

Reexamining the Role of LE in Countering Violent Extremism



Terminology is Important

Who uses these terms?

- War on Poverty; War on Drugs; War on Homelessness
- Right-wing extremism
- Racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism
- Domestic terrorism vs. domestic extremism
- White supremacist vs. neo-Nazi
- Ultranationalist vs. separatist
- Freedom fighter, nationalist, liberator
- Jihadist or Islamist extremism/terrorism
- Environmental or animal rights terrorism
- War on terror

Law of The Land or Law of War?

- What is the purpose of violence perpetrated by extremists?
- Which do extremists prefer?
- Which is more effective against violent extremism?

Terrorists Hate Law & Law Enforcement

- For extremists destroying law & order and LE is job #1 (e.g. attacks on police cadets in Iraq)
- First order of business for ISIS, Red Brigades, drug cartels, etc. is to force the government into abandoning the civil law and operate under law of war, thus making the law impotent and the government illegitimate.
- Don't play the game by their rules.

When They Dictate Their Rules...



... and Police is Not Strong Enough?

Status Quo: An Imperfect Triad



CT strategies have changed, but our system of organizing CT is always based on this Triad.

Clear-Hold-Secure is Not Enough

- Therefore, military's job #1 after the clear-hold-secure phase should be to re-establish and support effective law enforcement
- That task should be pre-planned, not an afterthought

Strong States Require Strong Civil Institutions

- After any military intervention to remove immediate foreign or domestic threat, domestic security mission must be transferred from military authority to civil authority as soon as possible.
- Only legitimate and effective law enforcement can create the social and political security and the time-space required for civilian control to take place.

It All Comes Down to Frame, Narrative and Legality



Conclusion

- Terrorist-criminal nexus means violent extremists are more vulnerable to LE methods
- Strategies to counter violent extremist groups must to be designed for a law and order-based governance.
- A better triad is needed.

