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THESIS

THE IMPACT OF POLICE AND MEDIA RELATIONS ON A CRISIS

by

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THE IMPACT OF POLICE AND MEDIA RELATIONS ON A CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

Effective crisis management and communication is crucial during any catastrophic event, otherwise fear, panic, and mass hysteria can prevail. The public relies heavily on the government (police) and the media for information during a crisis. This thesis focuses on a joint police and media response plan and outlines a preparation plan to assist the public during a terrorist attack or similar crisis. Historically, the police and the media have had opposing views regarding sharing and disseminating information to the public. This report studies the inherent mistrust between both organizations and proposes strategies to overcome the suspicion and build a partnership. Proven community policing models within the Philadelphia Police Department are examined as a potential template for a police and media partnership. Survey results and focus group responses from the police, media, and the community are presented. This document examines national and international lessons learned and offers best practices on providing timely and accurate information, educating and informing the public, and improving communication and trust between the police and the media. The proposed police and media training curriculum breaks down the cultural barriers and develops mutual respect for each individual profession.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The media and the government are directly responsible for our views on terrorism. How the events unfold immediately after an incident and how the crisis is communicated can have a detrimental effect on the public. Five years ago, America changed forever due to the atrocities of September 11, 2001. Many citizens found themselves dealing with a new sense of insecurity. Our sense of asylum on our own soil shattered when al-Qaeda hijacked airplanes and crashed them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. A fourth plane reportedly targeted the White House. The hijackers of United Flight 93 may have succeeded if not for the heroes onboard, who brought the plane down before the intended strike.

Additionally, Hurricane Katrina's wrath and a growing list of government errors have left Americans feeling less safe since 9/11. Media reports on both incidents have crumbled public confidence in the government's ability with respect to anti-terrorism efforts and crisis response. Compounding the public's lack of confidence has been a series of misinformation from the media on the global war on terror (GWOT). Subsequently, public confidence in the government and the media has suffered.

The government and the media must do more in an effort to learn from the lessons of 9/11, Katrina, and other disasters. We need to go beyond numbly accepting occasional inconvenience to welcoming shared efforts and sacrifices that could produce real progress on security and the proper dissemination of timely and accurate information to the public. A local Philadelphia television reporter summed it up well: "We need to collectively produce a reservoir of goodwill in combating a disaster and helping the public."[1]

This thesis proposes an unusual partnership between two forces the public so vehemently relies upon for information in times of a crisis: the police and the media. This document explores the strategies available to the PPD and the Philadelphia media outlets in developing partnerships to better calibrate and direct public response to a terrorist

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[1] Walt Hunter (news reporter, Eyewitness News, CBS TV 3), interview by the author, May 1, 2006.

incident. While the model in this thesis focuses on the PPD and the local media, the operating principles could be transferable to any agency and its media outlets.

One of the principles of this collaboration is improving public confidence in government and the media during a catastrophic event. The police and the media are powerful forces that influence public behavior and perception. Merging both forces with the goal of securing the public's safety is morally responsible; ignoring this responsibility strengthens the enemy. Successful law enforcement invariably rests on a sound foundation of public support. How the police department is portrayed by the media plays a major role in forming public opinion; how the police treat the media is important in how they portray the department.

The PPD has a policy that supports openness and honesty with the media; it encourages all employees to maintain a friendly and cooperative relationship with journalists. However, a culture of apprehension persists when interacting with the media. In times when we are dealing with terrorist episodes, this apprehensive culture can prove to be a fatal mistake. The PPD and the local media have a history of poor relations; both organizations are distrustful and suspicious of each other. This is not unique to the PPD and should not be viewed as a criticism of the department or its members, nor the media. It's an organizational culture shared by many departments across the country, who view information as an instrument of security; while the media argues that information is public property. Both are equally responsible for the current state of affairs.

The police and the media have opposing views about how information should be presented. The police argue that the media frequently presents information out of context and therefore encourages the misinterpretation of information. The media argues that police are too possessive of information and try to restrict the manner in which information is presented, thus stifling the media's freedom to report. While good, and at times excellent, relationships between some members of both professions exist, these relationships are an exception rather than the rule. As a whole, the department and the media share a symbiotic relationship, yet suspicion and mistrust continues to linger on both sides. This suspicion has contributed to the ebb and flow of the relationship, much like a stormy marriage.

This poor relationship is compounded by information technology, including 24-hour media coverage of worldwide events, the internet, instant and text messaging. In this post–9/11 era, a deficient police/media relation is a recipe for poor communication, fear, and mass hysteria, which terrorists depend upon. The challenge undertaken in this thesis is to determine how the PPD can, in partnership with the media, formulate and disseminate timely and accurate information to the public during a crisis.

In times of crises, law enforcement should view the media as a valuable outlet to communicate a calm and consistent message to the public. At the heart of police and media relations is credibility and trust. Although the two professions have different means in which to carry out their responsibilities, they have a common function: to serve the public. Therefore, the two organizations need to respect each other and learn how to work together. This professional respect should supersede cultural differences and personal agendas. It should not be bribed nor bullied. Respect must be earned through the practice of open, honest, and transparent communication. The intended goal of this report is to form a partnership between the Philadelphia media and the PPD. Ultimately that partnership will lead to responsible communication, education, and information during a crisis, which will allay fears and reduce undue alarm to the public. Good media relations enhance the public's opportunity to obtain information they are entitled to receive. Educating the public on how to respond to terrorism is an essential part of the police department's goal, one that relies heavily on the cooperation of the media to disseminate information. Mutual respect and cooperation are necessary components for this partnership to succeed.

Fundamentally, the police and media have different sets of interest, and they may often be at odds to some degree. An opportunity lies before these two organizations to develop a partnership. The means to promoting media/police collaboration in the United States is removing, or significantly reducing, mistrust and suspicion. Clearly one can argue that effective personal relationships between journalists and public officials can greatly facilitate the appropriate and responsible distribution of information.

An effective media/police model sets the stage for the organizations to jointly become shepherds of the public and provide guidance that can:

- Save lives
- Promote information and intelligence sharing
- Educate the public
- Reduce mass hysteria
- Increase public confidence
- Build a better understanding of police, media, and community roles

Alternatively, if we do nothing, we fall victim to terrorist propaganda that leverages on the public's ignorance about terrorism. This only compounds confusion and mass hysteria.

The primary objective of terrorist acts is to create fear. Today's terrorists view the media as an opportunity to exert omnipresence with a massive psychological impact that reaches a huge audience. This new threat endangers the freedom of the press and freedom of expression for those who try to fight terrorism. While this new challenge may make it difficult at times, our sense of honor will remain steadfast and our freedom of speech will continue to be a fundamental principle of a democratic society.

While the best position for the citizenry is prevention, the focal point of this report is on response from the police and media at the local level, and how information is packaged and delivered. The diversity of data must be measured to obtain the desired public response. Excellent examples of this cooperation between government and media exist in other countries, such as Britain and Israel, whose governments educate the police, the media, and the public. In the United States, George Washington University has provided similar training to the police and media. Closer to home, the PPD has been provided with a fortuitous opportunity as the result of Temple University's initiative training program, which supports media and law enforcement relations during an emergency.

The community policing (CP) model in Philadelphia is an excellent example of a police/public partnership and it works. Several models that encourage partnership between police and outside entities are examined, and recommendations are made with

the goal of developing sound police and media relations. Because of these community relations, the Philadelphia community contradicts national polls of the public's poor confidence in the police and media. Not surprising in this report, the Philadelphia community trusts the police more than the media. The majority of the community groups were neutral on media relations despite the media's assertion of having good community relations. Based on the author's 21 years of law enforcement experience, the reason the PPD enjoys this advantage over the media is mainly due to the numerous partnerships and relations developed over the years with its residents, business leaders, clergy, and elected officials. Using the CP model as a template for police and media relations may be the answer in bridging the gap between these two organizations.

Representative samples of the stakeholders (the police, media, and community leaders) for this project were polled. They displayed a serious interest in searching for collaborative efforts in the interest of public safety and in the proper dissemination of critical information. Their views and recommendations stretch from ensuring accurate information is properly communicated to forming a partnership that includes cross training, educating the public, and tackling new challenges in this unprecedented joint venture.

The Philadelphia police commanders and the Philadelphia media both want to develop a partnership for their interest but, equally important, for their consumers – the citizens. The local media emphasized the importance of responsible journalism and their desire for a partnership that promotes:

- Training regularly with the police, which includes role playing
- Consulting with the police on determining the sensitivity of information and retaining that information until the appropriate time
- Formulating Police and Media Auxiliary Council, which promotes collaboration
- Sharing the responsibility of training the public
- Open communication
- Providing quality information
- A strategy to reduce public panic and mass hysteria
- A climate of need-to-share information

- An informal policy on a case-by-case basis on reporting incidents of WMD
- Informal scheduled meetings with police department officials to discuss counterterrorism measures and practices
- Participation in a Media Police Academy
- Trust

The police commanders also expressed their desire for a partnership with the media and suggested the following caveats:

- Provide timely and accurate information to the media
- Provide specific instructions to the public through the media
- Preparation is key; therefore, training with the media is imperative
- Key decision makers from both organizations should participate in the training
- Key decision makers from the police and media should meet to develop acceptable guidelines in crisis reporting
- Develop a police embedded journalist program similar to the military model
- Police officials recognize the media will not wait for information if the police do not cooperate; therefore, the police should cooperate with reasonable media requests
- Be responsible in the face of adversity, and allay community fears as soon as possible
- Share responsibility in educating the public
- Collaboration among other law enforcement in disseminating information during a crisis is critical in reducing confusion
- Local media partnership is embraced
- CPA training for the media
- Provide a subject matter expert to the media to address questions and help allay fears
- Specialize training for commanders in crisis communication
- Move toward a need-to-share environment rather than need-to-know
- Build trust with the media

The community leaders focused on ensuring that they receive instructions and accurate information. They decried irresponsible journalism and any mishandling of

critical information that can potentially cause chaos. In light of these suggestions, many recommendations can be made that will ensure the issues highlighted will be adequately addressed. The information contained in this document may serve as an effective tool to thwart the objectives sought by terrorists. Having the media and the police work towards a common goal, albeit a challenging and unconventional one, will significantly impact the terrorists, who depend considerably upon the media frenzy. Most of the proposed strategies in this document are unprecedented in this nation. By following the practices outlined in this report, the PPD and the media will be pioneers in effectively dealing with the aftermath of a terrorist attack. It is incumbent upon the PPD and the media to understand that how information is framed during a crisis contributes to the physical and psychological health of the community.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.   Relations and Conflict

A significant controversy and suspicion exists between two sources the public depends upon for information and direction: 1) media and 2) government. Relations between journalists and the government are frequently fraught with conflicting interests. Journalists strive to provide accurate, reliable and timely information, and they want to do it in an expeditious manner. Information, they argue, is public property, and the media should deliver it to its rightful owners as fast as possible. Politicians, police officers, and security officials [government] have another approach. "Information is an instrument of security and political policy to be manipulated, controlled and disseminated to suit strategic interests. Security personnel have their own clear view of what constitutes the public interest and very often, whether at war or peace, this conflicts with independent journalism."[2]

The media and the police have long had a strained relationship in communicating and distributing vital information to the public during an emergency. Each is equally responsible for the strained relationship. According to a veteran Philadelphia news reporter, who wishes to remain anonymous, "the strains between the media and law enforcement are as much created by the media as they are by police." This strained relationship has led to mistrust due to the inability of each side to understand the culture, role, and rules that its counterpart adheres to. Both operate under a timeline with opposing points of view. The media operates under time constraints while the government, specifically the police, operates under a "time of no essence" model, except during those emergencies where time may be a factor.

These two factions stem from opposing cultures, the media in the need-to-share and the police in the need-to-know. Specifically, the police object to the media's use of sensationalized sound bites, as compared to telling the "whole story" with the

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[2] Aidan White, "Security and the Media" (paper presented at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, Switzerland, 2003).

information presented in context. The media distrust the police due to an impression of censorship of relevant information or of "covering up" information that may be essential to the story. In response, the police argue information is only withheld to protect the victim, the public, and/or the investigation.

Highly charged, emotionally gut-wrenching events can work to define and clarify a built-in conflict of interest that exists between the media and police officials - conflicts that have historically resulted in hostility, suspicion, and occasionally violence.[3] Researchers have characterized the habitually stormy relationship as one comprised of "basic mistrust and perhaps even mutual dislike" between the two parties.[4]

2.   Source of Information

In this turbulent era, the media has played a significant role in shaping popular views on terrorism. If a terrorist attack occurs, the public will immediately look to the media for information. Overall, cable is the top source of news for all Americans (53%), regardless of demographics. Americans follow the news more closely than they did before Sept. 11; and cable networks, such as CNN, MSNBC, and FOX News, are the first choice for news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism. [5]   However, cable is not the only news source Americans rely upon; other outlets are providing information as well. Forty-four percent say they sometimes get news about issues related to terrorism from talk radio, 35 percent get news from the internet, and 24 percent get some news from religious radio and television programming. Newspapers rate a distant second to the electronic media, with about one-in-three saying they get most of their news this way.[6] Network television news, which was a top source for three out of ten Americans immediately following the 9/11 attacks, is now no more prominent a source of information about terrorism than radio or local television news.[7]

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[3] Tory J. Caeti, John Liederbach, and Steven S. Bellew, "Police-Media Relations at Critical Incidents: Interviews from Oklahoma City," *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, no. 2, June 29, (Denton, Chilton Hall, 2004), 87.

[4] Ibid.

[5] The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, *Public Views of Terrorism Coverage* (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2005); available from http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?PageID=12. (accessed September 20, 2005).

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

3.   Public Confidence

Despite the public's dependence on the media for information, there are salient aspects of press behavior that the public views negatively. Overall, 52 percent say the press tries to cover up its mistakes and "gets in the way of" society solving its problems.[8] About the same amount believe that the press is politically biased. However, a recent study indicates the public also has little confidence that information provided by the government on the global war on terror (GWOT) and domestic anti-terrorism efforts is accurate.[9] Generally, the public has about as much confidence in the government as it does in the press. Public confidence in information provided by the government on anti-terrorism efforts in the United States is somewhat lower (61 percent fair amount, 19 percent great deal)[10] than its confidence in information provided by the press. Thus, both the media and the government have little confidence from their consumers on domestic anti-terrorism efforts.

Public reaction is a strong indicator of government confidence. Four years after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, media coverage of Hurricane Katrina has highlighted the United States' vulnerabilities in responding to large-scale incidents of mass destruction, be they man-made or courtesy of Mother Nature. The handling of the worst hurricane in U.S. history has been dismal, contributing to some of the lowest presidential approval ratings in history. While building government confidence will be an uphill battle on the heels of Katrina, it is also an opportunity to develop local policies to avoid future government mismanagement.

4.   Duty to Public

Clearly, an opportunity exists for these two organizations to develop a partnership to improve their images while reporting significant issues during a terrorist incident, which may very well dictate public reaction. Ideally, the best position is preparedness through public awareness and educating the public in taking a more active role against

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[8] The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, *The Media's Post 9/11 Image* (Pew Center for the People and the Press, 2005); available from http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?PageID=12. (accessed September 20, 2005).

[9] Pew Research Center, *Public Views of Terrorism*.

[10]Ibid.

terrorism on the local front. While preventive measures are addressed in this report, the focal point of this thesis is on crisis response, communication, and how the media and the police can both help address the public's reaction to a post-terrorist incident on U.S. soil.

The public needs and demands the necessary information to respond accordingly. The more they are given, the better equipped they are to react. Given the sensitivity and unpredictable nature of a terrorist incident, it is imperative that authorities exercise careful judgment in the timing of the release of critical data and in communicating sufficient data. Too much information, and the manner in which it is delivered, has the potential to produce panic and ultimately cause more harm than the actual terrorist attack.

5.   **Media Impact**

The ability to impact audiences en masse and cause panic may have first become obvious as a result of one of the most infamous mistakes in history. It happened on Oct. 30, 1938, when millions of Americans tuned in to a popular radio program that featured plays directed by, and often starring, Orson Welles. The performance that evening was an adaptation of the science fiction novel, *The War of the Worlds*, about a Martian invasion of the earth. Listeners mistakenly believed the world was being invaded by aliens and reacted with mass hysteria.

The emergence of media-oriented terrorism presents a challenge to any democratic society and its liberal values. The threat is not limited to media manipulation and psychological warfare launched by a terrorist; it also includes the danger of restrictions imposed on freedom of the press and freedom of expression by those who try to fight terrorism.

6.   **Challenges Ahead**

The challenges presented to democratic societies as a result of modern, media-wise terrorists should lead to collaboration among the mass media, the administration, and the academic community. Only by establishing self-imposed restrictions and guidelines, based on empirical findings, can we maximize security while minimizing the

damage to the free flow of information and civil rights. This requires an open debate, bargaining, and negotiation among all stakeholders to reach an arrangement that will be in the best interest of our citizenry.[11]

The United States government must collaborate with the media on a national level to develop an effective communication strategy that thwarts the objectives of the terrorist, improves government and media relations, and increases public confidence when dealing with a post-terrorist incident. However, breaking new ground inherently presents unique challenges. Therefore, instituting a national policy at this stage could be impractical because of legal and practical barriers (in terms of the constitutional challenges and the government's inability to convince the media without cause).

Because there are fewer variables and less complexity, the local front is a more feasible venue in which to develop a prototype for media policies. Success in the localities can pave the way for expansion on the national level. In this post 9/11 era, it is critical to develop strategies that will deny terrorists the ability to harness the media in order to further their attempts to create public fear and effect political change.

B.   RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis explores strategies available to the PPD and the local media outlets in developing a partnership to better calibrate and direct the public's response to a terrorist incident or catastrophic incident. Specifically, the thesis identifies practical methods to reduce the inherent mistrust and begin changing a culture from need-to-know to need-to-share.

C.   SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The PPD and local media outlets were chosen as the experiment for this thesis, largely because the author is a senior official in the PPD with access to information regarding its policies with respect to interfacing between the department and the local media. The objective of this thesis is to raise awareness of the media's impact on

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[11] Paul Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9, no. 2 (summer 1997): 51.

terrorism and to develop policies/recommendations that will help reduce and/or thwart the terrorists' goals of creating mass hysteria, panic, fear, and disruption to our lives. The focus is limited to the PPD, the Philadelphia media, and the city's citizenry. If a catastrophic incident occurs, the local media will be the first to report the information and will then inform the national "network" news media. Focusing on the local media is practical and manageable in developing a consistent message to Philadelphians, who typically rely on the local media for immediate information.

Philadelphia is a major city with a population of nearly 1.5 million; an additional 1 million people visit or work in the city daily. Nestled between two heavily populated cities, New York and Washington, DC, Philadelphia is the birthplace of our country. It was once the capital of the United States where the "White House" was located for 10 years and is home to the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and the Betsy Ross House. The country's first two presidents, as well as Benjamin Franklin, were among the many dignitaries who have called Philadelphia home. The city's rich history, population, and national icons make it an attractive target.

A collaborative effort can build a strong relationship between the police and the media and ultimately the intended target: the public. With accurate and timely information, and through basic emergency preparedness, individuals will feel less frightened and thus be more likely to respond to incidents in a logical and practical manner, virtually obliterating the biggest aim of terrorism: psychological fear. This will help to counter the psychological impact of a terrorist attack. For example, if public officials fail to tell people within 30 minutes of an attack that their children are safe and being sheltered, it will be too late to tell parents not to pick them up.[12] Large metropolitan police departments, like the PPD, must build trust and partnerships with local media outlets to mitigate potential public panic in the event of an incident. An approach must be found in which the media views itself as a part of this process.

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[12] Sharon Begley, "Simulations of Attacks by Terrorist Illustrate Challenge Officials Face," *Wall Street Journal*, July 15, 2005.

The CP model is an example of a police/public partnership that aims to reduce negative reaction against either party and increase trust and confidence.[13] This CP model may be best utilized for soliciting the support of the media and focusing the community on tackling some of the challenges the PPD has faced since 9/11. A strategic policy plan must be developed that specifically addresses public reaction to local media coverage.

Ideally, such a policy could reduce and/or prevent mass hysteria and fear and save thousands of lives during a crisis. The PPD must build relationships with its local media before an incident occurs in order to alleviate the potential negative effects of media coverage. The objective of this strategy would be to lessen the effectiveness of terrorism through minimizing panic and improving media relations. Much like law enforcement has embraced the CP model and is sensitive to the needs of the community, a similar approach must be adopted with the media if we are to cooperate and implement potential findings of this study.

The relevant audience is comprehensive and should be handled with experience. The PPD's successful participation in community policing provides the necessary expertise and leadership to take the initiative in this partnership process. Recent history has shown the importance of an effective media relationship. In the DC sniper case, despite great panic and fear, the public had confidence in the police mainly because the police managed the media well, and provided timely information to the public until the successful apprehension of the suspects.[14] In contrast, poor police and media relations in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina had a significant negative impact on public

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[13]Community policing is a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes and reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and police-community partnerships. The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem-solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder. Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners in the course of both identifying and effectively addressing these issues.

[14]Chuck Wexler, Gerard R. Murphy, Heather J. Davies and Martha Plotkin, "Managing a Multi-Jurisdictional Case, Lessons Learned from the Sniper Investigation," Police Executive Research Forum, (2004).

confidence in its police force, partly due to decimation of the police force because of the disaster and partly due to inaccurate reports of critical situations by the media.[15]

Findings in this thesis regarding the PPD's media policies, its relationship with the local media outlets, and the policy recommendations derived from these findings, may serve as a template for relations between police departments of other large cities and their media counterparts in the sphere of terrorism coverage.

D.   SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

Paul Wilkinson stated that communication between the government and the media is an important element in any strategy to impede the terrorist's mission from prevailing and to preserve democracy.[16] The U.S. government's experience is based on the supposition that the media's editorial decisions regarding how they cover acts of terrorism have a two-pronged effect. Through vivid and shocking images, the media can escalate fear and panic while simultaneously providing a far-reaching venue for spreading the terrorists' propaganda. What must be realized in this process is that, generally speaking, bad news is good news for the media, which therefore affects the bottom line and thus policy. The unprecedented challenge, one unimaginable to our forefathers and authors of the Bill of Rights, is to cripple the manipulative tactics of media-oriented terrorists while honoring our basic foundation of freedom of speech. The bridge to media/police collaboration in the U.S. is removing or significantly reducing the skepticism both parties have of each other. An in-depth appreciation of the parties' respective roles and procedures will promote the development of rules of engagement when moving forward in the post 9/11 media/police arena. Together, through training, education, and collaborative effort, we can have an impact on how terrorism will affect our consumers - the citizens of Philadelphia.

The primary objective of terrorist acts is to create fear and to encourage divisive reactions. The Philadelphia media and the PPD can help in this mission through the

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[15]Susannah Rosenblatt and James Rainey, "Katrina Rumors," *LA Times,* September 27, 2005, available from http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-rumors27sep27,0,5492806,full.story?coll=la-home-headlines. (accessed January 4, 2006).

[16] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment."

careful oversight of the messages they deliver to the community at large. Modern terrorists have become aware of the new opportunities for exerting mass psychological impact using the latest means of mass communications. Several terrorist organizations have realized the potential of media-oriented terror in terms of effectively reaching enormous audiences.[17] The media and the terrorists have a disjointed, symbiotic relationship, but it is more about the terrorists using the media to get their propaganda publicized than it is the willingness of the media to tout their ideals. The media needs to more fully recognize their duplicity in fueling the terrorist's campaign of hatred. The media needs no prompting in resisting efforts at manipulation by the government; one can only hope they will exercise the same care in resisting manipulation by terrorists.[18]

The ultimate objective and significance of this project is to illustrate that the American public can significantly decrease the impact of terrorism and effectively deal with its aftermath through trust and partnership with the police and media. This may subsequently reduce the attractiveness of terrorism as a tactic and thus reduce the number and degree of terrorist incidents.

This thesis proposes new strategies and tactics for the PPD and the local media to help lessen the negative effects of media coverage of a terrorist incident in our community. Emergency situations most commonly involve four phases of activity: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.[19] While the media may play a role in all four phases, they are least important in disaster mitigation and probably most important in the response phase, followed by the preparation phase. In the two latter phases, the media becomes one of the most important sources of local and national information about the crisis. They can continue to work in a disseminator role, seeking official information about what happened and how citizens can best respond, and can also provide help and advice to victims. Effective personal relationships between journalists

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[17] Robert Geffner, "The Theater of Terror: The Psychology of Terrorism and Mass Media," *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, no. 3/4 (March 25, 2004): 389.

[18] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment."

[19] Ford N. Burkhart, *Media, Emergency Warnings, and Citizen Response* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991).

and public officials can greatly facilitate the dissemination of information.[20] There are excellent examples of this opportunity for cooperation between government and media, which have been in practice for several years. Later we will explore these examples in other countries, such as Britain, Israel, and Australia, which may provide best practices for the U.S. government.

The power of the media cannot be underestimated. The media has the ability to "create" an event, aid in rescue operations, alleviate or exacerbate an emergency situation, prejudice the outcome of an event, exaggerate or sensationalize news and affect public perception.[21] Another important issue to consider, which complicates law enforcement's ability to control a situation, is the media's rapid response to an emergency situation and the speed with which information is disseminated prior to law enforcement assessment. Adding to the problem is the competition among news organizations to be the first with "breaking news," which at times potentially leads to incompetent and trivial journalism marked by superficial coverage of complex issues caused by insufficient background reporting and use of inadequate sources. The nature of the industry puts tremendous pressure on journalists seeking a story. Profitability in the news industry frequently revolves around the acquisition of information before a competitor has it, stringent deadlines, and the need to fill newspaper columns, television and radio air time. Profitability versus integrity of a story poses a unique conundrum when considering the media's motivation in getting its product to its consumers.

A significant component of this study rests on a reciprocal understanding of the role of the major participants during an emergency; especially an incident with terrorist tentacles. Rather than view the media with suspicion, law enforcement should view the media as an opportunity to communicate a calm and consistent message to the public that will aid in controlling the situation.

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[20] Library of Congress, *Media Interaction with the Public in Emergency Situations* (Library of Congress, 1979; available from http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/pdf-files/Media_Interaction.pdf. (accessed March 10, 2006).

[21] Ibid.

E. SUMMARY

Americans follow news reports more closely since September 11. Network television news is no more prominent a source of information than radio or local television news. The media and government play a significant role in shaping the public's view on terrorism. Unfortunately, public confidence in both organizations is dismal. Mistrust and suspicion blankets relations between the police and the media; both are equally responsible for the current state of affairs. Each profession operates in an opposing professional environment: the police from a need-to-know and the media from a need-to-share. Unless sound solutions are proposed and adopted this state of affairs is a recipe for disaster in the post 9/11 era. There is an inherent and ethical duty to the public for both organizations to resolve this conflict. This thesis explores strategies available to the PPD and the local media outlets for developing a partnership to better calibrate and direct the public's response to a terrorist incident or catastrophic incident. The strained relations are not unique to Philadelphia; therefore, the proposals offered in this document should be geographically transferable to other municipalities. The author proposes a partnership between the police and the media to improve relations and public confidence and to reduce the inherent mistrust between the parties. The focal point of this proposal centers on a local crisis response and crisis communication in managing public reaction to reduce mass hysteria typically associated with a disaster, whether it's a deliberate act or not. The emergence of media-oriented terrorism threatens our freedom of the press and, as Americans, we must be mindful not to let terrorism manipulate our basic rights. The challenge is to maximize security while minimizing the damage to the free flow of information and our civil rights.

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II.   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the current schools of thought that guide the relationship among the media, the government (police), the public, and terrorists. It will provide some background on the balance between the current threat of terrorism and the media's role and influence on the public. Specifically, this chapter will review the delicate issue of censorship of media-oriented terrorism that furthers terrorist objectives, the media's response to terrorist activities, and the public's role. Additionally, this section explores traditional community policing as a model that provides solutions during a crisis event.   Finally, the topics discussed in this chapter underscore the significance of developing a police and media partnership with the goal of reducing the psychological impact of a terrorist incident or similar crisis.

B.   HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE POLICE AND MEDIA

Conflict between the police and the media emanates from long-standing constitutional, occupational, and historical factors that have served to perpetuate struggles between both contingents over time. First, disagreements between the two groups are deeply embedded in the right to free speech outlined in the First Amendment. Over time, the U.S. Supreme Court has limited these rights so that the right to freedom of expression is not absolute. For example, speech that has been deemed as libelous, obscene, or seditious is generally not protected under the First Amendment. As a rule, the courts have attempted to balance the individual's right to free speech with the government's (including the police) interest in promoting societal order and morality.[22]   The courts have continually attempted to balance the right of the press to access information that it deems is in the 'public interest' with the rights of government to maintain order. For instance, the Supreme Court has consistently upheld the media's right to access and report information relating to criminal trials, but has refrained from providing the media

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[22] Caeti et al, "Police-Media Relations at Critical Incidents."

an absolute right to take pictures or publicly broadcast such proceedings. In this regard, the courts have ruled that there is no "unbridgeable" First Amendment right to broadcast comparable to the right of every individual to speak, write, or publish.[23]

There appear to be pre-existing distinctions in personality and orientation between law enforcement and the media. For example, researchers conducted a survey to explore the predisposition and general orientation of police cadets and journalism students regarding their prospective professions. Their results identified several attitudinal and perceptual differences in the way these two groups viewed the fields of law enforcement and journalism, suggesting that a large degree of suspicion and a lack of trust exist between members of these two professions even prior to their formal entry into these careers.[24]

C.   CENSORSHIP

Censorship is the control of speech and other forms of human expression. In many cases (not all), it is exercised by governing bodies. The visible motive of censorship is often to stabilize or improve the society that the government would have control over. In wartime, explicit censorship is carried out with the intent of preventing the release of information that might be useful to an enemy. Generally, it involves keeping times or locations secret or delaying the release of information (e.g., an operational objective) until it is of no possible use to enemy forces.[25]

Reporting acts of terrorism is a tough balancing act that requires a collegial relationship between the media and the government to offset the terrorist's objectives. Some countries have opted to censor reports of terrorist incidents while others have developed policies that encourage responsible journalism. For instance, as a result of the July 7, 2005 London bombings, the Terrorism Act of 2006 was enacted in England which makes it illegal to glorify terrorism. In 2004, the Attorney General of England warned

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[23] Caeti et al, "Police-Media Relations at Critical Incidents."

[24] Ibid.

[25] Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia, "Censorship," available from http://www.wikipedia.com. (accessed July 12, 2006).

newspapers that they could be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act if they publish a memo detailing the possible U.S. bombing of the Al Jazeera news network. In Australia, despite the country's pride in freedom, it lacks an explicit form of free speech. The Australian Communications and Media Authority are active in making recommendations and setting guidelines for media censoring. In Canada, the concerns of community standards are the primary threshold of what may be published or broadcast by the media. National standards are trumped by community standards, community standards are viewed more explicit and exact, therefore setting the standard of what is considered responsible journalism.[26] Perhaps, through similar international policies, training, and cooperative effort, the U.S. may be able to develop acceptable methods in reporting acts of terrorism.

At the core of this proposition are the needs of the stakeholders: the government, the media, and terrorists. In the case of the government and the terrorist, each has opposing needs in which the media plays a pivotal role. Policymakers do not want terrorism, or anti-terrorism, to erode freedom of the press — one of the pillars of democracy. This dilemma cannot be completely reconciled; rather, it is one with which society will continue to struggle. The challenge for policymakers is to explore mechanisms that enhance media and government cooperation to accommodate the citizens' and the media's need for honest coverage while limiting the gains unhampered coverage may provide terrorists. We should uphold the vital principle of free speech so eloquently championed by Thomas Jefferson two centuries ago: "that truth is great and will prevail if left to her; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate."[27]

Freedom of the press is one of the primary tenets of a Western democratic society. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution lays the foundation for freedom of the press, stating:

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[26] Wikipedia, "Censorship."

[27] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment."

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

There exist several perspectives on censoring information. Censorship should never be exercised to disguise information or merely for the sake of withholding information. Under these conditions, it insults the public's right to know. However, there are times when censoring may prove to be the obvious choice, but it must be based on sound principles. For instance, if information puts the country at risk, endangering national security, then the information should be restricted until it no longer poses a threat. In the crisis following 9/11 there was a strenuous government effort to withhold information from the press claiming disclosure would endanger national security. The Whitehouse urged all high-level government officials to be extraordinarily, and probably excessively, tight-lipped. A clear example of denying information was the Justice Department's decision to deny press inquiries on detainees rounded up after the attacks, on the grounds that public disclosure would undermine counter-terrorism efforts.[28]

The media is often in an awkward position when attempting to cover terrorist events. Their mission to "protect society's right to know" is often in direct conflict with the government's mandate to "protect and serve" and maintain order. The *Harvard International Review* argues that the government should enlist the support of correspondents in suppressing news by appealing to their sense of patriotism or self-censorship. Shortly after September 11, President Bush's team of top advisors appealed to the U.S. media not to broadcast unedited video of Osama bin Laden. Ostensibly, the concern was that the video might reactivate "sleeper" agents in the United States by sending a signal. Most broadcasters supported the request.[29]

There exists a precarious balancing act the press faces when covering a terrorist incident. During such an event, the press needs to be vigilant about balancing society's right to know against the media's responsibility to inform. In the past, studies have shown

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[28] Pippa Norris, Montague Kern, and Marion Just, "Terrorism, Censorship and the 1st Amendment: In Search of Policy Guidelines," in *Framing Terrorism* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 27.

[29] Steven Jukes, "Real-Time Responsibility," *The Harvard International Review,* no. 16 (Summer 2002): 1.

that most Americans support news censorship when directly related to war. However, some clearly distinguish between restrictions placed on international as opposed to domestic news. It appears that Americans are much more comfortable with the former. By a margin of more than five-to-one, those who believe that news from Afghanistan was censored favored those restrictions.[30]

That is on par with the level of support for censorship measured during the Gulf War. By contrast, there is about two-to-one support for government censorship of news on home-front threats.[31] Clearly, the public is of more than one mind when it comes to the competing interests of government and media during wartime. Censorship is favored, with 70 percent believing such restrictions are intended to protect the safety of U.S. forces rather than to cover up bad news. At the same time, a 52 percent majority endorses the idea that the media should aggressively pursue news rather than trust the government's refusals to release information.[32] In the search for a simple explanation, the idea that media are a contagion of terrorism has been widely heralded. The fear of an epidemic of violence has been used repeatedly to justify efforts to alter media coverage, even though there is no significant evidence that the media act as a contagion.[33]

Censoring is not left solely to the possessor of information. It is not unusual for the news media to censor their coverage when they deem it essential for security interest, especially when they argue with the government's objectives and face condemnation and economic penalties for voicing dissent. Self-censorship generally happens quietly behind the scenes to avoid the impression that the media are yielding to the government's demand. For example, the Washington Post acknowledged holding back publishing stories following the 9/11 attacks, prompted by phone calls from government administration officials. The editor of the Post said that, in some instances, certain stories could be detrimental to national security and not instrumental to their readers, such as

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[30]The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Terror Coverage Boost News Media Images, but Military Censorship Backed," (Washington D.C.; Pew Center for the People and the Press, 2001).·

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Pamala L. Griset and Sue Mahan., "Reporting Terrorism," *Terrorism in Perspective* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003), 129.

methods of intelligence collection. Shortly after 9/11 The New York Times said, "Some groups fear that if they are perceived as unpatriotic it will hurt them in the long run."[34] Ironically, in the recent weeks of this writing, the New York Times has come under scrutiny after publishing a story disclosing intelligence information about the government's effort to trace terrorists' financial nexus. Presumably, disclosing this type of information creates huge hurdles for the GWOT.

The chart depicted on the following page covers many of the issues inherent in this discussion. The government's and the terrorists' objectives tend to be diametrically opposed, while the media's position is often a matter of judgment. "The media tends to be the force multiplier stuck in the middle between complete censorship and total freedom of the press, neither of which are in Western democracy's long term interests. Reportage is inevitable and, especially if it includes unbridled speculation, false threats or hoaxes; coverage can advance terrorists' agendas, such as spreading panic, hurting tourism, and provoking strong government reactions leading to unpopular measures, including restrictions on individual liberties."[35]

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[34] Norris, "Censorship and the 1st Amendment."

[35] Raphael F. Perl, "Terrorism, the Media, and the Government: Perspectives, Trends, and Options for Policymakers," CRS Issue Brief, Oct. 22, 1997; available from http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/state/crs-terror-media.htm. (accessed July 10, 2005).

Table 1.　Analysis of Tri-Objectives Concerning Terrorist Incidents or Issues
(After: Terrorism, The Media and the Government Perspectives, Trends and Options for
Policymakers, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/state/crs-terror-media.htm)

Government	Media	Terrorist
Advance their agenda and not that of the terrorist	Be the first with the story	Publicity to create fear, panic, and mass hysteria
Separate the terrorist from the media	Make the story as timely and dramatic as possible	Promote propaganda and a favorable understanding of their cause
Have the media present terrorists as criminals	Freedom to cover an issue without external restraint, whether from media owners, advertisers, editors, or the government	Legitimize what is often portrayed as ideological or personality feuds or divisions between armed groups and political wings
Want the news organizations to provide information to authorities	Be professional and accurate	Seek media coverage that causes harm to their enemy
Control terrorist's access to outside data	Protect the ability to operate as securely and freely as possible	Seek to control smaller news organizations through funding
Prevent the media from revealing planned or current anti-terrorist actions	Protect society's right to know	Terrorist organizations seek to court, or place, sympathetic personnel in press positions
Cooperation of the media in disseminating a ruse that would contribute to neutralizing the immediate threat posed by terrorists	Play a constructive role in solving specific terrorist situations	Cause financial damage to their enemy, i.e., tourism

D.   TERRORISM COMMUNICATION THEORY

The emergence of media-oriented terrorism has led several communications and terrorism scholars to re-conceptualize modern terrorism within the framework of symbolic communication theory. According to Robert Geffner's theory, terrorism as a symbolic act can be analyzed much like other forms of communication, consisting of four basic components: (a) transmitter (the terrorist), (b) intended recipient (target), (c) message (bombing, ambush, invasion), and (d) feedback (reaction of target audience). The growing use and manipulation of modern modes of communication by terrorist organizations have led governments and several media organizations to consider appropriate responses. These include limiting terrorists' access to conventional mass media, reducing and censoring news coverage of terrorist acts and their perpetrators, and minimizing the terrorists' capacity for manipulating the media.[36]

Basic dilemmas with respect to event coverage often spark open and bitter debate among scholars, media organizations, and public servants. Some of the challenges that need to be addressed are: (a) Breaking news — how should disastrous events be reported? (b) How should live coverage be carried out (i.e., lessons from direct feed and how to curtail the spread of panic); and (c) Drawing red lines (newspaper editors) — who should draw them, how can they be implemented by all media organizations?[37] Journalists face difficult dilemmas in their profession, but terrorist acts present even more difficult choices, such as the conflicting roles of a citizen and a journalist, the clash between care for the victim and the duty to report, and photograph and video that affect public reaction.

E.   ROLE OF THE MEDIA

Front page New York Times, Monday, October 31, 1938: "Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact: Many Flee Home to Escape 'Gas Raid from Mars' Phone Calls Swamp Police at Broadcast of Wells Fantasy."[38] In a prescient column in

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[36] Geffner, "The Theater of Terror."

[37] Ibid.

[38] H.G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*; available from http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/war_worlds.html. (accessed March 10, 2006).

the New York Tribune, Dorothy Thompson foresaw that the broadcast revealed the way politicians could use the power of mass communications to manipulate the public. "They have proved that a few effective voices… can convince masses of people of a totally unreasonable, completely fantastic proposition as to create a nation-wide panic."[39]

Journalists are well aware of the news value of terrorism, but it bears repeating, journalists need to be equally aware of the potential for being the terrorist's conduit in delivering their propaganda.[40] Reporters are supposed to remain objective and calm while accurately reporting the news. However, there are occasions when the magnitude of the incident is so great that the role of reporting becomes conflicted in moments of compassion for the victim, which can influence public response. For example, many can identify with the late ABC World News anchor Peter Jennings, when he tearfully advised all Americans to tell our children that we love them as he reported the devastation of the 9/11 attacks. During his tribute, we discovered that his message touched many and helped refocus priorities and the importance of family values.

Similarly, public reaction was sympathetic when a reporter tearfully interviewed a husband about losing grasp of his wife during Hurricane Katrina as she yelled her last words to take care of their children. In contrast, media video footage of the Rodney King beating touched off the L.A. riots in 1992 when the police officers who allegedly committed the beating, were acquitted.

Former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge equated the media to first responders. Members of the media rush toward danger, not away from it. The media is on the scene to bring home the story, he argues, but there may be a time when the audience needs more than the story. They may need information that could be critical to minimizing damage and saving lives. Government officials must have a better understanding of the way the media will work in a crisis, what the public will need, and

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[39] Wells, *War of the Worlds.*

[40] Ibid.

how quickly they will need it.[41] Author Steven Brill said the media should take an active part in educating the public about terrorism.[42]

As an example of the media educating the public, the recent rise in homicides in Philadelphia has caused fear and anxiety within the community. A local news station took the initiative in an hour-long special to educate residents on the causes of these homicides, how to help the police solve them, what the police are doing to stop the violence, and how to protect themselves from becoming victims. The program did not levy critique or blame on the police; rather, it was a public service documentary seeking answers to this problem. It is too early to draw any conclusions about the impact of this style of local reporting, but it serves as an example of how the local media may influence the public, allaying fears and concerns.

Although a bit outdated, the Three Mile Island (TMI) incident in 1979 underscores the need for better public-sector and media relations. Significant to the public's "right to know" was that many "facts" about the accident were not presented in a context that could be understood by the layperson.[43] In the TMI incident, reactor officials were besieged with inquiries almost as soon as the event occurred.[44] Competent journalists can absorb vast amounts of unfamiliar material while on the job. That happened during TMI, but the effort required to make sense of the story was enormous. It was not like covering a political campaign or an airplane hijacking, where at least the vocabulary of the sources and the vocabulary of the reporters are the same.[45]

In the TMI event, reporters arrived with different objectives. Some were science writers with an interest in the reactor. Some were medical writers with an interest in public health and safety. Others were sent to write "color" stories and focus on reactions

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[41] Department of Homeland Security, *Communicating in a Crisis* (Department of Homeland Security, 2004; available from http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=43&content=3937&print=true. (accessed November 11, 2005).

[42] National Public Radio, "Fear and Fallout "(2004); available from http//www.onthemedia.org/transcripts/transcripts_010904_fear.html. (accessed November 13, 2005).

[43] U.S. Government, *Kemeny Commission Report: Report of the Public's Right to Information Task Force to the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979).

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

of citizens and evacuees. It would have been difficult under ideal circumstances for a public information program to serve the many needs of the reporters who covered the accident. Given the information program in place when the reporters arrived, it proved to be impossible.[46]Similarly, without the proper training and knowledge about the consequences of weapons of mass destruction, the media and the police cannot properly inform or instruct the public.

Because terrorism is such a newsworthy event, according to widespread public belief, the media are expected to be aware of their operational role in the terror syndrome and to cooperate with law enforcement. Media cooperation with law enforcement in support of government is more likely than the media cooperation with terrorist aims.[47]

In his research of police and media relations, Robert Mawby discovered a number of key themes that set out what might be described as the orthodox view of the police-media relationship. This suggests that mass media images of policing are important; they are a source of information on the police and, on the whole, have helped to legitimate police work. Despite this, the media have had an important "watch dog" role, acting on behalf of the public against state agencies such as the police when propriety or justice is in doubt, particularly in alleged cases of miscarriages of justice.[48]

The importance of the media, both as a threat to and opportunity for the police, is underlined by research which suggests that up to two-thirds of people find out about the police through the media rather than personal contact. If this is true, then communication through the media is a critical issue for the police service. However, there is some dichotomy in the media's role. The media are dependent on the police for the news they deliver; it begs the question: Can the media objectively fulfill the ability to act as a Fourth Estate in a watchdog role over the institutions, such as law enforcement, of a democratic society?

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[46] Kemeny Commission Report.

[47] Robert Mawby, *Visibility, Transparency and Police-Media Relations: Policing and Society* (Stafford: OPA, 1999), 263.

[48]Ibid.

F.   MEDIA IMPACT — EFFECTS ON THE PUBLIC

The media's impact on the public is best summed up by a journalism professor Walt Seifert:

> The United States Supreme Court is not the highest in our land. Our highest court is the Court of Public Opinion which meets every hour.[49]

A media blackout is not the answer in guiding public reaction. Such a strategy weakens the very core of the First Amendment and our expectation to be informed. Jessica Hamblen studied the effects of news coverage during a terrorist attack and the addiction to being informed by news accounts. "Many people are unable to resist news coverage of terrorist attacks. As horrific as they are to watch on television and read about in newspapers and magazines, many still find it nearly impossible to turn away. It is difficult to know why the information is so hard to resist. Some say that people are hoping for information because they are fearful of future attacks and want to be prepared; others say that people are watching and reading in an effort to digest and process the event; still others say the media are intentionally creating seductive and addictive images, almost like those seen in an action movie. Whatever the reason, it is important to understand the effects on the community that this type of exposure may have. Research generally finds an association between watching television coverage of terrorist attacks and stress symptoms. However, most studies cannot answer the important question of whether watching television of the event makes people worse or if people who have more severe stress reactions are the ones who choose to watch more television coverage of the event."[50]

Lessons learned from democratic societies, such as Israel, about the effects of terrorism include the following:

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[49] Missouri State Highway Patrol, "Media Guide," June 1994, 1.

[50] Jessica Hamblen, *The Effects of Media Coverage of Terrorist Attacks on Viewers.* National Center for PTSD; available from http://www.dartcenter.org. (accessed July 5, 2005).

1. Terrorism is designed to sap the moral strength of Israeli citizens and upset their way of life. In its threats and harmful onslaught on persons and property, terrorism causes moral and psychological damage.

2. Terrorist attacks are meant to attain political aims —to change policies and influence political moves. To attain these aims, terrorism seeks broad media exposure in order to reach various target populations and spread fear and anxiety.

Electronic media and the press (e.g., editors, journalists, publishers, and owners) should establish an ad hoc committee of media members to agree upon technical rules regarding media coverage of terrorist attacks, during and after their occurrence.

In the event of a terrorist attack in Philadelphia, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated. The EOC, under the direction of the managing director, summons representatives from the various emergency response agencies to coordinate and properly utilize federal, state, and local resources. Through the joint information center, a Public Information Officer (PIO) will address the public through the media.

G. MEDIA CREDIBILITY

In the recent past, the media's credibility has come under scrutiny. The media's reputation has been harmed by scandals involving fictitious news articles in the New York Times, questionable documents secured by CBS, and also by general accusations of not being tough enough on the federal government, particularly on the question of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In a survey published by the Annenberg Public Policy Center in May 2005, people were asked: "In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight or do you think their stories and reports are "often inaccurate"?" Of the 1500 respondents, 48 percent said "often inaccurate." On top of that, 41 percent believe that once a mistake had been made, news organizations would try to cover up the blunder.[51] Polls show that journalism's public image took severe blows. The media's credibility suffered another blow when they hastily reported that all

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[51] Staff, "With Hurricane, Media Regain Some Ground with the Public," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 16, 2005.

Tallmansville, W. Virginia, miners were safely rescued from the Sago Mine. Sadly, the truth was tainted by the most unfortunate sort of miscommunication.

Journalists should do their professional best to give readers, listeners, and viewers substantive and specific attribution to their stories. Attribution supports both accuracy and authenticity. As journalists, they should respectfully push their sources. Editors and producers should be strictly reviewing the reporters' work to ensure a high level of confidence in the accuracy of the information. Ideally, professional skepticism produces high quality, believable reports.

One of the biggest setbacks in the battle for media credibility came when *Newsweek Magazine* erroneously reported that U.S. interrogators at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, had flushed a copy of Islam's holy book down a toilet in an attempt to rattle detainees. This discredited report resulted in eruptions of violence in Pakistan and Afghanistan that left 15 dead and scores injured. Despite a retraction, the damage was done. The Project for Excellence in Journalism, an organization dedicated to improving the profession, lamented the decline in media credibility in its annual State of the News Media report. "People have long considered the press sensational, rude, pushy, and callous. But in the past 17 years, they have also come to see the press as less professional, less caring about the interest of the country."[52] "Newsweek is directly responsible for the deaths of innocents and for damaging America."[53]

H.   CREDIBILITY OF INFORMATION

The PPD's credibility with the public and the media is paramount. It is especially significant during a terrorist attack. Some law enforcement personnel's negative experiences with the media lead them to believe that the media often "twists" the facts in order to portray the police in a negative light. "The media attempt to sensationalize all of their stories if they can't get the news due to the police…then the media will make up facts and broadcast lies to the American public."[54]

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[52] Ron Hutchenson, "A Setback in Battle for Credibility," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 18, 2005.

[53] David Brooks, "Newsweek Bashing: Bloggers Chime In," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 23, 2005.

[54] Caeti, et al., "Police-Media Relations at Critical Incidents."

Conversely, police officials realize the media's involvement is both necessary for and an integral part of these events. They also realize the media can be utilized to their advantage. One law enforcement official during the Oklahoma City bombing stated, "I think the media is a useful tool…and it is imperative that law enforcement has a working relationship with the media, which at times can be confusing."[55] This confusion can be lessened by two factors that can create successful relations in even the most difficult situations. First, law enforcement executives must recognize the need for open and honest communications. Second, law enforcement personnel must communicate fair and thorough ground rules to the media in order to govern both the initial encounter and subsequent interactions.[56]

In Oklahoma City, there was not much conflict at the site because the media were given some ground rules at the onset. Another source of cooperation seemed to be the willingness of police executives to provide timely pieces of news to the media at regular intervals, effectively to "give the media a bone" in order to avoid larger conflicts.[57]

The PIO needs to respond quickly during an incident, to prevent confusion and to reduce anxiety, otherwise pandemonium can ensue. For example, during the TMI incident, without the proper oversight, multiple interpretations were made by the press. In turn, some members of Congress received different, often more speculative and pessimistic reports from the nuclear regulatory commission (NRC). Reporters who had not received this information heard it second-hand from congressional sources. As a result, reporters became very suspicious of the officials, especially those at the NRC. The utility had naively underestimated the public reaction to the accident, leading to a loss of credibility.[58] During a biological attack, this type of irresponsible handling would become a breeding ground for suspicion and could significantly damage police credibility.

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[55] Caeti, et al., "Police-Media Relations at Critical Incidents."

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] *Kemeny Commission Report*.

I. COMMUNITY POLICING (CP)

Community policing principles have been extremely successful in Philadelphia. For instance, during a recent International Association Chiefs of Police conference officials were amazed of the lack of public outcry about the number of police shootings resulting in death. The Philadelphia Police Commissioner explained the openness and information sharing between the police and community thwarted any public outcry.[59] To obtain this same objective, the local police should form a partnership with the media to create a synchronized and systematic environment in reacting to a crisis incident resulting in positive public response. Considering its effectiveness and success in Philadelphia and around the country, a model similar to community policing may serve as the template for police and media relations for addressing the issues raised in this thesis.

CP was introduced to the PPD in the 1980's as a result of series of complaints against the police and their poor community relations practices. Since the inception of CP in Philadelphia, community members have embraced a partnership concept between the community and the police. The PPD prides itself on CP, interfacing with people of diverse backgrounds and addressing issues that negatively impact the quality of life in the community. The PPD is one of the few departments in the United States that calls on the business community and residents to be active members of the Police District Advisory Council (PDAC). The PPD also solicits faith-based leaders to participate in a police clergy program. Both groups work together in cooperation with the PPD and have an active voice in public safety.

J. PREPAREDNESS AND SOLUTIONS

A survey concerning terrorism conducted by Penn State University regarding the media's affect on the public revealed that, out of 1,000 people, nearly two-thirds of all respondents felt that the media had influenced their views on the importance of terrorism as a national problem. However, the study also revealed that the media is not effective in

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[59]Sylvester Johnson (Philadelphia Police Commissioner), Police Command Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, June 30, 2006.

motivating preparedness behavior.[60] This is an opportunity for the media to join the police and take a joint proactive approach to educate the public and reduce the psychological effects during unfamiliar incidents. For example, an unfamiliar incident like a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack will be unlike any disaster known to most Americans. Usually, disasters do not produce panic because they involve familiar phenomena that are time limited and discernible to those involved in them. People in fires, for example, generally act responsibly, even altruistically, because they know about fires and receive sensory cues that enable them to assess the threat and to plan their escape.[61] However, a chemical or, even more so, a biological incident poses a sudden, unanticipated and unfamiliar threat to health that lacks sensory cues, is prolonged or recurrent, potentially is contagious, and produces casualties that are observed by others. These are the factors that, historically, have spawned fear, panic, and contagious somatization — physical symptoms in the absence of known medical conditions. [62]

Police and the media can offset these psychological reactions. During the pre-event phase, the public should be made to feel that it is an active participant in preparedness. Community organizations that serve diverse populations should be involved in the development and dissemination of information. It is important that the public be educated prior to an attack.[63] In addition to instructing the public, basic preparedness information should be developed for and provided to professionals, faith-based leaders, civic organizations, and especially the media, who will interface with the community and can help to foster a sense of self-sufficiency. These leaders are experts in the needs of the community and informal resources within the community that may augment planned intervention.[64] This collection of people may help to promote confidence in the plans. The public will require reassurance and optimism in addition to

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[60] Staff, "Media Sways Perception, Not Action against Terrorism," Nov. 1,2003; available from http://www.in.news.yahoo.com/031101/139/2914s.html. (accessed April 4, 2006).

[61] Robert L. Heath and Michael Palenchar, "Community Relations and Risk Communication," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 12 (March 1, 2000): 131.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Adrienne Butler, Allison M. Panzer, and Lewis R. Goldfrank, "Developing Strategies for Minimizing the Psychological Consequences of Terrorism through Prevention, Intervention, and Health Promotion," National Academies Press (2003), 9.

[64] Butler et al., "Developing Strategies," 9.

instructions for personal protection and information regarding response measures from designated spokespersons. The key to this plan is preparedness. Both the media and the police department are highly skilled in dealing with disasters, but our American culture is largely unfamiliar with, and inexperienced in, terrorism.

The media's reaction must be responsible reporting. Sensationalized, irresponsible coverage of a massive anthrax outbreak, for example, would play into the hands of the bioterrorist and lead to chaos. There are times when the media must defer to responsible government institutions, just as automobile drivers defer to a police officer who is directing traffic. However, the policy of self-policing and accurate, responsible reporting must occasionally be followed in certain instances (e.g., bioterrorist attack), and the time to prepare for such reporting is now.[65]

K.   PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

Threats made against the U.S. and its allies make it more probable than not that the U.S. will experience a terrorist attack similar to 9/11 or one of greater magnitude. We cannot prevent all attacks; preparation is our weapon of choice in the immediate response. Unless we are psychologically prepared to cope with a terrorist incident we will fall victim to the terrorist. We must prepare in the physical sense and, equally importantly, in the psychological sense. To help prevent fear and limit uncertainty, the public should be made aware of normal psychological reactions to threats of violence, such as worry, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating, and how preparedness can help limit fear and promote effective coping.[66]

Any disaster response plan should be coordinated with regional agency facilities (i.e., local law enforcement and civil defense agencies). This process can serve as a vehicle by which expert medical professionals can educate others about the potential impact of psychological casualties on the community, the spectrum of normal-to-abnormal emotional reactions that may occur, and crisis intervention techniques.

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[65]Butler et al., "Developing Strategies,"

[66] Ibid.

Alternatively, if we do nothing, we fall victim to the terrorist propaganda that is fueled by the general public's ignorance about terrorism and exacerbates confusion and mass hysteria.

Our psychological state impacts our behavior and response. A poor or an abandoned psychological outlook breeds insecurity, fear, panic, distrust, hysteria, etc. Our culture must mirror others who work hard at reversing the negative effects of a poor psychological mindset. For example, the Israeli government has made a deliberate effort to counter the demoralizing effects of terrorism by strengthening the psychological coping skills of ordinary citizens. Terrorism experts visit schools throughout the country and provide educational programs tailored to students with the goal of lowering the level of anxiety and foiling one of the terrorists' principal aims: to instill fear and undermine the personal security of civilians."[67]

Police, media, and community leaders must deliver a message to the public that limits secondary exposure. Although the evidence linking media exposure to traumatic events and psychological consequences correlates well, the public may benefit by limiting its viewing of repeated depictions of the violence associated with terrorism events.[68]

L.   SUMMARY

This chapter identified several deficiencies in police and media relations. Historically both professions have been mistrusting and suspicious of each other. Pre-existing distinctions between the two compounds the sterile relationship. In the absence of wartime information that places our troops and our homeland in imminent danger, censoring information stifles our freedom of expression. While some countries have opted to censor information, the U.S. is conscientious to ensure that we operate within the parameters of the constitution and encourage responsible journalism. Although controversial and sensitive the media has quietly proven to self-censored information that

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[67] Jonathan B. Tucker, "Strategies for Countering Terrorism: Lessons from the Israeli Experience," March 2003; available from http://www.homelandsecurity.org/journal/articles/tucker-israel.html. (accessed November 8, 2005).

[68] Butler et al, "Developing Strategies."

may have serious consequences if release. The growing role of mass communication has provided terrorists with a vast array of options to promote their propaganda and the U.S. must minimize their capacity. Equally, the media must be conscious that they may serve as a conduit for the terrorist. The recent setbacks in public confidence in the media can be overturned by responsible and ethical standards. The media has been equated to first responders. Therefore, there may be a time when the public may need more than a story; the public may need information critical enough to save lives. The government must embrace how the media operates in times of crisis and leverage it to deliver the desirable message to the public.

The media must take an active part with the government in educating the public about the effects of terrorism. Failure to do so misinforms the public, breeds mass hysteria, and can be fatal. CP models exist that may serve as an ideal template in developing better police and media relations. Community organizations have proven to be a valuable asset in times of crisis and should not be overlooked as part of the preparation strategy. These community members and proven international educational programs may be the necessary panacea in combating and coping with the psychological impact of an incident.

In the next few chapters, the author takes on the challenge of addressing these deficiencies, offering recommendations, and developing newer methods which promote efforts in:

- Reducing tension between the police and the media

- Collaboration with the stakeholders during a crisis

- Utilizing the CP model approach in maintaining a partnership

- Creating a reservoir of goodwill for the public

- Establishing some preliminary guidelines between the police and the media

- Recognizing the media's impact on the public

- Effective crisis communication

- Establishing a training curriculum which enhances police and media relations

III.   COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS

A.   INTRODUCTION

The specific issue before us is how the media should cover and report on terrorism immediately following an incident. The controversial and sensitive question is who should decide how the media goes about its business. This chapter will review comparative studies on how media and government relations affect crisis management within the United States and internationally. Additionally, this chapter will compare and contrast U.S. public awareness strategies and mitigation response with other countries. Included in this section is a systematic review of proven national and international collaboration policies and training programs between both industries to identify best practices for local government.

B.   U.S. CASE STUDIES

This section examines the role and impact of the media in emergency situations by comparing four cases in the United States: the 1992 L.A. riots vs. the 1979 TMI nuclear accident and the 1993 WTC attack vs. the 1995 Oklahoma City terrorist bombings.[69]   Despite the obvious differences among these events, a comparison of the role of the media and their interaction with the public in all four cases reveals several common themes, each of which demonstrates a range of media responses.[70]

1.   A Case of Exaggeration/Sensationalized News and How the Media Can Create an Event

Perhaps one of the most sensationalized media events was that of the accident at TMI in 1979. A nationally televised report indicated that TMI faced the considerable uncertainties and dangers of the worst nuclear power plant accident of the atomic age. The specter was raised of perhaps the next most serious kind of nuclear catastrophe — a massive release of radioactivity. Nothing could have been further from the truth. An unfortunate contributor to this misinformation was that the utility and the NRC did not anticipate, nor were they prepared to deal with the public about, a serious, prolonged

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[69] Burkhart, *Media, Emergency Warnings, and Citizen Response.*

[70] Congress, *Media Interaction with the Public in Emergency Situations.*

nuclear accident. Utility spokesmen offered explanations that were confusing and often at odds with the views of the NRC. Journalists' accounts reflected the confusion of their sources and at times bordered on sensationalism.[71]

Conflicting statements brought swarms of reporters to TMI to probe what looked like an industry cover-up. Communications failings by the nuclear industry and media produced confusion among local residents, heightening the public's difficulties in understanding radiation and evacuation.

TMI is in contrast to the L.A. riots, which illustrated how the media can create an event. From beginning to end, the L.A. riots were a media spectacle. The repeated airing of the beating of Rodney King, intensified by deep-seated grievances in South Central Los Angeles, effectively paved the way for violence. News of the acquittal of the four police officers involved in the beating of Rodney King set off rioting by African-American, Hispanic, and some white residents of South Central Los Angeles. Televised images of street scenes acted as guides to looters and helped to propel the rioting. The impact of videotaping was particularly noteworthy; it was through this medium that images of the beatings of Rodney King and Reginald Denny were seared into the nation's collective psyche.[72]

Reporting in the *Los Angeles Times* appeared more restrained than television coverage, but both broadcast and print media engaged in controversial and sensationalized reporting,[73] which compares well with TMI. Such coverage led many people across the nation to fear that the lawlessness in Los Angeles might spread to their neighborhoods, while reports from TMI in contrast became more of a catalyst for hysteria about radioactivity.

2.   **Media as an Aid in Rescue Operations can Alleviate, Exacerbate or Prejudice the Outcome of an Event.**

Directly following the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the actions of the media had powerful effects on three distinct groups of people and illustrated the ways

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[71] Burkhart, *Media, Emergency Warnings, and Citizen Response*.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

in which the media can alter a crisis situation. First, radio and television served as sources of emergency information for victims before and during the evacuation of the towers. Second, in some cases the media directly hindered investigators as they did their jobs. Third, press reports on the explosion played a role in determining how the general public reacted to the situation, thus increasing or decreasing the likelihood of mass panic.[74]

Many of the victims trapped inside the WTC after the bombing were able to watch television news, listen to radio broadcasts, and even call newscasters directly. The media was able to give people a wide range of emergency information. "Throughout the afternoon and evening, New York City newscasters gave out emergency phone numbers, urged calm on those trapped inside, and praised the work of the city's emergency crews," the *New York Times* wrote the day after the explosion.[75] The efforts of the television studios to provide information to victims in New York and similar efforts in Oklahoma City to locate relatives of the injured and collect relief supplies are examples of how mass media can alleviate suffering and promote rescue operations.

In contrast, a potentially more harmful episode took place when media reports revealed that investigators had linked the WTC explosion to a yellow Ford van rented from a Ryder franchise in New Jersey. The report did not name the man who had rented the van, but it did report the address of the Ryder office and the fact that the van had been reported stolen.[76] The report forced investigators to arrest Mohammed Salameh immediately, although they would have preferred to keep him under surveillance in the hope that he would lead them to co-conspirators. The arrest cost them possible leads on other suspects and demonstrated the ability of news reporting to force the hand of investigators in the midst of their work.[77]

Finally, the general tone of the bombing coverage varied greatly among media outlets. Predictably, the tabloid press displayed the greatest tendency to play to readers'

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[74] Congress, *Media Interaction with the Public in Emergency Situations.*

[75] Elizabeth Kolbert, "News Coverage Plays Central Role in Story," *New York Times*, February 27 1993.

[76] Shirley E. Perlman, "Focus on Stolen Van," *Newsday*, March 4, 1993.

[77] Ralph Blumenthal, "Insistence on Refund for a Truck Results in an Arrest in Explosion," *New York Times,* March 5, 1993.

worst fears. Most reputable newspapers and networks exercised caution in their reporting of the bombings. However, in some cases, respected newspapers and networks also resorted to alarmist speculation. The media quoted federal authorities describing the bombing as "the single most destructive act of terrorism ever committed on U.S. soil." This statement is accurate only if destruction is measured in financial terms rather than in terms of loss of life.[78] This casting of the bombing as the first event of its kind in U.S. history seems designed to heighten viewer hysteria.

3. Media Impact on Public Perception

In contrast to the WTC bombing, in Oklahoma City media speculation about Middle Eastern terrorists began within hours of the explosion. Two years after the WTC bombing, Americans were eager to blame foreigners because it was too painful to look closer to home. There was little evidence to support stories that suggested Islamic terrorists had bombed the building. CNN went so far as to name suspects without any evidence whatsoever of their involvement; CBS singled out terrorists from Hamas, the militant Palestinian organization, without corroboration. Such accusations amounted to scapegoat-hunting as the press and the public groped for answers. Suspicion of Middle Eastern terrorists led to harassing phone calls, vandalism, and acts of hate against Middle Eastern residents in the United States. Even law enforcement agencies succumbed to the Middle East terrorist hysteria. They pursued several suspects from the region to London, even though officials lacked solid evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the alleged offenders. When the prime suspect turned out to be a white American, the attention focused on antigovernment militia despite the fact that there was no evidence supporting such a conclusion.[79]

The media and public's quick assumptions that this horrific act of terrorism had Middle East origins quickly channeled the country's grief and anger into hate. Bomb threats, harassing phone calls, and acts of vandalism against the innocent occurred, much like in response to the 1993 WTC bombing.[80]

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[78] Congress, *Media Interaction with the Public in Emergency Situations.*

[79] Ibid.

[80] Congress, *Media Interaction with the Public in Emergency Situations.*

In summary, the lessons learned from these four cases illustrate the impact the U.S. media has when reporting events and how the American public is informed, but also how people can be misled with half-truths and sensationalism.

C.   PUBLIC AWARENESS — AN OVERSEAS COMPARISON

Public awareness is a key component of crisis management. Establishing and maintaining a common operating procedure and ensuring cooperative relationships are the principle goals of effective communications and information management.[81] Preparation, practice, and response to a catastrophic incident should not be limited to the police and media. It should be expanded to a larger audience to obtain the maximum result during a crisis. Unfortunately, the U.S. preparation strategies are limited to the much confused, color-coded warning system, fragmented interviews of government officials, and a poorly advertised website, *www.ready.gov*. Best practices also can be learned from other countries.

In contrast to the U.S., the British government uses a "commonsense" campaign to inform people about the best way to respond to a terrorist attack through television and brochure mailings to every household to advise people about how best to respond to a terrorist attack. The anti-terrorist brochure is designed to provide practical advice that covers the basics of first aid, how to respond in the workplace to a major incident, and what to have on hand in case of an emergency. This emergency could be a terrorist attack, a major fire, a flood, or a situation where someone needs help. The origination of this idea arose from a similar initiative in Australia in which the government sent a booklet to every home, explaining what to do in the event of a terrorist attack and warning people to look for suspicious vehicles, people purchasing large quantities of fertilizer, and "unusual videotaping" of official buildings.[82] The Australian $15m (US $9m) campaign involved packs that included a refrigerator magnet bearing an anti-

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[81]FEMA, National Incident Management System; available from http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims. (accessed Aug 10, 2005)

[82] Abraham Miller, "Terrorism and the Media: Lessons from the British Experience," Heritage Foundation; available from www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandandDefense/HL249.cfm. (accessed April 1, 2006).

terrorist hotline number, with instructions on assembling a survival kit, making emergency plans to collect children from school, and checking on elderly neighbors.

Both governments' campaigns include television, press, transit and outdoor advertising, and advertising in 33 languages other than English. The government targeted business owners, especially critical infrastructure entities, to ensure they were adequately protected.

The Australian government specifically insists on using all forms of mass media (e.g., television, radio, newspapers, and the internet) to provide critical information and advice on protecting the nation against terrorism. Among the governments' objectives during an emergency are to ensure that citizens remain calm and to reassure them that the government is effectively addressing the threat.[83]

One of the most proven strategies for educating the public following a catastrophic event may rest with preparation models from England and Australia, where government campaigns focus on direct contact with the public through the media to disseminate information concerning terrorist incidents. The world witnessed an excellent example of media/government cooperation during the July 7, 2005, bus and train bombings in London. The media focused on the citizens resolve to return to "life as normal," while the police periodically kept the public informed and allayed fears. Images on television depicted people returning home from work on the day of the bombings, like any ordinary day. This provides a powerful statement to the terrorists. Life was temporarily disrupted but not frozen.

As the investigation matured, the police located some co-conspirators and even though the media knew the precise location the terrorists occupied, at the request of the police, they held back, not filming until the police could make the arrest. Only then did the media swarm in for their exclusive pictures and video. It was a brilliant example demonstrating how cooperation allowed both parties to get what they wanted without impeding the arrest or slowing media coverage.

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[83] Sarah H. Wright, "Teach-in Looks at World Media Response to Terrorist Attacks," MIT; available from http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2001/teachin1-0926.html. (accessed April 1, 2006).

D.   HOW TO MITIGATE AFFECTS OF TERRORISM

Americans can lessen the impact of future terrorism by learning to respond more objectively to future malicious acts. As we obsessively and excessively beef up internal security and try to dismantle terrorist groups worldwide, Americans actually feed the terrorists' purposes.[84] It could be as important to combat our emotional vulnerability to terrorism as it is to attack al Qaeda.

By minimizing our negative reactions, we might undermine terrorists' goals as effectively as by waging war on them or by mounting homeland defenses. As former President Franklin D. Roosevelt so famously stated, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." We can help ensure that terrorists don't win if we can minimize our fears and react more constructively to future terrorism. This option is not easy, nor will it suffice alone. It may not even be possible. Yet human beings often best succeed by being rational when their emotions, however tenacious and innate, have let them down.

For a few days following the July 7 London transit bombings the number of riders was slightly below average. The transportation system recovered quickly, and within a couple of weeks, the numbers were back to normal. In contrast, for a year after the 9/11 attacks, Americans were still profoundly reluctant to board airplanes. As a result, Americans chose the roadways as their alternative mode of transportation, which led to a rise in traffic deaths of more than 1,200 when compared to the previous year's statistics. According to Professor Garrick Blalock at Cornell University, "the response to terrorism can often have consequences that rival the affects of the act itself."[85]   One constructive antidote to post-9/11 trauma is to enhance the information available and to foster judicious appreciation, evaluation, and use of the information. Life is inherently risky, unpredictable, and subject to variables we cannot know, but there are factors we do know and can understand. Rather than inciting people's fears about sharks, serial killers, and anthrax, the mass media could help people understand genuine risks in their everyday

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[84] Clark R. Chapman and Allan W. Harris, "A Skeptical Look at September 11th: How We Can Defeat Terrorism by Reacting to it More Rationally," September, 2002; available from http://www.csicop.org/SI/2002-09/9-11.html. (accessed July 1, 2005).

[85] Elisabeth Rosenthal, "New Insight on Coping with the Risk of Terror," *International Herald Tribune*, July 30, 2005.

environments and activities.[86] Much like the Israeli system, our educational institutions should help students develop critical skills necessary to make rational choices.[87] While avoiding intrusions into personal liberties, government could nevertheless collect and assess statistical data in those arenas (such as air travel) considered potential targets, concentrating protective efforts and law enforcement where it is most efficacious.

The goal, researchers say, is to get people to view the threat of terrorism as a calculated risk rather than as an event to avoid at all costs because dread incites panic and irrational behavior. "Governments need to give people an accurate assessment of risk to help them, because we know people react in ways that are often wildly irrational," said Gary LaFree, director of the Center for the Study of Terrorism at the University of Maryland. For example, Spaniards took the more rational approach after the Madrid train bombing in March 2004; the number of riders dropped for just two months (though this might be because the new Spanish government decided to pull its troops out of Iraq and this perhaps created a sense among Madrid's riders that their city was no longer a terrorist target). There was no rise in driving; hence, no additional traffic deaths.[88] The Spanish government helped promote a positive response and the trains continued to operate on time. The day after the bombing, train ridership was four times higher than normal as Spaniards attended huge antiterrorism demonstrations.[89] The U.S., by contrast, chose to ground air traffic for several days after 9/11, possibly fostering undesirable effects.

Since 9/11, there has been a tremendous interest in the never ending GWOT. The media plays a significant role in reporting international efforts related to the GWOT and the impact such information has on the American public. As these images and information are released, Americans become painfully aware of their vulnerability to terrorism. However, there is good news on the GWOT front. There has been successful counterterrorism measures employed recently in Europe. Since the 2004 bombings in

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[86] Rosenthal, "New Insight."

[87] Brendan Loy, *Terrorism in Israel* (paper presented at the New Jersey Counter-terrorism symposium, Trenton, New Jersey, May 19, 2005).

[88] Rosenthal, "New Insight."

[89] Ibid.

Madrid, authorities across the Atlantic Ocean have escalated counterterrorism efforts, making hundreds of arrests and foiling several large scale plots.[90] As of the recent writing of this report on August 9, 2006, British authorities prevented a terrorist plot of significant magnitude that some have described as larger than 9/11.

Despite successful counterterrorism measures, about 41 percent of Americans feel that neither international allies, nor the U.S. is winning the war on terrorism.[91] Although international authorities continue to effectively fight terrorist operatives, the media reminds us of our vulnerabilities back at home on an almost daily basis. However, despite this significant poll rating government officials and the media should still use these international accomplishments to parlay U.S. interventions and collaborative efforts with other countries to make America safer. Successful U.S. intervention deserves substantial media attention, and the government should be a driving force in ensuring that these messages are delivered to the public.

E.   GUIDELINE

Journalists know the news value of terrorism, but they are also aware of their role as envoys of the fear, threats, and messages terrorists wish to promulgate.[92] A wide range of people have suggested ways by which the media might address the problems inherent in covering terrorist incidents. Some have suggested that there be no live coverage of an incident in progress. Others have proposed formal guidelines, perhaps offered by the government, voluntarily set up by news organizations, or by the two working in concert. For example, during the Institute for Counter Terrorism (ICT) conference in Israel, media and government officials discovered the following: [93]

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[90] John Cloud, "Three Lessons from London," *Time*, July 18, 2005.

[91] CBS News Poll, "War on Terrorism, Polling Report, Aug 11-13, 2006;" available from http://www.pollingreport.com/terror.htm. (accessed August 15, 2006).

[92] Geffner, "Theater of Terror."

[93] Staff,"Contending with Terror: Psychological Aspects," (paper presented at the The Shefayyim Conference, June 26-27, 1997); available from http://www.ict.org.il/institute/conf2.htm. (accessed November 2, 2005).

- The heightening of fear in the public due to media reports, both at the scene of terrorist attacks and in the aftermath, may play into the hands of terrorist organizations and encourage them to continue their activities with even more zeal.

- All agencies involved in the shaping of public opinion (i.e., politicians, public figures, media people, academics, educators, etc.) must contribute their share to the minimization of the moral–psychological damages of terrorism.

- Methods and guidelines must be formulated that will, on the one hand, enable the media to go on playing their crucial role in a democratic society of reporting freely and without external interference and, on the other hand, restrict the extent of the damages to people's sense of personal safety and to public morale.

Israel's government and local media downplay terrorist incidents to a minimum, focusing more on quick response, recovery, and the coping process and less on the actual incident. Other experts suggest crisis role playing, training, and educating the media.[94] As an example, the Metropolitan Police Department (Scotland Yard) has had success composing and developing good media relations. Both train together for large-scale events, such as a terrorist incident, and understand each other's roles and responsibilities. This formal training builds mutual rapport and trust. This has been accomplished through development of a mutual agreement as described below:

- Media are not allowed to photograph the dead or injured, or the scene itself, in an uncoordinated and unsupervised fashion.

- A press assembly point is established outside the outer cordon and an officer detailed to ensure they remain at that location until allowed supervised access.

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[94] Richard Esposito, "Media Operations During Major Incidents" (paper presented at the U.S. EPA Regional III Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Conference, Philadelphia, December 2004).

- A representative from the Public Affairs Office (PAO) attends as soon as possible, but no comment is made by police without the authority of the highest ranking commander and after consultation with the coordinating group.

- No comment about the numbers of injured or police action is made in conversation with press or TV representatives. Police and the PAO must bear in mind the probability of television cameras transmitting live pictures on the electronic news gathering system and so possibly alerting other terrorists of the precise scene or causing undue distress to the public. [95]

George Washington University has adopted a model similar to Scotland Yard's for training government and the media during a crisis. In Philadelphia, Temple University hosted the first ever media and first responder training in March 2006, which specifically addressed how both groups should communicate during a terrorist incident.

The greatest strength Israel and the United Kingdom (U.K.) have is that each enjoys a national police force run by one government under a centralized model. Because of this centralization, policies and procedures are easily disseminated and monitored to meet the intended outcome. Police and media relations are formed to collaborate in ways that make information available to the public in a synchronized and systematic fashion. However, one disadvantage is the availability of the vast government players to respond to media inquiries. It is enormous and, at times, far beyond the local authorities' capabilities to stifle government reaction. While this is a weakness in a national process, it can be controlled in a local response by instituting a policy limiting response to a select few delivering a consistent message (i.e., mayor, police commissioner, PIO, etc.).

In sharp contrast to the above examples, in the TMI incident authorities were ill-prepared and inexperienced in dealing with the media during a crisis. Basic public information techniques, such as setting up a press center where reporters could gather and

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[95] Metropolitan Police, "Operation Rainbow-Counter-Terrorism Response Plan," (London: London Metropolitan Police, 2001).

question sources, holding regular press conferences, and providing background information kits and graphics, were virtually neglected in the heat of the crisis.[96] Due to these shortcomings, misleading rumors that radiation had leaked into the community festered, causing unwarranted panic, stress, and concern.

Paul Bremer, the former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, said, "After considerable reflection, I believe that U.S. law and custom, our country's profound commitment to freedom of the press, and the individual circumstances of each terrorist incident make it impractical to develop universally accepted guidelines on media's response to terrorism."[97] However, he argues giving extensive coverage to terrorist statements may well encourage future acts of terrorism.[98] It is encouraging to see that responsible journalists are paying increasing attention to the impact their actions have on terrorism. Some major news organizations have set up specific internal guidelines for handling terrorist incidents. One example of an improvement in the situation was the decision by the major networks to decline to broadcast a videotape made in March 1988 by one of the hostages in Lebanon. The substance of what was said was reported, but the tape itself — obviously a cynical attempt by the kidnappers to advance their demands — was not aired.[99] Similarly, Robert Long, KNBC News Director, Burbank, California, chose not to air a live shooting death during a police chase on May 11, 2005, despite the temporary rating drop.

Terry Anderson, the journalist who was taken hostage and eventually released by the Islamic Jihad in the 1980s, said, "General guidelines too often do not fit all cases. Certainly, we should not allow, or implicitly approve censorship by government officials, who will try to impose censorship in any case. Public approval of their acts simply encourages an even heavier hand."[100]

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[96] *Kemeny Commission Report.*

[97] L. Paul Bremer III, "Terrorism and the Media-address before the International Association of Airline Security Officers," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* June 27, 1987.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism."

[100] Terry Anderson, *Terrorism in Perspective* , Terrorism and Censorship-The Media in Chains," (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003), 151.

News coverage also fosters irrational reactions, researchers have said, as graphic images and live television broadcasts reinforce the message of terror. On September 11, the world listened in on last desperate cell phone calls to loved ones and watched blood spattered office workers fleeing Manhattan. Despite the high toll of deaths and injury in the attack on the London Underground (Tube), the British news generally showed little in the way of gore. On the BBC, the standard image was a map of London and the Tube, with an "X" indicating each explosion. "Terrorism is theater, and it thrives only where there is open media…the more coverage, in some ways the more it plays into the hands of the terrorists."[101]

F.   POLICE AND MEDIA STRATEGIES

A number of strategies, none without costs or risks, exist for enhancing the effectiveness of government/media-oriented responses to terrorism, and for preventing the media from furthering terrorist goals as a byproduct of vigorous and free reporting.[102] However, these strategies are not likely to be very effective unless the United States, like Britain and Australia (who have sought to deny the terrorist direct access to the important platform of the broadcast media), is open to thinking outside the proverbial box to effectively win this campaign. Therefore, the following alternatives/policy recommendations should be considered:

1.   Training

a. Use expert advisers from both disciplines to avoid questions or reports that might exacerbate a terrorist situation; this training should encompass how to effectively communicate to the public.

b. Publicize the ongoing training, preparedness, and successful interagency partnerships which can "raise the costs" for terrorists and have a positive effect on deterrence.

c. The anti-media bias expressed by police is often born out of ignorance. Modifying the attitudes of department personnel toward the media should

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[101] Rosenthal, "New Insight."

[102] Perl, "Terrorism, the Media, and the Government."

begin with recruits at the police academy and continue through in-service training. The department cannot ignore or throw up their hands in exasperation. It must take the initiative in changing the mindset. Until officers and police executives are educated about the effect the media can have on the department, the power of the media works against the police rather than for it. In the same vein, media administrators and journalism schools should follow suit.

The training program should include the following ten C's of good communication,[103] which will produce confidence in the system and in the officials running the operation:

1. Be Cooperative

2. Provide Control

3. Demonstrate Care and Concern

4. Exhibit Competence

5. Be Credible

6. Be Consistent

7. Be Clear

8. Be Concise

9. Keep Current

10. Act Calm

At the same time, we need to be mindful of keeping to the principles of "Dealing with the HEAT." The pressure of the incident, inherent in any critical situation, obviously creates panicky reactions. To lessen that likelihood, the PIO should maintain eye contact and consider the following model when dealing with the media:[104]

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[103]Judy C. Hoffman, *Keeping Cool on the Hot Seat: Dealing Effectively with the Media in Times* of *Crisis* (Highland Mills: 4 Cs Publishing, 2001), 79.

[104] Hoffman, "Keeping Cool on the Hot Seat."

H — Hear them out; listen carefully to their questions; do not interrupt or jump to conclusions.

E — Empathize; validate what they are saying; if you don't have the answer, tell them, and get back to them when you do know.

A — Apologize for any confusion, misinformation or any adverse situation

T — Take action to help resolve or soften any problems

2. Professional Conduct

- A mutual agreement is necessary between the local government and the media that establishes a binding code of behavior or guidelines that editors and reporters can access for guidance. Even if specific guidelines are not adopted, such focus would increase understanding in the public and press policy communities about the need for responsible journalism.[105]

- The approach most favored by responsible mass media organizations is voluntary self-restraint in an attempt to avoid the dangers of manipulation and exploitation by terrorist groups.[106]

- Many major media organizations have adopted guidelines for their staff with the aim of preventing the more obvious pitfalls. For example, CBS News guidelines commit the organization to "thoughtful, conscientious care and restraint in its coverage of terrorism, avoiding giving an excessive platform for the terrorist/kidnapper, no live coverage of the terrorist/kidnapper (though live on-the-spot reporting by CBS News reporters is not limited thereby); avoiding interference with the authorities' communications (e.g., telephone lines); using expert advisers in hostage situations to avoid questions or reports that might exacerbate the situation; obeying all police instructions (but reporting to their superiors any instructions that seem to massage or suppress

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[105] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism."

[106] Ibid.

the news); and attempting to achieve such overall balance as to length so that the (terrorist) story does not unduly crowd out other important news of the hour/day."[107]

- There is no argument that cooperative relationships between the authorities and the media are essential for an effective police/media relations policy. However, the media should police itself to some degree. Media outlet manager-editors, publishers, and owners should establish an ad hoc committee of media members to agree upon technical rules regarding media coverage of terrorist attacks, during and after their occurrence. Formulating a program that will help identify propaganda manipulation by terrorist organizations will stress the importance of standing up to this manipulation as part of the overall fight against terrorism. One of the components of the program is a seminar to train media personnel and journalists who cover terrorist attacks (senior and novice) to provide critical and balanced coverage of attacks.[108]

3. Media Center

- An authorized body should be created to which media representatives can turn for reliable online information regarding terrorism on an ongoing basis, as well as during terrorist attacks.

- During a crisis incident we should consider use of a proven public warning/alert system to issue specific statements through the media in a coordinated manner. The Community Alert Network (CAN), an emergency notification system, allows the media to utilize a 24/7 operations center that assists the police in composing a succinct message that is quickly dispersed to those who need to know.[109]

- Another alternative is to utilize the services of independent crisis management consultants. For example, Audience Central (www.audiencecentral.com)

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[107]Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism."

[108] Perl, "Terrorism, the Media, and the Government."

[109]Judy Hoffman, "Community and Media Relations, Finding Answers," *JCH Enterprises* 3, no. 1, (March 1, 2003): 3.

developed PIER (Public Information and Emergency Response) to respond at a moments notice to meet the high demand for fast, accurate, and direct information. In an instant, this organization can remotely construct a public information notice on the organization's website for the media, providing additional time for the PAO and the organization [police] to concentrate on the latest developments.

- Another option is for Congress to consider establishing a permanent government terrorist information response center. Such a center, by agreement with the media, could have a rapid reaction terrorism reporting pool on call (through communication links), composed of senior network, wire service, and print media representatives. Network coverage of incidents would then be coordinated by the network representative in the center. Such a center could be headed by a government spokesperson (the Terrorism Information Coordinator) who would promptly seize the information and any initial communiqués from terrorists. Too often, when incidents happen in the United States, there is a vacuum of news other than the incident itself, and by the time the government agencies agree on and refine what can be said and what position is to be taken, the government information initiative is lost.[110]

G. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER'S ROLE

The PIO serves a crucial role in the organization, especially in times of a crisis. The PIO is often the individual the media has the most contact with in representing the organization's position. This established role perpetuates the significance of maintaining good public relations. The following strategies should be considered by the PIO when addressing the media:

- The first message is the most important message. The information must be clear and it must be accurate. Impressions are formed immediately. There must be one spokesperson, the PIO, who gets the information to the public. The PIO must adhere to principles of repetition, regularity and consistency.

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[110] Perl, "Terrorism, the Media, and the Government."

That is, information must be regularly reported with consistency; factual information should provide a well-shaped perception; and the information should be robust and withstand later disclosure.

- The PIO does not need to be an expert on the subject matter; however, part of the crisis plan should include bringing experts in and knowing when to call upon them to clarify any informational issues that might arise. In the TMI incident, there was no unambiguous evidence of a cover-up, but some utility officials showed a marked capacity for self-deception, and others hid behind technical jargon to obscure answers to troublesome questions.[111]

- Updates from the PIO at regular intervals are critical. Conducting unified briefings with other critical personnel and decision makers is essential. The PIO must remain calm, and provide clear and concise instructions, at all times.

- The PIO should build relationships between the PPD and the local media in advance to familiarize key representatives with operations and chain of command. Involve the media in exercises on how and why to disseminate information. Establish a forward media command post with links to headquarters. Conduct regular updates, hold on- and off-camera briefings, and, lastly, provide them a tour of the incident site.[112]

All of these suggestions promote a cohesive, hand-in-glove relationship between both organizations. We must be mindful not to neglect the political fallouts that may occur from watchdog groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). This or other groups may view police and media partnerships as a form of censorship or a tactic to control the media, which denies the public the right to know and to have free access to information. However, new strategies utilized by our government weaken this argument. For example, responding to pressure from the country's news media who were disappointed by the level of access granted during the 1991 Gulf War and in the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the United States military initiated a partnership concept

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[111]*Kemeny Commission Report.*

[112]Esposito, "Media Operations During Major Incidents."

with the Embedded Journalist Program.[113] The military offered journalists the opportunity to undergo a period of boot-camp style training before being allowed into the combat zone. Whether the news accounts of the GWOT are positive or damaging, embedded journalists continue to provide Americans with updates to keep the public informed. A similar embedded model should be entertained by the PPD during a terrorist incident. The likelihood of offsetting criticism from the ACLU and other watchdog groups may rest in unconventional methods, by allowing representatives to participate as students/instructors.

H.   SUMMARY

In the first half of this chapter, the author discussed comparative case studies within the United States and overseas on media response to a crisis and its effect. In the U.S., several cases emphasized on how the media can 1) exaggerate or sensationalize news and their impact in creating an event; 2) be an aid in rescue operations in which they can alleviate, exacerbate, or prejudice the outcome of an event; and 3) impact public perception. The lessons learned from the four cases illustrate the influence of the media in reporting and how people can be misled with limited information.

Public awareness is critical during a crisis, and preparedness is a necessary ingredient. Unfortunately public awareness preparation strategies in the U.S. are limited. Overseas governments, on the other hand, employ a strategy of how the public should respond to an attack through public service announcements on television and through brochure mailings to every household. Businesses and critical infrastructures are also included in the preparedness strategy. Overseas strategies such as these can aid America in mitigating the affects of a terrorist incident. Furthermore, educational programs like those exercised in Israel can help America develop better coping skills to make rational choices during a crisis. Successful U.S. intervention requires public exposure with a confident message that the government is forcefully protecting our homeland.

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[113] An embedded journalist is a news reporter who is attached to a military unit involved in an armed conflict.

In the second half of this chapter, the author looked at guidelines for the police and media. Although sweeping guidelines are impractical; some preliminary guidelines should be developed between the two organizations to ensure the proper message is made available to the public in a timely and accurate manner. Ideally, one spokesperson should be the sole communicator during a crisis. Other strategies discussed in this chapter covered training programs, exercising professional conduct (including responsible journalism and voluntary self-restraint), and working with a media center to help disseminate information. The author discussed the PIO's critical role in representing the organization's position and the willingness to cooperate with the media should be apparent. The PIO's relationship with the media and openness in providing the necessary information provides a well organized public perception of the government's response to a crisis. In the following chapter the methodology of the experiment conducted by the author to test some of these hypotheses will be discussed followed by the research findings.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. PARTICIPANTS

This research entailed surveys and interviews of a diverse group of individuals with varying degrees of background relevant to this thesis, yet homogeneous enough to capture any recurring themes. Relationships between the author and participants varied. The author's experience with some participants spanned more than 21 years of law-enforcement experience, while he had no prior interaction with others. The participants for each group were comprised as follows:

- Law enforcement: Philadelphia police commanders; nearly all with 20 or more years of law enforcement experience who have worked throughout the city. Their knowledge covers a variety of disciplines (i.e., public affairs, patrol, detective division investigators, crime scene investigations, internal investigations, communications, narcotics investigations, and homeland security). Included in this group was the former chief of police of Portland, Maine, who is currently the chief of police for Upper Darby Township, Pennsylvania. In addition, there was also a special agent from the Philadelphia FBI office, responsible for all media and public affairs in the area.

- Media: Twenty journalists (i.e., reporters, editors, producers, and managers) covering the different media outlets in the Philadelphia market (e.g., television, radio, print, and internet). Their experience ranges from 10-30 years of reporting on a variety of critical incidents such as Hurricane Katrina, the September 11th attacks, the DC sniper attacks, the New York blackout, daily crime occurrences, etc.

- Community: Twenty-five community leaders, including neighborhood block captains, members from the business community, police district advisory council (PDAC) members, police clergy, elected officials, and community activists from central, north, and west Philadelphia. Councilpersons represented north and west Philadelphia; another represented the city at large.

The goal was to develop a policy designed to serve the interests of local government, the media, and the public, while recognizing the dynamics of a terrorist enterprise. Additionally, the focus group exploration should produce opportunities to convene forums where participants can discuss issues of common interest.[114]

B.   LIMITATIONS

Study limitations included a small sample group of the general population identified in this report. The participants in section A consisted of the 65 individuals; the geographic boundary area represents the publication, listening, and viewing audience specific to and surrounding the city of Philadelphia. The results should not be interpreted as a generalization for all police, media outlets, and the American people. The group in this study is a sample of convenience and may not capture all ideas of the larger group within the metropolitan area.

C.   INSTRUMENTATION

The instrument used to gauge all of the participant's response was a survey questionnaire; followed by six questions for the police and media in a focus group setting. The questions specifically addressed reporting practices, relationship experiences between the two groups, and training (refer to appendix A for a sample of the instrument).[115] The community group participated in two focus group questions regarding reporting practices of the police and media. Each stakeholder group participated in a questionnaire consisting of 14-16 multiple-choice and yes-or-no questions.[116] These questions were designed to capture the participant's interpretation of his or her relationship with each respective group (media, police, and community) and his or her views on collaborating on crisis management training. The survey questionnaire also aimed at collecting focus opinions about each group's value in developing a

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[114] E. Stringer and W.J. Genat, *Action Research in Health, Gathering Data: Sources of Information* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Press, 2004), 69.

[115] Police and media participated in six focus group questions and the community participated in two focus group questions.

[116] Questions 7 and 8 from the police &media survey were omitted in the community survey. Both questions referred to specific job responsibility and were irrelevant for the community to participate.

partnership. Immediately following the questionnaire, follow-up focus group discussions were conducted to elaborate on the issues and themes that were initially identified and to obtain optimal solutions through group consensus. [117] Focus group interviews, when conducted carefully and used appropriately, promise to provide a rich, new way of gathering qualitative evaluation information.[118]

D.   PROCEDURE

The media were the first to be interviewed, followed by the police, and, finally, the community leaders. Each individual signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study and provided permission to be audio taped for the sake of reference and accuracy of the data. The audio tapes will be destroyed after the publication of this thesis. Each focus group discussion lasted approximately 1-1½ hours followed by individual discussions. The community group proved to be a challenge in terms of scheduling a focus group discussion. Therefore, individual discussions and telephone interviews were conducted by the author. Each group was highly verbal and was able to share their views comfortably. The participants were able to hear each other's responses and made additional comments beyond their own original responses.

The objective is to get high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others.[119] It was extremely important to capture all relevant data and to ensure the accuracy of the discussions. The author conducted the interview, while the second observer, Dr. Kristie Koenig, was present to record notes and key issues that surfaced as recurring themes and asked participants to elaborate if it was necessary. Following each session the author and second observer together analyzed the survey response. The audio tapes were transcribed and analyzed by the author and then shared with the second observer in a follow up meeting for her assessment. The member checking process was then instituted. Member checking is a procedure by which the respondents are provided a copy of the interview as

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[117] One commander elected not to participate in the survey portion of the research.

[118] M.Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, Qualitative Interviewing* (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990), 335.

[119] Ibid.

an opportunity to confirm the accuracy or to extend or clarify information. A copy of the results from each interview was provided to nearly each respondent for his/her comment(s).

E.   ANALYSIS

The qualitative and quantitative analysis was part of the methodology which helped maximize the data collection, identify common features across groups, identify divergent issues or perspectives, uncover recurring themes, and interpret the information useful for an application method. Qualitative and quantitative aspects can be combined within one study to measure certain components of behavior and to see how such measures relate to the nature of the experience.[120] In this experiment the author concentrated on the relationships among the groups. The survey provided the quantitative data which was analyzed using descriptive statistics to yield percent agreement and differences for the items. The focus group discussions provided the qualitative data for this research. The transcribed audiotapes and observer notes were analyzed for recurring themes.

The results are explored in the following chapter. The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) of the data collected were examined and identified. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify the impact of these criteria to a study or project. In this experiment the author considered the following parameters in assessing the overall systems view of a joint operational plan: the mission and vision of the PPD,[121] stakeholders input, communication network, leadership commitment, management priorities, and organizational culture/mindset. These key components helped identify obstacles and how to overcome them. It also helped in identifying allies and competencies in driving the plan. The goal of this analysis system is to identify thoughtful discussions among the participants and comprehend the implications of their

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[120] L.G. Portney and M.P. Watkins, *Foundations of Clinical Research: Applications to Practice, Designing Clinical Research* (Norwalk: Appleton & Lange, 1993), 238.

[121] Because each media outlet has varying missions and visions it would be impractical to consider each one. Since the PPD should take the lead in the joint venture; their mission and vision is a critical component in guiding the various media outlet needs. The author worked under the assumption that the community's mission is one of sound, public safety practices which provides them with timely and accurate information.

suggestions in promoting a collaborative system which satisfies the needs of each respective group that creates public value.

The power of this exercise increased exponentially when the participants collaborated and began to ask questions of other respondents and the research facilitator.[122] The data was reduced to derive meaning from the exercise. The questions were categorized in a systematic way to uncover patterns or themes and to extract meaning from the mass information. One of the unique features of this methodology is that it allows the researcher to develop research hypotheses as the data unfolds.[123] There were no predetermined expectations.

F.   SUMMARY

Surveys and interviews were conducted with a diverse group of stakeholders to capture the recurring theme in developing police and media relations. While the nature of policing is to deal with crisis management, identifying this group was simplistic. However, by design, it was critical for the study to identify journalists with significant experience in dealing with terrorism or crisis incidents. The goal of the study was to develop a policy that addresses the concerns of these stakeholders that challenges the prospect of a partnership. A quantitative and qualitative experiment was conducted to capture their concerns and to help provide possible solutions. Capturing the accuracy of the information was exercised through the member checking process where the participants were provided a copy of the data to confirm the information relayed during the focus group session. Both the author and the second reader separately tabulated the survey and conferred on the results. The parameters of the exercise focused on stakeholder input, communication network, mission and vision of the PPD, leadership and management priorities, and organizational culture. The questions were designed in a systematic manner to unveil a SWOT analysis and information relevant to the exercise.

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[122] Stringer and Genat, *Action Research in Health*.

[123]Portney and Watkins, *Foundations of Clinical Research: Applications to Practice*.

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V.   RESEARCH FINDINGS

A.   INTRODUCTION

As noted in Chapter I, the research question is to determine what strategies the PPD and the local media can jointly develop to better calibrate and direct public response to a terrorist incident. In the aftermath of a major terrorist incident, can the media and the PPD work collaboratively to reduce fear and prevent mass hysteria? This chapter will discuss the mixed methodology of survey and focus group interviews used to answer the research question. The chapter includes survey results and an examination of these findings, followed by an analysis of each focus group discussion with common and divergent themes identified amongst the media, police, and community leaders.

B.   SURVEY RESULTS

1.   Police and Media

The survey highlighted several interesting points. Forty-five percent of the police indicated they have not undergone any preparation in reporting a terrorist incident to the media; whereas 54 percent of the media indicated they have undergone such preparation. Statistically, the media is well prepared in contrast to the police. The police and the media were about even in terms of having a good relationship with the community; 55 percent and 54 percent respectively. However, when it came to suggesting the best method of covering breaking news concerning a terrorist incident, 64 percent of the police opted to provide generic information until there was confirmation of the specifics. Thirty-one percent of the media agreed with the police, while 23 percent would prefer to immediately release all information to the public. The majority of the media (46 percent) felt that providing information to the public as soon as possible was a priority and should not be impeded. Nevertheless, the media agreed that the exact information to be provided should depend upon the specific situation. The individual situation should dictate whether to release information immediately, conduct some background, or provide some generic information. The quality of the information provided to the public was key to this majority.

Both groups recognized reports of terrorism have a psychological effect on the public. More than half of the police (55 percent) understood that it depended on the information; another 36 percent felt it has a significant psychological effect. Seventy-seven percent of the media agreed with the police on both positions.

The following graph depicts eight core questions of the sixteen from the survey. Both groups unanimously understood the objectives of a terrorist attack. A clear majority (69%-100%) of both professions recognized that each should participate in the following: cross-training between the professions, joint exercises, and helping to educate the public in preparation and response. The surprising results rest in whether information should be withheld or not. Predictably 91 percent of the police said yes, and, surprisingly, 62 percent of the media agreed.
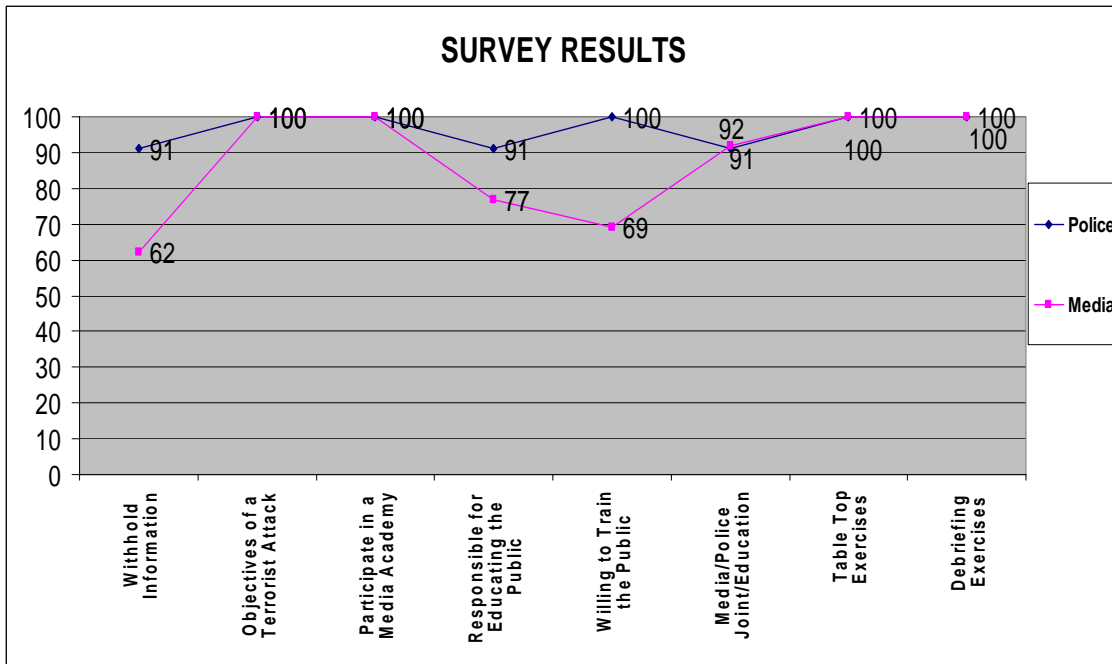
Figure 1.   Police and Media Survey Results

2. Community

The entire community group understood the objectives of a terrorist attack, despite that 55 percent had no formal training in counterterrorism. Eighty percent (80 percent) felt they have an excellent relationship with the police, and the remaining 20 percent said they have a good relationship. The groups regard of the media was different, 75 percent said their relationship with the media was neutral, and the remainder of the group was split between very poor to good.

Sixty-five percent recognized that the psychological effect on the public depends on the information reported. More than half (55 percent) agreed with the police that breaking news about a terrorist event should contain generic information until the information is confirmed. Ninety percent said all of the stakeholders (i.e., police, media, and community leaders) are responsible for educating the public about terrorism. Seventy-five percent agreed to be a spokesperson during an incident if called upon. The group unanimously agreed to participate in training programs in which they would learn and discuss the role of police, the media, and community leaders during a terrorist attack. This training will assist these leaders in effectively communicating with the general public during a crisis.

C.   FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW RESULTS

1.   Media

In the following section, the author addresses the questions presented to the media and a synopsis of the focus group discussions and common themes identified:

How can the police and media improve in communicating information to the public following a terrorist incident?

Before this could be addressed, some journalists questioned the current communication process and the ability of the media to determine whether an incident is terrorist-related. For example, immediately following the first plane crash into the World Trade Center no one knew it was a terrorist incident. The media argued that as soon as the police know something, they should share the information with them. If the police do

not know, they should make it clear that they do not know. By no means should the police lie, regardless of whether the ultimate intention is to protect the public. Once a lie is detected, subsequent information becomes suspect and the inherent mistrust intensifies. The media is willing to wait for confirmation on specifics as long as the police are willing to share what they can provide without jeopardizing the investigation.

Timing the release of information, and what to do with it, is critical. Due to the nature of their business, journalists recognize they are also vulnerable to terrorist attacks. They are either second to police or, possibly, the first at a scene. Their safety, as well as the safety of first responders and the public, is of primary importance in a terrorist incident. Therefore, sharing as much information as possible with the media is crucial. A good example is the effect of a bioterrorist attack as explained by one journalist. If the public is not informed in a timely manner, many risk being exposed to ground zero and contaminating others. Therefore, police should be forthcoming with this type of information. One journalist covering the 9/11 attacks said officials feared the air at ground zero may have been contaminated but reacted slowly. It took two to three days before masks were distributed to first responders and the media. Interestingly, another journalist countered and said that, ideally, police officials should have this knowledge and release it as soon as possible. In reality, this may not be the case because the effect of a bioterrorism attack may not be readily noticeable or known to officials until a later point.

An immediate concern for a journalist present at ground zero moments after the 9/11 attacks was the lack of public official presence in providing information to the public. Television was the sole communicator of the 9/11 events and, according to this journalist, "our job to the public" was difficult to do. However, once New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani began communicating, things quickly changed. The Mayor often provided information. He did not "sugar coat" information but provided facts. If he did not know something, he stated so. He also informed the public of what he did know and what the public needed to know and to do. This journalist felt this type of information sharing helped the media and government disseminate critical information and began the process of understanding the full effect of the attacks.

Another journalist mirrored suggestions by the 9/11 commission that law enforcement needs to change its culture from "need-to-know" to "need-to-share" information. Typically, law enforcement wants to conduct an investigation and then provide information to the media. While most journalists understand this practice, it is neither realistic nor practical during a terrorist incident to adopt this "wait for the investigation" approach. During a terrorist attack, every minute is vital to the media and the public.

A fiber optic technology was recommended to be a part of the Philadelphia Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This technology would be connected to all of the local media outlets for live broadcasting from the EOC within 10-15 minutes of an incident. Such technology would allow the PIO or spokesperson to provide the media and the public with the latest information.

While deadlines are critical for the media, deadlines quickly become insignificant during a terrorist incident due to live, 24-hour broadcasting. The media prefers reporting new information often and providing critical updates to the public. An example would be the activation of shelter-in-place protocol. A communication plan will facilitate the ability of the media and police to quickly provide this information, particularly to schools and high rise buildings.

<u>What are the barriers in establishing guidelines about how to report an act of terrorism?</u>

The majority of the journalists did not embrace developing guidelines that would curtail how information should be disseminated, mainly due to the competitive nature of the business. A terrorist incident is a difficult situation to handle and report. Restrictions would complicate the reporting, said one editor. However, there was a general consensus that the media may agree to an informal, unwritten procedure on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the incident. Undoubtedly, it will depend on the forged relationship between the police and media as well. Most argued that a pre-planned guideline would not be honored by most media outlets, but would agree to use more generic/non-descriptive language in order to prevent mass hysteria.

<u>What are acceptable guidelines or rules in holding back information?</u>

The media was open to the notion of waiting to release information; however, the police need to explain why officials are asking the media to repress information. Providing background information is critical for the media to accept the request. How City Hall perceives the proposed police and media relationship is also a concern for the media. If they are not committed to this venture, then the partnership is seriously compromised.

Journalists recommended that the police and media meet often to discuss emergency/crisis issues rather than wait for an incident to occur. As an example, they suggested adopting the current Philadelphia COMPSTAT model, where journalists are invited to attend the weekly command staff crime strategies meeting but are prohibited from using information from the meetings to report directly to the public. Information from these meetings can be used to develop new information (i.e., seek public help for new information, crime prevention tips, crime stoppers, etc.). A COMPSTAT-style meeting for journalists and police will aid in fostering a relationship between both organizations and provide a public service.

The media indicated that they did not need the proposed training program to be sold to them; they agreed to the concept of sharing information between the police and the media. The journalists stressed that the relationship should be developed on a daily basis instead of waiting until an incident brings them together. All agreed on the necessity of building trust to avoid false perceptions of convenience for either party. For instance, at times, the media feels exploited when the police ask for the public's help through the media to further an investigation, but the police will not reciprocate by providing additional information.

<u>What are the barriers in building trusting relationships between the media and the PPD?</u>

There was a consensus among the media that while the Police Commissioner is open to the media, a majority of the command staff is not. It is critical to have a written policy regarding when to speak with the media and what to say, otherwise the culture of

mistrust will prevail. Ironically, the department has a well written policy encouraging trust and openness with the media. However, many personnel still will not speak with the media due to the inherent mistrust while other personnel fear being ostracized by the organizational [police] culture if they do speak to the media. The command staff should be able to speak with the media more often and without reprisal, thus developing a relationship at the grass roots level. This type of initiative lends itself to building trust. Some journalists felt that the PIO should be able to provide more information during an incident. The media would like the PIO to have more authority in the release of information and to provide solutions to questions often asked by the media such as:

- Who has more information about the incident?

- Where else can information be obtained?

Should the police and the media train together?

This focus group agreed that training should be performed on a more regular basis than annually. Such training will provide valuable information about both cultures; but, more importantly, it will foster a relationship that will help bridge the gap between the two organizations. An introductory course should be a part of the police academy curriculum to off-set the "us versus them" mentality, which is already part of the recruit mind-set. Having a training course at the academy with media personalities will aid in bridging any potential gaps early in a police officer's career.

One journalist, reflecting on past experiences, stated that other departments have made the transition from the police role to the media role by assigning police officers in the communications section [Public Affairs] of the department to help understand the importance of sharing information with the media and the public. Another expressed that he is puzzled by the mistrust, particularly when 90 percent of the reporting about police is positive press about what the police are doing to address a situation. The mentality needs to change in order to understand the benefit of speaking with the media.

Journalists agreed that the best training for the media would be a "scenario-based type (foxhole)." This will help the media understand why the release of certain information may need to be delayed. All agreed that editors/producers/managers and

police administrators should adopt a model similar to PDAC and should meet on a regular basis to address the concerns of both organizations.

The media "speaks through experts" as a model to educate the public. They suggested having a department member with experience in terrorism begin developing a rapport with the media now. This will serve to identify a point person who could be interviewed during a crisis to aid the media in addressing an educational response to the public.

<u>Does the news media play a role in educating the public?</u>

The journalists acknowledge that educating the public is a serious responsibility for the police and the media. They pointed out that different media markets have different roles and responsibilities. For example, one manager stated while the local media provides information to educate the public on what to do (i.e., health advisory and road closure information), the national media focuses more on ground zero and the specifics leading up to the catastrophe. All stakeholders agreed that participating in a training program which shares information on lessons learned from an incident may prove to be vital information for the public.

One interesting note discovered in the focus groups is worth mentioning. What the media interprets as good communication tactics are not necessarily viewed as such by the police. For example, several police departments and articles written on the DC Sniper incident applauded how the Montgomery County Police kept the media and the public informed. However, the media viewed it as poor communication. This group complained about how local roads were closed, different media outlets were reporting different stories, and the local media were not informed of why certain events were occurring. This has an eerie similarity to the TMI incident. The principal spokesperson, Chief Moose, was viewed by most media as being available, but the perception was that he did not say anything of substance or value. Most information learned by the media was leaked information, which police did not want to share with the media (i.e., the license tag and

the capture). One producer said that had the police developed or shared more information initially, the media would have been more inclined to restrain use of the leaked information.

Locally, another example surfaced that these journalists collectively felt stifles media relations. For instance, Philadelphia government officials in city hall refused to provide the media the city's emergency evacuation plan, despite the fact that this same information had been made available to business leaders. The media feels such information should be available to them in advance so that they may provide it to the general public as a form of preparation for an incident. This is a classic example of why a training program is necessary for the police and media. Although admirable and having good intentions, the tragic truth is this type of advance general public disclosure can threaten the very purpose of the plan; the safety of the public. Sometimes there is no right response, except in retrospect. If after a bombing, you dispatch scores of medical, fire, and police personnel to evacuate the wounded and secure the scene, many of them will die if terrorists have set a second bomb to detonate there.[124] Other terrorist incidents have taught us that terrorists typically plan for secondary devices in order to cause more harm than the initial incident. Therefore, unnecessary and premature exposure by our government would be irresponsible and negligent. The media cannot argue with this reasonable explanation; but until an effort is made to bridge the communication gap, situations like this will continue to fester.

2.   Police

In this section the author will address the questions presented to the police and provide a synopsis of the focus group discussions and common themes identified:

<u>What can the police and media do better in communicating information to the public following a terrorist incident?</u>

Police are in agreement that providing the media and the public with timely and accurate information is vital. Information should not be provided for the sake of providing it; it should serve a purpose, such as providing instructions to the public. The information should include a plan of action to allay fears and build confidence in the

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[124] Begley, "Simulations of Attacks by Terrorist Illustrate Challenge Officials Face."

officials charged with relaying that information. There was concern that there is a tendency for the police to say something because they feel compelled to make a statement. It was stressed that when officials release information, it should be accurate and not assumptions or guesswork; otherwise, it will compound any confusion.

Police officials believe that preparation is the key, and that having a plan prior to the incident is imperative to the success of the response. All agreed that a police and media training program was a good suggestion. One commander suggested seeking the advice of terrorism experts to help facilitate the training. Such training should also include senior media personnel and police officials and should endeavor to explain why certain information cannot be released. Some thought it would be valuable to have managers/editors meet with officials during an incident in an effort to provide accurate information to all journalists.

The media should adopt a policy that aids them in policing themselves when it is necessary to refrain from making certain information public. It was generally accepted that on a national level some type of government and media relations campaign was working particularly with the Embedded Journalist Program. Therefore, a local plan may work as well. One commander recommended following the military model of embedded journalists as part of a response plan. This model would provide each journalist with different parts of the news and serve as an omnipresence of information. Rather than have the market drive the news, each episode will provide a unique story and perhaps offset the swarm of reporters competing for the entire story.

These police officials recognized that the media will not wait for official response and will report information as they discover it. The media will seek and find information from other sources if it is not provided by the police. Controlling information is an incredibly daunting task, said one commander. Police will not be successful in controlling the media but can be successful in providing information of value. Therefore, the police need to cooperate better with the media in order to provide accurate information rather than have the media obtain misinformation from other sources, which may lead to hysteria.

The immediate former Portland, Maine police chief, who presided over the department on September 11, raised an interesting point regarding allaying public fears when dealing with multiple law enforcement agencies. He supports media relations and understands the present era where the media can serve as a more valuable asset than ever before. He explained that police typically defer to the federal government. However, police need to actively counter the federal government when a situation appears to be headed in the wrong direction. For example, identification left at the Boston Airport linked two of the 9/11 hijackers to Portland, Maine. The FBI refused to release information to the public despite the media frenzy connecting the terrorist to Portland. There was widespread fear within the community that there might be sleeper cells. The community was anxious and panicky and assumptions were made that the local community was also a target. In opposition to the FBI, the Chief called a news conference and informed the public of the status of the investigation and the plan of action. This helped ease the tension that had been brewing and quell the fallout within the community.

Unless there is collaboration among the different levels of law enforcement (i.e., federal/state/local), different information will be disseminated to the public due to the different agendas and responsibilities each has to their audience. Fortunately, in Philadelphia, the police department and the FBI have an agreement to utilize one spokesperson at the Joint Information Center to address the public immediately following an incident.

There were some concerns raised regarding national coverage and the impact it will have on local media partnerships. It was generally accepted that once the national media gets involved, the local media will absolve their partnership to keep up with the national press. As an example, within minutes of what initially appeared to be a shooting inside a school in Philadelphia, CNN contacted the public affairs office of the PPD to obtain information. A local partnership would be beneficial but many fear that a terrorist attack would overwhelm the local media and that the national media would take over.

<u>What are potential barriers in establishing guidelines on how to report an act of terrorism?</u>

Competing interest will determine the common ground without violating freedom of expression/press and without causing a panic. Terrorists count on the force multiplier to create fear, and thus they accomplish their goal. For example, immediately following the 2005 London bombings, the Philadelphia Police Commissioner was interviewed by the local media on his strategy to address local response. The incident in Maine is also an example of how silence from officials may serve as a force multiplier.

One recommendation was to have key media decision makers and police officials help to determine guidelines. This process will assist the media in understanding why the police need to retain certain information, as is the case of active investigations. For example, the media has proven to be helpful to the PPD in the past by using ruses to further an investigation.

The media is a powerful resource that is often not utilized to its maximum potential. The media deserves more credit than it receives. Journalists are not averse to media blackouts in order to meet an objective, as was the case with Jill Carroll, the journalist held hostage for nearly three months in Iraq in early 2006. Rather than follow a traditional outreach to her captives on national television, media officials asked Carroll's parents to allow them to strategize her release. The media agreed to a 72-hour blackout. They implemented a strategy to frame stories of Carroll as a person who cared about the Arab culture and released information into the local media market that she was there as a person to help the Iraqi people. She was portrayed by the media as a sympathizer, and the media was instrumental in her release.

Similar to the media focus group, the police agreed that when developing a policy guideline to address a terrorism event, it needs to be general enough that it allows for some flexibility. It is difficult to create a policy without knowing the specific threat (i.e., bioterrorism or explosion). This is why one of the commanders stressed that training is crucial to help focus in on specific response to the media. Clearly, if a commander cannot confirm a terrorist attack; that information needs to be very clear to the media.

The guidelines should include a component that is specifically based on training in addition to implementing a strategic plan. For example, a refinery explosion today is treated differently than it would have been before 9/11. The trained commander will know exactly what to say to the media and how to allay fears.

What are the barriers in building trusting relationships between the media and the PPD?

The natural competitiveness inherent to the media acts as a barrier when communicating with the media. Each outlet, wanting to outperform their rivals may compromise any type of agreement between the police and the media. Most did not agree on having an open media policy similar to the system utilized by Scotland Yard. Based on the compelling endorsement of this study for police and media relations, this may have been a matter of interpretation of what constitutes an open media policy. An open media policy is the endorsement of open, honest, and transparency of the department with the media and the public. At least one commander felt that the police commissioner should be the sole person to respond to the media in the event of a terrorist incident. Like the media focus group, the police also felt scenario training, similar to Scotland Yard, was the best method of training for helping to close the gap.

Most agreed on a similar Civilian Police Academy {CPA} training program for the police and media (i.e., Media Police Academy [MPA]). Everyone felt an MPA would provide the opportunity to forge relationships and dispel rumors and mistrust. It was viewed as an opportunity for the exchange of ideas, and would provide the police a sense of how and why the media operate in specific situations, such as a terrorist event.

A police and media auxiliary council (PMAC) should be formed where the police commissioner and senior command staff, including the PIO, would meet with senior media officials to discuss issues regarding terrorism. The goal being to develop a relationship before an incident occurs.

To promote the development of a trusting relationship, the Police Commissioner should meet with general managers of the various media outlets. These general managers should understand the Commissioner's vision of the department and his position on

media relations. The PIO plays a significant role in implementing the Commissioner's vision and therefore should forge more than superficial relationships with the media.

One commander recalled former Philadelphia Police Commissioner, John F. Timoney hosting a one-day media training conference with journalist John Miller,[125] former ABC 20/20 reporter and former Deputy Police Commissioner of Public Affairs at the NYPD. Miller encouraged the Philadelphia commanders to:

- Be consistent with the media
- Return calls
- Provide as much information as possible, without compromising the investigation

Miller stressed that once a relationship is developed with the media, it is usually difficult for the media to circumvent the PIO or the department. Journalists want to report accurate information and credibility is important to the media. It is a problem for the media when they provide bad information. He stressed that media relationships start with the PIO office.

It is critical to get information out to the public during any incident. For instance, this group cited Chief Moose as a very effective principal spokesperson during the DC sniper incident. The public wants to see a familiar and trusted face.

A former PIO mentioned the importance of public officials speaking to the media in an expeditious manner and providing as much information as possible as well as a true assessment of the conditions. She cited Hurricane Katrina as an example. There were not enough officials countering rumors. Rumors were allowed to fester, and the public began to believe incidents of rape and murder. Police did not do enough to dispel these rumors and failed to control the situation. During the hurricane, the media was the only source of information and people needed to hear more from officials. Despite the hurricane warnings, officials were not organized in communicating with the media.

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[125] Miller is currently the Deputy Director of Public Affairs for the FBI at Washington, DC..

<u>Should police and media train together?</u>

The police also agreed that training the public should be a joint effort. However, a few dissenters believed the media should serve as a conduit of information rather than be responsible for training/teaching the public. Aside from the police, other agencies should join the training campaign as well (i.e., Public Health, Fire Dept., Dept. of Health and Human Services, elected officials, etc). The media typically interview terrorist experts during such events and should use them to allay fears by discussing the probable effects and what steps to take to remain safe. The media raised this issue and suggested having a police official knowledgeable in handling terrorism incidents available to them to accomplish this objective.

Some police were surprised to hear that the police department provided the media with WMD awareness training. As a result of a series of white powder being delivered to the local media, and at the request of media officials, the PPD Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) trained the media on the proper handling of WMD. Relationships developed as a result; the department should seize the opportunity to solidify a partnership.

The general consensus was that it is a good idea for all commanders to receive media training. The PIO cannot be everywhere. One commander suggested that it might be better for fewer commanders to speak with the media rather than having all or most speak to them. This commander suggested information should be referred to the PIO; thereby averting bad information in the public domain (i.e., the PIO should run the story). The PIO should be the lead person; but in the event of multiple scenes, it is essential to have the command staff trained and prepared. Particularly the commanders of the Command Inspections Bureau, who are delegated the responsibility to operate the department during non-business hours. While an Incident Command System should be activated that promotes one spokesperson, it should be flexible enough to include another spokesperson if the event dictates.

3.   Community

Predictably, this group emphasized their reaction is based on the information relayed in the public domain by the police, the media, and other authorities. They emphasized the police and the media need to "be factual" about the situation but "should be calm and cautious" on how they deliver the information.

They believe the media gets partial information and that "they fill-in the blanks to get better ratings." The community's regard of the media is consistent with prior literature. Several individuals mentioned that, similar to the New York attacks, there would likely be much confusion and the police and the media must avoid irresponsible speculation. The right information delivered in the wrong manner can cause chaos according to these individuals. Sensationalism during a terrorist attack will only increase confusion and create panic. On the other hand, the police and other authorities must react quickly and make sure all the information they are releasing is accurate. The authorities should inform the media as soon as they learn any information the public should be aware of. It was extremely apparent that the authorities' role was to stick with the facts and to allay fears as quickly as possible. It was essential that information be communicated quickly to the public to help mitigate any negative public reaction.

These community leaders said that, in addition to the information specific to the incident, they need to hear explicit instructions from authorities on what to do and the potential harm of the incident. For example, one leader said he was confused by conflicting media reports on what to do during a "dirty bomb" attack. Initially he learned it was safe to go to the lowest point (i.e., the basement); however, that was contradicted when he watched another weekly news magazine. Clearly, by these discussions, timely and accurate information is essential to public reaction to a terrorist incident.

D.   SUMMARY

In this chapter the author discussed the results of the survey and focus group discussions. Several interesting developments surfaced from both exercises. Most noteworthy was the fact that the police and the media acknowledged training will aid

each organization in abating the mistrust and suspicion inherent between both professions. In addition both agreed training would add value in understanding:

- the significant responsibility to the public each profession shares

- the usefulness of timely and accurate information

- the culture each operates under

- the importance of a need-to-share culture

- the psychological effects of poor crisis communication

- the significance of educating the public in preparation and response

- the significance a terrorist attack has on the media, police, and the public

- the value of joint exercises such as those discussed in Chapter III (i.e., Scotland Yard, George Washington University, Temple University, and an embedded journalist program)

- in adopting a Media Police Academy

- the value of meeting regularly to discuss concerns raised by both professions

A surprising 62 percent of the media agreed that certain information should be withheld. A strange dichotomy when you consider the industry, but one which supports the notion that the media understands the impact of disseminating inappropriate or ill-timed information and is open to policing itself. The media argued that providing an explanation for withholding information helps them honor the police request. Through each discussion exercise, respective members were able to better understand why the opposing group could or could not honor a request. This experience helped strengthen the notion of understanding the respective culture, hence the need for a partnership.

Technological recommendations were made and the politics of police and media relations surfaced. A critical objective during a crisis situation as described by a journalist at ground zero is to immediately have a public official provide information necessary for the public to respond. Despite department policy supporting media cooperation, the

media did not feel police commanders were open to media, a hindrance to the proposed model. Both the police and media acknowledge a broad guideline is applicable during a crisis for both to operate, rather than a specific guideline which leaves little room for flexibility. Both agreed in identifying a subject matter expert prior to an incident to address questions and, more importantly, to help reduce any confusion and ally fears.

Relationships between the community and the police and media were sporadic. The community by far enjoyed a much stronger relationship with the police than the media. They emphasized the importance of providing factual information and less sensationalism. The community leaders recognized the psychological impact of disseminating information in the public domain. These leaders welcomed instructional information during a crisis and they were willing to participate as ambassadors in providing accurate information to the community at large.

VI.   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A.   IMPLICATIONS

The results of the survey and the focus group discussions produced a surprising dichotomy. In the survey, an extraordinary 77 percent of the media indicated that they had a good to excellent relationship with the police. Similarly, 73 percent of the police felt that their relationship was also good to excellent. However, during the discussions it was clear that both groups distrusted each other, mainly due to poor communication practices. This could be a case where individual relationships were captured in the survey exercise and an institutional position was captured in the focus group setting.[126]   The survey results may be the socially desirable response, but the focus group format provided a venue to explore the genesis of this inherent mistrust and factors that may counterbalance it. It seemed apparent that both groups are socialized into being wary of information received from each other or concerned that information once shared will be misconstrued. The mixed reactions from the participants suggest that the predominately negative description of police and media relations expressed in the prior literature may still exist. In light of this analysis, several recommendations have been suggested by the participants that may prove useful in identifying programs and policy options in the spirit of collaboration.

A recurring theme emerged during the survey and discussion phase of the study; the police are in a position to select, filter, and provide access to information. This places them in a position of dominance in relation to the media. Proponents of this view believe that the relationship is driven by the police. They are the gatekeepers of information. They recognize the media's needs and use them to the police's advantage. They define reality in terms of images of policing and crime.[127] The need for training is clearly recognized by each group. There were lessons learned by the participants in these discussions. For example, the media learned why the police may not immediately inform the media and the public about contaminated air. During the police discussions, the

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[126]William Pelfrey (Department of Homeland Security Office of Grants and Training) interview by the author, Monterey, CA, July 15, 2006.

[127] Mawby, *Visibility, Transparency and Police-Media Relations*.

commanders learned that the media is not averse to delaying the release of information. Imagine the possibilities of the cross-training. Had the police participated in the media discussions, their concerns regarding national vs. local media coverage would have been addressed as journalists explained the difference between both media markets.

Not surprising in this study, it appears that the community trust the police more than the media. The entire community group regarded their relationship with the police as either good or excellent. The majority of this community group was neutral on media relations despite the media's position of having good community relations. This is an absolute contradiction to the findings in Chapter I, where the public virtually does not trust either organization.

The reason the PPD enjoys this advantage over the media is mainly due to the numerous partnerships and relations developed over the years with its residents, business leaders, clergy, and elected officials. There is no reason to doubt that an established police and media partnership could improve community relations with the media. The bonus of a police and media partnership will surface as collateral benefits during daily encounters that should help avoid most of the concerns raised in this report in the event of a catastrophic event.

The author found all of the stakeholders genuine and open in their response and their position. The police and media both want to develop a partnership not only for their own interests but, equally important, for their consumers - the citizens. The media emphasized the importance of responsible journalism and their desire for a partnership that promotes:

- Training regularly with the police, which includes role playing

- Consulting with the police on determining the sensitivity of information and retaining that information until the appropriate time

- PMAC, which promotes collaboration

- Participating in a media police academy training curriculum similar to the current civilian police academy (CPA) model

- Sharing the responsibility of training the public

- Open communication

- Providing quality information

- A strategy to reduce panic and mass hysteria

- A climate of need-to-share information

- An informal policy on a case-by-case basis on reporting incidents of WMD

- Informal scheduled meetings with police department authorities to discuss counter-terrorism measures and practices

- Trust

The police also expressed their desire for a partnership with the media and suggested the following:

- Moving toward a "need-to-share" environment rather than a "need-to-know"

- Providing timely and accurate information to the media

- Providing specific instructions to the public through the media

- Preparation is key; therefore, training with the media is imperative

- Key decision makers from both organizations should participate in the training

- Developing a police embedded journalist program similar to the military model

- Police officials recognizing the media will not wait for information if the police do not cooperate; therefore, the police should cooperate with reasonable media requests

- Being responsible in the face of adversity and allay community fears as soon as possible

- Encouraging collaboration with other law enforcement agencies to disseminate information during a crisis is critical in reducing confusion

- Ensuring local media partnership is embraced

- Meetings between key decision makers from the police and media should be held to develop acceptable guidelines

- CPA training for the media

- Sharing responsibility in educating the public

- Providing a terrorism expert to the media to address questions and help allay fears

- Specialize training for commanders in crisis communication

- Building trust with the media

The community leaders focused on ensuring that they receive instructions and accurate information. They decried irresponsible journalism and any mishandling of critical information that can potentially cause chaos. In light of these suggestions, many recommendations can be made that will ensure that the issues highlighted by police, media and the community will be addressed.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

A strategic policy must be developed that specifically addresses public reaction to local media coverage. Such a policy, ideally, would reduce and/or prevent mass hysteria and save thousands of lives during a crisis. Before identifying key strategic dimensions of this plan it is very important to understand the current mission of the PPD. The mission statement reads:

> The mission of the Philadelphia Police Department is to work in a **true partnership** with our fellow citizens of Philadelphia to enhance the quality of life in our city. And, by **raising the level of public safety** through law enforcement, **to reduce the fear** and incidence of crime. In accomplishing these goals: service will be our commitment, honor and integrity our mandate.[128]

The primary objective of this mission is to maintain a partnership with the citizens of Philadelphia where the department provides service to reduce fear and the incidence of

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[128] Philadelphia Police Department website; available from: http://www.ppdonline.org/hq_mission.php, (accessed May 1, 2006).

crime. In this post 9/11 era, the goal of reducing fear extends to crisis communication with the aim of reducing panic and mass hysteria in response to a terrorist attack. If the department fails to reduce fear, the objective is seriously compromised.

1.   **Goals**

Preparedness and response through partnership with the media remains the focus of this strategic plan, which will close the gap between both organizations and help prepare the community in its response to a terrorist incident. The key stakeholders, the police and media, must agree to collaborate to successfully champion the objectives of this plan.

If the PPD is to raise the level of public safety, then it is incumbent upon the department to take the initiative in preparing and responding jointly with the media to minimize the effects of a terrorist attack. Additionally, this joint approach will begin the process of developing the relationship into one that is more than merely symbiotic. The common denominator for the media and the police is to provide meaningful information to the public during an incident. The media and the police can have a powerful partnership in this venture. If they don't, they will share responsibility for contributing to the mass hysteria and panic generally associated with a terrorist incident.

A comparison of the current police and media relationship vs. the proposed relationship is illustrated in Figure 2. The measurable dimensions necessary for an effective relationship between both organizations are low and negative in the current system. As mentioned previously, the police and media exist in an environment where need-to-know information is highly desirable but sharing it is problematic. The reason for the status quo is partly due to cultural differences, negative experiences, and the inability to trust each other, which inhibits communication. The PPD does not provide media training to its personnel; therefore, the unknown is suspect to the police culture. The current strategy is reactive driven. Until a media training curriculum is developed that encourages a true open media policy, both organizations will harbor mistrust and suspicion. However, once a training curriculum is introduced, developed, and evolved, a vast improvement will be reached, and the archetype shifts to partnership rather than an adversarial relationship. The new policy must engage the police and media in an open

dialogue that promotes the sharing of information in a timely manner with a mutual understanding of how to respond and communicate effectively during a crisis.
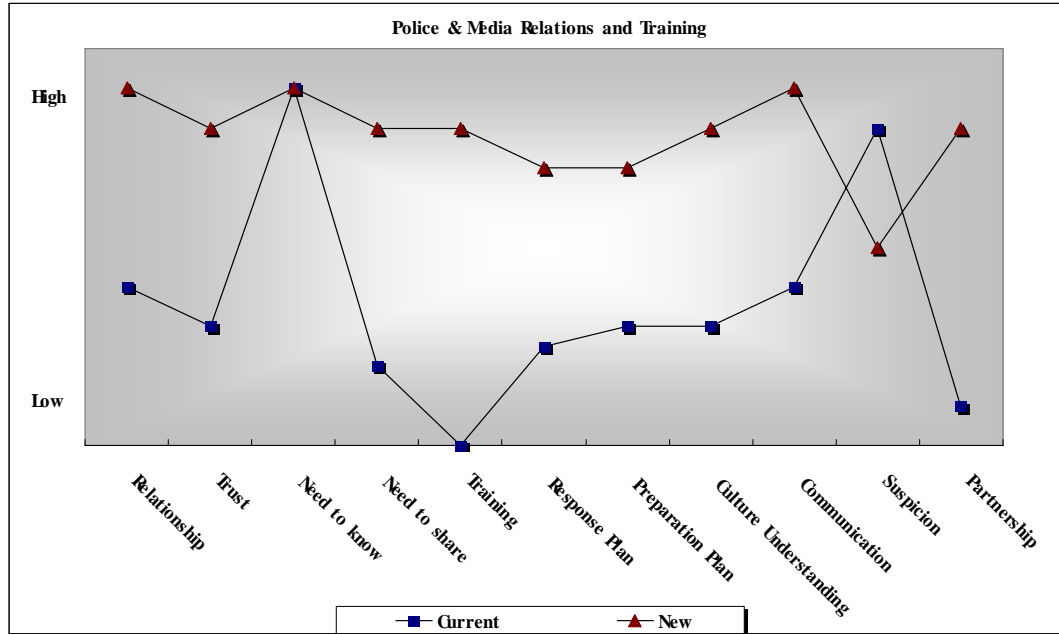
Figure 2.   Police and Media Relations: Current and Proposed Status.

2.   Specific Approach

Although traditionally a police role, with the advent of 24-hour news availability, the media should promote preparedness plans and begin to educate the public. The continuing proliferation of news on terrorism has slowly entered our psyche and will forever continue to be a part of our culture, as it has proven to be for other countries.

Media coverage and U.S. politicians remind us daily of the significance of the GWOT. It is evident by the Penn State survey mentioned in Chapter II that the American public has made terrorism a national concern and, subsequently, it has become a hot political topic. For instance, President Bush's approval ratings received the greatest boost for any president in history immediately following the 9/11 attacks. He based his

reelection campaign mainly on the war against terrorism and won.[129] All of the stakeholders of this report have reacted to the effects of terrorism and support the notion for a proactive approach.

The following Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) analysis provides an overview of the notion of a police and media partnership and provides direction in identifying the necessary steps in implementing a strategy plan:

Strengths
- Improved communication
- Trust
- Informed public
- Improved public confidence
- Reduction in mass hysteria/fear/panic
- Cross-cultural understanding
- Highly skilled staff

Weaknesses
- Media bias
- Profit motivated
- How will the naysayer buy-in

Opportunities
- Change paradigm
- Collaborative relationship
- Information sharing
- Improved communication - getting the desired message out
- Prepare the public
- Save lives
- Responsible journalism
- Other agencies can follow

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[129] John Mueller, *Six Rather Unusual Propositions About Terrorism* (Ohio State University Department of Political Science, 2005), 8.

- Funding source
- Partnership

Threats
- Censored information
- Resistance from naysayer's
- Opportunity cost
- Who should pay for the training
- Critics

Clearly the strengths and opportunities outlined above outweigh obstacles that may impede the plan. Our efforts to educate the public and promote a responsible preparation and response plan are apparent in the SWOT analysis, which supports a police and media partnership-relations training program. The first step toward this goal is to revisit and revise the mission statement to extend the partnership to the media. An emphasis on being open, honest, and transparent, as discussed during the focus group, will reinforce our commitment to a partnership. A mission statement similar to Scotland Yard's open media policy will provide a distinctive competency to the PPD. The Scotland Yard policy reads in part:[130]

> We need to refresh our approach to working with the media by developing effective and positive relationships with journalists from the wide range of news organizations that cover our work…. We have a duty to let the media know things that should be in the public domain….It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media and respond to their inquiries within their deadlines as far as possible….This media policy must be reinforced at every level…the success of this policy depends on everyone being open and flexible with the media…

The revised mission statement must propel us toward building a partnership that produces the desired outcome of a better informed public. The decision makers must agree on the key issues in Figure 3 in developing a police and media training program.

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[130] Metropolitan Police Service Media Relations Policy; available from http://www.met.police.uk/media. (accessed April 3, 2006).

INPUT	+	Output	=	Outcome

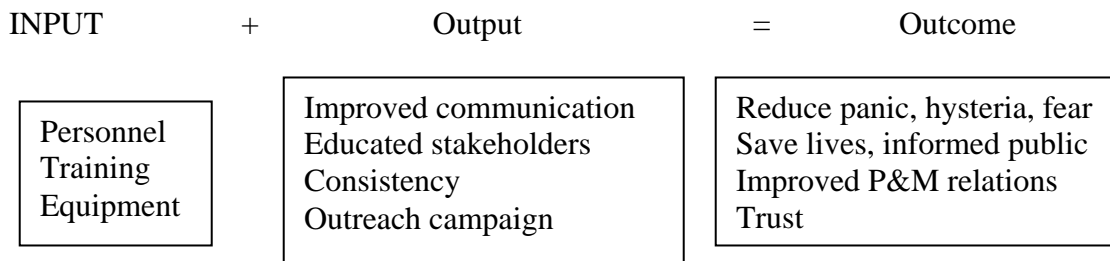| Personnel Training Equipment	Improved communication Educated stakeholders Consistency Outreach campaign	Reduce panic, hysteria, fear Save lives, informed public Improved P&M relations Trust

Figure 3.   Key Aspects of Measurements for a Police and Media Training Curriculum

The two key strategies that emerge from this analysis are training and an outreach campaign designed to instruct and reach a larger audience. Effective public relations usually precede a story rather than react to it.[131] Government officials can beneficially employ broad public affairs strategies to combat terrorist-driven initiatives, and the media can play an important role within the framework of such a strategy. Training exercises are vital, such as those conducted by Scotland Yard, George Washington University, [Temple University], and the Technology Institute in Holon, Israel, which bring together government officials and media representatives to simulate government response and media coverage of mock terrorist incidents. Promoting and funding of similar programs on a broad scale internationally is an option for consideration.[132]

3.   Identify Specific Action Plan

By establishing a dialogue with the media with the goal of preparing the community for a terrorist attack, the PPD can begin to resolve the issues that lead to the mutual suspicion and mistrust that has caused a rift between these two groups. The following are some initiatives that may produce a solid return on investment:

- Practice, train, and educate with the media. Invite them to table-top exercises. Educate the news managers, reporters and editors that how they deliver the news is as important as what news they deliver. Stress to the media that in a terrorist event things will go wrong, which is why such an exercise is important. As part of the training, the media should be schooled on typical public reactions and safety concerns. Include key community leaders to serve as ambassadors of this program.

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[131] Wilkinson, "The Media and Terrorism."

[132] Ibid.

- A debriefing session is an invaluable commodity serving as a blueprint for preparedness and providing specific examples for future training purposes. After an incident, the Police Department should conduct a debriefing exercise with the media and community leaders to gather information that may provide insight into new ways of coping with future events.

In an effort to include and form a true partnership with the public, the PPD developed the CPA. The purpose of the program is to familiarize community members with the operations of the department. The PPD has won accolades from the community and politicians for its efforts in reaching out to its citizenry; rapport and trust were forged. Hence when a controversy arises, news accounts often reflect a balanced position from the community. Similarly, and supported by the focus group participants, much can be done in conjunction with the media by opening our department and including them in a CPA-style curriculum. The goal of providing timely and accurate information during a terrorist incident will help allay unnecessary fear and panic. Included in this curriculum should be:

- Police rules, policy, and procedures
- Shoot, don't shoot scenarios
- Off-camera ride-a-longs
- Internship
- Counter-terrorism training
- Cross-disciplinary "culture" training
- Develop an open media policy similar to the one utilized by Scotland Yard, where the department publicly commits to building a productive dialogue with the media

- Promote a PMAC similar to the PDAC model where public safety issues and strategies could be addressed with the decision makers (i.e., editors, producers, and police command staff)

4. Budget

This proposal has affordable financial and psychological price tags for results that are immeasurable. Figure 4 depicts the resources and funding necessary for this project. Funding should be obtained from the Urban Area Security Initiative grant in the amount of $240,000 for an initial training program in Year One. An additional $70,000 should be appropriated each subsequent year for new training techniques and expertise. Since a partial objective is to learn to communicate effectively and to foster mutual relationships, we should be guided by other successful training programs that have accomplished this objective.

Resources	Cost	Funding	Cost	Total
Rank & File 1/2 day	$150,000	Printing	$5,000	
Commanders 2 days	$20,000	Material	$20,000	
Media 2 days	$20,000	Location	0*	
Community Leaders 1 day	$10,000	Video	$15,000	
		Equipment	0*	
Total	$200,000		$40,000	$240,000

Figure 4.   Resources and Funding for Police and Media Training
*Minimal cost for location at the Police Academy; media equipment utilized

5. Implementation

The current Philadelphia Police Commissioner is a visionary. His 42 years of police experience has taught him that change is necessary in running a successful department. Throughout his tenure as Police Commissioner, he has navigated uncharted territory in the spirit of reinventing police strategies. His accessibility to the media is the correct position; the key to driving this plan is the Commissioner's vision for the department. His support for a revised mission statement identifying our added value to the citizenry and his open commitment to a police and media relationship will alleviate the current culture, skepticism, and rejection typically associated with an organization adopting a new strategy that may affect traditional methods. His commitment will motivate influential participants who will, in turn, motivate others. Like the police, key media stakeholders (i.e., editors, producers, and owners) must also convince their rank

and file of the necessary collaboration. Without the support of the Police Commissioner and these key media personnel this plan simply will not work.

To ensure this commitment is communicated to the entire department, the following options should be considered as a means for delivering the message directly to the rank and file: through the departmental CCTV system, the internet web page, newsletter, and cable network, etc. The department should promote the joint commitment to public safety in a series of public service announcements and at news conferences where feasible. Such endorsement will help sway any public skepticism.

PPD personnel participated in training with the media and other public officials hosted by Temple University in March 2006. The training was well received. Best practices were discovered and lessons were learned. This training presents the department with an opportunity to convert the current relationship into one of mutual esteem for the respective professions. The collateral bonus of this strategic plan will surface in daily operations with the media rather than waiting for a catastrophic event to test the relationship.

C.   CONCLUSION

The policing of critical incidents are a salient topic in the post-9/11 environment. The tragic events of September 11 in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC have shifted the terrorism paradigm from the abstract to a vivid reality for all Americans. The early morning hours of this date will be forever etched in our memories. The media images that were seared into the American public's collective conscience remain indelible and have had a significant psychological impact. Like the JFK assassination on November 22, 1963; September 11, 2001, was a moment where we could account for precisely where we were and what we were doing when we heard the unimaginable news. There was substantial confusion and scant comprehension with respect to the gravity of the circumstances. Our airways came to a halt, our economy was heavily bruised, and our sense of security was irrevocably altered.

For a very short period of time during the attacks, America was unable to grasp the severity of the situation. As media accounts briefed us of the circumstances of September 11, the distorted picture became clearer as we realized that we were under terrorist attack. Our views of terrorism began to reform. As the days, months, and years have passed since the attacks, the media continues to remind us of the GWOT, the security measures undertaken in its aftermath, and the vulnerabilities that continue to loom. Like the government, the media also possesses compelling power and influence. The media impacts our disposition and plays a significant role in our safety. In times of crisis we rely heavily on public officials, namely law enforcement, and the media to keep us informed. September 11, and the subsequent emerging threats of terrorism, has magnified the critical importance for public officials and the media to communicate effectively with the public in delivering a consistent and synoptic message that will inform without frightening and educate without provoking alarm.

Unfortunately, studies have shown that while the public relies on the government and media for information specifically on the GWOT, they have little confidence in the information. Recent polls have shown both that government's and journalism's public images have suffered. An opportunity exists for the police [government] and the media to improve their respective image. The focus of this thesis is on a crisis response plan, whether it is a result of a deliberate or accidental act. Specifically the author examined how the media and the police can both help address the public's response to a post-terrorist incident. This report also looked at preparedness initiative that informs and educates the public in the event of a crisis incident such as a terrorist attack or similar catastrophic incident.

An inherent mistrust and suspicion exists between the police and the media, the two sources the public significantly depends upon for information and direction during any crisis. There appears to be pre-existing distinction in personalities between the police and media. Both organizations have opposing viewpoints on sharing information. Much of the controversy stems from cultural differences; the media operates in the need-to-share environment while the police operate in the need-to-know. Specifically the police

object to the media's sensationalistic use of information versus presenting it in context. In a post–9/11 era, this is a recipe for disaster.

There exists a precarious balancing act for the media; they need to be vigilant about balancing society's right to know against the media's responsibility to inform. The challenge is not only that of media manipulation and psychological response; it also includes the delicate navigation between freedom of the press and the eradication of terror tactics. It is important to avoid the hijacking and manipulation of the media by terrorists. But if freedom of the press is sacrificed in the name of combating terrorism, one has allowed small groups of terrorists to destroy one of the basic foundations of a democratic society. Pure censorship insults the intelligence of the public and undermines confidence in the veracity of the media, but thoughtful and careful media coverage does not. We do not want terrorism, or antiterrorism, to erode freedom of the press – one of the pillars of democracy.

This report focused on the PPD, the Philadelphia media, and its citizenry. The goal of this study is two-fold. First, to develop a partnership between the police and media specific to terrorism and crisis communication and second, to empower the public to feel less frightened and be more likely to respond to incidents in a logical and practical manner. The objective is to dilute terrorist aims to create psychological trauma. The research question for this thesis specifically addresses which strategies the PPD and the local media outlets can develop in partnership to better calibrate and direct the public response to a terrorist incident. A successful response to this challenge requires precise collaboration between the media and local authorities (police), at least until the nation as a whole can address this issue effectively.

This strained relationship between the police and media has existed for decades throughout the United States and is not unique to Philadelphia. Criticism of these flawed relations should not be viewed as shortcomings of either organization in Philadelphia rather they should be viewed as inherent cultural differences. As indicated by a journalist who covered the DC sniper case, poor media relations may have a significant impact on delivering effective crisis communications.

To reduce mistrust and improve the alliance between the media and the police, a process similar to the proven CP model discussed in this report should be adopted. The CP model promotes partnership and improves communications between the police and the community. As much as the police and others would like to thwart the media and keep them away from a disaster or other serious situation, they must also realize that the media can be a strong ally. The media, too, must learn that how they frame the news is important since it can impede active investigations and cause a panicked public and an unintentional conveyance of terrorist propaganda. Without an organized partnership with the media, the PPD is failing to meet a core competency of its mission statement to the public (i.e., to reduce fear).

Communicating with the public is not an exact science; different people will interpret the same message differently. This is precisely why, during times of catastrophic events, the words chosen to communicate with the public must be carefully articulated. The ill-trained crisis communicator (police or media) may cause more harm than the actual event. Amassing "a reservoir of goodwill" among the stakeholders is essential; failure to do so creates an environment that feeds terrorist objectives.

If we accept the notion that the purpose of terrorist acts is to instill fear and panic in the targeted population, can we then accept the supplementary notion that any lessening of the negative impact of these acts may force the terrorist to abandon this method? Perhaps not totally, but surely learning to respond with less crippling emotion might weaken the terrorist's resolve. Combating our emotional vulnerability to terrorism may be even more important than defeating Al Qaeda and is, perhaps, a more attainable goal. By minimizing and controlling our negative reactions, we can undermine the terrorists' goals. As Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." We can ensure that terrorists don't succeed by preventing them from ruling our lives through fear and by being rational and logical, even though it may be antithetical to our innate emotions.

Law enforcement officials harbor critical information during major disasters, and the manner in which this information is disseminated is vital to ensuring a healthy public reaction. The media plays a decisive role in the aftermath of an incident; providing

essential information and instructions to victims and their families. Both the media and the police are key resources for the community and can provide a source of hope during a time of crisis. Both organizations have a significant impact on managing the crisis. One of the most important functions of the media is its contribution to the preparation and response phase of consequence management. We have learned, through proven international methods in countries like Israel, Britain, and Australia, that preparing and educating the public through the media is an effective strategy. The PPD has been provided with a fortuitous opportunity as the result of a local university's initiative training program, which supports media and law enforcement relations during an emergency. We must seize this opportunity.

A strategic plan has been recommended that takes a proactive approach rather than the traditional reactive response to terrorism. The strengths and opportunities provided by forging improved police and media relations outweigh the weaknesses by a significant margin. The return on investment for building a partnership has the potential of delivering huge dividends in the form of:

- Improved communication practices
- Mutual trust
- Informed public
- Improved public confidence
- Collaborative relationship

Throughout this report examples were discovered of how the PPD can develop its own police and media methods and the benefits it will provide. For example, George Washington University, in Washington, DC, and Temple University, in Philadelphia, PA, independently developed a training program to facilitate government and media relations during a crisis. An array of recommendations, lessons learned, and best practices from national and international government entities were unveiled and presented. Any of the suggestions would be an improvement over the current state of affairs between the police and the media in Philadelphia.

The need for training to raise awareness of the role the media plays during terrorist/emergency incidents and the impact their reporting has on the public must be

taken seriously for the benefit of the citizenry. The actions and language exercised by the police and the media are critical in shaping public behavior. With proper training and collaboration, the message delivered in the public domain can help thwart the objectives of terrorists. Engaging in proven practices, while utilizing a fresh approach that relies on the coexistence of both organizations, is necessary to effectively prepare and respond to a catastrophic incident.

The most valuable input came from the stakeholders during the survey and focus group phase. While each profession acknowledged the inherent mistrust between the parties, they also grasped the importance of forming a partnership. Independently, each profession unanimously agreed to participate in a police and media training curriculum. A clear majority of both professions recognized that each should participate in cross-training, joint exercises, and helping to inform the public in preparation and response. This training will assist in improving crisis communication and educating the public on terrorism readiness. Consistent with prior literature the police and media agreed that general guidelines too often do not fit all cases and should be handled on a case-by-case basis. Surprisingly, a significant number of media participants agreed to restrain information when provided with an explanation for the reason to withhold the information. Until police are educated about the effect the media can have on the department, the power of the media works against the police rather than for it.

Nearly all Philadelphia police commanders interviewed agreed that the police need to cooperate better with the media in the spirit of providing accurate information that may allay fears and prevent mass hysteria. Police and media officials both agreed that promoting a police media auxiliary council (PMAC), similar to the existing PDAC model, where public safety issues and strategies can be addressed with the decision makers, is a step in the right direction. The success of, and responsibility for, this plan falls squarely on the shoulders of select key stakeholders: the Philadelphia Police Commissioner and key media decision makers. Without their support, the strategic plan and the participant's recommendations will stagnate.

This report shed light on the importance of community organizations' involvement in the development and dissemination of information. The community

leaders played a significant role in the study. Their unusually high confidence in the police contradicts national findings, which may be attributed to the PPD's successful CP model. These participants were skeptical of the media and perceived information disseminated by the media as partially accurate at times. The neutral position held by the community regarding their relationship with the media is consistent with prior literature and the studies found in Chapter I. The majority of this group insisted on being provided with precise instructions concerning crisis response helpful to them. Community residents want to know what to do in the event of an emergency. Such knowledge helps them to control and, therefore, tolerate risks.[133] Another terrorist attack is far from a remote possibility. We must prepare for the possibility, physically and psychologically. Trust is a central factor in predicting whether community members will accept and rely on the conclusions and recommendations of the people who are trained in crisis management.

The information encompassed in this document may serve as an effective tool to thwart the objectives sought by terrorists. Having the media and the police work towards a common goal, albeit a challenging and unconventional one, will significantly impact the terrorists, who depend considerably upon the media frenzy. Most of the proposed strategies are unprecedented in this nation. By following the practices outlined in this report, the PPD and the Philadelphia media will be pioneers in effectively dealing with the aftermath of a terrorist attack.

The Wisdom of a Partnership will Out-weigh the Independent Role

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[133] Heath and Palenchar, "Community Relations and Risk Communication."

APPENDIX

A.   SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Media Survey and Focus Group Questions

A. Survey:

1.   What is your position in the media?

a. Reporter   b. Anchor   c. Editor/Producer   d. Mgr.

2.   What preparation have you undergone to report a terrorist attack?

a. none   b. one day briefing   c. conference   d. seminar   e. other_____

3.   What are the objectives of a terrorist attack?

a. create panic   b. fear   c. harm   d. influence political decision   e. death   f. all of the above   e. not sure

4.   How would you describe your relationship with the police?

a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

5.   What is your relationship with community leaders?

a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

6.   What is the best method of covering "breaking news" concerning a terrorist incident?

a. immediately make all information public   b. conduct background information

c. wait for an official to confirm   d. provide generic information until

confirmation

e. other_____

7.   If you are a manager/supervisor are you willing to edit raw footage of a terrorist attack during the infancy stage of breaking news?

a. no   b. if time permits   c. yes

8. If formal guidelines were developed by all news organization (competitors) in concert with government/police officials in reporting acts of terrorism, how successful would it be?

a. not successful at all   b. limited success   c. good idea but would fail in practice

d. successful

9. What psychological effects do you think reports of terrorism have on the public?

a. no effect   b. minimal effect   c. depends on information reported   d. moderate effect   e. significant effect

10. Are you willing to withhold critical information from the public immediately following a terrorist incident that has the potential of creating mass hysteria if it were made public?

a. no   b. yes

11. Are you willing to participate in a Media Police Academy training program that focuses on police & media responsibilities during a terrorist incident? i.e. reporting and crisis communication

a. no   b. yes

12. Who is responsible for educating the public about terrorism?

a. police   b. other government (HLS/Mayor)   c. media   d. police & media   e. community leaders   f. all of the above

13. Are you willing to train the public in preparing/responding to a terrorist attack?

a. no   b. yes

14. In your opinion should the media and police jointly play a significant role in educating the public about terrorism?

a. no   b. yes

15. Would you participate in table top exercises with police, community leaders, and the media that would simulate a terrorist attack?

a. no   b. yes

16. Would you participate in debriefing exercises with the police, community leaders, and the media to develop lessons learned/best practices that may provide insight in coping with similar incidents?

a. no   b. yes

B. Focus Group

1. What can the PPD and the media do better in reporting a terrorist attack **<u>immediately following the incident?</u>**

LE:

Media:

2. What might be the barriers in implementing a policy that establishes guidelines on how to report an act of terrorism?

Suggestions on a doable policy:

3. What are the barriers to building trusting relationships between the media and the PPD?

Probe: Open Media Policy?

4. From your experience, what has facilitated this relationship?

5. What are your thoughts concerning a police & media training program? (Media Police Academy)

Probe: Terrorism training

Probe: PDAC=PMAC: Editors/Producers

6. What is the PPD/media's role in educating the public about the effects of terrorism?

Probe: Preparation
Probe: Response
Probe: Joint responsibility

Comments:

2. Police Survey and Focus Group Questions

A. Survey

1. What is your position in the police department?

   a. P/O   b. Supervisor   c. Commander

2. What preparation have you undergone to report a terrorist attack?

   a. none   b. one day briefing   c. conference   d. seminar   e. other_____

3. Are you willing to withhold critical information from the public immediately following a terrorist incident that has the potential of creating mass hysteria if it were made public?

   a. no   b. yes

4. What are the objectives of a terrorist attack?

   a. create panic   b. fear   c. harm   d. influence political decision   e. death   f. all of the above   e. not sure

5. How would you describe your relationship with the media?

   a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

6. What is your relationship with community leaders?

   a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

7. What is the best method of covering "breaking news" concerning a terrorist incident?

a. immediately make all information public   b. conduct background information

c. wait for an official to confirm   d. provide generic information until

confirmation   e. other_____

8. If you are a manager/supervisor are you willing to edit raw footage of a terrorist attack during the infancy stage of breaking news?

    a. no   b. if time permits   c. yes

9. If formal guidelines were developed by all news organization (competitors) in concert with government/police officials in reporting acts of terrorism, how successful would it be?

    a. not successful at all   b. limited success   c. good idea but would fail in practice

    d. successful

10. What psychological effects do you think reports of terrorism have on the public?

    a. no effect   b. minimal effect   c. depends on information reported   d. moderate effect   e. significant effect

11. Are you willing to participate in a Media Police Academy training program that focuses on police & media responsibilities during a terrorist incident? i.e. reporting and crisis communication

    a. no   b. yes

12. Who is responsible for educating the public about terrorism?

    a. police   b. other government (HLS/Mayor)   c. media   d. police & media   e. community leaders   f. all of the above

13. Are you willing to train the public in effectively preparing/responding to a terrorist attack?

    a. no   b. yes

14. In your opinion, should the media and police jointly play a significant role in educating the public about terrorism?

    a. no   b. yes

15. Would you participate in table top exercises with police, community leaders, and the media that would simulate a terrorist attack?

    a. no   b. yes

16. Would you participate in debriefing exercises with the police, community leaders, and the media to develop lessons learned/best practices that may provide insight in coping with similar incidents?

    a. no b. yes

B. Focus Group

    1. What can the PPD and the media do better in reporting a terrorist attack **<u>immediately following the incident?</u>**

    LE:

    Media:

    2. What might be the barriers in implementing a policy that establishes guidelines on how to report an act of terrorism?

    Suggestions on a doable policy:

    3. What are the barriers to building trusting relationships between the media and the PPD?

    Probe: Open Media Policy?

    4. From your experience, what has facilitated this relationship?

    5. What are your thoughts concerning a police & media training program? (Media Police Academy)

    Probe: Terrorism training

    Probe: PDAC=PMAC: Editors/Producers

6. What is the PPD/media's role in educating the public about the effects of terrorism?

Probe: Preparation
Probe: Response
Probe: Joint responsibility

Comments:

C. Community Survey and Focus Group Questions

A. Survey

1. What is your position in the community?

a. Block captain   b. Resident   c. Active resident (Town watch /PDAC)   d. Business Owner   e. Elected Official

2. What preparation have you undergone in responding to a terrorist attack?

a. none   b. one day briefing   c. conference   d. seminar/ just what read or watch on T.V.   e. other_____

3. What are the objectives of a terrorist attack?

a. create panic   b. fear   c. harm   d. influence political decision   e. death   f. all of the above   e. not sure

4. How would you describe your relationship with the police?

a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

5. How would you describe your relationship with the media?

a. very poor   b. poor   c. neutral   d. good   e. excellent

6. What is the best method of covering "breaking news" concerning a terrorist incident?

a. immediately make all information public   b. conduct background information

c. wait for an official to confirm   d. provide generic information until

confirmation   e. other_____

7. What psychological effects do you think reports of terrorism have on the public?

a. no effect   b. minimal effect   c. depends on information reported   d. moderate effect   e. significant effect

8. Are you willing to train with police/media and other experts in dealing with terrorist incidents and in crisis communication?

a. no   b. yes

9. Are you willing to participate in a Media Police Academy program that focuses on police & media responsibilities during a terrorist incident?

a. no   b. yes

10. Who is responsible for educating the public about terrorism?

a. police   b. other government (HLS/Mayor)   c. media   d. police & media   e. community leaders   f. all of the above

11. Are you willing to be a spokesperson immediately after an attack to help allay fears of terrorism?

a. no   b. yes

12. In your opinion should the media and police jointly play a significant role in educating the public about terrorism?

a. no   b. yes

13. Would you participate in table top exercises with police, community leaders, and the media that would simulate a terrorist attack?

   a. no   b. yes

14. Would you participate in debriefing exercises with the police, community leaders, and the media to develop lessons learned/best practices that may provide insight in coping with similar incidents?

   a. no b. yes

B. Focus Group

   1. What can the PPD, the media, and you do better in reporting a terrorist attack **immediately following the incident?**

      LE:

      Media:

      You:

   2. What is your role in educating your community about the effects of terrorism?

      Probe: Preparation

      Probe: Response

      Probe: Joint responsibility

Comments:

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        Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

23.   Mr. Gordon Wasserman
        City of Philadelphia
        Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

24.   Charles Wexler
        Executive Director Police Executive Research Forum
        Washington, DC

25.   John S. Wolf
        President Eisenhower Fellowship
        Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

26.   Thomas Frawley
        Ombudsman Northern Ireland
        Belfast, Northern Ireland