

**EXECUTIVE SECRETariat**  
ROUTING SLIP

*Memo Chrono*

TO:

		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X		<i>C</i>
2	DDCI -D		X		
3	EXDIR				
4	D/ICS				
5	DDI				
6	DDA				
7	DDO	X			
8	DDS&T				
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/OLL				
14	D/PAO				
15	D/PERS				
16	VC/NIC				
17	C/Ops for Counterterrorism		X		
18					
19	ES		X		
20	NIO/CT		X		
21					
22					
SUSPENSE		23 Apr '86			
		Date			

Remarks  
To #7: Please have note prepared for DCI signature.

[Signature Box]  
Executive Secretary

3637 (10-81)

Date  
15 Apr 86

STAT

**Page Denied**

# policy REVIEW

Adam Meyerson  
*Editor*  
Dinesh D'Souza  
*Managing Editor*  
David I. Meiselman  
*Chairman*  
*Editorial Board*

4 April 1986

Edwin J. Feulner Jr.  
*Publisher*  
Burton Yale Pines  
*Associate Publisher*

I thought you might like to see an advance copy of "Protecting Our Citizens: When to Use Force Against Terrorists," by Representative Jim Courter (R-New Jersey). The article appears in the spring issue of Policy Review, the quarterly magazine of The Heritage Foundation.

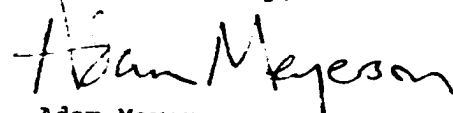
"Time and time again," writes Representative Courter, "hostages have been rescued unharmed by the swift and skillful use of force. Time and time again, decisive action has destroyed terrorists' headquarters and thus impaired their military capabilities or deterred them from using terrorist tactics." Representative Courter draws practical lessons from successful counterterrorism in the past.

Policy Review publishes a lively letters to the editor section. If you would like to take issue with, or to support, Representative Courter's argument, we welcome letters to the editor of no more than 500 words. Letters must be received by May 15 to go into our summer issue.

I am also enclosing the cover page of our spring issue. Please let me know if you would like to receive a complimentary issue of the magazine.

With all best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Adam Meyerson  
Editor

**A publication of The Heritage Foundation**

214 Massachusetts Avenue, NE • Washington, D.C. 20002 • Telephone (202) 546-4400

---

# **policy** **REVIEW**

Spring 1986

Number 36

Four Dollars

---

**My Plan To Balance The Budget**  
Representative Jack Kemp

---

**Anti-Terrorist Strategies That Work**  
Representative Jim Courter

**Racism In Russia**  
Deroy Murdock

**Shanty Raids At Dartmouth**  
Dinesh D'Souza

**Future Challenges For Conservatism**  
George H. Nash

**Should We Privatize Money?**  
Richard Rahn

**Charlton Heston On Hollywood Politics**

# PROTECTING OUR CITIZENS

---

## When to Use Force Against Terrorists

### REPRESENTATIVE JIM COURTER

**T**wenty-three Americans died in terrorist attacks abroad last year, and another 160 were wounded. From the murderous and elaborate theater that Nabih Berri and his associates staged around the TWA jetliner in Beirut, to the bombings which killed servicemen in Greece and West Germany, to the use of an automatic weapon on invalid Leon Klinghoffer traveling on the *Achille Lauro*, terrorists have treated American lives and honor with contempt. And yet, apart from the use of fighter aircraft to capture the *Achille Lauro* pirates, the United States has done remarkably little to secure justice for the wrongs done to its citizens. Americans have been hearing for a long time about "the war against terrorism," but thus far the war has been one-sided, and it is not the terrorists who are losing.

There have been no known attempts to rescue the six Americans still held hostage in Lebanon. Nor have there been any known measures taken against Iran, which last had possession of the Shiites who murdered William Stanford and Charles Hegna in December 1984 on a Kuwaiti airliner at Teheran. The killers of Navy petty officer Robert Stethem have been identified by the State Department, but have since been reported to be at large in Beirut. Very recently, one of them was allowed to pass through France untouched.

Neither Abu Nidal nor his Libyan and Syrian patrons have paid any price for their submachine gun and grenade attacks on defenseless travelers in the Rome and Vienna airports in December. Instead, the new year began with the Sixth Fleet maneuvering uselessly off the coast of Libya, as Colonel Qaddafi poured scorn on the White House. The naval exercises may not have intimidated Qaddafi, but they can be presumed to have reinforced his megalomania.

Thomas Jefferson dealt differently with the Mediterranean pirates of his day. "An insult unpunished is the parent of others," he said. Jefferson overturned the George Washington/John Adams policy of paying protection money to the Barbary pirates who preyed upon commerce from bases in Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. In lieu of further payment, he sent our six-ship Navy under Stephen Decatur's command to the Mediterranean. The fleet bombarded the pirates' bases and the military installations of their governmental sponsors and blockaded their coasts,

eventually forcing their submission. Decatur came home with guarantees of something which tradition and all codes of international law promised but could not by themselves preserve: the freedom of trading ships to move on the high seas.

"History is full of such episodes," wrote Yale's Sterling Professor of Law Eugene Rostow in 1980 after critics questioned the legality of our attempt to rescue diplomats imprisoned in our Teheran embassy. The cases demonstrate both the responsibility of a state to prevent its territory from being used as a base for international crimes, and the right of a victimized state to redress such crimes by force if other means fail. A simple reprisal is acceptable where it is "discriminate"—no more dangerous than necessary to innocent parties—and "proportionate," which means punitive but no more so than necessary. Natural moral law, traditional international law, and even the more delicate rules of the United Nations Charter all guarantee the right to self-defense, particularly against the transnational movements of armed bands.

As one terrorist atrocity follows another, it has not been law which has prevented measured and forcible American reaction. Our hand has been stayed by political reservations and by moral and psychological inhibitions. The Reagan Administration's policy—that force is both justifiable and necessary—has been argued clearly and repeatedly since 1981. But time after time, we have vented our anger and sheathed our sword.

We have made ourselves experts at explaining why not acting is almost always the more satisfactory course. We think of the danger a rescue mission poses to the hostages and of the dangers military reprisal presents to innocent bystanders. We echo each other's remarks about not furthering "the spiral of violence." We persuade each other that retaliation would mean Libyan or Iranian terrorism in American streets. We read of the concern any action would be certain to raise in the capitals of friendly coun-

---

REPRESENTATIVE JIM COURTER, *Republican of New Jersey*, is a fourth-term member of the House Armed Services Committee. He was aided in preparing this article by legislative assistant Christopher Harmon.

tries or even in capitals of friendly countries like Syria, which already has a place on our list of identified governmental sponsors of terrorism. And if all these reasons do not stop us from punishing terrorists and their patrons, then we come to discover that, after all, visiting justice on a religious or political zealot is counterproductive because it would only gratify his longing for martyrdom.

Meanwhile, we have been overlooking the remarkable number of counterterrorism success stories in the past two decades. Time and time again, hostages have been rescued unharmed by the swift and skillful use of force. Time and time again, decisive action has destroyed terrorists' headquarters or camps and thus impaired their military capabilities or deterred them from using terrorist tactics. The option of the use of force, while not always necessary, must always be available. Contingency planning for a rescue mission or military retaliation or both should begin from the very hour in which Americans are taken hostage or killed abroad. There is no need for us to be paralyzed: history gives ample evidence that international terrorism can be impeded by countermeasures that are skillful and swift.

### Rescue Missions

Delta Force, the U.S. Army's team of counterterrorism specialists, is regrettably best known for failing to take enough helicopters to the desert staging ground outside Teheran in 1980. When three of the eight helicopters developed mechanical problems, the mission to rescue the 52 Americans had to be aborted. But Delta should also be remembered for other, more successful missions.

In March 1981, for example, the unit was asked for assistance when Islamic fundamentalists of the "Kommando Jihad," or Holy War Command, seized an Indonesian DC-10 airliner with about 50 passengers. As the plane rested on an airstrip in Bangkok, Thailand, Delta Force sent an anti-terrorist team with specialized equipment to advise and assist the Indonesian commandos. The Indonesians then stormed and liberated the airplane, killing three terrorists and mortally wounding a fourth.

Delta's advice was sought again in July 1984 when a Venezuelan DC-9 with 79 aboard was skyjacked by a Dominican national and a former Haitian army captain. The Venezuelan government defied the terrorists' demands, and the airplane made a series of short hops around the Caribbean, settling in Curacao. A clever airport technician crept to the plane and let the air out of its front tires and removed several electrical fuses. Eventually, 12 American-coached Venezuelan commandos armed with Uzi submachine guns approached the plane from two directions. As a hijacker panicked and threw gasoline into the aisles, they stormed the aircraft and killed both gunmen. There was no injury to any of the hostages.

Israel has successfully prevented the hijacking of its passenger liners. One El Al jet was commandeered in 1968 by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (P.F.L.P). Never again. Israel put undercover sky marshals on selected flights, reinforced cargo holds to nullify the effect of baggage bombs, and reportedly installed devices under jet wings which can alter and misdirect the flight of incoming missiles. When two Arabs tried to seize an El Al jet in 1970

on its flight from Amsterdam to New York, one of them was shot dead by a marshal while the other was handed over to authorities when the plane landed in London. Palestinian terrorists lost their interest in flying with El Al. The Israelis also have a fine record of recapturing other nations' airliners for them. Disguised as ground attendants, one team liberated a Belgian plane at Ben Gurion Airport in 1972, killing two members of Wadi Haddad's P.F.L.P. team and saving 97 passengers. Another squad retook a Sabena Airlines plane held by Black Septemberists that same year.

Egypt was one of the countries to study the Israeli lessons. In 1976, gunmen in the pay of Libya made the mistake of skyjacking an Egyptian Boeing 737 en route from Cairo to Luxor. As the government's negotiators stalled the gunmen with false news of a technical problem that would delay lift-off from Luxor, the army was working with information provided by several released hostages to develop a plan. Crack Egyptian paratroopers dressed as technicians were put aboard to perform the "necessary repairs." Working slowly, they talked themselves into the terrorists' confidence and their eventual request for spare parts and tools was granted. When these arrived, the "technicians" suddenly opened battle with the iron tools, battering several hijackers in prolonged hand-to-hand combat. A second team rushed in with effective automatic weapons fire. Every terrorist ended up in the hospital while every one of the 101 passengers and crew—Arab, French, West German, and Japanese—escaped harm.

In 1977, Palestinian gunmen hijacked a Lufthansa flight to Mogadishu, Somalia, where they threatened to kill the 90 hostages unless Baader-Meinhof terrorists were released from a West German prison, and a \$9 million ransom was paid. As Somalian government negotiators bought time, a team from West Germany's GSG-9 team, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ulrich Wegener, flew in from Crete and made an unobserved night landing. With blackened faces, dark clothes, and special soft shoes that allowed them to creep unnoticed along the wings of the plane, they placed their explosives. A ruse was employed to get all the terrorists to go forward to the cabin momentarily, and the starboard doors and several rear windows were then blown off. The GSG-9 team rushed in and gunned down all four terrorists. No one else was hurt. Leaders of the Baader-Meinhof gang committed suicide in their German prison cells when they heard of the counterassault. The raid at Mogadishu proved to be the psychological and political end of their movement.

The team at Mogadishu was assisted by specialists from Europe's most celebrated counterinsurgency professionals, the British Special Air Service (S.A.S.). The S.A.S. carries on a small exchange program with Delta Force, and has helped the Dutch Royal Marines, who put an end to South Moluccan terrorism in their country in the 1970s by successfully storming a train, an embassy, a school building, and other enclosures where hostages had been seized. Initiated to carry out commando raids against Rommel's forces in North Africa in World War II, the S.A.S. then focused on counterinsurgency and counterterrorism work in Indonesia, Malaya, and South Yemen. Today, rescuing hostages is one of its specialties. So formidable is its reputation that

①

②

③

UPI/Associated Press

**WANTED: Yasir Arafat for ordering the killing of Cleo Noel; Abu Nidal, for the hijacking of an Egypt Air plane last November; Abu Abbas, for the murder of Leon Klinghoffer.**

the reported presence of plainclothes marksmen from the regiment was said to have persuaded four Irish Republican Army terrorists to surrender after holding a building on Balcombe Street in London in 1975.

An S.A.S. contingent attached to the Special Branch of London's Metropolitan Police went on alert on the afternoon of April 30, 1980, when dissident Iranians stormed their own embassy in London and seized 26 hostages. Armed with a submachine gun, a machine pistol, Browning automatic pistols, and hand grenades, the Khomeini opponents from the Arab province of Khuzestan separated the hostages by sex and held them in two rooms on the third floor of the elegant five-story building. Such dispersal of hostages makes rescue considerably more difficult, which is why the tactic has become commonplace in more recent years.

London's police specialists had outlasted and out-talked and outwitted many hostage-takers before, and remained confident during the six-day siege. They kept the terrorists on one telephone and passed everything they learned by another to the S.A.S. The regiment was busy with blueprints of the building, their contingency planning, and certain limited movements on the embassy site itself. The gunmen began to sense their presence, and the government was still resisting their demand for an airplane to Baghdad. Terrorist leader Sami Mohammed Ali lost his patience. "The time for talking is past," he announced into the telephone as he gunned down a hostage. He pushed the body out the door and warned that another would die every half hour. "Knowing someone had been killed,

things had to change," said John Dellow, deputy assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

"What followed took just 11 minutes," *The Times* of London later reported. S.A.S. teams descended from the roof of the embassy using a high speed drop along ropes which they had anchored earlier to the jump-off point. They carried "frame charges" four feet long and two feet wide, specially packed with plastique, which they placed around the perimeters of the heavily reinforced windows. Through the blown apertures came stun grenades, an S.A.S. invention which produces a flash and a roar that momentarily immobilizes terrorists and hostages alike. Then the S.A.S., wearing helmet gear and built-in radios, came through and rushed upstairs, killing one gunman in the hallway and the others in the rooms with the hostages. Then some searched the rest of the embassy while others formed a human chain and virtually hurled the hostages one by one down the staircases and out of the burning building. With faces still hooded—now against the eager electronic eyes of the press—the S.A.S. troops boarded their waiting helicopters and disappeared.

The motto of the Special Air Service is "Who Dares, Wins."

#### Retaliation

The United States helped impose a Palestine Liberation Organization contingent on Tunisia as part of the deal it brokered in 1982 to evacuate Palestinians loyal to Yasir Arafat from Beirut and scatter them throughout the Mediterranean. The elderly President Bourguiba did his best to

alleviate his new problem by not permitting P.L.O. members to wander far from their camp and not permitting them to take their weapons with them when they did. But while he would later make reference to their "combatant" status, Bourguiba did not try to inhibit their foreign operations. He must have known very well what they were.

Tel Aviv knew as well. Force 17, Arafat's elite personal guard, was increasingly assuming an external role. Several crimes inside Israel were credited to them, and boatloads of Force 17 guerrillas were apprehended twice approaching the Israeli coast in August 1985. Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin charged that they were launched from Algeria on the orders of the Tunis headquarters, and told simply "to kill as many Jews as they can." Rabin made his statement in early September; a few days later, Force 17 seems to have sent three terrorists to murder Israeli tourists moored off Cyprus in a yacht. Many of these events were boasted of by captured Force 17 members and confirmed by American and British intelligence. The P.L.O. denied everything.

On October 1, 1985, two weeks after the Cyprus killings, Israeli jets left home for Arafat's headquarters just outside the Tunisian capital. Carrying the radar-jamming and deflecting equipment that proved so successful against Syria in 1982 and refueled in the air by Boeing 707 tankers, they approached the compound in two waves. First came F-15s, carrying laser designators to mark the P.L.O. headquarters building. Then came F-16s, which dropped American-built, laser-guided bombs that honed in on laser beams reflected off the designators. The phrase "surgical strike" has seldom been more appropriate. According to the *Washington Post*, the raid "damaged or destroyed buildings used by Force 17 . . . while leaving others in the complex untouched." Of the 70 or so killed, all were P.L.O. except for a dozen Tunisian policemen.

In an age of highly accurate weapons, including precision-guided munitions, Americans have clung stubbornly to the view that bombing is almost by definition indiscriminate. In part, this is due to our endless war in Vietnam, where we dropped staggering amounts of ordnance with remarkably little effect. But the Vietnam War was also a proving ground for new radio- and laser-guided munitions that can be used with pinpoint accuracy and minimum risk to civilians. The U.S. Air Force flew about 800 sorties against the Thanh Hoa bridge near Hanoi between 1965 and 1967 and lost 30 to 40 aircraft. But in May 1972, the first four Phantoms to be sent in with laser bombs hit the bridge. In June 1972, using 15 laser-guided 2,000-pound bombs, the U.S. Air Force destroyed the generating capacity of the Lang Chi dam, northwest of Hanoi, without destroying the dam itself—thereby preventing a flooding of the Red River valley that would have endangered civilians.

These and other more sophisticated weapons can be employed, as they were at Tunis, to ensure that reprisals against terrorist encampments or military and economic targets are exact and undamaging to civilians.

Not all Israeli raids have been as "clean" as that at Tunis. But the Israeli Defense Force history includes many such strikes in which the damage is devastatingly effective but limited to military targets. Late this January, after the at-

tacks in Vienna and Rome by Abu Nidal's Libyan- and Synan-supported Palestinians, and after a Synan-supported Fatah faction led by Abu Musa claimed credit for the Sunday bombing of a Jerusalem pizzeria, Israel decided upon action against an Abu Musa outpost at the Ain el Hilweh refugee camp in southern Lebanon, long a shelter for Palestinian gunmen. As first light broke on the morning of January 29, a flight of Israeli war planes swept over the

---

## It took the British Special Air Service just 11 minutes to rescue hostages from the Iranian embassy in London in 1980.

---

Lebanese border and struck at a selected cluster of three houses outside the camp. Though surrounded by sandbags and twin-barrelled anti-aircraft gun emplacements, all three buildings were destroyed by strafing and 50-pound fragmentation bombs.

Israel's pilots returned safely to their bases and reported accurate hits on the one-story center of Abu Musa's group, a smaller building occupied by Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command, and a two-story possession of another guerrilla group. The operation was over so swiftly that the Palestinians were unable even to remove the covers from their anti-aircraft guns. The refugees nearby were untouched.

The psychological effects of such an accurate raid are extraordinary. It must have been particularly hard on Abu Musa: 18 months before, in August 1984, Israeli jets had hit his bases with precision attacks in East Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, home to 5,000 anti-Arafat Palestinian guerrillas, and the departure point for frequent raids into Israel. One pair of Israeli bombers destroyed several buildings at Mejd el Anjar, a guerrilla base just south of the Beirut-Damascus highway. Abu Musa would admit to losing only four of his fighters, but about 100 people were buried in the rubble of a three-story building which Israel said served as his security and intelligence office. If the pursuit of Abu Musa has not yet resulted in his death, it has seriously disrupted his military operations. Many terrorist commanders remember the Israeli air attacks as "the worst part of their careers," wrote veteran Middle East reporter John Laffin, "because the Israeli planes always seemed to know where to find us."

American cases of retaliation are rare. One involved a combined rescue/retaliation action directed by President Gerald Ford in 1975 when Cambodian Communists seized the American cargo ship *Mayaguez* off the Cambodian coast. The U.S. Navy counterassault was swift, somewhat clumsy, and successful: all 40 captives were rescued. The President was much criticized by those who would guard us against any trace of "adventurism" and by others who judge a rescue mission not by its punitive and deterrent



effect or by the retrieval of hostage. It by body counts of the American soldiers who try to bring them back. Interviewed by Hugh Sidey five years after giving the orders for action, Mr. Ford had a short answer for his critics: "There was never a repeat while I was President."

The case of the *Mayaguez* illustrated how necessary our military alliances and overseas bases are to rescue missions. Reconnaissance aircraft were dispatched from Utapao Airfield in Thailand. The U.S.S. *Coral Sea* carrier group was redirected toward the area, as were other U.S. ships of war. The Joint Chiefs of Staff needed a landing party and ordered an Okinawa-based Marine battalion to Utapao. Two other Marine platoons would be brought in from Cubi Point in the Philippines.

The captured *Mayaguez* had been anchored near Kaoh Tang Island, and the movement of small boats to and from the ship suggested to intelligence that the 40-member crew had been transferred to land. (Intelligence, as it happens, was wrong.) Late in the fourth day, following a meeting of the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered that Kaoh Tang Island be attacked and the empty *Mayaguez* reboarded and towed to sea. Airstrikes hit the Cambodian airfield at Ream, heavily damaging the installations and the airstrip. The 180 Marines in the helicopterborne landing parties nonetheless took barrages of automatic weapons from the ground. Of the eight helicopters in the first wave, three crashed and two were disabled. Claymore mines on the beach also took their toll. Other landings placed hundreds of other troops ashore, some on nearby Tang Island where they engaged 150 Cambodians. If the fighting was bloody, it was also brief: three hours after the assault commenced, a fishing boat with mostly Caucasians on board was reported to be approaching Kaoh Tang Island flying a white flag.

The incident has a number of parallels with the Grenada operation of 1983. Both combined rescue and assault missions. Both successfully used overwhelming force on a small enemy-held island, but proved costly in men and machines. In both, there were lethal accidents. In Grenada, a skiff full of equipment-laden Navy SEALs overturned in unexpectedly heavy surf as a helicopter towed it towards the shore of the eastern side of the island. In Thailand, as helicopters landed at a U.S. base with Cambodia-bound Marines, one chopper crashed, costing 23 lives. The Cambodian operation used three arms of the military services: Navy, Marines, and Air Force. The Grenada mission used the Navy, Marines, Army personnel, and special forces.

President Ford had been told to expect to lose between 10 to 40 men in the *Mayaguez* mission. Fifteen died in action, and the 23 others in the shattered helicopter in Thailand must also be counted as losses. Another 51 servicemen and officers were wounded, and a three-man machine gun crew disappeared in action. Two cryptic entries in the records of the debriefing of the *Mayaguez* crew would have satisfied Commander-in-Chief Ford, however. According to one of these, the *Mayaguez* captain "convinced Cambodians that he could get U.S. forces to stop bombing/strafing if ship and crew released." The other is the last: "Ship's captain states that Cambodian fear of airstrike and prompt U.S. force response were the primary causes for release of the ship and its crew."

### What Works, and What Doesn't

Certainly there are cases in which force has been used badly. Last November, 59 hostages of an Egypt Air plane hijacked to Malta by followers of Abu Nidal were killed during a rescue attempt by the Egyptian counterterrorist squad Sa'iq. A rescue attempt was necessary, because the terrorists had begun executing passengers. But action is not of itself enough. Neither planning nor skill were in evidence. French counterterrorism expert Paul Barnil, who helped the Saudis recapture the Great Mosque of Mecca from heavily armed Sunnis in 1979, has criticized Sa'iq for using no sophisticated equipment, such as spike microphones, which can locate each of the terrorists with some precision inside the plane, or incapacitating gas, or the stun grenades which had rooted out the terrorists in the catacombs beneath the Great Mosque. No deception was attempted to provide the element of surprise.

Maltese authorities were also to blame. Available American experts were kept confined to their quarters by the Maltese; they were not even allowed to communicate with Sa'iq's commanding officer. Barnil notes further that the Maltese authorities' refusal to allow refueling of the plane cost Sa'iq its best chance to approach and gather intelligence. The rule in hostage situations is not to refuse to negotiate but to buy time by appearing to negotiate.

Sa'iq commenced its operation with an attempt to blow an aperture in the plane, but used too much explosive and set the aircraft on fire. Then, unforgivably, it killed innocents after passengers and terrorists began rushing from the burning plane. Counterterrorist forces are trained at instantaneous distinction between those with guns and those without. Firing without certainty is the worst mistake. Sa'iq had no reason to fire into knots of escaping passengers and terrorists when the police presumably had the airport cordoned off.

Disaster in Colombia followed the one in Malta, and the reasons for it were similar. After three dozen M-19 Communist guerrillas seized the Palace of Justice and a number of judges on November 6, the Colombian army stormed and recaptured the building. The result was some 100 deaths and only three dozen of the dead were guerrillas. So bad was the carnage that the 12 rescued justices boycotted the memorial service that President Betancur held for their 11 colleagues and the other innocents.

The operation discredited the use of force, an option to which a democratic society like Colombia must have recourse when faced with drug traffickers and Communist terrorists. Given the strategy by which terrorists and their sympathizers operate, lethal overreaction by the victimized government is of more propaganda value to them than a successful act of terror. Terrorists wish above all to discredit the power and the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of their audience, the people.

Time was on the side of the Colombian officials at Bogota and they threw it away. Until the terrorists began killing (and they apparently had not) waiting was appropriate, just as it was at the Iranian embassy in London in 1980. Instead, President Betancur waited two days—more than enough for the terrorists to organize their defenses but not enough for them to be worn down by the siege—and then the army was sent in with much bravado and no apparent

**This attack by Arab commandos at Rome Airport in December 1985 cost 13 lives. Fifty others were wounded.**

plan. Soldiers simply rammed an armored personnel carrier through the front door. The ensuing firefight raged for two days inside the block-long, three-story building. Some of that time seems to have been used by the guerrillas to execute at least six of the 11 justices who died.

The M-19 guerrillas who took the Palace of Justice were reportedly led by five Cuban-trained members of Nicaragua's Directorate of Special Operations. At a safehouse outside the capital, they had built a scale model of the targeted building and trained with it for three weeks. They maintained regular coded communication with Cuba and Nicaragua, which supplied half the arms they took to the Palace. Such opponents cannot be surprised—or prevented from shooting their captives—by the appearance of an armored personnel carrier at the front door. But even two army fire teams, introduced into the building by stealth, or given satchel charges and placed on the roof by helicopter at the moment the ground assault began, would have diverted the besieged, compromising their freedom to concentrate their fire on army personnel on the ground.

#### **When to Use Force**

Malta and Bogota are cases in which force was used ineptly. Sometimes force ought not be used at all. This is most likely when hostages are taken on a country's own soil and the government possesses complete control over the environment. Police and political officials can permit or limit the terrorists' movement, allow or prevent visitors, withhold or grant food and communication.

The New York City police department has a splendid record of outlasting and out-talking nonpolitical hostage-takers. "We bore them to death," one officer has said. Although ideological zealots differ from emotional cases, sometimes they, too, can be exhausted or tricked into submission. There may also be times in which terrible danger can be averted or scores of hostages rescued by giving into the demands or granting terrorists their escape. In such cases, it is important to make sure that punishment or reprisal take place afterward.

Everything that was done wrong at Malta and Bogota was done right at Entebbe. Even after a decade, that operation by the General Intelligence and Reconnaissance Unit 269 of the Israeli Defense Force remains the model of the three elements of success in rescue missions: surprise, speed, and skill.

On June 28, 1976, Air France flight 139 en route to Tel Aviv was skyjacked by Palestinian and German terrorists and flown to Entebbe, Uganda. By the morning of July 1, a fullscale mock-up of Entebbe's Old Terminal had been built from blueprints (obtained from the building's Israeli architect) and from tourists' vague photographs. The commando force was assembled and commenced rehearsals under the stopwatch. One hour before midnight on July 3, the first of four C-130s touched down after a 2,200 mile flight, exactly 30 seconds behind schedule. The planes disgorged armored personnel carriers, jeeps, other vehicles, and several hundred men. They killed the terrorists, recaptured the hostages and put them on a plane for home,

machine-gunned the Ugandan MIG fighters at the airstrip, refueled, reloaded, and disappeared into the skies, all in an hour and a half. The Israelis called it "Operation Thunderbolt," and Ugandans in the ministries and army barracks at Kampala understood what they meant.

Without surprise, the lives of hostages and counter-attackers alike are in the gravest danger. The terrorists may fire on their captives; this happened at Entebbe and London, though in most cases terrorists naturally turn upon their attackers. Operating at night has often proven a good way to gain surprise. Guards are least alert then, and although the commandos are on unfamiliar ground, they enjoy the advantages of moving out of darkness and toward lit interiors. Where they attack in dark interiors, infrared-sensitive night vision goggles can provide an advantage in a firefight. The rescues at Entebbe and Mogadishu occurred at night and a dozen others were planned for or took place in darkness. By contrast, some of the most celebrated disasters—the attempt to stop Black September's escape with Israeli hostages at Furstenfeldbruck Airport outside Munich in 1972, Larnacav on Cyprus in 1978 where Sa'iq'a botched a rescue attempt, and the Malta disaster of last year—took place in the full light of day. The best opportunity for Delta Force to rescue the TWA 847 passengers last June may have been stymied by Algerian authorities, who kept on the brilliant lights at Algiers airport while the plane was held there overnight between trips to Beirut.

Arriving at Entebbe at night was not of itself enough to gain surprise. Elaborate plans were necessary to fool the Ugandan radar systems and the Entebbe air traffic controllers. In addition, putting a C-130 Hercules transport aircraft down on an airstrip unseen may be possible, but putting it down quietly is a challenge. William Stevenson has described how the first of the four transports cut its speed to a mere 100 miles per hour and then cut it again to 75. To the soldiers strapped inside, the landing airplane "seemed to fall out of the air with a shriek of twisted metal and protesting turbines," but outside "an observer would have seen the craft slide almost soundlessly onto the runway, the underinflated tires uttering a soft squeal."

Enemy troops on the ground presented another problem. An Israeli paratroop major assigned to get his men from the first plane to the distant Old Terminal building (where the hostages were) solved the problem of surprising the expected sentries only in the last hours before boarding. He realized that the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin always traveled in a black Mercedes, and had been visiting the airport regularly to see his P.F.L.P. friends and "console" the hostages. The major requisitioned a Mercedes, but the only one available was white; it went into the Hercules with a new wet coat of black paint. The deception worked perfectly. Outside the Old Terminal, Ugandans who would have fired upon an unidentified column of jeeps snapped to attention when it was led by a black Mercedes, and the commandos inside cut them down with silencer-equipped pistols. The addition of surprise to the customary swiftness and skill of Israeli military operations made the Entebbe rescue a masterpiece. It broke a most dangerous circle of political criminals from Palestine and West Germany and saved the hundred persons they had victimized.

### What Can Be Done

The President and Secretary of State Shultz have propounded a reasonable, moral, and convincing doctrine of the use of force against terrorism. Calling for the use of preemption, punitive retaliation, and other acts which go to the sources of terrorism, this doctrine is said to have been codified by National Security Directive 138 in April 1984. The doctrine has often been invoked but rarely applied. Given the fact that Americans continue to be the leading targets of international terrorism and that such acts of terrorism continue to rise, it is necessary for the United States to undertake a more aggressive counterterrorism role. While it must be to others to choose the methods and tools of action, the following suggestions indicate the breadth of the American options.

The United States should make immediate and effective use of international arrest warrants for known terrorists, both those shielded from extradition by foreign governments and those beyond the control of their own poorly governed states. The Terrorist Protection Act, recently passed unanimously by the Senate, would lower domestic legal barriers that inhibit American agents from seizing those who kill Americans for political reasons abroad and allow them to be brought to trial under American law.

Bounties may be useful supplements to American efforts to arrest and prosecute known killers. The Department of Justice has offered a bounty of \$250,000 for the killers of Charles Hegna and William Stanford on a hijacked Kuwaiti airliner on December 4, 1984 at Teheran airport. It has offered \$500,000 for Hasan Izz-Al-din and Mohammad Hamadei, the Hezbollah members who murdered Robert Stethem on the TWA plane last summer. While there is no good moral or political reason to turn over to bounty hunters the counterterrorism work we should do ourselves, bounties may nonetheless be of use in cases in which American agents are simply unable to locate the killer.

There will, of course, be objections. Israel's clever kidnapping-for-trial of Adolf Eichmann from Argentina 25 years ago produced a roar of international protest in spite of the distinct unpopularity of Nazi mass murderers. We must expect the objections, as surely as President Reagan expected Mubarak's unhappiness about the *Achille Lauro* force-down. We should turn them against the government from which they come: if requests for extradition go unheeded, the snatch that follows should be accompanied by wide dissemination of details of the government's refusal to help seize an international terrorist, and by full listings of the charges against the accused.

Ambassador Charles Lichenstein, formerly with our United Nations mission, is among those examining ways of bringing formal charges against Yasir Arafat, who is alleged to have given orders over a shortwave radio to kill Cleo Noel, American ambassador to the Sudan in 1973. Carlo Mastelloni, a magistrate at Venice, has already issued a warrant for Arafat's arrest (in September 1984) on charges of weapons smuggling to the Italian Red Brigade via the Mediterranean. And a justice in a court in Genoa, from whence the *Achille Lauro* sailed, has issued a warrant for Abu Abbas on charges of piracy and the murder of Leon Klinghoffer.

Another candidate for arrest or reprisal may be Hussein Mussawi, a Lebanese militant and an organizer of Hezbollah, the sponsors of the TWA hijacking. Mussawi operates primarily from West Beirut, Baalbek, and southern Lebanon. He has been identified as the probable draftsman, with Iran's Minister of Islamic Guidance, Seyed Muhammed Khatami, of a 200-page plan drawn up in May 1984 for the formation of terrorist strike forces. Mussawi reportedly sits as part of the secret council of Islamic Jihad, or "Holy War," which meets in the Iranian Embassy in Damascus. Apart from holding our six American hostages, Islamic Jihad claims credit for the bombing of the Marine barracks, as well as that of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 1983. The Departments of Justice and State might also take a hard look at the chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, Colonel Ghazi Kanaan, to whom terrorism expert Arnaud de Borchgrave ascribes "the key supervisory role for Shiite extremists in Lebanon. [He] functions as President Assad's pro-consul in a country Syria regards as its own. Colonel Kanaan has worked closely with the K.G.B. in Syria and in Lebanon."

Kamaran Island, South Yemen's northernmost possession in the Red Sea, may be an example of the kind of hard target available to American planners, should they be directed by the President to retaliate for the killings of Americans by the P.L.O. In early 1985, Kamaran Island was reported to be a new site for pro-Arafat P.L.O. activities. The 70-square-mile island was leased to him and military construction and the lengthening of an airstrip were underway. P.L.O. pilots were expected from other Middle Eastern bases. If U.S. intelligence had confidence in such a report, Kamaran Island could have been deemed a reasonable target for a bombing raid following pro-Arafat P.L.O. atrocities. The danger to South Yemeni citizens would have been minimal.

Any number of Iranian, Syrian, or Libyan terrorist training camps suggest themselves as potential targets when retaliation is appropriate. The State Department says it knows of some 15 camps in Libya. Instructors are Syrian, East German, Palestinian, and Cuban. Some 7,000 young men and women from all over the world train there. Many of the camps are on or near the Mediterranean coast and

are vulnerable to airstrikes and covert or overt operations from the sea. These include Res al Hilal west of Tobruk, the "April 17th" camp near Benghazi, and a cluster of others around Tripoli.

If action against a country like Iran is necessary, according to the Naval War College's chairman of strategy, Alvin Bernstein, the best targets would be those outside the country which would not endanger Americans carrying out the reprisal. Arms-carrying ships essential to the Ayatollah's war effort against Iraq are one such target; naval patrol boats are another.

We should also start thinking about using political alliances, political leverage, and financial and covert operations against state sponsors of terrorists who kill Americans. Every dictator has vulnerabilities. Arafat faces enemies within the P.L.O. Syria's Assad is a member of an Alawite minority in a largely Sunni country. Egypt might give quiet support to U.S. operations against Libya, which has repeatedly engaged in cross-border terrorism and assassination attempts against Egyptian officials. Terrorist atrocities sponsored by Iran could be answered by overt, publicized increments of military aid to Iraq.

### A Closing Word

If the first five years of the present decade have demonstrated anything, it is that closer international cooperation by victimized states, better intelligence gathering, and diplomatic and economic sanctions can all help control terrorism, but that each fails in decisive respects. Most terrorists, particularly the most well known, are not caught by such means. And most of those who are caught do not stay in jail long.

Five years ago, 52 Americans finally came home from Iran. Khomeini had done nothing for 444 days. Then a "breakthrough"—for which more than one negotiator claimed credit—came in the very first hours of the Presidency of Ronald Reagan, who had made well known his opinions of the handling of the hostage crisis and of Khomeini. The new President welcomed back the 52 Americans with words we would do well to live by: "We hear it said that we live in an era of limits to our powers. Well, let it also be understood, there are limits to our patience." ■