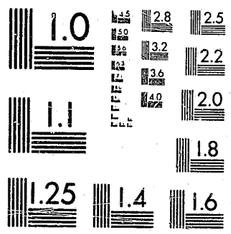

FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 1980, VOLUME 49, NUMBER 11

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The Cover: The Newberg, Oreg., Police Department sends a 6'4" sergeant to kindergarten to explain that being a policeman is a big job. Photograph by Bob Ellis, "Oregonian," Portland, Oreg.

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20535

William H. Webster, Director

The Attorney General has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of the Department of Justice. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget through December 28, 1983.

Published by the Public Affairs Office,
Roger S. Young
Inspector in Charge

Editor—Thomas J. Deakin
Assistant Editor—Kathryn E. Sulewski
Art Director—Carl A. Gnam, Jr.
Writer/Editor—Karen McCarron
Production Manager—Jeffery L. Summers

ISSN 0014-5688 USPS 383-310

73778

Terrorism

Countersnipers are the eyes of the command post. The three-man teams include a team leader, a primary countersniper, and a secondary countersniper who doubles as a photographer.

TACTICAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

The Challenge of the 80's

By W. RONALD OLIN
Assistant Chief of Police
Police Department
Lawrence, Kans.

The Central Intelligence Agency recently predicted that "terrorists will try to adapt their tactics to neutralize the countermeasures adopted by government and private security services. They probably will change target selection, improve planning and trade craft, and, possibly, increase their technological sophistication." [1] This prediction has ominous implications for law enforcement agencies in the United States. There appears to be a resurgence of terrorist-type attacks, whether politically or criminally motivated, which require sophisticated law enforcement response. Unfortunately, American police agencies seem to be locked into a "mind set" when dealing with tactical police operations. Most tactical police response is defined by parameters developed in the early 1970's. Unless we carefully evaluate recent innovations in handling crises, law enforcement may not be prepared to deal effectively with the challenge of the decade ahead.

How prepared are most law enforcement agencies to handle a complex tactical police response? Many agencies are only marginally prepared or not prepared at all. While some agencies have tactical units, specialized training has focused on the countersniper option. Response is complicated by some field commanders who rely on the spontaneous use of any officer arriving upon the scene. These arbitrarily dispensed assignments suggest that many administrators are quite assured that their enlightened leadership is more important than any preplanned response.

A great deal of literature is available to police officers and administrators on the various components of response. Many articles are available which describe the equipment or training of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) personnel. Others describe the needs of hostage negotiation and weaponry. This article will review some of the historical developments relevant to police tactics and provide a concrete framework for planning and executing a sophisticated emergency response.

The State of the Art

Tactical response groups were organized to cope with an increasing problem of hostage and barricaded-suspect incidents. As usual, the police response to this phenomenon developed after the widespread use of these tactics by criminals. The resulting sophistication of the police response was enhanced when it was proven that "in those instances where the police used specially trained and equipped personnel, they were able to successfully isolate and contain the suspects and thereby prevented the loss of life of innocent bystanders." [2] Perhaps the most famous tactical team is the Los Angeles Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. Los Angeles pioneered the development and training of SWAT. The resulting model of tactical response was copied by many law enforcement agencies throughout the country. Some law enforcement agencies tried to obscure ties with the concept of SWAT because of adverse publicity caused by a popular television show of that name. In those cases, teams were created and the titles changed to "Tactical Operations Unit" [3] or "Emergency Services Unit." [4] However, the basic tactics remained the same.

R. Richard Stanwix
Chief of Police

Assistant Chief Olin

American tactical police response has been locked into the mold as defined in the early 1970's by the LAPD concept of SWAT. LAPD specifies:

> "A SWAT team is composed of five permanent team members (team leader, marksman, observer, scout and rear guard). SWAT teams operate separately or combined with other SWAT teams as squads or platoons, to perform special tactical missions. . . ." [5]

Each SWAT team member was cross-trained in the duties of every man. Some police agencies changed the number of men assigned to a team or the name of the team. But, the evidence indicates that law enforcement's view of tactical response has been clouded by the automatic acceptance of the SWAT team model with little significant change. Some law enforcement agencies have integrated

hostage negotiation techniques into the response concept. However, there has been a lack of a concrete model to incorporate a total systems approach for dealing with police tactical emergencies.

The development of SWAT and the aura of elitism inbred into the teams resulted in many articles in police professional journals, newspapers, and magazines, each accompanied by a photo of the particular team completing some exciting maneuver while brandishing the exotic weapons of their trade. The natural reaction of the public was to view SWAT as a "killer team." This citizen perception created pressure on police administrators to demonstrate that tactical police response can be deployed with a minimum of force. Hence, hostage negotiation rapidly evolved into an acceptable practice. Some law enforcement agencies merged their negotiators and tactical teams, while others insisted on separation of the two for optimum results.

Additional innovations accompanied these developments, including the use of scenarios to test the emergency response capability of an agency. Some scenarios pointed out difficulties in proper deployment. In a complex scenario run in Norman, Okla., the merger of tactical response and negotiation demonstrated an "obvious (need) to study further training programs." [6] The scenario also demonstrated that "the police sometimes stressed tactical considerations at the expense of sacrificing intelligence opportunities." [7] Perhaps the problem truly lies in the multiplicity of responsibilities required to resolve professionally a tactical emergency. While many problems were exemplified in scenarios and actual cases, no documentation can be found suggesting that the basic organization of the response was challenged. The traditional tactical response could be described as a simple four-point concept. (See fig. 1.) However, it is necessary to depart from this myopic view and examine a new framework for police tactical response.

Many lessons can be learned by examining past historical incidents.

Members of the assault group practice basic hand-to-hand combat. Fifty percent of all assault training is physical fitness and defensive tactics, the remainder of the training is devoted to classroom and scenario work.

Figure 1

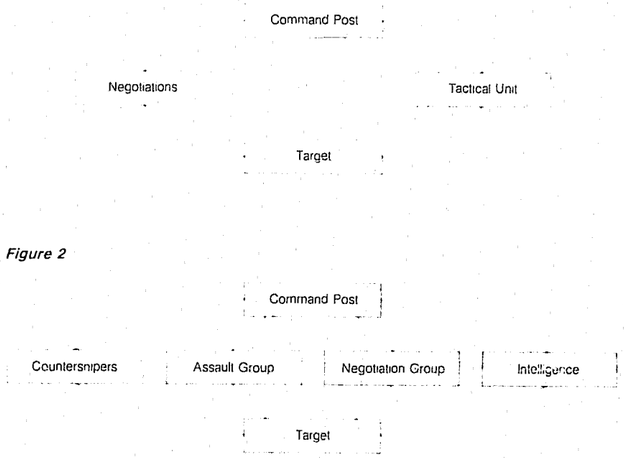


Figure 2

Perhaps one of the most sobering is the Munich massacre on September 5, 1972, in Munich, West Germany at the 20th Olympiad. Black September terrorists killed two and seized nine Israeli athletes in the Olympic village and held them for an anticipated trade with imprisoned terrorists in Israel. After lengthy negotiations were unsuccessful, the terrorists were transported to Fürstenfeldbruck airfield outside of Munich, where a gun battle resulted in the death of the remaining athletes, one police officer, and five of the eight terrorists. The Munich incident was complicated by many police problems, including inadequate intelligence gathering, no police assault capability, a total reliance on countersnipers for resolution of the problem, high ranking police administrators rather than mid-level personnel as negotiators, a language barrier, and a command post too close to the incident to remain emotionally detached. The resulting lesson, which has led to changes by both the Bavarian State Police and the Federal Republic of Germany, is that to be successful a police tactical operation must have intelligence, countersniper, assault, and negotiation capabilities.

These conclusions have been substantiated in other incidents and scenarios throughout the world. The evidence suggests that proper tactical response is too complex to cross train all personnel in all elements of any operation. This is especially true when the personnel train only part-time. Such a conclusion challenges one of the basic assumptions of SWAT. It is also obvious that to improve the tactical response of any law enforcement agency, it is necessary to define precisely the division of labor, the specific job tasks, and the training goals and objectives of each man. A simple alteration of the traditional concept of SWAT can solve the problems specified above. This model has been in use by our German police colleagues for some time. However, few American administrators have so precisely interpreted the lessons of history to mold an improved police response.

A Model Police Response

The resulting police response model, taken from the Bavarian State Police and incorporates a total approach for dealing with tactical emergencies. The model corrects the deficiencies outlined above. The strength of the model lies in the systematic identification of the elements necessary to resolve an incident of this nature. The strict division of labor and specialization is a further refinement of existing response models using four groups—countersniper group, assault group, negotiation group, and intelligence group. (See fig. 2.) This model may not vary significantly from the way some agencies actually handle tactical emergencies. However, it does carefully delineate the necessary criteria for an organized response.

Group One—Countersniper (3 or more men) This group requires a minimum of one three-man team comprised of one leader-communications man and two marksmen. The advantage of separating the countersnipers from the traditional SWAT composition is two-fold. First, most SWAT deployment is made on a team-by-team basis. In some instances, entire teams are used to set up countersniper positions when only three of the men are required to complete the task. If team deployment is not used, then the team must be split to accomplish total coverage. Secondly, the department's best rifle shots are not necessarily those who are young or in the best physical condition. While it is desirable to have combat-ready snipers, the only requirements for a countersniper are the talent to provide precise, controlled gunfire on command and the psychological ability to pull the trigger. A separation of the countersnipers from the assault team accomplishes these needs. Refresher training is also simplified for countersnipers, since daily or weekly practice can be completed with a minimum expenditure of time and money.

Group Two—Assault (7 or more men) The assault group is responsible for inner perimeter control, entry, and armed assault. This group requires a minimum of seven men, one for each side of the target and three or more for any actual assault. The separation of this team from the countersnipers enables the assault group to practice and perfect entry methods into various structures, short range selective fire techniques, hand-to-hand combat, protective assignments, and other specialized tasks.

Group Three—Negotiations (2 or more men) The negotiations group requires a minimum of one two-man team to conduct negotiations in the case of a barricaded suspect. The negotiators should be selected and trained in psychological communication techniques. Whenever possible, the negotiator should speak a foreign language or have translators available on an immediate basis. Two men are necessary in most instances to support each other physically and psychologically during the incident.

Group Four—Intelligence (3 or more men) The intelligence group requires a minimum of one three-man team specifically designated prior to any tactical emergency. This team is responsible for developing background information on the offenders involved. The group leader would be responsible for team coordination and evaluation of the information acquired from all sources. The group leader would then provide the command post with the information. In some cases, technological expertise is recommended to allow for electronic surveillance when legally permissible.

There are several advantages to the four-group concept of tactical response. Many tactical situations are successfully resolved or catastrophically bungled by local agencies before a more specialized alternate agency arrives. The four-group concept outlined above uses a department's personnel in the most advantageous way. The model clearly defines the tasks of each member and should result in less confusion and more control by the

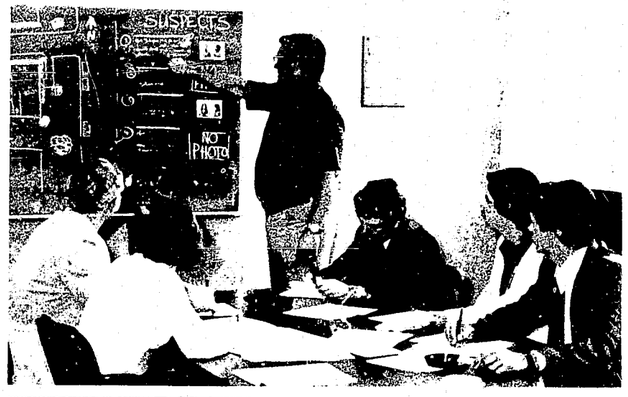
command post. The concept allows separate training and the development of more expertise by each group. Training scenarios can be easily developed to merge the response groups for practiced deployment on a regular basis.

The disadvantage to the four-group response is that it requires a minimum of 15 men. Because of budget and manpower limitations, this model may not be possible except in a medium or large police department. The model also requires a strong operational commander to control the diverse functions which are simultaneously occurring. However, these disadvantages are far outweighed by the advantages to this specific response concept.

Conclusion

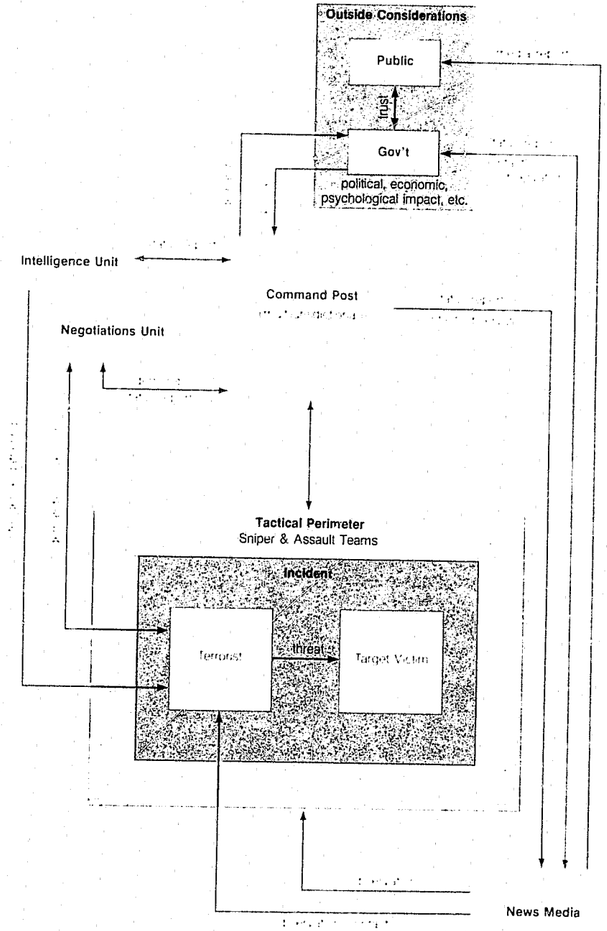
Tactical response is far more complicated than frequently depicted in training models. There are, in fact, many undiscussed areas of concern to any tactical operation. It is necessary to include the news media and the public's reaction when considering tactical response. The citizens have a right to know about these incidents. Agencies must be constantly striving to uphold professionally the trust given to law enforcement by the public and interpreted by the news media. Citizens expect proper handling of emergencies. The law enforcement profession cannot afford to be perceived as brutal, vicious, or disorganized. The resulting impact of an improperly handled tactical situation can be so overwhelming that the after-incident publicity may be more devastating than the actual tactical deployment. An ill-conceived tactical plan that fails may result in lawsuits, the forced resignations of key police personnel, or even unnecessary loss of life to those involved in the situation. In some social environments, it is possible that the perceived abuses of police authority could undermine the citizens' trust in the government, and the result could precipitate rioting or further attacks on law enforcement. The aftershock of terrorist incidents may be international in scope. When trying to understand

The intelligence group is charged with providing timely, efficient intelligence gathering on barricaded suspects or hostage situations. This group develops detailed personal information for use by the other groups and the command post.



One negotiator works on a scenario, while backup personnel record the incident and offer suggestions to handle the crisis more appropriately.

Figure 3



the actual forces involved in tactical crisis management, it's necessary to view the overall impact of a crisis on society. Figure 3 shows many of the complicated factors that must be considered during a crisis of this magnitude.

There are several historical precedents, including the rescues by the Israeli commandoes at Entebbe, the Border Police Group Nine at Mogadishum, and recently by the Special Air Services in London, which prove that a planned, practiced tactical response can be successful. It is increasingly necessary that law enforcement agencies be so well prepared in our response that we can rapidly seize the initiative from a criminal even when he has used the element of surprise. The West German model demonstrates that police tactical response can be viewed in ways other than the rather simplistic model of the 1970's. Law enforcement administrators must constantly strive to find ways to improve by studying successes, failures, and the lessons of others. Above all, we must not be locked into one view of response or fear constructive change. It is especially important that we carefully define the problem of tactical crisis management and vigorously pursue innovation in that area. Such a posture is the only way to meet the challenge of the 80's. **FBI**

Footnotes

[illegible] Agency, International Terrorism in 1979: A Research Paper (1980), p. [illegible].
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END