

PAGE 5B

WASHINGTON TIMES
21 May 1986



ships with other groups or state sponsors. Much of this is just hard research, compiling a large data base and attempting to fill in the gaps. It is not very glamorous, and those who do it do not capture the headlines. But it is the foundation upon which the U.S. counter-terrorism effort rests.

Continuing collection and analysis enable us to improve our ability to detect trends in terrorism operations, upgrade security in



areas most likely at risk, and determine vulnerabilities of terrorist groups. We have put in place a system of rapid communications to gather assessments, have reports tested by experts throughout our government, and pass conclusions and warnings quickly to the point of the threat.

Action based on our intelligence, along with that of other friendly countries, including moderate Arab governments, has been taken to prevent about 100 planned terrorist attacks around the world. The rate of effective warning is increasing, rising to 26 during April.

Sometimes we fall just heart-breakingly short of success, as was the case with the West Berlin nightclub bombing last month. You have heard the president's statement outlining the evidence for the Libyan complicity in the Berlin bombing. We also have compelling evidence of Libyan involvement in attempts to attack other U.S. targets, several of which were designed to cause maximum casualties similar to the Berlin bombing:

- France expelled two members of the Libyan People's Bureau in Paris for their involvement in a planned attack on visa applicants waiting in line at the U.S. Embassy;

- France subsequently expelled two disgruntled Fatah Force 17 members recruited by Libya to conduct another operation against the United States in Paris;

- In early April, a Libyan-inspired plot to attack the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was aborted when the 107mm rocket exploded on launch;

- Turkish police in late March arrested two Tunisians in Istanbul who claimed they were planning on behalf of the Libyans to use explosives

Continued

WILLIAM CASEY

To prevent terrorists' plans or to disrupt their activities, we need information about them. But the very nature of terrorist groups and their activities makes the task of gathering such information extremely complicated. Terrorist groups are very small,

making penetration a very difficult task for police or intelligence agents. Moreover, the operating life of any single group of terrorists is often no more than a few years. Likewise, typical terrorist leaders have a relatively short business life.

So how do we go about it? First, we are acquiring as much information as we can about terrorist groups, including *modus operandi*, organizational structure, personnel support, financial and communications arrangements, and their relation-

against a U.S. target in Turkey. The operation was planned to inflict heavy casualties.

All in all, nearly 50 Libyan diplomats have been expelled recently from Spain, Italy, France, and West Germany. In fact, so far this year we have reports of well over 35 Libyan-associated threats, including surveillance of planned attacks against U.S. personnel and facilities in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Together with the intelligence and security services of friendly countries, we have developed a worldwide counterterrorist network that functions through intelligence exchanges, training and technical support, and joint operations.

We have become increasingly effective and our capabilities are improving. I take this occasion to further a necessary dialogue on how we can overcome what I consider the greatest single impediment to protecting our interests and our citizens from the scourge of international terrorism.

In recent years, publication of classified information by the media

has destroyed or seriously damaged intelligence sources of the highest value. Every method we have of acquiring intelligence — our agents, our relationships with other security services, our photographic and electronic capabilities, the information we get from communications — has been damaged by the publication of unauthorized disclosures.

In recent weeks and months, a flood of information and misinformation has appeared in print and on the airwaves. Before the president spoke to our people and told them

about the conclusive evidence that we had about Libyan direction of the attack on allied soldiers in the Berlin nightclub, major newspapers and news magazines published that Libyan communications were being read. The Libyans stopped using those communications and this is bound to put other peaceful citizens in jeopardy. This is a severe problem we must address if our fight against terrorism is to succeed.

I respect the diligence and ingenuity of the working press in gathering and publishing news and applaud

its exposure of waste, inefficiency, corruption, and other misconduct. In short, I speak from 30 years of experience as a friend, participant, and supporter of the media.

I have two points that I feel I must make at this time in order to discharge the obligation specifically

placed on me by the law of our land to protect intelligence sources and methods.

Put very simply, they are, first, the media, like everyone else, must adhere to the law. Second, all of us have responsibilities to balance in carrying out a mission. In the face of the new dangerous threats we face from international terrorism, now is the time to address those responsibilities mutually in a serious and measured way.

Congress, shortly after it established the National Security Agency to gather signals intelligence, enacted a law which prohibits the publication of information about communications intelligence. There has been widespread violation of that law over recent weeks and months. Much damage has been done.

Kay Graham, the publisher of *The Washington Post*, in a recent, very thoughtful, and constructive speech, cited the kind of damage we have sustained. She told how a television network and a columnist had obtained information that we were reading the messages of people arranging the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. Shortly after this public disclosure, that traffic stopped. This undermined our efforts to capture the terrorist leaders and eliminated a source of information about future attacks.

Where there already has been public disclosure about communications intelligence, the law has been violated, but the milk has been spilled. I would not, therefore, at this time favor action for these past offenses. But I strongly believe that if we are to protect our security as a nation and the safety of our citizens in this age of international terrorism and intercontinental missiles, the law now on the books to protect a very narrow segment of information, that dealing with communications intelligence, must now be enforced.

There are other large areas of information about our intelligence, our national security, and our relationships with other nations which can and frequently should be published without violating any law. But there are situations in which many of us believe there is a responsibility, before rushing into print or onto the airwaves, to weigh and consider the danger to life and limb of our citizens and others and to the international relationships and the reputation for reliability of our nation.

The temptation to go beyond the facts and piece together and stretch fragments of information in order to make a publishable story, and sometimes in order to sensationalize, is a dangerous thing. It can, and has, cost lives. It can wrongly impair reputa-

tions and disrupt relationships critical to our national interest.

We all must do better. This is a dangerous and unpredictable world in which all of us must move with caution and responsibility.

We have been gratified by the readiness of many reporters and editors carefully to consider sometimes withholding publication of information which could jeopardize national interests or to treat or present a story in a manner which meets the public need, yet minimizes potential damage to intelligence sources. The trick is to recognize the potential for damage and to consult on how it might be minimized. We are always ready and available on short notice to help on that.

I hasten to add, however, that the first line of defense and the most effective way of preventing these types of leaks is to increase discipline within the government itself. The inability to control sensitive information is destructive of the morale of people who do keep secrets, as well as damaging to our security.

During the last several years, the president has emphasized the special obligation federal workers have to protect the classified information with which they are entrusted. We have increased, and must intensify, our efforts to uncover those who violate this trust. We are studying procedures and possibly new laws needed to deal with federal employees who decide on their own to disclose classified information.

William Casey is director of the Central Intelligence Agency. This article is condensed from a speech delivered May 15 before the annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee.
