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TERROR REPORT / JOHN WOLF

FBI Cites Better Intelligence for Terrorism's Decline

Citing improved intelligence as one of the reasons for a decline in domestic terrorism, FBI Director William H. Webster said recently that the principles and guidelines for curbing terror in this country can be applied on the international stage.

Figures released by the FBI last August tally seven terrorist incidents for this country in 1985. Numbers indicating the prevention of 23 such incidents were also revealed. One hundred acts of domestic terrorism occurred in the United States in 1978 and 13 in 1984.

Webster's remarks, in a speech at the American Bar Association (ABA) convention last month, cited various covert intelligence-gathering techniques as contributing to the FBI's success in stemming the tide of terrorism.

These clandestine methods include the active use of informants, undercover agents and court-ordered electronic surveillance.

Charles Allen, antiterrorism head of the CIA, while speaking at the same ABA gathering, mentioned that his agency and others engaged in intelligence operations had doubled their analytical and operational resources since 1984.

He said the CIA is working actively "to penetrate terrorist networks, mount operations to sow seeds of suspicion among the cadres and among the leaders" and identify new technical capabilities.

Allen also mentioned that terrorist incidents overseas had increased considerably in recent years: from about 500 recorded incidents in the early 1980s to almost 800 in 1984 alone.

He said "softer, less protected targets" such as businesses, hotels and restaurants were being hit by the terrorists.

Libya Raid Cited as Deterrent

Allen, Attorney General Edwin Meese III and a number of other

speakers at the ABA convention cited April's U.S. air raid on Libya as a deterrent to terrorists. According to Allen, state-supported terrorism — the variety backed by the communist bloc and its allies — has decreased since American warplanes hit Col. Moammar Qaddafi's state.

The CIA's summary of terrorist incidents was corroborated by an Israeli study released Aug. 12. Issued by Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, the paper — entitled *INTER 85* — said 639 people were killed, 833 wounded, 125 kidnapped and 1,045 taken hostage in hijackings and

“The number of people killed in 1985 in terrorist attacks worldwide increased by 83 percent over the previous year.”

other attacks in 1985. This is an 83 percent increase in the number of people killed over the previous year, when 412 incidents occurred, the report said.

Ariel Merari, who headed the *INTER 85* survey, said: "Contrary to some predictions, this raid [on Libya] did not result, at least not so far, in a counterwave of terrorism. We must conclude, therefore, at least for the time being, that the American retaliatory raid has been successful."

If U.S. anti-terrorist agents become overly confident, however, the results can be disastrous.

On Aug. 12, the eve of the Berlin Wall's 25th anniversary, the U.S. diplomatic mission in the former German capital city issued a state of alert. It

warned of a possible attack on American companies or soldiers in West Berlin.

A day earlier, Togo's Interior Minister Kpotivi Tevi-Djidjogbe Lacle said his country's security forces had thwarted an international terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy in Lome, capital of the former French colony in West Africa.

Lacle said two suitcases were intercepted that had been loaded with explosives, an automatic pistol and three grenades. They had been sent from Libya to its embassy in Cotonou, the capital of neighboring Benin, and then transshipped to Togo. The grenades, Lacle said, were to have been thrown into movie houses in the Togolese capital.

Allen told panelists at the ABA meeting that sharing intelligence information with allies has increased the CIA's ability to track terrorist operations, disrupt financial and supply lines and pre-empt terrorist attacks.

An information exchange among allies is the key ingredient of any anti-terrorist campaign. Apparently, the Togolese security forces were furnished data that enabled them to confiscate the terrorist weaponry.

Lacle said Benin had made a positive contribution in the arrest of nine people in his country and that France and the United States had also aided Togo in its investigation.

The nine detainees, believed linked to the Libyans, are currently being interrogated by the Togolese, and it is hoped that the information extracted will be provided to American anti-terrorist specialists.

This data may prove Qaddafi is still determined to unleash terror against Americans wherever they are easy to get at.

Although Togo is a small and far-away country, the ability of the United States and its allies to check terrorism in its capital is proof that anti-terrorist intelligence is well honed.