

## **Transcript**

**Mark Hamm** I'm Mark Hamm from Indiana State University. And we are working on an NIJ project on lone wolf terrorism in America looking at prevention strategies through an understanding of the radicalization process by law enforcement.

### **Defining the lone wolf**

Lone-wolf terrorism is someone who acts alone without the help or encouragement of a government or a terrorist organization, who acts without the direction or leadership of a hierarchy, someone who designs the plan and the methods by themselves without any sort of outside support, and who acts totally alone without the support of any second individual or third individual.

### **The difference between mass violence and terrorism**

It has to be political crime. By definition, that's what terrorism is, right, it has to have a political motive. And that is consistent with the government's definition and most academic definitions. It has to have a political grounding. Therefore, a mass shooting at Aurora or what happened in Connecticut, as far as we know so far, there was no political basis for that. It was simply an act of mass shooting. Columbine and Virginia Tech, for example, these were primarily initiated out of revenge or grief. You know, sometimes these are the motives.

We also exclude — because of the definition — we also exclude acts of political violence, acts of violence that were committed for pursuit of financial profit or fame. A famous case is John Hinckley in the shooting of President Reagan, right, done primarily for Hinckley to gain some sort of notoriety. So the basis was less political than it was individual in a search for deep celebrity of some sort.

### **How prevalent is lone wolf terrorism today?**

We look at lone-wolf terrorism from 1940 until 2012, and actually we've got two more cases in 2013 and we're just two months into it. And we see a spike in incidences of lone-wolf terrorism beginning at around 2009. And in 2009 and 2010 we had some very important cases, the Fort Hood shooting, the attack on the Holocaust Museum, those happened in 2009. The case of the shooting down in Little Rock, Arkansas, Army Recruiting Center, the attack on Representative Giffords, so a number of these high-profile cases have occurred since 2009. Some of these have been thwarted plots, some of these have been executed attacks, so as we do the math on this, since 2009 we see on average one of these attacks or interrupted plots once every about 45 days.

### **Broadcasting intent**

What we find is that many of them indeed broadcast their intent to commit violence. Theodore Kaczynski, the Unabomber, famously published the manifesto in the New York Times and in the Washington Post saying what he was going to do, right. People will have to die, said Kaczynski, right, so he not only took responsibility, he forewarned people that he was going to do this.

Jared Loughner, the young disturbed man who shot Gabby Giffords, posted YouTube videos before the incident, in which he railed against the government, in which he burned flags; in one he even provides his own definition of terrorism. And he then exchanged letters with the Congresswoman, so she knew who he was. The letters went back and forth. His high school — his college classmates knew that he had very deep-seated anger about the Congresswoman. And so this was not in isolation, he was broadcasting his intent to commit violence.

Now, I've mentioned 2 of 80 cases, and so I can't go through every one of them, but all I can say is that so far as we look at these we've seen a pattern in which these people almost cry out to others that they're going to commit this act of violence.

### **Describe your study**

This will be the largest database on lone-wolf terrorism that's ever been created. Again, we have some 80 to 90 cases across 16 variables — that's some 1,300 data points on lone-wolf terrorism — and it also includes military experience, it includes the locus of radicalization. In other words, where were they radicalized, so defining that some were radicalized in the military, some were radicalized in the workplace, some were radicalized over the internet. So understanding place of radicalization we think is important

too, because in this sends some message to those organizations that this does happen within these particular social institutions.

**What is the goal of this study?**

We would like to give police and policymakers a document that could identify some potential signatures of an attack by someone who may be a lone-wolf terrorist — signatures, broadcasting of terrorist intent being one of the major ones; affiliate or some sort of an affinity with an extremist group, but not membership in the group, but demonstrates some affinity; the presence of perhaps an enabler, someone who comes from the outside, is not part of any sort of conspiracy or plot, but through their rhetoric they inspire, they enable this person to do that. So if you put these things — And there are others, there's 16 total variables that try to predict these cases and the more that we can understand those and articulate what they are, they may indeed provide a set of signatures for investigators working to the left of bang.

[End of video clip]