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Reagan Vows Determination On Terrorism

U.S. Will Work With Allies To Consider Options, 'Military and Otherwise'

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WASHINGTON—President Reagan announced a series of actions designed to show determination to thwart terrorism abroad and to appear on top of the politically volatile issue at home.

"Our limits have been reached," the president declared in a statement yesterday. "We cannot allow our people to be placed at risk simply because they are blessed in being citizens" of the U.S.

The president instructed Vice President George Bush "to take the lead with the U.S. government and with our allies" to find ways of combating "this increasingly violent and indiscriminate but purposeful affront to humanity." He said the options to be explored would be "military and otherwise."

The president's actions seem aimed in part at diminishing political fallout from the Beirut hijacking crisis, as well as from the killing of six Americans in El Salvador late Wednesday.

Gunmen believed to be leftist guerrillas sprayed machine-gun fire into a crowd at an outdoor San Salvador cafe, killing four off-duty Marines from the U.S. Embassy there and two U.S. businessmen. Seven others died in the attack.

Deputy White House press secretary Larry Speakes said U.S. officials "strongly suspect" the guerrillas' primary target may have been the Marines, who reportedly took the "first fire." In his statement, Mr. Reagan said he directed officials at the State and Defense departments to "provide whatever assistance is necessary" to El Salvador's President Napoleon Duarte "in order to find and punish the terrorists who perpetrated this act."

He said he would expedite the delivery of unspecified "security assistance" al-

ready ordered by the Duarte government and he is prepared to use emergency powers to furnish additional military aid that could help the government track down and prosecute those responsible for the killings.

White House spokesman Speakes said the aid includes technical law-enforcement and intelligence-gathering assistance. He emphasized the U.S. has no plans to take military action itself in Central America to combat terrorism.

Mr. Reagan said the vice president would pursue anti-terrorism initiatives with European officials during a visit there soon and would later convene a "government-wide task force" to develop recommendations on how to handle the problem.

The president's actions clearly seemed aimed at showing presidential initiative on the difficult issue while keeping the president somewhat removed from the problem. White House officials say the president's aides have disagreed over just how publicly involved the president should get.

For now at least, the answer seems to be to shield the president from any negative political impact by keeping his direct involvement in the Beirut crisis to a minimum. An aide said that Mr. Reagan's schedule includes only a small increase in time devoted to National Security Council business. The president also declined to alter plans for a speech in Dallas today.

But while aides agree that the short-term political impact probably won't hurt the president as long as he remains above the day-to-day events, they believe a protracted hostage crisis could be very damaging politically. Thus, they want Mr. Reagan to demonstrate a long-term commitment to attacking the broader problem of increased terrorist activities around the world.

"The country traditionally rallies around a president early on" in such crises, said a top White House aide. "What happens after that depends on what you do and how you do it." He added that one important long-term goal is to demonstrate a presidential resolve to deal with the systematic threat of terrorism with broad policies.

Asked if yesterday's presidential actions contribute to that long-term goal, he replied, "Absolutely."