Terrorism and the Media

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Deliverable 6, Workpackage 4

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Introduction

"Where the press is free (...) all is safe" (Berg and Lipscomb, 1904). Almost 200 years ago Thomas Jefferson wrote these words, and still today, a free press is one of the cornerstones of democratic societies. What happens, however, if the content the media offer the audience is delivered or influenced by an organization that has the objective to disturb that safety? This is the case with terrorism; in order to spread fear and thus advance its political goals, a terrorist organization needs the media. In most cases, terrorist attacks are very localized, and affect only a few people. The goal, however, is to spread the message to more people than just those who were directly hit in the attack. The media play an important role in achieving this by spreading the news of the attacks or even by directly transferring the message of terrorist organizations.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, in an often mentioned quote, called media publicity the "oxygen" of terrorism. (Muller, et al. 2003, 65; Vieira 1991, 73-85) And in fact, the relationship is not a one-way street. Although terrorism cannot be labeled "oxygen of the media" – after all the media would not cease to exist or radically change if terrorism ended tomorrow – the media do profit from terrorism as well. Perhaps no oxygen, terrorism seems to be an attractive boon for media coverage, mainly because terrorist attacks make viewer ratings surge, the goal of most if not all television channels. This symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media is the broad subject of this paper. More specifically, several questions will be answered: What is the extent of the relationship between terrorism and the media, what are the effects of this relationship, and what is or can be done to reduce the negative effects?

These questions will be dealt with in separate chapters. First, we will make an analysis of the relationship between terrorism and the media. A deeper assessment will be made of the ways terrorists use the media, both "classic" media outlets such as newspapers and television, and the "new media", such as the Internet. In addition, we will take a look at the way the media profit from reporting on terrorism. Then, in the second chapter, the effects of this relationship will be analyzed. Are the effects as clear-cut as many claim? We will use both our own statistics and that of others, in addition to several examples to illustrate this data. The third chapter deals with the ways the EU and several states within and outside of the EU have tried to reduce these effects. We will also look at the ways media outlets have themselves tried to regulate the way

they cover terrorism. Interviews with experts from the field are an important part of this analysis. Finally, in the conclusion a summary of the answers to the questions posed here will be given, as well as some recommendations as to whether and how the effects of the relationship between the media and terrorism should be reduced, while keeping in mind democratic cornerstones such as freedom of speech.

Before we start it is good to set some delimitations of this paper. The main focus will be on the period after the Second World War, since this is the period in which terrorist organizations have started using mass media extensively – even though it has always been a major part of terrorist activity to look for publicity[1] – and most relevant examples can be found in this period. The main media that will be discussed are television and newspapers, as well as the Internet, since these have had most influence in the period that is researched here. Although the geographical focus is on Europe, in many cases the media cross borders, and something that is relevant to non-European countries often applies to Europe just as well. Examples from outside Europe will therefore not be avoided. Finally, it is good to note that since the definition and history of terrorism are discussed in depth elsewhere in this project,[2] this will not be repeated in this paper.

Even before the added dimension of the Internet, Alex Schmid and Janny de Graaf wrote that "the twentieth-century communication revolution has changed the face of (…) terrorism" (Schmid and de Graaf 1982, 16). In the following pages we will analyze the situation as it is now, along the lines set out above.

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[1] For example, centuries ago the Jewish "Zealots" and the Shi'ite Muslim "Assassins" already carried out their attacks in busy places and on holidays to increase the number of people that actually noticed the attacks. See: Nacos 2000, 174

[2] TTSRL Deliverables 4 and 5

1. The Relationship Between Terrorism and the Media

"Terrorism is theatre," and terrorist attacks carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the media. Brian Jenkins noted this already in the 1970s.[3] In turn, "the media responds to these overtures with almost unbridled alacrity, proving unable to ignore what has been accurately described as 'an event … fashioned specifically for their needs'," according to Bruce Hoffman, who in his book *Inside Terrorism* has dedicated two entire chapters to the relation between terrorism and the media (Hoffman 2006, 174).

This perceived mutually beneficial relationship between terrorists and the media is the subject of this chapter. First the reasons for terrorists to use the media will be discussed, as well as their methods, both illustrated by several examples. Subsequently the reasons and methods of the media reporting on terrorist attacks are analyzed. This part, too, will include illustrating examples from the past. Finally, new media technologies such as the Internet will be discussed, as well as other ways for terrorist organizations to directly show their messages, without interference of journalists.

1.1 Terrorists Using the Media

According to Fawaz Gerges the use of the media is so important for al-Qaida,[4] that many within the organization have said that Bin Laden is "obsessed" with the international media, "a publicity hound", and that he has "caught the disease of screens, flashes, fans, and applause." (Gerges 2005, 194-197). And he is not the only extremist to value the media so highly. Al-Zawahiri is believed to have said that "[m]ore than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media." (Ibid.) An Islamist magazine wrote: "Film everything; this is good advice for all mujahideen. (…) You should be aware that every frame you take is

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[3] Brian Jenkins quoted in Hoffman 2006, 174
[4] The term "al-Qaida" (or, depending on transliteration "al-Qaeda") can be used in several ways. The first way is to describe it as an organization, currently led by Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri. This is the view used, for example, by Rohan Gunaratna. See among others: Gunaratna 2004, 91-100. The second way is to describe it as a loosely linked network of cells, groups, and individuals, or even as an ideology more than an organization, like Jason Burke. See for this, for instance: Burke, 2004, 18-26. Burke even coins the term "Al Qaedism" to describe the ideology. For clarity, here the

as good as a missile fired at the Crusader enemy and his puppets." (Quoted in: Economist, 2007).

And from their point of view, they seem to be right. Bruce Hoffman argues on terrorist attacks that "without the media's coverage the act's impact is arguably wasted, remaining narrowly confined to the immediate victim(s) of the attack, rather than reaching the wider 'target audience' at whom the terrorists' violence is actually aimed." (Hoffman 2006, 174). Brigitte Nacos agrees: "Without massive news coverage the terrorist act would resemble the proverbial tree falling in the forest: if no one learned of an incident, it would be as if it had not occurred." (Nacos 2000, 175). Boaz Ganor states it even stronger: "Terrorists are not necessarily interested in the deaths of three, or thirty - or even of three thousand - people. Rather, they allow the imagination of the target population to do their work for them. In fact, it is conceivable that the terrorists could attain their aims without carrying out a single attack; the desired panic could be produced by the continuous broadcast of threats and declarations – by radio and TV interviews, videos and all the familiar methods of psychological warfare." (Ganor 2002)

The media are very well suited for the purposes of terrorists. Several theories concerning characteristics – or capabilities – of the media explain part of this phenomenon. Two of the most important media theories in the context of this paper are agenda setting and framing. Agenda setting is the theory that the more attention a media outlet pays to a certain phenomenon, the more importance the public attributes to such an issue. The theory of framing states that the way a news item is presented can have an influence on how it is interpreted or understood by the audience. (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007, 11-12). Obviously, terrorists like to be on their audiences' minds, and preferably in a way that is as positive as possible. Some examples in which these media characteristics can be useful for terrorists will be discussed throughout this section.

First, however, it is instructive to discuss some objectives that terrorists may have in using the media. Yonah Alexander argues that terrorist groups have three purposes to interact with the media, namely attention, recognition and legitimacy. (Alexander et al. 1979, 162). Robin Gerrits focuses more on the psychological interaction between terrorists and the media. According to him,

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term will be used in the first sense: "al-Qaida" describes the actual organization. For the second sense of the meaning terms like "Islamist terrorism" will be used.

demoralizing enemies such as governments, demonstrating strength, gaining sympathy and creating fear and chaos are the main interests of terrorists for which they can utilize the media. (Paraphrased in: Paletz and Vinson 1992, 2).[5] This is notably applicable to insurgencies, as is confirmed by the Brazilian guerilla Carlos Marighella, in his *Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla*: the war the insurgent wages is "based on the direct or indirect use of mass means of communications and news transmitted orally in order to demoralize the government". (Marighella [not dated], 103). Albert Bandura notes that the media is used for moral justification, arousal of sympathy and intimidation of the public. (Bandura 1998, 172).

Brigitte Nacos combines these aspects into one comprehensive framework, stating that terrorists have four general media-dependent objectives when they strike or threaten to commit violence. The first is to gain attention and awareness of the audience, and thus to condition the target population (and government) for intimidation: create fear. The second goal is recognition of the organization's motives. They want people to think about why they are carrying out attacks. The third objective is to gain the respect and sympathy of those in whose name they claim to attack. The last objective is to gain a quasi-legitimate status and a media treatment similar to that of legitimate political actors. (Nacos 2007, 20).

For each terrorist organization the objectives in using the media may be different. In some cases, one objective is more important than the other. For some organizations, one of the objectives may not be an issue at all, or another objective should be added. An added caveat is that the first objective is not necessarily the most important one. Nevertheless, most of the perceived important objectives fall under Nacos' division. Therefore it is a very useful framework, and it will be used in the following sections to explain in more detail why and how terrorists use the media.

1.1.1 Gaining Attention and Awareness; Spreading Fear

Gaining attention is strongly linked to agenda setting. Terrorists are trying to be in the media as often and as long as possible, in order to become well known to the public. They attempt to influence media outlets so that they, in

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[5] Gerrits has an entire chapter in this book in which he provides more details on the subject: Robin

turn, will influence the audience by spreading the word on the existence of the organization: the terrorists get attention, and people will be aware of the existence, methods, and targets of the group. In fact terrorists are thus carrying out propaganda by proxy.

A major factor of this objective is to creating fear among the target population. In fact, it is an essential factor in any terrorist's agenda that the whole tactic of terrorism is based upon, and that is visible in all parts of terrorist activity. This is not different for terrorist use of the media. The strategy to gain attention is meant, to an important extent, to intimidate the audience – and the target government – so that even the threat of possibly becoming victim of terrorist violence is enough to create fear, and thus to affect the policy making process. As Hoffman writes: "Only by spreading the terror and outrage to a much larger audience can the terrorists gain the maximum potential leverage that they need to effect fundamental political change." (Ibid., 174).

There are many examples that seem to confirm that gaining attention and awareness through the media are important aspects of terrorist strategy. Nacos herself mentions the attacks on the transit system in London as an example of how terrorists try to reach this first objective. And indeed, it seems to prove that terrorists devise sophisticated media tactics to get as much attention as possible. After all, the attacks took place while the G-8 summit was held practically next door, in Scotland. The terrorists took over the news and pushed the G-8 leaders off the front pages. (Ibid., 20-21).

Another, earlier, example is the terrorist attack in Munich. In 1972, when people throughout the world were watching the Olympic Games in that city and large numbers of newspaper and broadcast journalists had gathered, the Palestinian terrorist organization Black September carried out the infamous attack on Israeli athletes present in the Olympic camp. What followed was a hostage situation and a rescue attempt that was closely covered by all of those media, and watched by millions of people throughout the world. The terrorists were able to "monopolize the attention of a global television audience who had tuned in expecting to watch the Games." (Ibid., 179). Brigitte Nacos mentions that approximately 800 million people watched the events as they unfolded. In addition, she argues that "Black September undoubtedly chose Munich at the time of the Olympics because the technology, equipment, and personnel were in

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P. J. M. Gerrits, "Terrorists' Perspectives: Memoirs," p. 29-61

place to guarantee a television drama that had never before been witnessed in the global arena." (Nacos 2000, 177).

Such strategies to capture the attention and awareness of the audience do not happen by chance. In fact, they are carefully designed by terrorist "spin doctors". For example, during the hijacking of a TWA airplane in 1985 by a Lebanese Shi'ite terrorist organization, some members of the group that had graduated in media studies from American colleges regularly met at the house of the organization's leader to work out spin doctoring tactics. (Hoffman 2006, 176).

Finally, a worrisome finding is that people tend to get used to a certain extent of violence. (See for instance: Liebes and Kampf 2007). Therefore, low-profile attacks may become less of an issue. As a result, terrorist spin doctors will have to devise more shocking events or more striking ways to exploit these events in order to keep the attention at the desired level. Besides, even if people would not get used to low levels of violence, the largest attacks generally still receive most attention. Nacos: "since the most gruesome and deadly incidents receive the greatest volume of reporting, media critics have charged that terrorists resort to progressively bloodier violence to satisfy the media's appetite for shocking news." (Nacos 2000, 175).

1.1.2 Recognition of Motives

The second objective is related both to agenda setting and framing. Not only do terrorists want to be known to the audience, they also want to try to get their message across through the media. Sometimes this can be achieved merely by carrying out attacks: the audience may ask itself why people would do such things, especially, for example, if suicide bombers are involved. For many it is all but unfathomable that people would kill themselves in order to kill civilian bystanders. To get to know the cause they do this for would be a logical next step for them. The effects of this media strategy can be increased by trying to make the media frame the issues in a certain way. In some cases, the media can even give a positive spin to the cause, or compare the means terrorists use to means that are used by others who are considered more legitimate than terrorists, thus lending some recognition to the terrorists.

Sometimes terrorist groups actually force media to publish their motivations, so that people throughout the world read about it. For example, Croatian hijackers of a TWA airplane in 1976 demanded that flyers be dropped over several large cities, and that, more importantly for this research, high ranking newspapers such as the New York Times and the Washington Post print statements made by the terrorists. The newspapers agreed and the statements were printed (Pitt 1987).

In most cases, however, terrorists do not force-feed their motivations to the media outlets. Instead, the media voluntarily decide to report on these issues. This is not very surprising – after all, oftentimes motivations are relevant for the story. It is a good alternative to factual "breaking news" once there is no new information available anymore. A good example is the 1985 TWA hostage taking, in which scores of American journalists came to Beirut to cover the event. "As the hostage crisis dragged on day after day, at times with seemingly little or no progress toward a resolution, the vast media resources deployed for just this one story had to find or create 'news' to justify the expense and continued presence of the media personnel, even if no 'real news' was occurring." (Hoffman 2006, 175). This created the opportunity, and in fact – lacking new events – almost the necessity, to report on the motivations of the terrorists and their demands, as well as the situation of the hostages, and the need to bring them home at all costs (Ibid.).

Another example is the attack at the Munich Olympics, Brigitte Nacos states that in the process of mass media attention for the Games, and thus for the hostage taking "many in the global audience learned a considerable amount about Palestinian terrorist groups and their motives for violence." (Nacos 2000, 177).

Like Brian Jenkins, Jeffrey Rubin and Nehemia Friedland compare terrorism to theater. They then take the metaphor to the next level, saying that the "media are important to terrorists because they not only relay information but, like good drama critics, interpret it as well. The slant they give – by deciding which events to report and which to ignore, by intentionally or unintentionally expressing approval or disapproval – can create a climate of public support, apathy, or anger." (Quoted in: Hermann and Hermann 1998, 226).

Terrorists use this, because they know that even without forcing the media's hand, the motivations will be discussed, especially if they leave clues as to the underlying reasons. Nacos mentions the attacks in London: what followed

after the attacks was an "avalanche of reports" on grievances of Muslims, on the consequences of the Iraq war, and similar subjects, not only in the UK, but also in the rest of Europe and beyond (Nacos 2007, 21). The same happened after 9/11: "Suddenly, there were many stories that pondered the question (…): Why do they hate us?" (Nacos 2006, 90)[6]

1.1.3 Gaining Respect and Sympathy

The audience of terrorist attacks does not only include potential victims that have to be frightened, but potential supporters as well. These potential supporters – the people in whose name the terrorists claim to act – have to be impressed. This is a third objective of terrorists using the media: they want to show potential supporters that they can "deliver". When people who are perhaps mildly interested in the activities or ideas of a particular group see that that organization is actually able to have an impact on the legitimate political establishment, these people may become more respectful or sympathetic toward the terrorist cause or organization. Of course, this, again, requires agenda setting. Much like for the previous objective, if an organization succeeds in having the media frame its message in a certain way, it may succeed in getting even more respect and sympathy than if it fails to do so.

The images of attacks, especially in cases such as 9/11, can inspire awe. For instance, after 9/11 and other attacks, Bin Laden has become more popular among groups in the Muslim world (See for example polls quoted in: Haqqani 2004; Economist 2001; Ellis 2007; Pipes 2001). Nacos: "Simply by demonstrating that he and his kind were able to land a catastrophic blow against the United States on its home turf, bin Laden conditioned a large number of young Muslim men – especially in the Muslim diaspora in western Europe – for recruitment into his cause without ever meeting them." (Nacos 2007, 22). This is a good example of how media attention for terrorist activity abroad can lead to an increased threat of terrorism within European countries.

Another example is Hezbollah, that shows people in and outside the Arab world that it is able to withstand and even beat the Israelis, something many Arab nations have not been able to do. The organization has an extensive media strategy – more on this later in this chapter – and uses footage to prove that its

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[6] A good example of one of those articles on "why they hate us" is: Zakaria 2001

attacks are successful. In turn, Hezbollah is seen as the new "lion" of the Arab world. Increased support, also among certain groups in Europe, has been reported as the result (See for example: Murphy 2006; Soliman 2006).

1.1.4 Gaining Legitimacy

By regularly appearing in the media, terrorists are trying to become a legitimate representative of their own cause. Whether or not the audience agrees is, for this objective, of less importance. The theory is that merely the fact that they are treated by the media much like regular, accepted, legitimate world leaders gives them a similar status. This is mainly achieved by getting personal airtime through interviews and recorded videos or messages. Framing is very important in this. If terrorists succeed in having the media frame their leader much like a "regular" leader would be framed, the audience may get the impression that the two are comparable. If, on the other hand, media make a clear distinction between actual world leaders and terrorist leaders,[7] the audience may do so too, consciously or not. The terrorist source has a role in this too. If it can deliver, for instance, a high quality, professionally edited message, it will be more "statesmanlike" than if the message has a low resolution, and looks unprofessional.

Al-Qaida's Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri extensively use this strategy, by regularly sending in videos to the media portraying themselves as leaders of the (Muslim) world. Many European media sources play at least part of the messages, and dedicate time to analyzing them. When they refrain from doing so, others criticize them. For instance, Rick van Amersfoort, researcher at an institute that critically tracks the Dutch intelligence agencies, argued that these movies must be aired in Europe: "a balanced picture must be given. People must be able to give their counterarguments. There are two sides to a story, to a war. Just show them both!"[8] Van Amersfoort thus puts Bin Laden on equal footing with other legitimate leaders – not necessarily by wanting to show the clips, but by proposing that these are two equal arguments in a discussion.

Another example of gaining legitimacy is how PLO leader Yassir Arafat managed to be allowed to speak at the United Nations General Assembly in

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[7] For instance by not granting them equal amounts of airtime, or by paraphrasing the words of terrorists instead of directly quoting them.

1974. His speech was, of course, broadcast throughout the world, much like speeches of other leaders. This speech provided him with the opportunity to prove himself an actual leader, despite his terrorist activities. As such, the speech at the UN can be seen as an important step in the legitimization process of himself and his organization. (the transcript can be read in: Monde Diplomatique 1974)

A third example is that several television channels around the world, among others in the US, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, aired interviews with Chechen terrorist leader Shamil Basayev.[9] Best known is the interview that the American television program *Nightline* broadcast, since it had most consequences.[10] Basayev has claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks on a theatre in Moscow and a school in Beslan. Obviously, the interviews created an opportunity for Basayev to explain his reasons and motivations for the use of terrorism, another objective of media usage mentioned above, but in addition the program is said to have given the terrorist a status similar to any other world leader (Nacos 2007, 22-23). Obviously, not everyone who is interviewed can be considered on equal footing with political leaders. Thousands of people are interviewed by news media every day. However, in this case, an entire show was dedicated to one political actor only, Basayev. This generally happens only to a select few. Another point is that in many people's eyes Basayev may have seemed like a lunatic, thus not providing him with the status of a world leader. Then again, the audience does not have to agree with a politician in order to see him or her as a world leader. As is the case for other examples, saying that Basayev is seen as a world leader is debatable. Still, finding legitimization from a world audience may indeed have been one of his objectives, and one of the reasons he cooperated with the interviewers.

Going back to Palestinian organizations: a Palestinian, Abul Abbas, leader of the group that had, in 1985, hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro and killed one of its passengers, was sought by the American government after this attack. News channel NBC found him before the US government did, and broadcast an exclusive interview. Bruce Hoffman quotes Lawrence Grossman,

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[8] Rick van Amersfoort, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Amsterdam, April 21, 2008

[9] Transcripts in English are hard to find. One transcript, from the Chechen Press can be found on a Finnish site: http://www.kolumbus.fi/suomi-tshetshenia-seura/shamilb.htm. The same transcript can be found on http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/2638 as well. See also: Abdullaev and McChesney (not dated)

[10] This will be discussed later in this paper

who was NBC News President at the time: "We like to interview all leaders." Hoffman then comments on Grossmans words: "Yet by no stretch of the imagination could (or should) Abbas be ranked with those world 'leaders' whose views merit the most coveted prize on American television – a dedicated slot on a major prime-time news show." (Hoffman 2006, 185).

In order to reach these four objectives, and to try to compel the media to set the agenda or to frame the news items along the lines they desire, terrorists often adjust their plan of attack. Terrorism expert J. Bowyer Bell illustrates this conscious effort by having one terrorist say to another: "Don't shoot, Abdul! We're not on prime time!" (Ibid., 183). Bruno Frey and Dominic Rohner conclude the same, arguing that, for example, from a terrorist perspective, an attack in Africa should be bloodier than one in Europe, because otherwise media will not cover it. Terrorists will thus adjust their plan if they want to have real impact (Frey and Rohner 2007, 130, 141). Another example is that during the 1985 TWA crisis a British journalist noted that the hostage-takers paid no attention to non-American or non-television journalists (Hoffman 2006, 178). It was better to focus on the American television press, since then the news would spread by itself. Such strategies have undoubtedly contributed to the amount of media coverage terrorists have received.

Other factors that terrorists may keep in mind while planning include media likeability, available visual footage, and originality. Brian Jenkins concludes the same in saying that a significant number of incidents are overlooked by the international media. Thus, the characteristics of a terrorist incident partly determine the attention it receives (Jenkins 1981, 4).

1.2 The Media Using Terrorists

In this section an analysis will be made as to why and how the media use terrorism. The "why" question seems to be easily answered: viewer ratings. Of course several other reasons may play a role as well, such as personal interest or involvement by journalists, social responsibility – after all terrorism *is* news and must be covered. Still, the main common denominator seems to be the number of viewers that watch terrorist coverage: people are fascinated by the subject. Much like terrorists, journalists need a public in order to exist. In addition,

ratings are directly linked to advertisement income, and so the more people watch the news on a certain channel, the more money that particular channel will make. As Brigitte Nacos mentions: "The media are rewarded [for broadcasting terrorism] in that they energize their competition for audience size and circulation – and thus for all-important advertising." (Nacos 2006, 82). A more in-depth analysis is given in the next sections.

1.2.1 Bleeding, Human Interest, and Drama

"Terrorism specialist David Rapoport was once contacted by a cable television channel about working with it on a program about terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. After several conversations, the producer asked, 'By the way, what is your view of the problem?' Rapoport replied, 'A frightening thought, but not a serious possibility now.' They never called him back." (Mueller 2007, 33).

John Mueller adds: "If a baseball player hits three home runs in a single game, press reports will include not only the notice of that achievement, but also information about the rarity of the event as well as statistics about how many home runs the player normally hits. By contrast, I have never heard anyone in the media stress that, in every year except 2001, only a few hundred people in the entire world have been killed by international terrorism outside of war zones." (Ibid.)

This preference of the media for stories confirming or reinforcing the danger of terrorism instead of those questioning it is obvious in many cases. A good example is the difference in attention when the threat alert level is raised (much attention in the media) and when it is lowered (little attention in the media – if any at all) (Nacos, Bloch-Elkon, and Shapiro 2007, 110-113). As Mueller says: "A cynical aphorism in the newspaper business holds, 'If it bleeds, it leads.' There is an obvious, if less pungent, corollary: If it doesn't bleed, it certainly shouldn't lead, and indeed, may not be fit to print at all." (Mueller 2007, 33). The result of this is, that there is an overrepresentation of "bleeding" stories in the media. Terrorism, obviously, fits this description very well.

"Bleeding" is not the only characteristic a story must have to be attractive for the media. Conservative commentator and journalist Fred Barnes described, already in 1985, that there is a "normal lust of the media – particularly TV – for

breaking events of international impact, and for high drama and a human dimension to the news. When all these occur together, there is a 'crisis.' Wall-to-wall coverage follows." (Barnes 1985, 10-11). Nacos states it similarly, two decades later: "While I do not suggest that the news media favor this sort of political violence, it is nevertheless true that terrorist strikes provide what the contemporary media crave most – drama, shock, and tragedy suited to be packaged as human interest news." (Nacos 2006, 81-82).

The audience wants to be captivated by what it sees in the media. Christine Ockrent mentions that: "Today, for all of us – and more often than we acknowledge it – the desire to be entertained takes over the need to know." (Ockrent 2006, 77). And this leads to a focus on human interest and drama rather than "hard" news stories. This "lust" for human interest stories and drama can lead to overcoverage of terrorist activity. An example is, that in the early 80s, the American television channels ABC, CBS, and NBC broadcast more terrorism related stories than stories on poverty, crime, unemployment, and discrimination combined. (Nacos 2000, 176).[11] In addition, as mentioned in the beginning of this section: the focus of the stories on terrorism are not necessarily on the hard news or statistics, but more on emotional aspects.

On the first issue, overrepresentation of terrorism in the media, Brian Jenkins mentions that "[i]t makes no difference that ordinary homicides vastly exceed murders caused by terrorists. The news media do not allocate space or air time proportionally according to the leading causes of death in the world. News in general is about the unusual, the alarming, the dramatic. It is not a summing up of information. It is anecdotal." (Jenkins 1981, 2). Terrorism fits these descriptions very well: unusual, alarming, dramatic, anecdotal. Much more so then, for instance, crime or traffic accidents.

On the second issue, an overemphasis on certain aspects of terrorism, Jenkins confirms skewed reporting: "It has been asserted that the news media report only the sensational aspects of terrorism, the blood, the gore, the horror of the victims." (Ibid.) And indeed, according to Jenkins, this is often true: "As in war, the media, and in particular television, focus on the action and in so doing often present an unbalanced picture of the intensity of the conflict." (Ibid.)

In sum, terrorism has many aspects that make it a very "sexy" subject for the media: it has drama, it has danger, it has blood. It is anecdotal and new, it has human tragedy, as well as miracle stories and heroes. It has a clear division

between good and evil, it has shocking footage, and often action. This is what led many people who watched the 9/11 attacks in the media to feel that it was too surreal to even be fit for a movie – and what "forced" those people to stay on the edge of their seats for hours if not days. The media want just that: many people watching for a long time. They know that terrorism has this effect, and it is a logical choice for them to overcover it, with a focus on what people generally want to see: news leaning to the "soft" aspects rather than to "hard" and objective facts. Unfortunately, not only the media want high viewer ratings. Terrorists do too. The result of the media coverage may therefore be that they indirectly – and in most cases unwillingly – assist terrorists in achieving their objectives.

1.2.2 Exacerbating factors: Competition and Speed

The role of the media – even the "classic" media, such as newspapers, radio, and television – has changed over the years and has become more liable to offer a platform for the terrorist agenda. Paul Wilkinson argues that "we would be deceiving ourselves if we believed that this dangerous media hype of terrorist 'spectaculars' was simply the result of media organisations' unintended mistakes. The major US networks all compete fiercely for an increased market share of the audience and for the higher advertising revenue they can gain through exploiting the public's insatiable interest in the coverage of major terrorist 'pseudo-events'." (Wilkinson 2006, 150). Christine Ockrent notes that: "all the news networks are very competitive, and their treatment of news is more and more like that of tabloids. (…) Moreover, speed is of the essence. We are no longer bewildered to see an event on the screen before we know what has actually happened. The development of headlines news helps terrorism have an immediate impact upon a vast number of people." (Ockrent 2006, 75).

Wilkinson and Ockrent mention two factors that are important in the changing role the media have: competition and speed. Even if we discount the Internet for now – this will be discussed in the next section – much has changed in the media landscape over the past few decades. Competition has always been an important factor, but over the past decades the number of (all-news and other) channels has risen, and competition has become much stiffer (Nacos

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[11] The statistical research was done by Shanto Iyengar, and quoted in Nacos' article.

2000, 176). This has resulted in an even larger focus on "breaking news" subjects such as terrorist activity. After all, everyone wants to be the first to show events, to make sure viewers watch their channel and not another one, and keep doing so.

Whereas a long time ago the main competition between news outlets was *whether* a particular outlet had a story, now the factor media compete for is *when* the outlet has it. If a terrorist attack occurs, and there is video footage available, every news channel will air it at some point. However, it is important to be the first to air the "scoop". The faster an event is reported, the better. Shlomo Shpiro argues that "[s]peed plays a critical role in global news coverage. While the newsreels of World War II could be edited and censored for several days or even weeks before being publicly screened, the audience of present-day conflicts demands media reaction time measured by hours and even minutes. Media outlets that, for technical, political or financial reasons, cannot supply the most up-to-date news coverage lose out in a field saturated by intense competition." (Shpiro 2002, 77).

Henrik Keith Hansen, an editor for the Danish national broadcasting system, confirms this in an interview with TTSRL: "Yes, of course we are a responsible media, but as I said earlier we are in the news business and it is running faster and faster. You know, the demand for news, new news all the time is increasing, so it is actually difficult to hold back information (…) The nature of the news media is to present the news for the public as fast as we can."[12]

The result is that a situation may occur in which footage is simply aired, sometimes even using a live feed, and thus without any prescreening. In other cases, there may be some prescreening, but very little time to make a well-informed decision on whether or not footage is suitable for broadcasting. Consequently, horrific pictures are broadcast into the world, possibly amplifying fear among viewers. After the news is brought, news programs do not want their viewers to switch to another channel, and thus, instead of going back to their regular programming, they continue reporting on the terrorist attack. Often little footage is available, leading in some cases to "repeated recycling of bloody images and of the most emotional sound bites." (Liebes and Kampf 2007, 109). Perhaps it helps in keeping the viewers, or informing new viewers, but it certainly

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[12] Henrik Keith Hansen, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Copenhagen, February 22, 2008

does not add much newsworthy information. In fact, it may have results similar to those of the scores of journalists looking for news at the TWA hijacking in Lebanon mentioned above.

There may even be some personal reasons at stake. Barnes notes that "[m]edia competition, always brutal, is especially fierce in this atmosphere [of crisis coverage after terrorist attacks], partly because the public is more attentive, partly because media stardom may be at stake for some. News anchors can become famous when covering events such as large terrorist attacks." (Barnes 1985, 11).

An important caveat is, that some of these characteristics do not apply to all media. For instance, the repeated recycling of horrific images may be a problem on 24-hour news channels, such as CNN or Fox News, but not for most channels, that edit the footage into a brief, to-the-point video and broadcast it. Nevertheless, it should be clear that the role of competition and speed in the media landscape can be important invigorating factors for the aspects listed in the previous section, such as drama and human interest stories, not only for those 24-hour news channels. Although it is hard to gauge the exact impact, being under pressure of time and competition is likely to have an effect on all types of media reporting.

1.3 New Developments: Terrorists are the Media

There are several levels of terrorist participation in the media. The first is when the media report on terrorist activity. In that case, terrorists merely carry out an attack and must wait to see how the media report on it. They can try to influence the report by choosing location, time, and target, but they are not involved in writing the contents of the news.

A second level is when terrorists send in their messages straight to the media outlets. They can thus decide on what exactly to say, and how to frame their message. At the same time, the media "gatekeeper" gets to make the final decision, and decides whether or not to cut into the message, to broadcast only part of the message, to add explicatory voiceovers, or perhaps not to broadcast it at all. Although media and terrorists have some common objectives (large audience) they are generally not willfully cooperating. Therefore journalists are likely to adapt the message, especially when it is long and repetitive.

Terrorists get most influence if they reach the third level: full control of the media outlet. They can create the message and broadcast it exactly the way they want. They have "final cut". It is this last level that this section is about. Terrorists can reach this level of media influence by literally forcing media to report on something, as in the case of the Croatian hijacking, or by starting their own newspapers, launching their own television channels, and especially by spreading their messages over the Internet.

Although the title of this section is "new developments", this is not entirely accurate. After all, newspapers have been published by terrorist organizations for a long time. This can be seen for example, in the small San Francisco anarchist paper *Truth* that was published over a century ago: "Truth is two cents a copy, dynamite is forty cents a pound. Buy them both, read one, use the other" (Schmid and de Graaf 1982, 9). It should be clear, the media outlet and the terrorist group are one and the same.

Here though, the emphasis is on those new developments that have led to more opportunities for terrorists to create their own media outlets. More specifically the following sections will discuss two modern technologies that have enhanced the terrorist media capabilities: the Internet and satellite television. These new media have caused an information revolution that terrorists gladly take advantage of. Bruce Hoffman notes that "much like previous information revolutions (…) that also profoundly affected terrorist and insurgent external communications, a new information revolution has occurred to empower these movements with the ability to shape and disseminate their own message in their own way, enabling them to completely bypass traditional, established media outlets." (Hoffman 2006, 198).

1.3.1 The Internet

"[Al-Qaida] made its name in blood and pixels, with deadly attacks and an avalanche of electronic news media." (Kimmage 2008). Daniel Kimmage writes this in an op-ed in the *New York* Times. And indeed, the Internet can be and has been used for many purposes by terrorists. Examples are cyber-terrorism, coordination of plans of attack, communication with cells, or propaganda and information. Here, only the last will be discussed, since we are dealing with the Internet as a media outlet. The fact that terrorists can now be their own media

gatekeeper is not the only advantage they have in using the Internet for propaganda purposes. Several authors, among them Gabriel Weimann and Akil N. Awan, mention other advantages that lead to increased benefit for terrorists using the Net. For instance, the audience is enormous, much larger than for most regular media. It is easy to access and to stay anonymous, it is incredibly fast and inexpensive, and it offers a multimedia environment, which means that text, graphics, video, songs, books, and presentations can all be combined. In addition, regular media now often report on or even copy Internet content, which means that both old and new media can be influenced by using the Internet alone (Weimann 2004, 3; Awan 2007, 390-391).

The Internet has become so prominent that some think it is replacing the role of the "old" media, especially concerning terrorism. For instance, Michel Moutot, in charge of terrorism at the press agency l'*Agence France-Presse* (AFP), said in an interview: "terrorists do not really need us anymore to convey their message. The 'official' media have been replaced by the Internet which, in the end, is much easier to use, much quicker and much more effective. Terrorist groups now have their own websites where they can convey their propaganda and, for most of them, they advise their readers and followers not to trust the media which are now seen as the enemy. New recruits do not trust us."[13]

Keeping in mind the four goals terrorists have using the media that Brigitte Nacos described, it becomes clear how the Internet is so useful for terrorist groups. The first goal, gaining attention and awareness, is easier achievable over the Internet than through the old media. As mentioned above, the Internet reaches an enormous audience, much bigger than any other media outlet. The Internet can function as a world wide press agency. Messages put online by terrorist organizations are picked up by other Internet sites, and may find their way to the regular media. Thus, more people hear about the propaganda than before. A good example is the movie clips of beheadings that were put online, for instance those of Nicholas Berg and Daniel Pearl. These clips received much attention, and were intended to raise awareness, fear, and helplessness among the audience. As Nadya Labi mentions on the uploaded video showing Berg's murder, "with the slash of a knife al-Zarqawi had pulled off the most successful online terrorist PR campaign ever." (Labi 2006, 102). Of course, such horrific acts may have been counterproductive in achieving other objectives, but it definitely gained much attention and awareness.

The second goal, gaining recognition of the organization's motives, becomes much easier, since terrorists can now frame their own messages. They can explain why they are carrying out their attacks. Of course, in order to actually read or see this motivation, people have to surf to the specific website, and so there must be a prior interest. Nevertheless, it is easier for people that are looking for information, to actually get this in the frame created by the terrorists. Besides, with sites like YouTube, it is easier to spread messages even without the need for people to find terrorist websites. Before the Internet most people were dependent on the way the media framed the messages. Now, terrorists can justify their actions, for instance by claiming that they have no other choice but to use violence against the oppressive enemy, or by demonizing and dehumanizing the enemy (Weimann 2004, 6).

The third objective, gaining respect and sympathy of those in whose name terrorists claim to attack, probably benefits most from the Internet. After all, those who are interested in a certain terrorist organization are most likely to actually look for the information at the source. There, they will see only the successful attacks, accompanied by engaging texts and other propaganda. They are thus more likely to get respect for the terrorist achievements. The terrorists can and will frame their own achievements, and thus do not add any caveats, as happens on television or in newspapers. Radicalization, mobilization, and perhaps recruitment can be the result (Hoffman 2006, 214-219). American intelligence analyst Ned Moran mentions that the radical websites are dangerous because of their "ability to recruit the disaffected, to recruit those who are on the fringes (...) to make jihad sexy and cool and to convince these younger, otherwise arm-chair jihadists that this is something to do." (Murphy 2007, 38).

The last objective, to gain a quasi-legitimate status and media treatment similar to that of legitimate political actors does not really benefit from the Internet. Unlike the "old" media, everyone can put their content on the Internet, not only statesmen. Therefore a showing on the Internet does not mean much for your status, and legitimacy does not increase, unless the Internet contents are copied by regular media. Lately, however, this seems to be changing a bit, and some Internet "movie stars", unknown people that regularly appear in movie

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clips on the Internet have become famous beyond the Internet as well.[14] In the future, this may happen for terrorists as well.

It should be clear that the Internet can significantly increase the scope of terrorist propaganda. Therefore, terrorists take full advantage of the new options the Internet has to offer. Dozens of radical pages can be found. In fact, according to Bruce Hoffman, "almost without exception, all major (and many minor) terrorist and insurgent groups have Web sites." He then quotes an American Internet researcher: "These days, if you're not on the web, you don't exist." (Hoffman 2006, 206).

1.3.2 Terrorist TV

Another way to directly run the media, is to create it yourself. Again, this can be a newspaper, a journal, or a radio station, but in some cases terrorists have created their own television channel as well, even broadcasting it over satellite to millions of homes throughout the world. The best example is the Lebanese Hezbollah's al-Manar television channel. Al-Manar directly broadcasts Hezbollah's point of view, and does so very successfully. In fact it is said to be in the top 5 of best watched television channels in the Middle East, and internationally it has reported approximately 10 million viewers per day. (Ibid., 224; Jorisch 2004).

There is some disagreement as to the contents of the channel. Many say al-Manar's reports are often anti-Semitic, incite violence against Israelis, Americans, and others, or glorify terrorism and violence. Avi Jorisch, author of a book on al-Manar, says that "[a]l-Manar is not a legitimate news organization or the rough equivalent of al-Jazeera. It is the propaganda arm of a listed terrorist organization, complicit in the full range of [Hezbollah]'s activities." (Jorisch 2004). Anne Marie Baylouny does not agree, and calls Jorisch's work "polemical and alarmist, drawing conclusions not supported by the data or lacking contextual knowledge of many of the references." Instead, she says that her study "did not find overt support for suicide bombings or attacks on Americans or Israelis." (Baylouni 2005).

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[14] For instance, a Dutch girl that started singing on YouTube became so popular that she has received a contract, and appeared in regular (news)media such as Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* and American talk show Oprah Winfrey.

Still, others mention several shows that according to them clearly reflect al-Manar's biases. Israel's defeat as well as the downfall of the US are prophesized, heroic sacrifices are recounted, footage of attacks on Israelis are broadcast (Hoffman 2006, 223-225). And indeed, some of al-Manar's videos are in fact calling on people to become martyrs and do glorify terrorism and violence against Israelis and Americans. In addition, anti-Semitic concepts such as the "blood libel"[15] are shown.[16]

Another indication of al-Manar's function is given by the news director Hassan Fadlallah in an interview with *New Yorker* journalist Jeffrey Goldberg. "Neutrality like that of [al-Jazeera] is out of the question for us (…) We cover only the victim, not the aggressor." In addition, he says that al-Manar is "trying to keep the people in the mood of suffering". Goldberg then mentions movie clips that al-Manar uses to break into its programs, employing patriotic music, and celebrating terrorist attacks on Israel. The editor at al-Manar creating such videos expresses the message his movie clips should send out: "get ready to blow yourselves up, because this is the only way to liberate Palestine." (Goldberg 2002).

Creating terrorist television channels has similar advantages for terrorist organizations as the use of the Internet, at least from a media point of view. Awareness, recognition of motives, or sympathy and respect are all easier to achieve if the channel is made by the organization itself. In addition, contrary to the Internet, the fourth objective, legitimacy for terrorist leaders, is easier to achieve as well, since you can give a higher amount of attention to terrorist leaders than to other leaders. Or as al-Manar's Hassan Fadlallah said about former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon: "We're not looking to interview Sharon (…) We want to get close to him in order to kill him." (Ibid.)

The added advantages do come at a price. For instance, unlike the Internet, creating and broadcasting satellite television is expensive. In addition, it is harder to remain anonymous and easier to ban satellite channels than Internet sites. Also most of the interactivity that the Internet is renowned for is lost on satellite television. Therefore, a combination of Internet, television, and possibly other media, as Hezbollah employs, can be a potent weapon for a terrorist organization.

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[15] The blood libel claims that Jews killed Christian or Muslim children or babies and used their blood to bake matzahs, the unleavened bread Jews eat for Passover.

2. Effects of the Relationship

"Terrorists and newspapermen share the assumption that those whose names make the headlines have power," Walter Laqueur writes, confirming the ideas discussed in the previous chapter of this paper. He then continues: "Publicity, needless to say, is important; people pay a great deal of money and go through great lengths to achieve it. But, unless this publicity is translated into something more tangible, it is no more than entertainment." (Laqueur 2001, 216). Bruce Hoffman adds that the real issue "is not so much the relationship itself, which is widely acknowledged to exist, but whether it actually affects public opinion and government decision making (…) in a manner that favors or assists terrorists. The answer is far more complex and ambiguous than the conventional wisdom on this subject suggests." (Hoffman 2006, 183). While in the previous chapter the relationship between terrorism and the media was mostly just described, here an attempt is made to determine the extent of the impact of this relationship, based on secondary sources, but also on primary sources such as public opinion polls and media analyses.

We will analyze the effect of media use and terrorism on two main levels. Firstly, the public: what exactly is the effect of terrorism in the media on the greater public, which is, after all, one of the main targets of terrorists. Does fear among the public increase because of media attention? The second level is that of the government. Since the most important objective of terrorism can be assumed to be political, it is important to see how governments react on terrorist activities in the media. Then, we will take a look at the role of the new media: are there any effects specific to the terrorist use of internet and satellite television? The last section will discuss the impact of media on terrorists and radicalizing people.

2.1 The Public; A Change in Threat Perception?

As described in the previous chapter, an important objective of terrorists is to raise awareness and attention among the target public by using the media. If

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[16] For some clips taken from al-Manar see:
http://www.europeandemocracy.org/alManarTerroristMediaClips/tabid/790/Default.aspx; See also MemriTV: http://www.memritv.org/subject/en/116.htm

this strategy would be successful, a change in the threat perception among the public should be visible.

Compared to the other terrorist objectives in the media a relatively large amount has been written on awareness, fear, and changing behavior among the public as a result of this. Brigitte Nacos found that after the 9/11 events "heavy news consumers were more plagued by fear of terrorism than those who did not follow the news very closely." (Nacos 2006, 88). In another research project she carried out in cooperation with Yaeli Bloch-Elkon and Robert Y. Shapiro her findings are somewhat different. This study focuses solely on the situation as it is in the United States, but most of the observations and conclusions are interesting for the European context as well. It found that attention to terrorism in the media does not have a strong effect on the way the terrorist threat is perceived by the audience. In order to find a correlation, an additional factor must be entered into the equation: the factor of *who* conveys the message. If the source is authoritative, for instance the President or his Administration's officials, or even terrorists themselves, people did react by changing the way they perceived the threat. (Nacos, Bloch-Elkon, and Shapiro 2007, 117-118).

Michelle Slone carried out an experiment in Israel, where she exposed participants from different groups in society to television news clips of either terrorism and threats to national security, or of other events, not related to terrorism. A significant relation between watching terrorism related news footage and a heightened state of anxiety was found. This experiment researched immediate impact only, and did not consider the longer term effects (Slone 2000). These longer term effects were researched, for instance, in a study to the effects of the Oklahoma bombing on children living 100 miles away from Oklahoma. The start of the research project, two years after the attack, coincided with the trial against Timothy McVeigh, who carried it out. Many children who only knew about the attack from the media (and did not have any relatives or acquaintances who were involved) still suffered from post-traumatic stress symptoms. In addition, this study found that print media have more influence than broadcast media (Pfefferbaum et al. 2003). At the same time, several other studies found the contrary, namely that broadcast media have a

larger impact on the public than newspapers in "dramatic" and "short-term" events such as terrorism (See for instance Leff, Protess, and Brooks 1986).

It is important to keep a dissenting argument in mind. Although most literature focuses on how media coverage of terrorist incidents helps terrorists frighten people and thus bring their goals closer, there are some authors that focus on the other side of the coin as well, and argue that media attention does not necessarily lead to an environment that is more advantageous for terrorists. For instance, Brian Jenkins wrote that terrorists "obtain much publicity through the news media, but not the propaganda they usually want." (Jenkins 1981, 3). Paul Wilkinson adds that the "terrorist believes in the ultimate inevitability of a collapse of will on the part of the adversary. Even on the face of it this is a somewhat naïve assumption. Why should people subjected to threats behave with such docility and weakness?" (Wilkinson 2006, 152). Finally, Bruce Hoffman mentions: "While most terrorists certainly crave the attention that the media eagerly provide, the publicity that they receive cuts both ways. (…) [T]he public attitudes and reactions that they hope to shape by their violent actions are both less predictable and less malleable than either the terrorists or the pundits believe." (Hoffman 2006, 188).

Hoffman can find only one clear impact on the public resulting from media coverage on terrorism: a reduced willingness to travel by airplane. For instance, in December 1988 the Lockerbie terrorist attack was carried out. The next year statistical data showed that "an American was just as likely to be killed by a dog as by a terrorist (…) yet nearly a third of those surveyed that year stated that they would refuse the opportunity to travel abroad because of the threat of terrorism." Hoffman then dryly notes that "[t]here is no statistical evidence whether an identical percentage had similarly concluded that it was now equally dangerous to keep dogs as pets." (Ibid., 189-190). John Mueller adds to this, that "fear can be very costly" proving this by a research project that found "a notable uptick in U.S. traffic fatalities (more than 1,000) in the three months following 9/11, as more Americans – out of fear of flying – traveled in automobiles rather than airplanes." (Mueller 2007, 30).

In short, previous research suggests that there is some sort of relationship between media attention and the public threat perception, although they often disagree and find it hard to pinpoint the exact variables. The amount of media attention may not be the only factor, or even the most important one. Intervening variables may be involved that intensify the effects. Examples are

the sort of media outlet and the news source. At the same time media attention to terrorism may not change public opinion favorably from a terrorist point of view, it may also turn out to be counterproductive for them.

2.1.2 TTSRL Research

Since the previous section shows that there is little agreement on the actual substance of the effects of the relationship between the media and terrorism, an analysis is made here as to whether the relative volume of articles on terrorism is linked to the threat perception of the public in the European Union. For this, extensive use is made of the *Eurobarometer* opinion polls taken biannually (in spring and in fall) by the European Union.[17] One of the questions this poll has been asking from its respondents is: "What do you think are the two most important issues facing [your country] at the moment?"[18] The respondents are only asked about their own country: for instance in Spain the question is about issues in Spain, and it does not apply to Europe or the world as a whole.
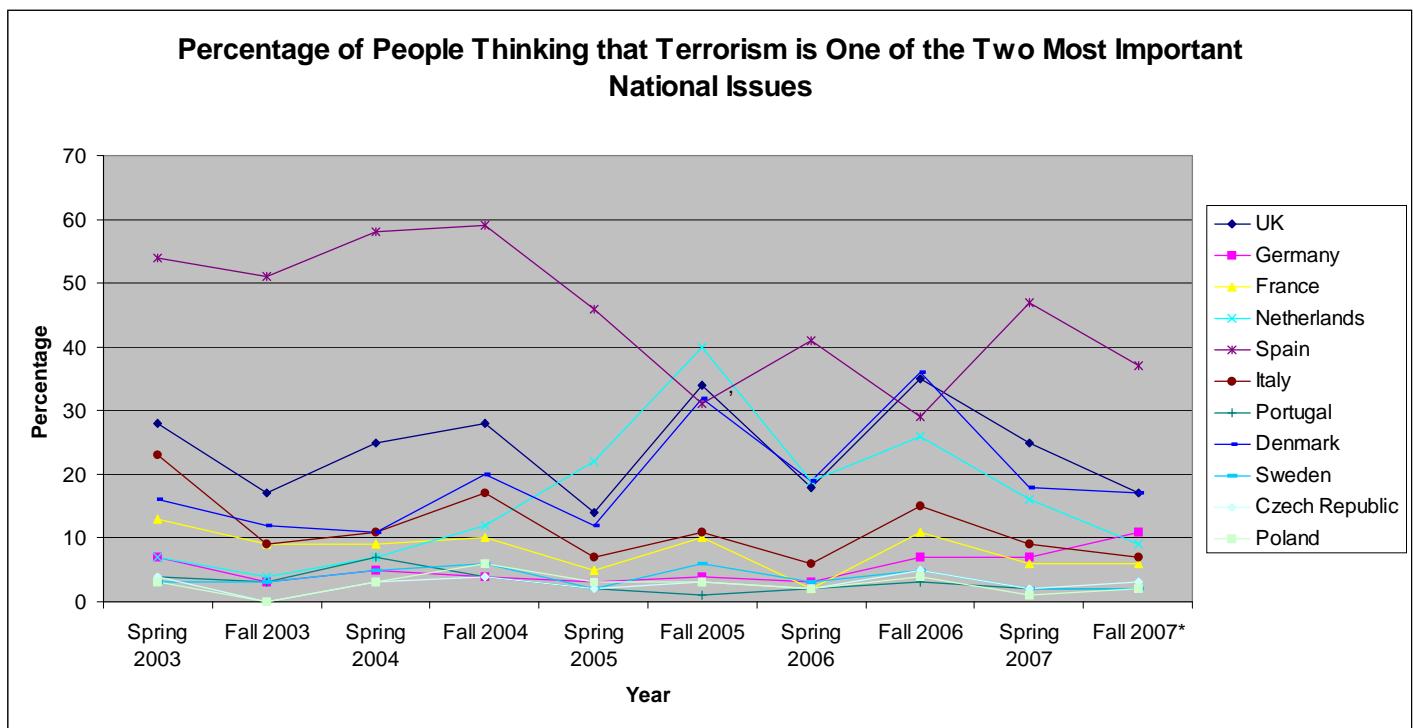
Graph 1: Perception of Terrorism as First or Second Most Important Issue

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[17] See online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm. We have used the "Standard Eurobarometer" results. This question was asked in this format starting in spring 2003. For methodology of the Eurobarometer please see the website as well.
[18] The categories are: Crime, Public transport, Economic situation, Rising prices\ inflation, Taxation, Unemployment, Terrorism, Defence/Foreign affairs, Housing, Immigration, Healthcare system, The educational system, Pensions, Protecting the environment, Other, Don't Know.

Graph 1 shows the percentage of people in each country that thinks terrorism is one of the two most important issues for the member state they live in.

It is difficult to prove that fluctuations in these graphs can be linked to media coverage of terrorist activities, or to other, personal or national factors. Still, if the graph is explained by such experiences only, several questions can be raised. For example, there is a clear peak in most graphs in fall 2005, just after the London attacks. This may be understandable for the United Kingdom, but why do France, the Netherlands, and Denmark have a similar peak? And if the fear for terrorism rises world-wide, or at least continent-wide, then how can the dips, or at least the absence of peaks in the same period for countries such as Portugal and Spain be explained? Different explanations may be part of the answer. The significance of terrorism in the media could be one of them.

To see if this is the case, the lines in Graph 1 will be isolated for each country, and then compared to the salience of terrorism in the media of that country. In order to do this, the media database *Factiva* is used. Much like elsewhere in this project,[19] for each country the number of articles that contain the word "terrorism" (translated into the respective language) is divided by the total number of articles, in order to calculate the salience of terrorism in the press. Although this does not say anything about the way terrorism is presented, and thus, nothing can be said about framing, it does give a hint as to the agenda-setting aspects: if from one year to the next the relative number of articles on terrorism increases, the concept is more salient, and thus, so we assume, a larger part of the day-to-day life.

Since obviously the media outlets that are analyzed per country are different for each member state,[20] no direct comparison can be made for salience of terrorism between countries. However, within each country a trend is visible over the years that will be used for this analysis. It is good to note that in this chapter[21] the analysis of salience of terrorism in the media is made on the basis of six month periods, instead of full years. This is done to better correspond to the Eurobarometer results, that are held twice per year, as mentioned above. In this regard it is also important to note the following. Since the Eurobarometer polls are not held on one and the same day each spring and fall, and in each country, but spread over several months, it is impossible to exactly match the

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[19] See TTSRL Deliverable 2 (Workpackage 2)
[20] For instance, *Factiva* may contain a higher number of journals on agriculture in one country, as well as a lower number of political media, than in another country.
[21] Contrary to the analysis in TTSRL Deliverable 2

two sources. The salience of terrorism was calculated for each year in the periods between January 1st and June 30th ("spring" results) and July 1st and December 31st ("fall" results). This may lead to a delay in results for one of the graph lines.[22]

This research should give an impression as to whether there is a direct relation between salience of terrorism in the media and public threat perception. In addition, an attempt will be made to see if there are more independent variables or intervening variables that may influence the link between two variables. This will be done by analyzing the importance (semantic weight) of the concepts in those articles on terrorism. In order to research these factors, TTSRL uses the PARANOID research program for data retrieval and analysis.[23] Unfortunately, we were unable to distill the PARANOID results on the semantic weight of words per six months, therefore these results are per year. Still, this may help in explaining some of the results in the graphs that follow in the next sections.

In the PARANOID analysis, that is better able to see if, next to agenda setting, framing plays an important role in creating fear among the public, a focus will be on the difference between terrorism related to the own country, and terrorism related to other countries, such as Iraq. The hypothesis here is, that a frame of terrorism in one's own country will be more effective in creating fear than a frame of terrorism aimed at other countries or groups. Therefore, if the hypothesis is correct, years in which the "internal" terrorism frame is more prominent should show a clearer similarity in graphs than those in which the "external" terrorism frame is emphasized.

2.1.3 TTSRL Results

Our research confirms Brigitte Nacos's conclusion that the mere volume of terrorism related media attention is not necessarily directly related to the public consideration of terrorism as a problem. Annex 1 contains graphs for 11 European sample countries, with the threat perception as measured by the

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[22] For example, if in one country a terrorist incident would happen on May 30, and the Eurobarometer polls for that year were held on May 13 to 15, then all the articles the media writes in the month directly following the incident would be part of the "spring" section of that year, but the results of the media attention for threat perception would only become visible in fall.
[23] Deliverable 2 of the TTSRL research project explains the advantages and disadvantages of both Factiva and of PARANOID program in depth. These will, therefore, be omitted here.

Eurobarometer as well as the salience of terrorism as measured by TTSRL research along the lines described above.

The graphs of several countries show that the extent of coverage on terrorism is not always a determining factor in creating awareness or even fear among the population. For instance, in Poland, in spring 2004 and fall 2005 media coverage increases significantly, but threat perception stays at the same level. In France, starting fall 2005, media attention steadily decreases, but threat perception shows a high peak in fall 2006. The Netherlands has four out of nine sections of the graph that show contrary movement for threat perception and media attention. In fact, for each country, with the exception of Italy, at least one, but more often two or more, of the data points follow a contradictory trend: media attention goes up and threat perception goes down or the other way around. Where the trends do match, it often happens that a high peak in media perception on one occasion leads to a small peak in threat perception, and then later a very small peak in media attention occurs along with a high peak in threat perception.

Therefore, despite the fact that some of the graphs at certain stages show remarkable uniformity between the lines, which may mean that in some cases there is a link between media attention and threat perception, this link would – at best – be indirect or very weak. Although the concept of agenda setting is not completely invalidated with this research, it should be clear that it is definitely not the only factor playing a role in determining the extent of anxiety among people when it comes to terrorism. Without one or more additional variables, and while keeping in mind the delimitations of this research, there is no compelling reason to believe that there is a link between media reporting on terrorism and public threat perception. In the research projects quoted above it is often the goal to find that extra variable: researchers came up with such variables as the authority of the source, the media outlet, or direct results versus longer term effects. For this research, an examination has been made of the graphs and additional PARANOID information, to see whether a variable can be found that explains the fact that sometimes the lines are very similar whereas at other times they are contrary to the expectations. Since there is no space for an analysis of each and every sample country in this study, a case study is used and extensively described, to illustrate the system used here. After this some conclusions can be generated for that case study as well as for the other sample countries. The sample country used here as a case study is the Netherlands.
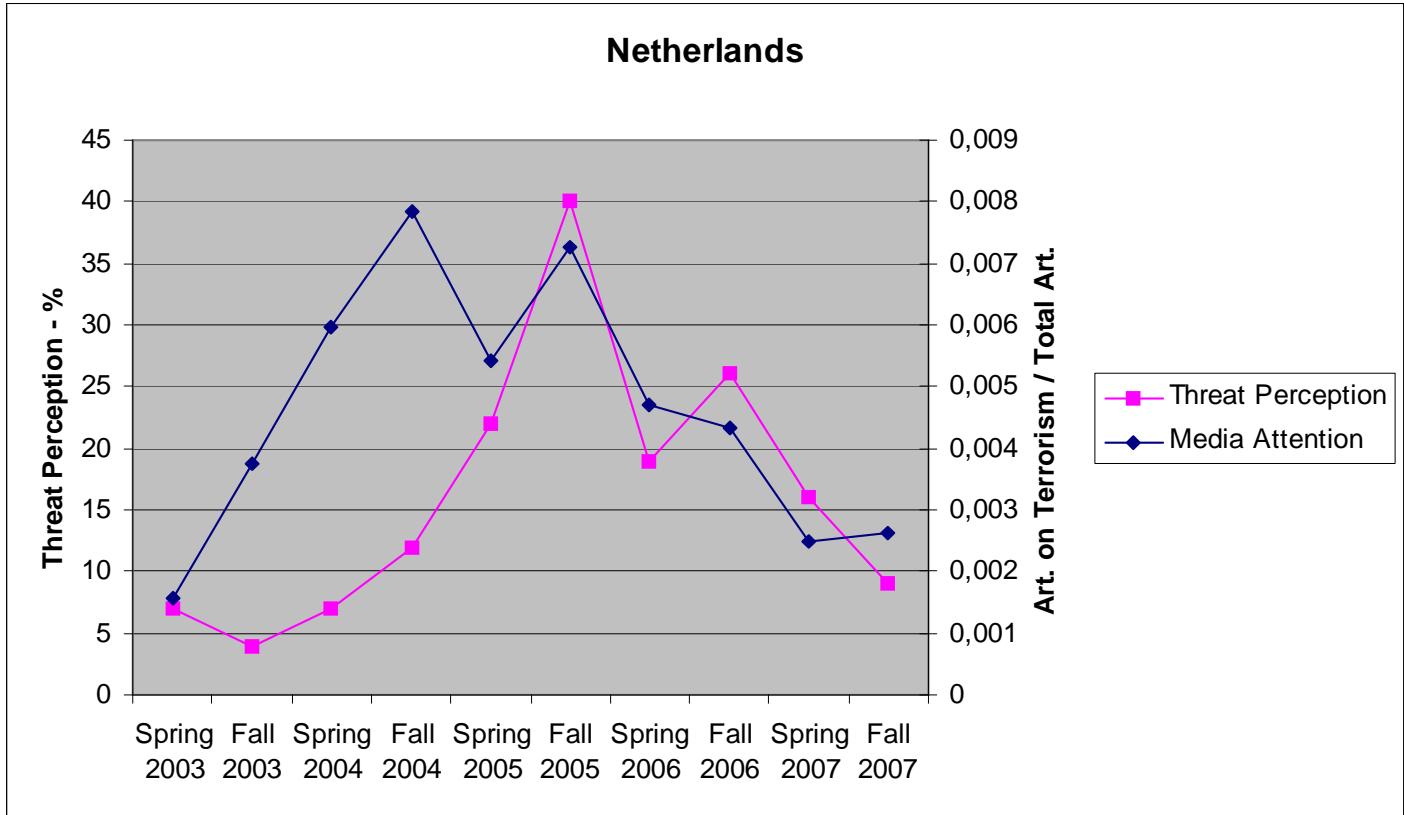
Graph 2: Threat Perception and Media Attention in the Netherlands

For the Netherlands, a rise in both media attention and threat perception are visible in the first half of the graph (see Graph 2), and then they both decrease. At a first glance, therefore, the lines in the graph seem to resemble each other quite well, which would indicate a relation between media attention and threat perception. Still, as mentioned earlier, there are several parts of the graph that do not correspond.

A few factors in the graph are very striking. Firstly, in 2003 and 2004 the number of articles on terrorism rises quickly. Threat perception, however, goes down first, then starts to rise, relatively slowly. Only after the fall of 2004, right after the assassination of Theo van Gogh on November 2nd, 2004, does threat perception start to rise very quickly. At that time, however, the relative number of articles on terrorism goes down, despite the assassination of Van Gogh.

Another striking element is, that if a delay is calculated into the effects of the media attention, the lines do correspond much better: if the threat perception line is moved to the left by two periods (which constitutes one year) it corresponds very well to the media attention line. The graph that would come into existence then can be seen in Graph 3. Although this is not a scientifically

relevant graph, it does give a good idea of how the two lines would correspond with a year delay.

However, if indeed media attention would take a year to penetrate the human mind, it would mean that people have a collective memory that crosses the span of a year. In other words, when

Graph 3: Media attention vs. threat perception with a delay of one year.

people read about a terrorist attack or event, they would not worry until a year later, when there may be much less attention in the media for the phenomenon. In addition, if they do not hear much they will still worry for another year, after which their worries disappear. It seems unlikely that people would not react immediately, but that it would take exactly a year for either the presence or the absence of information to sink in. Nevertheless, this is a possibility. However, the fact that such a delay is not found in any of the other member states, reinforces the idea that there is no delayed link. These arguments do not entirely disprove the theory that a delay exists or that it is part of the explanation for the Netherlands, but it does prove that the theory is not a valid one for media influence in general. Since there is no reason to believe that the Dutch public handles media information differently, the uniformity of the graphs if a year's delay is taken into account is probably coincidental.

Back to the analysis of Graph 2 then. A second explanation for the non-correspondence of the two lines in the graph may be found in the relative importance of concepts in the years that were

2003	2004	2005	2006
CDA*	(basket1)***	(basket1)***	Netherlands
Iraq	Netherlands	Netherlands	(basket1)***
Netherlands	people	terrorism	American
American	terrorism	European	Dutch
Bush	yesterday	people	terrorism
Fortuyn	American	yesterday	people
The Hague	Dutch	other	minister
Hillen**	Iraq	minister	Bush
percent	Bush	American	other
people	President	Dutch	yesterday

Table 5: Top 10 of words: highest semantic weight.

* CDA – Christian political party, coalition leader.
** Hillen – Hans Hillen, CDA parliamentarian
*** Basket1 is a combination of the words: Muslim, Islam, Islamist and Islamism

analyzed. Using a PARANOID analysis on the semantic weight of words in the analyzed years, we have researched what the most important words are in terrorism related articles. Table 5 shows the translated results of this analysis.[24] For each year the ten most important words are mentioned, with the first word mentioned for each year being the most important, and the last being the least important of the top ten.

Table 5 may give an explanation for the odd fall in media attention for terrorism just after Van Gogh's assassination. Van Gogh's name does not come up in PARANOID results as significant in articles on terrorism. In fact, not only does his name not show up in the top ten, it actually does not turn up even in the top 500 of most important words in articles on terrorism. This may indicate that the media did not link this event to "terrorism", but rather to other concepts such as radicalization, Islamism, immigration and integration, or others. The public, however, may have made this link by itself, and thus developed a heightened threat perception despite the relatively lower amount of articles on terrorism. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for us to research this more in depth.

In 2003 a clear emphasis on the war in Iraq that started in March is visible, with Iraq, America, Bush, and the leading Dutch coalition partner CDA that supported the war being important in the media attention on terrorism. In 2004 Iraq is still an important part of the discussion on terrorism, but in 2005 and 2006 this is clearly less, although "American" is still important, especially in 2006. In addition, Pim Fortuyn's assassination by an environmentalist in 2002 is, in 2003, still an important part of the discourse on terrorism in the Netherlands.

Starting in 2004, "basket1", a combination of the words Muslim, Islam, Islamist, and Islamism becomes very prominent, as does "the Netherlands" itself, that rises from a third place in 2003 to the most important word in 2006. Although this is not a very clear trend, it seems that over the years, more emphasis is put on the domestic version of terrorism – in other words, terrorism as a threat to the homeland – with a special focus on Islamist terrorist activity.

This shift from a focus on "far-away" terrorism to "nearby" terrorism may be part of an explanation as to why the threat perception line and the media attention line both show similar peaks and dips after spring 2004. The theory would then be, that if people hear much about terrorism in their own country they may consider this a bigger problem than when they hear about attacks in

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[24] The original table, as well as tables for other member states can be found in Annex 1.

Iraq or elsewhere. At the same time, when this attention subsides, the threat perception will go down quickly as well, because people are not reminded of the supposed danger anymore.

Still, even after spring 2004, there are two points where the lines differ significantly. In the period between spring 2006 and fall 2006 media attention decreases, whereas threat perception rises. Between spring 2007 and fall 2007 it is the inverse. No good explanation can be given based on the results presented here.

Other member states have a similar move from external to internal terrorism.[25] The media in the United Kingdom, for instance, put much emphasis on the troubles in Northern Ireland until 2000. Then in 2001, the emphasis shifts to the American "Global War on Terrorism", with words like Afghanistan, war, September, and Bin Laden showing up. In 2002 and 2003 Iraq gets a more prominent role, as does Bush. Then, starting in 2004, Afghanistan and Iraq are pushed away, and domestic homeland security terms such as "police", "security", "Britain", and "British" become more important. In 2005 and 2006, after the London attacks, this trend continues, and of course terms like "London" and "Blair" rise to the top, together with basket1, the combination of the terms "Muslim", "Islam", "Islamist", and "Islamism". In short, here too, there is a gradual shift from external to internal terrorism. Still, much like for the Netherlands, the graph for the United Kingdom does not show a remarkable improvement in how the two lines correspond to each other.

France generally shows a higher focus on internal matters. Only in 2001 and 2003 are other countries more important than France itself in articles related to terrorism (in 2001 the United States and Afghanistan and in 2003 Iraq). For all of the years, "France" or "French" are among the most important terms. Despite this, the graph of France does not show that media attention and threat perception are more clearly linked than for other countries.

Other countries such as Germany, often show a situation similar to that in the Netherlands and Britain: a shift from terrorism abroad, in Afghanistan and Iraq, with political analyses about the United States and its policies, to a more domestic approach, often focusing on Islamist terrorism. In these countries, too, the changing media approach does not seem to be linked to a closer relationship between media attention and public threat perception. A clear exception is Spain,

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[25] Annex 1 shows the media attention and threat perception graphs as well as the top 10 tables for every researched member state.

where the main focused   is on domestic terrorism, notably the ETA. It is noteworthy that on average, threat perception is much higher in Spain than in other European countries, as can be seen in Graph 1. In Spain too, however, no clear link can be found between the two variables researched here.

This must lead to the conclusion that even though there are many instances in which media attention and threat perception follow similar short-term trends, there is no evidence that the two are actually linked without intervening variables. In addition, there is no evidence proving that media attention with a focus on terrorism close to home has more impact than that focusing on terrorism far away in other countries. Other factors that cannot be analyzed with PARANOID may be just as important or even more so.

That, obviously, is an unsatisfying conclusion. Especially since some of the sections in the graphs do give the impression that there may be a connection after all. Moreover, the metaphor of the tree falling in the forest mentioned above is true in the sense that without the media, terrorism would be confined to a very small group of people that see it, and fear it. Media do spread the word. So if people fear it, it is a result of media coverage, since without it they would not have heard from it. Still, perhaps that is the extent of it. A good question is whether a different approach by the media would change the public perception. This is subject of chapter 3.

Future research is necessary to confirm or invalidate the ideas mentioned in section 2.1.1 in a European context, and search for alternative explanations. Does the authority of the news source matter? Is there a difference between television, newspapers, and Internet? Is there a difference between long term and short term effects? Does a threshold exist, or in other words, do people only react when a certain amount of media attention is brought? Or perhaps a ceiling exists, leading to a situation in which additional media attention does not lead to more fear? Maybe instead of a formula with media attention being the independent variable and threat perception the dependent variable, a formula exists that has another independent variable, influencing both media attention and threat perception, perhaps with intervening variables to more specifically determine the outcome for each? If so, the challenge is to find that independent variable, along with those possible intervening variables.

If a link between media attention and public threat perception exists, it is important to find it. Only then can media or governments effectively counter the impact. So far, in this context it has not been proven that a link exists. However,

the research given here does not exclude a link either, although a direct relationship seems very unlikely. In the next section the impact of terrorism on the government will be examined more closely.

2.2 The Government; Policy Changes?

Even if a link between media attention for terrorist activity and a changed threat perception among the public cannot be proven, it is still possible that the government is influenced by media reporting on terrorism. Since the ultimate goal of terrorists is political change, an impact of terrorism related news on policy could be a dangerous phenomenon.

A well known media theory that has not been discussed so far, but is relevant for this chapter, is the so-called "CNN effect". Diana Owen describes the CNN effect as a "catch-all phrase describing the global mass media's ability to leverage the conduct of (…) diplomacy and foreign policy (…) The 'CNN effect' implies a loss of policymaking control on the part of decision makers because of the power and immediacy of press reports." (Owen 2003, 242). Although Owen mainly focuses on the United States, a parallel can obviously be made with Europe, although perhaps the equivalent for European diplomacy and foreign policy would be more appropriately called BBC effect (or any other European day and night news channel). Nevertheless, here the commonly used "CNN effect" will be employed.

Steven Livingston, one of the main researchers on this subject, distinguishes three aspects of the CNN Effect. Firstly the CNN effect entails "a policy agenda setting agent", secondly "an impediment to the achievement of desired policy goals", and thirdly "an accelerant to policy decision making." (Livingston 1997, 2). The agenda setting part has been discussed in the previous section, with the additional note that emotional and compelling coverage can reorder foreign policy priorities for governments. For instance, when an American soldier was killed and dragged through the streets in Somalia, pressure to withdraw the US troops from the country mounted. Eventually this pressure turned out to be successful (Hoffman 2006, 192). The equivalent with terrorism is the call to "do something" after gruesome images of a terrorist attack have been aired.

The impediment to the achievement of desired policy goals would be, according to Livingston, media coverage leads to a loss of morale after gruesome images or live coverage poses a threat to operational security. This part of the CNN effect is not very relevant for the terrorism debate, although there are some operational activities that may be hampered by the media. An example is the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner that landed in Cyprus. International media was located all around the aircraft with infrared equipment, so that even at night the decision to carry out a rescue operation could not be made, since its execution would be given away immediately. (Wilkinson 2006, 151). Several other examples of rescue missions that went wrong because of media coverage are known (Cohen-Almagor 2005). Another example would go a little beyond the scope of this paper, into the greater "Global War On Terrorism": European support for the mission in Afghanistan declined rapidly after the invasion. A European diplomat was convinced there was one main reason for this: "The main reason is the 'CNN Effect.' On the European television screens you see the collateral damage, the humanitarian crisis that some people relate to American bombings." (Owen 2003, 243).

The last aspect of the CNN effect is the accelerant effect. This deals with the reduction of reaction time for politicians. According to the theory, almost no time for consideration, deliberation, or secret agreements exists anymore, because once a story is out, a politician must react soon, especially when there are shocking images involved. This may increase the chances for hasty and sloppy decision making (Livingston 1997, 2-10). The quick announcement by the Aznar government right after the Madrid attacks in 2004 that ETA carried out those attacks may be an example of such hasty communication.

Except for the examples mentioned above, there are several others that seem to indicate that media behavior concerning terrorism can indeed influence policy making. A good example is the hijacking of the TWA flight and the ensuing events in Beirut. Journalist interviewed family members, and the focus on human interest and drama led to a remarkable increase in public pressure to give in to demands of the terrorists. American Congressman Tom Lantos said that "focusing on individual tragedies, interviewing the families of people in anguish, in horror, in nightmare, completely debilitates national policymakers from making rational decisions in the national interest." (Hoffman 2006, 175). Other academicians and politicians such as Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski agree: "the febrile television coverage afforded to hijackings and hostage

situations involving American citizens complicates and undermines governmental efforts to obtain their release." (Ibid., See also: Wilkinson 2006, 150).

In fact, politicians and high-ranking officials themselves state that they are influenced by the media, and that they use it as an important source for policy. For instance, already in the 1980s did the American Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense mention that the media was their best source of intelligence. A National Security Council aide once said that "CNN runs ten minutes ahead of NSA [National Security Agency]." (Both quoted in Hoffman 2006, 191). If this is so important, it is likely, although obviously not proven, that politicians use media coverage of terrorism as at least one of the foundations of their policy making.

Despite the fact that these examples show that government behavior may be affected by media coverage of terrorism, the situation is not as clear-cut as it may seem from some statements. As was the case for the effect of media coverage on public opinion, it is hard to prove that the effects on policy are actually the result of media coverage, and not of other factors. Owen notes: "There is little consensus about the scope, significance, and implications of the 'CNN effect,' or even about whether it actually exists. It is clear that there is no simple cause-and-effect relationship at work. Media coverage is but one factor of many that can influence foreign policy." (Owen 2003, 242). In one case there may seem to be a direct link, while in another situation there is no observable relation between media attention and government actions. Owen mentions that "scholarly investigations increasingly reveal that the 'CNN effect' rarely undermines policymakers' objectives." Additionally, media do not force leaders to make decisions, or actually control the foreign policy agenda (Ibid., 244).

In addition, there is another side to the government being influenced by media reporting on terrorism. The relationship is not a one-way street. Media reporting on terrorism is used extensively by governments to enhance, explain, or propagate their own counter-terrorism efforts. An example is the continuing efforts by the Bush administration to link Iraq to terrorism and 9/11 before the invasion (Ibid.). David Domke describes, together with several other authors, the efforts of the Bush administration to push through anti-terrorism legislation just after 9/11. An important part of Bush's strategy was to use the media for explaining why such legislation would prevent new 9/11s (Domke et al. 2006). In fact, there are reports about misinformation being leaked to the press by governments, in order to mislead and confuse people (See for instance Owen

2003, 241). In the United States, the "Office of Strategic Influence" was established soon after 9/11. According to the *New York Times* this was done in order to provide propaganda to the foreign press in the public relations war linked to the "Global War on Terrorism" (Stewart and Marlin 2004).

Although the actual usefulness from a counterterrorism standpoint of this legislation or a war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq is massively questioned and debated, the American government did use the mediated attacks to push the decisions through. At least from the point of view of the Bush administration, but apparently from that of many others including his political opponents as well, the legislation would help to reduce the chance of another major terrorist attack. From that point of view, media attention for terrorism helps counterterrorism agencies, instead of helping terrorists. And, of course, this is not limited to the United States. In Europe as well did many governments introduce new, often stricter, legislation after 9/11, and after the attacks of for instance Madrid and London.[26] This notion is confirmed, for instance, by Paul Wilkinson, who writes that not only "do terrorists frequently score an 'own goal', they also often succeed in hardening society's resistance towards them, and in provoking tougher, more effective counter-measures of a kind that may decimate or permanently debilitate their revolutionary movement." (Wilkinson 2006, 152).

To sum up this section, the theory of the CNN effect is an important one that may explain how media coverage influences policy making. However, much like in the previous section for public opinion, a relationship between media coverage on terrorism and policy change that suits terrorists is hard to prove. It can be said that among most authors and even policymakers themselves there is a tendency to believe that the latter are using the media as an important source to base their policies on, also when it relates to terrorism. At the same time, the media is used by them to be able to implement policies geared at countering terrorism. Therefore, media attention for terrorism may just as well backfire and be harmful from a terrorist point of view.

2.3 Effects of Direct Terrorist Use of the Media

"[T]he world has changed in the last two decades. Our world has become increasingly globalised and so has international terrorism. In today's world, the

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[26] More information on this can be found in TTSRL Deliverable 4 (WP3).

media play an extremely important role and the world's leading newspapers are read all over the planet, both as the printed edition and the online edition. Therefore, the possibility of gaining media attention can trigger terrorism more than ever." (Frey and Rohner 2007, 140). An important part of the globalization of the media and terrorism as noted here by Frey and Rohner can be dedicated to the Internet. And indeed, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the Internet, together with other forms of "direct media" such as terrorist satellite television, has become an important part of terrorist activity.

In fact, Spanish journalist Jose Maria Irujo believes that: "the main tool that radical Islam is using to spread its ideas, its propaganda, and to recruit, has nothing to do with traditional newspapers (…) or traditional radio or television media. The main tool these groups use is the Internet. It's the dozens of pages on the Web in far away countries that they're using to win over new followers, to raise finance, to spread their ideas or recruit militants. In Spain, the police have already detected more than 5000 web pages which are being used to this end."[27] Although probably underestimating the role of traditional newspapers, other researchers confirm his idea that the Internet is becoming an important tool for terrorists (See for instance Weimann 2004; Murphy 2006; Labi 2006).

The effects of the use of the Internet as a direct medium are troubling. Arguably the first terrorist organization to use the Internet was the EZLN, better known as the Zapatistas, from Mexico. What started as a very small insurgency in the Mexican countryside, turned out to become a major problem for the Mexican government once it became clear that the information reached throughout the world over the Internet, forcing the government into a truce with the organization. The Mexican Foreign Minister declared: "The shots lasted ten days and ever since the war has been a war of ink, of written word, a war on the Internet." (Quoted in Hoffman 2006, 204). Although other reasons may exist as well, the relative success of the insurgency can be at least partly ascribed to the Internet.

Europol states in its trend report 2008, that the "increasingly sophisticated methods of promoting this agenda [of calling on people to join in the *jihad*], in particular using the Internet and other electronic media, have been identified as factors contributing to the increasing number of Islamist terrorists." (Europol 2008, 22). In fact, in order to increase the effects, al-Qaida has started an Internet media offensive in 2007, translating these messages into European

languages (Ibid., 26). And Americans seem to agree with their European colleagues. In a 2006 National Intelligence Estimate, the American Office of the Director of National Intelligence states that "[t]he radicalization process is occurring more quickly, more widely, and more anonymously in the Internet age, raising the likelihood of surprise attacks by unknown groups whose members and supporters may be difficult to pinpoint." (Office of DNI 2006). The Dutch intelligence agency AIVD notes that the anonymity as well as the option to stay at home makes it easier for otherwise unlikely suspects to radicalize. In 2007, for instance, a clear rise in the number of women that participated in spreading radical material over the Internet (AIVD 2008, 46-47). In short: the Internet is widely believed to amplify radicalization, both by intelligence agencies and academic researchers.

Akil Awan confirms this, saying that the Madrid bombers are thought to have been influenced by a text on the Internet that stated that Spain would retreat from Iraq if strategic bombing of trains would be carried out. In addition, one of the defendants in the London bombing case said that his group often watched online videos of the war in Iraq, and that they used the Internet to get information on the *jihad*. At the same time, Awan states that it is hard to estimate the exact influence of these websites in the radicalization process and in the eventual decision to carry out an attack (Awan 2007, 400-401). It seems likely that without the Internet the attacks would have been carried out as well, but this is a question that is all but impossible to answer.

Maura Conway describes how terrorists send out information that is relevant for carrying out attacks. Thus, they make it easier for others to execute terrorist acts. For instance, in 1999, a British right-wing extremist killed several people in three bomb attacks in London. At his trial he admitted that he had downloaded several terrorist handbooks and manuals from the Internet (Conway 2006, 292). Although terrorists could get their information from other places, the fact that other terrorists use the Internet to "broadcast" this information makes it much easier to get, and much harder for authorities to catch those that would want to use it for terrorist activities (Weimann 2004, 9-10).

Not only the Internet is effective in achieving objectives set by terrorists. Terrorist television has proven its effectiveness from a terrorist's perspective as well. For instance, al-Manar, Hezbollah's channel, succeeded in introducing Jerusalem Day in Europe, as mentioned above, and in getting thousands of

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[27] Jose Maria Irujo, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Madrid, March 3, 2008

people throughout Europe – not just Lebanon or the Middle East – to rise in protest. Avi Jorisch implies that al-Manar's "fillers" (music videos between the regular programming) that, so he claims, call on people to carry out attacks against Israel and the West, are actually successful: "The effect of such programming should not be underestimated. For example, it was widely reported in April 2002 that Ayat al-Akhras, a Palestinian female suicide bomber, watched al-Manar incessantly before she committed her attack." (Jorisch 2004). Of course, this is not a smoking gun or hard evidence for the influence of satellite television on radicalization. Further research is necessary to find out what the exact effects are. Again, this is a difficult task, since people are not willing to speak freely on their radicalization processes. If such research can be carried out successfully, it could be an important step in better understanding the link between terrorism and the media.

In sum, it can be said that, unlike for the "old" media, where, as we have seen, a direct link between terrorism and the media is hard to prove and authors disagree on the issue, the situation is somewhat different for "new" media. Carrying out extensive statistical research on this issue is hard, but would be an important next step in understanding the phenomenon. Nevertheless, most authors agree that media controlled directly by terrorists, such as Internet websites and satellite television, have important effects, especially in radicalization and recruitment, but also in increasing terrorist capabilities by handing information on how to act or create weapons.

2.4 Media Impact on Terrorists?

In the first section of this chapter, the effect of media terrorism coverage on the general public has been analyzed. Here, a closer look will be taken on a tiny, but important, section of that public, that of terrorists themselves. In relation to this, this section will provide a discussion on the media effect on radicalizing people; those that may be on their way to become terrorists. Are the efforts by terrorists to subvert people and win them over for their cause by using the media successful?

Rohner and Frey note that "[t]here is a common-interest-game, whereby both the media and terrorists benefit from terrorist incidents and where both parties adjust their actions according to the actions of the other player." (Frey

and Rohner 2007, 142). In other words, they claim that more terrorism leads to more media coverage on the subject, and that the converse is true as well: more media coverage on terrorism leads to more terrorist activity.

As mentioned before, Rohner and Frey believe that media reporting and characteristics have an impact on terrorist behavior, using the example of attacks in Africa. They expected terrorist attacks in that continent to be bloodier, since this is needed for terrorists to reach global media. According to their research, this turns out to be true: on average terrorist attacks in Africa claim more lives than in any other continent (Ibid., 141). However, attacks in Africa being bloodier could very well have a number of other reasons, and is not necessarily linked to terrorist media strategy. Media strategy could be one of the reasons, but this is not persuasively proven.

Another researcher, Ayla Schbley, attempts to explain the role of al-Manar in aggravating terrorism. Schbley interviewed over 2,000 Arab and Muslim demonstrators in European cities on what Hezbollah has dubbed "Jerusalem Day", a day to demonstrate against Israel and the United States. Although not all of these people are highly radicalized, according to Schbley a large part had a certain propensity to violence. In addition, much of their information came from the media. Obviously, al-Manar was an important source for the people, but American and, to a lesser extent, European media were so too (Schbley 2004).

Many of the interviewees reported that they got ideas on how to carry out attacks by looking at the media. Answers they gave to the open question what they may have "learned" by watching the media were, for instance, how to carry out attacks, what Americans fear, how to enter the United States, or that nuclear plants in the United States are vulnerable (Ibid.).[28] Although this does not mean that they will actually carry out attacks with their newly gained knowledge, Schbley's research does seem to indicate that much can be learned from the media, and that these ideas can become a basis for attacks once the decision has been made to cross the threshold toward terrorism. If non-terrorists claim to have learned such things, then terrorists are likely to learn the same lessons – and apply them. Media may broadcast more relevant information than it is aware of. Of course this does not mean that they should not, since it may be an important part of the media's duty. This, however, is subject of the next chapter.

Learning from or copying previous terrorist attacks and the media coverage on them is not the only way media treatment of the subject may

influence terrorists. A second way is that it may increase recruitment among radicalizing people. This is strongly linked to the third objective that Nacos described, gaining respect and sympathy. Seeing the consequences of terrorist attacks on television and reading about them in the newspapers will disgust most people, even those that are in the process of radicalization. Nevertheless, a small percentage of people, perhaps only a handful, may agree with the ideas behind the attack, be in awe about the effects, and decide to do the same, cooperate with someone else doing so, or just support terrorists. A good example is the notion mentioned before that Bin Laden has now become very popular among certain groups in the Muslim world – as well as some radicalizing youngsters in Europe – by demonstrating that he was able to hit the United States.[29]

Although the little research that has been done to the effect of the media on terrorists gives the impression that there may be a link, no conclusive evidence has been given yet. Although we found it a subject worth mentioning here, our research has not focused on this subject either. Further research is necessary to gain more insight into the actual effects of media coverage on terrorists, although this may be hard to do, since it is difficult to poll terrorists or radicalizing people on such issues.

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[28] The questions asked are mentioned in the article as well.
[29] This deliverable is not about radicalization, and thus will not go into the details of the phenomenon. More on that subject for instance in Workpackage 4, Deliverable 7. See also the TTSRL contextual paper: *Causal Factors of Radicalization*. Online at:
http://www.transnationalterrorism.eu/tekst/publications/Causal%20Factors.pdf

3. Countering Terrorist Use of the Media

In the previous chapters it has become clear that a relationship between terrorism and the media exists, but that the effects of this relationship are in many cases subject to debate and uncertainty. This immediately leads to the rise of a discussion on whether measures must be taken to counter the relationship, and if so, how stringent these measures should be. In this chapter, an analysis will be presented of measures taken in the past, both by governments and by media themselves. In addition, we will discuss the experiences and ideas that journalists and experts on media and terrorism from throughout the European Union and the world have on this subject. The question whether the measures are useful or desirable will be discussed as well.

3.1 Breaking the Link

There are several ways in which governments in democratic societies may react to media coverage of terrorism. Wilkinson divides them into three main policy options (Wilkinson 2006, 154-157). The first is the policy of *laissez-faire*. This policy assumes that no specific steps should be taken concerning media coverage of terrorism at all, regardless of the situation or circumstances. Wilkinson suggests that this approach is likely to trigger more attacks which could endanger people's lives, saying that "[t]he dangers of this approach are fairly obvious: sophisticated and media-wise terrorist organisations will exploit the enormous power of the media to enhance their ability to create a climate of fear and disruption, to amplify their propaganda of the deed to publicise their cause or to force concessions of ransoms out of the government or out of companies or wealthy individuals." (Ibid., 155).

The second policy option is a form of *media censorship of statutory regulation*. Despite the fact that freedom of speech and political debate is at the very core of the concept of a democratic society, restrictions on the freedom of press and expression might appear as a necessary measure in the fight against terrorism. If the media refuse to cover acts of terrorism, ultimately terrorists will disappear, supporters of regulation measures argue.

Wilkinson points out that many responsible media organizations favor the third policy options, that he labels *voluntary self-restraint*. Numerous major

media organizations have adopted guidelines – often verbally and not in writ – on how to act and work in situations of crisis caused by terrorist acts, without these guidelines being imposed by a government.

Any attempt in the Western world to choose for Wilkinson's second policy option, and thus break or weaken the relationship between the media and terrorism through government action, is likely to cause debate, or even uproar. Nevertheless, it has often been tried, by several governments. To start outside of Europe, in the United States, the American government has attempted on several occasions to tell the media what to publish and what not. For example, shortly after the September 11 attacks, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage contacted the board of the Voice of America, a federally supported international station, and asked the executives not to air an interview with Taliban leader Mullah Omar. According to a State Department official: "Voice of America is not the Voice of Mullah Omar and not the Voice of the Taliban." Initially the board of Voice of America gave in and blocked the broadcast of the interview, but eventually, after heavy protests of the editors, the program was aired some days later (Washington Post 2001a). The incident provoked angry reactions by journalists and NGOs (See for instance National Writers Union [not dated]).

In another example, Condoleezza Rice and other officials from the US Administration asked major American television stations, just after 9/11, to stop airing Bin Laden messages, because they may incite violence against Americans, or even contain secret messages for sleeper cells. The television channels agreed. According to one media watchdog organization this was "a silky form of censorship" (BBC 2001). In fact, this was representative of the general atmosphere in the United States after 9/11. Commentator Michael Kinsley noted in an editorial in the Washington Post some months after the attacks that "[j]ournalists found it exceedingly difficult to challenge the government because the September attack was such a monstrous crime. Journalists who might be inclined to dissent feared the wrath of their readers and their editors and publishers, possibly leading to loss of their job. Such social pressures transformed White House requests into commands." (Graber 2003, 36).

A third example, getting closer to Europe, is the Russian effort to stop ABC from airing the aforementioned interview with Chechen terrorist leader Shamil Basayev. The Russians summoned the US embassy's deputy chief of mission (no ambassador was present at the time) and denied ABC access to its Defense

Ministry and other official sources. After previous interviews with British and Swedish channels, similar measures were taken by the Russians (Nacos 2006, 95; Abdullaev and McChesney [not dated]). Of course, these were censorship attempts by a foreign government, not by the government of the state itself. Internally, Russia has a notorious record of censoring events in Chechnya on its own news media (See for instance Weir 1999 and Lupis 2005).

In Europe, the best example to influence the media in this context is the situation in the United Kingdom in the 1970s, 80s and early 90s, when several efforts were made to prevent the BBC from airing interviews or statements from terrorists. For instance, in 1985, a documentary was canceled by the BBC board, after political pressure by Thatcher's government, because it contained an interview with an IRA leader. In fact, also before this, the British government had on several occasions threatened to sue the BBC under the so-called "Prevention of Terrorism Act". The government never actually prosecuted the BBC. Much like in the US, in many cases the threats or requests themselves turned out to be enough and the show in question was canceled, or internal controls were tightened. Although often BBC journalists protested, the board would not budge (Vieira 1991, 73-74, 79-81). John David Vieira notes on this that it "amounts to a de facto censorship of coverage of Northern Ireland" (Ibid., 81).

The British government, however, went further than this. In 1988 a ban was imposed on the broadcast of all interviews with terrorists and their supporters. This time, though, the BBC did not comply, at least to the spirit of the new ban. Indeed, the terrorists themselves did not appear on television, but if the BBC deemed it necessary to broadcast the terrorists' words, it hired actors to pose as terrorists, reading their statements (Ockrent 2006, 78; Hoffman 2006, 342n50). Although this more or less broke the British effort to keep the media on a tight leash in the 80s and early 90s, Ian Cram notes that even before 9/11 and the London attacks, the definition of terrorism within British law was expanded, which resulted in an even more stringent framework for media concerning terrorism coverage (Cram 2006, 339-340).

The United Kingdom is not the only European country in which the government attempted to pressure the media to change their reporting on terrorism. Former Spanish Prime Minister Aznar, who reportedly had never contacted the media himself during his term, suddenly called the high ranking media executives after the Madrid attacks, to tell them that ETA was responsible

for the attacks (Ibid., 337). Earlier, in 1998 and 2003, Spain forced two Basque newspapers and a radio station to close, supposedly because they assisted ETA (Ibid., 345).

In sum, there have been cases in which governments have used their influence to ban – or threaten a media outlet into not broadcasting – certain reporting on terrorism. In Western Europe, however, these generally seem to be the exception rather than the rule. TTSRL interviews with editors, journalists, and other media executives show, that none of them have been directly contacted by the government asking them to limit the possibility for terrorist organizations to use that respective media for conveying their messages, except for instance in hostage situations when lives where in direct danger. Although this does not mean that it never happens in Europe, it does give an indication that at least for the conventional media, it is not very common. The situation is slightly different for the new media, subject of discussion in a later section.

3.2 Are Measures Useful?

The question rises, whether censorship can be useful in the fight against terrorism. In other words, if the government succeeds in reducing the amount or character of media coverage on terrorism, would terrorist attacks lose some of their effects? First of all it is important to repeat last chapter's conclusion, that for regular media it is hard to pinpoint the exact effects, and that a lively discussion is going on about negative consequences of terrorism in the media. Still, in some cases it is possible to look at the intended effects of the measures taken, and at whether these intended effects were achieved. In other cases it is impossible to know whether a certain measure taken was successful in reducing the terrorist threat, or conversely, whether a measure that was not taken could have reduced the threat. Often the effectiveness of certain measures must be based upon inference and conjecture rather than undeniable facts.

Some authors and politicians definitely seem to think that imposing censorship will reduce the terrorist threat. For instance, in the late 1970s, academician Chalmers Johnson wrote that "[t]errorism can be suppressed through 'special powers,' but these inevitably entail a temporary curtailment or suspension of certain liberties. For example, censorship (…) may be necessary." (Quoted in: Hocking 1992, 92).

Although the BBC circumvented the Thatcher government's imposition of a ban on interviews with the IRA, the ban does seem to have had some effects. After 1988, the IRA was virtually excluded from media coverage in both Ireland and Britain. In March 1989 the Republican Press Center in Belfast reported that inquiries from broadcast journalists had dropped by 75 percent since the ban went into effect. In Sinn Féin's Political Report of 1991, there are numerous references to the party's need to redouble its publicity efforts and to counter its isolated status (Quoted in: Irvin 1992, 68).

A more general note is, that blocking information broadcast live during terrorist or counterterrorist operations can be useful. When terrorists see live images of police operations during a hostage-taking or terrorist attack, counterterrorism strategies can be hindered. Furthermore, media coverage during hostage situations or terrorist attacks can cause panic among the terrorists, so that they could react impulsively and, for instance, kill more people.

Despite these examples of effective media regulations, few think measures of censorship are really efficacious. Even for the British broadcast ban, the eventual results are contentious. Although there were many who believed that the British broadcast ban would stifle the IRA and therefore reduce the violence, there is no evidence that this was the case.

The case of the American government asking news organizations not to air Bin Laden tapes, and the compliance of those organizations, cannot be labeled incredibly effective either. After all, sleeper cells that may see hidden messages in the tapes could still see the videos on the Internet. In addition, incitement to violence would probably not be very effective among those watching only these large American channels. Those who may heed Bin Laden's calls and decide to cross the threshold to violence will probably use other media sources, if not exclusively then along with the American channels. Nevertheless, the entire atmosphere described above – in which American media did not dare to challenge the government – may have led to a climate in which it was easier for the government to take countermeasures, and consequently to a reduction of the terrorist threat. At the same time, this climate may have led to a situation in which it was easier for the American government to push through the war in Iraq, which in the long term may have led to radicalization and an increased threat of Islamist terrorism.

Aznar's attempt to convince the media that the Madrid attacks were carried out by ETA terrorists in fact turned out to be counterproductive for him.

Of course it is the question whether he carried out this action for counterterrorist purposes, but the event does show that attempts by governments to influence media coverage of terrorist events certainly do not always have the intended effects.

Therefore, a largely accepted argument is that censoring terrorist activity is not so effective in significantly reducing or even stopping terrorism. Robin Gerrits noted on the United Kingdom that Thatcher's media policy regarding the IRA may "indeed deprive the terrorists of an important instrument, but they will not be able to destroy thereby the political fanaticism that forms the basis of (armed) resistance." (Gerrits 1992, 60). He then paraphrases Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams, saying that "censorship alone will certainly not paralyze the movement" (Ibid.).

Several analysts and journalists take a next step, saying that certain censorship of terrorist activity may backfire, actually leading to a higher amount of violence. Political terrorists boycotted by the media might step up their level of violence until the media will cover their deeds. For instance, Schmid and De Graaf noted that "to advocate censorship of [terrorists'] expressions of violence is in a way advocating double censorship. Their terrorism was, in many cases, born out of a kind of censorship, a censorship not labeled as such but flowing from the restrictive laws of news value of the Western media. To introduce additional laws and guidelines to keep these terrorists from presenting their grievances and frustrations with violence may even increase their level of violence." (Schmid and De Graaf 1982, 171). Michel Moutot from AFP notes that "whatever we think about those groups, they do play a role in our world and their claims need to be taken into account. It is important that we listen to them and try to understand them, if only so that we can fight them more accurately."[30] In other words, censorship may make the fight against terrorism more difficult. Especially since most people are not necessarily subverted – but rather disgusted – by terrorist acts.

Another argument against censorship of terrorism is that if the media do not report on the subject, rumors may be spread. The lack of public awareness of certain terrorist activities may keep the public from fully understanding the political situation. People would live in ignorance of, or indifference to, information about crises all over the world. According to Dale van Atta, shutting off a nation from news from an independent press breeds rumors which transmit

far more fear and misinformation than responsible journalists do by truthfully reporting on terrorist events (Van Atta 1998, 66-70). This argument is enhanced by the rapid expansion of the Internet over the past decade and a half. As mentioned before, people can now get their information elsewhere. News will spread anyway, and the lack of coverage by conventional media may lead to more baseless rumors and fear. The Internet will be discussed in depth later in this chapter.

In sum, despite the problem of defining the exact effects of the appearance of terrorists and their activities in the media, several things can be – and have been – said on the results of measures countering this. Although some argue that regulations imposed on the media will be useful and effective in reducing the terrorist threat, most disagree with that statement, thinking that censorship does not have much effect, except in some specific situations such as crises with hostages or during specific counterterrorist actions. In fact, some analysts claim the opposite, namely that censorship may actually increase the threat of terrorism.

3.3 Are Measures Desirable?

Besides the question whether censorship or media regulation is useful, the question whether it is at all desirable is important as well. Media regulation as a tool to fight terrorism presents a fundamental dilemma, due to the inherent tension between censorship and the liberal-democratic tradition of free speech. The answer to the question whether media regulation is desirable – or even possible – in Europe has both legal and moral or ethical aspects, that will be discussed here separately.

3.3.1 Legal restrictions

Media regulation by governments in the European Union must be measured against the standards developed by the European Court of Human Rights. The right to freedom of expression is enshrined in Article 10 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), which says that "[e]veryone has the right to freedom of

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[30] Michel Moutot, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Prague, March 14, 2008

expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises." In addition, it notes that "[t]he exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary." (ECHR 1950).

A key tenet of the European case-law is that there is little scope for restrictions on political speech or on debate on questions of public interest. Freedom of political debate is considered a sine qua non for a healthy democracy. In the past, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that it is "incumbent on [the press] to impart information and ideas on political issues just as on those in other areas of public interest. Not only does the press have the task of imparting such information and ideas: the public also has a right to receive them." (ECHR 1986, par. 41). The court then proceeded in the same vein, averring that "freedom of political debate is at the very core of the concept of a democratic society which prevails throughout the Convention." (Ibid., par. 42). The freedom of expression includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information. The political debate should be free, robust and uninhibited (US Supreme Court 1964). The freedom of expression also covers ideas that, in the words of the European Court of Human Rights, "offend, shock or disturb." (ECHR 1986, par. 41).

The questions then arising, as to the possible limiting of the right to freedom of expression, are of utmost importance: which of the limits placed on the freedom of expression are actually justified in the fight against terrorism? (European Audiovisual Observatory 2004). Should the state prohibit the media from distributing messages if they are put out by terrorists?

No society knows unlimited freedom of expression. In accordance with Article 10(2) ECHR, enjoying journalistic freedoms by media actors is contingent on the simultaneous exercise of certain duties and responsibilities. These include, first and foremost, that journalists obey the ordinary criminal law, and also that

they act "in good faith in order to provide accurate and reliable information in accordance with the ethics of journalism" (ECHR 2000, par. 53). Additionally, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms permits limited restrictions on the right to freedom of expression, on the basis of three provisions. The restriction must be provided by law, it must be for the purpose of safeguarding a legitimate public or private interest, and it must be necessary to secure this interest. This latter part of the test means that even when measures seek to protect a legitimate interest, the government must demonstrate that there is a "pressing social need" for the measures. Moreover, the restriction must be proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued and the reasons given to justify the restriction must be relevant and sufficient (ECHR 1979, par. 62).

Now, is this the case for terrorism? Of course this depends on the situation. In many cases incitement to violence may be involved, which may be the required link to law. Other laws, such as prohibition of discrimination may be other possibilities to base measures upon. New legislation that has been implemented in the years after 9/11 and several terrorist attacks in Europe may make it easier for governments to prove the link to the law.[31] If a government can prove that the dangers of certain media coverage are so grave that restrictions on freedom of expression should be imposed, it has the legal authority to do so. However, this is very unlikely, and often the damage has already been done once the government can do anything about it. In other words, there are very few legal opportunities for governments to restrict the media in their terrorism related broadcasts.

This is confirmed by the Council of Europe that has adopted many documents on freedom of expression, two of which are particularly relevant to terrorism: the *Declaration on freedom of expression and information in the media in the context of the fight against terrorism*, and the *Guidelines on protection freedom of expression and information in times of crisis*. Whereas the latter contains non-binding recommendations, the former lays some legal restrictions upon the member states. For instance, it notes that, also in the light of terrorism, "states cannot adopt measures which would impose restrictions on freedom of expression and information going beyond what is permitted by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights." (Council of Europe 2005). In addition the Council notes that "in their fight against terrorism, states must take

care not to adopt measures that are contrary to human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression, which is one of the very pillars of the democratic societies that terrorists seek to destroy." (Ibid.). The Council also calls on public authorities in member states: "not to introduce any new restrictions on freedom of expression and information in the media unless strictly necessary and proportionate in a democratic society and after examining carefully whether existing laws or other measures are not already sufficient," "to refrain from adopting measures equating media reporting on terrorism with support for terrorism," and "to respect strictly the editorial independence of the media, and accordingly, to refrain from any kind of pressure on them." (Ibid.).

Indeed, these legal boundaries are confirmed by Meryem Aksu, in her book on Strasbourgian frameworks for the fight against terrorism. "To prevent the media from becoming a vehicle for the dissemination of incitements to hate and/or violence, national authorities should be careful in relation to the publication of (…) opinions which approve the use of violence. However, where this is not the case, member [s]tates cannot by using criminal law against the media in the name of national security, limit the right of the public to be informed." (Aksu 2007, 249)[32]

3.3.2 Ethical issues

According to Robin Gerrits, "[t]he media may provide insurgent terrorists with a good dose of the 'oxygen of publicity', but censorship can provide a government with the 'narcotic of secrecy', which is an even bigger danger to democracy." (Gerrits 1992, 60). In fact, "democracies die behind closed doors." (US Court of Appeals 2002). There are many people objecting to governments imposing restrictions on the media, seeing it as one of the main pillars of a democratic society. Many issues exist that are not enshrined in law but do play an important role in deciding whether or not censorship is desirable.

In Western democracies, the media are supposed to be public watchdogs, (see for instance: ECHR 1992) applying their investigative powers to restrain and critique government activity. The media can provide an indispensable forum for informed discussion concerning the social and political implications of terrorism

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[31] For more information on new legislation, see Deliverable 4, WP3
[32] The book is largely in Dutch, but this quote was taken from the English summary at the end

and the development of adequate policies and countermeasures. Restricting this function undoubtedly leads to heavy criticism by several actors in society.

First of all, journalists, editors, and others, generally see it as their purpose to inform the population as thoroughly and completely as possible. For instance, Christophe Ayad, journalist at the French newspaper *Libération*, mentions in an interview that his duty as a journalist is "to give all the points of view of all parties to a conflict or crisis. We cannot decide to censor some groups or organizations. I do not think we should censor reality."[33] Erik Berg, editor at a Danish news agency, agrees with Ayad: "Of course we are not trying to spread unnecessary fear just to make people worried or nervous. But we respond to facts. I mean the bomb did go off and this or that number of people was in fact killed (…) we relate to fact, and the facts we pass on, no matter if they create fear or not."[34] Martine Audusseau Pouchard, journalist for RTL Spain says: "if you cover terrorism of course you give publicity to the terrorist movements in a way, but you are obliged to talk about these issues. The problem of mediatization is that we cannot stop talking about them (…) When there is an attack we report on it, and we are obliged to do so because it would be worrying if we did not talk about it."[35]

From a politician's point of view, some emphasize the danger of censorship of terrorism. Dutch Socialist Party Member of Parliament Jan de Wit focuses on videotapes of terrorists like Osama Bin Laden. "It would be extremely dangerous if a democratic government says: we fear those videotapes, so we censor them! If the freedom of the media is sacrificed in the name of combating terrorism, one has allowed small groups of terrorists to destroy one of the key foundations of a democratic society."[36]

A large part of the ethical objections are linked to censorship of media coverage on terrorism being perceived as a slippery slope. If terrorism can be censored, what is next? Governments could label other quasi- or non-terrorist activities by political dissenters terrorism, and censor them. Uncontrolled government actions might be the result. It is considered a dangerously small step to move from accepting the principle that there are certain people in society who do not have the right to speak and be heard, to gagging anyone whose

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[33] Christophe Ayad, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Prague, March 14, 2008
[34] Erik Berg, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Copenhagen, March 14, 2008
[35] Martine Audusseau Pouchard, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Madrid/Barcelona, March 12, 2008
[36] Jan de Wit, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, The Hague, April 24, 2008

opinions are not welcome by the ruling group. According to an indictment in one case: "When government begins closing doors, it selectively controls information rightfully belonging to the people. Select information is misinformation." (US Court of Appeals 2002).

In addition, the public may suspect that other things are censored as well, leading to a decline in credibility of the media. The feeling of being deprived of vital information might create a public distrust in the media and political authorities. The recent war in Iraq and heightened fears of terrorist attacks throughout the world have fuelled increased concerns about, and criticism of, governments' information policies on security matters. Examples of such public suspicion and discontent abound in the U.S., and allegations of secrecy, spin-doctoring and falsification of official information have also surfaced in a number of European countries.

To emphasize the importance of these issues, three international organizations are set up for promoting freedom of expression: the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression; the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Organization of American States Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression. Their joint statement of November 2001 contains several relevant notions:

"Terror must not triumph over human rights in general, and freedom of expression in particular;

Certain governments have, in the aftermath of the events of 11 September, adopted measures or taken steps to limit freedom of expression and curtail the free flow of information; this reaction plays into the hands of the terrorists;

Guarantees for freedom of expression have developed over centuries but they can easily be rolled back; we are particularly concerned that recent moves by some governments to introduce legislation limiting freedom of expression set a bad precedent;

We are of the view that an effective strategy to address terror must include reaffirming and strengthening democratic values, based on the right to freedom of expression;" (UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression et al. 2001)

Along these lines, the Council of Europe emphasizes that "member states should constantly strive to maintain a favourable environment, in line with the

Council of Europe standards, for the functioning of independent and professional media, notably in crisis situations. In this respect, special efforts should be made to support the role of public service media as a reliable source of information and a factor for social integration and understanding between the different groups of society," and "[m]ember states should always bear in mind that free access to information can help to effectively resolve the crisis and expose abuses that may occur. In response to the legitimate need for information in situations of great public concern, the authorities should guarantee to the public free access to information, including through the media." (Council of Europe 2007).

Although the declarations by these international organizations are not legally binding for nations, they do show that the organizations are trying to find ways to deal with the problematic issues arising from the link between terrorism and the media. In some cases, such as for the Council of Europe, other documents that were drafted in conjunction with these guidelines, do provide a legal framework, for instance the *Declaration on freedom of expression and information in the media in the context of the fight against terrorism* mentioned in the previous section.

Nevertheless, despite the documents and all those that zealously defend the freedom of expression, not everybody is completely against all forms of regulation. Brigitte Nacos said after the broadcast of Nicholas Berg's beheading: "My concern is (...) once you have reported it, especially on television, it is played and replayed, and I think that magnifies the impact. I think that there has to be some restraint. I'm not talking about censorship ... but there probably is a limit where you say that's enough." (quoted in Stannard 2004). At the same time, others disagree. Harvard's Jim Walsh, for example, stated after Berg's video was aired that "it is a reality (…) The kidnapping and murdering and bombings are the reality of what is happening on the ground in Iraq. To hide that would be the greater mistake." (Ibid.)

It should be clear that in most cases media censorship is neither legally feasible, nor desired by most analysts, journalists and even politicians. Nevertheless, most admit that some sort of problem exists, and that perhaps something should be done about it. One of the measures that may be acceptable to most is establishing some sort of self-regulatory system in which the media establishes rules for its own coverage of terrorist incidents. This will be discussed in a next section. First, however, a quick look will be taken at the new media.

3.4 Countering Terrorist Use of New Media

In the previous chapter it has become clear that new media play an especially important role in terrorist activity. The main reason for its danger is, that contents can be controlled directly by the terrorists. In addition, especially for the Internet, it is hard to counter terrorist use, since it is so anonymous and flexible. Gabriel Weimann notes that "while we must (…) better defend our societies against terrorism, we must not in the process erode the very qualities and values that make our societies worth defending." (Weimann 2004). In other words, controlling the Internet may lead to severe discussion on whether or not the improved security – if that can be achieved by better controlling the Internet – is worth impairing, for instance, privacy or freedom of speech.

Nevertheless, although these new media have not been around for too long, several efforts have already been made in Europe to counter the impact that terrorists can have using them. A good example is the attempts made by governments to ban al-Manar from the satellites. Next to several non-European states such as the US and Australia, the European countries France, Spain, and – through a legal construction – the Netherlands have blocked satellite broadcast of al-Manar (EU Rapid 2005).

The European Union as a whole, too, has effectively imposed a ban on al-Manar (mentioning it by name) or similar (mostly satellite) broadcast media that preach hate or incitement (European Commission 2005). In addition, it has actively supported and assisted national efforts, and has stated that member states should enforce the EU rule that broadcasting "shall not give undue prominence to violence or be likely to incite to racial hatred" (EU Rapid 2005). Also, it stated that during the French procedure against al-Manar "the European Commission worked very closely together with the French authorities and supported the strict and effective application of European law. The Commission welcomed the fact that measures have been taken to ensure respect of the material rules of the Directive, in line with the division of responsibilities between the Commission and the national authorities on such matters." (Ibid.)

Quite some debate has occurred as a result of the decisions to ban al-Manar. The station's representatives themselves, obviously, do not agree with the decision to ban the channel. They say that it is the result of Israeli pressure on the governments of the EU member states. Israel "is launching an unprecedented campaign against Al-Manar to stop it from keeping European

viewers and foreign European residents aware of the truth about crimes against humanity, which Israel is committing in occupied Palestine and in the rest of the world," (BBC 2004a) according to one of al-Manar's show hosts. And there are more people, not necessarily from al-Manar, that agree. (Ibid.)

Others say that banning the station was legitimate, because of the anti-Semitic and inciting contents described above (see for instance BBC 2004b), and that it is not the same as banning any other station merely because the contents are not liked. For instance, Rachel Zabarkes Friedman, associate editor for the American conservative *National Review Online*, writes that "al-Manar is hardly comparable to an independent news outlet whose views the administration happens to dislike. Shutting down such an outlet would of course be troubling; shutting down al-Manar is not." (Friedman 2005).

Another question is, whether the ban on al-Manar is at all effective. Of course, those who favor banning the station do believe so. And in fact, it may be part of a solution: if people cannot see the contents of the station, Hezbollah loses an important direct link to its audience. Still, it is not as easy as that, and according to many, the ban is not exactly successful. In fact, it seems that the actions by the EU and some European member states are largely symbolic. The BBC noted after the French ban that al-Manar "can be beamed to France on at least two non-French satellites, over which the court has no jurisdiction." (Ibid.). In addition, the channel can be seen on the Internet, accessible to all in the European Union. Nevertheless, a unified, international effort to ban the channel may be more effective, especially when combined with a restriction on Internet access. Whether or not Internet censorship is desirable is another question that will be discussed below.

Anne Marie Baylouny doubts whether al-Manar actually poses a problem and thus, whether banning it would have any positive consequences for security: "The effect of satellite TV such as (…) al-Manar is questionable. One study failed to find a correlation between satellite television and attitudes toward the west." (Baylouny 2005). Later in her article she states that banning the channel may actually be counterproductive: "banning al-Manar in fact promotes the idea that the station is airing news deemed unfit for American[37] viewers, and in the process, inflates the presumed power of al-Manar and empowers it as an alternative to US views and propaganda." (Ibid.). In this context an incomplete

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[37] This was written after the American ban on al-Manar, but the same would apply to European viewers.

ban may be more dangerous than no ban at all, since people will find other ways to watch the channel, and will have more incentive to do so. In sum: there is much discussion on the question of banning satellite television channels for security reasons.

On the issue of the Internet, the EU has acted only very recently. Whereas legislation within the EU on terrorism and the Internet used to be "an important gap in European legislation" (Lungescu 2008), the European Union decided on implementing clearer and stricter rules in April of 2008. The new rules make "public provocation to commit a terrorist offence, recruitment and training for terrorism punishable behaviour, also when committed through the Internet." (European Council 2008). The idea is to make it punishable to use the Internet for these purposes, and to make it easier for law enforcement authorities to get cooperation from Internet service providers, for prevention, identification, and perhaps removal of the websites (Ibid.). Although this had not been well established in EU legislation yet, several member states such as Spain, the United Kingdom, and Italy, already had similar legislation in place (Lungescu 2008).

Much like legislation to reduce terrorist use of conventional media, this Internet related legislation caused quite some debate. Weimann, as mentioned before, warns that tools to reduce terrorist use of the Internet can easily lead to an undesirable reduction in civil liberties: "The Internet is in many ways an almost perfect embodiment of the democratic ideals of free speech and open communication; it is a marketplace of ideas unlike any that has existed before. (…) [I]f, fearful of further terrorist attacks, we circumscribe our own freedom to use the Internet, then we hand the terrorists a victory and deal democracy a blow." (Weimann 2004, 11). Several persons and organizations think that such legislation will actually turn Europe into "the most surveilled place in the world."[38] Members of the European Parliament argued that there was no evidence that such legislation would reduce the threat of terrorism, and that "[i]f we continue to remove people's basic liberties in this way, the terrorists will have won." (Traynor 2007). On the other hand, Franco Frattini, initiator of the new measures, thought that they form a sensible answer that "sends a strong message to terrorists and people planning terrorist attacks" and "a strong protective message to our citizens" (EurActiv 2007). In addition, the European Council stated in its memo after having agreed on the new measures, that its

decision was a good example of how "the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes can be dealt with in a way which respects the freedom of speech." (European Council 2008).

A last point, a very recent way of thinking, is described by Daniel Kimmage in his op-ed in the *New York Times*. He thinks that in fact it may be possible to reduce the effectiveness of for instance al-Qaida's Internet use by improving freedom of Internet access in Middle Eastern countries. New developments on the Internet, such as the rise of social networking and sites such as *YouTube*, offer new opportunities to people around the world. According to Kimmage, these sites are not al-Qaida's strongpoint. "Anonymity and accessibility, the hallmarks of Web 1.0, provided an ideal platform for Al Qaeda's radical demagoguery. Social networking, the emerging hallmark of Web 2.0, can unite a fragmented silent majority and help it to find its voice in the face of thuggish opponents (…) By blocking the Internet, [authoritarian governments of the Middle East] are leaving the field open to [al-Qaida] and its recruiters" (Kimmage 2008). At the same time he admits that al-Qaida "has shown remarkable resilience and will find ways to adapt to new trends" (Ibid.). In addition, not enough research has been done to this, but it is nevertheless an interesting twist that may be used in the future. If nothing else, Kimmage's article proves that it is imperative to keep a close eye on new developments within the realm of the Internet and other new media, and keep research up to date. After all, new methods, both for terrorists and for counterterrorism organizations, may pop up quickly and unexpectedly.

In short, it is obvious that there is much discussion as to whether censoring new media by a ban or other forms of censorship increases security, and whether, even if this is the case, it is desirable. In the conclusion of this paper the findings of this research will be combined and a stand will be taken in these discussions. First, however, a closer look will be taken at a more subtle form of reducing the effects of the link between terrorism and the media: self-regulation.

3.5 Is Self-Regulation the Solution?

In countries without state censorship or permanent nationwide media-government agreements on the coverage of terrorism, the media have in some

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[38] According to Tony Bunyan of the organization *Statewatch*. Quoted in: Traynor 2007

cases developed internal guidelines of their own, partly in response to the fear that government-imposed regulations might otherwise be forced upon them. An editor of the *Baltimore Sun* states about the Global War on Terrorism: "Editors, not government, must be the arbiters of what's fit to air or print. For a free society (…) no other alternative is acceptable." (Graber 2003, 41)

Although some media argue that regulation should not be implemented by governments, several do agree there should be some sort of policy on terrorism coverage in case of media involvement in terrorist events. In general, self-regulatory measures are least intrusive and thus supported by many. This type of measures could deal more appropriately and effectively with the subtle issues which are often raised when journalist expression is being challenged. Most European countries have a code of ethics for journalists, adopted by journalists' organizations or in some cases jointly with publisher organizations.[39] Similarly, there are many press councils that administer the codes. Ethical guidelines and other media accountability systems are generally considered to be effective tools to encourage committed journalism. In most places where they have been used, such systems gave satisfactory results, or at worst, they were harmless (Council of Europe 1998).

When it comes to the coverage of terrorism, ethical principles of journalism are likely to face hard times. Since the late seventies, some attempts have been made by media organizations to come up with guidelines for covering terrorist incidents. Three major American TV networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, created longstanding, written policies on their coverage of terrorist incidents. The *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Daily News* established standards which include paraphrasing terrorist demands to avoid unbridled propaganda, banning reporters from getting involved in negotiations with terrorists, giving senior supervisory editors that are in touch with police authorities the final call on the stories and aiming at thoughtful, restrained, and credible coverage of terrorist acts.

When David Paletz and Alex Schmid conducted research among news editors in the early nineties, only five of the twenty respondents said that they had no special policy regarding terrorism; the remaining fifteen had voluntarily instituted guidelines for dealing with terrorism. However, only three of these had actually written guidelines down. In most cases, they were verbal guidelines,

sometimes as vague as the existence of "a certain policy for handling news on terrorism." (Paletz and Schmid 1992, 126-127).

A similar picture is drawn by the interviews carried out by TTSRL in several countries in Europe. These too showed that the majority of media outlets have no written guidelines for their own coverage on terrorism. Of course, they do debate issues in the editors' room, and not everything is published, but there are no written guidelines for journalists. According to Henrik Keith Hansen, this is for the reason that "every single incident is different from another. We always have to discuss the specific or concrete event, so I don't think we can take any other measures than again and again telling our reporters to be careful, to be cautious about these things (…) Our experience in this is that you cannot have a general guideline saying here is the limit. It is very, very difficult to operate with that in the news business."[40]

A Spanish journalist, from the *El País* Newspaper, adds: "the measures and precautions we have adopted are the elementary ones which make up the moral code of any honest journalist and any serious and prestigious media outlet such as El País. We have tried in some shape or form to balance our coverage, to focus on both sides of the story, denouncing mistakes by the security services when they occurred, and supporting the security services when they acted professionally and efficiently against Islamic terrorism."[41]

Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h from the General Direction of the French National Police, notes that "[t]errorism is too much of a sensitive topic for us to set precise and permanent rules about it. Every terrorist threat, every situation is different and what is relevant today might not be tomorrow. Thus, every time we face a terrorist threat or a terrorist act, we ask ourselves the question whether we should communicate on it, to what extent, how and with whom."[42]

Former executive editor of the *New York Times*, A.M. Rosenthal, described it firmer: "The last thing in the world I want is guidelines. I don't want guidelines from the government and I don't want any from professional organizations or anyone else. The strength of the press is its diversity." (Alexander, Carlton, and

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[39] These codes include the following principles: to report truthfully (that is, honestly, accurately, objectively, and reliably), comprehensively, impartially, to maintain editorial independence against all interest groups and to separate news from commentary.

[40] Henrik Keith Hansen, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Copenhagen, February 22, 2008

[41] Jose Maria Irujo, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Madrid, March 3, 2008.

[42] Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Prague, March 14, 2008.

Wilkinson 1979, 168). From this perspective, the media are not a single entity that can be cautioned, leaned on or controlled. The secretary of the Dutch Association of Journalists does not support media regulation with regard to the coverage of terrorism either: "journalists do already have a professional responsibility. They have to act along these professional ethics and just use their brains when covering terrorism."[43]

The interviewed spokesmen of counter-terrorism institutions do not necessarily favor media regulation with regard to the covering of terrorism either. They underline that they do not have that many problems with the media.[44] Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h notes that "we collaborate and cooperate with the media quite easily. Regarding terrorism in particular, it should even be underlined that so far they have shown great decency. As you can see, there is already a self-regulation from the media. And, as far as we are concerned, we do understand that the media cannot refuse to broadcast what actually is news. All the more so that they have done it responsively and cautiously so far."[45]

Peter Klerks, lecturer at the Dutch Police Academy does not support special guidelines for the coverage of terrorism either. He says he cannot remember any irresponsible publications about terrorism in the past: "if the media are reporting irresponsibly, it is the judge who decides ultimately. We should not waste our time supporting problems that don't exist."[46] However, it should be clear that in many cases this may already be too late, and damage may already have been done. In fact, such legal procedures may put extra emphasis on the broadcast, making more people familiar with it.

An anonymous source at the Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTb) argues that in the event of a terrorist incident, rather than impose information control on the media, it is preferable to foster close liaison between counter-terrorism institutions and the media. This applies to both systematic and incidental cooperation as well as communication about terrorism to the public.[47] Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h notes that "the police do not tell the media how they should do their job. There is a legal framework the

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[43] Thomas Bruning, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Amsterdam, May 14, 2008.
[44] Among others spokesperson of the Dutch National Prosecutor's Office, Wim de Bruin, in an interview conducted with the TTSRL framework, Rotterdam, May 30, 2008.
[45] Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Prague, March 14, 2008.
[46] Peter Klerks, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, The Hague, May 5, 2008.
[47] Source at the NCTb, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework

media have to observe. For instance, promoting and inciting to racial hatred and violence are legal offences. Our penal code also deals with offences affecting the external or internal security of the State. It is the law, which defines the limit between the right to inform and the safekeeping of the national interests and security."[48]

Reading all this may give the impression that nobody is interested in guidelines or self-regulation. This is not true. Many people (often from outside of the media community) do favor some sort of self-imposed directions by the media. Terell and Ross offer a set of guidelines for reporting about terrorists and their activities. Among their recommendations are such issues as reporting terrorist demands and their significance concisely, surrendering information to law enforcement authority only upon request and never covertly, always remembering that lives are at stake, seeking additional information and reporting it in moderation, avoiding speculation, and opposing censorship and any attempts to impose sanctions against journalists who reject guidelines, including these (Terell and Ross 1988). So while self-regulation is propagated, censorship from outside the media is strictly opposed.

In the Guidelines of the Council of Europe on protecting freedom of expression and information in times of crises, the Council states that "[m]edia professionals need to adhere, especially in times of crisis, to the highest professional and ethical standards, having regard to their special responsibility in crisis situations to make available to the public timely, factual, accurate and comprehensive information while being attentive to the rights of other people, their special sensitivities and their possible feeling of uncertainty and fear. Self-regulation is the most appropriate mechanism for ensuring that media professionals perform in a responsible and professional way needs to be made more effective in times of crisis. In this regard, co-operation between self-regulatory bodies is encouraged at both the regional and the European levels. Member states, professional organizations of journalists, other relevant non-governmental organizations and the media are invited to facilitate such co-operation and provide further assistance where appropriate." (Council of Europe 2007).

And indeed, as mentioned before, some governments do try to have an impact on media by providing guidelines as to what is and what is not

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[48] Marie-France Monéger Guyomarc'h, in an interview conducted within the TTSRL framework, Prague, March 14, 2008.

appropriate. This in fact amounts to a request for self-restraint. The British government has over the years sent out so-called "D-notices"[49] (the "D" standing for Defense) to editors, requesting that a certain subject should not receive publicity. In general, this was meant for external defense matters, but according to Schmid and De Graaf it is likely that D-notices were also used for matters relating to domestic terrorism (Schmid and De Graaf 1982, 158).

Fred Barnes has some harsh criticism on the media: "Journalists should (…) quit being so defensive when criticized. (…) Nor should the press create a false choice between praising its coverage and promoting censorship." (Barnes 1985, 12). He then quotes CBS's Dan Rather, who commented on the channel's behavior during the hostage crisis in Beirut. Rather said: "With it all, I'll take the free press to the controlled media." (Ibid.) Barnes then continues: "Sorry, Dan, but that's not the issue. The issue in the hostage coverage is excess and moral blindness that may aid – or even encourage – terrorists (…) The way to avert this is through self-restraint (…) and by remembering to let moral distinctions frame the coverage. Occasionally, a fleeting scoop might have to be ignored. Worse things could happen. One of them is allowing terrorists to have spin control on the news." (Ibid., 12-13).

In sum, there is much opposition to guidelines, even if drafted by media organizations themselves. The media want their position to be as free as possible, and want to have the flexibility to react to any event in the way they see fit. Nevertheless, they claim to take the utmost care to act with self-restraint, in order not to become part of the terrorist machinery. As described here, several people are not convinced that this is enough, and use examples to illustrate why they think the media are not always as careful as they should be. Written guidelines drafted by each media organization may be both a guide and a reminder to individual journalists and thus reduce the influence of terrorism using the media.

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[49] Currently D-notices are called DA-notices (Defense Advisory notices). Although they touch on subjects that could be related to terrorism, they do not often specifically refer to terrorism, and obviously do not request not to publish on terrorism in general. For more information see the official website of DA-notices: http://www.dnotice.org.uk/index.htm

Conclusion

"It is difficult to establish policies governing the operation of global media, particularly in peacetime. The global media system itself is largely unregulated. In democratic nations, industry pressures and social norms work against regulation (…) Individual media organizations are primarily self-regulated and fight hard against efforts to control their operations." (Owen 2003, 251). With this sentence, Diana Owen paints a clear picture of the dilemma that policy makers face concerning the link between terrorism and the media.

It is good to first give a short summary of the findings made in the present paper. From this research several important points can be distilled. First of all, it has become clear that a distinction must be made between old and new media. The characteristics of the new media are so unlike those of television, radio, or newspaper, that the challenges to those countering terrorism are very different for the two as well.

The second point is the answer to one of the questions asked in the introduction, about the extent of the relationship between terrorism and the media. Indeed, this link – or according to some even a full-blown symbiotic relationship – exists between terrorism and the media. Terrorists try to use the media to their advantage, and media are very happy to broadcast events related to terrorism, simply because it is newsworthy, but also because it possesses many of the features that make it very attractive to the public, and thus to the media.

New media, especially the Internet and – perhaps to a lesser extent because of higher costs and less anonymity – satellite television, are particularly attractive for terrorists, since they offer the possibility to *be* the media, and thus post their objectives in a more direct way. Expansion of terrorism to new media like the Internet and satellite television leads to a situation in which not only a symbiotic relationship exists between terrorism and the media, but where the media is an extension or even an intrinsic part of the terrorist organization.

A third point, about the effects of the relationship, is that on the one hand, without media attention, terrorism could never be as successful as it is today. People would simply not know. However, media do exist, and will always report on terrorism, and rightly so. The exact underlying factors, or the extent of media influence in negative consequences of terrorism have not been persuasively

proven. Much debate takes place in literature as to whether negative effects on public opinion or government decision making exist, and to what extent. In our own TTSRL research we have not been able to convincingly prove such effects on public opinion. There seems to be some relation, but there are too many diverging factors to prove a definite link. Some other research projects have found effects, by adding extra variables, such as the source of a particular message. But then, too, the evidence is not sufficient, and sometimes even contradictory. Future research is imperative in order to better map the consequences of the link between terrorism and the conventional media.

For the Internet, the situation is clearly different. In general, most authors agree that terrorists use the Internet in order to achieve their own objectives, and that this is an effective tool that may increase worldwide radicalization and inform potential recruits or terrorists on how to carry out attacks.

The lack of clear, direct effects of the link between conventional media and terrorism leads to a situation in which it will be harder to ask for measures against the media. In fact, our research proves that many experts think measures imposed by democratic government are neither desirable nor effective. Attempts in the past such as the British ban on IRA interviews failed to reduce terrorist propaganda through the media. Moreover, such measures would effectively represent censorship, not a very popular policy in Western democracies, and rightly so. Measures taken by the media themselves to try to deal responsibly with terrorist propaganda are more likely to be accepted, and in most cases media already use such principles, although usually not in writ.

For the Internet and satellite television the situation is slightly different. Despite some debate and protest, people are more likely to accept banning media that is directly related or even part of a terrorist organization. Therefore, a website of al-Qaida or a television station like al-Manar can be banned more easily than a show or a news program broadcast by regular, accepted media. New legislation by the European Union illustrates this well. Of course, some protest occurred, but eventually it passed fairly smoothly, without too much uproar. Nevertheless, effectiveness is not necessarily guaranteed. After all, television channels can be beamed to Europe on other satellites that may be harder, but not impossible to receive. Additionally, these channels can be broadcast over the Internet, available to all, and if an Internet page is blocked, it can pop up anywhere else on the web without too much effort.

The most important question is, then, what can and should be done, realistically, to counter the link between terrorism and the media – if anything at all. Based upon this research, several recommendations can be made. First of all, it is important for the European Union – and for individual countries both within and outside of the Union – to expand research in this area. It would be very useful to find out whether there are any intervening variables that influence public opinion in terrorism coverage, and if so, which ones. With a clear vision of this, it will be easier to devise countermeasures and "sell" them to the public. Other research projects could include better mapping the effect of the Internet and future possibilities with new media or research on the actual effects of written self-regulation.

Imposing censorship on conventional media is not a good idea. It leads to a situation in which infringement on democratic values occurs in order to protect that democracy. In certain cases such infringement may be inevitable, but for any measure that does this, a thorough analysis must be made as to whether it is really necessary, and truly efficacious. In the case of censorship of the media as a counterterrorism measure, this is clearly not the case. Mark Blaisse notes that "with censorship alone you cannot put a stop to terrorism. Anyone who lives in a democracy, and wishes to continue doing so, will have to realize that he or she lives in a paradise for terrorists: open borders, easily accessible airports and means of communication, relatively small-scale police departments, and humane legislation are just a few of the features that make democracies so livable and at the same time so vulnerable. (…) It is the system, not the media, that plays such an important role in instigating acts of terrorism." (Blaisse 1992, 160). Nevertheless, the system can be made more resilient to the terrorist threat without impinging on democratic values. For instance, governments could provide information as well as non-binding guidelines along which they think media behavior would help terrorism to a lesser extent.

This recommendation is entirely in line with what Ayla Schbley says on this issue concerning the American media. In the following quote, "American" can be substituted with "European" or "Western": "It is very simple to label the American media, a primary guardian of liberty and social justice, as the oxygen of terrorism (…) It is very simple to call for gagging the press, if unaware of the fact that the amount of liberty accorded to them is the primary indicator of the level of social consciousness and freedom (…) It is very simple to point to the media's mistakes and deny them the opportunity to self-regulate and self-

educate. What is difficult is to provide the media with what they need: guidance, procedures, and motivations to change. Future studies must illuminate to the media what, how, and when to report terror acts, for terrorism's success can be measured by the amount of media exposure as well as the number of casualties and cost" (Schbley 2003, 223-224). Guidance, procedures and motivations are insufficiently provided as of yet.

With censorship out of the picture, guidance, procedures, and motivations by the government a possibility, the best way to counter terrorist use of the media is by self-regulation. Legally, media do not have much to fear. Fortunately, in Western democracies, few if any news messages are actually against the law. At the same time, media do have a responsibility toward the society that they are part of.

Although currently self-regulation is largely the case already, there is much left to be done. Some journalists may oppose guidelines in writ, but there are some clear advantages to them. They will pose as a guide and reminder to any journalist who is working on terrorism. Self-censorship does not necessarily have to be involved. In some cases bringing the same news in a different way may already reduce the use for terrorists. At the same time, there is no legal force behind them: if a decision is made not to stick to the guidelines, nothing happens, unless a law is crossed as well. Still, with clear guidelines that are available to anyone, the decision to ignore them has to be made consciously. This is a bigger step than crossing a vaguely defined oral agreement, and the journalist has to have valid arguments to do so. In addition, it will be clearer to the outside world what it can expect from the coverage on terrorism, and governments can better anticipate potential negative fall-out.

Another important policy should be to better inform media. Governments can organize educational activities for media executives and journalists that work on terrorism. That way, a generation of new, in-depth investigative journalists may rise, that will be better able to analyze and explain terrorist activity. Christine Ockrent, herself a journalist, notes that "[j]ournalists are often much more ignorant than they pretend to be. There has to be an open data base that would provide more knowledge and more exposure to what we know about terrorist organizations, their methods and their disguise." (Ockrent 2006, 79). Schbley agrees, and thinks that this may lead to more self-regulation: "The media must be provided with quantitative data that would demonstrate its impact not only on educating terrorists on what makes targets fearful and where

their weaknesses are but also on the expenditure or reallocation of limited resources and on the stress of the population they are striving to serve." He then continues: "Once the media understands that victims of terrorism are mainly lures to attract their exposures, they will demonstrate self-restraint. If they really understand that terrorism's victims are only symbolic and the media is one of the primary targets, they will revise, review, and reorganize." (Schbley 2003, 224). In fact, educating not only the media, but the population as well, may be helpful in creating a society that is more resilient to terrorist propaganda through the media, and better able to put terrorism in the right perspective.

For the Internet the situation is somewhat different. Self-regulation or education may help for regular media, but not for reducing the number of terrorist Internet pages. These are directly controlled either by terrorists themselves or by people or organizations closely liaised to them. As such they are an actual weapon for terrorist organizations, instead of – like regular media – merely a medium for their messages. In addition, the new media are thought to be more effective in achieving terrorist objectives than the old media. Therefore, countering terrorist use of new, directly controlled media is probably more likely to be accepted, and more likely to be successful in taking away an actual recruiting mechanism of those organizations.

Still, this does not mean that Europe should ban any site that assists terrorists in achieving their objectives or spreading their message. It is important to make a distinction between sites that are actually controlled by terrorists and those that are, much like regular media, covering terrorist attacks or organizations. After all, most newspapers and television channels have their own websites, and many new Internet sources have come into existence, for instance "weblogs", that are often strongly opinionated. As mentioned before, the Internet is an open forum for opinions, and most would agree that it should stay that way. Shutting down websites that are not part of a terrorist organization, would be an unacceptable infringement on freedom of speech to many, and in fact probably in violation of article 10 ECHR. Shutting down or blocking a website that deliberately works as part of a terrorist organization is not.

The problem with this type of censorship of new media is that it may create a slippery slope. Governments could use it to their advantage to close down websites that they deem dangerous, despite not being terrorist. It is important that measures cannot be used to block opinions that are simply contrary to a government's policies. Therefore, it may be good to link censorship

to the European list of terrorist organizations. Much like the fact that a government cannot decide to just freeze any organization's assets, but can do so if a particular group is on the terrorism list, banning the media of organizations may be linked to that same list. In that case, for instance, al-Manar and Hezbollah's websites could be blocked in Europe, since Hezbollah is on the list, but al-Jazeera could not, since it is not linked to any terrorist organization, even if from time to time it may give a voice to terrorist organizations.

The question remains whether this will be effective, since Internet pages may return on other addresses very quickly, and continuously blocking them may be hard, although not impossible. Satellite channels such as al-Manar could be broadcast on foreign satellites, and diplomatic and other efforts may be necessary to make it impossible to see al-Manar in Europe. Nevertheless, media is a tool in the terrorist toolbox, and it is almost always difficult to counter terrorist weapons. This does not mean that it should not at least be tried.

In sum, governments, as well as the European institutions, should refrain from censorship, unless the media outlet is directly controlled by terrorists or those closely liaised to them, as attested by the terrorist black list. Instead, media must themselves decide what can be published and what cannot. They should create written guidelines, clarifying their terrorism coverage for themselves and for others. Governments can give guidance, but must be very careful that they do not impose censorship or seem to do so. An important role for governments is to start education programs for media executives and journalists, as well as broader programs for the population at large, enabling them both to better deal with terrorist propaganda. In addition, further research on related subjects is one of the most important steps to be taken – as mentioned throughout this paper – since it will help define the problem as well as the solutions.

If these measures are implemented, terrorist use of the media should not be expected to plummet. Nevertheless, a thorough media policy by governments is an essential part of any counterterrorist strategy, although usually not the first to be thought of. Governments have the responsibility not to impose undemocratic censorship upon the media, while it is the media's responsibility to be open to suggestions and self-reflection. Together democratic values can be kept in place, people can remain well informed, while terrorists will find it harder to use the media as a weapon in their struggle.

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Annex 1: Media Attention and Threat Perception

For each country a graph of the threat perception and media attention is shown, as well as a table with the top 10 of most relevant words in articles on terrorism. It should be noted that for languages that use accents on letters, in some cases those letters were dropped by the analysis software. Since we have researched the results manually, this has not been a problem for understanding the outcome. "Basket1", that can be found in the tables for several of the member states, is a combination of the words: Muslim, Islam, Islamist and Islamism in the respective languages.

Czech Republic
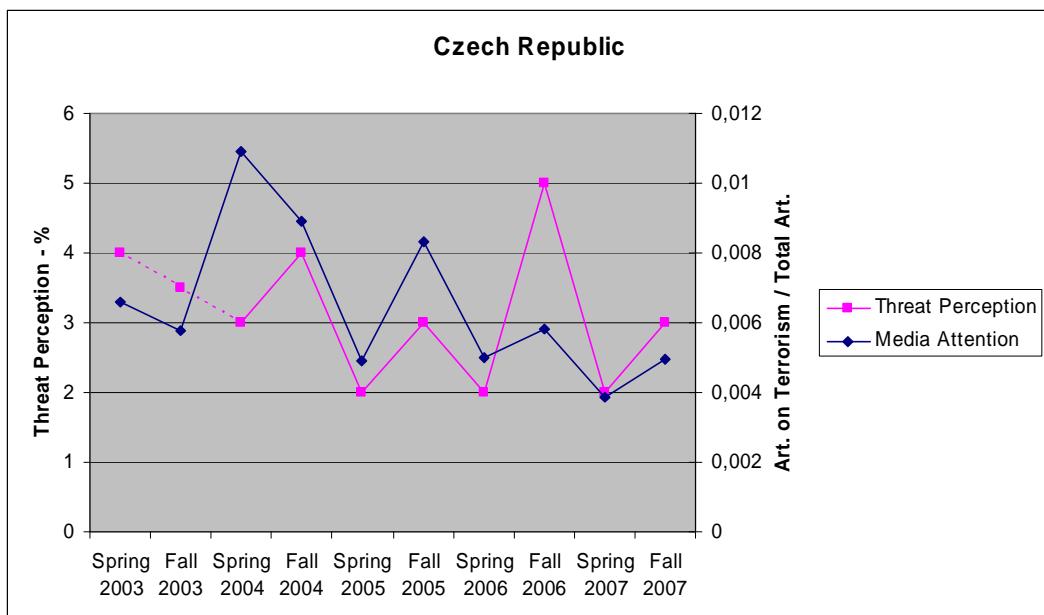
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
aby	NATO	USA	však	aby	podle
USA	USA	Iráku	podle	Podle	aby
NATO	aby	aby	aby	však	USA
však	aliance	podle	LN	podle	také
také	Režie	OSN	NATO	roce	tom
podle	Hrají	dnes	zemí	lidí	Torst
řekl	při	však	EU	při	dnes
tom	podle	LN	při	více	let
bin	však	lidí	USA	LN	mi
české	zemí	také	Iráku	až	země

Denmark
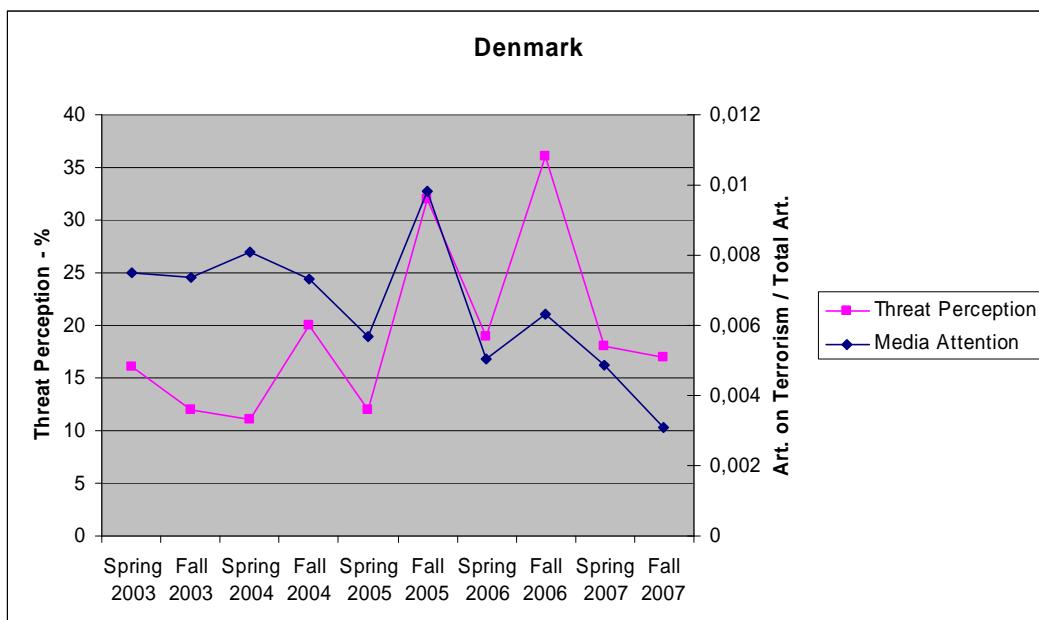
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
USA	USA	USA	USA	Danmark	Danmark
lande	lande	Irak	EU	USA	USA
EU	EU	EU	Irak	Irak	danske
Danmark	Danmark	Danmark	lande	terrorisme	Basket1
Afghanistan	amerikanske	krig	Danmark	danske	muslimer
terrorisme	terrorisme	amerikanske	danske	EU	EU
amerikanske	krig	FN	terrorisme	samfund	lande
internationale	FN	lande	Bush	lande	muslimske
Bush	Rusland	Europa	amerikanske	film	Irak
danske	Bush	krigen	skulle	altid	samfund

France
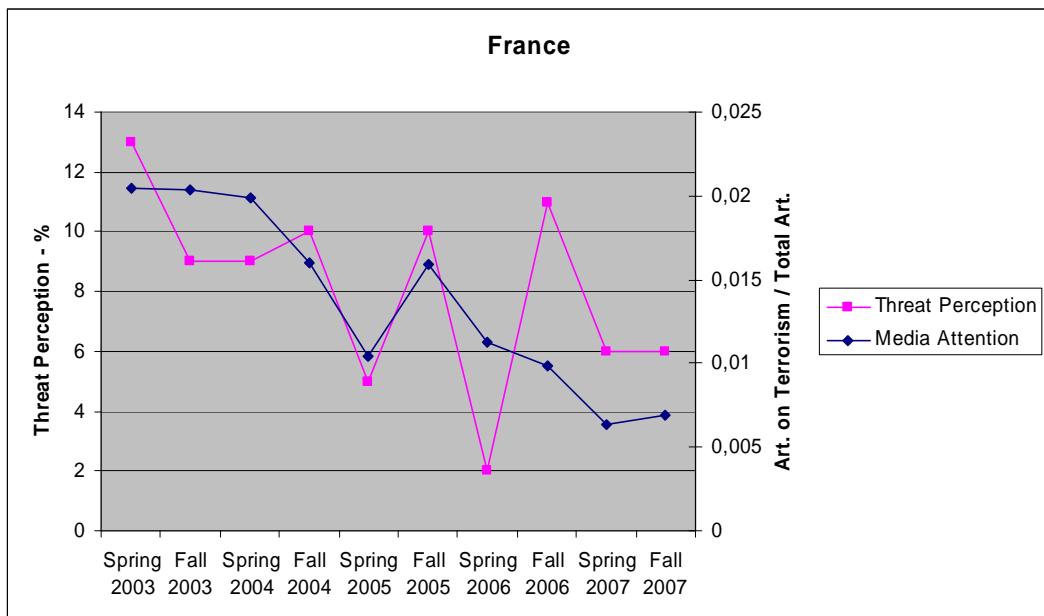
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
pays	pays	pays	pays	France	pays	pays
ministre	basket1	politique	Irak	pays	mots	PAPIER GENERAL
PARIS	Etats-Unis	France	France	franais	France	PAPIER
prsident	Afghanistan	basket1	guerre	basket1	PAPIER	mots
franais	terrorisme	Europe	politique	ministre	ministre	France
France	Etats	Etats-Unis	franais	prsident	PAPIER GENERAL	ministre
Etat	hier	prsident	Etats-Unis	PARIS	ans	politique
ans	attentats	ministre	Europe	Irak	PARIS	prsident
politique	septembre	faire	faire	politique	basket1	PHOTO
hier	politique	PARIS	PARIS	terrorisme	politique	Isral

Germany
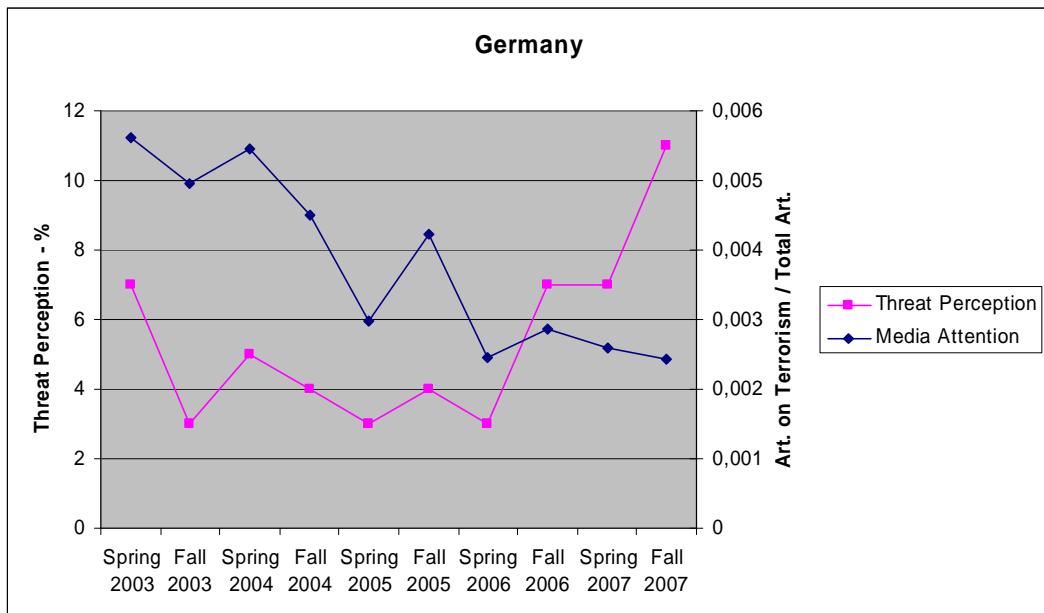
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Klein	USA	USA	Irak	basket1	basket1	basket1
RAF	Schrder	Irak	Krieg	EU	Deutschland	US
Berlin	Terrorismus	US	USA	Deutschland	US	Deutschland
Schrder	basket1	Terrorismus	US	Schrder	EU	Merkel
SPD	US	Deutschland	basket1	Schily	Schily	EU
Deutschland	SPD	Schrder	Deutschland	Terrorismus	Terrorismus	Terrorismus
Leben	Grnen	Krieg	Schrder	US	SPD	USA
Terrorismus	Afghanistan	basket1	Bush	Irak	USA	BND
NPD	Berlin	Bush	EU	USA	Schrder	Irak
CDU	Fischer	Welt	Terrorismus	Bush	Berlin	Bush

Italy
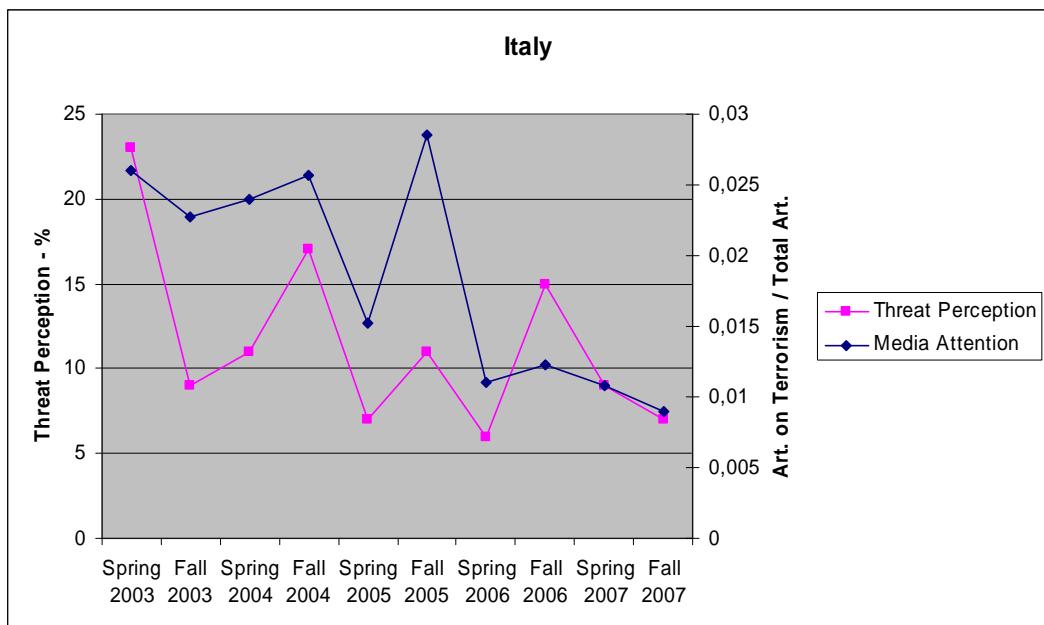
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Italia	terrorismo	terrorismo	terrorismo	Italia	terrorismo
terrorismo	Italia	USA	Italia	terrorismo	AGI
politica	guerra	Italia	guerra	Iraq	Italia
Milano	Usa	Usa	Usa	Roma	Roma
Antona	USA	Roma	Berlusconi	presidente	righe
legge	Afghanistan	guerra	Iraq	Europa	ROMA
fu	TERRORISMO	IRAQ	Europa	guerra	sicurezza
destra	Berlusconi	presidente	IRAQ	Berlusconi	estero
Bianco	Bin Laden	Berlusconi	presidente	AGI	legge
sinistra	GUERRA	TERRORISMO	politica	politica	presidente

The Netherlands
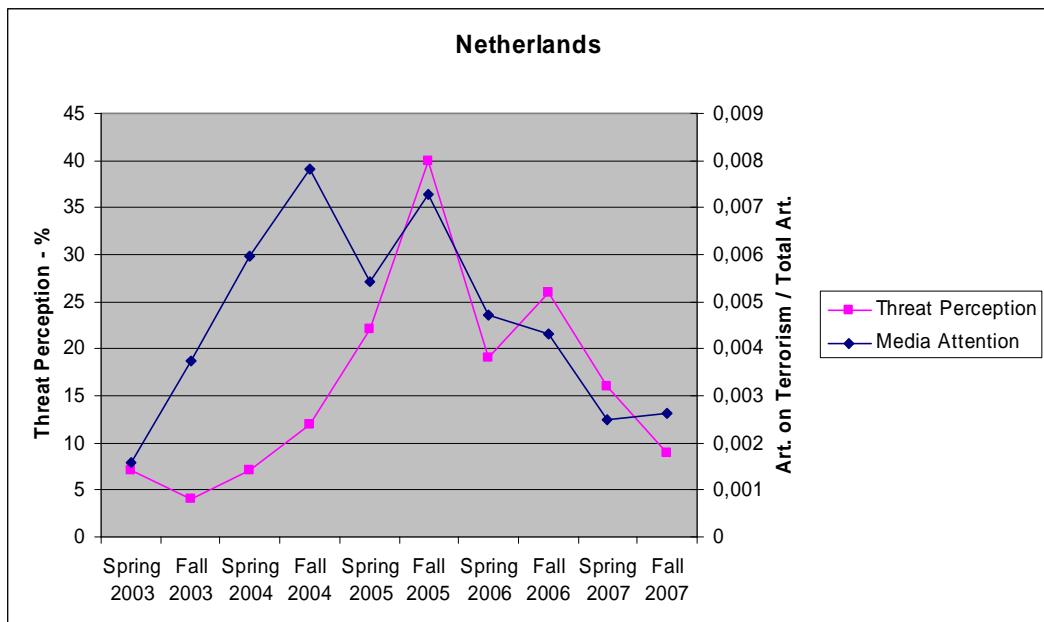
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
CDA	CDA	CDA	basket1	basket1	Nederland
Fortuyn	Fortuyn	Irak	Nederland	Nederland	basket1
DEN HAAG	DEN HAAG	Nederland	mensen	terrorisme	Amerikaanse
POLITIEK	AMSTERDAM	Amerikaanse	terrorisme	Europese	Nederlandse
Nederland	POLITIEK	Bush	gisteren	mensen	terrorisme
ECONOMIE	Hillen	gisteren	Amerikaanse	gisteren	mensen
zekerheid	euro	Fortuyn	Nederlandse	andere	minister
BUITENLANDSE	LPF	DEN HAAG	Irak	minister	Bush
AMSTERDAM	Nederland	Hillen	Bush	Amerikaanse	andere
vrijheid	procent	procent	president	Nederlandse	gisteren

Poland
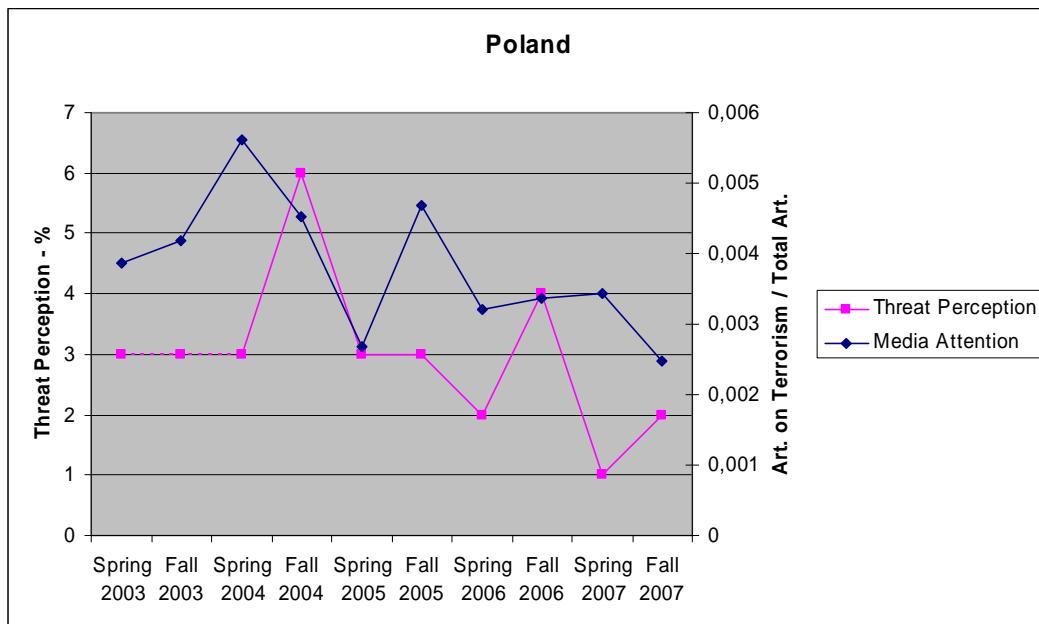
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
tylko	tylko	będzie	które	który	USA
kontra	będzie	które	tego	roku	będzie
Marek Domagalski	które	także	roku	które	tylko
roku	także	tego	będzie	tego	roku
prawa	roku	tylko	Iraku	tylko	który
Robert Horbaczewski	prawa	jednak	tych	Polsce	jednak
Renata Majewska	Jerzy Kowalski	proc	jednak	tej	lat
Renata	państw	Unii	tej	USA	Polsce
Marek	będą	Polska	tylko	też	jako
Maciej Kuciel	Unii	USA	też	będzie	które

Portugal
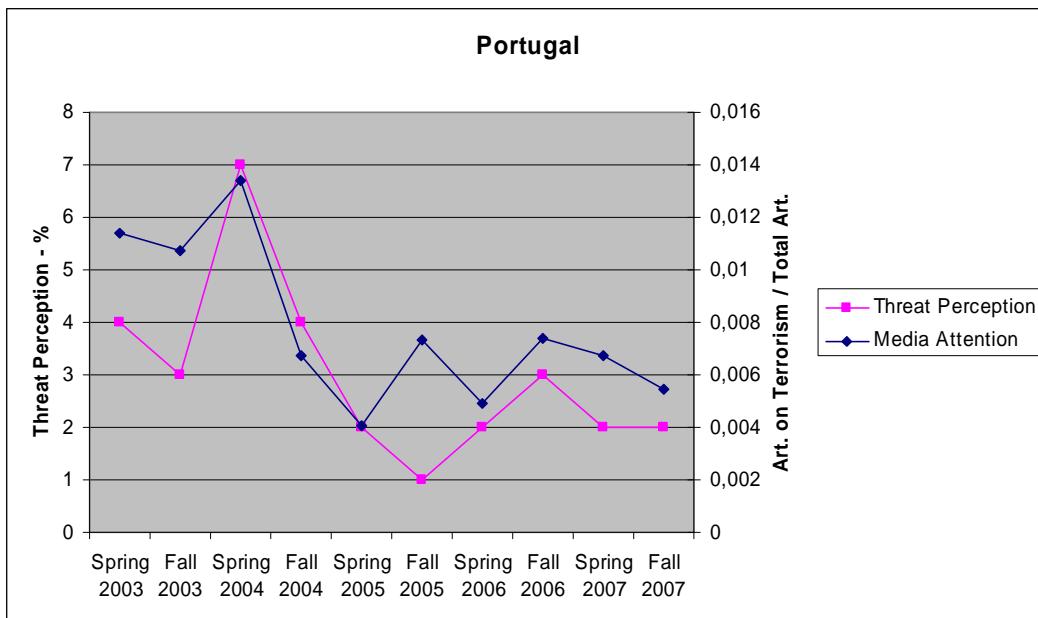
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
terrorismo	terrorismo	Portugal	Portugal	Portugal	Portugal
Portugal	países	guerra	terrorismo	terrorismo	Lusa
países	política	terrorismo	Governo	países	terrorismo
internacional	Portugal	países	Lusa	Governo	voos
terroristas	Europa	Iraque	Durão Barroso	disse	Lisboa
Estados Unidos	ministro	Lisboa	Lisboa	Lusa	Governo
EUA	presidente	Durão Barroso	ministro	Estado	ministro
ministro	país	Governo	Iraque	segurança	países
atentados	OSCE	ministro	Europeia	Lisboa	disse
norte	Governo	mesmo	disse	Europeia	relatório

Spain
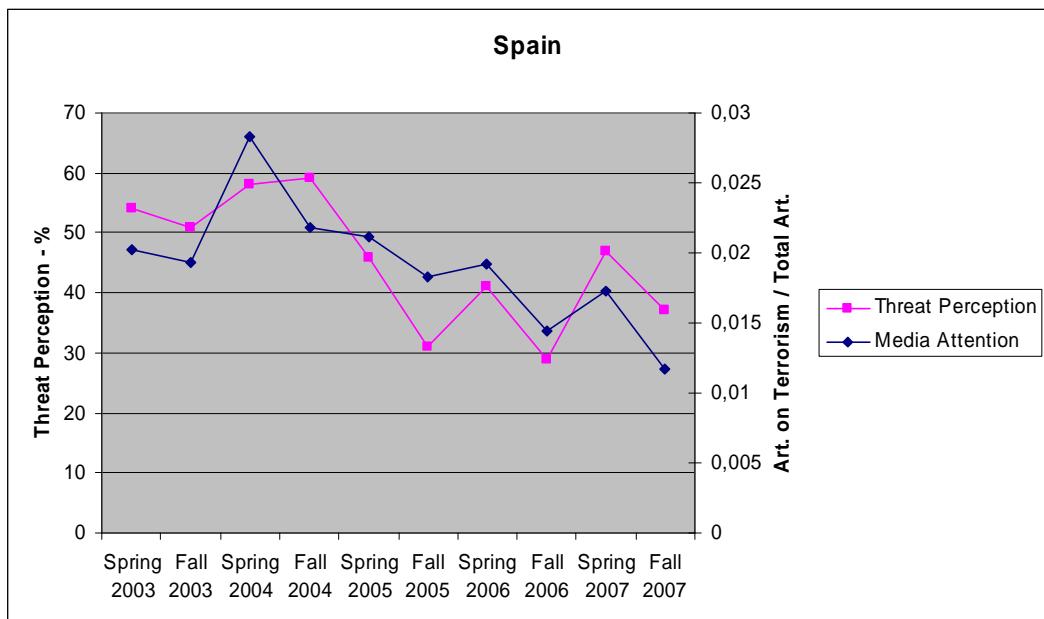
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
ETA	ETA	Gobierno	Aznar	Gobierno	Gobierno	ETA
Gobierno	Gobierno	ETA	Gobierno	Espaa	ETA	Gobierno
PNV	terrorismo	terrorismo	Espaa	ETA	Nota	Zapatero
PSOE	Aznar	Espaa	Irak	PP	Espaa	PP
PP	Espaa	Aznar	ETA	terrorismo	PP	Nota
poltica	PP	Batasuna	terrorismo	Zapatero	Zapatero	Espaa
terrorismo	PNV	PP	PP	Aznar	terrorismo	presidente
Aznar	poltica	poltica	poltica	presidente	poltica	poltica
Espaa	vasco	PSOE	aos	PSOE	presidente	aos
vasco	Estados Unidos	aos	presidente	poltica	EEUU	terrorismo

Sweden
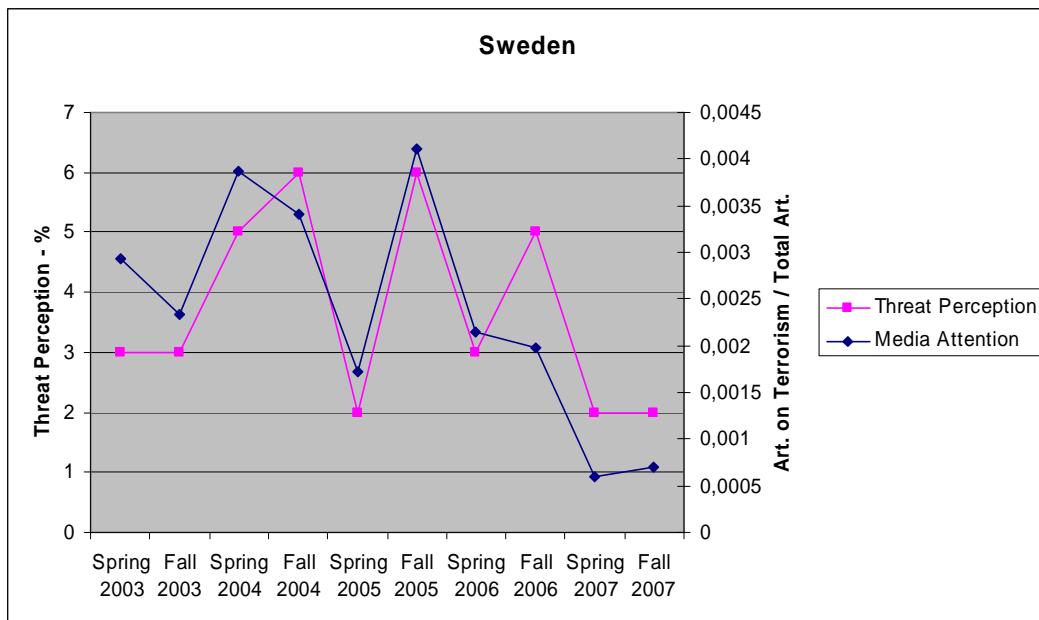
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
USA	USA	Sverige	USA	information	USA
Sverige	EU	dessa	Irak	tfn	nya
FN	Sverige	USA	al-Qaida	kontakta	kriget
terrorism	svenska	stder	EU	FN	Clausewitz
EU	CIA	the	nya	EU	krig
SvD	Afghanistan	svenska	terrorism	Sverige	EU
Afghanistan	Europa	globala	frskte	nya	Gat
lnder	polisen	miljarder	Vita huset	Posner	Sverige
kravallerna	FN	EU	Clarke	stater	FN
bin Ladin	Turkiet	Bush	Sverige	terrorism	menar

United Kingdom
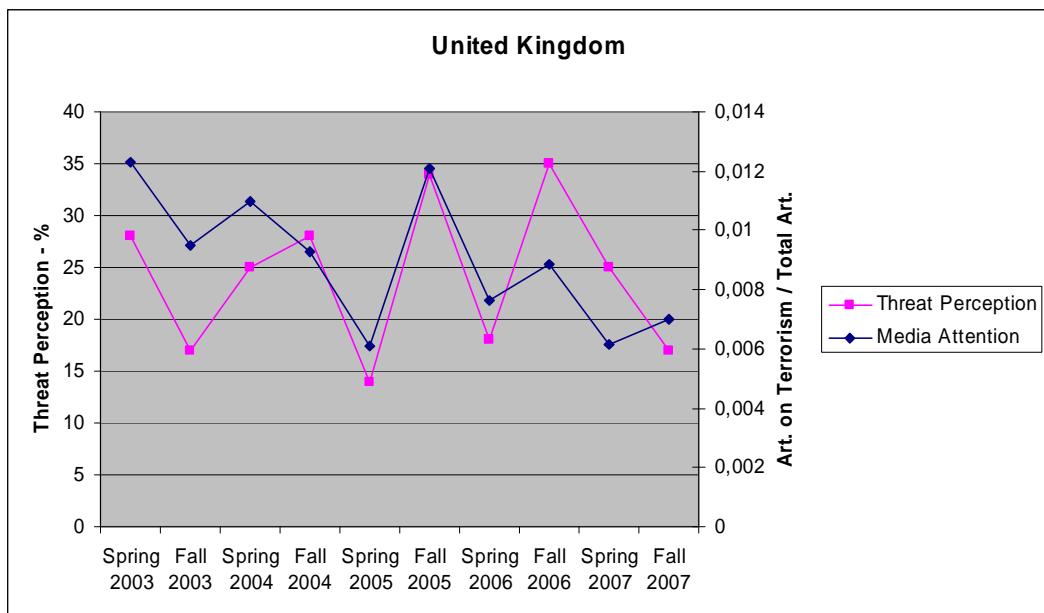
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Mr	Mr	Mr	war	year	London	Mr
people	war	war	Iraq	Mr	police	Basket1
police	Afghanistan	year	Mr	people	people	people
British	people	Iraq	people	terrorism	Mr	police
Northern Ireland	terrorism	people	year	security	terrorism	British
years	Basket1	terrorism	terrorism	police	Basket1	terrorism
year	year	Bush	police	business	year	year
IRA	September	Basket1	British	time	Blair	London
time	bin Laden	September	security	British	British	security
Adair	British	British	Bush	years	Mr Blair	Britain