

## Chapter 3

# The Terrorist Threat

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### INTRODUCTION

Political developments in 1989 and early 1990 throughout the world have led to a kind of euphoria that Americans have not known since the end of World War II. The tearing down of the Berlin Wall, the democratization of East European countries, and the decline of communism have been much welcomed by Americans of most political persuasions.

In addition to the developments in the communist world have been the recent changes towards democracy in other countries, such as the toppling of the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, the progressive installation of democratically elected governments in Latin America, and the winds of change in South Africa symbolized by the release of Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress (ANC), and the relegalization of the ANC and other anti-apartheid groups.

However, terrorism remains a vital threat to the security of the United States as well as other powers, large and small. The recent changes in the world have not diminished the dangers of terrorism—including new dangers created by the forces of extreme nationalism. Since the late summer of 1990, Iraq and its allied subnational groups have reminded us graphically of this.

This chapter presents perspectives on the nature, scope, and intensity of the terrorist threat affecting contemporary society and U.S. security interests.

### A DEFINITIONAL FOCUS<sup>1</sup>

Many governments and peoples of the free world have failed to appreciate the magnitude and implications of the terrorist threat. Some democracies tend to regard terrorism as a minor nuisance or irritant. As a result, a large number of pluralist societies have not

developed a strong commitment to deal effectively with the problem of terrorism.

A major reason for this failure is a definitional and moral confusion over what constitutes terrorism. The media, as the most critical instrument reflecting the perspectives of the perpetrators and opponents of terrorist acts, reinforce the confusion about terrorism.

It is prudent to distinguish among terms used to describe terrorism. Terrorism is perceived differently by perpetrators and by victims. To the attackers, whoever stands by a just cause cannot possibly be called a terrorist. . .<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the diverse origins and semantic justifications of terrorist acts are irrelevant to the victims.

Moreover, the definitional focus of each sovereign government depends first and foremost on the nature of its internal and external policies. Every sovereign state reserves to itself the political and legal authority to determine what is and what is not terrorism in the context of domestic and foreign affairs. For instance, the United Kingdom applies the term to the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), and Israel regards all violent acts by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as terrorist.

As a pluralist democracy, the United States speaks with a bewildering variety of voices on the subject of terrorism. Under the U.S. Federal system, each state determines what constitutes an offense under its criminal or penal code. An increasing number of States have defined terrorism generically as a crime, thus evading the need for use of specific statutes covering other selected criminal acts that are identified as terrorism.<sup>3</sup> Also, Congress has, over the past 20 years, held hearings, considered numerous bills, adopted resolutions, and passed laws on terrorism.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For sources on the definitional issues of terrorism as well as for literature on the general topic of terrorism, see, for example, Yonah Alexander (ed.), *Terrorism: An International Resource File, 1980-85 Index, 1986 Index, 1987 Index, and 1988 Index* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1986-89), and Edward F. Mikolus with Peter A. Flemming, *Terrorism, 1980-1987: A Selectively Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988). For a specific treatment of the issue of definition see, for instance, Brian M. Jenkins, "The Study of Terrorism: Definitional Problems" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., December 1980).

<sup>2</sup>Yasser Arafat at the U.N. General Assembly, 1974, as quoted by Secretary of State George Shultz in a speech in New York, Oct. 25, 1984.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Arkansas Criminal Code, Title 41, Sec. 41-1608, stating that "a person commits the offense of terroristic threatening if with the purpose of terrorizing another person he threatens to cause death or serious physical injury or substantial property damage to another person."

<sup>4</sup>See, for instance, H.R. 2507 (101st Cong., 1st sess., May 25, 1989), a bill initiated to establish a commission on aviation security and terrorism, seeking to investigate the destruction of Pan Am 103 on Dec. 21, 1988, and KAL 007 on Aug. 31, 1983.

Nevertheless, a comprehensive working definition that can address the different forms of terrorist activity has not emerged from the Congress thus far.

Similarly, the executive branch, partly as a result of the very nature of its jurisdictional diversities, has not developed a coordinated position on the meaning of the term. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as ‘the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.’<sup>5</sup> The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), has specified that:

... international terrorism is terrorism conducted with the support of foreign governments or organizations and/or directed against foreign nations, institutions, or governments.<sup>6</sup>

In recent years, however, both the Department of State and the Department of Defense adopted a definition that has been commonly used by the U.S. Government and which reflects:

... a middle ground within the broad range of expert opinion, both domestic and international.<sup>7</sup>

Accordingly, State and Defense see “terrorism” as:

... premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against a noncombatant target by subnational groups or clandestine state agents, usually intended to influence an audience. “International terrorism” is terrorism involving the citizens or territory of more than one country.<sup>8</sup>

An analysis of these as well as numerous other definitions indicates that although there is a lack of consensus in public and private views on the subject,<sup>9</sup> the following elements are essential in what can be considered as “terrorism”

1. **Nature of the Act:** The concept of terrorist violence or threat of violence clearly embraces criminal, unlawful, politically subversive, and

anarchic acts—piracy, hijacking of aircraft, taking of hostages, and other offenses of a political character.

2. **Perpetrators:** States as well as individuals and private groups may be perpetrators.
3. **Strategic and Other Objectives:** State sponsorship of terrorism is often part of a campaign of geographic expansion of political control. More recently, some terrorism has had as its political objectives the furtherance of illicit business operations. The prime example is the narcoterrorism waged by drug cartels in Colombia.
4. **Intended Outcomes and Motivations:** Fear, extortion, radical political change, and measures jeopardizing fundamental human freedoms of innocent parties are most often the expected immediate results. The ultimate goal usually is the satisfaction of political demands that the group does not feel able to achieve by conventional political, economic, or military actions. Terrorism is often born of such frustration.
5. **Targets:** Human beings and property are both targets of terrorist acts, with special focus on heads of states, diplomats, public officials, and military targets in noncombat or peacekeeping roles.
6. **Methods:** Threats, as well as the actual use of violence, including kidnapping, hostage-taking, and murder are the common weapons of terrorists in spreading fear among the targeted population.<sup>10</sup>

On the basis of the above components, it is reasonable to adopt the following as a working definition of terrorism:

The deliberate employment of violence or the threat of violence by sovereign states or subnational groups, possibly encouraged or assisted by sovereign states, to attain strategic or political objectives by acts in violation of law intended to

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of Justice, *FBI Terrorism in the United States 1988* (Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Counterterrorism Section, Criminal Investigative Division, Dec. 31, 1988), p. 34.

<sup>6</sup>“Pattern of International Terrorism: 1980,” a research paper prepared by the National Foreign Assessment Center, Washington DC, p. ii. (This is a Central Intelligence Agency publication and is based on information available as of Dec. 31, 1980.)

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Department of Defense, *Terrorist Group Profiles* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), p. viii.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.* See & W U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1988* (Washington, DC: March 1989), p. viii.

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Alex P. Schmid, and Albert J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co., 1988), pp. 1-39.

<sup>10</sup>Ray S. Cline and Yonah Alexander developed these elements in an unclassified report prepared for the U.S. Army on “State-Sponsored Terrorism” (1985), pp. 22-23.

**create a climate of fear in a target population larger than the civilian or military victims attacked or threatened.<sup>11</sup>**

Since terrorism represents the use of severe psychological and physical extra-legal force, typically directed against innocent victims, it is a violation of fundamental human rights, contrary to international law, and flouts the letter and spirit of the U.N. Charter and other relevant multilateral treaties.

## **TERRORISM: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

### *Historical Origins*

Terrorism, as a cost-effective tool of low-intensity conflict that projects psychological intimidation and physical force in violation of law, has ancient roots. Mostly religious in motivation, terrorists systematically utilized swords and daggers during antiquity and the Middle Ages in their violent holy campaigns. Examples are the operations of the Jewish Zealot Sicarii, directed against Roman rule in occupied Judea as well as Jewish political and social enemies, and the martyrdom missions of the Hashashin (assassins), an offspring of the Ismailis, targeting the Crusaders and Sunni adversaries in Persia, Syria, and elsewhere in the Middle East. The former were active for 70 years in the first century and the latter lasted some 200 years—from the 11th to the 13th centuries. Their experience has proven that terrorism can be attractive, effective, and durable, even if its tools are rather primitive.<sup>12</sup>

In subsequent periods, several European maritime states between the 16th and late 18th centuries employed pirates, or privateers, to terrorize the seas for the purpose of advancing foreign policy objectives. By the time of the “reign of terror” (1793–1794) during the French Revolution, terrorism from

“above” and “below” was commonplace. A variety of European groups nourished by anarchistic theories, left- and right-wing ideologies, and nationalism, have attained some tactical successes. Resorting to regicide and other terrorist activities such as bombing, extremists assassinated a considerable number of European rulers and ministers, including Tsar Alexander II in 1881. Although not intended by the perpetrator, the murder of the Austrian Archduke in Sarajevo drew the powers into World War I.

The period in the 20th century between the World Wars also witnessed terrorist violence in different regions of the world, such as Asia and the Middle East, where nationalist groups fought for liberation from colonial rule.<sup>13</sup>

### *Contemporary Terrorism*

*In* the late 1960s, terrorism became a constant feature of international life. Unique political circumstances led to this development, including the Six-Day War of 1967 and the rise of Palestinian terrorism worldwide; the adversarial relationship and physical proximity of the United States to Cuba, leading to numerous aircraft hijackings; the Vietnam War and the universal reaction against it; and the Paris students’ revolt in 1968. These events, coupled with rapid developments in modern technology, communication facilities, and inexpensive and rapid travel, have contributed to the proliferation of indigenous and international terrorist groups and to the intensification of ideological and political violence.<sup>14</sup>

Another factor contributing to the expansion of contemporary terrorism is the role of certain states. A number of nations, such as Iran, Syria, Libya, and North Korea have sponsored terrorist operations as a form of secret or undeclared warfare in situations where overt or declared warfare would be inconvenient. Because modern weapons and all-out wars are

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, David C. Rappaport and Yonah Alexander (eds.), *The Morality of Terrorism: Religious and Secular Justifications* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1989).

<sup>13</sup>See, for instance, Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co., 1987); and Walter Laqueur and Yonah Alexander (eds.), *The Terrorism Reader* (New York, NY: New American Library, 1987).

<sup>14</sup>For some general works on contemporary terrorism see, for example, Yonah Alexander (ed.), *International Terrorism: National, Regional, and Global Perspectives* (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1976); Yonah Alexander, David Carlton, and Paul Wilkinson (eds.), *Terrorism: Theory and Practice* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979); Yonah Alexander and Seymour M. Finger (eds.), *Terrorism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Maidenhead, England: McGraw Hill, 1978); and Robert Kupperman and Jeff Kamen, *Final Warning* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1989). For an exhaustive survey of domestic and international groups see, for instance, Peter Janke, *Guerrilla and Terrorist organizations: A World Directory and Bibliography* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1983); and Henry W. Degenhart, *Political Dissent: An International Guide to Dissident, Extra-Parliamentary Guerrilla and Illegal Political Movements* (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Co., 1983).

so expensive and destructive, these states, ideologically inclined to fight nations they perceive as enemies, may wish to restrict themselves to low-intensity conflict. In this mode, they attack their adversaries but confine their violence to the lower end of the spectrum of conflict, well away from the high-intensity of open, organized military hostilities. Since state sponsors of terrorism can engage in operations with little risk of being held accountable for their actions, they are usually not subject to reprisals by the target states.<sup>15</sup>

It is these political circumstances and technological and military realities that have led both subnational groups and state actors to employ violence or the threat of violence to attain political, social, and economic objectives in violation of law. As perpetrators, they became linked with each other. Many major terrorist groups around the world have at some point maintained a director indirect connection with a state sponsor. Some terrorist organizations appear to function at the exclusive service of certain states. In addition, over the past 10 to 15 years, collaboration among ideologically linked bodies and even among those without a common philosophy or political orientation has increased substantially.<sup>16</sup>

A case in point is the Japanese Red Army (JRA). JRA broke away from the Japanese Communist League Red Army Faction and established a distinct group in 1970. Aiming to form a People's Republic in Japan and to support a Marxist-Leninist revolution throughout the world, the JRA maintains ties with abroad range of movements inside and outside Japan. It has links with several other groups, such as

the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and maintains a base under Syrian control in Lebanon's Beka'a Valley. It also enjoys the support of Libya and North Korea and has set up terrorist cells throughout Asia, including Hong Kong, Manila, and Singapore.

The JRA has attacked, inter alia, U.S. targets, including American passengers at Lod Airport in Israel (1972); U.S. business facilities in Singapore (1974); U.S. embassies in Jakarta (1986), Rome (1987) and Madrid (1988); and a USO club in Naples (1988). Yu Kikumura, a JRA member, was arrested with explosives on the New Jersey Turnpike in April 1988 and was subsequently sentenced to 30 years imprisonment.

In addition to the JRA, other groups, acting independently or as surrogates for some states, have resorted to pragmatic and symbolic terrorist acts (e.g., arson, bombing, hostage-taking, kidnapping, and murder) for the purpose of producing pressures on governments and people to accede to the demands of the perpetrators. Their attacks have victimized, killed, and maimed large numbers of innocent civilians.

Terrorist acts have also inflicted considerable damage on targets other than people. Besides government offices and police stations, terrorists have attacked many property targets, usually those sites that either have many innocent persons present or have strategic importance (e.g., powerlines or pipelines).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup>See, for instance, Ray S. Cline and Yonah Alexander, *Terrorism as State-Sponsored Covert Warfare* (Fairfax, VA: HERO Books, 1986); and Yonah Alexander, "State-Sponsored Terrorism," *Harvard International Review*, vol. 7, No. 6, 1986, pp. 21-23.

<sup>16</sup>See, for example, Yonah Alexander and Robert A. Kilmarx (eds.), "International Network of Terrorist Movements," *Political Terrorism and Business* (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1979), pp. 34-56; and Claire Sterling, "The Great Bulgarian Cover-Up," *The New Republic* 192:21, 1985, pp. 16-21.

<sup>17</sup>Chronologies of terrorist events used for this paper include a variety of sources, such as press indexes; FBIS; NEXIS; Facts-on-File; U.S. Government reports such as those published by the FBI, Department of Defense, and Department of State (e.g. Bureau of Diplomatic Security, *Significant Incidents of Political Violence Against Americans*, 1988); annuals such as Yonah Alexander (ed.), *The 1986 Annual on Terrorism* (The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1989); Edward F. Mickolus, Todd Sandier, and Jean M. Murdock, *International Terrorism in the 1980's: A Chronology of Events, Vol. II, 1984-1987* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press); yearly reports of terrorist events prepared by the Project on Low Intensity Warfare of the Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies of Tel Aviv University (JCSS), such as the latest publication *INTER: International Terrorism in 1988* (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Post, 1989); the chronologies published by the RAND Corp. on different types of terrorism (e.g., Brian M. Jenkins et al., "A Chronology of Terrorist Attacks and Other Criminal Actions Against Maritime Targets," (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corp., September, 1983); and the information on terrorist attacks research by the Institute for Studies in International Terrorism, State University of New York.

## *Two Decades of Terrorism: A Statistical Overview*

**The** statistics of both domestic and international incidents are startling.<sup>18</sup> During the decade of the 1970s, the total number of incidents worldwide was 8,114. There were 4,978 people killed and 6,902 injured. In terms of geographic distribution, Europe was the most active region, with a total of 3,598 incidents. Latin America followed with 2,252 incidents. The third region affected was the Middle East with 1,097 incidents. The most targeted victim during the 1970s was the business community, with a total of 3,290 incidents recorded.

The next decade was even more intensive in scope and destructive force. In 1980, 2,755 attacks were registered and their number increased to a record high of 4,422 in 1989, a 16-percent increase over the previous year. The 1980s saw a grand total of 31,426 incidents, with 70,859 killed and 47,849 injured, reflecting a lethality trend of more attacks designed to kill random victims. Figure 3-1 contains a summary of data on terrorist attacks.

Unlike the previous decade, in the 1980s the most violent terrorist region was Latin America, where 18,173 incidents were recorded. It is followed by Europe, with 4,613, Asia with 4,302, and the Middle East with 3,060.

Another approach to survey the nature, scope, and intensity of terrorism during the past two decades is to focus on its international character rather than deal with both domestic and foreign cases. According to the U.S. State Department database that records terrorist events involving the citizens or territory of more than one state,<sup>19</sup> the pattern of operations by subnational groups and state sponsors underscores a constant global rise in number of incidents.

In 1970, a total of 309 international operations were recorded; this figure more than doubled in two decades, reaching 661 incidents in 1989. Overall, in the 1970s, a total of 4,234 international acts were perpetrated, with 2,783 killed and 4,799 wounded.<sup>20</sup> The primary target was the business community with 1,011 incidents recorded. Targets also involved diplomats (967), government officials (255), and the military (173)?

The decade of the 1980s marked a substantial increase in the number of international terrorist incidents and casualties. Overall, 6,501 operations were registered, with a total of 5,042 killed and 11,702 wounded. Shifting of the regional distribution of international terrorist incidents during the 1980s also occurred. Whereas in the 1970s Europe led the world in such incidents, the Middle East became the predominant location of international terrorist attacks in the 1980s. As in the preceding decade, the primary target of the 1980s was business with a total of 1,630 incidents.

## *Terrorism in the Future*

**In 1990**, both domestic and international terrorism touched the lives and interests of individuals and nations in every region of the world. Some examples underline the diverse nature of recent incidents: a bomb exploded at the Chilean-U.S. Cultural Institute in Santiago; in Medellin, Colombia, a military judge was shot (one of very many murders there in recent years); a former Defense Minister was assassinated in Peru; and in Guatemala, a left-wing union leader from El Salvador and an activist were killed.

Elsewhere, a 1,000-pound bomb placed in a van exploded in Northern Ireland demolishing an unmanned police station and damaging 50 houses; Spanish deputies were shot in a Madrid restaurant; and a bomb killed two people and wounded two others in a bus terminal in Agdam, Azerbaijan. Also,

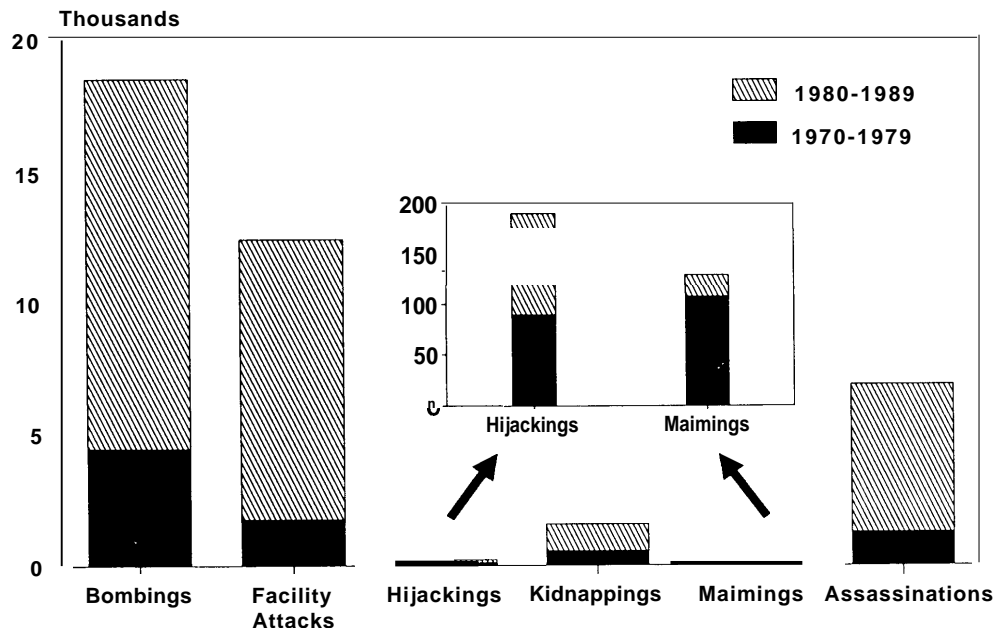
<sup>18</sup>Statistics on terrorism vary widely, mainly depending on the definitions employed by researchers. Numerous databanks focus on domestic terrorism, international terrorism, state terrorism, terrorism in specific countries, etc. Also, interpretation of these statistics differ, depending on the body organizing the data. A major private statistical source for both domestic and international incidents is the database of Business Risks International (BRI) located in Arlington VA. It has issued monthly and quarterly reports since 1979, which are sold to subscribers. Some of the statistical material has been reprinted elsewhere in such publications as *Terrorism: An International Journal* and the annuals on terrorism, both edited by Yonah Alexander. The statistical material used in this section is drawn from BRI sources in dealing with both domestic and international terrorism. Other statistical databases consulted for this paper include JCSS and RAND materials.

<sup>19</sup>Available unclassified U.S. State Department figures cover the years 1968-1989. The statistical information for this period was provided by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. Some of the statistical material is available in State Department publications such as *Patterns Of Global Terrorism*, op.cit., footnote 8, and *Significant Incidents of Political Violence Against Americans*, op.cit., footnote 17.

<sup>20</sup>According to the State Department data, the incident figures may exceed event totals due to overlapping.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

**Figure 3-I-Distribution of Categories of International Terrorist Attacks  
1970-79 and 1980-89**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of State, 1990.

9 Israelis were killed and 17 were wounded in a tourist bus ambushed in Egypt; the Mayor of Nagasaki was wounded by extreme right-wing assailants; and a British member of Parliament was murdered by the Provisional IRA (PIRA). Towards the end of the year, the Speaker of the Egyptian Parliament was murdered by terrorists, and in 1991, the PIRA succeeded in launching a mortar attack on 10 Downing Street, disrupting a British cabinet meeting.

The Gulf War and its preliminary crisis brought several international terrorist groups together to offer their services to Iraq. In addition, a large number of (mostly minor) terrorist incidents occurred throughout the world after the onset of hostilities in 1991. Many of the latter attacks were apparently independent of Iraqi control and due to local, established terrorist groups that wished to express solidarity with Saddam Hussein and against the coalition nations.

While it is expected that similar kinds of incidents will occur in the foreseeable future (i.e., terrorists will use a wide range of conventional weapons—guns,

bombs, plus more sophisticated weapons, e.g., man-portable anti-tank rockets and surface-to-air missiles), the arsenal of tomorrow's terrorist might include instruments of mass destruction as well.

The specter of nuclear terrorism, such as the theft or detonation of a nuclear bomb, the use of fissionable material or intensely radioactive waste as a radioactive poison, or the seizure and sabotage of nuclear facilities, is seen by many experts as plausible and by others as inevitable.<sup>22</sup> At this time, however, more likely forms of nuclear terrorism would include a credible hoax involving a nuclear device, holding a nuclear facility or a shipment of highly radioactive material for purposes of political or economic blackmail, or dispersal of radioactive medical isotopes.

While the probability of a serious and successful nuclear terrorist episode remains low, the consequences in terms of mass destruction could be enormous. For example, if a crude, 1-kiloton nuclear device (one-thirteenth the size of the Hiroshima bomb) were detonated (having been either stolen or built by a terrorist group with exceptional resources

<sup>22</sup>For detailed studies see Paul Leventhal and Yonah Alexander, *Preventing Nuclear Terrorism* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Press, 1987); and Paul Leventhal and Yonah Alexander, *Nuclear Terrorism: Defining the Threat* (McLean, VA: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986).

and talent) in a major city, it could cause more than 100,000 fatalities and damage totaling billions of dollars. The human, physical, and psychological consequences of such an incident would be far more catastrophic than those of Three Mile Island (where there was no detectable loss of life but considerable financial damage) and the Chernobyl accident (which was caused by operators who overrode safety systems in a negligent, but not malicious reamer) which killed several dozen people outright, injured, or killed thousands of others, and caused severe property losses and untold damage to the environment.

Most experts agree, however, that it is easier to acquire the technical capability to produce chemical or biological weapons than it would be to produce or steal nuclear weapons. These weapons, like nuclear ones, are capable of producing enormous numbers of casualties in a single incident (perhaps up to several hundred thousand fatalities in a worst case, considering biological agents) and causing governmental and societal disruption of major proportions and widespread public panic.<sup>23</sup> Biological and chemical weapons have many advantages for terrorists. They include low cost as well as ease and speed of production; further, these weapons can, in principle, be developed by individuals with no more than a college-level education in the relevant field and with limited facilities. Weapons development requires only a minimum amount of tools and space, and equipment can be improvised or purchased without arousing suspicion.<sup>24</sup>

Further, many states are known to have chemical or biological weapons programs. The existence of the Libyan chemical weapons plant at Rabta has become common knowledge, especially since the

fire at the site that at first was thought to have caused its destruction.<sup>25</sup> Besides this well-known chemical plant, chemical and biological weapons facilities exist in Iraq and chemical facilities have been reported in Iran. The development of such capabilities has been confirmed by leaders of both nations. The United States has developed chemical weapons, but decided to abandon the development of biological weapons.

Iraq and Iran have actually used chemical weapons on the battlefield.<sup>26</sup> Sixteen nations are known to have chemical warfare agents and another 10 are alleged to possess them.<sup>27</sup> According to publicly reported information, some 10 to 15 nations also possess an offensive biological warfare program. Will terrorist organizations acquire chemical or biological weapons, either on their own or from some state sponsor? According to some experts, the odds are perhaps even or slightly higher that such an attack will eventually occur.<sup>28</sup>

Terrorist organizations with a few skilled technicians (available to some terrorist groups for another task—bomb design) could easily amass the requisite capability in short order. Biological weapons are probably easier to develop technically and are more effective than chemical weapons. Because many biological agents persist and (if living agents) may multiply and spread, they can cause far-reaching epidemics. Thus, they should be considered to be a much greater potential threat than chemical agents.

A recent report prepared for the U.S. Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center by the RAND Corp. discusses arguments for and against the likelihood of terrorist use of biological weapons.<sup>29</sup> In it, the technological barriers to use were not found

<sup>23</sup>See, for instance, Brian M. Jenkins and Alfred P. Rubin, "New Vulnerabilities and the Acquisition of New Weapons by Nongovernment Groups," in Alona E. Evans and John P. Murphy (eds.), *Legal Aspects of International Terrorism* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1978) pp. 221-276; David Carlton and Carlo Schaerf, *The Dynamics of the Arms Race* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), pp. 170-93; and Jeremiah Denton, "International Terrorism: The Nuclear Dimension" paper presented at a Conference on Nuclear Terrorism, Washington, DC, June 25, 1985.

<sup>24</sup>See, for example, Richard Dean McCarthy, *The Ultimate Folly: War by Pestilence, Asphyxiation and Defoliation* (New York, NY: Random House, 1969); and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *The Rise of CB Weapons: The Problem of Chemical and Biological Warfare*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Humanities Press, 1971).

<sup>25</sup>Later reports have cast doubt on the effects of the fire and even on whether the fire was real or a subterfuge that did little actual damage.

<sup>26</sup>See Seth Carus, *The Genie Unleashed: Iraq's Chemical and Biological Weapons Production* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1989).

<sup>27</sup>U.S. General Accounting office, "Chemical Warfare: Progress and Problems in Defensive Capability," a report to the Chairman of House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, GAO PEMD-86-11, July 1986.

<sup>28</sup>E. Hurwitz, "TerrOriSts and Chemical/Biological Weapons," *Naval War College Review*, 35:36-40, 1982; and H.J. McGeorge, "The Deadly Mixture: Bugs, Gas, and Terrorists," *NBC Defense and Technology International* 1:56-61, 1986.

<sup>29</sup>Jeffrey D. Simon, *Terrorists and the Potential Use of Biological Weapons—A Discussion of Possibilities R-3771-AFMIC*, (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corp., December 1989).

to be “insurmountable. The main problem to evaluate was the potential willingness to use such weapons, given their heinousness and the possible adverse reaction of the terrorists’ own support base. Further, the employment of biological weapons is not as subject to user control as most other weapons and would require the terrorists to become familiar with a weapon technology that is substantially different from what they may be used to.

The RAND report concluded that some of the negative aspects of the use of biological weapons (from the terrorist perspective) might be becoming less important. The trend of mass killings through terrorist acts has been recently observed in multiple airline bombings, and one might foresee a reduced reluctance on the part of terrorists to take the lives of thousands of innocents since it has been demonstrably acceptable for them to take the lives of hundreds.

The use of chemical and biological agents by terrorists is not without precedent. For example, in 1978, a group identifying itself as the Arab Revolutionary Army Palestinian Commandos claimed they injected Israeli citrus fruit with mercury. An indication of the interest of at least one terrorist group in biological warfare was the factory for making botulinum toxin found in a raid on a hideout of the Red Army Faction in Paris in 1980.<sup>30</sup> Even in the United States, there have been incidents. One of the better known was allegedly perpetrated by a senior member of the Rajneesh cult in Antelope, Oregon in 1985, when among other similar incidents, bacteria were apparently used in an attempt to poison the food of a public official. And a few years ago, an extreme right-wing group, the Order of the Rising Sun, in St. Louis, MO, attempted to acquire the biological agent that causes typhus.

Biological weapons are, in some aspects, well suited to terrorist activities. They are small, easily concealed and transported, and readily activated. Some relatively crude forms are easily obtainable such as the common food poisons of salmonella, shigella, and staphylococcus, which can be procured from local clinical laboratories. They are readily grown in batches and can be dispersed in water. The

extensive food and water hygiene and inspection practices of most industrialized countries might, however, complicate their effective use in food and water. Some agents can be dispersed as aerosols, but this requires greater skills on the part of the attacker.

State-sponsored terrorist organizations would appear to be the most likely to resort to biological warfare agents. They might have easier access to them; they could have the skills for handling and dispersing them and might wish to attack those targets most susceptible to such weapons, i.e., large populations in distant places, public buildings, or embassies. As noted above, several terrorist-sponsoring states have R&D programs in this domain. Of particular concern is a statement made by Iranian President H. Rafsanjani in a speech to “Islamic Fighters:”

We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons. From now on, you should make use of the opportunity and perform this task.<sup>31</sup>

The examples of the attempted terrorist use of chemical and biological weapons in the past, statements on the part of leaders in some countries that are state sponsors of terrorism regarding the development of such weapons, and independent evidence on R&D efforts in some of those same countries, all indicate that the use of such weapons of mass destruction by terrorists in the future must be considered.

Although possession of such weapons by states that sponsor terrorism does not guarantee that the weapons or technology would be given to the terrorists, the possibility of such a technology transfer, whether intentional or not, cannot be excluded and should raise serious concerns. The recent example of the transfer of chemical weapons technologies from the Federal Republic of Germany to Libya indicates that such occurrences are possible even in a well-structured society with laws forbidding such behavior. Such transfers might be more difficult to prevent in less stable societies.

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<sup>30</sup>Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Dec. 19, 1980, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup>Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Oct. 7, 1988, attributed to Tehran Domestic Radio Service, Oct. 6, 1988.



## THE THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

### *Domestic Terrorism*

There have been occasional outbreaks of terrorism in the United States during the past 200 years perpetrated by both domestic and foreign groups. Some of the earliest “home-grown” groups include the vigilantes, originally organized to keep law and order in the lawless Western frontier; the Ku Klux Klan during the post-Civil War period; and the Molly Maguires, whose primary interest was vengeance against the anti-Irish-Catholic Scotch, Ulster, Welsh, and English Protestants in Pennsylvania during the 1870s.<sup>32</sup>

In the turbulent 1960s a proliferation of radical groups with violent tendencies occurred.<sup>33</sup> The Weather Underground, the New World Liberation Front, the George Jackson Brigade, the Symbionese Liberation Army, the Black Liberation Army, and the Black Panther Party, were among the most active of such left-wing groups in the United States during the late 1960s and 1970s. During the same period ethnic and nationalist groups (e.g., the Jewish Defense League, Armenian movements, Puerto Rican Armed Forces of National Liberation, Omega 7-Cuban Nationalist Movement, and the Cuban National Liberation Front) operated within the United States and Puerto Rico.

Although these groups have proved to be less professional and successful than their counterparts in other regions around the world during the 1970s, terrorist campaigns in the United States targeted the police, military, business, and other victims in over 600 attacks.<sup>34</sup> In justifying their operations, terrorists have communicated a multitude of rationalizations. For instance, in a statement claiming credit for the bombing of the Gulf Oil Building in Pittsburgh in June 1974, the Weather Underground explained that the attack was to punish the corporation for

“financing the Portuguese in Angola, stealing from the poor in the U. S., and exploiting the people and resources of 70 countries.” The Jewish Defense League targeted Soviet facilities, residences, and vehicles as well as commercial firms or the installations of Eastern European countries in the New York area to protest the policies of the Soviet Bloc toward their Jewish minorities and Israel.

In addition to terrorism perpetrated by indigenous groups in the 1970s, foreign nationalist groups were also active in the United States. For instance, the Croatian group Otpor (Resistance) hijacked a TWA Boeing 727 from New York to Paris in 1976 to attract attention to its separatist goal of independence from Yugoslavia and took over the West German Consulate in Chicago in 1978 to demand the release of a Croatian leader in Cologne. The Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, seeking revenge for Turkey’s genocide against Armenians during World War I, assassinated Turkish consular officials in Los Angeles during 1973. Also, the Black September Organization, operating within the framework of Fatah, the main group of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) headed by Yasser Arafat, killed an Israeli air attache in Washington, DC, in 1973.

During the 1980s, the United States experienced fewer terrorist incidents domestically than abroad. According to FBI data, terrorist acts within the United States declined drastically after the first few years of the decade.<sup>35</sup> The total number of terrorist activities, both of indigenous and foreign origin, reached an estimated 220, approximately one-third that of the previous decade. The highest number of incidents were committed between 1980 and 1982 (122). Conversely, in 1989, only six cases were investigated as terrorist incidents, the lowest number in any given year during two decades of violence. A major reason for this encouraging trend has been the success of the proactive operations of the FBI and its

<sup>32</sup>See, for example, Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr, *Violence in America: Historical and Comparative perspectives* (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1970).

<sup>33</sup>See, for instance, *Regional Risk Assessment: North America* (Alexandria, VA: Risks International, Inc., August 1979); “Report of the Policy Study Group on Terrorism” (New York State: The Criminal Justice Institute, November 1985); and Brian M. Jenkins, “Terrorism in the United States,” *TVI Journal*, vol. 5, No. 1, 1984, pp. 1-4.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.* See also *Disorders and Terrorism*, Report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism (Washington, DC: National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1976).

<sup>35</sup>See Department of Justice, FBI, *Terrorism in the United States 1988*, op.cit., footnote 5, p. 11. See also statement by Oliver B. Revell, Associate Deputy Director-Investigations, FBI, before an open session of the Committee on Government Affairs, U.S. Senate, Sept. 11, 1989. For an overview of the domestic and international terrorist threat to the United States, see “Public Report of the Vice President’s Task Force on Combatting Terrorism,” February 1986.

effective cooperation with other law enforcement agencies in the United States and abroad. Prosecution of terrorists, such as the 1986 indictment by a Federal jury in Boston of eight radicals involved in a 9-year series of bombings, bank robberies and murder, has also been a contributing factor in the decline of domestic terrorism. Another factor has been a social phenomenon—the general loss of revolutionary fervor in the United States during this period.

To be sure, some of the terrorist groups operating in the 1970s were also active to some extent during the 1980s. There were left-wing groups such as the Weather Underground and the Black Panther Party, both involved in the Brinks armored car robbery in 1981 in Nyack, New York; the Armed Forces of National Liberation claimed 11 bombings in 1982. Also, the Jewish Defense League was active, engaging in violence against its perceived enemies.

In addition to these and other domestic groups, a variety of new bodies committed to ideological and political violence emerged during the 1980s. The most recent example of a group of terrorist attacks in the United States has been the series of letter bombs addressed to various lawyers and court officials in the southeastern United States at the end of 1989. A note claiming credit for the bombings implied racist motivations. Other examples of recent U.S. terrorism include reactionary right-wing movements advancing anti-Semitic and white supremacist causes as well as antigovernment and antitax beliefs (e.g., Aryan Nations) and the Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy (EMETIC), desiring to preserve the ecological systems by attacking perceived despoilers of the ecology through acts of sabotage (“ecotage”). Another example is the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and related groups, dedicated to the elimination of animal use in medical research and industry. Animal rights groups in the United States have usually confined attacks to destruction of property, rather than humans. An exception, however, was the attempted murder of the president of U.S. Surgical Corp. by means of a bomb. In the United Kingdom, two animal rights bombings recently occurred—in one, a young child passing by was seriously injured.

Foreign groups have also continued their operations in the United States during the past decade. For

example, the PIRA maintained a gun-running ring in 1982, and Sikh terrorists were prevented from destroying an Air India aircraft at Kennedy Airport in 1986 (although they had succeeded in Canada the year before). In addition, there is some evidence that foreign governments, such as Libya and Iran, have put in place in the United States an infrastructure to aid in carrying out terrorist acts. One possible example was the 1989 San Diego pipebomb attack on the car of the wife of Capt. Will Rogers, the commanding officer of the *USS Vincennes*, which had inadvertently shot down a civilian Iranian airliner with massive loss of life in 1988.

In short, although the general level of domestic terrorist activity has been reduced to relatively low proportions during the past decade, the potential for future attacks by both domestic and foreign bodies remains intact. One reason for this situation is the fact that many of the root causes of terrorism are perceived by potential perpetrators as being unresolved. Another factor is the inevitable emergence of new political, economic, and social problems that will encourage terrorism.

There is no evidence available to indicate that any U.S.-based terrorists have the intention or the capability to mount large-scale operations. Nevertheless, there are circumstances under which terrorism might escalate considerably within this country. For example, were the United States to intensify its war against the narco traffickers at home and abroad, terrorist acts in the United States could ensue.

### *International Terrorism*

U.S. citizens and interests have been more affected by ideological and political violence abroad than they have at home. Indeed, during the past two decades, the United States has become a major target of acts of terrorism throughout the world. There are many factors contributing to this situation, including the fact that the United States maintains an extensive cultural, political, economic, and military presence abroad and that a considerable number of foreign groups and governments oppose American values, policies, and actions. This reality, coupled with other global developments such as technological advancements in weaponry and communications, has resulted in the expansion of international terrorist activities against the United States.

## Statistical Data

Available statistics indicate the magnitude of the challenge to the United States. According to one nongovernmental database, the total number of international terrorist incidents directed against the United States during the past two decades was 1,617 (1970s—738; 1980s—879), with 915 killed (1970s—215; 1980s—700), and 1,149 wounded (1970s—314; 1980s—835).<sup>36</sup> The U.S. State Department's more extensive database offers a different set of figures.<sup>37</sup> According to it, during the same period, the total number of attacks against U.S. citizens and interests abroad reached 3,458 (1970s—1,705; 1980s—1,753), killings-722 (1970s—151; 1980s—571) and woundings-764 (1970s—227; 1980s—537) persons. According to the breakdown of U.S. victimization, the business community has been the primary target with 1,114 incidents registered, followed by the diplomatic community with 562 incidents, and the military with 438 incidents. Table 3-1 shows the number of attacks as a function of location; these data are also displayed in figures 3-2 and 3-3.

While the number of attacks has fluctuated, the overall percentage of the number of attacks against U.S. targets has risen sharply since 1975. For example, in the period 1975-79, attacks against U.S. interests abroad accounted for only 8.5 percent of the world total of terrorist incidents. In 1983, the percentage reached 35 percent of the world total, dropping to 26 percent in 1986, and slightly lower than 20 percent in the past 2 years.<sup>38</sup>

## Targets and Tactics

An analysis of American victimization in international terrorist attacks in the past two decades demonstrates a wide range of civilian and military targets. For instance, every kind of U.S. business activity abroad has been affected, including financial (e.g., Merrill Lynch), banking (e.g., Bank of America), energy (e.g., Texaco), chemicals (e.g., Union Carbide), automobiles (e.g., Ford), communication (e.g., International Telephone & Telegraph), computers (e.g., International Business Machines),

**Table 3-1—Regional Distribution of Attacks Against U.S. Citizens and Interests 1970-89**

Region	Attacks		
	1970-79	1980-89	Total
Latin America . . . . .	520	769	1,289
Western Europe . . . . .	598	583	1,181
Middle East . . . . .	274	148	422
Asia . . . . .	138	172	310
North America . . . . .	130	25	155
Africa . . . . .	42	52	94
Eastern Europe . . . . .	3	4	7

SOURCE: U.S. Department of State, 1989.

travel (e.g., American Express), and many others. In addition, every segment of the U.S. military abroad has been affected. The personnel, facilities, and operations of the Army, Air Force, and Navy have become a continuing target.

The tactics and tools utilized by terrorists in their attacks against U.S. targets overseas also varied widely in their nature. The following examples are typical: incendiary devices (e.g., U.S. Government employees' cars in Greece, January 1973); mid-air explosion (e.g., Pan Am 103, Lockerbie, December 1988); car bomb (e.g., Occidental Petroleum, Bogota, February 1988); suicide truck bombing (e.g., U.S. Embassy Annex in East Beirut, September 1984); kidnapping (e.g., Lt. Col. William Higgins in Lebanon, February 1988); hostage-taking (e.g., U.S. Embassy in Tehran, November 1979); assassination (e.g., Assistant U.S. Army attache, Paris, January 1982); and hijacking (e.g., TWA 847, June 1985).

From these examples as well as from numerous other cases,<sup>40</sup> it is seen that terrorists attacking U.S. targets overseas have employed weapons and tactics ranging from primitive to sophisticated and modern. As far as the technological aspects of bombing are concerned, the devices ranged from home-made to advanced. For instance, at the primitive end of the scale, the components in an incendiary device employed in an attack on the American Cultural Center in South Korea in February 1988 included a plastic container, a desk clock, 9-volt batteries, and a chemical substance.

<sup>36</sup>Business Risks International annual reports, 1970-1989.

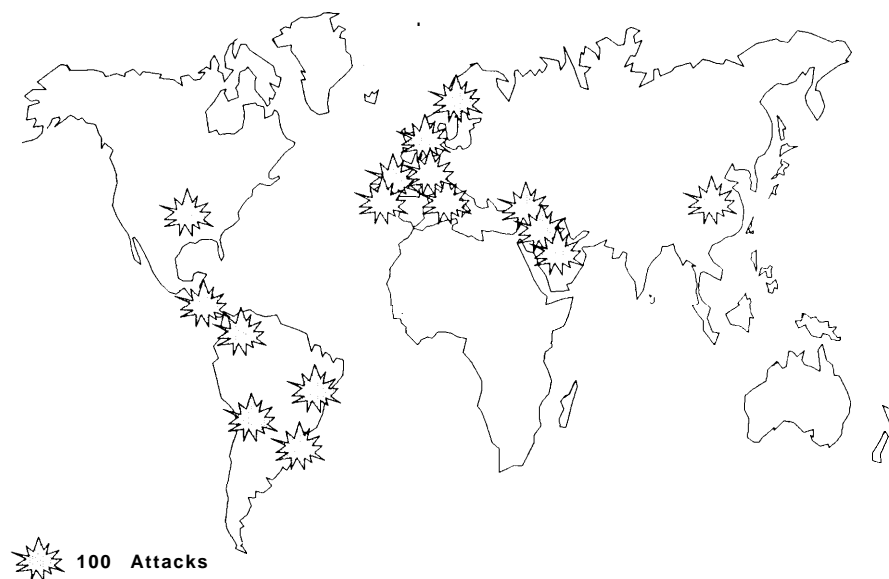
<sup>37</sup>State Department Statistics provided by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism.

<sup>38</sup>See James P. Wootten, "Terrorist Incidents Involving U.S. Citizens or Property 1981-1989: A Chronology," CRS Issue Brief, Aug. 11, 1989.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid. See also footnote 17.

<sup>40</sup>Information for these cases are derived from a variety of sources such as those cited in footnote 8, 17, and 19.

**Figure 3-2-Geographical Distribution of Terrorist Attacks Against U.S. Citizens and Interests, 1970-79**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of State, 1990.

Such primitive devices, however, are increasingly being replaced by high-explosive bombs, often utilizing SEMTEX, a high explosive of Czechoslovak manufacture, or PETN, or other plastic explosives,<sup>41</sup> as starkly demonstrated in the downing of Pan Am 103 over Scotland in December 1988. Although current remote and timed detonator technology has advanced beyond the capability of some terrorist groups, many others have demonstrated the know-how to utilize sophisticated electronics to this end. Moreover, the probability is that more and more terrorist groups, both independent subnational and state-sponsored agents, will be employing sophisticated electronics in the near future.

It is also important to guard against the possibility of terrorists using such levels of technical capability in the near future, but in the realm of chemical or biological weapons rather than explosives and timers.

### **Perpetrators and Capabilities**

Since the late 1960s, hundreds of subnational groups, acting independently or as proxies of state sponsors, have targeted the United States throughout the world. Some groups emerged for single-issue

concerns such as the Frente de Liberation Nacional de Vietnam del Sur in Argentina. Most of these are now defunct. Others, with broader goals, such as the Red Brigades of Italy, are still operational, though weakened.

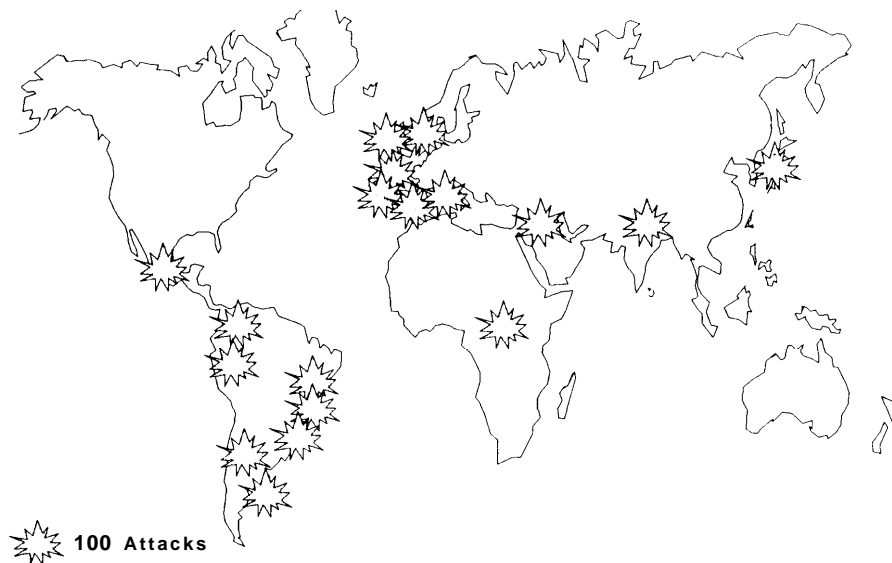
The following is a selection of terrorist groups that have been active in recent years and have attacked U.S. citizens and interests:<sup>42</sup>

1. *Latin America:* Fuerza Zarate Willca (Bolivia); Simon Bolivar Command (Bolivia); Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (Chile); M-19 (Colombia); Farabundo Marti National Liberation Forces (El Salvador); Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Guatemala); Shining Path (Peru); the Nicaraguan Contras; and unidentified elements within the military or security forces of El Salvador.
2. *Europe:* Red Army Faction (Federal Republic of Germany); Direct Action (France); Red Brigades (Italy); November 17 Organization (Greece); ETA or Basque Homeland and Liberty (Spain).
3. *The Middle East:* Al Daawa (Iran); Palestine Liberation Front (operating against Israel from

<sup>41</sup>See ch. 4 for a discussion of types of explosives.

<sup>42</sup>See footnotes 17 and 19 for sources. See also Janke, *op. cit.*, footnote 14, and Degenhardt, *op. cit.*, footnote 14 for details on most of these organizations.

**Figure 3-3-Geographical Distribution of Terrorist Attacks Against U.S. Citizens and Interests, 1980-89**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of State, 1990.

bases in the Middle East); Hizbollah (Lebanon); Islamic Jihad Organization (Lebanon); Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (Syria); Abu Nidal Organization (Libya); Abu Ibrahim (15 May) Organization (Iraq).

4. **Asia:** Japanese Red Army (Japan); New People's Army (Philippines).

Terrorist groups often seek each other's support. For example, the PLO, through its affiliate members, such as Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Sa'iqa, and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), collaborated with numerous non-Arab groups, including the German Baader-Meinhof Group, the Italian Red Brigades, the Provisional Irish Republican Army, and the Japanese Red Army.

Individual members of the PLO have also been linked with Arab and non-Arab states. Thus, the PLF (headed by Abu'l Abbas, who masterminded the 1985 attack on the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship, in which Leon Klinghoffer, an American citizen, was murdered) has received aid from Libya and Iraq. And the Fatah established a strong link with the communist bloc in an effort to create a vast

infrastructure for undertaking terrorist activities throughout the world.

The latest shift in PLO policies, as expressed in the December 1988 renunciation of terrorism and the recognition of Israel, does not assure a complete disintegration of this network as long as forces opposed to PLO leader Yassir Arafat are committed to the "armed struggle" strategy. The recent abortive attack (which aimed at civilian targets) on Israeli beaches by Abu'l Abbas' Palestine Liberation Front provides a clear example of the persistence of terrorism from this quarter.<sup>43</sup>

The Hizbollah (also known by other names, such as Islamic Jihad), supported primarily by Iran, also maintains some ties with Syria, Libya, and the PLO. It has been responsible for some of the most spectacular terrorist attacks, including the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, the hijackings of TWA 847 in 1985, and the kidnapping of most of the U.S. hostages in Lebanon.

The informal and formal relationship among various anti-U.S. terrorist groups and state sponsors has resulted in a machinery for terror on national, regional, and global levels. This framework has operated in many ways: ideological alliances, propaganda support, diplomatic assistance, geographic

<sup>43</sup>See, for example, Yonah Alexander and Joshua Sinai, *Terrorism: The PLO Connection* (New York, NY: Crane Russak, 1989).

sanctuary, financial help, training, organizational assistance, intelligence, weapons supply, and operations.<sup>44</sup>

A multitude of subnational groups and state sponsors have both the motivations and capabilities to continue to strike at U.S. interests abroad in the foreseeable future. In addition, the possibility also exists that foreign terrorist groups may try to attack U.S. interests even on U.S. soil, looking for targets that are among the less well defended. What is a particularly disturbing development is the trend in the instruments of terrorist warfare—from primitive arsenals into high-technology conventional and perhaps ultimately even unconventional (i.e., chemical, biological, or radiological) weaponry.

## OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

**In** light of the record of the past two decades, the following observations and conclusions are offered:

*First*, terrorism poses a variety of threats to contemporary society. It has had a substantial impact on the way Americans live, work, and travel abroad. There is also an effect on the way Americans live at home. If there are attacks on U.S. soil (if, e.g., Kikumura had not been arrested by an observant State trooper on the New Jersey Turnpike and had succeeded in bombing populated sites in Manhattan), impacts will be far greater, particularly on the U.S. psyche.

*Second*, terrorism has become an integral part of the struggle-for-power process as a form of surrogate warfare, whereby small groups, with direct and indirect state support, are able to conduct political warfare at the national level, and ultimately may even succeed in altering the balance of power on an international level through, for example, the control of strategic resources in the Third World.

*Third*, terrorists operating today are better organized, more professional and better equipped than their predecessors of the past two decades. In the 1990s, it appears likely that they will be prepared to undertake greater operational risks. There is a very real possibility of attacks using chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction in the near future. This is of special concern since the

**technology does not require a high level of education or training, and, in fact, such capabilities are possessed by a number of countries** that sponsor terrorist activities.

*Fourth*, a proliferation of subnational groups will continue to seek ideologically-based or single-issue goals. Their attacks in the future will be characterized by both continuity and change. Groups that are small and unsophisticated can be expected to continue to rely mostly on bombings. Those with enhanced skills and an international network will carry out more complex operations, **such as kidnappings, assassinations, and attacks on facilities closely associated with governments or companies whose policies the terrorists oppose.**

*Fifth*, a few of the more sophisticated terrorist groups will use increasingly high-leverage tactics to achieve massive disruption or political turmoil. Extremists will continue to operate as proxies or surrogates for particular governments such as Iran, Libya, and Syria. The techniques used will include more and more sophisticated technologies, particularly in the area of electronics, such as those used to provide sophisticated initiators, including remote-controlled ones, for bombs.

*Sixth*, **as some targets become more difficult for terrorists to attack, we can expect terrorist countermeasures to try to overcome added security systems as well as a redirection of effort towards less secure targets.** For example, there may be attempts to use surface-to-air missiles to attack aircraft when other means become too difficult to accomplish. Another possibility, again, could be the use of chemical or biological weapons.

*Seventh*, there are no simplistic or complete solutions to the dangers of terrorism. As the tactics utilized to challenge the authority of the state are and continue to be novel, so, too, must be the response by the instruments of the state. We must also be cautious to avoid the kinds of overreaction that could lead to repression and the ultimate weakening of the democratic institutions that we seek to protect.

*Eighth*, having achieved considerable tactical success during the 1970s and 1980s, terrorists sometimes find it politically expedient to restrain the level of political violence. These self-imposed restraints will not persist indefinitely, and future

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<sup>44</sup>See *Terrorist Groups Profiles*, op.cit., footnote 7, and *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, op.cit., footnote 8.

incidents may continue to be costly in terms of human lives and property. Certain conditions, such as religious extremism or perceptions that the “cause” is lost, could provide terrorists with an incentive to escalate their attacks dramatically.

*And finally, the* vulnerability of modern society and its infrastructure, coupled with the opportunities

for the utilization of sophisticated high-leverage conventional and unconventional weaponry, requires the United States both unilaterally and in concert with other like-minded nations to develop credible response capabilities, including the creation of adequate technological tools to minimize future threats.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>For a discussion of a particular case of vulnerability, that of U.S. domestic power grids, see U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment *Physical Vulnerability of Electric Systems to Natural Disasters and Sabotage*, OTA-E-453 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1990).