

Original article

Analysis of the lone wolf phenomenon in the context of the leaderless resistance strategy

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ABSTRACT

The article presents an analysis of the phenomenon of a terrorist – a lone wolf in the context of the leaderless resistance strategy. The aim of the article is to show that individual terrorism is a basic element of the leaderless resistance strategy. The research problem is the impact of the leaderless resistance strategy on the actions of individual terrorists who organize and carry out a terrorist attack without the support of a terrorist organization. According to the leaderless resistance strategy, an individual is sufficient to organize and implement a terrorist attack.

The leaderless resistance strategy assumes maximum decentralization. The key is the existence of individuals who, sharing a particular worldview, are capable of independent organization and launching an attack. When attempting an attack, a lone wolf is appropriately motivated ideologically, but does not maintain contact with the hierarchy of the organization, and thus enhances the effect of intimidation of the society.

Individual terrorism, based on the leaderless resistance strategy, is becoming the most popular form of terrorism. An element of the leaderless resistance strategy are operations carried out by lone wolves, small groups or cells regardless of the support of official organizational structures.

KEYWORDS

terrorism, Anders Breivik, leaderless resistance strategy



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Introduction

The motif of a lone wolf performing an attack on civilian targets on his own is not a new phenomena characteristic of the fourth wave of terrorism, the face of which is religious fundamentalism. An ideologically motivated terrorist attacking alone has been already known in history. For the first time, the phenomenon of a lone wolf appeared in Russian 19th-century anarchist terrorism. A lone wolf terrorist planning and carrying out an attack without organizational support was also known in the 1960s when the leaderless resistance strategy was created. Its basic component is the activity of individual terrorists or small, autonomous cells commonly known as *a lone wolf*.

Lone wolves' attacks pose a problem and a challenge for counterintelligence services, which are responsible for acquiring advance information and enabling effective attack prevention. The threat level from individual terrorists rises as the pressure from the security services increases. The actions of the services enforce tactical adaptation of terrorist structures, which increasingly use the potential of lone wolves – individuals planning and conducting a terrorist attack independently and without organizational support. The Islamic State calls for action of all those who share the ideology. While analyzing the phenomenon of a lone wolf in the context of the strategy of leaderless resistance, it should be highlighted the shared worldviews and ideology are extremely important. A defined ideology determines the involvement of a lone wolf terrorist in terrorist activities without visible, identifiable links to a terrorist organization. It calls for independent action, without support and direct tasking.

The phenomenon of a lone wolf is identified as the earliest example of terrorism by a non-state actor. According to David Rappaport, terrorism developed in waves. Each of the waves differed in ideology, goals and *modus operandi*. The first-wave terrorism was anarchist terrorism in tsarist Russia. Then, for the first time, the phenomenon of a lone wolf appeared – an individual who attempted a terrorist attack on the representatives of state power [1, p. 43]. The second-wave terrorism was of anti-colonial nature and developed after the end of the First World War as a reaction to the decolonization process. The third wave of terrorism was linked to the development of extreme left-wing movements in the 1960s. Currently, the world is experiencing the fourth wave of terrorism, which is characterized by strong religious motivation [2, p. 48]. The term *lone wolf* used to describe the terrorist activity of an individual not belonging to wider, hierarchized terrorist structures, and with respect to terrorist activity, is experiencing its renaissance. The leaderless resistance strategy, the essential element of which is terrorist executed from the level of autonomous individuals is an extremely current matrix of analysis of the activity and motivation of the so-called lone wolf terrorists.

Terrorism is a phenomenon with complex dynamics requiring the adoption of an interdisciplinary perspective. Analyzing the historical context can significantly contribute to understanding the phenomenon of a lone wolf. Terrorism of hierarchical groups as well as lone actor terrorism should be analyzed taking into account a wider historical and political context [3, p. 28]. Current trends indicate that lone wolf terrorists will be an ever-greater threat, and the leaderless resistance strategy is the basis for explaining and interpreting the phenomenon of individual terrorism.

Terrorist activity of lone wolves is a serious challenge for law enforcement agencies. It is an opponent difficult to identify and work out since it functions outside an organized structure. It does not operate within any structure that the services could infiltrate and investigate. The lone wolf functions outside the centralized chain of command, hence he is elusive. An individual terrorist operates without direct command. Being autonomous, he functions outside the control of a terrorist network or organization. Individuals deciding to conduct a lone wolf attack often lead a double life, which allows them to act without attracting the authorities' attention [4].

According to many theories, the phenomenon of an elusive, hard-to-identify lone wolf is problematic for intelligence and counterintelligence agencies. Lack of possibilities of

infiltration deprives the services of preventive capabilities in the event of neutralization of lone wolf terrorist activities. Dynamic development of information technologies is not without significance. The Internet and technology are becoming key catalysts for planning and preparing terrorist activities by an individual terrorist. The Internet facilitates access to training materials, Jihadi publications and precise tips how to plan an attack [5]. The identification of an individual terrorist is, therefore, largely hampered not by the fact of a deep conspiracy but a smooth transition between the sphere of socially acceptable life and terrorist activity that undermines the basic canon of social values and is a stigmatized activity from the level of society. An important basis for analyzing the phenomenon of a lone wolf is the strategy of leaderless resistance published by right wing, nationalist activist Louis Beam in 1983. The strategy assumes the functioning of lone wolf terrorists who are independent of the mother-organization's logistical and financial support [See: 6, p. 83].

Terrorism implemented by the so-called lone wolves is strongly politically as well as religiously motivated. Religious motivation in the activities of a lone wolf is not a privilege that Islamic terrorists have on an exclusive basis. The lone wolf terrorist's modus operandi was widely exploited by right-wing extremists, as well as contemporary supporters and sympathizers of the global Caliphate idea. With the progressive decentralization of terrorist organizations and the development of network structures, the leaderless resistance strategy and the ideological, political or religious inspiration of an individual terrorist present a significant cognitive value, crucial for understanding the lone wolf phenomenon. Therefore, a prerequisite for defining a terrorist as a lone wolf is to act independently, excluding belonging to defined terrorist structures. The individual, motivated action of a lone wolf terrorist is still a current example of an asymmetrical, non-state actor with a much smaller potential than a state entity with armed forces and special services.

The contemporary realities, dynamics of the conflict in the Middle East and the recruitment activity of the Islamic State in Western Europe may contribute to the activation of individual terrorism. In the context of a potential attack of a solo terrorist¹, an important aspect is the return of European fighters to European countries of origin. It is the Europeans returning from fighting on the Islamic State side that pose a threat to European security. Individuals that have gained combat experience on the battlefield are properly trained, which in turn allows them to be used as terrorists prepared to attempt an attack since they do not need logistic support from the organization. The experience gained and military training make the returning Europeans potential lone wolf terrorists ready to attack regardless of the circumstances and time of attack.

Since intelligence agencies are becoming more and more specialized in detecting large-scale terrorist plots, the transition of terrorist organizations from coordinated terrorist attacks to non-standard forms of action is noticeable. The replacement of the centrally commanded attacks by less logistically specialized attacks is much more beneficial from the organization's point of view. Lower-scale attacks are more effective while

¹ A solo terrorist – a terrorist who previously had contact with a terrorist organization. He participated in terrorist networks or stayed in the territories of armed conflicts and underwent combat training.

maintaining the minimum cost of attack. The modern world is experiencing a wave of terrorist attacks, the perpetrators of which are individual terrorists using methods, which are primitive but of proven effectiveness. Despite logistical problems and the loss of self-proclaimed territory, the Islamic State intensifies the inspirational and propaganda activities aimed at acquiring individuals ready to plan and carry out an attack independently without direct organizational and financial support from the terrorist organization. Extremist groups value a lone actor model as an effective way to achieve political and ideological goals. An attack of a lone wolf is crucial for one more reason, which determines the use of this model of action by terrorist organizations. This kind of attack is characterized by a large propaganda effect and socio-psychological impact, thus it is highly desirable by terrorist groups [7, p. 19].

The latest attacks attempted in Europe by the Islamic State using the destructive potential of a lone wolf terrorist have confirmed the lack of preparedness and helplessness of the security structures of European states towards individual terrorists' activities [8, p. 613]. With the evolution of the modus operandi of terrorists and the decentralization of the terrorist network, the threat of attacks by lone wolves – individuals who do not belong to any organized terrorist structure or network and organize and carry out attacks themselves – has increased. In the era of the evolution of information technologies, the phenomenon of terrorism is constantly evolving and growing stronger and as the Islamic State is losing its potential and reach, attacks by lone wolves, individuals difficult to identify and neutralize, are increasingly common. Lone actor terrorism is part of the leaderless resistance strategy that is used by terrorist organizations and is fully compatible with the trend of decentralization of organizational structures and transition.

The phenomenon of terrorism of a lone wolf is the subject of numerous studies in the expert community. Most of the research is devoted to organized groups and terrorist structures with a defined hierarchy and structure. Researchers focus on collective socialization in which they see the explanation of the foundations of terrorism. The aim of the article is to analyze the phenomenon of a lone wolf. The essay on the leaderless resistance strategy published in 1983 is the main matrix explaining the operation of individual terrorism. The article presents an analysis of the phenomenon of a lone wolf terrorist who has a wide range of autonomy and independently organizes and conducts a terrorist attack without the support of a terrorist network or organization. The article explores the differences between the lone wolf's activities and the classic terrorist structure, with taking into account the cognitive value of the leaderless resistance strategy. The relationship between ideological inspiration and involvement in terrorist activities is crucial in understanding the phenomenon of a lone wolf acting independently of a terrorist organization.

1. Terrorist – lone wolf – an attempt to define the phenomenon

The Anders Breivik case of 2011, the 2013 Boston Marathon attack carried out by the Tsarnaev brothers and European fighters returning from the Middle East conflict to their counties of origin expose the problem of self-radicalization and self-activation of

individuals who decide to conduct a terrorist attack themselves. Despite the media studies of the terrorist figures, little is known about the motives of these individuals – Who are they? How and where did the radicalization take place? How did they learn the technical aspects necessary to perform an attack? Anders Breivik is the most notable example of a lone wolf in the modern history of individual terrorism. The problem of ideological inspiration is crucial. Breivik's terrorism is the result of sympathizing with the ideology of a radical right-wing organization.

It is worth bearing in mind that terrorism is such a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon that it is not possible to include it in a coherent and universally binding definition framework. There are a number of research perspectives focusing on various aspects of terrorism and lone wolf terrorists' actions. There is no single, coherent and universally binding definition of a lone wolf. Lone actor terrorism is an essential element of the leaderless resistance strategy, which excludes the existence of one central headquarters. Although the term *lone wolf* functions in common use, it is often not completely understandable. The phenomenon of a lone wolf is different from the so-called solo terrorism. A solo terrorist carries out a terrorist attack himself, but in the past he had contact with a terrorist organization. A solo terrorist performs a terrorist attack on behalf of the group, whose ideas he sympathizes with. A solo terrorist can task himself, but he usually stays asleep and is waiting for activation, a call to action, instructions "in advance". In many cases, solo terrorists have the proper preparation and are trained well enough to conduct independent terrorist attacks [9].

Terrorism of a lone wolf is a threat or use of violence by a single perpetrator (or a small cell). A lone wolf does not work solely because of personal material motives. His purpose is to influence an audience, society, and power structures. His activities are accompanied by striving to have an effect on the wider audience. A lone wolf terrorist is an individual that operates without explicit and direct support in planning, preparing and conducting an attack. An individual's decision to engage in terrorist activity is not influenced by any group or other entity. Nevertheless, it is an action inspired by a certain ideology or canon of values [10, p. VI].

Due to the cross-border nature of the ideology, which an individual terrorist adopts during the process of radicalization, the phenomenon of a lone wolf is a serious, unpredictable threat to states and societies. In the era of new terrorism, lone wolf terrorism will be an increasingly exploited mode of terrorist activity. The change in social dynamics in Europe as well as the technologization and digitization of life may act as a stimulus activating marginalized individuals. The widespread availability of online training materials, brochures and materials with ideological interpretations makes it easier for an average individual to engage in terrorist activities. The Internet has become a place where every individual can get to know the offer of almost every terrorist organization.

The phenomenon of a lone wolf is the emanation of new terrorism. Due to the elusive nature of ideological impact, the identification of radicalized individuals is significantly hampered. From the perspective of authorities responsible for ensuring security, the activities of lone wolf terrorists are unpredictable and difficult to work out and neutral-

ize. In the context of the dynamics of individual terrorism, the consequences of the Europeans' journeys with the aim to engage in terrorist activities on the side of the Islamic State are particularly dangerous. Residents of Europe returning from the Middle East conflict are a new challenge for the services [11].

A characteristic feature of the lone wolf's activity is that an attack is prepared and carried out independently, without the logistical and financial support of the organization. A lone wolf, however, does not work in total vacuum. An individual, regardless of intentions, is a member of society. Even if being unprivileged and marginalized, such a person still belongs to society. Radicalization is an alternative to social engagement. A radicalized lone wolf acts in conspiracy and for this reason is elusive to the services. It is a challenge since an individual terrorist limits his social interactions, he does not usually share information about a planned attack even with his immediate family. Democratization of communication contributed to the development of the phenomenon of a lone wolf. Lone wolf terrorists exploit the Internet on a large scale as a means of propagating specific ideas and getting acquainted with the offer of a terrorist organization. It is an undefined space of radicalization. While using the Internet, an individual terrorist has access to training materials and ideas. The Internet also creates a number of opportunities to share knowledge and experiences. The use by terrorist organizations of the Internet as a transmission belt for their ideology can affect the growth of individual terrorism, which is not associated with terrorist groups and is difficult to predict and prevent.

Contemporary terrorist organizations phase out coordinated attacks limited to the territory of one state. Attacks of this type have become ineffective and easily identifiable by the services. The network structure without a single decision center is a challenge for the services fighting against terrorism. The use of the ideology that is cross-border and which in the Internet age is transmitted to anywhere on earth allows terrorists to gain an advantage. A lone wolf – most often an individual inspired by a certain ideology, convinced of its legitimacy, decides to carry out an attack in the name of a "cause". An individual terrorist is a person who has undergone socialization in a specific culture and tradition. He does not act in a vacuum. Attackers differ in their motivations, political commitment as well as the methodology and logistics of an attack. They also vary in terms of the level of online activity and personal characteristics. A common feature of all lone wolves is functioning within structures and social groups. In many cases, the so-called lone wolves are those who are marginalized, deprived of access to certain goods, opportunities, perspectives, but this does not mean that they function outside the society. On the one hand, a lone wolf is a member of society while planning and organizing a terrorist attack, thus avoiding excessive interest on the part of the services. Terrorism is defined as the threat or use of violence to achieve political objectives. It is clear from the very definition that this is a political phenomenon, and terrorism can be seen as a social construct.

A significant difficulty in analyzing the phenomenon of a lone wolf is impreciseness of the term. In the common understanding, a lone wolf is an individual that operates without command, voluntarily and is in no way associated with any terrorist organiza-

tion [12]. In this context, a lone wolf is not the same as a “sleeper” terrorist who is waiting for commands and orders from the leading organization. A sleeper terrorist is tasked with infiltrating a society in which he is to prepare and conduct an attack. In full knowledge of facts he penetrates into its structures. He carries out the basic reconnaissance and stays asleep until the organization gives an order to accomplish a task. It should be emphasized that as a natural member of a given society, a lone wolf prepares and conducts a terrorist attack independently. In the media reports, a lone wolf terrorist is depicted as a marginalized isolated outcast from society, or a man with mental problems. As the research results show, an individual terrorist is not always an individual that exhibits psychopathological features.

Anders Breivik is considered an archetype of a terrorist – a lone wolf. His murder of 77 people in Oslo in 2011 shows how serious individual terrorism is. A lone wolf has become the undisputed symptom of terrorism in the 21st century. Nevertheless, before the attack Anders Breivik show signs of radicalization and connection with the organized terrorist structure. Breivik in his manifesto clearly suggested that he intended to carry out an attack as a lone wolf, and that he was a member of the Pauperes Com-militones Christi Templique Solomonice (Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon) [13] – the European military Christian order.

The characteristic aspect is that a lone wolf implements the tactics of an attack applying proven means, such as pistols, knives, explosives and motor vehicles. It is a beneficial and effective way of operating. An attack using uncomplicated means does not require experience as well as complicated specialist knowledge. Independently of the state, security agencies are unable to identify who bought a knife or vehicle for terrorist purposes.

The ideological component is important when analyzing the phenomenon of lone wolf terrorism. Lone terrorists act not only outside society. Individual terrorism is ideologically inspired. A lone wolf sympathizes with a specific ideology of an extremist organization. The network provides the transmission of the ideological message is perfectly served by. The Internet has largely disseminated access to extremist materials and functions as a lone terrorist training base. Thus, the Internet increases the radicalization potential of a particular ideology.

A characteristic feature of a lone wolf is the implementation of the tactics of the attack using proven means, such as pistols, knives, explosives and motor vehicles. It is a beneficial and effective way of acting, carrying out an attack. An attack using uncomplicated means does not require experience as well as complicated specialist knowledge. Irrespective of the state, security agencies are unable to identify who bought a knife or vehicle for terrorist purposes.

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a lone terrorist training base. Thus, the Internet increases the radicalization potential of a particular ideology [14].

In the media, the activity of a lone wolf terrorist is portrayed as irrational and crazy [15, p. 255]. Reality, however, is far from the media performances. Religion was the main stimuli for action in the majority of attacks carried out by an individual. According to the theory of rational choice, the decision to carry out an attack is not irrational, it is carefully thought out and results from the desire to maximize the benefits. It is a consequence of a rational choice. According to the theory of rational choice, a terrorist – a lone wolf aims at maximizing utility with a limited budget allocated for the task implementation. The difference between the rational choice model and the real world is due to the popularity of irrational political and religious beliefs, as well as misinterpretations and reasoning about the outside world on their basis [16, p. 105]. A lone wolf carries out mainly suicide attacks. The action of a terrorist, either a lone wolf or a suicide terrorist, is the effect of calculated, rational and, above all, conscious decisions. These decisions constitute the optimal strategy for achieving social and political goals of the perpetrators of attacks [17, p. 76]. In the light of the theory of rational choice, terrorism cannot be considered as pathological or logical action. This is the best way to meet personal needs in specific circumstances. Assuming the rationality of a terrorist's activity has certain consequences for political decision-makers. According to the research, lone wolf terrorists – suicides are in a few cases individuals with pathological and psychopathic tendencies [18, p. 15]. In contrast to individual terrorists, psychopathic individuals lack the planning ability and their actions are often characterized by irrationalism. Undoubtedly, there are cases of mental disorders among lone wolf terrorists, however this is not the rule.

In the case of a lone wolf, a psychopathic personality would manifest itself as a lack of coordination and responsibility. Nevertheless, a terrorist group can recruit an individual with psychopathic characteristics to perform a specific mission, in particular when it requires ruthlessness and lack of response to the fate of victims [20, p. 6]. However, the individual's mental state is generally of little importance.

According to P. Gill's research, lone wolf terrorists are mainly socially isolated individuals, who still remain members of society. A lone wolf is an individual denying the current status quo. A characteristic feature is the high self-radicalization ability, with no direct contact with the recruiting organization [20, p. 430]. The social isolation of individuals involved in planning and conducting of one-actor terrorist attacks is a recurrent theme of research on the phenomenon of terrorists – lone wolves. The issue of mental illness is considered in various aspects. There is no doubt that psychological predispositions and mental illnesses are an indirect reason for committing terrorist acts. However, in the case of a mental illness or its absence, the likelihood of social isolation does not increase [21, p. 26].

The action of a lone wolf minimizes the possibility of exposure and enables his flexible operation adapted to the circumstances. Minimizing the possibility of a lone wolf's exposure is reflected in the manifesto of Anders Breivik. Breivik emphasized that a lone wolf should not belong to any network or terrorist organization. This allows for staying

hidden and minimizing the possibility of exposure and neutralization by the services. Both in the case of Anders Breivik and of other individual terrorists terrorist activity is ideologically motivated. A terrorist can identify with the ideology of a particular terrorist group and at the same time he is not a member of an organization. Ideology is an important justification for the action of a lone wolf, as it goes beyond the organizational framework. Ideology is ubiquitous; it is not limited to the structural framework and hierarchy. Much more extensive ideological, political or religious foundation distinguishes a lone wolf from the killer. A killer acts only for material and selfish reasons. A lone wolf attacks, because he identifies himself with the matter and the determined canon of values [22, p. 43].

Attacks of lone wolves are different from each other. There are no two identical attacks. Each of them is conditioned by a number of factors that in other circumstances could not exist or would lead to extremely different consequences. Individual attackers, depending on the reasons, also differ in age. Nevertheless, the constitutive feature of the lone wolf's operation is functioning outside the structure, without contacting the hierarchy or the terrorist network. According to some definitions, a lone wolf may operate in small groups of several people connected by a common ideology. Such activity is part of the leaderless resistance strategy, which assumes lack of a decision-making center and a high level of autonomy of individuals and groups united around one ideological interpretation. Terrorism of a lone wolf is a specific form of action. Violence is deliberate, thought out and motivated. The actions taken are ideologically or religiously justified. In contrast to the psychopathic personality, an individual terrorist remains in relationships with others – also sympathizers of a specific ideology [24, p. 21].

Despite significant definitional differences, the definition of a lone wolf consists of several fixed elements. The basic element of all definitions is the assumption of lack of direct support from a terrorist group or network. Another constitutive feature is lack of hierarchical control and defined leadership. It is assumed that a lone wolf terrorist may act being inspired by the ideology of a terrorist group and maintain readiness for self-activation [24, p. 16]. There are several criteria that allow the qualification of terrorism as an act of individual terrorism [25, p. 860]:

- lone actor operation,
- a lone wolf does not belong to a terrorist organization or terrorist network or does not maintain a relationship with it,
- modus operandi is developed by an individual – it is not recommended by terrorist organizations or hierarchies.

Nowadays, activity is not considered and analyzed from the level of violence carried out by an organized group with a clandestine structure and an identifiable chain of command. Due to the intensification of terrorist activity and decentralization of structures, terrorism is not identified with activities carried out only by a group with an organized, defined hierarchy. Such understood terrorist activity excluded the voluntary and arbitrary action of an individual [25, p. 32]. A suicide attack creates the opportunity to achieve unique tactical benefits. Attacks by an individual terrorist are highly effec-

tive – they are more likely to be successful. Preparation and implementation of an attack requires a relatively low cost and uncomplicated. Importantly, a lone wolf does not strive to create a separate group of supporters. He does not have contact with an organized terrorist group, nor is he subject to direct orders of the organization's top management.

A characteristic feature of lone wolf terrorism is acting under the influence of strong ideological or religious beliefs. In each case, attacks by lone actor terrorists are preceded by meticulous planning and implementation. A lone wolf terrorist is able to conceal his plans against others – he lives a double life. As a lone wolf functions outside an organized structure, he is difficult to identify and work out by the services. Lack of communication with other members of terrorist organizations prevents infiltration and neutralization. However, there are known cases of the existence of the so-called packs of lone wolves. A pack of lone wolves is a small group of mutually radicalizing individuals. The April 2004 (Madrid) and 2005 (London) assassins cannot be classified as lone actor terrorists since they maintained relationships with the terrorist organization and were controlled and tasked by it. Analyzing the lone wolf phenomenon in the context of asymmetric activities, the logic of individual terrorists stems from the limited potential, not strength, in relation to the state structures.

2. A lone wolf in the historical context and the leaderless resistance strategy

In line with the current understanding of the term *lone wolf*, individual terrorism is a terrorist attack carried out by an individual operating independently of any terrorist organization or network. The phenomenon of a lone wolf is by no means new. It was commonplace already in the 19th century in the period of the intensification of anarchist terrorism in Russia and Europe. A great number of terrorist attacks were the effect of the actions of individuals. Even then, the governments and services were powerless in the face of their actions. Nowadays, attacks by lone wolves have become a regular occurrence. Getting information ahead of an attack is much more difficult, because a lone wolf does not have contact with any organization, he functions outside structures. His effectiveness is the result of a fusion of ideological inspiration, hatred and dissatisfaction with the current status quo.

Contemporary terrorism is increasingly accepting the face of a lone wolf. Nowadays, as in the past, a lone wolf did not maintain formal contacts with a terrorist organization. A terrorist does not cooperate with a hierarchical terrorist structure at the planning and execution phase of the attack. Frequently, he sympathizes with the ideology of a terrorist organization. Attacks by lone wolves differ in ideological motivations, however they show a high degree of probability taking into account the tactics used.

What is more, a lone wolf motif is common in popular culture. Since 1914, this term has been used in the best-selling series of crime novels. Nevertheless, at that time, he was not identified with terrorist activities. The phenomenon of a lone wolf as a terrorist initiated the development of far right and far left movements in the 1960s

and 1970s in the United States and Western Europe. A responsibility for the terrorist attacks of that time fell to hierarchical terrorist groups as well as individuals acting themselves. Then, a lone wolf was seen as an outcast, not a main threat.

The current understanding of the term lone wolf is derived from 1983 from the resistance strategy published by Louis Beam [27, s. 35]. However, Louis Beam is not the author of the strategy. Colonel Ulius Louis Amoss, an American anti-communist, created it in 1962. The strategy was a reaction to the threat of communist domination in the United States. Louis Beam only disseminated the concept of Ulius Amoss [28].

Individual terrorism was then the domain of extreme right-wing supporters. In the 1980s, extreme-right organizations and movements were under constant observation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). When in 1983, Louis Beam published the leaderless resistance strategy in the form of an essay, nothing indicated that it would become a universal basis for analyzing the terrorists – lone wolves' actions and would be called a military strategy for terrorists. The leaderless resistance strategy is widely used in asymmetrical operations. In accordance with the strategy, terrorist attacks are implemented by horizontal cell networks or autonomous individuals, which minimizes the possibility of exposure, infiltration and working out these activities by state agencies [29, p. 62]. To be precise, the leaderless resistance strategy appeared just after the end of World War II. It was then used mainly by American anti-communists as a way of fighting Soviet allies in Eastern Europe and Latin America.

The term *lone wolf* was popularized through the activities of the white supremacists, Alexander Curtis and Thomas Metzger, in 1990. Operation of Curtis and similar white nationalists was the subject of a joint investigation by the FBI and the Police Department in San Diego in 1998. The joint action adopted the name "Lone Wolf Operation" mainly due to the fact that Curtis was calling for terrorist activity carried out by an individual – the so-called lone wolf [30]. The leaderless resistance strategy is the most popular matrix for analyzing the lone wolf phenomenon. Single-person attacks within a decentralized network are the main assumption of the leaderless resistance strategy.

The strategy of leaderless resistance lies at the core of the activity of contemporary terrorist organizations. A characteristic feature of the concept popularized by Louis Beam is lack of a central headquarters, and cells constitute a loosely connected network. Each of the cells and individuals has full autonomy in planning and carrying out attacks. The decentralized structure allows the organization to maintain flexibility and reduce the risk of infiltration and investigation [31, p. 161]. The leaderless resistance strategy was used by underground armies and guerillas, and is an important matrix for the analysis of the lone wolf phenomenon, which operates independently and does not maintain formal contact with a terrorist organization, nor does he receive any logistical or financial support from it. The move to the centralized structure of a terrorist organization has revealed the potential of attacks planned and carried out by terrorists – lone wolves.

The conviction that a changing situation naturally influences the change in the tactics of action underpinned the leaderless resistance strategy. The effectiveness of attacks is

the effect of organizational flexibility. Due to the simplicity of operation and the difficulty in detecting terrorist activity, various terrorist movements and organizations apply the leaderless resistance strategy. Its main feature is the minimization of contact between individual cells and people [27]. The strategy popularized by Louis Beam is based on the reduction of the role of central command and management in an organization. Individuals deciding to engage in terrorist activities do not report to the organization's headquarters to receive orders. The ideological factor is the foundation of the leaderless resistance strategy. The ideological community and the confession of one worldview are a more effective binder than any organizational subordination. Individuals are well aware of what they are to do and how to prepare an attack so that it is characterized by maximum effectiveness [27].

As outlined in the leaderless resistance strategy, the conventional hierarchical organization structure is highly ineffective. The success in fighting against an enemy can be achieved only by shifting the action to the underground. This is a solution dictated by the ease of identifying the chain of command in an organization. Individuals should autonomously decide on the launch of operations. The ideological cohesion and community of goals are important elements of the Beam's strategy. The functioning of autonomous cells or individuals is a serious challenge for state agencies. The strategy of the leaderless resistance assumes that the best way to increase the effectiveness of action is the greatest possible decentralization, which prevents the services from dismantling an organization from the inside.

By limiting the role of central control and management, an organization is flexible and resilient to surveillance. A lone wolf is one of the main emanations of the leaderless resistance strategy. An individual terrorist attacks regardless of the organization and leadership of the organization. Since 1940, there have been 40 successful attacks of lone wolves in the United States that are known to be politically motivated. The attacks performed by lone wolves became the subject of the public debate when al-Qaeda – one of the most recognizable terrorist organizations – began using these types of individuals to launch attacks [32]. One person with appropriate predispositions and ideological inspiration suffices to implement a terrorist plot. The modern network structure is characterized by a high degree of autonomy and flexibility. Individuals, regardless of motivation, organize and conduct a terrorist attack when they consider it relevant and appropriate.

The network structure allows for smooth adaptation to changing realities. Another characteristic of the leaderless resistance is the common goal. Thus, the bond is not an organizational-structural but ideological factor. The strength of the leaderless resistance strategy lies in the dissemination of a particular ideological message. The network members are united by the support of a specific idea and values. The strategy understood in this way is a departure from the classic organizational model. The leaderless resistance strategy is the reversal of the classic pyramid organization structure with a leader at the forefront and the mass of subordinate supporters. According to Beam, the classic organizational pyramid is not only useless, but also dangerous for members working in the resistance movement against state tyranny. It is a particularly

ineffective structure in societies with a high level of technological development and a high surveillance regime [33, p. 53].

Despite the high degree of independence and responsibility for the logistics of the attack, it is not excluded that the so-called lone wolf can receive indirect support from a terrorist organization and will continue to be qualified as a lone terrorist. The issue of the independence of a lone wolf is crucial and problematic. Determination of the independence threshold is ambiguous. Despite formal independence, an individual terrorist's activity is inspired by external influence. A lone wolf adapts the ideology that leads to the implementation of a terrorist attack. An individual terrorist is thus exposed to external influence. An individual is radicalizing himself and at the same time is not a member of a terrorist organization.

The increased frequency of lone wolf attacks indicates a fundamental change. Terrorist organizations switch from coordinated, centrally planned attacks to actions carried out by individuals from outside the organization. Individual terrorism, which is based on the leaderless resistance strategy, is becoming a common form of terrorism. It is the individual terrorism that is the main element of the leaderless resistance strategy. Not only do small groups or cells, regardless of official organizational structures, have extensive autonomy, but can also influence and inspire individuals [34, p. 2]. Nowadays, the leaderless resistance strategy is a growing threat to states. In the strategy of leaderless resistance, as in the activities of individual terrorists, the Internet plays an important role. The network allows activists to organize operations on their own without being guided by a terrorist organization. A lone terrorist infected with ideology undertakes an attack to defend the case and to oppose the current status quo. By definition, it is dangerous. The strategy of leaderless resistance assumes the existence of individuals who share a certain worldview and thereby are able to organize and attack independently.

Conclusions

Today, the leaderless resistance strategy is used to describe secret, underground organizations with a decentralized and cellular structure. It also applies to organizations with a network, hybrid structure. It is a concept of opposition without a leader. A lone wolf accomplishing an attack is appropriately motivated ideologically, although he does not maintain contacts with the hierarchy of an organization. An attack carried out by an individual terrorist, whether effective or not, produces a significant psychological and propaganda effect. The leaderless resistance modus excludes the existence of a command center, which allows the planner to be free and inventive.

Effectiveness is the only valid criterion. The development of new technologies facilitating communication, and thus the transmission of cross-border ideology, has become a powerful tool used by non-state actors – terrorists. Technological development has allowed terrorists to implement previously unknown strategies. The leaderless resistance strategy is strictly connected with the activity of lone wolves, whose activity is difficult to neutralize for special services. The unity of purpose and worldview, which is

a key element of the leaderless resistance strategy and the activity of a lone wolf, guarantees similar behavior of individuals in the face of a given situation. Ideology motivates to the preparation and execution of an attack by a non-affiliated individual. A lone wolf does not report to the headquarters for orders and knows exactly how to act, plan and carry out a terrorist attack. The goal of lone terrorists as well as terrorist groups carrying out coordinated attacks is intimidation of the audience, and thus a wide socio-psychological impact [35, p. 49].

The leaderless resistance strategy allows for a smooth transition between forms of violence. According to the widespread definition, terrorism is a method of struggle, as is a lone wolf attack. As Jaroslaw Tomaszewicz emphasizes, the perpetrator of a terrorist attack may be an individual or group of a transnational character [36, p. 117]. In the case of individual terrorism, an individual is the main executor of an attack and ideology becomes the most dangerous motivation. In the leaderless resistance strategy the ideological community makes a lone terrorist one of the most serious and at the same time difficult to combat security threats in the 21st century.

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Conflict of interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.


Author contributions

The author contributed to the interpretation of results and writing of the paper. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical statement

The research complies with all national and international ethical requirements.

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Analiza fenomenu samotnego wilka w kontekście strategii oporu niekierowanego

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł stanowi analizę fenomenu terroryzmy – samotnego wilka, w kontekście strategii oporu niekierowanego. Celem artykułu jest wykazanie, iż terroryzm indywidualny jest podstawowym elementem strategii oporu niekierowanego. Problemem badawczym jest wpływ strategii oporu niekierowanego na działania indywidualnych terrorystów, którzy organizują i przeprowadzają atak terrorystyczny bez wsparcia organizacji terrorystycznej. Zgodnie ze strategią oporu niekierowanego jednostka jest wystarczająca do organizacji i realizacji ataku terrorystycznego.

Strategia oporu niekierowanego zakłada maksymalną decentralizację. Kluczowe jest istnienie jednostek, które współdzieląc określony światopogląd są zdolne do niezależnej organizacji i przeprowadzenia ataku. Samotny wilk realizując atak jest odpowiednio zmotywowany ideologicznie jednak nie utrzymuje kontaktów z hierarchią organizacji, a przez to zwiększa efekt zastraszenia społeczeństwa.

Terroryzm indywidualny, którego podstawą jest strategia oporu niekierowanego, staje się najpopularniejszą formą terroryzmu. Elementem strategii oporu niekierowanego są operacje przeprowadzane przez samotnych wilków lub małe grupy lub komórki niezależnie od wsparcia oficjalnych struktur organizacyjnych.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE terroryzm, Anders Breivik, strategia oporu niekierowanego

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