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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

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26 September 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer for Counterterrorism

SUBJECT: Appearance at the International Conference on Terrorism Seminar

1. Action Requested: None. The following is background information for your consideration on how to respond to questions that may be posed to you at the Columbia University School of Journalism seminar on Saturday. As a participant in the "dry run" of this seminar on 10 September at Columbia University, I believe the majority of the questions can be fielded without difficulty. It is likely, however, that some of the questions will involve sensitive policy and covert action issues that you will not to be able to answer with any degree of candor.

2. Background. The hypothetical situation that will be presented to you is that an aircraft from the country of Tiberus is hijacked and diverted to the Middle East country of Cedaron, a small country devasted by civil war and lacking a centralized government. About 55 Americans are among the 100 passengers on board this aircraft. The other nationals on the airliner include 25 citizens of Tiberus as well as nationals from the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and several other countries. The terrorist group responsible for the hijacking is called "Brothers Loyal Unto Death" or BLUD. The group demands the release of members of their group held in Tiberus. Except for the fact that a foreign flag carrier is hijacked, this hypothetical terrorist incident is very reminiscent of the hijacking of TWA 847 to Lebanon in June 1985.

3. Through "Socratic dialogue", the moderator takes the assembled panel through the decision making processes within the US Government as senior officials grapple with this crisis, explores the role and moral responsibilities of the electronic and print news media, and examines the interaction between the United States and other countries--especially Tiberus.

4. The areas that may turn out to be the most sensitive during this exercise are the following:

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[redacted]

6. Attached is some background information that you may wish to draw on during the seminar. They are not particularly original, but I believe there are some fundamental misunderstandings and misconceptions about the international terrorist threat. The seminar provides you with a forum to try to put terrorism in a proper prospective for the American public. Your comments will, of course, be carefully scrutinized by foreign audiences as well.

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[redacted]

Charles E. Allen

International Terrorism: Issues

Definitions: As Morrie Leibman points out, terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but we tend to become confused about what international terrorism really means. Modern terrorism is different; it has taken on a truly international character and has become the tactic of ideological extremists and radical states. As a consequence, it threatens the political foundation on which our democratic system is based and undercuts the system of political, economic, and military relationships upon which the United States and its allies depend to preserve and promote basic human freedoms. We must, however, avoid confusing the terms like "freedom fighter" with that of "terrorist". A freedom fighter or a revolutionary traditionally belongs to a group that for reasons--justified or not--is endeavoring to overthrow by military means an established government. The long established rules of such conflicts are to attack the military personnel and facilities of the government, to establish bases of operation, to hold territory, and to win popular support.

A terrorist, on the other hand, engages in premediated, politically motivated violence against noncombatant targets. He normally is a member of a subnational group or a clandestine state agent. He frequently crosses international boundaries to conduct attacks against innocents. He has no intention of holding territory or winning over the populace; his goal, by striking at innocents, is to disrupt, discredit, and traumatize existing political and social structures. The actions of terrorists worldwide are gradually debasing international law and Western democratic values. The media, academicians, and others frequently express sympathy for such individuals, alluding to the "root causes" that lead them to commit acts of

desperation. Regardless of the cause, however, there can be no justification for the wanton killing of innocents who are in no way responsible for the plight of the terrorist. We must remember that groups who perpetrate these acts are usually supported by radical and totalitarian states whose principal objectives are to undermine Western democracies as well as non-aligned or pro-Western governments in the Third World--with little or no concern about root causes of political violence.

State-Sponsored Terrorism: A principal reason why international terrorism continues to flourish is state sponsors. Middle Eastern terrorist groups in particular are backed by impressive material and financial support from Syria and Libya. Through the careful use of surrogates, these radical states have been able to project power and reap foreign policy benefits with minimum cost and risk. Libyan leader Qadhafi, for example, has aspired to play a leading role on the world stage as leader of a new Arab order vehemently opposed to the United States, but he is constrained by the boundaries of a relatively small and weak state. Sponsorship of terrorism allows him to carry out his ambitions far beyond Libya's national borders. Without the active involvement of Libya and Syria, the problem of Middle Eastern terrorism would not be nearly as serious. In fact, the involvement of the governments in Damascus and Tripoli in recruiting, indoctrinating, training, arming, and facilitating the movement of terrorists from place to place has created an institutionalized quality to Middle Eastern terrorism that is largely absent in other parts of the world.

Standing behind Syria and Libya is another state sponsor of terrorism--the USSR. The Soviets view terrorism as a basic, legitimate tool of political struggle to be applied or sponsored in those settings where its use will benefit the USSR. As a result, the Soviets have no moral compunctions about supporting foreign insurgent and terrorist groups; the primary consideration is whether the activities of these groups further Soviet interests.

The Soviets support terrorists by promoting an environment of violence. They arm, supply, and train personnel belonging to insurgent/terrorist groups with the knowledge that they will commit terrorist acts in attempting to overthrow governments that are either non-aligned or pro-Western. We have identified Soviet Bloc support of terrorist and insurgent groups in about 13 countries. The Soviets and their East European partners provide a wide range of material assistance to groups in these countries, including the provision of arms and paramilitary training. We know as a fact that personnel from numerous foreign extremist groups have undergone military and paramilitary training in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. We know of several training camps in the Soviet Union where insurgents and terrorists are being trained this very day. The camps are run by the Soviet military as well as by the KGB and GRU.

The Soviets also supply arms to states that practice and sponsor terrorism, especially Libya and Syria--without restricting the end use of these weapons. Both have supplied arms to terrorists and radical insurgent groups from the Soviet stockpile. There is no evidence that Moscow has discouraged the disbursement of weapons to these groups.

There has been no change in Soviet behavior, despite recent rhetoric by Moscow deploring terrorist actions. [redacted] Moscow is supporting terrorism where its interests are served. We also know that Palestinian terrorist groups are permitted to use Eastern Europe for illicit commercial operations, arms deals, and staging attacks in the West. We know that the leaders of well-known Middle Eastern European terrorist groups continue to travel to and deal with East Communist states. These East European regimes act in some cases as Soviet surrogates in making arrangements with these groups. We have no reason to expect any change in Soviet policy. Moscow will continue to support these extremist groups and radical states. The cost to the Soviet Bloc of providing such support is slight whether in terms of money, reputation, influence, or risk. Those who profess to see a change in Soviet behavior should review Soviet coinduct during the recent confrontation between the United States and Libya. A review of that record demonstrates clearly that the Gorbachev regime is just like its predecessors when it comes to actions, as opposed to words.

Counterterrorist Cooperation Among Developed Countries: International terrorism is a complex, intractable problem that must be attacked across a broad spectrum--politically, economically, militarily, and covertly.

Politically, more can and should be done among like-minded states to combat terrorism. It is imperative that the United States along with its allies and other friendly states take actions jointly against terrorist groups and states that support them. Even though much is being done constructively

bilaterally, this should not preclude the adaption of significant multilateral initiatives and measures against perpetrators of terrorism and their foreign sponsors. Nor should any effort be spared in the strengthening of existing counterterrorist conventions.

Terrorist violence in Western Europe, cooperation there among indigenous terrorist groups, and the "spillover" of Middle Eastern violence have resulted in broader counterterrorist discussions and cooperative measures among West European states. West European governments recognize the utility of formalized working-level contacts fostered by multilateral groupings. The European Economic Community's newly founded permanent working group on terrorism and abuse of diplomatic immunity reflects the strengthened European resolve to combat international terrorism. The emergency meeting of the Trevi Group in London on Thursday underscores that multilateral actions are possible if there is resolve by like-minded states. In addition, one of the most encouraging signs that democratic states are determined to confront terrorism occurred at the Summit Seven in Tokyo in May where international terrorism was cited as one of the highest priorities and Libya was condemned outright.

Multilateral cooperation to reduce or punish terrorist activity has resulted in eight international agreements since 1968, including the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (Strasbourg Convention) and the Summit Seven's Bonn Declaration on aircraft hijacking. Even these efforts have met at times with mixed success, the overall results have been positive.

(A list of existing international conventions and declarations on combatting terrorism is attached.)

ANNEX D

International Conventions and Declarations

1. *The Tokyo Convention* (Convention on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft) entered into force in December 1969, calls for states to make every effort to restore control of a hijacked aircraft to its lawful commander and to arrange for the prompt onward passage of the aircraft, passengers, cargo, and crew.

2. *The Hague Convention* (Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft) entered into force in October 1971, requires adhering states either to extradite skyjackers or to submit them to local prosecution.

3. *The Montreal Convention* (Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation) entered into force in January 1973, extends The Hague Convention's extradite-or-prosecute provisions to acts committed on the ground against civil aircraft in service and against associated ground facilities.

4. *The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons Including Diplomatic Agents* entered into force in February 1977, applies the extradite-or-prosecute formula to acts committed against protected persons (chiefly diplomats and people who have been granted political asylum) and their premises and vehicles.

5. *The Strasbourg Convention* (European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism) is an agreement drafted in Strasbourg (at the initiative of France and West Germany) in November 1976 by the Council of Europe and signed in January 1977 by all members of the Council except Ireland and Malta. It entered into force in August 1978. The convention declares that—regardless of the motivation—certain violent crimes, including kidnaping, hijacking, bombing, and attacks against internationally protected persons, are not subject to the "political offense exception" that might otherwise prevent extradition of the perpetrators; if extradition is denied for some other legal reason, the denying country must prosecute under its own laws.

6. *The Bonn Economic Summit Declaration on Hijacking* of July 1978 asserted that the participating countries (Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and West Germany) would halt all air traffic with any country harboring a hijacker or refusing to return the aircraft and passengers. This was the first effort to put teeth into the antiskyjacking conventions; previously there had been no way to punish countries that violated the provisions of these conventions.

7. *The Venice Economic Summit Declaration on the Protection of Diplomats* of June 1980 is a denunciation by the Summit Seven of terrorist or criminal actions against diplomatic or consular personnel or premises in contravention of the norms of international law and practice. The summit governments further resolve to provide "support and assistance" in situations involving the seizure of diplomatic or consular establishments or personnel.

This information is Unclassified.