**A Comparative Analysis of**

**Sub-State Counter-Leadership Campaigns**

**Brad Taylor, April 24, 2003**

**Disclaimer:**

All research conducted for this analysis was from open source. Thus, there is an element of risk in accuracy. Due to this, I kept my observations fairly general. Using open source for granular, in-depth analysis risks developing false observations that bear no relevance to actual truth.

Additionally, my observations are filtered through my own experiences. What jumped out at me might be missed by someone else. Conversely, I most assuredly missed several key points that others with different experiences would have found.

## I.    Background

Generally, the rational actor will attempt Counter Leadership

Targeting for one of two reasons[*]:

- To cause the <u>dislocation</u> of the opponent organization's ability to function in the prosecution of a conflict by removing the leader of the organization.

- To cause the opponent organization to alter its policy towards a conflict by <u>replacing</u> the leader with one whose objectives are in line with our own.

A CLT strategy of dislocation attempts to remove or hinder the

direction of the organization.  This strategy is not a means to an

end, but rather creates conditions that allow the targeting

organization to exploit the target's loss of efficiency and

effectiveness in the prosecution of the conflict.  Conversely, an

intent of replacement strives to alter the vision of the targeted

organization and is an end unto itself.

CLT against sub-state organizations will almost always be

attempted for dislocation purposes.  Replacement usually will not

succeed, since the sub-state organization exists solely to counter the

state. It is unlikely, if not impossible, to have a successor who

alters the vision of a sub-state organization.  To do so would entail

destroying the organization's reason for existence, and thus the

organization would not allow it.  For the same reasons, deterrence, as

Israel has discovered, is also very difficult to accomplish with sub-

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[*] By rational, I mean that the targeting is attempted for reasons beyond simple redemption or revenge within a framework that is looking toward future policies or goals.  Irrational actors could attempt CLT for any reason, and will not be discussed.

state groups.  Deterrence, like replacement, affects the sub-state organization's reason for existence. Even if the leader wanted to alter the group's behavior, the members would not allow it.  If he attempted to alter the vision of the organization, his own people would remove him.

II.  **Two types of Sub-State CLT Campaigns**

In the modern era, sub-state CLT campaigns have been conducted within two distinct environments, internal and external, each with distinct variables.  The internal campaign is defined by a finite area where the state controls, or purports to control, the monopoly of violence.

This type encompasses the majority of sub-state CLT campaigns that have been conducted, and includes the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Vietnam, Rhodesia, Bosnia, Somalia, and to a lesser extent, current operations in Afghanistan.  While the state controls the monopoly of violence, in most of these campaigns there is also an element of cross-border activity (Ireland proper for Northern Ireland, Cambodia and Laos for Vietnam, Serbia for Bosnia, Zambia and Mozambique for Rhodesia, Pakistan for Afghanistan, etc).  Even still, the preponderance of effort and forces are located within the prime country.  Internal CLT campaigns are characterized by the following:

a.  The security forces are intimately familiar with the AO, as they routinely operate throughout it.

b.  The security forces "own" the system of government and can act throughout the AO at will.  In most cases it is not necessary to coordinate with other state systems.

c.  The security forces work on internal LOCs.  The finite area lends itself to rapid, flexible, pre-positioned forces.

d.  The security forces have no need for plausible deniability.  Cover concerns end at the tactical or operational level.

e.  Intelligence assets have the luxury of focusing within a finite area.

The second type of CLT campaign is external, or more accurately, global.  This type of campaign is characterized by CLT attempts initiated throughout the world for specific targets.  It includes the hunt for Ilich Ramirez Sanchez (Carlos the Jackal), the "Wrath of God" operations by Israel against Black September, Israeli attempts to find Nazi war criminals, and our current efforts against Al Qaeda.

As one would expect, the characteristics of external operations are the inverse of internal operations:

a. Since the AO is global, knowing the specific target area intimately is a matter of luck.  Odds are that the security element will have to conduct some amount of advance force operations prior to the actual mission.  This is unlike internal operations, where, due to the inherent knowledge of the terrain and atmospherics, the odds are good that a security element can conduct a rapid mission analysis and subsequent execution.

b. By definition, the global campaign involves cross-border operations as a matter of course.  Unlike the internal campaign with its monopoly on existing state structures, those planning the external campaign must constantly take into account the political and military system within which they will operate.  The ramifications of the

foreign system are directly related to the level of support, from a permissive, collaborative operation to a non-permissive, completely covert operation. Throughout this spectrum the targeting force must contend with the state in question, at the extreme actively avoiding the state's own security apparatus while attempting to penetrate the target's security.

In addition, the targeting organization must deal with friendly agencies with which it may or may not have a working relationship. Since the internal campaign works within a finite area, it will invariably forge interpersonal relationships within the various agencies involved. The external campaign, on the other hand, is forced to work with different personalities on each operation, both within the same agency or different agencies altogether, depending on the location of the target. This creates greater inefficiencies. Both variables, different state systems and different friendly actors, will increase the friction of the external campaign.

c. Since the external campaign is potentially global, the targeting organization doesn't have the luxury of pre-positioned forces. More often than not, the forces must be launched from a central location far from the area of operations, with all of the inherent additional complexity this implies.

d. The external campaign requires a much more refined "trigger" prior to execution. With the internal campaign's pre-positioned forces and shortened LOCs, it is possible to conduct operations with a bare minimum of intelligence, on the off chance the operation will strike paydirt. This is impossible for the external campaign, which, as

stated above, must lay the groundwork prior to assault as well as launch from a different location.  To prevent wasted effort and possible missed opportunities elsewhere, the operation requires a highly refined intelligence picture prior to launch.

This fidelity of the intelligence picture leads to a "Catch 22" for the external campaign.  While greater fidelity is needed prior to launch, it is much harder to develop due to the global nature of the fight.

e. Unlike the internal campaign, the external campaign will more than likely need "strategic cover".  Even if the country in question is amenable to the operation, it will more than likely want plausible deniability about foreign forces operating on its soil.  Thus, the targeting element will have to be able to operate covertly within the country, which adds another layer of complexity to the mission.  At the extreme, in a non-permissive environment, the targeting element will have to avoid both the host nation's security as well as the target's.

**IV. Characteristics common to both internal and external campaigns**

While the external and internal campaigns have distinct differences, there are several common characteristics that enhance or detract from the success of the campaign.

a. UNITY OF EFFORT IS KEY.  While this may appear obvious, in fact in almost every campaign I studied, both internal and external, the response was fragmented, with a massive duplication of effort.  Instead of striving to create synergy across services and agencies,

each organization tended to try to expand capabilities in order to "do it all".

For instance, the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia felt that the CIO (Rhodesian CIA) "rarely produced the necessary detailed and accurate intelligence on ZIPRA camps"[1] (one of two main insurgency groups in the Rhodesian conflict), and thus started their own internal spy ring in Zambia.  The CIO vigorously fought this, as they regarded all external intelligence operations, other than purely military intelligence collection, as their own preserve and "clearly resented …intrusion into these areas of intelligence gathering"[2].  This parochialism proved vicious after a Selous Scout agent was captured in Zambia. Since he wasn't CIO, a concerted effort was not made for his repatriation, and he remained in a Zambian jail for twelve years after the fall of Rhodesia.

Another example was France's response to terrorism in the early 1980's.  During the first six months of 1982, France suffered a spate of terrorist attacks, most instigated by Ilich Sanchez (alias "Carlos the Jackal").  President Mitterand "turned his back on the existing anti-terrorism apparatus"[3] and created a whole new organization to combat the terrorism.  This only served to cause confusion and dilute the effort of the overall campaign.  In the words of the Chief of DST (French FBI), "In the space of a few days, no one any longer knew who was doing what.  Our foreign partners were dismayed that doubts were cast over existing procedures for sharing intelligence, and they threatened to turn off the tap"[4].

Probably the greatest example of a lack of unity of effort is the long running conflict in Northern Ireland.  Every organization involved in the conflict attempted to build full-spectrum capabilities, which led to a massive duplication of effort and confusion as to who was responsible for what.

First, because they didn't trust the RUC police or Special Branch, the Army decided to gather their own intelligence by creating a myriad of different intelligence collection agencies.  These extended from the theater to the local county level.  There were at least three overarching intelligence collection efforts at the national level, and a plethora of intelligence collection organizations within the various army sectors, all stovepiped to a greater or lesser degree.

 Next, the various police elements within Northern Ireland developed their own SAS-type units to duplicate Army capabilities already in theater, and expanded the inherent police intelligence apparatus already running.

Finally, not to be outdone, both MI5 and MI6 entered the fray with their own brand of intelligence collection, once again stovepiped for their use only.  In the end, "accidental arrests of informers, the failure to inform other security organizations of movements of key IRA figures, and the compromising of one another's sources became routine"[5].

This lack of unity extended beyond intelligence, including operational aspects as well.  For instance, there was confusion as to who actually controlled SAS operations, as they fell under Army

command but the police, ostensibly, had primacy for operations.  Thus, who actually had authority to execute was sometimes hard to decipher, leading to finger pointing and recriminations.  A system of liaison officers was eventually established, but "the lack of clear lines of authority and continuing personality clashes hampered matters."[6]

Finally, this lack of unity and rampant parochialism culminated in one of the few external operations conducted. Army Intelligence, MI-5, and MI-6 all began running operations within the Irish expatriate community located in West Germany without any of the players knowing the other was there.  Luckily, before an embarrassing situation with the Bonn government occurred, the various operations were discovered, and MI-5 was given the lead.[7]

The systemic problem in Northern Ireland was that an overarching doctrine for attacking the "troubles" was never developed.  A national level campaign was not devised.  Instead of appointing a "lead agency" to be in charge of the overall security effort, to include intelligence collection, British authorities were content to allow the Army, the national level intelligence agencies and the police to attempt to solve the problems their own way, with a system of gentlemen's agreements as the only coordinating mechanism.  In the words of Mark Urban, "The failure of the security establishment to resolve these issues, stemming from distrust and rivalry…was to plague the whole anti-terrorist campaign."[8]

This tendency to duplicate efforts and mistrust other agencies, while understandable, must be contained in the interests of the

overall campaign. A fractured response stemming from parochial interests creates seams that the terrorist leadership can exploit.

When reading current open press reports, I found direct parallels between the US view after 9-11 and other CLT campaigns conducted in the past. Time magazine describes the CIA's effort to build up a "Secret Army" while the Washington Post reports that Secretary Rumsfield is attempting to increase the intelligence capability of DOD. I make no judgements about either initiative, as they may be untrue or may in fact be necessary, but instead caution that without an overall architect of specific roles and missions our response against AQ could be ineffectual and chaotic.

The Israeli response against Black September (see appendix) shows the greatest unity of effort, probably because there was a very small gap between the Mossad and the military. The leaders of both organizations were fused with the same experiences and focus, thus fostering a greater level of trust and commitment. In addition, approximately 95% of Mossad's agents were recruited from elite Israeli military organizations, creating a common bond. Thus, both organizations stayed within their "box", allowing the other to concentrate on that which they excelled. This unity of effort is starkly seen in Operation Spring of Youth.

In 1973 Mossad had located the living quarters of three of the top terrorists in the Black September hierarchy in downtown Beirut. As Beirut was a denied area to Israelis, it was determined that Sayeret Mat'kal (Israeli commandos) would conduct the assault. Mossad was tasked with conducting reconnaissance, providing guides, procuring

vehicles and conducting other AFO work while the equivalent of the Israeli SEALs secured a beach head in order to infiltrate and exfiltrate Sayeret Mat'kal from the Mediterranean. The end result was a flawless operation, with three dead terrorists deep in hostile territory[9].

While there is some evidence of each organization attempting to expand their roles in the operation (the Naval Commandos wanted to conduct the operation unilaterally, while some in the Mossad felt that the inclusion of military personnel wasn't necessary), in the end the leadership ensured a unity of effort and engendered success.

b. INTELLIGENCE MUST BE NETWORKED, BOTH INTER AND INTRA-AGENCY. While dedicating certain agencies to locate and track leadership targets is imperative for success, crucial intelligence can be gleaned from organizations not involved in the hunt. If this intelligence does not enter a network that connects all players, opportunities may be lost. In order to exploit unforeseen opportunities, the "flash to bang" of intelligence collection needs to become shortened. Collection assets that are not part of the hunt need to ensure that seemingly inconsequential intelligence can be acted on by others who understand the significance of the information.

For instance, one of the Mossad targets that was eliminated during the Wrath of God campaign was found through the activities of a completely different operation. Another element of Mossad was attempting to pre-empt a possible terrorist action by surveilling persons suspected of involvement. In one such operation, the target group was seen meeting with another unknown man. A photo of the man

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was taken and circulated within Mossad.  He was identified as Basil Al-Kubaissi, the European logistics officer for Black September.  The information was turned over to the Wrath of God teams and he was assassinated shortly thereafter.[10]  The key point is that the team who took the photo had no idea of Al Kubaissi's identity or significance. Had they ignored him and continued focusing solely on their specific mission, an opportunity would have been lost.

Another Israeli example involves the capture and extradition of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichman from Argentina.  He was found through sheer luck when the daughter of a blind man met Eichman's son using his real name.  Even still, after the information was reported, it took a full two years to be acted on because everyone assumed the information was ridiculous.  In the words of the chief agent who was the architect of Eichman's capture, "…the chorus of famous and less famous Nazi-hunters who claimed the credit for having found him became louder and louder.  Authors wrote about the 'untiring search lasting fifteen years'.  I have little respect for these people.  The sad truth is that Eichmann was discovered by a blind man and that the Mossad needed more than two years to believe that blind man's story"[11].

In the RAND study *Countering the New Terrorism*, John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt stress that it takes a network to fight a network. Nowhere is that more clear than in the intelligence collection needed for sub-state CLT. At this very moment there are a plethora of intelligence indicators floating about and known to various stovepiped agencies.  In order to exploit it, the intelligence must be networked into a hub so that specific targeting organizations can act upon the

information.  Unfortunately, inter and intra-organizational rivalries hinder this effort as each entity tends to "hide his cards" in order to claim credit for the "big win". Much like the unity of effort discussion above, clearly defined roles and missions will help alleviate this tendency towards organizational parochialism and advance the goal of all-channel networked intelligence.

C.  FOCUS ON A TARGET AND STICK WITH IT.  While intelligence may come in from unlikely sources, sitting back and waiting for the blind man in Argentina to report will not breed success.  The targeting organization must first develop a target list, and then focus its efforts (depending on capability) to a limited number of targets on the list.  This does not mean pick the top target and ignore all others.  Target choice may be a function of ability instead of priority.  For instance, the top Israeli target for Wrath of God was the architect of the Munich Massacre, Ali Hassan Salameh.  Unfortunately, he was in deep hiding; thus the hit teams went after personnel lower on the list because they could find them first.

It also doesn't mean that one is only chasing a single target. In most cases, linkage targets will be key to finding the main target, and thus the targeting organization may be hunting ten different persons in order to find the intelligence that will lead to the main target.

The key is to pick a target and stick with it.  Changing threads every time a lead comes in on a different target dilutes the overall effort.  For instance, in Northern Ireland, the SAS were parceled out piece-meal, chasing every rumor that came down the chain.  This "…

dispersed SAS efforts, when they might better have been concentrated at the place where the best intelligence was available."[12]

Focusing on a target doesn't mean losing one's flexibility. When strong intelligence appears, the organization should have the flexibility to act on it, but in a deliberate, thought-out decision process. Once again, Operation Spring of Youth shows this type of flexibility. All three targets in the operation were considered "hard", and thus were further down the Wrath of God list. When the Beirut intelligence came in it was considered too good an opportunity to pass up, and the mission was executed.

Finally, perseverance and patience are key. The chase must be a continual process, not one conducted in fits and starts whenever intelligence becomes available. After Eichman's successful capture Israel focused on Dr. Joseph Mengele, the so-called "Angel of Death". Unfortunately, whenever promising intelligence began to be investigated, the agents were redirected to other tasks considered higher priority. Thus, Mengele ended up dying in Brazil instead of on Israeli gallows.

d. BE PREPARED TO EXPLOIT SUCCESS. Whether chasing a linkage target or the primary target, mission accomplishment on that particular target should not be perceived as the endstate. The targeting organization must be mentally and physically prepared and agile enough to exploit any information gleaned in a rapid turn-around, especially if the information is within the span of influence of the element that just executed the primary mission. Each mission should be designed for two hits, the one planned and a follow on

opportunity target.  In addition, all intelligence gleaned should be fed rapidly into the network to allow other elements to exploit in other locales.  Mentally focusing on the primary mission as an end-state may engender lost opportunities.

Examples of success and failure are abundant.  In the hunt for Carlos, the French arrested a minor terrorist involved with the Japanese Red Army who had an address book that included all JRA leaders within France.  The French rapidly used this information to arrest dozens of individuals before they learned of the first arrest and had time to flee, and thus dismantled the JRA infrastructure for some time to come (unfortunately, the liberal French judicial system simply expelled many of them, and within months they were back working in France)[13].

In another example, documents gleaned in Operation Spring of Youth provided the death knell to a man previously not on the Wrath of God list.  Mohammad Boudia was one of many Palestinians suspected by the Mossad as having been involved in Black September, but no proof could be linked to him.  Documents from Operation Spring of Youth provided the proof, and he was blown up with a pressure-activated car bomb a short while later.[14]

While Spring of Youth showed agility, the Israelis were also capable of being as rigid as anyone else. During interrogation in Argentina, before he was taken to Israel, Eichmann divulged that Dr. Mengele was living under his own name within Argentina.  It would have been a simple matter to locate Mengele, and, although more complicated, capture him using the same team and exfiltration plan for

Eichmann.  This windfall was debated and ultimately ignored due to wringing of hands at all levels.  After Eichmann's capture became public, Mengele changed his name, moved to another location, and, as stated above, was never found again.[15]

Delegation is key to agility.  The men on the ground need the flexibility to rapidly act upon any intelligence gleaned.  This need is countered by the stakes involved, whereby the highest authority must retain some level of control.  Still, a balance must be achieved in order to exploit success.  The Wrath of God teams had to obtain execute authority from the Prime Minister prior to a hit, but all aspects of the operation were delegated to the hit team itself.  Even this loose, decentralized control led to missed opportunities against their number one target, Salameh, when an agent located him in Paris.  While the team waited for the execute order from Israel, Salameh left Paris and his trail was lost.[16]

e. MIS-HITS HAVE EXPONENTIAL CONSEQUENCES.  While the need for rapid agility increases the need for delegation of authority, this aspect is countered by the consequences of mistakes.  CLT operations are inherently controversial, mistakes even more so.

For instance, in Somalia, the first attempt at Aideed and his Lieutenants ended up netting a UN element, which engendered unwanted worldwide publicity for TF Ranger.

Going further, lethal mistakes can be catastrophic.  In Northern Ireland, an SAS element killed a sixteen-year-old boy by mistake while surveilling a weapons cache[17].  The soldiers were placed on trial and the IRA received a propaganda bonanza, stating a "shoot to kill"

policy was in effect.  The political consequences seriously hampered the overall security effort.

The most glaring example of a catastrophic mistake is the last operation conducted by the Wrath of God hit teams. In an attempt to eliminate Salameh yet again, the teams killed a Moroccan waiter in Lillehammer, Norway, by mistake.  The repercussions were enormous. Israel came under intense international pressure, was compared in the media to the very terrorists they were trying to destroy, and ultimately ended up dismantling the entire operation[18].

This example highlights the need for honest brokers within the targeting organization.  In their zeal to get Salameh, the hit teams convinced themselves that the waiter was the target.  In effect, groupthink began to play out whereby everyone associated with the operation convinced themselves that the target was correct. Unfortunately for the waiter, a confluence of events prevented the checks and balances of the Israeli command structure from operating. At the precise time the Wrath of God team asked for execute authority, the Israeli high command was dealing with a highjacked airliner that was suspected of being laden with explosives and heading to Tel Aviv. Thus, the judgment for the hit was ultimately delegated to the team itself, as execute authority was given without the usual level of unbiased scrutiny.

Thus, while delegation is key, in CLT tactical actions have strategic consequences, and thus some centralized control at the highest level is pre-ordained.  Even still, as seen with Lillehammer, the targeting organization must maintain an objective bias in order to

prevent falling into a "get some" mentality. Once an element commits enormous resources to an operation, as happened in Lillehammer, it becomes much more difficult for that organization to mentally decide the operation is a mistake.

f. THE ENEMY HAS A VOTE. CLT operations are not conducted in a vacuum. If the strategy becomes effective, the enemy will respond, usually in two ways:

1. They will lash out at anything available to prove that the CLT attacks have not hurt the organization. More than any other organization, terrorist groups exist on the perception of strength. Membership is gained because people believe that the organization is strong enough to effect change. Successful attacks erode this confidence, and thus engender attacks in return to re-establish this perception of strength. As a direct result of Wrath of God, Black September killed Israeli diplomats that had nothing to do with the operations as well as conducting more ambitious terrorist acts. As a better example, the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland is replete with tit-for-tat terrorist reprisals in reaction to security forces' success.

2. More importantly, if the CLT campaign becomes particularly successful, the terrorists will eschew public actions in favor of hunting the hunters. In Northern Ireland, the IRA put a concerted effort into locating and eliminating intelligence efforts against them, including attacking front business operations and individually targeting individuals perceived to be part of the intelligence security apparatus. Luckily, they were not always successful. In one

instance, while conducting a recce for an upcoming operation, an operator in civilian attire was attacked by four men using M-16's. The operator pulled his Browning automatic, hit three of the IRA men, dove into his car and escaped amid a fusillade of return fire[19].

Israeli forces, like the British, were also not immune to reprisals. After Wrath of God went into full swing, Black September began to make concerted efforts to attack the hit teams and their intelligence capability. They first began to kill anyone suspected of being an informer. Eventually, they began to attack the Mossad itself. For instance, after the first two successful Wrath of God hits, a Mossad agent was gunned down in Spain as he attempted to glean information from a contact about Black September.[20]

This particular action highlights a significant peril for the targeting organization. As the targeting organization is always on a quest for information, it is relatively easy for the terrorist group to attack by simply inserting loyal members into the intelligence apparatus. In this way they can use the targeting organization's own quest for information against it, as only that organization will respond to the bait. In the above example, the Mossad agent was lured to his death by the contact stating he had information about Black September.[21]

The lesson is that the targeting organization cannot assume it is above attack. Executing the mission may not be the most dangerous part of the operation. CLT is not a one- way street, and the enemy, as in every other operation, has a vote.

V. **Characteristics of the External Campaign**

Unfortunately, while the external campaign is the most difficult, it is the one the US is most concerned with today.  Thus, I took a harder look at specific characteristics that pertain only to the external campaign.

a. TERRORISTS DO NOT OPERATE ALONE.  Historically, global terrorists have had help, either witting or unwitting, from foreign governments.  This help can be as simple as turning a blind eye to terrorists residing in their country or as complex as actually transporting weapons and demolitions in the country's diplomatic pouches or officially issuing passports to terrorist entities.

Carlos the Jackal had immunity and safe haven in a plethora of countries, including Iraq, Syria, Hungary, and East Germany.  Black September could count on help from just about any country in the Mideast, including Libya and Algeria.

The countries in question are not always "enemy" regimes. Israel's number one target, Salameh, was also a CIA asset.  Salameh and the PLO were desperate for official recognition from a world power.  As a quid pro quo the PLO alerted the CIA about an attempt on Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's life during a trip to Beirut in 1973.  The cooperation extended beyond the threat alert, and included Salameh's personal security detail protecting Kissinger throughout the trip.[22]

Modern day terrorists are no different.  The open press is rife with accounts of AQ having help from the governments of Yemen, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan.

The point is that AQ will have sophisticated means of travel and communication beyond the "satphone in a cave" stereotype.  This is a dual-edged sword for the terrorist, as any support from a given country is inherently fickle. While it may initially help the terrorist, it also provides another seam to exploit, one that may be easier to penetrate than the frontier lands of Western Pakistan.  For instance, Carlos the Jackal was not captured by a super-secret CT Op, but because his host country of Sudan grew tired of him and arranged to have him turned over to France covertly[23].

   b. THE GLOBAL FIGHT DEMANDS A GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE.  While the trigger for assault will have to be much more refined than the internal campaign, AFO and intelligence assets need to operate continuously in high priority countries in order to familiarize themselves with the environment. The targeting organization must become intimately familiar with the mores and customs in the priority countries in order to reduce the chance of compromise, both in permissive and non-permissive situations.

   In addition, interpersonal relationships, which may prove crucial to success, must be fostered between and among the various agencies involved in the campaign, to include the country teams located in countries deemed to be a likely target area, before the initiation of an operation.

   Finally, a foundation must be laid to allow a rapid, flexible influx of operational forces before the forces are tasked.

   This involves continual small-scale operations worldwide.  Since the targeting organization cannot be everywhere, it should prioritize

the countries it might operate within, and then proceed to lay the groundwork for all of the above by repeated exposure to the area and the other agencies with which it might have to coordinate.

Much more so than the terrorists, a state organization can use its embassy as a key node in virtually every country, but the foundation must be laid prior to the operation. As an example, the Wrath of God operation spent a great deal of effort creating the necessary infrastructure prior to beginning any actual attack. They set up a base hub in the Israeli embassy in The Hague, then networked out into the various countries on the European continent, renting apartments and conducting other AFO operations in a variety of countries[24].

Much like the SOF mantra "Special Operation Forces cannot be created after a crisis", the external CLT campaign requires prior planning and integration in order to set the conditions for successful execution.

c. THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT MAY PRECLUDE COVERT OPERATIONS. As stated above, the external campaign will rely more on plausible deniability than the internal campaign. It should be recognized that some environments will simply prevent successful penetration for the size force necessary to accomplish the mission, and thus preclude covert operations. An honest assessment should be made prior to initiating actions.

The Lillehammer debacle is, once again, a good example. Not only did the teams hit the wrong man, but in addition four Mossad agents were arrested shortly thereafter, exposing Israeli involvement. This

is a direct result of the Lillehammer environment, coupled with some stupidity on the part of the Israelis. Previous operations had been conducted in large, metropolitan cities that facilitated a variety of covers. Lillehammer was a small town composed of homogenous Scandinavian stock. In the words of Reeve, "The arrival of more than a dozen Israelis with swarthy Mediterranean complexions had not gone unnoticed, and [the killed waiter's] neighbors proved extremely helpful to the police in the first few hours of their investigations".[25]

This, coupled with the use of out of town rental cars, caused the team to stick out like a sore thumb, allowing rapid arrests. In this case, the team leader "should have realized that it was not the proper setting for a political assassination"[26] and called off the operation.

Once again, it is imperative to not fall victim to the "get some" syndrome. The targeting organization must remain unbiased and make an honest assessment of the situation, realizing when the environment is not conducive to successful execution.


Within this study I have tried to analyze and bring to light some of the critical elements of the sub-state CLT campaign. While I would like to have found some secret formula for success, most of the elements found were fairly obvious. Even still, as shown, these elements have routinely been ignored. One reason is the fact that most of the elements tend to conflict with one another. While unity of effort is paramount, global intelligence networking, which defies unity, is also a prerequisite. Agility and flexibility are required

to exploit success, yet the strategic stakes of the mission dictate shying away from an agile, decentralized operation in favor of one with a more centralized, bureaucratic control.  In the final analysis, the organization that breaks the code on the balance of these elements is the one that will succeed.

**APPENDIX I: Notes on Lethal Operations**

Lethal CLT campaigns, by their very nature, are invariably more controversial than non-lethal ones. Any time a state organization, which surrenders to the rule of law, embarks on this type of campaign, it will invite a plethora of second-guessing. One need only look as far as the recent Yemeni predator strike to see the massive amount of opinion-giving and hand-wringing that will occur in another similar situation.

The state organization is at a disadvantage due to the fact that it must follow the rule of law. The terrorist group, by its very nature, is expected to work outside of the law, and thus, while abhorred, its actions are not nearly as shocking as a state conducting the same type of action. Because the conflict is asymmetric with respect to the relative strength of each side, the state is expected to adhere to a more stringent standard of conduct. "When the survival of the nation is not directly threatened, and when the obvious asymmetry in conventional military power bestows an underdog status on the [sub-state] side, the morality of the war is more easily questioned"[27], and thus CLT is harder to justify.

The greater the national stakes, the more leeway for lethal CLT. For instance, Rhodesia was absolutely ruthless in their attempts to wipe out insurgent leaders. In one case, they actually planned to fill a car full of explosives, hire an African "agent" to "tail" the target (under the guise of intelligence gathering), then blow both cars up, killing both the "agent" and the target.[28] The operation wasn't stopped because of any moral restraints, but because a lack of

intelligence on the target precluded successful execution.  Rhodesia
felt justified with these attempts because they were truly on the
verge of losing national sovereignty.  States which are not perceived
to be in a struggle for national survival are not so fortunate, and
thus the operation will be open to question.

This is keenly illustrated by the US Phoenix program during the
Vietnam War.  The program itself was highly successful, but was
dismantled in the end because of a US public backlash over its
morality.  This backlash continued beyond the Vietnam War, since the
project was used, along with other alleged assassination attempts, to
eviscerate the CIA during the Church Committee proceedings in the mid
'70s.

To alleviate potential problems, if capture of the target is not
desirable or obtainable, the lethal strike should be conducted with as
much plausible deniability as possible.  In a perfect world, the blame
will be directed against another sub-state group, thus engendering
conflict between groups.  This method may have exponential effects, as
the internal killing actually helps the CLT campaign because the enemy
begins to attrit itself.

British security forces used this to great effect in Northern
Ireland, as stories about "knee-capping" and other retributions by the
IRA have become legendary in their quest to root out informers.

The Rhodesians also understood this aspect of CLT well. In
describing the attempted use of the African "agent" mentioned above,
the Commander of the Selous Scouts stated "The callous advantages of
this method were that firstly, by ensuring the remains of an African

were discovered in the wreckage, it would create speculation as to who had sent him to do the job? ZANLA? The Rhodesians? The Zambians? A whole range of possibilities would be opened for conjecture."[29]

In another example, this time successful, the Rhodesian government managed to covertly assassinate the national chairman of ZANU, the political wing of one of the insurgency forces vying for power. This was done inside neighboring Zambia in such a way as to suggest that his "death by car bomb was due to factional fighting within that organization."[30] This led to a fracture within ZANU, as well as the loss of Zambia as a safe haven, which cost the rebels "an estimated two years in its war against Rhodesia."[31]

Mossad's war against Black September provides a final example. Several of the hits attributed to the Mossad can also be attributed to factional fighting within the PLO hierarchy, depending on whom one wishes to believe. Salameh, the man at the top of the Wrath of God hit list, and the one that was confused in Lillehammer, eventually was killed by a car bomb in Beirut in 1978. While Mossad is the most likely suspect, others maintain that factional fighting between the PLO and the rival Abu Nidal organization was the cause.

The point is that the lethal operation, while not good for further intelligence exploitation, can be good for other useful purposes beyond simply the death of the target.

One difference between today and the historical examples given above must be mentioned. All of the organizations above had political goals, and were vying for primacy with other sub-state groups. Thus, there was a seam to exploit. There was someone to "pin the rose" on

to create the factional fighting.  AQ is unique in that they have no short-term political goals, and are not competing with anyone.  In fact, any and all terrorist organizations that attack American interests are welcome in their eyes.  Thus, it would appear to be impossible to find a seam.

Looking at it inversely, it may be possible to create a seam among the other terrorist groups that maintain political goals.  AQ is, without a doubt, networked in some fashion with all manner of terrorist groups throughout the world.  AQ is also the number one target of the US.  Other groups, with political goals, recognize this and strive to stay separated from visible contacts with AQ.  Some, such as Hamas and the PLO, have actually denounced AQ actions for fear that reprisals against AQ may include them.  This is the possible seam.

We may be able to play on the political fears of other groups by pinning lethal attacks against AQ to those very groups, with the inference that the political groups are so concerned by AQ actions that they conducted the attack to protect their organizations existence from US reprisal.  This may lead to infighting between AQ and other organizations.

I digress.  The points I'm trying to make are a: Lethal attacks should strive to be covert if the targeting organization expects to continue operations in the face of  domestic and world opinion, and b: There are ways to make the effects of lethal attacks extend beyond the target itself.

**APPENDIX II: The Wrath of God and Black September**

The Israeli operation, "Wrath of God", to destroy Black September has striking parallels to today's current efforts against AQ. Barring classified rendition operations that I am unaware of, it is the closest campaign conducted that resembles our current problem.

Black September was a shell organization under the PLO that was created by the expulsion of Palestinian refugees from Jordanian soil in September of 1970. At first, Black September only attacked Jordanian targets, but eventually began to conduct small-scale terrorist actions against Israel. This culminated in the massacre of Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich during the summer Olympics of 1972. It is difficult to imagine today the effect this had on the state of Israel, but the shock to that country was every bit as hard as our own 9-11. The Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, took the gloves off and ordered the destruction of the architects of the Munich massacre.

Over the course of the next nine years the Israeli operation killed or attempted to kill (depending on whom you believe) between eight and fourteen terrorists in six different countries from Lebanon to Greece. As stated above, the operation culminated in the bungled attempt on Salameh in Lillehammer, Norway, which forced the termination of the operation. Even still, by the time the Lillehammer operation occurred, Black September had ceased to exist.

While Wrath of God has many parallels to today's environment, as it blended military operations with intelligence functions, it also has distinct differences from today's environment that must be mentioned:

a. Black September was tied to the political goals of the PLO. While the Wrath of God operation undeniably hurt the organization, possibly fatally, its final demise was due to the PLO pulling back from terrorist actions in order to gain world-wide acceptance.  As mentioned above, AQ has no such restraint.

b. Black September was an extremely hierarchical, centralized organization.  Thus, removing a finite level of the leadership eliminated the operational capacity of the organization, since there was nobody with the authority to step into the breach.  AQ is much flatter and networked.  While we like to fixate on specific individuals, AQ will be much harder to destroy by CLT[32].  Individual cells with decentralized control prevent the body blow that would be dealt if AQ followed the Black September structure.

c. Black September targets could be split into two groups: Hard Targets and Soft Targets.  The majority of the targets hit were soft targets who lived openly in European cities.  Their only protection was their developed cover, which attempted to cloak their involvement with Black September.  Thus, the intelligence need ended with the identification of the target and specific tactical concerns.  Finding the target was not an issue.  AQ targets that concern us, on the other hand, are primarily hard targets that preclude easy location and/or access.  This is not to say that Israel didn't take on hard targets. Operation Spring of Youth was directed against a definite hard target that enabled the destruction of three of the top men in the Black September/PLO hierarchy.

d. While the campaign was global, Israel had the luxury (or misfortune) of having a preponderance of intelligence assets (both willing and unwilling) in their own backyard, as the PLO lived and fought primarily on Israeli soil or just beyond the border in Lebanon and Jordan. This allowed them to develop an intelligence capability much like an internal campaign, then execute externally. It would be analogous to AQ operating primarily out of Mexico just south of the border. Instead, as we well know, AQ chooses to operate in failed or unstable states far from our reach, making intelligence gathering a much harder prospect.

e. Wrath of God had a simple charter: to kill. This simplified all operations, as the operation ended with the elimination of the target. This opened up the art of the possible, with stand-off attacks and area weapons employment facilitating success. In addition, no follow through was necessary after the mission. Capturing a target is much more complex, as one must first be in physical contact with the target and then deal with the transportation, health and well- being of the target away from the operational area.

Thus, while the Wrath of God operation most closely resembles our current efforts, it has distinct differences. I felt it prudent to highlight some as a caution against learning lessons that do not apply to the current situation.

[1] Peter Stiff and Ron Reid-Daly, *Selous Scouts Top Secret War,* (Johannesburg: Galago Publishing, 1982), p 338

[2] Ibid

[3] John Follian, *JACKAL; The Complete story of the Legendary Terrorist, Carlos the Jackal*, (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1998), p. 160-161

[4] Ibid

[5] Mark Urban, *Big Boys Rules*, (London: BCA publishing, 1992), p. 23

[6] Urban, p. 8

[7] Urban, p. 123-129

[8] Urban, p. 13

[9] Spring of Youth is discussed in quite a few different books. The best description can be found in *The Elite* by Samuel Katz (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), p 128-160

[10] Michael Bar-Zohar and Eitan Haber, *The Quest for the Red Prince*, (New York: William and Morrow Co., 1983), p. 156-157

[11] Zvi Aharoni and Wilhelm Dietl, *Operation Eichman*, (New York: John Wiley and sons, 1997), p. 84

[12] Urban, p. 82

[13] Follian, p. 46

[14] Tinnin and Christensen, p. 95-97

[15] Zvi Aharoni and Wilhelm Dietl, p. 150-152

[16] Tinnin and Christensen, p. 98-99

[17] Urban, p. 63-64

[18] The most complete account of the Lillehammer fiasco can be found in David Tinnin and Dag Christensen's *The Hit Team*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), p. 108-178

[19] Urban, p. 141-142

[20] Simon Reeve, *One day in September* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2000), p. 173-174

[21] Reeve, p. 173-174

[22] Reeve. p. 203-204

[23] Follian, p. 216-221

[24] David Tinnin and Dag Christensen, p. 67

[25] Simon Reeve, p. 196

[26] David Tinnin and Dag Christensen, p. 182

[27] Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict" in *World Politics*, Jan. 1975, p 186

[28] Stiff and Reid-Daly, p. 349

[29] Stiff and Reid-Daly, p. 349

[30] Bruce Hoffman, et al, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies: The Rhodesian Experience*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1991), p 35

[31] Ibid

[32] For a discussion of AQ and networking, see "Networks, Netwar and Information Age Terrorism" by John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, and Michele Zanini in *Countering the New Terrorism*, (Santa Monica: RAND Corp., 1999).