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Note change in second paragraph on page 2 of
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NATIONAL SECURITY ~~AND RISK~~ MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE
AMERICAN BANKERS ASSOCIATION
27 JANUARY 1988

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM: CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE
BY ROBERT M. GATES
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. LET ME FIRST EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO YOU FOR BEING INVITED TO ADDRESS THIS GATHERING ON A SUBJECT THAT IS MUCH ON OUR MINDS, THE SPREAD OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. THIS MORNING I WILL SHARE WITH YOU HOW WE ASSESS THIS WAR WITHOUT BORDERS CONDUCTED AGAINST AN ENEMY THAT IS HARD TO FIND AND HARDER STILL TO DEFEND AGAINST.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE CANCER OF TERRORISM IS HERE TO STAY AND, INDEED, SPREADING. PRELIMINARY FIGURES SHOW THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS WORLD-WIDE GREW FROM 774 IN 1986 TO 849 IN 1987 -- AN INCREASE MAINLY REFLECTING A DRAMATIC RISE IN TERRORISM IN ASIA. THE UNITED STATES AND ITS FRIENDS AND ALLIES CONTINUE TO BE THE PRIMARY TARGETS. THE SAD TOLL OF KILLED AND INJURED GROWS MONTH BY MONTH. WE MUST EXPECT TERRORISTS AROUND THE WORLD TO ADAPT TO OUR DEFENSIVE MEASURES BY USING LARGER BOMBS, PERHAPS AGAINST SOFTER TARGETS, AND TO CONTINUE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO HARM INNOCENT BYSTANDERS THROUGH INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS.

WHAT THE TERRORIST DOES IS KILL, MAIM, KIDNAP, TORTURE. HIS VICTIMS MAY BE CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOLROOM, INNOCENT TRAVELERS ON AIRPLANES, BUSINESSMEN RETURNING HOME FROM WORK, POLITICAL LEADERS, DIPLOMATS, SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS ANYWHERE. THE TERRORIST'S VICTIMS MAY HAVE NO PARTICULAR POLITICAL IDENTITY; OR THEY MAY BE POLITICAL SYMBOLS, LIKE ALDO MORO OR -- PERHAPS -- POPE JOHN PAUL II. THEY MAY BE KIDNAPPED AND HELD FOR RANSOM, MAIMED OR SIMPLY BLOWN TO BITS. ONE DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC OF THE TERRORIST IS HIS CHOICE OF METHOD: THE TERRORIST CHOOSES VIOLENCE AS THE INSTRUMENT OF FIRST RESORT.

LET ME TALK FIRST ABOUT TERRORISM WITH ITS ROOTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IN 1983, MIDDLE EASTERN GROUPS ACCOUNTED FOR ABOUT ONE-FOURTH OF ALL INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST INCIDENTS. BY 1985, THEIR SHARE HAD REACHED ABOUT ONE-HALF, AND THROUGH 1987 TERRORISM OF MIDDLE EASTERN ORIGIN CONTINUED TO ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT HALF OF ALL INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST INCIDENTS. MIDDLE EAST TERRORISM CONTINUES TO REPRESENT THE GRAVEST DANGER TO THE UNITED STATES. THE MAJORITY OF U.S. CASUALTIES HAVE OCCURRED IN INCIDENTS INVOLVING MIDDLE EASTERNERS. MIDDLE EASTERN BOMBS HAVE TENDED TO BE LARGER, MORE SOPHISTICATED, AND MORE LETHAL. MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISTS GENERALLY ARE MORE PROFESSIONAL AND PROFICIENT IN CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS THAN OTHERS, AND THUS MORE DIFFICULT TO DETECT AND STOP. MOST IMPORTANT, IT IS MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISM THAT HAS HAD, AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE, THE MOST SEVERE IMPACT ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS.

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LET ME OUTLINE FOR YOU SOME OF OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISM:

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