - Seek to overthrow an established order and replace it with a new form of social, economic, or political structure.

◆ **Right Wing** - Are sometimes described as reactionaries. Fascism or neo-Nazi associations are extreme examples.



**Shining Path
in Peru**

◆ **Left Wing** - Are sometimes referred to as radicals. Extreme examples are socialist or variants of communism such as a Maoist or a Marxist-Leninist political tradition.

◆ **Anarchists** - Are anti-authority or anti-government and support individual liberty, and voluntary association of cooperative groups.



Learning Activity

Religious Ideology

- ◆ Religious - Religions experience extremists and extremism.

“Today’s extreme Islamist groups such as al-Qaida do not merely seek political revolution in their own countries. They aspire to dominate all countries. Their goal is a totalitarian, theocratic empire to be achieved by waging perpetual war on soldiers and civilians alike.”



Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary of Homeland Security

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is an Indonesia-based Islamic extremist group with a stated goal to create an Islamic state or caliphate encompassing Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, the southern Philippines, and southern Thailand.

- ◆ Cults exist too, and can distort what actions are acceptable to further quasi-religious or unorthodox viewpoints.



Learning Activity

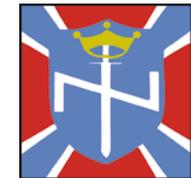
Social Ideology

◆ Social and Special Interest groups include *extremism* in:

◆ Ethnocentric groups may use race as a defining issue to build a sense of superiority over other ethnic or racial groups. Examples include the Ku Klux Klan or Aryan Nation.



Ku Klux Klan



Aryan Nations

◆ Animal Rights extremism is a significant US domestic terrorism threat. Autonomous cells or individuals conduct economic sabotage and property destruction.

◆ Environmental Rights extremism is a significant US domestic terrorism threat. autonomous cells or individuals conduct economic sabotage and property destruction.



Earth Liberation Front (ELF) Eco-Terror



Learning Activity

Social Ideology

More -- Social and Special Interests.

◆ **Abortion rights extremism can display terrorism in supporting parenthood options or the right of life to a human embryo and fetus.**



Eric Rudolph

◆ **Domestic militia groups, criminal gangs, and an increasing appearance of international gangs and activities in US communities, prisons, and across international borders demonstrate the ability of groups to use terror in advancing their influence and power.**



MS-13

◆ **One example is *Mara Salvatrucha* (MS13) that has its origin in El Salvador criminal gang activity. Tactics and some of its actions fit the profile of terrorism rather than just traditional gang crime.**



Learning Activity

Domestic or Indigenous Terrorism

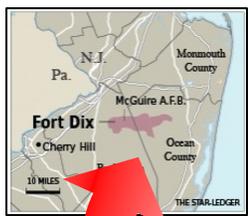
◆ “Home-grown terrorism” can describe terror conducted by native born or naturalized citizens of a State. Terrorists may or may not have direct association to a terrorist group they claim to support.

◆ Examples include:

◆ Timothy McVeigh and his bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Search and Rescue



◆ ...individuals arrested in May 2007 for conspiring to attack US military members-facilities at Fort Dix.

“...we are witnessing here is kind of a brand new form of terrorism...They [terrorists] operate under the radar...they strike when they feel it is right whenever that might be.”

FBI SAIC



Learning Activity

International or Transnational Terrorism

- ◆ International can be visualized as terrorist activity that is primarily between two nations and their geographic location.
- ◆ International groups may operate in multiple countries, but retain a geographic focus for their activities. For example, Hizballah has several organizational cells worldwide and conducts operations in multiple countries, but is primarily concerned with political events in the region of Lebanon and Israel.
- ◆ Transnational is a more expansive realm of operating among multiple national geographic locations, and creating global impact with operational or strategic reach. al-Qaida and its affiliated groups are transnational. Their vision of domination is global.



Hizballah



al-Furqan Media Wing,
ISI/al-Qaida in Iraq.



Learning Activity

Individual and Group Behaviors

No “one profile” exists for a terrorist. Each situation should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.

Similarities may be identified, but generalizations may be too simplistic in applying factors of analyses. Methods to compare and contrast both individuals and groups may include:

◆ Gender -- Is there a significant male or female presence in a group's acts of terror?

◆ Age -- Is there a preference or preclusion of using adults, adolescents, or children?

◆ Education -- Is there a noticeable signature in the level of formal education of terrorists within a group?

◆ Commitment – Are there primary, secondary, or tertiary themes for conducting terror?



Suicide Bombing



Learning Activity

Organizational Behaviors

Similar to individual and group behaviors, no “one profile” exists for organizational behavior. Each situation should be analyzed on an individual basis.

Methods of organizational comparison and contrast may include:

- ◆ **Secrecy and Loyalty.** Does a charismatic leader exist? Is there active support among the local-regional population?
- ◆ **Adaptive-Evolutionary Tactics.** Do TTP transfer easily among cells? Is suicide attack acceptable? Are suicide proxies a norm?
- ◆ **Association or Assimilation.** Are TTP discriminate-indiscriminate in their targets? What formal affiliations exist?





Learning Feedback

◆ *What will terrorists attempt to cause in current and future attacks?*

Terrorists will attempt to: cause mass casualties, damage economies, fracture US alliances and partnerships, and break public resolve.

◆ *What two main levels of violence are used by terrorist organizations depending on their objectives?*

Two main levels of violence are discriminate and indiscriminate acts of terror.

◆ *What are at least five different types of motivational category for terrorists?*

Five different types of motivational category for terrorist organizations are: separatist, ethnocentric, nationalistic, revolutionary, and anarchist.



Learning Summary

- ◆ ***“Today’s extremist Islamist groups such as al-Qaida...Their goal is a totalitarian, theocratic empire to be achieved by waging perpetual war on soldiers and civilians alike.”***

Honorable Michael Chertoff

- ◆ **International terrorism can be visualized as terrorist activities primarily between two nations and their geographic location.**
- ◆ **Transnational terrorism is a more expansive realm beyond international terrorism that operates among multiple geographic locations, and can create global impact with operational and strategic reach.**