

interfere with the resolution of the incident. Based on these precedents and on experience in other countries, in particular the United Kingdom*, several witnesses suggested that substantial gains can be made in this direction.

Several witnesses felt it appropriate and often necessary that information be withheld from public release during an incident, but that the same information need not be withheld from journalists for release later on. They had in mind a procedure whereby journalists would be fully and continuously briefed by police officers on all aspects of the situation, including the police's plan for resolution. In addition, cameramen and still photographers would be allowed safe access to take pictures for public release later on. Suggestions were made by witnesses that the media could be briefed on a pool basis, whereby a few journalists would be briefed by police and these journalists would, in turn, provide the information to the remaining journalists, on the basis of strict equality. In briefing the journalists, however, the police would clearly identify the information that could be released to the public immediately and the information that could not be released until the incident is over. The grounds for not releasing certain information would be that to do so would endanger life, or interfere with the resolution of the incident. This approach would result in the media knowing all during an incident, but being allowed to publish or broadcast certain information only after the incident is over, or sooner with police authorization. The condition would be, not only that the media respect the police's directions on the release of such information, but also that the media refrain from using other sources of information, such as telephone calls into the terrorists, that could interfere with police handling of the incident.

Some witnesses recommended another innovation for major urban centres: As a matter of police policy, any journalist accepted into the "pool" could be accredited by the police. Police accreditation could include "auditing" or participation in at least some police anti-terrorist training programs. It was argued that this would raise the journalists' credibility with the police and would help the journalists evaluate and understand the police actions during an incident, in particular the necessity to withhold certain information temporarily.

* The London Metropolitan Police Force follows the "Marks Guidelines" for media relations that are essentially identical to the approach recommended in this Part. The Guidelines were named after Sir Robert Mark, who issued the guidelines during his tenure as Chief Commissioner. During the kidnapping of German industrialist Hans Martin Schleyer, the German government successfully obtained agreement from the media to restrain its coverage until the incident was terminated. In return, the media were given a detailed account of developments as they occurred, by the authorities. With the exception of a few minor publications, the German media respected the agreement.