

A Look at Community Terrorism

Charles Titus, MPA

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There were many events that took place during 2012. Some of the events were good, some were interesting, and some were horrible. One example was the movie John Carter which was released in the United States and recorded one of the biggest losses in cinema history. One of the good events that took place was when the FBI announced that Megaupload.com was shut down due to copyright infringement. However, the year 2012 was the year that many horrible events took place that has led to the new phenomenon that should be known as community terrorism.

The events that I am referring to are the number of mass shootings and violence that was carried out across the United States for no apparent reason or because the person that carried out the attack was upset for a reason that was not associated with politics, religion or social issues. Zornick (2012) noted that in 2012 there were sixteen mass shootings that took place. These events are referred to as many different names such as mass shootings, domestic terrorism, people going crazy, or a number of other names. These events can't be considered terrorism or domestic terrorism. Martin (2009) found that "the U.S. Department of Defense defines terrorism as the unlawful use of, or threatened use, of force or violence against individuals, or property to coerce and intimidate government or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives" (p. 43). In other words, the sixteen mass shootings that took place in the United States in 2012 can't be referred to as terrorism because the acts were not carried out to coerce and intimidate a government or societies for a political, religious, or ideological reason. Now that leads us to domestic terrorism. Fletcher (2008) found that the FBI has defined domestic terrorism as:

"the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."

In other words, the main difference between terrorism and domestic terrorism is that domestic terrorism are acts carried out in the United States or Puerto Rico to further a political or social objective. None of the mass shootings have been proven to be domestic terrorism since the attacks were not carried out

to further a political or social objective.

These mass shootings have to be considered community terrorism. This is violence that was carried out for reasons that are not related to religious, political or social objectives. The definition of community terrorism is very similar to domestic terrorism but with one key difference. Community terrorism is the unlawful use, or threatened use, or force or violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction committed against persons or property for reasons that are not associated with political, religious, or social objectives and the acts that are carried out may or may not intimidate or coerce a government or the civilian population. These attacks were carried out because the person or persons involved decided to attack two or more people. So, community terrorism is violence that is carried out by a person or persons that are not trying to coerce a government over a political, religious, or social view. They are just carrying out the attack as a selfish act and not worried about the effects that it will have on the community in which the attack was carried out in.

Community terrorism does not have to be carried out in a certain setting. The setting of community terrorism can be anywhere that someone decides to carry out an attack. One attack occurred on July 20, 2012 when James Holmes entered a movie theater during “a midnight screening of *The Dark Knight Rises* and opens fire with a semi-automatic weapon; twelve people are killed and fifty-eight are wounded” (Zornick, 2012). Another attack occurred on December 14 when Adam Lanza forced his way into Sandy Hook Elementary School and killed “twenty-six people” which included “twenty children, before killing himself” (Zornick, 2012). Both of these attacks were carried out in completely different locations. However, they both were carried out for reasons that were not associated with politics, religion, or social views.

The year 2012 had many events that took place. It was the year that the new phenomenon of community terrorism really came to light. These individuals attacked for reasons that were not associated with politics, religion, or social views. They were just carried out for reasons that may never

be known. By understanding the phenomenon of community terrorism, communities can try to prepare for an event that might take place within their community.

References

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