**Report to the Justice and Treasury Departments Regarding law enforcement interaction with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas**

submitted by Nancy T. Ammerman

September 3, 1993

The following report and recommendations are based largely on oral briefings conducted on July 1-2 at the Justice Department, as well as on August 3 at the Treasury Department and at the FBI Training Academy at Quantico. In addition, I have had access to a number of other sources. We were supplied with background information on many of the persons in the Investigative Support Unit, and I was supplied with a list of the experts consulted by the FBI during the affair. I have consulted with academic colleagues and have reviewed a good deal of the academic literature on New Religious Movements. Various political and lobbying groups have sent me information. I talked with Glenn Hilburn at Baylor, and I spent two hours with Pete Smerick and Gregg McCrary at the FBI Academy.

I do not pretend that this represents a full accounting of what happened at Waco. That has not been my aim. Rather, what follows attempts to assess the nature and quality of the expert advice available to the agencies involved in this situation and to make some suggestions about how that advice might better be utilized in the future.

I. What information sources were available in the Waco affair?

A. The Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms. In the months that led up to the February 28 attempted "dynamic entry" at the Branch Davidian compound, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) apparently failed to solicit any social science background information about the nature of the group with which they were dealing. BATF has no internal behavioral science division and did not consult with any other behavioral science persons within the government. Nor did they consult with outside persons in religious studies, sociology of religion, or psychology of religion. There were, for instance, persons in the Baylor University Department of Religion who had studied this particular group for much of its history; they were not consulted. Investigators reviewing the Waco incident have repeatedly told us that BATF simply did not consult with anyone who might be considered an "expert" on this group or groups like it.

In their attempt to build a case against the Branch Davidians, BATF did interview persons who were former members of the group and at least one person who had "deprogrammed" a group member. Mr. Rick Ross, who often works in conjunction with the Cult Awareness Network (CAN), has been quoted as saying that he was "consulted" by the BATF. My suspicion is that he was merely one among many the BATF interviewed in its background checks on the group and on Koresh. However, it is unclear how information gained from him was evaluated. The Network and Mr. Ross have a direct ideological (and financial) interest in arousing suspicion and antagonism against what they call "cults". These same persons seem to have been major sources for the series of stories run by the Waco newspaper, beginning February 27. It seems clear that people within the "anti-cult" community had targeted the Branch Davidians for attention.

Although these people often call themselves "cult experts," they are certainly not recognized as such by the academic community. The activities of the CAN are seen by the National Council of Churches (among others) as a danger to religious liberty, and deprogramming tactics have been increasingly found to fall outside the law. At the very least, Mr. Ross and any ex-members he was associated with should have been seen as questionable sources of information. Having no access to information from the larger social science community, however, BATF had no way to put in perspective what they may have heard from angry ex-members and eager deprogrammers.

B. The Federal Bureau of Investigation.

1. Outside consultants. After the failed raid, handling of the crisis passed to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). They had a much broader array of information available, although they still failed to consult a single person who might be recognized by the social science community as an expert on the Branch Davidians or on other marginal religious movements (sometimes called "cults"). The official list of outside experts consulted, compiled by the investigative team, includes three persons in the field of psychiatry who have been regular consultants to the FBI on other cases (Murray Myron, Syracuse University; Joseph Krofcheck, Yarrow Associates; Park Dietz, University of California San Diego). From my conversations with the persons in the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) who worked with the negotiators at Waco, I believe that these three persons were the most frequently consulted experts throughout the siege. Dietz assisted in writing the profile of Koresh. Others apparently assisted in recommending strategies to the negotiators and tacticians.

It is unclear which of these consultants (if any) recommended the psychological warfare tactics (Tibetan chants, sounds of rabbits dying, rock music, flood lights, helicopters hovering, etc.). None of the persons associated with NCAVC with whom I have talked claims to have favored these tactics, but no one was willing to say who recommended them or how the decision was made to use them.

Three other persons were apparently called in for specific, limited, consultations. Because he was examining the children who were leaving the compound, Bruce Perry, a Baylor Medical School psychiatrist, was consulted. A pastor in Virginia (Douglas Kittredge) was consulted on one occasion, offering assistance in interpreting the scriptural references being used by Koresh. And CBN talk show host Craig Smith was consulted regarding the airing of the Koresh tape.

Finally, one person in religious studies was consulted by the Bureau--Glenn Hilburn, chair of the Religion Department at Baylor. He was contacted about one week after the initial raid and was asked especially for help in interpreting Koresh's ideas about the "seven seals." He offered the negotiators basic tools for interpreting scripture (a set of commentaries and concordances) and consulted with them on a number of occasions about various biblical interpretations. While Hilburn is a reputable scholar in church history, he would never claim to be an expert on the Davidians or on other marginal religious movements. He often offered to help the Bureau get in touch with others who might offer such expertise, but he was not asked to do so. For instance, Prof. Bill Pitts, also of the Baylor faculty, had studied the history of the Davidians, but was not consulted by the FBI. Nor did they seek Prof. Hilburn's help in locating others, outside the Baylor faculty, who might help.

In my judgment, this list of outside consultants is sorely wanting. The psychiatrists who were most intimately involved are undoubtedly experienced in helping the FBI understand "the criminal mind." This however, was a very different situation, and we have no evidence that any of these men had background or experience in dealing with a high-commitment religious group. The only experts in religion that were consulted lacked the kinds of expertise necessary for understanding the dynamics of a marginal religious movement.

One of the dilemmas faced by the Waco negotiators was the problem of assessing the potential helpfulness of outside experts. Agents on the scene in Waco described their situation as information overload. One person referred to the threat of "fax meltdown." Not only were they receiving constant information about the situation as it unfolded, they were also being bombarded with offers of help from all sorts of unknown sources. Many of these were judged to be "crack pots." Others were probably legitimate and potentially helpful persons. However, the persons on the scene had no way to evaluate this information. With no one in the scholarly community at their disposal to help evaluate the credentials and experience of these persons, they were forced simply to discount everything they received.

Conclusions. Since the BATF consulted no outside experts and the FBI consulted only a limited roster, both agencies were then relying primarily on their own internal capabilities. As we have seen, BATF has no internal behavioral science personnel. As a result, all of their planning was based on building up a legal case against the group and planning a para-military type assault on the compound. In that atmosphere, I believe, it became easy to lose sight of the human dynamics of the group involved, to plan as if the group were indeed a military target. It also discouraged the BATF from seeking other forms of intervention in the group. Quite simply, the agency pursued the line of action--armed assault--for which they were best equipped. If they had been better equipped to pursue interventions based on human science advice, they might have acted differently.

2. Internal advice. The FBI, on the other hand, did have solid Behavioral Science advice available internally. The Behavioral Science Services Unit, especially its Investigative Support Unit, at the NCAVC, houses a number of people with considerable working knowledge of marginal religious groups. For instance, Gregg McCrary, in the Criminal Investigative Analysis subunit, is well-informed in this area and was on the scene in Waco throughout much of the siege. While no one there would be considered an "expert" by the usual standards of scholarship (academic credentials and publication, that is), several have done sufficient reading to have a good basic knowledge of the nature of religious groups. They know that religious beliefs have to be taken seriously, and they know that it takes more than understanding an individual personality to understand the dynamics of a group. They could benefit from additional training and from access to reliable outside experts (about which I will say more below), but they had the basic social science knowledge they needed to analyze this situation.

In the early days of the siege, Pete Smerick (along with outside consultant Park Dietz) put together a profile of David Koresh and of the group. They used materials gathered by the BATF, but knew they should weigh carefully the reports from former members.

Based on that assessment, Smerick (with Special Agent Mark Young) wrote on March 5, in a memo to his superiors (the Special Agents in Charge at Waco and people in headquarters in Washington),

...For years he [Koresh] has been brainwashing his followers for this battle [between his church and his enemies], and on February 28, 1993, his prophesy came true.

As of March 5, 1993, Koresh is still able to convince his followers that the end in near and, as he predicted, their enemies will surround them and kill them.

In traditional hostage situations, a strategy which has been successful has been negotiations coupled with ever increasing tactical presence. In this situation, however, it is believed this strategy, if carried to excess, could eventually be counter productive and could result in loss of life.

Every time his followers sense movement of tactical personnel, Koresh validates his prophetic warnings that an attack is forthcoming and they are going to have to defend themselves. According to his teachings, if they die defending their faith, they will be saved.

On March 7, Smerick and Young listed the psychological warfare tactics available to the FBI, but cautioned that these options "would also succeed in shutting down negotiations and convince Koresh and his followers that the end is near." On March 8, the same pair cautioned that the Mt. Carmel compound was for the Davidians sacred ground, something they were likely to defend against the intrusions of people they considered evil (the federal government). Summarizing the arguments of people using primarily "criminal" or psychological categories to explain Koresh, they wrote,

It has been speculated that Koresh's religious beliefs are nothing more than a con, in order to get power, money, women, etc., and that a strong show of force (tanks, APC's, weapons, etc.) will crumble that resolve, causing him to surrender. In fact, the opposite very well may also occur, whereby the presence of that show of force will draw David Koresh and his followers closer together in the "bunker mentality", and they would rather die than surrender.

They go on to detail the way in which FBI actions are playing into the prophetic scheme of Koresh, warning that "we may unintentionally make his prophesy [death, or the "fourth seal"] come true, if we take what he perceives to be hostile or aggressive action." They note that "mass suicide ordered by Koresh cannot be discounted." Then, following their logic through to its conclusion, they point out that "one way to take control away from him is to do the opposite of what he is expecting. Instead of moving towards him, we consider moving back. This may appear to be appeasement to his wishes, but in reality, it is taking power away from him. He has told his followers that an attack is imminent, and this will show them that he was wrong."

It is my belief that this understanding of Koresh's ideas was basically accurate and that their assessment of his likely behavior was on target. While outside experts might have refined this picture and added nuance to the assessment, the basic direction of the FBI's own behavioral analysts was sound.

II. How was behavioral science advice utilized in Waco?

Clearly the advice of these agents was not heeded. Why? The answer to that question takes us first to the structure of command and second to the culture and training of the Bureau itself.

Most basically, people representing the Behavioral Sciences Unit were out-ranked and out-numbered. Within the command structure, people from the Hostage Rescue Team carried more

weight than people who were negotiators. In addition, it is evident that people from the tactical side were simply trusted more and more at home with the Special Agents in Charge (SACs) in Waco.

As I understand it, the SACs for this operation were chosen on the basis of proximity, not on the basis of any special training or experience for an operation like this. Understandably, their primary skills are in the apprehension of criminals and in the management of personnel. Under normal circumstances, they can count on key assistance in apprehension of criminals from their SWAT teams and from Hostage Rescue Teams, and predictably they listened most closely to people who spoke the language of forceful tactics. This was the territory in which they were most comfortable, possibly the direction in which they perceived the most potential rewards. There was an understandable desire among many agents in Waco to make Koresh and the Davidians pay for the harm they had caused. Arguments for patience or unconventional tactics fell on deaf ears.

Those ears were deaf for a number of reasons, many of which have to do with the training and culture of the Bureau. In all likelihood, these SACs had had no behavioral science training since their very early days training as agents. And then, they were very unlikely to have heard anything about religious belief systems of group dynamics. Their entire professional world has been constructed (understandably) around understanding and out-maneuvering criminals. They think (again, understandably) in terms of individual behavior (hence the near exclusive focus on Koresh, rather than on the group) and on criminal wrong-doing (hence the label sociopath for someone seen as dangerously at odds with society's norms). Little, if anything, in their previous experience prepared them for the kind of situation Mt. Carmel presented them.

The tendency to discount the influence of religious beliefs and to evaluate situations largely in terms of a leader's individual criminal/psychological motives is, I believe, very widespread in the Bureau. In our initial briefings with Daniels, Johnson, Wright, Noesner, and Uteg, the consensus around the table was that when they encountered people with religious beliefs, those beliefs were usually a convenient cover for criminal activity. While they were willing to consider that this case might have been different, they were still not convinced that Koresh was anything other than a sociopath who had duped some people into helping him carry out aggressive criminal activity. They continued to refer to the people in the compound as hostages, failing to recognize the free choice those people had made in following Koresh.

Behavior science advice, then, failed to get an adequate hearing. In the culture of the law enforcement community, neither training nor experience prepares agents for taking behavioral scientists seriously. And in the crisis situation, behavioral scientists are out-ranked and out-numbered. As a result, those in charge dealt with this situation as if it were one more familiar to them--a criminal committing illegal acts for personal gain for whom the threat of force is a significant deterrent.

III. What, in hindsight, should the BATF and the FBI have taken into consideration in dealing with the Branch Davidians?

1. They should have understood the pervasiveness of religious experimentation in American history and the fundamental right of groups like the Davidians to practice their religion. On that score, they might have benefitted by reading Jon Butler's *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), in which he gives a detailed portrait of the

breadth of religious belief and practice in early America. Catherine Albanese's *America: Religion and Religions* (Wadsworth, 1992) does the same up through the present. We have simply been a very religious people, and there have always been new and dissident religious groups challenging the boundaries of toleration.

And alongside all that religious fervor and experimentation has been our First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty. Only when there is clear evidence of criminal wrong-doing can authorities intervene in the free exercise of religion, and then only with appropriately low levels of intrusiveness. For a critical look at the regulatory issues raised by new and marginal religious groups, an article by David Bromley and Thomas Robbins, "The Role of Government in Regulating New and Nonconventional Religions" (Pp. 205-241 in *The Role of Government in Monitoring and Regulating Religion in Public Life*, edited by James Wood and Derek Davis. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1992) might have proven helpful to agents planning a raid on the Waco compound.

2. They should have understood that new or dissident religious groups are often "millennialist" or "apocalyptic". That is, they foresee the imminent end of the world as we know it and the emergence of a new world, usually with themselves in leadership roles. Among the many books and articles that would have helped agents understand such beliefs are Paul Boyer's *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); Susan J. Palmer and Natalie Finn's 1992 article "Coping with Apocalypse in Canada: Experiences of Endtime" (*Sociological Analysis* 53(4, winter):397-415); and Roy Wallis's edited book *Millennialism and Charisma*. (Belfast: Queen's University, 1982), especially the chapters by Balch and by Wallis.

3. They should have understood that the usual fate of new religious movements is quiet extinction through natural causes. Only a fraction of those that begin survive as a group more than a few years, and an even smaller fraction make it through the crisis that is precipitated by the natural death of the leader. For helpful background on factors in the success and failure of such groups, I would suggest the articles by Stark and by Wilson in David Bromley and Phillip Hammond's edited volume *The Future of New Religious Movements* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1987).

4. They should also have understood that new groups almost always provoke their neighbors. By definition, new religious groups think old ways of doing things are at best obsolete, at worst evil. Their very reason for existing is to call into question the status quo. They defy conventional rules and question conventional authorities. Not surprisingly, then, new groups often provoke resistance. A number of social scientists have examined the relationship between marginal religious groups and the surrounding society. Among the most helpful are Charles Harper and Bryan F. Le Beau's 1993 article, "The Social Adaptation of Marginal Religious Movements in America." (*Sociology of Religion* 54(2, summer):171-192); James T. Richardson's 1993 article "Definitions of Cult: From Sociological-Technical to Popular-Negative" (*Review of Religious Research* 34(4, June):348-356); and the book Richardson edited with Joel Best and David G. Bromley, *The Satanism Scare* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1991). These sources help to put groups like the Cult Awareness Network in context. Such groups are organized "anti-cult" responses that make predictable charges (such as child abuse and sexual "perversion") against groups that are seen as threatening. It is important to see that new religious groups are usually more threatening to cherished notions about how we all ought to order our lives than to our physical well-being.

The corollary to their provocation of neighbors is that they themselves are likely to perceive the outside world as hostile. This almost always takes the form of rhetoric condemning the evil ways of non-believers, and that rhetoric can sometimes sound quite violent. It may also be supplemented by rituals that reinforce the group's perception that they are surrounded by hostile forces (thus reinforcing their own sense of solidarity and righteousness). It is at least *possible* that rhetoric about the BATF as the Davidians' arch-enemy, the purchase of guns, and practicing with those guns served just such rhetorical and ritual purposes. That is, as the group talked about the evils of the federal government and went through the ritual motions of rehearsing a confrontation with their enemies, they may have been reinforcing their own solidarity more than they were practicing for an anticipated actual confrontation. The irony, of course, is that their internal group rhetoric and ritual did eventually come true.

5. They should also have understood that many new religious movements do indeed ask for commitments that seem abnormal to most of us, and those commitments do mean the disruption of "normal" family and work lives. Most of us are accustomed to seeing religion as relevant only to portions of our lives, with wide areas of decision-making (from marriage partners to what we do at work) kept neatly out of the reach of religious authorities. However, throughout much of the world and throughout much of human history, such neat divisions have not been the norm. People have lived in tightly-knit communities in which work, family, religion, politics, and leisure (what there was of it) fell under one domain. Taking the long view, not belonging to such a community is more abnormal than belonging to one. No matter how strange such commitments may seem to the rest of us, they are widely sought by millions of people. A number of social scientists have written accounts of everyday life in such religious groups, and those accounts can help readers to understand the sense of coherence and belonging that outweigh, for the believers, any freedom of choice they give up. One such recent book is David Van Zandt's *Living in the Children of God* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

6. They should also understand that the vast majority of those who make such commitments do so voluntarily. The notion of "cult brainwashing" has been thoroughly discredited in the academic community, and "experts" who propagate such notions in the courts have been discredited by the American Psychological Association and the American Sociological Association. While there may be real psychological needs that lead persons to seek such groups, and while their judgment may indeed be altered by their participation, neither of those facts constitutes coercion.

An review of the legal issues surrounding allegations of brainwashing can be found in James Richardson's 1991 article, "Cult/Brainwashing cases and freedom of religion" (*Journal of Church and State* 33:55-74). Alternative views on the process of joining (and leaving) new religious movements can be found in David Bromley and Anson Shupe's 1986 article, "Affiliation and Disaffiliation: A Role Theory Interpretation of Joining and Leaving New Religious Movements" (*Thought* 61:197-211); Stuart Wright's *Leaving Cults* (Washington: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1987); and Eileen Barker's award-winning 1984 book *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing?* (Oxford: Blackwell).

7. They should have understood the ability of a religious group to create an alternative symbolic world. Ideas about "logic" as we know it simply do not hold, but that does not mean that the group has no logic. The first dictum of sociology is "Situations perceived to be real are real in their

consequences." No matter how illogical or unreasonable the beliefs of a group seem to an outsider, they are the real facts that describe the world through the eyes of the insider.

8. The agents should have understood that "charisma" is not just an individual trait, but a property of the constantly-evolving relationship between a leader and followers. The leader is a prophet only so long as members believe him (or her) to be so. And those beliefs are sustained by the constant interplay between events and the leader's interpretation of them. So long as the leader's interpretations make sense of the group's experience, that leader is likely to be able to maintain authority. These interpretations are not a fixed text, but a living, changing body of ideas, rules, and practices. Meaning emerges daily in the interaction of sacred texts (in this case the Bible), events, and the imagination of leader and followers. Only in subsequent generations are religious prescriptions likely to become written orthodoxies.

Among the sources that might have helped in understanding charisma is Timothy Miller's edited book, *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991). In his introductory essay in that volume, J. Gordon Melton writes that the first generation of a new group is "a time of experimentation and rapid change. The leader must discover the right elements to combine in a workable program, generate solutions to unexpected obstacles, choose and train capable leaders, and elaborate upon the initial ideas or vision that motivated the founding of the group....The group formally or informally gives feedback in the form of approval or disapproval of the leader's actions. The most successful leaders are continually adjusting and reacting to that feedback" (p. 11). Other essays in that book examine the relationship between groups and their charismatic founders, from the Shakers to the Moonies.

Understanding that the relationship between leaders, followers, and practices is a fluid one might have led agents to take more seriously the possibility of suggesting alternative apocalyptic interpretations to Koresh. Such a strategy was suggested (and attempted) by Houston theologian Phillip Arnold and University of North Carolina professor James Tabor. In "The Waco Tragedy: An Autobiographical Account of One Attempt to Avert Disaster" (forthcoming in *From the Ashes: Making Sense of Waco*, edited by James R. Lewis and published by Rowman and Littlefield), Tabor writes that after considerable study of the interpretations being offered by Koresh, they concluded that alternative scenarios--still within his system of symbols--were possible. They hoped that he might reinterpret the "little season" of Revelation 6:11 as an extended period of time, that he might see himself as the writer of the "little book" mentioned in Revelation 10:11--and, most importantly, that he might use those reinterpretations to ask for a delay while he wrote down his insights about the seven seals. Koresh's response to their radio broadcast and tape indicated that he indeed had taken up this interpretive possibility and had begun to work on a book. In a letter sent out on April 14, he said that "as soon as I can see that people like Jim Tabor and Phil Arnold have a copy, I will come out and then you can do your thing with this beast." That he was indeed working on such a book is demonstrated by the existence of a computer disk brought out by one of the survivors who had been typing for him on the day before the fire. Ironically, it was the actions of the FBI on April 19 that evidently forced Koresh to return to his earlier interpretation of the texts--namely that the next event in the unfolding prophetic calendar would be death for his group, rather than a delay while he wrote his book.

8. And, of course, as soon as the possibility of mass martyrdom became evident, they should have reviewed the events of Jonestown. There, too, an exceptionally volatile religious group was pushed over the edge, inadvertently, by the actions of government agencies pushed forward by "concerned families". The best account of the Jonestown tragedy is John R. Hall's 1987 book, *Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Transaction). Also helpful is David Chidester's 1988 account of the religious dynamics of the People's Temple, *Salvation and Suicide: An Interpretation of Jim Jones, the Peoples Temple and Jonestown*. (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press).

9. Finally, they should have understood that any group under siege is likely to turn inward, bonding to each other and to their leader even more strongly than before. Outside pressure only consolidates the group's view that outsiders are the enemy. And isolation decreases the availability of information that might counter their internal view of the world. In this case, the federal government already enjoyed a particularly condemned place in the group's worldview. Taking that fact seriously might have changed the minds of federal agents who argued that using outside negotiators is always a mistake. Persons other than federal agents might have been able to assume a genuine third-party position in this case, translating and mediating between Koresh and the outside world. It is ironic to note that the one similar situation the FBI could point us to, in which they successfully negotiated a peaceful surrender, involved the use of an outside negotiator.

In this case, federal negotiators had a difficult time convincing Koresh to take them seriously. But even when they did, their talking strategies were constantly undermined by the actions of the tactical teams. Any success negotiators had in winning the group's confidence was completely undermined by continuing application of tactical pressure. If such pressure had been a specific response to a specific failure of Koresh to respond to negotiating proposals, it might have had some coherent psychological effect. However, such was never the case. Pressure from encroaching tanks, psychological warfare tactics, and the like, continually worked at cross-purposes with the negotiating strategies. This outside pressure only increased the paranoia of the group and further convinced them that the only person they could trust was Koresh.

IV. What outside experts might they have consulted?

I am attaching to this report a copy of a letter from the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion which includes several names and addresses of people recognized by that academic organization as experts on new, marginal, and high-commitment religious groups. I am also including in that appendix several additional names of persons whose research I have found helpful.

In addition, to help in locating experts and in evaluating the credentials of volunteer "experts", law enforcement agencies can turn to the American Sociological Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the Association for the Sociology of Religion, or the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

V. Conclusions. Knowing these things might not have changed the outcome in Waco. It is unclear to me whether any negotiating strategy could have succeeded in getting most or all of the members to leave the compound. However, paying attention to these basic facts about the nature of religious

groups would at least have enabled federal agents to have a clearer picture of the situation they were in. They were not in a hostage rescue situation. They were in a tragic stand-off with a group for whom they were already the enemy foretold to destroy them.

VI. Recommendations. In order for this sort of thinking to become available in future situations, several modes of access seem important.

1. Basic training. The training for all agents should include units in the behavioral sciences and units that give attention to the nature of political and religious groups. These units should emphasize both the rights of such groups to exist unhindered and the characteristics of high-commitment groups that may be relevant to future efforts at law enforcement. Such units should be aimed not so much as making every agent an expert as at sensitizing agents to the complex human dimensions of the situations in which they may find themselves. When they hear behavioral scientists advising them later, it will not be the first time they have heard such voices in the law enforcement community.

2. Advanced training. Incidents like Waco are, fortunately, relatively rare. Not everyone in federal law enforcement needs to be an expert on such situations. However, it appears that there is a need for a standing group of specialists in managing this sort of crisis. Rather than turning to whoever happens to be the local SAC, the FBI (and similar federal agencies) should have a small corps of crisis managers available. These persons should have received advanced training both in the various tactical measures at their disposal and in the insights available to them from the behavioral sciences.

3. Training and expertise for other federal agencies. An expanded Behavioral Sciences unit, perhaps not lodged in a single agency, might make a broader pool of behavioral science information available on a regular basis to all federal law enforcement agencies. I was particularly struck by the fact that ATF has no such unit. No one ever had the responsibility of imagining what the people in the compound were like, how they might be thinking, etc. With dozens of federal law enforcement agencies, it would not be cost effective to set up behavioral science units in each one, but all of them need such expertise available to them.

4. A broader pool of "experts" who can be consulted. Not all sorts of expertise are needed all the time. But agencies should not be caught in a moment of crisis wondering who to call and how to assess the credentials of those who call them. It is essential that behavioral scientists inside federal law enforcement and behavioral scientists in the academic community forge expanded working ties. People in law enforcement have for too long distrusted the "ivory tower" position of academics who do not have to make "real world" decisions. They have too long insisted that only someone who is really an insider to law enforcement can give them advice. For their part, academics have for too long discounted the experience and wisdom of persons working in law enforcement because it did not come in standard academic packages. It is my sense that this incident provides an opportune moment for overcoming both those problems. Law enforcement people are more aware than ever of the need for additional insight and training, and academics are more aware of their obligation to the public.

That new cooperation might take a number of forms. The various training facilities for federal law enforcement might host a series of consultations in which a small group of academics and a small

group of agents work together for 2-3 days on problems and potential problems facing law enforcement. Academics, for their part, might organize sessions at annual professional meetings at which such questions are raised and to which law enforcement people are invited. In addition, people teaching in the various academies should be encouraged to read more widely and to draw in outside experts whenever possible. Such on-going collaboration would have the benefit of acquainting the two communities with each other so that each would be better prepared for cooperation in a time of crisis.

Most concretely, it is essential that federal law enforcement develop an expanded list of experts on which it can call. These people need not be on contract. They simply need to be people the agencies already know to be legitimate, reliable, and willing to cooperate with them. The sorts of activities I am suggesting above would aid in the development of such a list. In addition, the various professional associations could also be helpful. It is essential that persons in federal law enforcement use this occasion to think pro-actively about the kinds of situations they are likely to encounter in the future and to seek out now the expertise they will need in confronting those situations.

VI. A last word.

Finally, the presence of expert knowledge is of no use if behavioral scientists are kept marginal to the actual decision-making being done. For knowledge about human behavior to have any effect, scientists must be involved early and often. They must have at least as much "clout" in a situation as the person commanding the firepower. And, it is my sense that it may be important for the behavioral scientists to have some autonomy, to be something of an outside eye. Once a team of enforcement persons has begun to formulate a plan for dealing with a group, that plan is likely to take on a life of its own. The same dynamics that hold the religious group together also hold the enforcement group together. They are as determined to stick together against their "enemy" as is the group they are facing. Having a built-in "yellow flag" can sometimes avoid catastrophe.