

Professionalizing the War on Terrorism The Print Media as a Reflection of Public Concern

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Abstract

How focused is the American public on the war on terrorism? Articles from the national print media citing terrorism were surveyed between January 1998 and October 2003. Unsurprisingly, results reveal high public interest immediately after a terrorist incident, but also a steady decline in interest even after significant events. However, while public interest fluctuates, consistent focus was found in quarterly professional journals, indicating recognition on the part of professional organizations that terrorism has direct implications for security and the conduct of business across professional communities. This tendency may have implications for national policy and strategy directed toward homeland security.

Introduction

The National Strategy for Homeland Security makes clear from the outset that “homeland security is a shared responsibility” requiring that the entire nation be rallied to the war against terrorism. (Office of Homeland Security, 2002, ii.). This statement makes good sense, given that terrorism constitutes a threat to public safety and freedom that can arise at random against the least suspecting, at the least likely time and place. The first line of defense against terrorists might best be characterized as a “neighborhood watch” at the national level, in which every citizen, every community and every organization, business and agency maintains some level of vigilance and preparedness in the event of an emergency occurring within their area or span of control. What is required to exercise this defense is an informed public that has the will to maintain vigilance over the long term, and the knowledge to minimize the risks of becoming either a victim or an impediment in the event of a terrorist act in their community.

But, is the nation focused on the war on terrorism, and if so, how much? What is an adequate amount of awareness, and how can a national strategy against terrorism establish and sustain a long-term mobilization of the nation against this new threat to national security? These questions have been the subject of numerous opinion polls and surveys, both prior to and since the events of September 11th, 2001. The general conclusions have so far indicated that, while Americans are indeed concerned about terrorism, they are also concerned about returning to

normalcy and “getting on with their lives” (Kiefer, 2001, 1). But is this conclusion correct? While opinion polls have obvious benefits in terms of providing an assessment of national attitudes, they nevertheless provide only a snapshot in time (*Economist*, Dec 2001). Polling results, while highly accurate, can fluctuate greatly for any number of reasons, and results are highly dependent even on such factors as how questions are asked. (Polling the Nation, “Caveat Emptor,” 2003).

A longer term indicator of national attention can be found in the range and duration of public consumption of news as represented by the print media’s focus on terrorism and terrorist events and trends over time. By assessing the frequency and duration with which the national press and print media pay attention to this specific issue, it is possible to draw conclusions about the American public’s interest in terrorism as a phenomenon affecting their lives.

This was the motivation for a survey to assess the frequency with which the print media published and cited articles dealing with terrorism, terrorist incidents, and the nation’s current war on terrorism. While the techniques used in this assessment were admittedly broad, they nevertheless provide some insight into both the consistency and the immediacy of public attention into this current national security problem. The results achieved do, indeed, reinforce the results of the polls, inasmuch as the generation, publication and consumption of news focusing on terrorism waxes and wanes with proximity to significant events. However, the perspective offered by a more broadly-based review of public interest—based on what the public reads and has access to read—holds some lessons for national policy-makers and for people involved in the mission of preparing for and responding to terrorism and terrorist-related events.

Throughout this paper, I use the word “focus” to characterize public and media attention being paid to the problem of terrorism. This word is selected intentionally in order to convey a specific attitude. “Focus” implies more than simple “interest” insofar as it describes a condition or problem about which the public feels a direct affect on their lives. While the reading public might be interested in the latest political or media scandal—the Gary Condit-Chandra Levy incident that immediately preceded the 9/11 attacks, for instance—the public was focused on the terrorist

attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., and not simply out of morbid curiosity. To say that the public is focused on an issue implies that they are expecting actions to be taken, probably by government but potentially by themselves, as well, either through direct action or by a commitment to support the actions of those in authority.

In short, to say that the public is “focused” on an issue implies potential for political or social action that has consequence for individual citizens and the public as a whole. This is, in fact, the sort of awareness that is required in order for the public to be rallied to action against a problem of the magnitude that domestic terrorism represents, as the National Strategy for Homeland Security states. This, in turn, implies that adopting national strategies for achieving long-term political objectives against terrorism will probably require that the public remain “focused” on the problem, in order to ensure the commitment of resources, time and effort demanded by the circumstances. In this endeavor, a central role must be accorded to the symbiotic relationship between the American press and the American public.

Methodology

In order to gain a more consistent understanding of the public’s focus on the “war on terrorism,” a survey was conducted using standard computer-based search engines accessed through the main library at George Washington University in Washington D.C. Four sources of information were investigated: daily newspapers, news magazines published weekly and in some cases bi-weekly, monthly literary and political magazines, and scholarly journals published quarterly. All queries were made on a monthly basis, so that cumulative results for the period illustrated general trends regardless of whether a periodical was published on a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. For the weekly, bi-weekly and monthly publications, queries were directed at the following publications:

(1) Daily national and regional newspapers:

<i>USA Today</i>	<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>
<i>Atlanta Constitution</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
<i>New York Times</i>	<i>Miami Herald</i>
<i>Houston Chronicle</i>	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>

(2) Popular weekly news magazines, to include:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Economist</i>
<i>New Republic</i>	<i>National Review</i>
<i>Newsweek</i>	<i>Business Week</i>
<i>Nation</i>	<i>U.S. News and World Report</i>

(3) Widely-read political and literary periodicals:

<i>New Yorker</i>	<i>Atlantic Monthly</i>
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<i>Reason</i>	<i>American Spectator</i>
<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Harper’s Magazine</i>
<i>Utne Reader</i>	<i>Current History</i>

(4) Quarterly professional journals, further divided into four groups and queried using library reference search engines specific to that field of research:

- Professional journals in business, management and organizational science, economics, human resource management, industry, and public administration.
- Journals related to the social sciences, sociology, counseling and the humanities.
- An unclassified, open-source database of topics pertinent to the defense industry, military services and government agencies focused on national security issues.
- Journals in the life sciences, health and health policy, psychology and human development, and the physical and biological sciences.

In order to maintain consistency, a single Boolean query was initiated using each of the databases. The query was structured to search for references to the phrases, “terrorism” OR “terrorist” OR “war on terror,” and was intended to turn up references to any or all of these key words. The query was directed to both article text and abstracts. Databases were queried for the number of entries registered in each month of publication from January 1998 through December 2003. Raw numbers indicate the number of citations or “hits” pulled up by the database query. It was recognized that some overlap or repetition could be generated by three simultaneous queries (“terrorism,” “terrorist,” “war on terror”). Nevertheless, the emphasis was more on capturing the spectrum of public interest on the broad scale, rather than in attempting to capture accurate numbers. Likewise, there was no effort made to evaluate the specific content of any articles; the goal was to determine the degree to which the American public has been “focused” on the terrorism problem based on long-term trends on what the public writes and reads, regardless of the specific form that focus might have taken.

The intent of this query was to review publication frequency and references to terrorism-related matters during the years leading up to the Y2K fear in January 2000, including the significant public interest during the initiation of the Hart-Rudman, Gilmore, and Bremer Commissions. The attention during the period prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks would also have reflected collective and continuing analysis of seminal incidents such as the initial World Trade Center bombing (1993); the Oklahoma City bombing and

sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway (1995); the attack on the Khobar Towers barracks and the Atlanta Olympics terrorist bombing (1996); and the attack on USS Cole in October 2000. Terminating this review in December 2003—necessary to ensure timely publication dates (particularly for quarterly journals)—avoids the frequent references to terrorism certain to be generated during the U.S. Presidential campaign season.

The results generated by the query of literature were then compared to a survey of public opinion polls spanning the same period. Poll results were adopted as a basis of comparison for several reasons. First, as the most common means of assessing public attitude or concern, polls form a sound basis of comparison to a broad-based survey of literature. Secondly, the polls were queried in the same fashion as the periodicals: a library database (“Polling the Nations”) was queried for references to questions about “terrorism,” “terrorist” or “war on terror,” and not on specific types of questions. This approach thus replicated the process used for the literature survey. Finally, the science of polling has become a highly refined one—with margins of error routinely under 3-4%—and are considered an accurate way of assessing public sentiment (Polling the Nation, “All About Polling,” 2003). Inasmuch as the polling data revealed considerable conformity with the literature surveys used in this study, the conclusions appear to be reinforced.

Background

For the purposes of this survey, the nation’s press and print media were organized into four categories:

- (1) Daily newspapers. These resources are of both national and regional circulation and stature, and serve to keep the public informed of important events and changes in status. Newspapers are ubiquitous, available to anyone for little to no cost, and form the backbone of society’s information network for current and critical events. While some analysis may be provided in the editorial and opinion sections, the specific purpose of this medium is simply to inform the general public of events as they occur.
- (2) Weekly news magazines. These magazines are available at virtually any newsstand, drugstore, and supermarket and by subscription. While readily available and relatively inexpensive, they are nevertheless customarily read by those who actively seek them out. Thus weekly news magazines represent a source of news and analysis (perhaps more accurately referred to as “context”) that is more condensed, benefits from

some perspective on events, and is more selective of what is significant.

- (3) Literary, political and analytic magazines. These periodicals serve audiences that are generally among the best educated, most economically secure, and most socially engaged segments of the American public. Much of the content is analytic in nature and goes beyond the presentation of simple social or political context. These magazines run a wide spectrum from liberal to conservative to overtly non-political, and generally offer views tailored for a particular readership. The analysis of events in these periodicals frequently attempts to shape the public’s understanding of those events.
- (4) Professional Journals. These periodicals are customarily offered on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis, and are narrowly focused on specific professional communities. Readership is generally limited to professionals or academic researchers who use these publications as important sources of knowledge. The review and analysis of events and trends found in these journals is highly refined, and often technical and/or quantitative in nature. What they offer that differs from other periodicals could be best described as “synthesis,” whereby the implications and consequences of events are reinterpreted for a specific professional audience using the tools of that profession. With a few exceptions, these periodicals are limited in distribution and not read by the general public.

It is important to point out that comparison between these four categories of periodicals would be like comparing apples, oranges, pears and pomegranates. At its most obvious level, the publications surveyed vary significantly in periodicity, length and selectivity of articles, but also in reporting and authorship staff, as well as in scope. Moreover, while the newspapers, weekly magazines and monthly periodicals were all confined to a survey sample of eight apiece, the professional journals were surveyed by category, rather than by a numerical quota (thus, the number of professional journals included in the survey was not determined). These limitations in population were selected for purely statistics-gathering reasons: newspapers were limited to eight in order to deal with the extraordinarily high return rate on citations, particularly after September 11, 2001; weekly and monthly periodicals were limited to eight because those magazines tended to be more narrowly focused or biased beyond those numbers.

Professional journals, on the other hand, were defined by category rather than by number because the more specific focus of journals required a broader survey population in order to return valid results. More importantly, journals tend to be written, as noted above, with a particular professional audience in mind. Many professionals have access to, and frequently write for and read more than one publication. Therefore, the degree of attention a particular subject receives (both by authors and by editors) is a function of how much that issue affects a given professional group. That is, journals focused on national security, information technology, or emergency management are likely to deal with issues of terrorism more consistently than professional journals in the mechanical engineering, obstetrics or business administration fields. Thus, limiting journals to a sampling of eight would likely have shown greater skewing of results—in one direction or another—than would a general interest publication as represented by newspapers or magazines.

Analysis and Conclusions

As might be expected, the numerical results of this survey varied significantly among the four groups. For example, the maximum numbers of articles citing terrorism or terrorist-related issues in the weeks following the September 11 attacks (calculated for the month of October, 2001) varied from 11,705 for the eight newspapers to 977 in weekly magazines, 31 articles in monthly periodicals and 1732 in professional journals. What is significant, however, is that within a given category there was considerable similarity in the magnitude and direction of change that occurred immediately after 9/11, and also in how that interest has tended to decline over time. Exhibit 1 outlines a relative demonstration of that change, comparing the numbers of references to “terrorism” and terrorism-related citations during consecutive years from October, 1999 through October, 2003. Interestingly, if calculated at the point of peak publishing interest in January 2002, monthly periodicals follow even more closely the trend evident in the other three sources—particularly the professional journals—when 68 citations would yield a factor increase of 9.71, rather than the 4.42 recorded for October 2001.

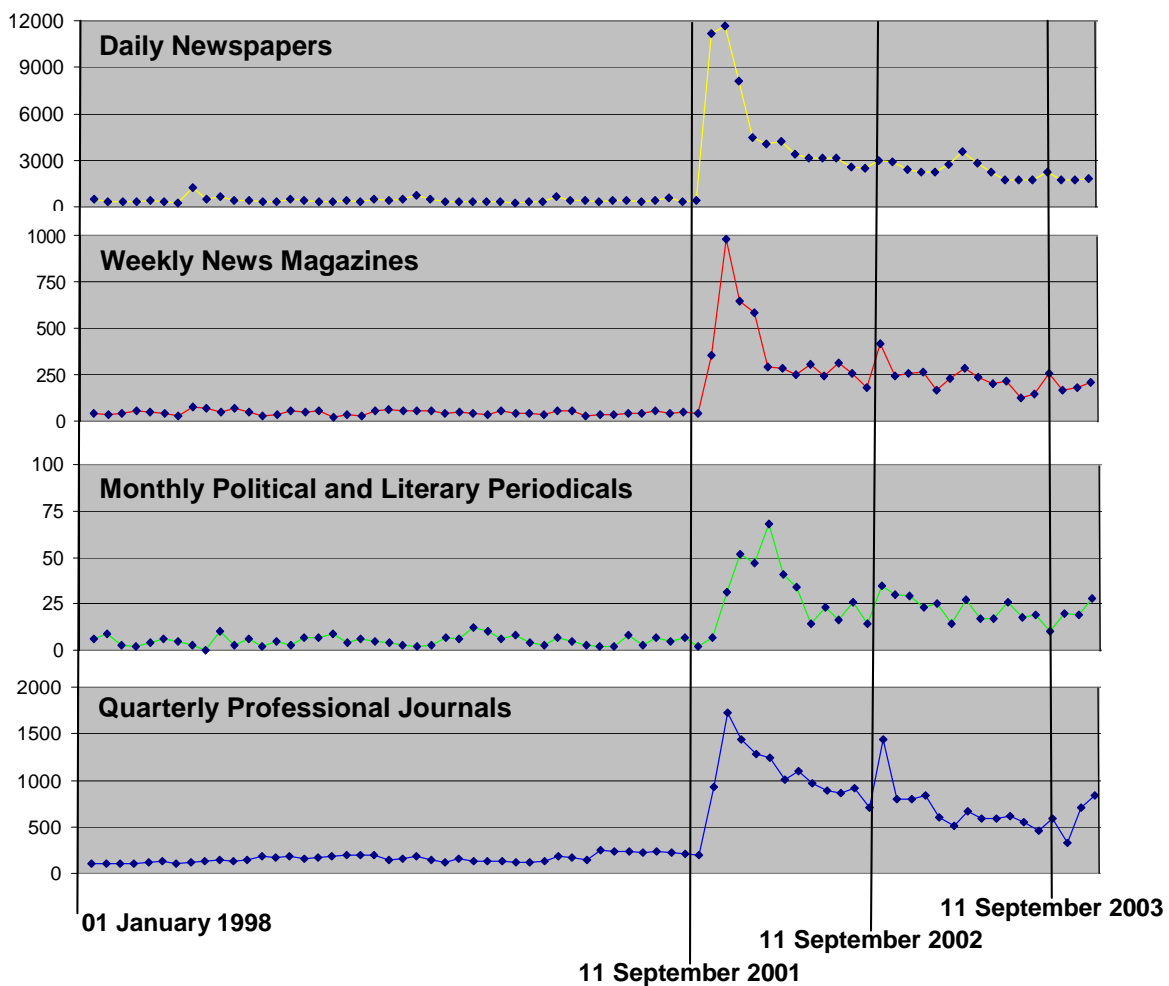
Exhibit 1. Relative change in periodical references to terrorism-related issues. (Peak citation of 68 in January 2002 yields a factor for monthly periodicals of 9.71).

	Oct 1999	Oct 2000	Oct 2001	Oct 2002	Oct 2003	Factor Increase Oct 2000-Oct 2001	Factor increase Oct 2000-Oct 2003	Factor decrease Oct 2001-Oct 2003
Daily Newspapers	454	676	11705	2870	1756	17.31	2.60	-6.66
Weekly News Magazines	62	57	977	245	167	17.14	2.93	-5.85
Monthly Political and Literary Magazines	4	7	31	*30	20	*4.42	2.86	-1.55
Quarterly Professional Journals	147	179	1732	795	326	9.68	1.82	-5.31

Through this graph, several trends can be seen:

- (1) As early as October 1999, there have appeared a considerable number of articles dealing with terrorism-related matters, indicative of the fact that the American public has been focused on the terrorism problem for some time. Exhibit (2) provides a graphical representation of this from January 1998 to December 2003, demonstrating that print media in all categories evaluated have been publishing articles on this subject.
- (2) Not unexpectedly, there was a dramatic increase in attention given to terrorism-related issues in all media, immediately following the events of September 11th, 2001.
- (3) Since 9/11, the relative degree of interest in terrorism by authors, publishers and readers has remained approximately 2 to 3 times the level seen during the years preceding 9/11 (between 1.82 and 2.93).
- (4) Nevertheless, the trend since 9/11 has been returning to some level of stasis, as evident in the negative factors determined by comparing the peak citations immediately following 9/11 with the current levels shown for October 2003. This trend is clearly illustrated in Exhibit 2 and is likewise consistent among all categories of published material surveyed.

Exhibit 2: References to “terrorism,” “terrorist,” or “war on terror” January 1998 to December 2003



Perhaps the most significant observation that can be made from this study is that the empirical evidence supports an intuitive understanding about the American public's attention to current events, even in the case of catastrophe. That is, the American public reacts immediately to significant events affecting the nation, but over time generally desires to return to "normal life" at the earliest opportunity. Whether this indicates a short attention span of a complacent population, the over-exposure to distractions and publicity inherent in the U.S. media's business model, or in an inherent optimism frequently postulated as a critical aspect of the American character is impossible to discern. More than likely, it represents some combination of the three. Perspectives on the war on terrorism evident from what writers write, from what publishers publish and from what the reading public reads conform to what we generally believe to be true about the relationship between the press and the public.

This observation is borne out by the results attained in a review of public opinion poll questions covering the same time span as the literature survey, a segment of which is depicted in Exhibit (3). This data was amassed from a fifth library database "Polling the Nations" and was filtered so as to include only polls conducted in the United States during the period in question. This data was included simply as a cross-check on the validity of the literature survey. Like the literature search—where numerical comparisons between periodical types would not only be inaccurate, but also irrelevant—the important aspect of the opinion polls taken during this period is not how the public responded, but, rather, the frequency with which questions dealing with terrorism and terrorist-related matters are asked by pollsters and responded to by interviewees. The specific questions asked are not apparent by these numbers, nor are they important in assessing the public "focus" on terrorism.

What is significant is that the question of terrorism has been the subject of public attention, if not concern, for some time, that it peaks immediately after a significant event, and that it wanes over time. It is also evident that there has been an expanding diversity of issues that are touched by public concern over terrorism since September 11th, 2001. As one study has determined, polls taken prior to 9/11 tended to focus on the possibility of terrorist attacks, personal views about vulnerability, and the adequacy

of routine security methods such as airport security. Polls taken after the September 11th attacks were much more diverse in subject and included issues ranging from domestic security to civil liberties, U.S. assassination of terrorist leaders, the establishment of international coalitions, and numerous country-specific issues (Huddie, Khatib, Capelos, 2002, 418).

Ultimately, the question is not whether the American public is focused on the war on terrorism, but whether it should be. What the data suggest—intuitively enough—is that Americans focus on even dramatic events to the degree that circumstances demand; what they prefer, however, is to deal with the urgencies of "getting on" with their daily lives, and not necessarily with questions of national security and warfare. This is certainly to be preferred to some level of militarization of American society in the interest of preparedness for an extended war on terrorism.

Of greater import is the fact that this conforms to what was desired—if not all but directed—by the President and the nation's top leadership immediately after 9/11. What the administration called for was that the nation's citizens return to "business as usual" in both the literal and metaphoric senses. Indeed, it was commonly stated with no sense of irony or exaggeration, that, "if America changes its way of life, the terrorists will have won."

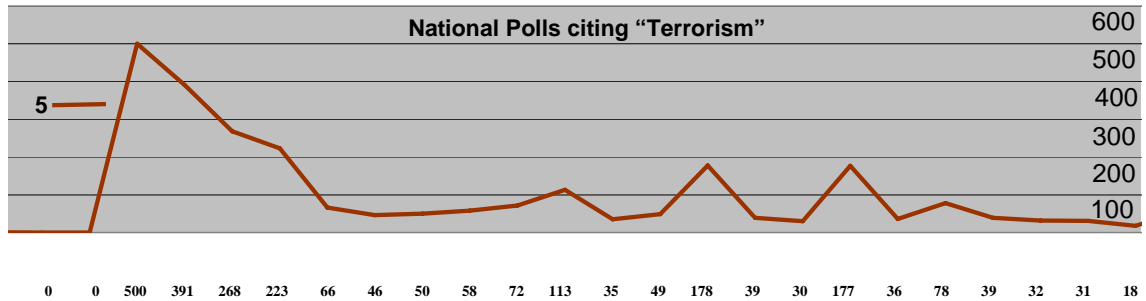
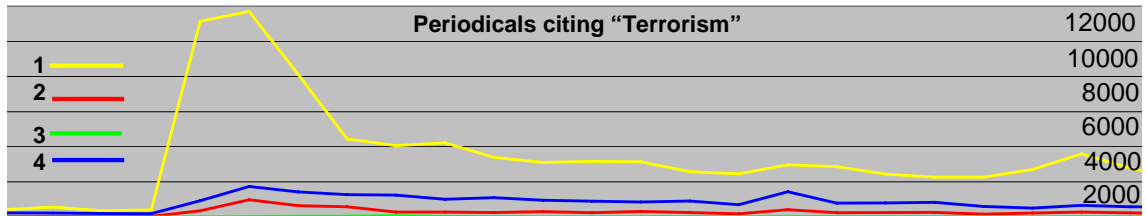
Reconciling this paradox may constitute one of the numerous long-term challenges faced by the White House, by the newly-formed Department of Homeland Security, and for any national strategy attempting to mobilize popular support for a global war on terrorism. On the one hand, what is required is that the populace be rallied to the cause, that it be motivated to maintain vigilance against the risk of domestic attack, and that it be prepared for contingencies—and presumably some sacrifices—that may be required in the wake of another terrorist attack. On the other hand, what is desired by our democratic society and its values is that the population "get on with business." It is too early to tell when—or indeed whether—the curve of public attention evident in the polls and print media will flatten out to that of the Post-Cold-War – Pre-9/11 era, there has been a distinct decline in focus on terrorism during the months since September 11th, 2001. Judging from the evidence apparent in what America writes, prints and reads, the public is turning its attention to matters of more immediate concern.

**Exhibit 3: Citations of “terrorism,” “terrorist,” or “war on terror”
in periodicals and national polls July 2001 to June 2003**

	2002												2003											
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
1	354	407	11133	11705	8123	4447	4066	4229	3401	3105	3170	3143	2573	2460	2975	2870	2441	2272	2263	2710	3592	2792	2194	1733
2	49	45	357	977	645	584	291	284	251	307	242	313	258	182	414	245	259	266	167	227	285	233	204	215
3	7	2	7	31	52	47	68	41	34	14	23	16	26	14	35	30	29	23	25	14	27	17	17	26
4	207	192	934	1732	1434	1281	1247	1010	1100	963	894	860	909	707	1440	795	802	840	606	509	665	582	584	618
	617	646	12431	14445	10254	6359	5672	5564	4786	4389	4329	4332	3766	3363	4864	3940	3531	3401	3061	3460	4569	3624	2999	2592

TSA established
 U.S. Patriot Act Enacted
 Office of Homeland Security Established
 Operation Enduring Freedom Initiated
 Anthrax mail attacks
 Terrorist attacks on WTC & Pentagon

National Security Strategy issued
 Department of Homeland Security established
 Congress authorizes use of force against Iraq
 Operation Iraqi Freedom



- 1** — Daily Newspapers
- 2** — Weekly News Magazines
- 3** — Monthly Political and Literary Periodicals
- 4** — Quarterly Professional Journals
- 5** — Questions in National Polls

This dilemma highlights one of the more interesting observations from the literature survey conducted in this study: the consistent rate of publication about terrorism within professional journals. Exhibit (4) provides the number of citations for “terrorism” and terrorism-related issues that appeared in professional journals during 1998 by category. Of particular interest is the fact that

business, management and organizational science journals were consistently the most “focused” on the problem of terrorism, followed by those dealing with the physical, biological and health sciences. Remarkably, citations on terrorism in military and government-related journals did not lead in this survey until after September 11th 2001, when the direct threat to national security became clear. Only

Exhibit 4: Query of Professional Journals by Category for 1998

QUARTERLY PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Business, management, organization sciences	64	64	68	71	75	78	70	72	68	75	86	82
Sociology, counseling and social sciences	5	2	7	8	2	13	5	4	20	15	3	22
Government and military journals	5	5	8	7	9	12	6	12	21	14	10	10
Physical, biological and health sciences	25	31	24	19	28	26	18	26	25	34	31	28
TOTAL	99	102	107	105	114	129	99	114	134	138	130	142

at that point did interest in the issue by government and military periodicals suddenly eclipse the other journal categories.

What these data indicate is that terrorism and its consequences have been the object of attention among professional organizations for some time, almost certainly out of concern for the direct consequences to their professions and constituencies. As noted above, journals tend to address events that bear significance for a specific professional group or that have a direct affect on the profession and its interests. Among the literature surveyed for this study, quarterly professional journals displayed the most consistent, longest-term, and least variable degree of interest in subjects related to terrorism. This is of arguably greater significance for American preparedness for a long-term “war on terrorism” than any reading of polls or writings in newspapers or general interest magazines, for the simple reason that those with a “need to know” have been focused enough on the problem to have been discussing it within their own professional circles for some time.

The recently published Report of the 9/11 Commission offers a clear rationale for why such a sustained level of emphasis is essential to national security. In a brief section entitled “Private Sector Preparedness,” the 9/11 Commission concluded that

“the private sector controls 85% of the critical infrastructure in the nation. Indeed, unless a terrorist’s target is a military or other secure government facility, the “first” first responders will almost certainly be civilians. Homeland security and national preparedness therefore often

begins with the private sector.” (9/11 Commission Report 2004, 398)

The report outlines three specific actions required for private and public sector preparedness:

- (1) a plan for evacuation;
- (2) adequate communications capabilities; and
- (3) a plan for continuity of operations.

The report further endorses a “National Standard for Preparedness” developed under direction of the 9/11 Commission by the American National Standards Institute. After considering the current state of U.S. preparedness in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, ANSI declared the voluntary standards issued by the National Fire Protection Association entitled the “American National Standard on Disaster/ Emergency Management and Business Continuity,” to be adequate for national disaster preparedness across the public and private sector. (That document, known as NFPA 1600 is available on the internet at: <http://www.nfpa.org/PDF/nfpa1600.pdf?src=nfpa>).

Of particular note was the 9/11 Commission’s determination that “compliance with the standard should define the standard of care owed by a company to its employees and the public for legal purposes,” and that the steps outlined under NFPA 1600 now represent the “cost of doing business in the post-9/11 world,” (9/11 Commission Report 2004, 398).

However, establishing this degree of technical integration, planning and material preparedness on the part of each and every business, organization and agency among both public and private sectors demands more than a detailed checklist. It will require an integrated national strategy that reaches from the

federal to the state, regional and local levels, and permits the integration and coordination of all resources among them. Taken at that level, the preparedness of U.S. civil society will effectively require a “systems engineering” approach that encompasses—at a minimum—infrastructure protection, public safety and public health, industrial safety and environmental protection, and continuity of business and government at all levels. More than simply a national strategy, this level of effort will require a national mobilization.

The difficult question is, who is to be mobilized and for what purpose?

Clearly, the degree of professionalism, subject matter expertise and interagency coordination required at all levels of society for this task means that homeland security will require more than simply a concerned public. It will require the focus of those who have the ability and knowledge to direct actions within their specific fields of endeavor, and to coordinate those efforts with others in their localities. This is why it would seem to be a positive indicator that sustained interest in writing, publishing and reading about terror-related issues has been most evident within the professional press across a wide spectrum of fields. Certainly, this level of interest by those in positions to actually *do* something in their professional arenas should be a specific goal of any national strategy for homeland security.

In the long run, the steady decline in public focus on the terrorism problem is perhaps a good sign, rather than a cause for concern. It is probably inevitable, but also probably preferable that the American public return to a less urgent concern for terrorism and the war on terrorism, if, in fact, we are to prevent the terrorists from “winning.” Certainly, this is preferable insofar that it would represent a continuing ability of the American public not only to

feel protected, but also to *be* protected. One can only hope that at some time in the future—and sooner is better than later—America can return to a situation where the national terrorism alert warning reads “green.”

At the same time, however, there is a clear imperative for the development of a cadre of professionals within American society whose job it is to remain vigilant and ensure that the public is prepared to respond to acts of terrorism and other civic calamities wherever they may arise, and however unlikely they may seem. Doing so does not necessarily require that the entire American population be mobilized against terrorism, or that such a thing would be good for the nation if, in fact, it were even possible. Moreover, under the umbrella of a unified national strategy, an adequate degree of vigilance and preparedness among the nation’s professional managers and leaders would represent a more realistic and effective goal for the Department of Homeland Security—and a truer indicator of success for the Department’s long-term strategy—than a frightened American public on the one hand, or claims that it will (or can) prevent the unpreventable, on the other.

What is required is that professionalism in the fields of security, emergency management, public health, infrastructure protection, civil engineering, information security, engineering management and a myriad other professions be instituted and nurtured as a part of the larger national strategy. The single-minded “focus” of the public is not likely to be as effective in preventing domestic terrorism and responding to its effects as the dedication of individuals to prepare for contingencies within their own spheres of influence and professional fields. In the long term, this is what will ensure that the nation’s homeland is secured, in order that the American public can get on with their lives and with the diverse business of running a democracy.

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