

*Recd
9 Aug 78*

Terrorism

OLC #78-2743/1

TERRORISM IN 1977

Trends

Developments relating to international terrorism in 1977 showed several major patterns and trends.

For the year as a whole, there was a decline in the number of international incidents and their attendant casualties (see figures 1 and 2). This decline was probably in large part due to increased security measures taken by previously victimized governments, coupled with political developments fostering a wait-and-see attitude on the part of terrorists. During the second half of the year, however, the frequency of terrorist incidents jumped to nearly the previous year's record levels. Several spectacular acts--such as the Japanese Red Army (JRA) and Lufthansa hijackings--and bombings protesting the Baader-Meinhof suicides and the Sadat peace initiative occurred toward the end of the year.

In geographic terms, terrorists continued to prefer operations in the industrialized democracies of Western Europe and North America. More than half of all incidents were recorded in these regions (see figure 3).

There were fewer attacks than the previous year, both in relative and absolute terms, on US citizens and property (see table 1). Increasingly effective preventive measures taken by police and by US Government and business officials were probably the main reasons for the decrease. American human rights advocacy may also have played a part by making US citizens and installations a more ambiguous and less inviting target than in previous years.

Terrorism in the Middle East stayed at relatively high levels and again transcended the Arab-Israeli conflict. As in 1976, attacks on fellow Arabs constituted the bulk of fedayeen-related international terrorism. Bombings of Egyptian overseas facilities contributed to an overall increase from 1976 in the number of fedayeen-related attacks.

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SUBJECT: (Optional)

OLC #18-2743/1

NFAC # 3407-78

FROM:

[Redacted]

Congressional Support Staff
3F30 Hqs

EXTENSION

NO.

D/ORPA-78-985

DATE

9 August 1978

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. [Redacted]
ORPA/IID - 5G32 Hqs

9 October

9 October

wmb

Please Hand Carry

2. D/ORPA
6G00 Hqs

10 Aug

wmb

Attached is an unclassified statement on terrorism. HPSCI plans to hand this out following hearings on August 16. DDO is to provide testimony which will be classified.

3. D/NFAC [Redacted]
7E44 Hqs

10 Aug

[Signature]

[Redacted] of ORPA will accompany the DDO witness and provide backup if needed.

4. OLC - [Redacted]
5E11 Hqs

[Large handwritten scribble]

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While terrorist organizations at times carefully planned and coordinated complex operations, the vast majority of reported attacks continued to be low-risk endeavors, such as bombings, arson, and murder (see table 2). This was accompanied by a shift away from well-protected targets to more remote ones not heretofore subjected to attacks. For example, US facilities in isolated rural villages were attacked, while hijackers used smaller airports as their embarkation points.

Terrorists continued to display a lack of inclination, or perhaps ability, to master and use sophisticated weapons and technology. Terrorist acquisition of such devices and training in their use is frequently reported but this has not led to their operational deployment. While the West German Red Army Faction threatened to shoot down Lufthansa planes with SA-7 heat-seeking missiles, so far it has not followed up its threat.

The behavior of hostage-takers suggested a heightened sensitivity to the tendency for sympathetic psychological bonds to form between captors and hostages over time. For example, South Moluccans refused to talk to their hostages; Japanese Red Army hijackers wore masks, used numbers to refer to themselves, and initially instructed passengers not to look at them; the Lufthansa hijackers deliberately mistreated passengers and killed the pilot.

Implications for 1978

The 1977 experience with international terrorism, compared with historical events, suggests two basic observations. First, relatively wide fluctuations in the nature and intensity of violence remain evident. Second, the number and character of the groups engaged in international terrorist activity have been constantly changing. Although terrorism has risen from the levels of the 1960s, the 1970s seem to have produced a cyclical pattern in terms of overall numbers of incidents. Most terrorist campaigns do not appear to be sustainable for more than a few months, as governments adapt to terrorist tactics, group leaders are arrested, and logistic problems arise. In time, however, new terrorist recruits appear and develop new methods--thus the cycle continues.

These oscillations and uncertainties in the pattern and level of terrorist activity render predictions hazardous, although it is clear that the threat will persist. While the precise level and nature of international terrorist activity over the next six months or so cannot be forecast, past experience suggests that:

- Regional patterns of victimization and location of operations will remain unchanged. Representatives of affluent countries, particularly government officials and business executives, will continue to be attractive targets. Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East will be the primary arenas of attack. While US official and corporate security will continue to deter potential attackers overseas, American persons and property will continue to be attractive targets.
- Terrorists will shift to alternative targets rather than retreat from the scene, if their primary goals are unattainable.
- Acts of terrorism related to the Palestinian issue will almost certainly continue. Extremists will seek to demonstrate their rejection of a political solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute, even if this is accepted by the mainstream of the Palestinian movement, the PLO. Recent terrorist activities in the Middle East have focused on President Sadat's overtures to Israel, with Egyptian facilities becoming prime targets. Developments seen by the Palestinians as contrary to their interests could induce even more moderate groups, such as Fatah, to resume terrorist activity outside of Israel.
- Developments in other areas, such as separatist sentiments in Europe or apartheid in South Africa, could motivate terrorist organizations indigenous to the arena of conflict to carry their battles abroad to gain increased international publicity for their cause.

--Commemoration of radical martyrs--such as Andreas Baader, Mayir Cayan, and Che Guevara--through the use of violence will continue. There are also likely to be incidents designed to protest specific national or international political developments.

--The development and implementation of more effective international countermeasures will continue to be impeded by differing moral perspectives among states, a broad resistance to the perceived infringement of sovereignty in any curtailment of the right to grant political asylum, and a natural reluctance on the part of many states to commit themselves to any course of action that might invite retribution--either by terrorist groups or by states sympathetic to the terrorists' cause.

The next six months or so are likely to be characterized by some discontinuities and new developments as well, including:

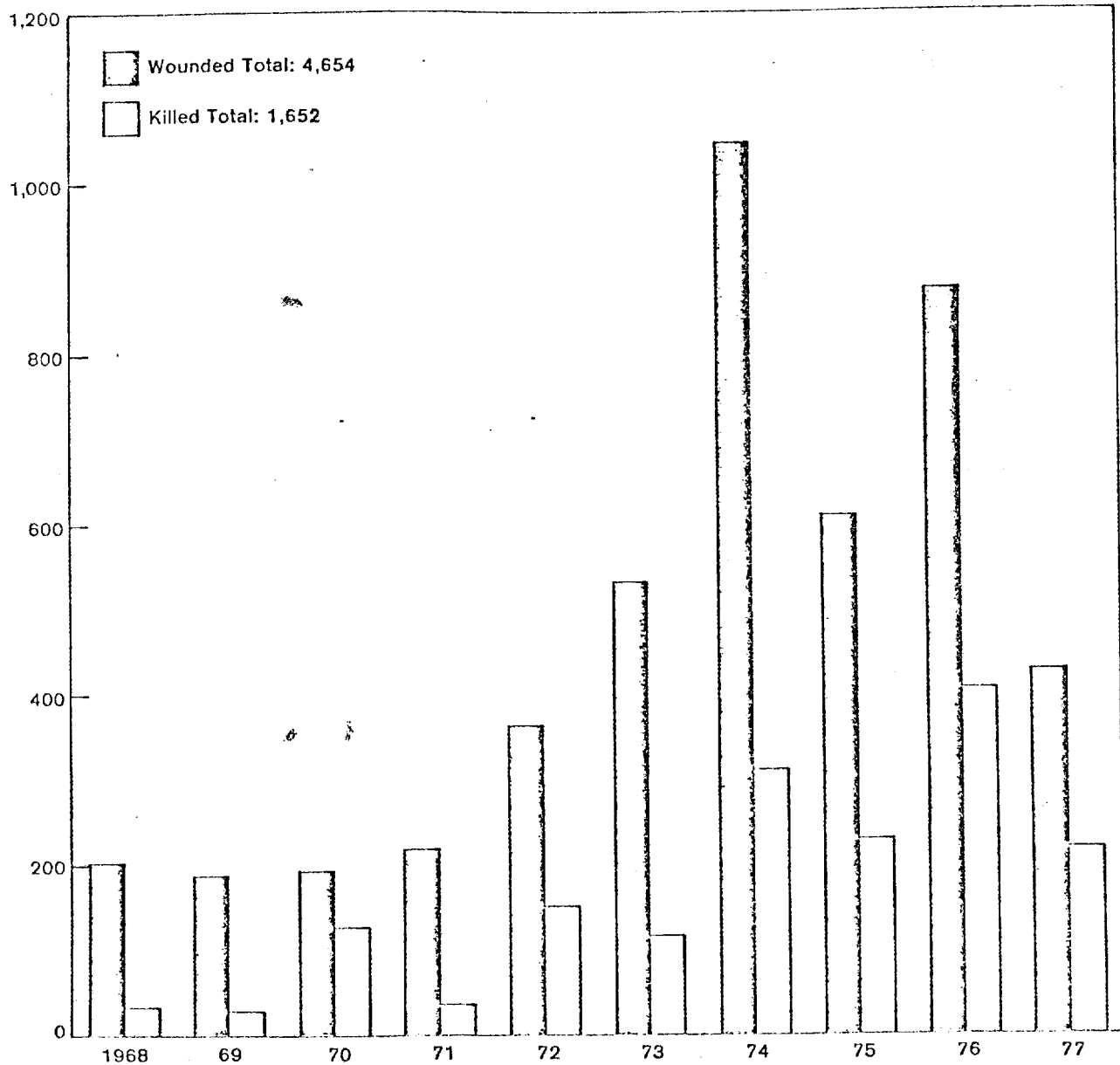
--The potential use of standoff weapons, such as heat-seeking missiles, to avoid direct confrontations with authorities. One or more groups may overcome their present tactical limitations and moral qualms to master and employ such technologies.

--A further upsurge in West European radical activity. Although the original West German anarchist leaders are dead, their organizations remain a major threat. Difficulties experienced by police in locating suspects involved in major kidnappings and assassinations have demonstrated the existence of well-organized support networks willing to aid such individuals. The suicides of the Baader-Meinhof leaders, as well as the deaths of the Mogadiscio hijackers, have provided the radical left with a new group of martyrs whose deaths may be avenged by future operations. These may be primarily directed against the governments that aided Bonn in arresting radicals who had fled West Germany.

In sum, the decline in the frequency of international terrorist attacks is expected to level off and may even be reversed. The many issues that have motivated individual terrorists remain unresolved, and new causes will arise. Although added security precautions at sensitive facilities and the use of paramilitary rescue squads may deter spectacular confrontational attacks, these measures clearly cannot protect all potential targets from simple hit-and-run operations.

Figure 1

Deaths and Injuries Due to International Terrorist Attacks,¹ 1968-77



1. Casualty figures are particularly susceptible to fluctuations due to inclusion of especially bloody incidents, e.g., exclusion of the Malaysian hijacking of 1977, which some reports credited to Asian terrorists, would subtract 100 deaths from that year's total.

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Figure 2
**International Terrorist Incidents,
1968-77**

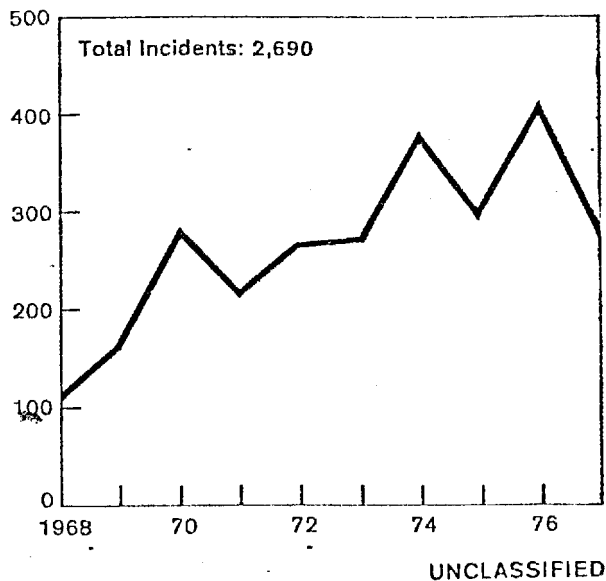


Figure 3
**Geographic Distribution of International
& Terrorist Incidents, 1968-77**

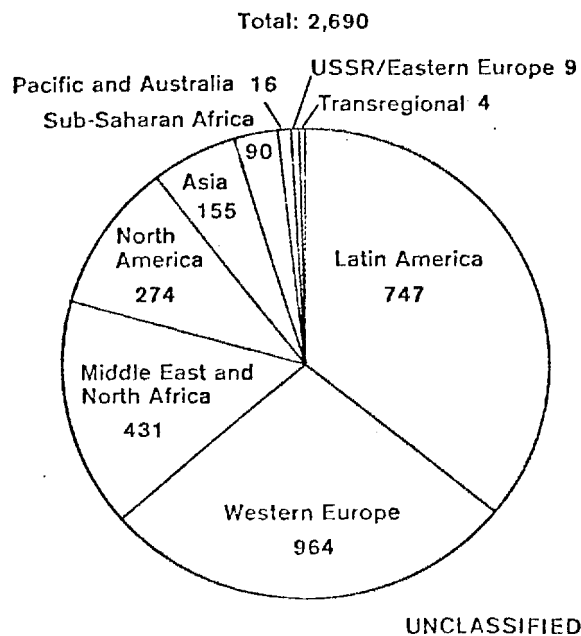


Table 1

International Terrorist Attacks on US Citizens or Property,
1968-77, by Category of Target (U)

Target	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Total ¹
US diplomatic officials or property	12	17	52	51	22	19	12	12	12	21	230 (20.0)
US military officials or property	4	2	38	36	11	12	12	9	33	10	167 (14.5)
Other US Government officials or property	26	32	57	21	20	10	16	14	2	7	205 (17.9)
US business facilities or executives	6	35	24	40	44	51	86	42	52	33	413 (36.0)
US private citizens	3	7	17	5	12	10	13	27	26	13	133 (11.6)
Total	51	93	188	153	109	102	139	104	125	84	1,148

¹ Figures in parentheses are percentages of the total accounted for by each category of target.

Table 2

International Terrorist Incidents, 1968-77, by Category of Attack (U)

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Total ¹
Kidnaping	1	3	32	17	11	37	25	33	30	22	216 (8.0)
Barricade-hostage	0	0	5	1	3	8	9	14	4	5	49 (1.5)
Letter bombing	3	4	3	1	92	22	16	3	11	2	157 (5.8)
Incendiary bombing	12	22	53	30	15	31	37	20	91	57	308 (13.7)
Explosive bombing	67	97	104	115	106	136	239	169	176	131	1,340 (49.8)
Armed attack	11	13	8	8	9	10	21	11	21	14	126 (4.7)
Hijacking ²	3	11	21	9	14	6	8	4	6	8	90 (3.3)
Assassination	7	4	16	12	10	18	12	20	48	23	170 (6.3)
Theft, break-in	3	7	22	10	1	0	8	8	5	0	64 (2.4)
Sniping	3	2	7	3	4	3	3	9	14	6	54 (2.0)
Other actions ³	1	3	11	10	4	4	4	1	7	11	56 (2.1)

¹ Figures in parentheses are percentages of the total accounted for by each category of attack.

² Includes hijackings of modes of transportation for air, sea, or land, but excludes numerous nonterrorist hijackings.

³ Includes occupation of facilities without hostage seizure, shootouts with police, and sabotage.