



**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**THE PATH TO TERRORIST VIOLENCE: A THREAT  
ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR RADICAL GROUPS AT RISK  
OF ESCALATION TO ACTS OF TERRORISM**

by

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September 2005

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE September 2005	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE: The Path to Terrorist Violence: A Threat Assessment Model for Radical Groups at Risk of Escalation to Acts of Terrorism			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Dean T. Olson				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) A threat assessment model to identify domestic radical groups on a trajectory towards terrorist violence remains an elusive goal. The lack of a model constrains proactive counter-terrorism efforts resulting in largely reactive strategies that often are ineffectual in discovering and disrupting terrorist plots while in an inchoate stage. The Path to Terrorist Violence Model, based on a threat assessment model used in the emerging field of threat management for the judiciary and elected officials, is a valid and reliable assessment methodology to identify radical groups at risk of escalation to acts of terrorism. By focusing on attack-related behaviors that a group must take to mount a planned attack, the Path to Terrorist Violence avoids contentious issues related to psychosocial, religious, race or ethnicity-based profiling assumptions.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Threat assessment. Radical groups. Terrorism. Path to terrorist violence. Threat model. Symbionese Liberation Army. Army of God. Animal Liberation Front. Pro-life violence. Counter terrorism. Disrupting terrorist conspiracies. Intended violence. Targeted Violence.			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 77	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL	

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**THE PATH TO TERRORIST VIOLENCE: A THREAT ASSESSMENT MODEL  
FOR RADICAL GROUPS AT RISK OF ESCALATION TO ACTS OF  
TERRORISM**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(HOMELAND SECURITY AND DEFENSE)**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

A threat assessment model to identify domestic radical groups on a trajectory towards terrorist violence remains an elusive goal. The lack of a model constrains proactive counter-terrorism efforts resulting in largely reactive strategies that often are ineffectual in discovering and disrupting terrorist plots while in an inchoate stage. The Path to Terrorist Violence Model, based on a threat assessment model used in the emerging field of threat management for the judiciary and elected officials, is a valid and reliable assessment methodology to identify radical groups at risk of escalation to acts of terrorism. By focusing on attack-related behaviors that a group must take to mount a planned terrorist attack, the Path to Terrorist Violence avoids contentious issues related to psychosocial, religious, race or ethnicity-based profiling assumptions.

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## I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A valid and reliable threat assessment model to identify domestic radical groups on a trajectory towards terrorist violence remains an elusive goal. The difficulty in identifying groups at risk stems in part from the complexity and idiosyncratic nature of the “causal chain” that leads to the commission of acts of terrorism (Crenshaw 1995, 5). Because terrorism appears in a variety of forms shaped by government counter terrorism efforts, religious traditions that influence ideology, historical experiences and culture, attempts to assess the threat potential of radical groups based on psychosocial indicators have yielded less than satisfactory results (Weinberg 1991, 426). The resulting lack of an assessment model constrains proactive domestic counter-terrorism efforts resulting in largely reactive strategies that often are ineffectual in discovering and disrupting terrorist plots while in an inchoate stage.

Operationally, the lack of an assessment model makes it difficult for law enforcement to differentiate between benign groups and ones that might evolve toward acts of terrorism. This dilemma hamstrings criminal intelligence<sup>1</sup> efforts to balance the competing demands of preventing terrorist violence while respecting fundamental civil liberties. Historically, this dilemma led to widespread abuses of civil liberties by government intelligence agents in the 1960's and 1970's, including spying on, and occasionally disrupting, constitutionally protected political activity and infringing on freedoms of association, assembly and expression (Halperin et al. 1976, 25; Bouza 1968, 19; Donnor 1990, 150).

A partial answer may lie in applying an existing threat assessment model, called the Path to Violence (PTV), to domestic radical groups at risk of escalation to terrorist violence. The majority of terrorist groups have enough shared characteristics to permit some generalization (Sprinzak 1991, 52). While terrorist

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<sup>1</sup>. Criminal Intelligence is defined as the collection of data for analysis to determine if it: (1) is relevant to the identification of criminal activity, including terrorism, engaged in by an individual or an organization reasonably suspected of involvement in illegal activity, and (2) meets criminal intelligence system submission criteria. Such information includes narcotics manufacturing and/or trafficking, unlawful gambling, extortion, infiltration of legitimate businesses for illegitimate purposes, organized crime, threats to public officials and private citizens and terrorism (Thomas 2000, 129; FBI 2005a).

groups may differ in identity and group psychology, they all share a common structural genealogy that sets them apart from groups that do not resort to acts of terrorism. For example, most of the known organizations have been splinter groups of larger radical movements with many reaching the decision to resort to terrorist violence gradually through a process of radicalization (Sprinzak 1991, 52; Laqueur 1997, 45; Gurr 1973, 87). This commonality may allow comparison among and between radical groups and allow threat assessment using PTV concepts.

The Path to Violence construct, elaborated on in the next chapter, has yielded a threat assessment model used in the emerging field of threat management involving targeted or planned violence against elected officials and the judiciary (Calhoun 2001, 5; Calhoun and Weston 2003, 35). Targeted violence is a subset of intended violence defined as a very specific symbolic choice of individual, location, or physical structure such as public officials, public figures, courthouses, schools, shopping centers, churches and synagogues, abortion clinics and animal vivisection laboratories (Calhoun 2001, 57). The PTV focuses on attack-related behaviors in six sequential steps that an attacker must take to mount a planned attack. By identifying and describing the behaviors necessary to commit an assassination, researchers offered a viable assessment model to recognize potential attackers prior to the act of violence.

Once inspired to violence, the behaviors and actions of an attacker appear remarkably similar regardless of the target. The apparent universality of the PTV construct enables the study of violence in its different manifestations, including domestic radical groups at risk of escalation. The hypothesis of this research is that the PTV model, and its attendant actions, can be applied to the assessment of radical groups at risk of escalation to terrorist violence. Because the PTV concept relies on universal behaviors linking all forms of intended violence, the examples provided later in this research are drawn from an array of violent episodes and targets.

The genesis of the PTV concept is traceable to research on Presidential assassins conducted by the United States Secret Service in the late 1990's (Fein and Vossekuil 1999, 248). Entitled the Exceptional Case Study Project (ECSP), this work entailed detailed research into the lives and activities of 83 assassins and near-assassins. Its major finding is that many, if not most, attacks on public officials and public figures are potentially preventable. Individuals intending to attack follow paths to violence indicated by attack-related behaviors (Borum, et al. 1999, 340).

Researchers avoided problems inherent in previous studies that often relied on secondary sources and questionable methodology. Project researchers bypassed tenuous and invalid race, psychology and trait-based assumptions to focus on the assassin's actions (Fein et al. 1995, 58). They concluded that assassination must be understood as a process composed of incremental behaviors in which all of an attacker's actions are intertwined (Borum, et al. 1999, 340). The attacker moves from embracing the idea that violence is an acceptable solution through various steps to committing the violent act. Seeing the requisite behaviors in sequence strengthens analysis and the ability to identify movement towards violence.

The process is best envisioned as a path leading to violence, or for the purposes of this research, a Path to Terrorist Violence (PTTV). In the same manner as the PTV, by focusing on radical groups at risk looking for specific attack-related activities, it may be possible to determine whether a group is on the Path to Terrorist Violence and is moving towards the commission of terrorist acts. If the PTTV works in the same way as the PTV, then groups intending to commit terrorist violence engage in certain noticeable behaviors. Terrorism as intended violence is a process of behaviors, or a path, along which a radical group can move in either direction reaching one level and then moving forward or retreating to a previous level. Time is essentially irrelevant along the path; traveling the PTTV can take months or years, or it can be traversed in hours (Calhoun and Weston 2004, 58).

The PTTV concept is elaborated on in the next chapter. It can be envisioned as a stairway consisting of six steps. Step One is the existence of a Grievance. Frustration with efforts to redress a group's grievance evolves into Step Two, Ideation, revolving around the consideration of violence as a means to achieve an objective. In this regard, the PTTV model is useful in identifying group activity as well as lone individuals or small groups acting independently following the concept of leaderless resistance.<sup>2</sup> With Step Three, Research & Planning, the threshold of observability and criminal activity is crossed as group members engage in conspiratorial, inchoate offenses. This step is significant because it forces a group out into the open to gather intelligence on the targeted individual or facility, conduct surveillance and make inquiries - all actions that are potentially noticeable. In addition, as described below, once a crime has been committed law enforcement can employ more intrusive, and oftentimes more effective, criminal intelligence techniques to identify the scope of group activities. In Step Four, Preparation, activities such as obtaining a disguise, preparing a weapon or buying ammunition continue the escalation to violence and constitute noticeable behaviors. Breaching constitutes Step Five and consists of attempts to bypass security, rehearsals, and dry runs. Delivering the act of violence in Step Six, Attack, culminates the trip on the PTTV and includes assaulting the target with a weapon, firebombing, committing acts of vandalism or other violence.

Because the PTTV focuses on conduct, rather than relying on less reliable and controversial psychosocial or race-based profiles of potential attackers, the model meshes well with restrictions on criminal intelligence activities. These restrictions, stemming largely from prior abuses during police intelligence activities, require the existence of reasonable suspicion – a criminal predicate - that an individual or organization is involved in a definable criminal activity or enterprise before intrusive law enforcement strategies, such as surveillance, infiltration, and disruption are employed (Thomas 2000, 26).

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<sup>2</sup>. Leaderless resistance is defined as "...voluntary, individual or small group independent cell criminal actions motivated by, and in furtherance of the stated goals of a political organization or movement." Groups following this model include right wing and animal rights extremists (Kaplan 1997, 80).

Identifying terrorism potential using the PTV model serves complementary goals. First, it minimizes the expenditure of finite law enforcement resources on unnecessary investigations of groups not posing a threat. Second, it minimizes the potential chilling effect on, and infringement of, constitutional guarantees of freedom of association, expression and dissenting political activity caused by unwarranted police investigation and disruption of benign groups. Third, in many cases, PTTV analysis can be accomplished using open sources, such as Internet web sites, press releases, group propaganda and proclamations, statements and interviews of leaders and key supporters. Open source information often yields radical group grievances, ideation and intentions – all potentially useful indicators in PTTV analysis. The use of open sources is non-intrusive and does not violate restrictions on criminal intelligence activities because such information is in the public domain.

The goal of this thesis is to test the applicability of the PTTV concept as a terrorism threat assessment tool by applying it to three groups representative of the broad spectrum of domestic radical groups. The first is the now-defunct Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), a left wing, urban terrorist group active in California in the early 1970's. The SLA is famous for the kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patty Hearst, numerous violent robberies and a bloody shootout with the Los Angeles, CA police (McClellan and Avery 1977). The second is the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), a contemporary extremist animal rights group classified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as a terrorist group for its arson and vandalism attacks on animal research and especially vivisection laboratories (FBI 2004b). The third is the Army of God (AOG), part of the somewhat amorphous and loosely coupled anti-abortion movement that includes radical groups like Lambs of Christ and Missionaries to the Pre-born (Baird-Windle and Bader 2001, 7-10). Among its adherents was defrocked

Presbyterian minister Paul Hill who was executed by the State of Florida for the 1994 assassination of Dr. David Gunn and an escort outside a Pensacola, FL abortion clinic.

This thesis has utility for counter-terrorism efforts including law enforcement and the broader goal of homeland security as well as for policy makers and legislators seeking insight into the evolution of radical groups towards terrorist violence as a tactic to achieve group objectives. The bombing of the Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City in 1996 by homegrown terrorists was the most deadly act of domestic terrorism<sup>3</sup> prior to the multi-focal attacks on 9/11. The danger of a myopic focus on transnational terrorism, especially the Islamist variety, may result in insufficient attention to the threat posed by domestic radical groups. In the ten years following the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, the radical right has spawned sixty terrorist plots ranging from plans to bomb government buildings, banks, clinics, synagogues, mosques and bridges, to assassinating police officers, judges and elected officials, to robbing banks, and armored cars and procuring illegal machine guns, missiles, explosives, biological and chemical weapons (Blejwas et al. 2005, 32). This research helps to push the focus of counter-terrorism efforts outwards to embrace a variety of potential threats to include those posed by domestic groups.

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<sup>3</sup>. The FBI defines domestic terrorism as "...the unlawful or threatened use of violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States (or its territories) without foreign direction, committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives" (ROCIC 2004, 2).

## II. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The genesis of the Path to Violence (PTV) concept is traceable to research on presidential assassins by James W. Clarke (1981, 84). Clarke deviated from traditional attempts to identify an assassin profile or to decipher the psychopathology of a perpetrator's mind. His research led to the realization that determining what was in the mind of the assassin would not yield a viable threat assessment method. He was the first to recognize the utility of a "situational approach to predicting political dangerousness" by noting behaviors and actions common to the assassins he studied (1981, 90). By focusing on actions integral to an assassin's behavior, Clarke shifted the focus from speculating about what was in the mind of the assassin to examining what a suspected assassin was doing. He showed that potential assassins could be identified by what they did, not by their irrationality or mental illness.

Almost two decades later, Clarke's research was bolstered by the findings of the Exceptional Case Study Project (ECSP) of the United States Secret Service (Fein and Vossekuil 1999, 248). The project entailed detailed research into the lives and activities of 83 assassins and near-assassins. The major overall finding is that many, if not most, attacks on public officials are potentially preventable. Assassins follow paths to their attacks engaging in "attack-related" behaviors (Fein and Vossekuil, 1999, 238). Project researchers found that tenuous race, psychology and trait-based indicators were not useful indicators of violence. They bypassed these assumptions to focus on the assassin's actions and concluded that assassination is best understood as a process composed of incremental behaviors (Borum, et al. 1999, 340). The study found:

Persons intending to mount attacks follow paths to their attacks. They often engage in... discernible activities that precede an attack. They may demonstrate interest in previous assassins and assassination attempts. They are likely to communicate their intentions to others or to keep a journal or diary about their thinking and activities. (Fein and Vossekuil 1999, 332)

The PTV model, while originally conceived as applying to lone assassins targeting high profile protectees, like the President of the United States, can be applied to other forms of targeted violence. Its concepts can be used in threat assessments of radical groups at risk of escalation to acts of terrorist violence. Applied as the Path to Terrorist Violence (PTTV) threat assessment model, it can be used to identify groups posing a risk of terrorist violence. As a proactive assessment tool, the PTTV can be used to identify precursor activities indicative of plots to commit terrorist violence enabling counter terrorism forces to disrupt conspiracies before violence occurs.

The theoretical underpinnings of the PTTV model turn on the concept of intended violence. Not all violence is the same; opportunistic violence may be a form of entertainment for a criminal offender or pursued as an outlet for their frustration. Examples include vandalism, purse snatch robbery, assault and violence towards particular cultures or races. Expressive or impromptu violence is spontaneous and unplanned (Calhoun 2001, 72). It often stems from some kind of interpersonal altercation in which one person intends to harm another. Those involved typically know each other, are similar in age and frequently share the same race and ethnic background (Hollinger et al. 1994, 210). By contrast, intended violence is premeditated and motive driven, such as the desire to acquire property or, in the case of terrorism, to achieve a political end. Typically, those involved do not know one another and the harm caused is secondary to the motive (Berkowitz 1994, 89).

The elements of premeditation and planning differentiate intended violence from other forms such as opportunistic or impromptu violence. While the degree of planning involved is infinitely variable and ranges from elaborate to simple, planning is an essential step in all intended violence. The degree of complexity often is determined by factors such as the setting for the attack, the target's accessibility, and the assailant's attitude toward escaping. The universality of premeditation and planning makes this type of violence amenable to threat assessment because the violence is theoretically detectable

before it occurs. Obviously, a disciplined and devoted group that is well versed in tradecraft,<sup>4</sup> such as strict compartmentalization, communications discipline and covert activity, will be difficult to detect.

In this thesis the terms “intended violence” and “targeted violence” are synonymous and refer to the choice of a symbolic individual, location or physical structure as the target for attack. Such targets include public officials, public figures, abortion providers, courthouses, schools, shopping centers, churches and synagogues, abortion clinics and animal vivisection laboratories, among others. Targeted violence as terrorist acts differs only in motivation from the other variants of intended violence.

Terrorism involves targets that are chosen because they are symbolic or capable of influencing a larger population beyond those immediately affected by the terrorist act (Crenshaw 1995, 18; Smith 2004, 410). In the Fall of 1999, Buford Furrow, a white supremacist, decided to attack Jews in a classic case of targeted violence as terrorism (Calhoun 2001, 68). Furrow was deterred by the level of security at the first two sites he surveilled. Fearing failure and personal danger in attacking a protected target, Furrow continued to search until he stumbled upon a Jewish community center that doubled as a day care center. Furrow did not care whom he shot - men, women or children - only that they happened to be present at the Jewish facility (Calhoun 2001, 59). Jews, in whatever form, were targets symbolic of threats to Furrow’s white supremacist ideology.

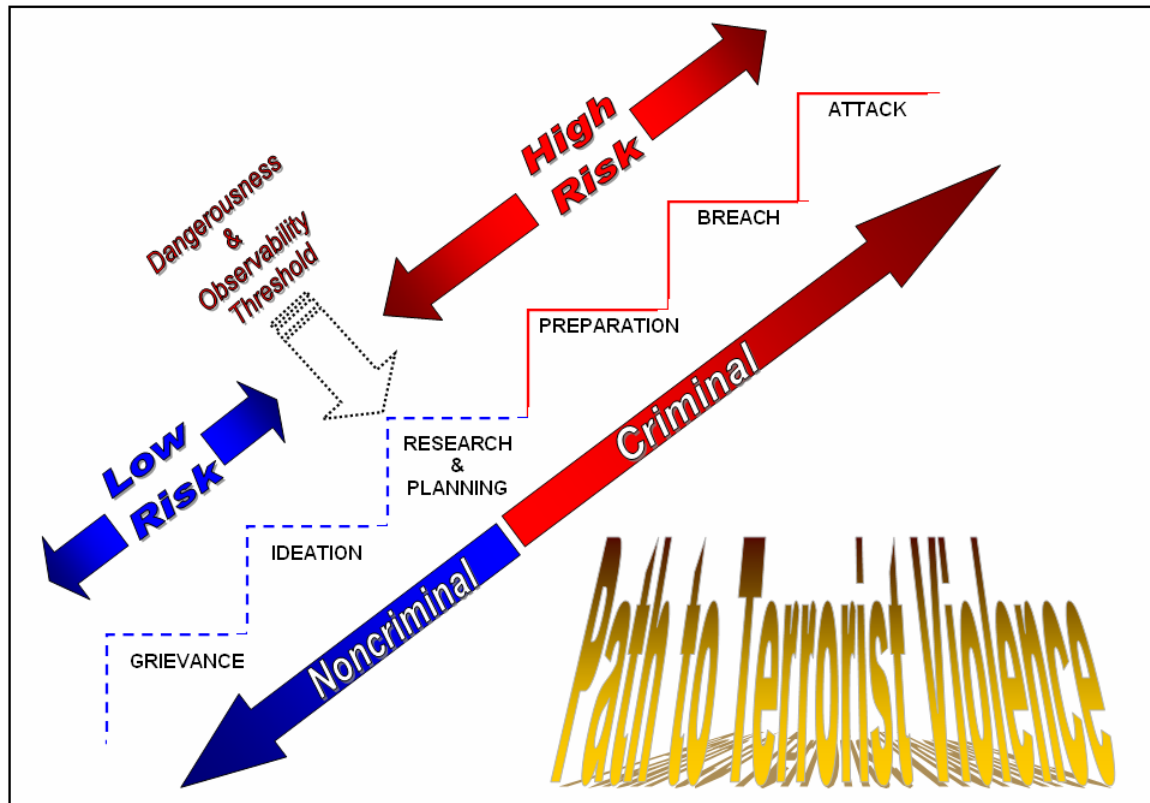
## **A. BACKGROUND**

The PTTV can be envisioned as a series of six steps leading to violence as shown in Figure One, below. Without exception, none of the steps can be skipped and all must be taken before targeted violence can be accomplished

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4. Tradecraft consists of specialized skills that terrorist operatives use to evade detection by intelligence services and law enforcement, and includes how to hide out in cities using safe houses, contact other operatives, use encryption to protect e-mail addresses and phone numbers, construct improvised explosive devices, and other techniques necessary to evade detection, apprehension to conduct terrorist operations.

(Calhoun 2001, 71). The following examples, provided by Israel's experience with suicide bombers, illustrate the PTTV process and why it is necessary to complete all steps before violence can occur.



**Figure 1. Path to Terrorist Violence** (adapted from Calhoun 2001, 71-90)

**Case One – Inability to Complete Path to Terrorist Violence** - In June 2005 Israeli troops arrested two Palestinians belonging to the militant Islamic Jihad in the West Bank on suspicion of planning suicide attacks against Israel (UPI 2005). The militants were at Step Three, Research and Planning on the PTTV when arrested. Step One, Grievance can be inferred by the long-standing Palestinian-Israeli conflict over occupied lands. Step Two, Ideation also can be inferred by the militant's progress on the PTTV because reaching the Research and Planning step implies that the militants have already accepted terrorist violence as a viable solution to existing grievances. If the requisite Ideation had not already occurred, the militants would have no need to conduct Research and

Planning in preparation for an attack. By arresting the two while still in the Research and Planning stage, counter terrorism forces disrupted the plot essentially freezing the militant's progress on the PTTV. Arrest blocked their ability to take subsequent steps necessary to complete the PTTV by mounting an attack.

**Case Two – Inability to Complete Path to Terrorist Violence.** Israeli border police arrested Palestinian Wafa Ibrahim as she tried to pass through the security checkpoint at the Erez Terminal to the Gaza Strip while wearing 20 pounds of explosives hidden in her underwear (Essing 2005). She had a written doctor's appointment and confessed that she was on her way to blow herself up inside the hospital. Ibrahim was stopped at the checkpoint before she could successfully complete Step Five – Breach (Essing 2005). Due to her failure to breach her intended target, she was unable to complete the PTTV by reaching Step Six, Attack.

**Case Three – Completion of Path to Terrorist Violence.** Six people were killed and scores injured when Andaleeb Takataqah, a 20-year-old Palestinian seamstress, detonated the suicide vest she was wearing at a bus stop in Jerusalem (Haaretz 2005). Witnesses reported that Takataqah apparently tried to enter the crowded open market area of Mahane Yehuda but was deterred by the large number of police and soldiers checking identity documents and parcels of people entering and leaving (Haaretz, 2005). If Takataqah had decided against attacking that day in favor of choosing another, less well-defended target at a later date, she would have regressed back to Preparation on the PTTV while she waited for a second opportunity to attack. However, apparently Takataqah's alternate target was a nearby bus stop. While temporarily stalled at Step Five, Breach, Takataqah made a second attempt to attack and was able to bypass security at the bus stop to successfully achieve Step Five – Breach. Once she breached security, she culminated her trip on the PTTV by detonating her explosives to reach Step Six – Attack.

As indicated in the cases above, group movement towards terrorist violence is not unidirectional or irresistible once it has begun. The group can stop its progress for a variety of reasons, including the exodus of radical members pushing a violent agenda resulting in the loss of critical mass necessary to pursue violence, incapacitation by arrest of key members, or by pressure from law enforcement counter terrorism efforts that make it too risky to attempt an attack. When interrupted from implementing an attack, as shown by the previous examples, groups may be frozen at a pre-attack step, or in other cases retreat along the path resulting in a lessened risk of violence and perhaps abandoning criminal acts altogether. In the months following the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1991, anecdotal reports indicated that the level of carnage that resulted shocked some white supremacist groups that had been thinking about violence, or had reached the Research and Planning or Preparation stages for violent acts. As a result, many abandoned, or at least temporarily retreated from their own plans for terrorist acts.

The Secret Service ECSP found a number of attempted assassins who were not able to become actual assassins because they were prevented from completing the Path to Violence. The appearance of effective, layered security that makes an attacker believe that an attack will fail can have a significant deterrent effect influencing an attacker to stop progress on the PTV. Sometimes, an innocuous happenstance interferes with an attacker's progress on the PTV. A female attempted assassin at Step Five, Breach, on the PTV intended to shoot President George H. W. Bush as his motorcade drove past. Just as the car came into view, a man standing next to her asked for the time. As she dug in her pocket for her watch, Bush sped by (Calhoun 2001, 96).

As these examples indicate, the nature of intended violence requires a group to complete each step on the Path to Terrorist Violence in sequence to reach Step Six – Attack. Where counter terrorism efforts were effective in stalling movement on the PTTV, violence did not occur. By contrast, where an attacker was able to complete the PTTV, intended violence culminated in a successful attack.

## **1. The Path to Terrorist Violence Construct**

The PTTV is predicated on the six steps of the Path to Violence. For the purposes of counter terrorism efforts, Step One - Grievance, Step Two - Ideation and Step Three - Research and Planning may be the most fruitful for identifying terrorist violence potential while still in the inchoate stage of development before violence occurs.

**Step One: Grievance** – The existence of grievances is considered by Crenshaw to be the first condition necessary for terrorism (1972, 383). In the context of radical groups, grievances stem from frustration with progress by less radical means usually pertaining to a chronic or intractable problem that affects the attainment of its objectives.

The concept of grievance must be interpreted in its broadest meaning to comprehend the influence it has on motivating a group to engage in terrorist acts. Grievance is commonly defined as a complaint regarding the status quo made against those in authority (Wikipedia 2005a). A prominent example is the Declaration of Independence that contained a list of colonists' grievances against the King of England. Grievances over what may appear to some as trivial concerns can be a significant source of frustration and deep emotion to others. The frustration and anger associated with grievances, sometimes historical and multi-generational, can become part of the social fabric and collective identity of the aggrieved. Groups formed from communities with long-standing, shared grievances may have no firsthand experience with the policies or actions that led to the grievances affecting previous generations, but through enculturation, socialization and custom feel the same frustration and anger. Knowing the precise nature of a group's grievance can provide tremendous insight into how strongly they may feel compelled to act out violently (Calhoun 2001, 75). Grievances often are discernable via communiqués, Internet postings, manifestos, ultimatums or treatises.

The existence of grievances implies frustration with the attainment of group goals. The frustration variable may be a significant indicator of terrorist

violence potential. For example, frustration within mainstream social movements with the pace of change through conventional tactics, such as public education, protest and civil disobedience, appears to act as a common catalyst to organizational splintering. Impatience with goal attainment provides a significant rationale in the decision to adopt terrorist violence. Action, including violence, becomes imperative because the group feels the challenge of change cannot be left to the future and, hindered by limited means, the group sees the choice as between action as survival and inaction as the death of the movement (Crenshaw 1972, 388). In essence, decaying mainstream protest movements often are important to the formation of terrorist groups because they spawn splintering and increased radicalization that can lead to terrorist violence (Weinberg and Eubank 1990, 140).

The view that political violence, including terrorist violence, is a potential consequence of a faltering social movement holds that the development of a revolutionary dimension and increased risk of violence occurs when various factions begin to fragment along ideological lines over disagreements about what methods to employ to achieve group goals (Gentry 2004, 275). As Laqueur (1997, 47) states, "It is difficult to think of any terrorist group which did not split at one time or another.... the result of a confrontation between hardliners and relative moderates." This effect can be seen in contemporary movements involved in extremist environmental causes. For example, public statements by spokespersons for the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) cite a growing demand by disenchanting members for the escalation of violence to include targeted violence against individuals associated with corporations, government agencies and other entities viewed as contributing to environmental abuse (Bosworth 2002).

The frustration-splintering phenomena often results in increased radicalization as more extreme members coalesce into a distinct subgroup willing to resort to increased violence to attain group objectives (Gurr 1998, 87). This phenomenon was evident in the 1960's radical anti-Vietnam War group Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) that splintered to yield the terrorist group Weather Underground Organization (WUO) (Jacobs 1997, 8-22). The WUO was

a self-described revolutionary organization of leftist women and men formed by splintered-off members of the SDS. Weathermen advocated the overthrow of the government and capitalism. Toward that end they carried out a campaign of bombings, jailbreaks, and riots. The Weathermen were active from 1969 to 1976. In 1970, the group issued a “Declaration of War” against the United States government and began a series of bombings including preparations for a bombing of a US military noncommissioned officers' dance at Fort Dix, NJ in what WUO member Mark Rudd said was going to be "the most horrific hit that the United States government had ever suffered on its territory." When three WUO members died in an accidental explosion while preparing the Ft. Dix bomb, other cells re-evaluated their plans and decided to pursue only non-lethal terrorist violence. The group released a number of manifestos and declarations while conducting a series of bombings including the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, police stations and prison buildings, among other targets (Jacobs 1997, 12-40).

**Step 2: Ideation.** In the context of judicial threateners, ideation often is evident following delivery of an Inappropriate Communication and Contact (IC&C) (DCSO, 2001). IC&Cs include communications or threats received in writing, in person, by telephone, fax, email, by informant or third party, or via suspicious activity directed at the judiciary or elected officials. IC&Cs contain inappropriate references such as threats, direct or specific, veiled (“You’ll get yours”), or conditional (“you’d better do... or I will”), pseudo-legal court filings from quasi-courts other than duly constituted federal, state or local governments, evidence of suspicious behavior, stalking behavior, or research on the personal affairs of the judicial or elected official, references to bodyguards, security, safety, danger, etc. or anything that is disjointed in content, sinister, or otherwise questionable (DCSO, 2001).

In the context of radical groups, ideation may be evident in the delivery of a manifesto, ultimatum, treatise or communiqué containing veiled or overt threats along the same parameters of an IC&C. Examples include the Weather Underground Organization’s Declaration of War delivered by Bernardine Dohrn as Weather Underground Communiqué #1, May 21 1970. It read:

I'm going to read a declaration of a state of war. This is the first communication from the Weatherman Underground. All over the world, people fighting Amerikan (sic) imperialism look to Amerika's (sic) youth to use our strategic position behind enemy lines to join forces in the destruction of the empire...Within the next fourteen days we will attack a symbol or institution of Amerikan (sic) injustice. (Jacobs 1997, 56)

On June 9, an anonymous call warned that a bomb had been planted and that evacuation was necessary. Shortly thereafter, explosions damaged the headquarters of the New York City Police Department (Jacobs 1997, 67). Similarly, anti-abortion websites that post the names of abortion doctors accompanied by treatises legitimizing the assassination of abortion providers as "justifiable homicide" reveal ideation advocating terrorist violence.

A group's increasing radicalization oftentimes is reflected in the tone and content of its open source communications. The importance of ideation and rhetoric is highlighted by Crenshaw:

...attention should be paid to the words that terrorists issue - memoirs, pronouncements, rationales. Although these words may be self-serving, that does not mean that they are not also, in some significant way, revealing. (1995, 277)

Sprinzak's Crisis of Legitimacy theory clarifies the importance of ideation in progress towards acts of terrorism (1991, 50). This process – a psycho-political crisis of legitimacy – is marked by a syndrome consisting of four components: (1) a political language of delegitimization of the regime; (2) rhetoric and symbols of depersonalization and dehumanization of individuals belonging to the system; (3) intended and planned violence, and (4) terrorism. Terrorism implies a crisis of legitimacy that influences a radical, pre-terrorist group to reject the government's legitimacy to the point of challenging it with unconventional violence (Sprinzak 1991, 50). Crisis of legitimacy matures through a lengthy process of delegitimization of the established society and government. Like other explanations of the radicalization of social movements, delegitimization usually begins in radical groups at risk of escalation, referred to by Sprinzak as pre-terrorist groups (1991, 52). An extreme form of this radicalization -

transformational delegitimization - usually takes place in democracies and can invert all of the political, cultural and moral codes of the individuals involved leading to extremes in violence (Sprinzak 1991, 58).

The delegitimization process involves three distinct evolutionary stages: crisis of confidence; conflict of legitimacy; and crisis of legitimacy (Sprinzak 1991, 55). The process begins with crisis of confidence that implies a conflict with specific rulers or policies. This stage is characterized by a profound disenchantment with what is usually thought of as "the establishment." While not illegal at this point, the group's mentality, language and behavior are likely to be countercultural, like that seen in new left groups of the 1960's, including the WUO:

Perhaps the most bizarre...act of the Weathermen was the applause they gave to the murder of movie actress Sharon Tate and her friends by Charles Manson and his "family"...the Weathermen celebrated the event as an act of liberation of utmost significance. Bernardine Dohrn was quoted as saying "Dig it, first they killed those pigs then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork in the victim's stomach! Wild!" (Sprinzak 1995, 79; quotations in original)

The intermediate stage is the conflict of legitimacy behavioral stage that evolves when a radical group, previously engaged in anti-government criticism, is ready to question the legitimacy of the entire system of governance. Members view the system as manipulative and repressive as they embrace an alternative ideological and cultural system (Sprinzak 1991, 54). This stage commonly follows on the heels of a profound disappointment with the effectiveness of the group's previous tactics. Moderates may become enraged and frustrated either by the government's hostile response to their criticisms, or by their own failure to achieve significant progress in achieving group goals. This stage of delegitimization is evidenced by active political action ranging from demonstrations, confrontations and petty vandalism, to relatively uncoordinated and small-scale intentional violence against symbols of the system (Sprinzak 1991, 56).

The culmination of this process is a crisis of legitimacy. This stage is essentially an expansion of the previous delegitimization of the system to every person and entity associated with it characterized by depersonalization and dehumanization that makes it possible for group members to distance themselves morally and to commit atrocities (Sprinzak 1991, 57; della Porta 1995, 49). This stage is usually reached in second or later generations of radical group members.

The importance of Sprinzak's model in understanding the context of radical group ideation is that the first external indication of group evolution is often linguistic and symbolic (1991, 57). The government and its supporters are portrayed as "things", "dogs", "pigs", "Nazis" or "terrorists". Each individual who is a member of the government, or is associated with it in the eyes of the group, is a potential target for violence (Sprinzak 1991, 57). The operational methods include systematic terrorism and the formation of small, covert terror cells engaged in unconventional attacks on the system. Totally isolated from the outside world, the group constructs its own reality and accompanying behavioral and moral standards that are enforced with an iron hand:

Young couples living in "weather collectives" were required to "smash monogamy" and to reject natural parenthood. The "Weather Bureau" ordered that all female revolutionaries sleep with all male revolutionaries, and vice versa. Women were also to make love to each other. Private relations of love and affection were declared counterrevolutionary, because they represented bourgeois habits. "Weather" mothers who were suspected of devoting too much time to their babies (born in the course of the "revolution") were told to give the revolution first priority. There were cases in which they were even ordered to give their babies to other, less committed, members of the organization, so that they could devote all of their energies to the cause. (Sprinzak 1991, 58; quotations in original)

According to threat assessment researchers, those who think about committing a violent act often have trouble keeping those thoughts to themselves (Calhoun 2001, 80). Indicators of ideation are obtainable from group communiqués, Internet postings, propaganda, interviews with group leaders and

news releases, mergers or alliances with groups with a history of violence and evidence suggesting that a group has begun to think of violence as a viable course of action including threats, references to approaches or stalking and surveillance of individuals, security measures, and similar behavior. These signs are merely indicators and although ideation is an essential step on the Path to Terrorist Violence, signs of ideation may not appear in each case. When signs of ideation are apparent, they should be treated as potential clues, not as categorical evidence of intent or exclusive of other indicators and signs (Calhoun, 2001, 109).

Research linking terrorist violence potential to value references contained in terrorist documents examined whether the psychological characteristics of a group's rhetoric might identify violent tendencies. Using content analysis of the values in key group documents, researchers attempted to determine if value references are indicative of violent tendencies (Smith 2004, 411). The documents examined included 166 items found through open sources including university library collections, newspapers, Internet sites set up by the group, letters, pamphlets and interviews. Values, like those described below, attributed to opponents and to the group itself, play important roles in the rhetoric of groups engaging in acts of terrorism:

**Dominance** - combat or physical aggression, valuing fighting, struggle; punishing, retaliating; victory in war, typified by statements such as "We will not stop fighting until there's no one left to fight." Also valuing power over people, authority, leadership, influence indicated by statements such as "We need to lead our people into the new millennium."

**Morality** - morality, goodness, distinguishing right from wrong or honesty and keeping promises. Valuing being good in a moral sense; conscience, right vs. wrong. Typical statements include "We must always be on the side of good and fight evil." Truthfulness, truth-speaking and truth-acting; not lying; not concealing the truth; keeping promises, highlighted by statements such as "Honesty is always the best policy."

**Justice** – justice and tolerance values such as fairness toward all or valuing humanity and the absence of cruelty. Justice values included justice, valuing equality, fairness or equal opportunity; fair-mindedness, or open-mindedness towards everyone. Justice values were typified by statements such as “We must respect the rights of all human beings” while tolerance included valuing diversity, non-prejudice, the absence of ill will, suspicion or hostility, indicated by statements such as “We must respect people from different backgrounds.”

**Culture** - culture and religion such as valuing the history and traditions of its own group or valuing God and religious practices. Culture values Culture: Valuing the art, history, or traditions of one’s own group. “We should never forget our heritage.” Religion: Valuing God or religious texts and practices. “God must inspire all of our actions.” (Smith 2004, 416 – 421; quotations in original)

Researchers found that the morality value was a significant indicator of terrorist violence potential. Groups that view themselves as morally superior to others are more likely to engage in violence (Smith 2004, 418). Groups that see themselves as a morally superior elite regard conventional standards of behavior as irrelevant. They view themselves as acting in order to preserve a sense of moral superiority or righteousness that facilitates evolution to violence including justifying terrorist attacks by creating an “evil enemy” image of opponents. Ominously, groups that had an elevated sense moral superiority were deemed more likely to justify using civilians as pawns in the struggle against their enemies (Smith 2004, 414).

Sometimes ideation appears as a preoccupation with another incident of violence that inspires an act of revenge. Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh blew up the Murrah Federal Building on the anniversary of the day that the Branch Davidian compound burned in Waco, TX following a lengthy standoff with federal law enforcement agents. Ideation also is manifested in fascination with another assassin or terror group. The killing of abortion doctors by adherents of the Army of God (AOG) and its “justifiable homicide” doctrine illustrates this effect. In March 1992, AOG follower Michael Griffen assassinated abortion provider Dr. David Gunn. For the next year and a half, Paul Hill

championed Griffen's action under the justifiable homicide doctrine (MIPT 2005). He circulated petitions, appeared on talk shows, and began focusing on Dr. Gunn's replacement. In August 1993, Hill completed his trip on the Path to Terrorist Violence by shooting Dr. John Britton and escort David Barrett outside a Pensacola, FL abortion clinic. Explaining his rationale, Hill stated "Michael Griffen had been dismissed as being mentally unbalanced, but I was a former Presbyterian minister." He reasoned that because he had better credentials, his act of violence would have more credibility than Griffen's (Calhoun 2001, 81).

**Step 3: Research and Planning.** Once a group has embraced the idea that violence is a viable solution the next step along the path is to plan the attack. Planning requires some degree of research, if only to determine where the target will be on the day of the attack and the best way to make the assault. Of all the steps on the PTTV, these behaviors are the most noticeable because they force group members into the open to collect the required information to mount a successful attack. In order to research the target the attacker has to ask questions and has to engage in behaviors associated with collecting information. The information itself may require direct observation, querying associates of the target, or searching public records stored by public custodians (Calhoun and Weston 2003, 74). In addition, the target may notice being followed, neighbors may report strangers asking questions and co-workers may notice a suspicious car parked nearby.

Evidence of research and planning also can come from the content of Internet website postings, group propaganda, communiqués and other open source information provided by the group itself. Animal Liberation Front website posts document an ominous escalation in tactics:

You can install all of the motion sensor lights in the world and it won't make a difference. You've been marked. ...We've been in your house while in San Francisco. We've 'bumped' into you at Costco. You've given us the time while in line at Bank of America. We've been watching you and your family. (Animal Defense League 2003)

Other evidence may be provided by the targets themselves, such as reports of suspicious cars in the neighborhood or unusual inquiries such as references to personal information about the target such as size of family, type of car driven, personal habits, spouse's place of employment, or favorite restaurants. All of these indicate some degree of target research (Calhoun 2001, 135).

Not every case involves extensive planning; AOG follower Michael Griffen killed Dr. Gunn simply by researching the kind of car Gunn drove, the routes he took to and from work, and where he parked at the reproductive health care clinic. When he saw Gunn's car enter the parking lot, Griffen knew the doctor would pull into the alley behind the clinic and park near the back door. Griffen walked down the alley and shot the doctor as he got out of his car. Clearly, little sophisticated planning was involved in Gunn's murder (Calhoun 2001, 85).

This step demarcates an important evolution on the Path to Terrorist Violence: crossing the threshold of dangerousness and observability and the onset of criminal conduct. Crossing the threshold of observability exposes the group to detection because research, such as making inquiries, forces the group into the open where such actions are theoretically observable. Similarly, the threshold of criminal conduct is determined by the transition from contemplating violence – ideation or thinking about violence is not illegal - to taking active precursor steps in preparation for violence that constitute inchoate criminal activity under conspiracy laws. As a criminal act, this step heightens the group's dangerousness as they engage in the requisite preparatory steps for violence.

From a counterterrorism perspective, illegal conduct by a radical group is significant in two ways. First, restrictions on intrusive criminal intelligence methods, such as physical surveillance, electronic monitoring, including wiretaps and audio and data intercepts of voice, fax, cell phone and computer communications, are loosened once the threshold of criminal conduct has been crossed. Since all terrorist violence - including conspiratorial activity in preparation for violence - is illegal, many constitutional restrictions on intelligence

targeting of non-criminal activities, or pre-criminal groups, do not apply. Using intrusive intelligence methods enhances police ability to more effectively detect terrorist plots. Second, the ability to arrest, convict and imprison group members for their crimes disrupts plots and incapacitates by incarceration those arrested, as well as deterring, at least theoretically, others from doing the same thing.

**Step 4: Preparation.** This step on the path includes activities such as acquiring a weapon, ammunition or explosives, assembling equipment, and arranging transportation. It also includes activities such as timing preparations so that the attack occurs on a significant date. An obvious example is the timing of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on the anniversary of the FBI assault on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, TX. Preparations include conducting final act behaviors and costuming. These types of preparation are usually restricted to suicidal individuals who put their affairs in order so that loose ends are not left after their deaths. Before Jack Gary McKnight assaulted the Federal Courthouse in Jefferson County, KS, he engaged in obvious final act behaviors. He made several homemade bombs, killed his dog, burned his second car, dressed in his best suit - a form of costuming - and made a videotape explaining why he attacked the courthouse and expected to die in the attack (Calhoun 2001, 5). McKnight was to be sentenced to prison on charges of possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and using a firearm while committing a drug offense. He was indicted on those charges along with his wife, Cynthia, who pleaded guilty and was to be sentenced later in the week. Subtle and seemingly irrational acts, like costuming and final act behaviors, can reveal intentions if those responsible for threat assessment are aware of their significance.

Like Research and Planning, Preparation involves activities that are potentially noticeable (Calhoun 2001, 91). Preparations often extend beyond obtaining a weapon or assembling the deadly or destructive equipment. Groups also have to raise the resources necessary to pay for the attack. Preparations often require interactions with others such as gathering materials from a variety

of sources and the assembly of that material. There is no standard rule for what the preparations may be, except that the group has to prepare for the attack.

The simultaneous existence of Grievances and the concomitant Ideation that considers violence as an acceptable redress, while reprehensible, is not against the law. As a group continues its trek on the Path to Terrorist Violence engaging in subsequent acts - such as Research and Planning - it crosses the threshold of criminal conduct. Reaching the Preparation step moves the group deeper into crime and further along the path towards terrorist violence.

**Step 5: Breach.** The final step before the actual attack is to breach security to approach the target with a weapon. The attackers have to position themselves in proximity to the target. Getting close is a noticeable and potentially preventable logistical exercise, especially if rehearsals and dry runs are involved (Calhoun 2001, 85).

**Step 6: Attack.** The ultimate step on the path is to assault the target with a weapon or destructive device (Calhoun 2001, 95). When Buford Farrow was prevented from attacking his first two targets because of security, his progress on the PTTV was blocked, at least temporarily. Seeking less well-secured targets, Farrow was able to complete the PTTV by shooting up a daycare at a Jewish Community Center.

## **B. SUMMARY**

The PTTV is supported by a solid theoretical foundation that supports the idea that the existence of grievances, group splintering and the process of increased radicalization, followed by discernable ideation supporting terrorism are valid and accurate indicators of terrorist violence potential. Beginning with the validity of the underlying Path to Violence concept, and expanding it to include the characteristics of radical groups at risk of escalation to terrorist violence, the PTTV becomes a proactive assessment tool to identify precursor activities indicative of terrorist violence.

The PTTV construct, envisioned as a path consisting of six steps leading to violence, is conceptually clean and intuitively easy to grasp. By focusing on actions rather than ambiguous and largely invalid race, ethnicity or trait-based assumptions of individuals or groups at risk, the PTTV can be used to assess terrorist violence potential for a wide variety of domestic radical groups. Assessing groups at risk for grievance and ideation indicative of terrorist violence, and supporting those assessments by identifying the elements of premeditation and planning inherent in intended violence, counter terrorism forces are armed with a useful threat assessment tool that enables them to proactively disrupt conspiracies before violence occurs.

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### **III. TESTING THE FIT: THREAT ASSESSMENT OF THREE GROUPS**

To test the efficacy of the Path to Terrorist Violence the histories of three groups are examined, chosen from across the spectrum of domestic radical groups. An overview of each group is provided as background followed by an analysis of each group's grievances, ideation and subsequent progress towards violence on the PTTV. Although the PTTV model includes Breach and Attack as distinct steps, in reality Breach occurs nearly simultaneously with Attack in many acts of terrorist violence. When ALF members were angered by an unflattering portrayal of them as terrorists, they attacked a British documentary film producer outside his residence, kidnapping and branding him with the letters "ALF" (ALF 2005c). The Breach and the Attack steps occurred in such quick succession that they could be viewed essentially as simultaneous acts. For the purposes of brevity and clarity, unless there are significant deviations from this pattern in the case studies examined, Breach and Attack are described together. Variations in method of breach and form of attack are provided and often are determined by the nature of the target, the environment of the attack and the idiosyncrasies of the group.

The efficacy of the PTTV model is predicated on the ability to spot terrorist violence potential before an attack occurs. Detecting group intentions at Step Four, Preparation, or later on the PTTV, increases the likelihood that law enforcement will be unable to stop an attack. Late stage detection of terrorist plots increases the risk that more extreme members of the group, or a competing group, will attempt to upstage the plot by attacking early or separately choosing different targets. Identifying violence potential from a group's reaction to grievance or ideation is the ultimate goal because it enables counter terrorism interventions while plans for violence are still in the planning or preparatory stages. It is difficult to accurately identify terrorist grievance and ideation without an assessment tool because they lie below the criminal and observability thresholds. In addition, although not studied in this research, there appears to be

a form of PTTV inertia stemming from group movement towards violence. If PTTV inertia is a common phenomenon, counter terrorism effectiveness is improved by earlier interventions that prevent its onset.

Open source analysis of a group's communications can provide key indicators of terrorist violence potential in the Grievance and Ideation steps. As described previously, research has demonstrated that key value references in radical group communiqués, press releases, manifestos, Internet postings, group propaganda, and statements by leaders and spokespersons can be used to assess the risk of violence (Smith 2004, 412).

## **A. GROUP ONE: HISTORIC LEFTIST RADICAL GROUP**

### **1. Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA)**

The Symbionese Liberation Army was a domestic terrorist group following a radical leftist ideology that considered itself a revolutionary vanguard army. Members of the group were accused of committing murders, bank robberies, and other acts of violence between 1973 and 1975. Never numbering more than 13 members, its motto was "Death to the fascist insect that preys upon the life of the people" (Stone 2004).

The SLA formed as a result of a prison visitation program affiliated with the Venceremos Movement (VM) (Stone 2004). Venceremos, Spanish for "we will conquer", was a radical political group formed in 1971 by Stanford University Professor H. Bruce Franklin and various other members of the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the Maoist Revolutionary Union. The VM took its name from the battle cry of Ernesto "Che" Guevara, a revolutionary communist leader from Argentina and a high ranking member of Fidel Castro's communist government in Cuba (Bryan 1975, 102). Venceremos advocated armed self-defense of the citizenry, community control of the police, and prison reform. Group members worked to educate prisoners and defend Vietnam war protesters (Bryan 1975, 105). Many SLA members were former VM members who believed that America's prisons were concentration camps designed to repress African Americans. Willie Wolfe, an anthropology student active in VM, developed this

ideology into a plan for action linking student ideologists with prisoner militants. (Stone 2004.) One of these militants was inmate Donald DeFreeze, imprisoned for a series of crimes ranging from petty theft to violent armed robbery (Payne et al. 1976, 19).

DeFreeze was instrumental in forming the SLA after his escape from Soledad prison in March 1973. Following escape, he sought refuge among his contacts with VM members and associates in the San Francisco Bay Area, eventually sharing living quarters with future SLA members Wolfe, Russ Little, and Patricia Soltysik, also known by her SLA nom de'guerre "Mizmoon." DeFreeze and Soltysik drafted the outline for the "Symbionese Nation" that centered on the concept of "Symbionese" derived from symbiosis, a biology term used to denote mutually beneficial interaction between different species (Payne et al. 1976, 51). The founders of the SLA had different human races in mind when coining the term. It is ironic that although members of the SLA considered themselves leaders of a Black revolution, DeFreeze was the only African American member. The infusion of DeFreeze's criminal expertise led the predominantly white, middle class SLA core from revolutionary rhetoric to terrorist action (Bryan 1975, 142). DeFreeze adopted the nom de'guerre "Field Marshal Cinque" taking his name from the leader of a slave rebellion that took over the Spanish slave ship *Amistad* in 1839 (Bryan 1975, 81).

During this formative period the group's primary activity was acquiring and training with firearms (Bryan 1975, 5). The SLA's first terrorist operation occurred in November 1973 when they murdered Oakland, California superintendent of schools Dr. Marcus Foster with their trademark cyanide-tipped bullets (Stone 2004). In a 2004 interview, Little stated that Foster, who was black, was assassinated because De Freeze believed that he was the front man for a wide-ranging police conspiracy to further subjugate blacks and minorities beginning with the mandatory issuance of student identification cards in Oakland schools (Stone 2004).

The SLA's second major action was the kidnapping of publishing heiress Patricia Hearst in February 1974 from her Berkeley area apartment. Hearst was kidnapped to trade for SLA members Wolfe and Little who had been captured following a shootout with police. When the swap failed, the SLA issued alternative ransom demands that included massive deliveries of free food to poor people in the San Francisco Bay area (Stone 2004). While under SLA control, Hearst was radicalized and assumed the nom de'guerre "Tania." She was indoctrinated in SLA ideology and later made tape recordings for the group to announce demands and conditions. After release, she claimed that she had been brainwashed by her captors or was suffering the symptoms of "Stockholm syndrome" in which captives come to identify with their captors (Stone 2004).

The SLA's next action was the robbery of the Hibernia Bank; violence that included the shooting of two innocent bystanders. Hearst participated in the robbery and was videotaped by security cameras holding a rifle and issuing orders to customers. She later was tried and convicted for her involvement and served time in prison. As a result of the Hibernia robbery and heightened police efforts to find the group, the SLA moved operations to the Los Angeles area (Payne et al. 1976, 262).

The violent demise of the group began on May 16, 1974 when William and Emily Harris and Patty Hearst were involved in a shooting following a failed shoplifting attempt at a sporting goods store in Inglewood, California. In the chaos following the violence they abandoned their van leaving police to find the address of their safehouse from a parking ticket in the glove box. The rest of the SLA fled the safehouse when they saw the events on the TV news (Payne et al. 1976, 271).

Seeking new shelter, SLA members took over a house in a black neighborhood. The next day an anonymous caller notified the Los Angeles Police that a group of heavily armed people had commandeered a family member's home. Police sealed off the neighborhood and surrounded the house and following demands to surrender, Special Weapons and Tactics Team

members fired tear gas into the house. SLA members inside responded with heavy bursts of automatic gunfire. The house ultimately caught fire from the tear gas projectiles and when two women charged from the burning building still firing at police, they were shot and killed. The rest died from the fire (Payne et al. 1976, 290). The bodies of Nancy Ling Perry ("Fahiza"), Angela Atwood ("General Gelina"), Willie Wolfe ("Cujo") who was reputedly Patricia Hearst's lover, Donald DeFreeze ("Fieldmarshall Cinque"), Patricia Soltysik ("Mizmoon", "Zoya"), and Camilla Hall ("Gabi") were found (McLellan and Avery 1977, 362). As a result of the seige, the remaining SLA members returned to the relative safety of the Bay Area and the anonymity provided by hiding among the large conclave of student radicals in the area.

Surviving SLA members, Bill and Emily Harris and Patty Hearst, were joined by new members Wendy Yoshimura, Kathleen and Steve Soliah, James Kilgore and Michael Bortin. The reconstituted SLA began a relatively minor bombing campaign in the Bay Area and in April 1975, robbed the Crocker National Bank in Carmichael, California, killing bank customer Myrna Opsahl in the process (McLellan and Avery 1977, 444). Patty Hearst was ultimately captured with Wendy Yoshimura later that year.

The last action by the SLA was the unsuccessful attempt by Kathleen Soliah to kill LAPD officers in August 1975. Several improvised explosive devices (IEDs) she placed under a police car failed to detonate. Soliah and other SLA members remained fugitives until 1999. In January 2002 first-degree murder charges for the killing of Myrna Opsahl were filed against SLA members Soliah, the Harrises, Bortin, and Kilgore. Emily Harris, now known as Emily Montague, admitted to being the one holding the murder weapon, but said that the shotgun went off accidentally. According to a public statement by Hearst, Montague had dismissed the murder at the time saying, "She was a bourgeois pig anyway. Her husband is a doctor" (McLellan and Avery 1977, 447).

## **2. The SLA Path to Terrorist Violence**

Grievance – As a New Left organization, the SLA followed an ideology that differed from earlier leftist movements that had been oriented towards labor activism. The New Left strain was intellectually driven and adopted a broader definition of political activism, commonly called social activism, exemplified in the SLA's roots in extremist prison reform and Black Nationalism sentiments. The many grievances stemming from this ideology shaped the revolutionary nature of the group and resulted in dehumanization of its opponents by referring to them as insects consistent with value references indicative of terrorism (Smith 2004, 411). Typical of group grievances and the belief in armed struggle and revolution was the SLA Declaration of War:

The ...Symbionese Liberation Army is made up of the aged, youth, and women and men of all races and people. The name Symbionese is taken from the word symbiosis and we define its meaning as a body of dissimilar bodies and organisms living in deep and loving harmony and partnership and the best interest of all within that body...We of the Symbionese Federation and the S.L.A. are the children of all oppressed people , who have decided to redefine ourselves as a Symbionese Race and People ...to die a race, and be born a nation, is to become free...(Bryan 1975, 169)

References to “oppression” and “death before freedom” suggest deep-seated grievances that the group expressed via communiqués recorded on audiotape and delivered to radio stations. That method of delivery, and the militant rhetoric of the SLA, made an impression on the American public and law enforcement which viewed the group as a significant threat (Nason 2004).

Ideation – There is also abundant evidence of SLA ideation indicating movement towards terrorist violence contained in various communiques and literature recovered by police from safehouses and following the arrests of group members (McLellan and Avery 1977, 170). Notable among them for the purposes of this research were plans to overthrow the existing capitalist system including overt threats like that in the group's slogan, “Death to the Facist Insect that Preys Upon the Life of the Citizens” (Stone 2004).

Research and Planning – The SLA conducted surveillance of potential targets and fairly sophisticated research and planning like that involved in the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst and the assassination of Marcus Foster (McLellan & Avery 1977, 169-171). During a search of a hastily abandoned safe house, police found a detailed sketch of the Foster ambush scene and another detailing the site of an armed robbery in Berkely. Also included were schedules of surveillance duty and maps and detailed plans for robberies and ambushes.

Preparations – SLA members were fairly sophisticated in terrorist trade-craft. The infusion of criminal expertise with DeFreeze's membership undoubtedly increased the group's potency. They were successful in obtaining weapons, ammunition, and constructing and using IEDs, found and used safe-houses, and understood and manipulated the "terrorism as theater concept" by manipulating the news media via release of communique's, using kidnap victim Patty Hearst to record group demands, and by using cyanide-tipped bullets in the Marcus Foster assassination (McLellan and Avery 1977, 131). Brian Jenkins summed up what terrorism is when he said "Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not the actual victims. Terrorism is theater" (Jenkins B. quoted in Nacos 1994).

Breach & Attack – Breach is self-evident in their success in kidnapping, assassination, bombing, and bank robbery. Group success in perpetrating violence by attack is self-evident in varied successful attacks such as assaults on police, bank robbery, kidnapping, bombings and assassination.

### **3. Analysis**

The PTTV analysis of the SLA proves to be a valid threat assessment model clearly indicating the potential for violence evident in the grievance and ideation stages. However, history has shown that public (and police) awareness of the group occurred simultaneously with its first act of violence precluding the possibility of proactively identifying terrorist violence potential prior to the group's first attack. It is purely speculation, but if intelligence entities had PTTV assessment capability during the radical milieu of the Berkely and Bay Area

during this period, they could have identified terrorist violence potential in statements and activities of VM members, prison radicals and their associates. Many were well known radicals who lived, or were associated, with groups and individuals that espoused views indicative of terrorist violence potential in expressed grievance and ideation advocating the violent overthrow of the government. Ideation that advocates violence would have established the requisite criminal predicate required to initiate criminal intelligence investigations that could, theoretically, have spotted terrorist violence potential or conspiratorial activities before violence occurred.

## **B. GROUP TWO: CONTEMPORARY SINGLE ISSUE GROUP**

### **1. The Animal Liberation Front (ALF)**

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is an extremist animal rights group classified as a terrorist organization by the FBI. Its organization is decentralized, an example of leaderless resistance, with no formal membership or hierarchy that serves to cloak members in anonymity and shield them from arrest and prosecution. A cell can consist of a single person. There are active ALF cells in most European countries, Russia, Australia and the United States and Canada (Jarboe 2002). ALF members embrace an ideology that rails against speciesism; the exploitation of one species by another, commonly the exploitation of animals by humans (Monaghan 1997, 109).

ALF began as a small group of fox hunt saboteurs in England in the 1960s. The Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) laid false scents and blew hunting horns to send the hounds in the wrong direction. In 1972 they set up the more militant Band of Mercy that attacked hunters' vehicles by slashing tires and breaking windows (ALF 2005c). The group progressed to attacking pharmaceutical laboratories and seal-hunting boats. The Animal Liberation Front splintered from the HSA and formed a more radical organization after two Band of Mercy members were jailed in 1975 (Jarboe 2002). The FBI claims that the

American branch of the ALF began its operations in the late 1970s, but the group became more high profile in 1982 and made the FBI's domestic terrorism list in 1987 with a multi-million dollar arson at a veterinary lab in California (Jarboe 2002).

Similar to ALF activities in the United Kingdom and Canada, the American ALF has attacked varied targets from medical and scientific research laboratories to butcher shops and retail furriers. The organization has claimed credit for stealing research animals, destroying research equipment and records, and acts of vandalism and arson. In August of 2003, ALF activists claimed responsibility for the release of 10,000 mink from a mink farm in Washington State (ALF 2005c). According to their website ALF's stated aims or policies are:

- To inflict economic damage on those who profit from the misery and exploitation of animals.
- To reveal the horror and atrocities committed against animals behind locked doors, by performing non-violent direct actions and liberations.
- To take all necessary precautions against harming any human or non-human animal. (ALF 2005c)

Group members engage in direct action in protest against facilities and laboratories engaged in what the group defines as abuse of animals. Early ALF covert operations tended to focus on the "liberation" of animals from vivisection laboratories. However, in recent years these actions have expanded to include vandalism, arson, and making threats against individuals who directly or indirectly work for organizations the ALF has targeted.

A more radical animal rights strain is evident in an undated interview with British ALF leader Robin Webb who said that anyone who is a vegetarian or vegan, and who carries out an action that falls within the policies of ALF, may claim that action on behalf of the ALF (No Compromise 2005). He added "That is why the ALF cannot be smashed, it cannot be effectively infiltrated, it cannot be stopped. You, each and every one of you: you are the ALF" (No Compromise 2005). More ominously, Webb made references to the Animal Rights Militia (ARM) and the Justice Department (JD), radical groups described as "...the hard

cutting edge of the war against abuse and exploitation of the weak and innocent.” (No Compromise 2005). The ARM claimed responsibility for six bomb attacks on the homes of scientists in 1985 (Monaghan 1997, 111). Since its appearance in 1993, the Justice Department has claimed responsibility for hundreds of violent attacks in the U.K. including letter bombs that have injured several people, and mailing scores of envelopes rigged with poisoned razor blades taped inside the opening edge of the envelopes, poised to cut the fingers of anyone opening the letters (Monaghan 1997, 110).

In January 1996, after the group became active in North America, the JD claimed responsibility for sending envelopes with blades dipped in rat poison to 80 researchers, hunting guides and others in British Columbia, Alberta and around the United States (SPLC 2002). "Dear animal killing scum!" read the note inside, "Hope we sliced your finger wide open and that you now die from the rat poison we smeared on the razor blade." The letter signed off, "Justice Department strikes again." Authorities in Great Britain have suggested that Keith Mann of the ALF, currently serving an 11-year prison sentence in Britain, founded the JD (Mannes 2005).

Some observers contend that groups like ARM and JD are not distinct groups, but merely invented names for non-existent groups that take responsibility for acts that are too violent to comply with ALF claims of “non violence to sentient beings” (Geldard 1989, 8; Henshaw 1989, 67). A communique issued by the JD highlights increased radicalization in the animal rights movement and the group’s willingness to use violence:

We’ve sat back for years and watched (animal rights) activists ask nicely for all the abuse to stop – the more daring risk their lives and liberty but still the unacceptable number of tortured animals keep rising...We won’t be asking anyone to stop messing with animals and make no more excuses for our violent intervention – they’ve had it too good for too long. **NO MORE TORTURE, NO MORE LIES.** (Monaghan 1997, 112; emphasis in original)

Webb stated "Simply put, the third policy of the ALF (performing non-violent direct actions) no longer applies" (No Compromise 2005). This statement appears to confirm claims in law enforcement intelligence reports that the more extreme groups like ARM and JD are simply different names for the same groups of activists engaged in escalating violence that has begun to target individuals for attack.

## **2. The ALF Path to Terrorist Violence**

Public statements by spokespersons for the ALF cite a growing demand by disenchanted members for the escalation of violence to include targeted violence towards individuals associated with corporations, government agencies and other entities viewed as contributing to animal abuse. Webb has stated elsewhere that "The only difference between ALF and the more radical ones is that ALF basically takes every precaution not to endanger life at any time. The Animal Rights Militia are prepared to twist the arm of animal abusers" (BBC 2000). Critics also have noted a statement made by ALF first press officer and founder Ronnie Lee, who wrote that "[a]nimal liberation is a fierce struggle that demands total commitment. There will be injuries and possibly deaths on both sides. That is sad but certain" (BBC 2000). When David Blenkinsop, together with two other men who remain unidentified, attacked Huntingdon Life Sciences director Brian Cass outside his home with pick-axe handles, ALF founder Ronnie Lee said "He has got off lightly. I have no sympathy for him" (Alleyne 2001). Robin Webb said of the attack:

The Animal Liberation Front has always had a policy of not harming life, but while it would not condone what took place, it understands the anger and frustration that leads people to take this kind of action. (Alleyne 2001)

Grievance. Grievances are evident via numerous open sources including Internet websites, interviews and news releases by ALF spokespersons. They include opposition to corporations and laboratories supporting animal research, vivisection and a vast array of activities the group defines as animal abuse. The ALF website displays this credo:

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) carries out direct action against animal abuse in the form of rescuing animals and causing financial loss to animal exploiters, usually through the damage and destruction of property. Wide ranging grievances focus on acts defined by the group as animal abuse, including vivisection, an emotive term that refers to the dissection or surgery upon a living animal, typically for scientific investigation. (ALF 2005b)

Animal rights groups apply it broadly to any type of experimentation in which animals are injured, with or without surgery. ALF also cites the “maintenance or commodification” of animals for:

...food, entertainment, cosmetics, clothing, scientific testing, or for any other reason, infringes upon their fundamental rights to possess themselves and to pursue their own ends (ALF 2005c).

Citing extreme cases of abuse, ALF examples include research laboratories forcing animals to simulate sex acts while taking blood samples, screaming at animals in order to invalidate blood-pressure tests, punching puppies in the face (purpose not clear), sawing open the tops of primate skulls to induce stroke and then leaving them with their brains exposed and uncared for after the procedure for 15 hours overnight. The animals were reportedly found dead the next morning (ALF 2005c).

Farmers, demonized as “manipulative money grubbers” and “brutal, crude and merciless” do not escape the group’s wrath. Citing husbandry practices, ALF states:

...hens exhaust themselves by laying so many eggs simply because their eggs are taken away from them. Dairy cows are artificially inseminated. As soon as they give birth their calf is ripped away from them. Calves are kept chained in tiny stalls and fed on a chemical rich diet for veal production. The mother's milk is sucked out along rubber tubes and sold by the massive dairy industry...farmers stuff (animals) into lorries and carry them for days without providing anything for them to eat or drink...cage them in tiny boxes, move them about soaked in their own urine and knee deep in their own excrement, scare them senseless and then slit their throats. (ALF 2005c)

Ideation is evident in the process of splintering and radicalization from more mainstream groups, such as Earth First! and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Citing troubling internal rhetoric that increasingly is shifting towards targeted violence against individuals, the FBI fears a dramatic escalation in violence:

Traditionally ALF freed lab and farm animals, insisting that they would never purposefully harm a human. But affiliated groups in Europe have beaten opponents, and Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn's assassin was an animal rights activist. (FBI 2004b)

At an August 2003 Animal Rights Conference in Los Angeles ALF spokesman, Dr. Jerry Vlasak, stated:

I think there is a use for violence in our movement. And I think it can be an effective strategy. Not only is it morally acceptable. ... I don't think you'd have to kill -- assassinate -- too many vivisectioners before you would see a marked decrease in the amount of vivisection going on. (FBI 2004b)

There are indications that ALF and its sister group Earth Liberation Front (ELF) share an increasingly cozy ideological kinship with international terrorists (FBI 2004b). Both groups have affiliates in Europe and connections to the radical left internationally. Daniel Andreas, who is on the FBI's most wanted list for a series of attempted bombings of animal research facilities, sent an e-mail claiming credit for the bombings that ended with a salute to international terrorists

including Columbia's FARC, the Irish Republican Army, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a group closely linked with the Islamist terrorist groups Hamas and Hezbollah (FBI 2004b).

Research and Planning. ALF tactics that include following corporate executives and surveilling their homes are evidence of Research and Planning. ALF members have obtained employment in offending laboratories to take pictures and video to document abuse and learn insider information necessary to circumvent alarms and other security measures. The group also conducts extensive research to identify corporations and individuals associated with organizations that ALF perceives as major animal abusers such as Huntingdon Life Sciences (ALF 2005c). Once identified, members follow corporate executives and surveil their homes, vehicles, family members and activities.

Preparation. Preparing how-to manuals on arson and other direct action methods designed to disrupt or destroy the ability of offending companies to continue operations and posting them on the Internet demonstrates preparation. The ALF manual "Arson Around with Auntie Alf" posted on ALF websites is a detailed and fairly sophisticated how-to manual detailing the construction and use of incendiary devices (ALF 2005a).

Breach and Attack The ability of the group to set arson fires resulting in significant damage and conduct burglaries to liberate laboratory animals is evidence of ALF ability to breach security and perpetrate violence.

### **3. Analysis**

The ability of ALF to inspire its followers to violence, and the success of the group in destroying property and generating publicity, has earned the ALF membership on the FBI's list of domestic terror groups. Its grievances stem from a well-honed and globe-spanning extremist animal rights ideology that overlaps and is supportive of other radical ideologies such as environmental extremism, green anarchy and other leftist ideologies (FBI 2004b). The group is responsible for millions of dollars in damage and numerous successful attacks aimed at disrupting the operations of companies it views as animal abusers. More

ominously, there are indications that more radical members, possibly forming splinter groups like ARM and JD, have targeted individuals for physical attack in an escalation of violence.

Threat assessment using PTTV clearly indicates terrorist violence potential in the group's stated grievances and its accompanying ideation of violence as a means to achieve group goals. However, like other covert, clandestine organizations, especially those employing leaderless resistance, PTTV assessment is manifestly more difficult because of the group's amorphous membership and the number and wide geographic dispersion of potential targets.

### **C. GROUP THREE: CONTEMPORARY RIGHT WING GROUP**

#### **1. The Army of God (AOG)**

The Army of God (AOG) is an extremist religious group that some argue is more a shared ideology than an organization (Altum 2003, 1). Adherents have taken credit for the 1997 bombings of an Atlanta abortion clinic and a gay nightclub (Haught 1997). After the second blast, a crude, unsigned letter was sent to the Reuters news agency. The letter said "units of the Army of God" placed both bombs. It said anyone involved with abortion "may become victims of retribution." As for the gay nightclub, it said: "We will target sodomites, there (sic) organizations, and all those who push there (sic) agenda." In militia-like tones, the letter threatened both the United Nations and the U.S. government:

We declare and will wage total war on the ungodly communist regime in New York and your legislative (sic)-bureaucratic lackey's in Washington. It is you who are responsible and preside over the murder of children and issue the policy of ungodly perversion (sic) thats (sic) destroying our people....Death to the New World Orer (sic). (Haught 1997)

Eric Rudolph, an Army of God follower, is suspected of planting the nail-studded bomb that killed a woman and hurt 100 others at the Atlanta Olympics in 1998, as well as the two bombings in Atlanta described above (MIPT 2005). He is currently serving two life sentences for the Birmingham bombings.

The origins of the group are traced to the early 1980s when fundamentalist protesters repeatedly swarmed<sup>5</sup> an abortion clinic in Granite City, IL. The clinic operator, Dr. Hector Zevallos, and his wife Rosalee were kidnapped by a group of men calling themselves the Army of God (Haught 2005). The couple was held eight days in an abandoned ammunition bunker and threatened by their captors with death if Dr. Zevallos did not pledge to stop performing abortions. He did, and the couple was released. Three men later were convicted of the kidnapping. The leader, Don Benny Anderson, said God had told him to wage war against abortion. Anderson was sentenced to a 30-year prison term and also was convicted of arson fires at two Florida abortion clinics that netted a second 30-year term (Haught 2005).

Followers of AOG's radical ideology believe that their call to action comes directly from God and therefore supercedes American law and jurisprudence. It promotes the doctrine of "justifiable homicide" that allows the killing of abortion providers in defense of innocent lives (Altum 2003, 2). Pastor Michael Bray is the self-proclaimed chaplain of the Army of God. He hosts the annual White Rose Banquet honoring those imprisoned for anti-abortion violence. He also wrote the book "A Time to Kill" which provides a biblical justification for the use of violence against abortion providers. Bray has served time in jail for bombing abortion clinics and he named his daughter after a murderer of an abortion doctor (Haught 2005).

The anonymously written Army of God manual contains detailed instructions for abortion clinic violence including tactics to blockade entrances, attack with butyric acid, firebombing and using improvised explosive devices (Altum 2003, 4). The manual contains anti-abortion language as well as anti-government and anti-gay/lesbian language. It begins with a declaration of war on the abortion industry:

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<sup>5</sup>. Swarming is a law enforcement term used to describe protest group activities directed at disrupting traffic flow or halting operations by flooding an intersection, street or abortion clinic with a large number of protesters.

Our Most Dread Sovereign Lord God requires that whosoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Not out of hatred of you, but out of love for the persons you exterminate, we are forced to take arms against you. Our life for yours - a simple equation....You shall not be tortured at our hands. Vengeance belongs to God only. However, execution is rarely gentle. (MIPT 2005)

Army of God member James Kopp was convicted in the fatal shooting of clinic doctor Dr. Barnett Slepian in 1998. Kopp is suspected of six or more similar shootings between 1994 and 1997. Clayton Wagner, the man who claimed responsibility for sending over 550 anthrax threat letters to clinics in 2001, signed many of his letters with the name "Army of God." He also posted threats on the Army of God website to kill 42 individuals working at abortion clinics (Reiter 2000, 120).

In March 1993, Michael Griffen assassinated Dr. David Gunn. Inspired by this murder, Oregon housewife Rachelle Shannon corresponded with Griffen several times and eventually decided to become an assassin herself. The routine monitoring of prison correspondence would have provided indications of radical ideation that might have established the requisite criminal predicate necessary for more intrusive criminal intelligence targeting of Shannon to determine her threat potential. If so, police might have discovered her research, planning and preparations leading to her decision to assassinate Dr. George Tiller of Wichita, Kansas. On August 19, 1993 Shannon waited outside Tiller's clinic. As he left work for the day, she approached his car and fired her pistol seriously wounding him (Calhoun 2001, 92). She later bragged that she was enforcing "God's will." Buried in Shannon's back yard, police found an AOG manual filled with bomb-making instructions and a "Declaration" saying abortion providers must be assassinated:

We, the undersigned, declare the justice of taking all godly action necessary to defend innocent human life including the use of force. We proclaim that whatever force is legitimate to defend the life of a born child is legitimate to defend the life of an unborn child. We assert that if Michael Griffin did in fact kill David Gunn, his use of lethal force was justifiable provided it was carried out for the purpose of defending the lives of unborn children. Therefore, he ought to be acquitted of the charges against him. (O'Boyle 2002, 35)

Other actions by AOG followers include the killing of abortion provider Dr. John Britton and his driver James Barrett outside a Pensacola, Florida abortion clinic. Paul Hill, a former Presbyterian minister and anti-abortion activist, killed Britton on July 29, 1994 (Mason 2000b, 39). In addition to the two murders, Hill wounded Barrett's wife. During his trial, the judge refused to allow Hill to explain to the jury his justifiable homicide rationale for taking action. Sentenced to the death penalty under Florida law, Hill was executed by lethal injection making him the first person to be executed in the U.S. for killing an abortionist.

Paul Hill's actions in 1994 were part of a wave of anti-abortion violence committed by AOG followers; Michael Griffin was serving a life sentence for the murder of an abortion provider; James Kopp was in prison for killing a physician in Buffalo, New York; Eric Rudolph was awaiting trial for a 1998 bombing that killed a police officer at an Alabama abortion clinic; John Salvi had committed suicide in prison two years after the 1994 killing of two abortion clinic receptionists in Massachusetts (Clarkson 1998). In a statement before his execution, Hill said that he felt no remorse for his actions and that he expected "a great reward in Heaven" (Hill, 1999).

## **2. The AOG Path to Terrorist Violence**

Prior to targeting abortion providers for assassination, observers of the pro-life movement detected several trends that indicated a shift from protest to increasingly violent forms of terrorism (Mason 2000a, 14). Pro-life assassins no longer fit the "religious martyr" mold; instead of confronting abortion providers face to face, as Michael Griffen had done when killing David Gunn, attacks evolved to anonymous snipers shooting from hidden locations and from the

bombing of clinics to the use of secondary devices - explosives studded with shrapnel like ball bearings and nails designed to injure and maim and timed to detonate after the arrival of first responders (Mason 2000a, 14).

Grievance – Evidence of grievance includes numerous publications like the underground manuals, “Firestorm: A Guerrilla Strategy for Pro-Life America” and “A Time to Kill” that provides a biblical justification for the use of violence against abortion providers (Clarkson 1998). These publications, and Internet postings supporting the AOG doctrine of justifiable homicide, indicate the depth of their grievances. All espouse a radical pro-life ideology that legitimates an end-justifies-the-means rationale for violence to stop abortions using tactics that disrupt abortion practices through arson, vandalism, confrontation, stalking harassment and murder.

Ideation – Evidence of ideation includes numerous AOG websites that support pro-life violence. Typical of this phenonoma was the original Numremburg Files (NF) website that listed attacks on abortion providers as well as detailed information on their residences and clinic addresses. The NF asserted that abortion doctors should be brought to trial as Nazi war criminals were after World War II (FMF 1999). The website maintained a list of abortion providers with different fonts indicating the status of violence directed at them. A gray font indicated wounded doctors while murdered doctors were marked with a strike through. For several of the people listed, the site also included photographs, home and work addresses, phone numbers, and other information useful for planning an attack.

Other sources of ideation include the annual White Rose Banquet (WRB) honoring imprisoned followers of AOG violence (FMF 2001). The activities at the 2001 WRB are indicative of AOG ideation. The banquet is celebrated on the eve of the anniversary of the right to abortion decision, Roe v. Wade.<sup>6</sup> In 2001 the host, and convicted clinic bomber Michael Bray, was honored by several dozen persons from across the country including convicted arsonists, bombers, and

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<sup>6</sup>. Roe v. Wade - 410 U.S. 113, January 17, 1973.

others previously convicted for anti abortion violence (FMF, 2001). Many of those attending had signed their names to “Defensive Action” petitions that justify the use of force, including murder, against abortion providers. Featured conference speakers at the 2001 banquet included Neal Horsley from suburban Atlanta, creator of the infamous Nuremberg Files. Michael Bray was presented symbolic gifts from those in attendance including a gasoline can and a road flare symbolizing AOG support of Bray’s arson attacks (FMF, 2001).

Research and Planning – The ability of AOG followers to kidnap and hold an abortion provider and his wife hostage, to assassinate other abortion providers, and to commit a range of geographically dispersed and varied type of attacks highlights the group’s ability to conduct research and formulate plans for violence.

Preparation – Publishing numerous how-to manuals that detail how to commit arson and vandalism attacks against abortion clinics, as well group ability to conduct kidnappings and sniper attacks, indicate that AOG followers can meet the logistical needs of mounting an array of attacks on widely dispersed targets. In addition, drafting treatises citing biblical sources for the justifiable homicide doctrine are part of a sophisticated psychological process to prepare members to move from ideation to action in attacking abortion clinic workers.

Breach & Attack - The ability of AOG followers to bypass security to kidnap an abortion provider and his wife, to assassinate other abortion providers, as well as damaging abortion clinics by arson and vandalism, are evidence of the group’s ability to successfully breach security and perpetrate violence.

### **3. Analysis**

The PTTV analysis of the AOG proves to be a valid threat assessment model clearly indicating the potential for violence evident in the Grievance and Ideation stages. Threat assessment of AOG documents, manuals, Internet postings and public statements clearly indicate a deeply emotional and substantial Grievance centered on an extreme version of pro-life activism fueled by what followers view as religious or divine justification for violence including

murder. There is clear ideation supporting terrorist violence including killing abortion providers, clinic workers and law enforcement officers by sniping and bombings.

Typical of the vitriolic rhetoric supporting such acts are the character of websites like the Nuremberg Files (FMF1999). The Nuremberg Files, before being shut down by court order for inciting violence against abortion providers, contained numerous inflammatory statements such as, "Our goal is to record the name of every person working in the baby slaughter business across the United States of America." In addition to listing abortionists with a legend indicating the status of violence directed at them, there was a link to additional pages accompanied by the phrase "Click Here If You Need Pictures To Remind You Why These People Must Be Brought To Justice." Clicking on the link opened a new page containing graphic photographs of aborted fetuses, biblical quotes and emotional supporting commentary, such as "This is what God's Child Looks Like Before the Baby Butchers Begin Their Deadly Business" (Nuremberg Files n.d.).

#### **D. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

The results of PTTV analysis are robust in identifying terrorism potential in all three groups in the Grievance and Ideation stages. Retrospective analysis of the groups clearly indicates that they were at risk of escalation via significant and deep-seated Grievances and Ideation supporting movement towards terrorist violence. The evolution of future members of the SLA from prison militancy and other forms of relatively benign leftist social activism to violent terror group is clearly indicated in grievances and ideation that hinted at, and sometimes blatantly decried, violent revolutionary tendencies. The ALF appears to be undergoing increased radicalization and splintering to form more extreme factions supporting the targeting of individuals. This escalation is clearly indicated in ideation supporting such violence and in physical attacks on opponents including a murder in Europe reportedly linked to an ALF-related group (FBI 2004b). AOG terrorist tendencies also are evident in numerous Internet posts and doctrines supporting violence targeting abortion providers.

The use of leaderless resistance by both AOG and ALF appears to be an increasingly common thread linking a wide range of contemporary radical groups from white supremacists to extremist animal and environmental groups. When it appears, especially in combination with other factors indicative of terrorist violence potential, leaderless resistance may be a strong indicator of a group reaching Step Four - Preparation on the PTTV.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

Validity and reliability are the ultimate measure of the efficacy of a threat assessment model. Validity refers to the degree to which the assessment model measures what it claims to measure. Reliability refers to the degree to which the model is consistent in measuring what it is intended to measure. Validity is requisite to reliability: If an assessment model is not valid, there is no point in discussing reliability because validity is required before reliability can be considered in any meaningful way. Similarly, if a model is not reliable it is also not valid (OPTISM 2005).

For the three groups examined, the PTTV is a valid threat assessment model. The PTTV benefits from its simple, easy to grasp concepts while avoiding the morass of contentious, conceptually messy and unreliable psychosocial, religious, race or ethnicity-based profiling assumptions. The model indicates terrorist violence potential by determining where on the PTTV a group is located based on an examination of group grievances, ideation and actions necessary to mount an attack.

There is a distinction between the significance of a grievance standing alone and a grievance in combination with ideation supporting terrorist violence. Grievances are inherent in the pluralist nature of American society. They are the catalyst for forming most legitimate social movements. The significance of a grievance to a mainstream social movement differs from that of the same grievance to a pre-terrorist group because the former accepts non-terrorist ideation supporting legitimate social change methods like participation in the political process, debate, protest and civil disobedience, while the latter - often a radical splintered-off subgroup - embraces ideation revolving around terrorist violence. In many cases grievances, by themselves, are not a strong indicator of terrorist violence potential. However, the existence of grievances can be a significant indicator when there is a nexus between them and ideation embracing terrorist violation.

The actions of Army of God follower, Rachelle Shannon, illustrate the validity of the PTTV model. Shannon began her anti-abortion activities by attending demonstrations and reading pro-life propaganda. In Shannon's case, her anti-abortion actions imply a grievance (**Step One-Grievance**). Several months later she was convicted of multiple arson fires at abortion clinics. In March 1993, Michael Griffen assassinated abortion provider Dr. David Gunn. Shannon wrote Griffen several times (**Step Two-Ideation**) and was inspired<sup>7</sup> to become an assassin herself (Calhoun 2001, 91-92). Her research on prominent abortion providers led her to choose Dr. George Tiller of Wichita, Kansas (**Step Three-Research and Planning**). Raising money through bake sales, Shannon earned enough money to buy a pistol and a plane ticket to Wichita (**Step Four-Preparation**). On August 19<sup>th</sup> 1993, Shannon waited outside Tiller's clinic until the doctor left work at the end of the day (**Step Five-Breach**). Shannon approached Tiller's car and fired her gun seriously wounding the doctor (**Step Six-Attack**).

The reliability of the PTTV model is evident in its ability to accurately assess terrorist violence potential for three radical groups representing a wide spectrum of ideologies. The strength of the model stems from the fact that all forms of targeted violence must follow the path in its entirety before violence can occur. The Rachelle Shannon case underscores the impact of removing any of the steps on the PTTV. If Shannon did not have a Grievance stemming from the inability of the pro-life movement to stop abortions she would not have a motive or need to seek redress via Ideation that violence was an acceptable solution. Shannon failed in less violent attempts – including setting arson fires at abortion clinics - to alleviate the Grievance. Her lack of success to ameliorate a deeply held and religiously influenced grievance led her to consider escalated violence. When lesser forms of violence failed to stop abortions, Shannon chose the ultimate form of violence by attempting to murder an abortion provider.

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<sup>7</sup>. Evidence of Shannon's ideation is based on her comments during interviews by Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) agents following her arrest (Calhoun 2001, 100).

The influence of AOG ideology and the apparent success of violence by other AOG members led Shannon to embrace Ideation supporting murder. The culmination of the Ideation process led her to translate thoughts of violence into actions to address her Grievance. Shannon took the next step on the PTTV, Research and Planning, by studying the attacks of other AOG members. Ready to imitate these attacks, she continued research and planning by choosing an appropriate target. At any point on the PTTV Shannon could have retreated from violence by abandoning Research and Planning. Instead, she took the next step and began Preparation to commit her attack. Holding bake sales to raise money to buy a gun and pay for plane fare are essential acts in transforming Shannon from a person contemplating violence to an armed assailant.

Assume that Shannon changed her mind and decided not to try to kill Dr. Teller. If, after purchasing the gun, she decided not to continue on the PTTV and sold the gun, threw it away, or put it in a drawer, Step Six, Attack, could not occur. Similarly, if Shannon was unable to complete her Preparation due to illness, accident, or incapacitation due to an arrest for arson, the attack could not occur. If Shannon had been unable to make the trip to Wichita from her home in Oregon, the Breach and Attack steps could not occur preventing the culmination of her trip on the PTTV. Instead, Shannon was motivated by her AOG beliefs to commit the attack by taking the requisite step to Breach by approaching the clinic where Dr. Teller worked. When Teller approached his car after work, Shannon shot and wounded him to complete her trek on the Path to Terrorist Violence. Similarly, if Shannon had failed to Attack due to the presence of armed security, innocent bystanders, or because she was not able to pull the trigger out of moral conviction, the Attack could not occur – at least for the moment. Obviously, removing any step prevents the culmination of the trip on the PTTV.

## **A. THEORETICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PATH TO TERRORIST VIOLENCE**

The theory that political violence, including terrorism, is a potential consequence of a faltering social movement leading to the development of a revolutionary dimension is widely accepted (Crenshaw 1972, 383; Weinberg and Eubank 1990, 140; Gentry 2004, 275; Laqueur 1997, 47; Gurr 1998, 87). The revolutionary dimension follows factionalism as the social movement begins to fragment along ideological lines over disagreements about what methods to employ to achieve group goals. A group's increasing radicalization oftentimes is reflected in the tone and content of its open source communications. The nature of intended violence, including the essential pre-conditions of premeditation and planning, make it theoretically detectable and therefore amenable to threat assessment.

There is substantial theoretical support for the PTTV, especially the utility of using Step One - Grievance and Step Two - Ideation to identify terrorist violence tendencies while still in an inchoate stage. Three studies in particular support the validity of threat assessment that focuses on the Grievance and Ideation stages.

### **1. Sprinzak - Crisis of Legitimacy**

The Crisis of Legitimacy theory clarifies the importance of ideation in identifying groups progressing towards terrorist violence (Sprinzak 1991, 50). This process includes language that de-legitimizes the regime; rhetoric that depersonalizes and dehumanizes opponents; acts of intended violence and terrorism. By rejecting a government's legitimacy, radical groups experience a crisis of legitimacy that leads them to challenge it with unconventional violence (Sprinzak 1991, 50). The importance of Sprinzak's model in understanding the context of radical group ideation is that the first external indication of group evolution to violence, and perhaps the most significant for threat assessment purposes, is often linguistic (1991, 57). Crenshaw underscores the importance of language as an indicator of potential terrorist violence (1998, 277):

...attention should be paid to the words that terrorists issue - memoirs, pronouncements, rationales. Although these words may be self-serving, that does not mean that they are not also, in some significant way, revealing.

## **2. Smith - Value References in Group Rhetoric**

Research supports the validity of analyzing value references in group rhetoric via open source documents to determine terrorist violence potential (Smith 2004, 416). Value references in group rhetoric stemming from grievance and reflecting ideation of violence reliably indicated terrorist violence potential (Smith 2004, 411). The morality value was a significant indicator; groups that view themselves as morally superior to others are more likely to engage in violence (Smith 2004, 418). Groups that see themselves as a morally superior elite feel entitled to disregard conventional standards of behavior including the ability to justify using civilians as pawns in the struggle against their enemies (Smith 2004, 414). The ability to identify moral superiority exists in Internet postings, group websites, communiqués, press releases, interviews, doctrines and other open source material.

## **3. Post, Ruby and Shaw - Integrated Analysis Approach**

The PTTV Model meshes well with a framework for analyzing the risk of violence associated with radical groups formulated by Post, Ruby and Shaw (2002, 73). Their integrated approach, based on the feedback of leading terrorism experts, provides indicators of a shift towards terrorist violence associated with a specified set of variables that can be applied to the analysis of radical groups. By interweaving various threat indicators in a socio-political context and comparing them to what experts view as significant indicators of transition to escalated violence, their approach lends itself to threat assessments of groups at risk. When available evidence concerning the SLA, ALF and AOG is applied to this framework, it reveals the existence of several ideological, psychological and behavioral indicators suggesting escalated risk of violence (Ackerman 2004, 146).

Post, Ruby and Shaw (2002, 74) identified thirty-four variables in four major categories: (1) Historical, Cultural and Contextual Variables; (2) Key Actors

Affecting the Group; (3) Group Characteristics, and: (4) Situational/Environmental conditions affecting the group (Post, et al. 2002, 76). Group characteristics, processes and structures, many identifiable via open sources, were the ultimate indicators of movement towards terrorist violence expressed in ideology and experience with violence (Post, et al. 2002, 84). The recruitment, selection, socialization, training, assignment, promotion and attrition of group members are tell-tale indicators of group motivations and orientation. In the case of the SLA, the infusion of escaped convict Donald De Freeze's violent criminal expertise transformed the rhetoric of the white, middle class SLA core to violent action that included kidnapping, assaults, bombings, robbery and assassination. Similarly, the training at ALF camps in Britain includes training supporters in how to kill (Nugent, 2004). Observers report that spokespersons for ALF advocated using tactics such as "delivering short punches to key areas" and to "aim for the eyes, nose, the neck and the kidneys" to attack the staff of companies and suppliers involved in vivisection (Nugent 2004).

While supporting PTTV concepts, this approach is encumbered by the large number of variables and the significant amount of information necessary for threat assessment. The covert nature of pre-terrorist and terrorist groups adds to the difficulty of collecting such information, especially for time-sensitive threat assessments involving late discovery of a group's violent tendencies. The time required gathering and analyzing historical, cultural and contextual variables, identifying key actors and their influence on the group, group characteristics and situational or environmental conditions makes this method better suited for academic research and less time-sensitive applications. By contrast, the PTTV construct is conceptually cleaner and easier to use by relying on six easy to observe variables that can be applied by a wide range of users from criminal intelligence analysts to researchers, from law enforcement executives to cops on the beat and operational or tactical decision makers.

## **B. LIMITATIONS ON THE SCOPE OF THIS RESEARCH**

There are obvious limitations imposed by the scope of this research, notably the lack of comparison with control groups from the same time period and ideology that did not pursue terrorist violence. It is reasonable to ask whether a valid and reliable study of the PTTV is possible without a control group or larger sample. The importance of non-terrorist groups as controls is highlighted by Crenshaw (1995, 5):

Rather than look at a dozen cases where terrorism developed, perhaps we should look at similar backgrounds and compare those cases where terrorism emerged with those where it did not.

Comparing groups embracing terrorist violence with similar groups that did not would undoubtedly strengthen the analysis. Future directions in threat assessment research would benefit from such comparison as well as analysis of within movement differences that highlights the factors present in radical splinter groups choosing violence and absent in those following more conventional, restrained methods.

## **C. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The PTTV was never envisioned as a stand-alone threat assessment tool. Instead, when used to support and enhance other methods, such as Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP) and the Atypical Signal Analysis and Processing (ASAP) schema, PTTV may yield a synergistic improvement in the accuracy, reliability and speed of threat assessments.

### **1. Support of Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)**

PTTV assessment meshes well with the emphasis on Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)<sup>8</sup> as a counter terrorism tool:

To adequately assess the threats from a terrorist group, information [gathered via Intelligence-Led Policing] is needed for a comprehensive analysis. Oftentimes...critical information is missing that prevents a complete and accurate [threat] assessment ... (Carter 2001, 4)

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<sup>8</sup>. Intelligence-Led Policing – “...the application of criminal intelligence analysis as a rigorous decision making tool to inform police decision making at both the tactical and strategic levels to facilitate crime reduction and prevention through effective policing strategies” (Carter 2001, vi).

Any method that helps fill in this missing information, either through direct knowledge or informed estimate, can potentially yield an exponential increase in the ability to identify terrorist violence potential. The importance of supporting ILP with threat-driven assessment models is underscored by this observation:

New expectations and responsibilities are being placed on law enforcement agencies...to develop an intelligence capacity as part of a cohesive national strategy to protect the United States from terrorism...particularly after the events of September 11, 2001...the intelligence process is threat-driven with the intent of preventing a terrorist act... (Carter 2004, vii)

Identifying domestic terrorist violence potential using the PTTV model accomplishes several complementary goals supporting ILP. First, it minimizes the expenditure of finite law enforcement resources on unnecessary investigations of groups not posing a threat. Second, related to the first goal, it minimizes the potential chilling effect on, and infringement of, constitutional guarantees of freedom of association, expression and dissenting political activity caused by unwarranted law enforcement investigation and disruption of benign groups. Third, in many cases, PTTV analysis can be accomplished using open sources. Open source information often yields radical group grievances and ideation – all potentially useful indicators in PTTV assessment. The use of open sources is non-intrusive and does not violate restrictions on criminal intelligence activities because such information is public domain.

## **2. Integration with other Methodologies: Atypical Signal Analysis and Processing (ASAP)**

The effectiveness of the PTTV Model is enhanced when it is used as part of a comprehensive threat assessment process to provide useful data for intelligence analysis. The potential synergy of PTTV analysis in concert with other approaches, such as the Atypical Signal Analysis and Processing (ASAP) schema, may yield quicker, more accurate assessments. ASAP is based on the idea that studying atypical, out-of-the-ordinary signals that deviate significantly from the status quo can identify terrorism planning and preparations before an attack occurs (Hollywood et al. 2004, 44). The PTTV Model enhances the

identification of these deviations, or critical warning signs, by separating them from background “noise.”<sup>9</sup> The PTTV model can feed the intelligence assessment process by identifying warning signs, and the context that helps explain them, from amid the clutter of intelligence noise (Hollywood et al. 2004, 44):

Every day, the intelligence community receives huge amounts of data...countless unsystematic “dots” of information. Yet with few clues about which data from this enormous flow are related to possible terrorist activity, great uncertainties about what the data mean, and little indication of how to put all the information together, the community can easily miss critical warning signs.

Models of expected behavior, like the PTTV Model, help analysts make sense of the information traces left by groups exhibiting terrorist violence potential. These traces describe highly atypical behavior as part of their attack preparations and some may indicate a change in operational status or the initiation of a threat (Hollywood et al. 2004, 44). The PTTV Model can help detect threatening behavior, isolate it from the glut of information, add clarity and meaning, and bring it to the attention of intelligence analysts in a timely fashion.

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<sup>9</sup>. For an interesting take on the problem of noise in counter terrorism intelligence, see Lake, “Al Qaeda’s Disinformation War” New Republic (<http://www.4law.co.il/598.htm>).

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