

PROMETHEUS COUNCIL

Terrorist Attack

Terrorism is a criminal act that influences people beyond the immediate victims. The strategy of terrorism is to commit acts of violence that draw the attention of the local populace, the government (sometimes more than one government), and the world to their cause. Terrorists plan attacks to obtain the greatest publicity, choosing targets that symbolize what they oppose. The effectiveness of the terrorist act lies not in the act itself, but in the public's or the government's reaction to the act.

Groups that are disgruntled and do not have the national sovereignty strength to enforce their aim resort to terrorism. Generally these aims stem from political ideology, nationalism, religion, race or special interest such as animal rights and environmental issues.

Political ideology ranges from far left to the far right. Nationalism is the devotion to the interest or culture of a group of people or a nation. Typically, nationalists share a common ethnic background and wish to establish or regain a homeland. Religious extremists often reject the authority of secular governments and view legal systems that are not based on their religious beliefs as illegitimate and often view modernization efforts as corrupting influences on the traditional culture. Racial extremists believe that their individual race is the dominant race above all others and that all others should be subjected to their form of culture. Special interest groups often feel so strongly in their perception of their interest they believe that violence is morally justified to achieve their goals.

Terrorist groups have an overall goal to effect large-scale political or ideological change and to accomplish this they usually have short-term objectives that lead up to this goal. These often include some if not all of the following:

- To produce wide spread fear.
- To obtain worldwide, national or local recognition by attracting the attention of the media.
- To harass, weaken, or embarrass government security forces so that the government overacts and appears repressive.
- To steal or extort money and equipment, especially weapons and ammunition.
- To destroy facilities or disrupt line of communication in order to create doubt that the government can provide for and protect its citizens.
- To discourage foreign investments, tourism, or assistance programs that can affect the target country's economy and support of the government in power.
- To influence government decisions, legislation, or other critical decisions.
- To free prisoners.
- To satisfy vengeance.
- To turn the tide in a guerrilla war by forcing government security forces to concentrate their efforts in urban areas. This allows the terrorist groups to establish themselves among the local populace in rural areas.

Most terrorist groups share characteristics:

- They seek to intimidate by promoting fear.
- They are militarily weaker than the governments they fight.

- They are capable of obtaining advanced weapons systems including chemical, biological and radiological weapons of mass destruction.
- They employ unconventional tactics.
- They are often trained very well; particularly the more commonly known groups and the large groups are supported by sympathetic governments.
- Training often includes weapons and explosives, combat tactics, intelligence gathering, psychological warfare, survival, communications, interrogation resistance, physical and mental conditioning and political and religious indoctrination.
- They do not equate tactical success with mission success. A terrorist act may not achieve its desired result, but a terrorist may still view the act as successful if it publicizes the cause.
- They are usually urban-based and highly mobile. If urban-based they have access to mass transit, e.g. airplanes, ships, railroads and subways.
- Groups with international contacts may have access to forged passports and safe havens in countries other than their home base.
- Generally they organize and operate clandestinely in cells of three to five members. A cell may only have contact with one other cell only or with the immediate step up in the command hierarchy. The capture of one or more terrorists rarely compromises the identity or plans of the entire organization.

Most terrorist organizations are organized utilizing the “Leaderless Resistance” concept, all individuals and groups operate independently of each other, and never report to a central headquarter or single leader for direction or instruction. The terrorists often pick a target of their choosing, tell no one, and solicit funds from their affiliated group and proceed on their own initiative. This makes taking out of one leader, a cell or several cells virtually ineffective, as individual cells will simply continue to exist and function as they see fit and striking when it is advantageous for them to do so.

More often than not, terrorists encountered will be well trained, highly motivated, exceptionally well equipped, and adept in conducting urban guerrilla war, well rehearsed and prepared for the encounter. It must be assumed that they have determined the time and place to begin the encounter, and are thoroughly familiar with their tactical position, avenues of approach to their position, avenues of escape and the likely courses of action that counter terrorist teams and law enforcement personnel will have to adopt in their efforts to neutralize him. Through their intelligence system, they will know your tactics, strengths and weaknesses, level of training and level of motivation.

Their training is often six months to a year in time with the training being realistic. Live ammunition is used as is live explosives in all training. There are no simulations used in tactical exercises, if a candidate makes a mistake in judgment or technical or tactical ability; they are killed by their error. For example if using a detonating device and the wrong pin is pulled in the wrong sequence, the device literally blows up, killing the trainee in the process for lack of paying attention to detail. The creature comforts, or environmental conditions are harsh. There are no hot meals served at the appropriate hour, there are no air condition structures to avoid the heat, or snow or rain. It is a very brutal training regime that instills a great deal of self-discipline and self-determination. Overall terrorists are trained at least to a level of a soldier in any 1st world country, and often times they are trained to a level comparable with 1st world countries special operations units. To think that a terrorist is a coward, ill trained and weak is setting the stage to get people who think like that killed.

Terrorists usually use unconventional tactics called guerrilla war. Their primary tactics will consist of ambushes, sniping incidents, bombings or threats of bombing, kidnapping, hostage takers and assassination. These tactics are designed and do serve to cause conditions of fear in the general populace. Terrorists usually resist appeals based on morals, decency, or fear for their own safety. These individuals are known for their determination and tenacity. If cornered, or if it is the mission perimeter, e.g. human bomb, they will gladly sacrifice their own life for their cause and anyone who gets in their way including other members of their organization who may be lacking in the dedication. Without hesitation they will kill family and friends if necessary, terrorist generally are devoid of mercy or compassion in regard to anyone, particularly those they view as the enemy. With this level of motivation and dedication to their cause, it is obvious that they certainly will not hesitate to kill or otherwise use anyone for a purpose justifiable to them in accomplishing their mission objective.

The team or teams of personnel that conduct an assault on a terrorist position must be prepared to strike violently and with the greatest amount of determination and skill. There is no negotiation with terrorists; at best the philosophy of killing them as quickly as possible without regard to legalities must be the prevailing order. The only strategic advantage of negotiation is to allow killing teams to get in place to take a shot. Negotiations for the sake of getting people out alive or to accomplish a terrorist surrender will prove to be fruitless. One should never attempt to bring terrorists to justice, it is a waste of time and effort, and terrorists need to be killed quickly, violently and with extreme prejudice.

Terrorists are experts at “pulling in” response teams on a limited attack or small explosion, then once the response teams, including EMS and fire are at the location or even after the area has been determined secure, then the main attack happens. This main attack is designed specifically to catch law enforcement, EMS and fire personnel in the open. The intent is to allow the all important news media to be covering the area to show how ineffective the government’s public safety program is against these terrorist groups.

Very wealthy persons often support terrorist organizations and in several cases even countries that feel supporting terrorist is a more viable option than overtly attacking another country, particularly one that is much stronger in the military sense. This allows the supporting country to claim deniability for heinous actions caused by terrorists without the target country being able to officially sanction the sponsoring nation. Middle Eastern nations are known to allow terrorists to train in their country with relative impunity. These same nations have access to modern weapons systems, munitions, tactical planning advisors and huge financial backing.

Terrorists are very adept at using the World Wide Web and computers to excel and enhance their efforts. Modern militaries must have equipment, specifically computers and electronics that must function time and again through rigid environmental conditions. Terrorists have the luxury of using systems that are often used once and destroyed in the process or are considered “throw away” systems. Their computers and electronics are at the cutting edge of technology, which gives them a decided computer age advantage. They have access to satellite telephone systems and down links that give them real time data as quick if not quicker than law enforcement or counter terrorist units.

They are very astute in intelligence collection methods of their opponents including satellite imagery, thermal imagery, ground sensors, communications capabilities, radar, sonar, over flights, and surveillance methods. If available they will use any methods to extract information from individuals including money, implied power, sex, love and torture. They are capable of doing anything to anybody to accomplish their mission. Their own intelligence network is second to none, and frequently better than most target countries.

Sponsoring governments will emplace sleeper agents and individuals who are to assist terrorist when needed in target countries. These implanted agents are in the target county legally and often are model citizens of that country. These individuals will be set up and financed for years before they are needed, if indeed they ever are. The sleepers will support the terrorists by giving them refuge, money, explosive, weapons, information or other needs as necessary. This allows the terrorist to infiltrate the target county legally carrying no illegal or even suspect material.

Terrorists will also gain the assistance from individuals from their own country against their will by threatening the family members of individuals who reside in the target country and those still residing in the terrorist’s county. These threats are more of a promise; the terrorists will carry out the threats. Generally the terrorist will have already killed a family member of the individual as an example of their intent even before a demand is made.

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