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State Support for International Terrorism, 1985



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An Intelligence Assessment

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May 1986

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State Support for International Terrorism, 1985



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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by 
and other analysts in the Policy Support Branch of the
Counterterrorism Center. Comments and queries
are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Policy
Support Branch, 

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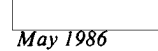
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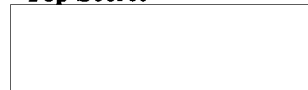


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State Support for International Terrorism, 1985 

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Key Judgments

Information available as of 1 April 1986 was used in this report.

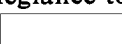
State support constituted a significant and lethal component of international terrorism in 1985. All but a handful of incidents were of Middle Eastern origin; state-supported terrorism has become an established instrument of foreign policy of some Middle Eastern countries. In our judgment, a significant change in the level or type of support provided to terrorist groups by states is unlikely, although the number of incidents in any given year may rise or fall. 

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The three trends we identified in 1985 probably will continue through 1986:

- Greater use of surrogates.
- More violent incidents.
- Higher number of bystander casualties. 


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States increasingly use other groups as their surrogates to conduct terrorism that the states later can deny having sponsored or encouraged. Many such groups owe no formal allegiance to the state but are willing to accept weapons, money, or training. 

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The second and third trends identified in state-supported terrorism are associated: as terrorist groups conduct proportionately more armed attacks—including assassinations—and bombings, the number of innocent victims grows. Americans particularly have suffered from this: US citizens have been singled out for beatings, torture, and death in instances when the terrorist target was not initially American, as in the Achille Lauro and Egyptair hijackings. 

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US facilities and personnel unquestionably will remain targets of state-supported terrorism. Victims in the Middle East have become more difficult to find as US installations improve their security and Americans keep a lower profile in these countries. As a result, we expect spillover into other areas—Western Europe in particular—to be more common in the coming year. 

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Libya moved toward closer ties to the radical Palestinian group Abu Nidal, a relationship that may have influenced the group's decision to carry out the Egyptair hijacking in November 1985 in which three Americans were shot, one fatally. *Libya* probably also provided support to some of the Abu Nidal terrorists involved in the attacks on two El Al ticket counters at



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airports in Europe last December. Qadhafi almost certainly would like to forge closer links to terrorist groups that have proved their mettle.



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Iran has employed terrorism as a primary instrument for exporting its revolution, but more pragmatic leadership has—temporarily at least—reduced Iran’s terrorist profile. Economic turmoil and the war with Iraq have compelled Tehran in recent months to pursue a strategy of diplomacy rather than subversion, particularly in its relations with the Persian Gulf states. In Lebanon, groups like Hizballah still derive their inspiration from Iran, but they increasingly follow an independent course.



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Syrian-supported groups dramatically stepped up their terrorist campaigns against Jordanian and Israeli targets. Responding to the rapprochement between PLO chief Arafat and Jordan’s King Hussein that began in late 1984, the radical Palestinian group Abu Nidal carried out almost two-thirds of the attacks attributable to Syria. President Assad uses the terrorist weapon when he deems it serves Syrian national interests.



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Iraqi involvement in terrorism continued at reduced levels, with most of its activity directed against Syria and Libya. Baghdad significantly increased support to Arafat last year to counterbalance Syria’s domination of the more radical PLO factions. The movement of several hundred PLO fighters to Baghdad after the Israeli raid on Tunis in October 1985 may presage increased Iraqi support for PLO terrorist activities. Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, however, will try to prevent the PLO from attacking Israeli targets outside Israel and the occupied territories.



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Before its bloody coup d’etat, *the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen* had begun curtailing Aden’s direct involvement with insurgent groups from Oman and North Yemen as well as with the PLO, but continued to provide safehaven, passports, and training facilities to some Palestinian groups. The new leadership, however, may resume a more active role in supporting terrorism in the future.



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Cuba maintains a large and complex apparatus for subversion that provides various forms of support for leftist revolutionaries and terrorists. The bulk of Cuban assistance goes to the Salvadoran leftist insurgency, although Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Chile also are targets of Havana's subversive efforts. 


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Nicaragua continues to provide training and support to Latin American revolutionary and guerrilla groups. Despite the publicity generated by US accusations, international disapproval has not discouraged the Sandinistas from pursuing terrorist ties, including the training of West European terrorists. 

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North Korea maintains ties to a variety of foreign extremist groups, although we are not aware of any North Korean-sponsored terrorist attacks since the October 1983 bombing directed against the South Korean Government. 

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The *Soviet Union* supports groups such as the PLO through training and the sale of weapons to countries like Syria and Libya that later end up in terrorist hands. In addition, Soviet influence over its Bloc allies gives Moscow the leverage to elicit Bloc support for radical groups. Such support includes travel assistance, safehaven, and the sale of weapons through the international gray arms market. Bulgaria is the most active of the Bloc countries, although Yugoslavia initially harbored Abu Abbas, the Palestinian leader who planned the Achille Lauro hijacking. 

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State Support for International Terrorism, 1985

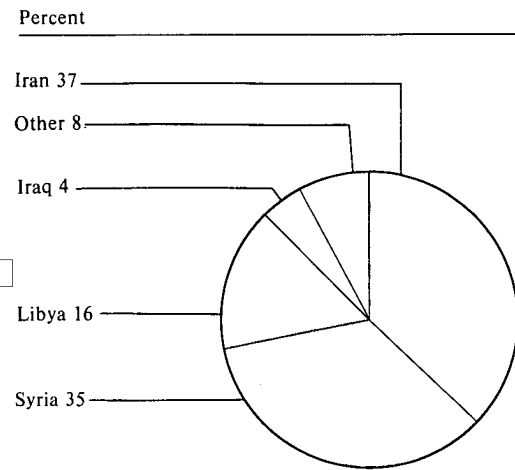
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State support constituted a lethal and significant component of international terrorism throughout 1985. All but a handful of incidents were of Middle Eastern origin; state-supported terrorism is an established instrument of foreign policy of some Middle Eastern countries. Terrorism in the Middle East has become so institutionalized that as long as Qadhafi and Khomeini are alive neither Iran nor Libya is likely to cease abruptly its support for terrorism. The number of terrorist incidents in any given year may rise or fall, but we do not foresee a significant change in the level or type of support provided to groups that undertake terrorist activity on behalf of a state.

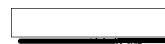
States provide a variety of support to terrorist groups; much of it is not direct assistance. Few states actually engage in terrorism using their own nationals: Libya is a notable exception. Some states like Nicaragua, Cuba, and Libya have ties to numerous organizations that are involved in dissident activities and insurgencies worldwide. Sometimes these groups—such as the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador or Colombia's M-19—also engage in terrorist activity.

Other states support groups whose terrorist activities dovetail with the state's policy agenda, whether or not the group acts directly as a surrogate on behalf of the state. Syria controls the activities of Saiqa and the Jordanian People's Revolutionary Party (JPRP), for instance, but Abu Nidal does not act at the order of either Syria or Libya. Finally, the support provided by state actors is instrumental in a group's ability to carry out acts of terrorism, but such acts may occur with or without the state's approval. The assistance provided ranges from false documentation, training, and active coordination to passive acquiescence in terrorism launched from a safehaven in the state's own territory.

Figure 1
State-Supported International Terrorist Incidents by Country, 1985



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Three trends stand out in 1985: the increased role played by surrogates, the high level of violence associated with these state-supported attacks, and the growing disregard for the fate of innocent bystanders. In most cases, states involved in supporting terrorism use surrogates to conceal their own involvement. Even Libya—virtually the only state sponsor that still uses its own nationals to carry out terrorist activity—also is seeking non-Libyan assailants to conduct attacks on its behalf. Libya may have encouraged the Abu Nidal Group to hijack the Egyptair jetliner that ultimately landed in Malta.

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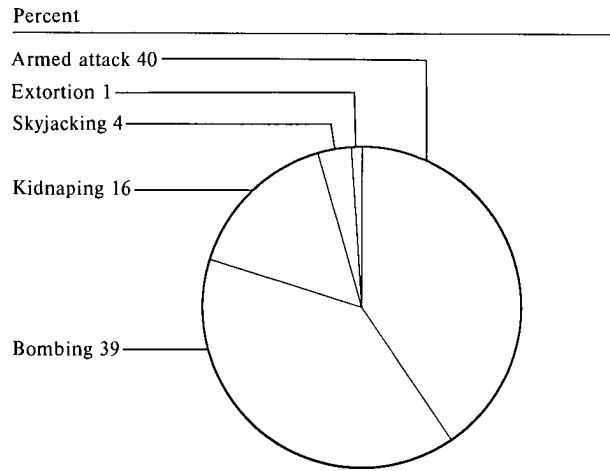
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By contrast, neither Syrian nor Iranian nationals actually carried out any terrorist attacks in 1985. Both countries relied entirely on other groups to act as stand-ins. In fact, some of these organizations appear to be moving toward greater independence, a development that could presage increased attacks as such groups try to demonstrate their autonomy. The radical Lebanese Hizballah, for example, still take their inspiration—although less direct guidance—from Iran, but greater independence is not likely to affect the group's choice of targets for terrorist attack. They will continue to oppose the remaining US and Western presence in Lebanon and will focus their attacks against Western targets. Moreover, Syria worries that its efforts to consolidate its position in Lebanon may encounter opposition from radical Shia groups encouraged by Iran. The Abu Nidal Group, once sponsored by Iraq and later by Syria, appears in recent months to have shifted some operatives to Tripoli, where Abu Nidal himself now resides, as evidenced by his interview from Tripoli in September 1985.

Armed attacks and bombings accounted for about three-fourths of all state-sponsored incidents last year—a key reason for the escalation in violence associated with such attacks. Americans often were the victims of that violence—13 US citizens died as a result of state-sponsored terrorism in 1985, in many cases because they presented targets of opportunity. The attacks in Rome and Vienna and the Egyptair hijacking are examples—unlike the TWA hijacking—where Americans were not the initial targets but nevertheless suffered the violent consequences.

We continue to watch for evidence that state sponsors of terrorism—particularly in the Middle East—are forging operational links, and by year's end only Libya and Iran had discussed terrorist cooperation. We lack information that any sort of broad-based "terrorist entente" is currently under development. In the Middle East, rivalries and jealousies impede efforts toward tactical cooperation; elsewhere, targets and motivations of state supporters are too diverse to warrant cooperation. If such cooperation were to occur in the future, it would probably be in targeting US facilities or personnel, but we have no evidence that even preliminary planning is yet occurring.

Figure 2
State-Supported International Terrorist Incidents by Type of Attack, 1985



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In Latin America, both Cuba and Nicaragua continue their support for subversive and revolutionary groups that sometimes use terrorist tactics to advance their cause. Neither is likely to cease aiding and abetting groups that engage in subversive activity.

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In addition to direct state supporters of terrorism, other states either provide support indirectly or are willing to tolerate the presence of known terrorists within their borders. East European countries have harbored known terrorists—Yugoslavia, for example, sheltered Abu Abbas, the Palestine Liberation Front leader who planned the Achille Lauro hijacking that took place in October 1985. Bulgaria is heavily involved in the gray arms market, and the weapons sold on this market often end up in the hands of terrorists. Such diverse nations as India, Greece, and Sudan also either tolerate, or fail to act against, terrorist activity carried out on their soil. The USSR, for its part, surely is aware of its East European allies' activities, and the Soviet Union itself continues to assist states and revolutionary movements that in turn

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provide training, weapons, and funds to terrorists. We have no evidence, however, of direct Soviet involvement in planning or carrying out terrorist operations.

[Redacted]

We believe state-supported terrorism will remain a major feature of international terrorism in 1986, and that US citizens will continue to be both targets and incidental victims. Increased security—and reduced numbers in terrorist hot spots like Lebanon—have made Americans on official assignments in the Middle East somewhat less vulnerable to terrorist attacks. As a result, state sponsors of terrorism are likely to turn to other areas—to Western Europe, in particular—where the publicity payoff for high-profile attacks is considerably higher, and where large numbers of US citizens remain highly visible. The trend toward more indiscriminate violence probably will continue, and casualties may well increase. Finally, we believe that, while states may continue to seek foreign operatives to conduct attacks on their behalf, they could well choose to resume more direct involvement in terrorism should they determine that such action would serve their policy interests.

Libya

Libya's terrorist effort took a new direction in 1985, as attacks on Libyan exiles slowed, and Libya forged closer links to the radical Palestinian group Abu Nidal. The assassination campaign against anti-Qadhafi exiles remained a top priority, however, and still accounted for the majority of attacks. In addition to increasing its operational support for radical Palestinian groups, Tripoli focused on efforts in Sudan and the Caribbean. Libya provides training, weapons, money, and other forms of support to about 30 insurgent and terrorist groups worldwide.

Qadhafi stepped up the pace in his longstanding program of support for Palestinian radical groups, particularly Abu Nidal. The extent of Libya's role in the Egyptair hijacking and the Rome and Vienna airport attacks is not yet clear, but we believe Libya financed, and possibly armed, the assailants and supported their actions.

[Redacted]

Tripoli's apparent willingness to undertake terrorist activity in the United States is of grave concern. The FBI foiled an ambitious plan to kill several Libyan exiles in the United States last May. Tripoli also continues activity abroad that lays the groundwork for potential anti-US attacks: some US embassies have reported that Libyan agents may be gathering intelligence on US installations and personnel in several countries. Serious constraints against such attacks remain.

Ties to Radical Palestinian Groups

There are several reasons for Qadhafi to draw closer to radical Palestinians¹ such as the Abu Nidal Group. These groups target Israel and moderate Arabs, and oppose Arafat and moderate Palestinians. Abu Nidal attacks are ruthless, and the group operates successfully in both the Middle East and Western Europe, in contrast to Qadhafi's often inept and blundering operatives. Qadhafi may already have bargained his increased support to the Abu Nidal Group for a role in its target selection. Before last November—when Egyptair flight 648 was hijacked—the Abu Nidal Group had not attacked an Egyptian target in seven years.

[Redacted]

¹ The factions that Libya is known to support include: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Fatah dissidents, the Abu Nidal Group, Sa'iq, the Popular Struggle Front (PSF), the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), and the umbrella group Palestinian National Salvation Front (which includes the PFLP, PFLP-GC, Fatah dissidents, PSF, Sa'iq, and the PLF).

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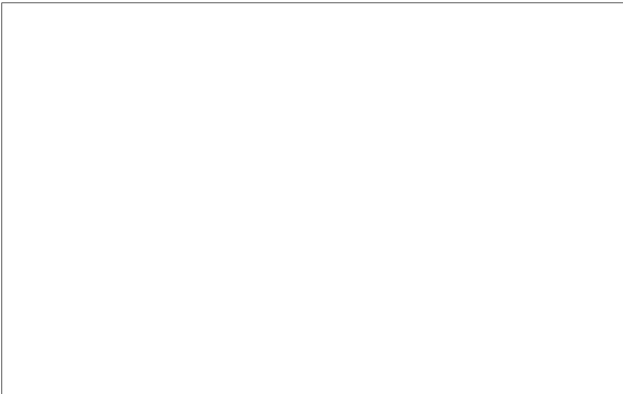
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Victims of Abu Nidal attack on the Rome El Al ticket counter, December 1985.



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- The Libyan exile community in Egypt also has been a frequent target, but Egyptian authorities have been effective in thwarting attacks. A four-man Libyan team was arrested in November 1985 during an attempted attack against a gathering of exiles near Cairo.
- Libya also plotted antiexile attacks in the United States. In May 1985 a Libyan diplomat at the United Nations was declared persona non grata, and 16 nonofficial Libyans were subpoenaed to appear before a US grand jury in connection with a plot to kill Libyan dissidents in four states.

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Libyan Antiexile Campaign

Many of Libya's attacks last year were against its own exiled dissidents. Qadhafi maintains a hit list of exiles and pursues these individuals around the world. Some attacks are planned months in advance, while others are spontaneous and opportunistic. Libya runs antiexile operations out of several People's Bureaus in Western Europe; Bonn, Vienna, and Athens were particularly active last year,

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Qadhafi generally uses Libyans for attacks on dissidents in Europe, although he tends to employ surrogates or mercenaries for attacks in other locations and against other targets:

- Tripoli's antiexile assassination campaign accounted for a greater percentage of attacks last year than in 1984, when Qadhafi reintroduced the tactic after a three-year respite. Anti-Qadhafi exiles were killed in Greece, West Germany, Cyprus, Italy, and Austria in 1985.

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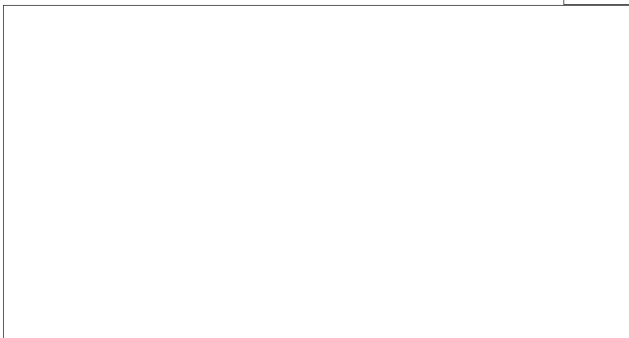
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Other Plots

Qadhafi has long targeted moderate Arab governments for their refusal to continue the military struggle against Israel and for their links to the West.



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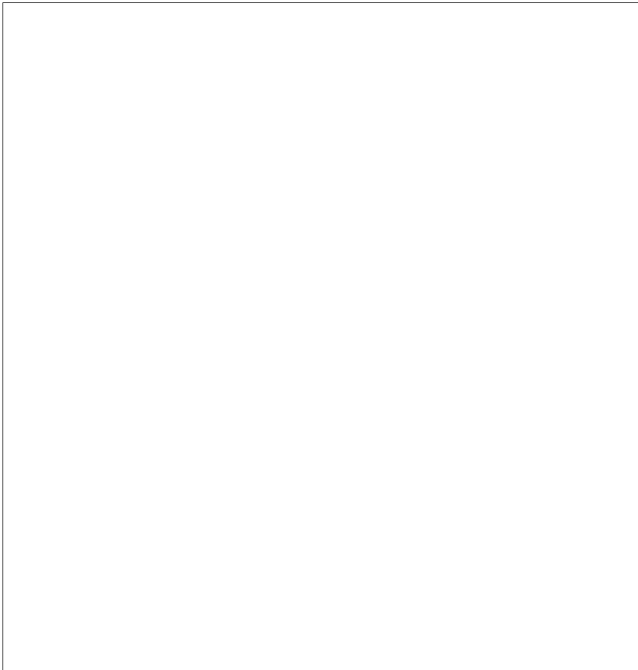
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activity.

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- In February 1985, Chad complained to the United Nations that Libya had attempted to assassinate President Habre the previous September. Photographs of the Libyan-made attache case bomb that was to be used in the attack were provided as evidence.

[Redacted]

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Activities in Latin America and Asia

Qadhafi appears increasingly anxious to extend his revolution to areas far removed from Libya. Libya uses propaganda organizations such as the Islamic Call Societies, and the funding of numerous dissident and leftist groups in Asia and Latin America to extend its reach.

[Redacted]

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In the Caribbean, Libya is gathering intelligence to advance its goal of gaining political influence and undermining US and French interests. Tripoli offers dissidents training in Libya and promises large sums of money if they will undertake acts of violence, a tactic that has met with virtually no success to date. Leftists in the English-speaking Caribbean states are likely to continue to reject violence. Libyan contacts with the more militant French-speaking separatists were initiated only last year, however, and may increase the potential for terrorist activity in French Caribbean territories. Cuba reportedly is concerned about the increasing Libyan role in the Caribbean and has warned several groups against accepting support from Libya:

Support for African Insurgents and Terrorists

Qadhafi often tries to disassociate Libya from direct responsibility in attacks to maintain plausible denial. The use of surrogates is one example. Libya trains, funds, and arms dissident and insurgent groups of many ideological stripes and from many different countries. Libya is particularly active in supporting groups in Sub-Saharan Africa:

- Tripoli has conducted extensive subversive activity in Sudan since a coup in April ousted longtime Qadhafi enemy President Nimeiri. Qadhafi has developed a network that could be activated with little difficulty, despite the recent expulsion from Khartoum of several known terrorists and the disarray within the Libyan-backed Sudanese Revolutionary Committees. We believe Tripoli has held back from terrorist activity in Sudan because diplomatic channels have proved so fruitful in advancing Libyan goals there. If Libyan-Sudanese relations deteriorate, however, or if a Sudanese political crisis arises that is too opportune to ignore, Tripoli could well decide to employ the terrorist weapon.



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- Qadhafi has courted groups in Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana, where generally his overtures have been relatively well received.

[Redacted]

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- [Redacted] Libya continues to fund, train, and arm Zairian dissidents in Libya and send them home to conduct terrorist and subversive

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Qadhafi also is interested in fomenting radical activity in Central and South America. [Redacted] dissidents in several countries receive aid from Tripoli:

- Libya has promised financial support to the Movement for the Revolutionary Left (MIR) in Chile in return for more visible terrorist operations. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

- Libya supports Colombia's M-19, although we doubt Libya has outdistanced Cuba as the group's major source of arms, money, and training. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

- In October 1985 the Morazanist Front for the Liberation of Honduras received an unspecified amount of money from Libya [Redacted]

[Redacted]

- Libya reportedly has agreed to provide financial support to the terrorist group Alfaro Vive, Carajo! (AVC) in Ecuador. [Redacted]

The Libyan effort in Asia and the Pacific is smaller than in Latin America but it is growing. Libyan activity largely revolves around the provision of funds and training to dissidents:

[Redacted]

Threat to the United States

Qadhafi fears retaliation for attacks against US targets and at year's end had not yet attacked an American official or facility. There clearly are circumstances, however, in which he is willing to take the risk. Currently, we believe Qadhafi would directly target US personnel or installations if he believed he could get away with the attack without US retaliation, or if he believed the United States directly threatened his personal safety or the existence of his regime. Libya probably is preparing contingency plans to attack US targets, and we attribute Libya's failure to follow through with plots against the United States to its poor operational planning and security, incompetence, and fear of US retaliation. [Redacted] Libyan agents have been gathering intelligence on US personnel and facilities in Tunisia, Sudan, Somalia, Greece, Italy, and Saudi Arabia. [Redacted]

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Attacks against US targets in the United States are unlikely, but Libya would like to embarrass the United States with terrorism on its own soil by targeting anti-Qadhafi dissidents here. In both cases, Libya is handicapped by its reduced presence and lack of an embassy. A Libyan attack against US personnel or facilities elsewhere in the world cannot be ruled out, and Qadhafi now is especially likely to seek opportunities to attack the United States in an effort to exploit the growing anti-US sentiment in the Arab states. Qadhafi probably believes that anti-US attacks would keep him in the forefront of the worldwide revolutionary struggle. Should he elect to take the risks associated with such an attack, he would be likely to work through surrogates to disguise the Libyan hand. [Redacted]

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Iran

The level of terrorism by Iranian-supported groups in 1985 remained high but declined from the record level of 1984. Groups with established ties to Iran carried out some 30 attacks in 1985, although there is no evidence to link Iran directly to most of these attacks. While Iraq, France, and the United States remain the

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primary targets, the Persian Gulf states face a continuing terrorist threat that could escalate sharply any time Iran chooses to exercise its terrorist option. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted], The rivalry between Iranian bureaucracies, however, for control over activities in Lebanon, and the absence of clear lines of authority, further complicates our ability to draw firm conclusions about Iran's role in Lebanese terrorism. [Redacted]

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Export of the revolution is a central tenet of the clerical regime in Iran, and terrorism has been a primary instrument in advancing this objective. Economic necessity and the war with Iraq, however, have compelled Iran to reduce its direct involvement in terrorism and pursue a more pragmatic foreign policy. Tehran has used terrorism increasingly to support Iranian national interests, with less emphasis on the ideological use of terrorism to support the violent export of its Islamic revolution. Some groups, moreover, such as the Lebanese Hizballah, owe their inspiration and their origin to Iran but have become increasingly independent. Their activities still serve Iran's foreign policy goals, even if they do not coordinate their actions with Iranian officials. [Redacted]

In 1985 [Redacted] pro-Iranian Shias in Lebanon were responsible for nearly 20 international incidents, including eight attacks against French targets and five against US targets. Among the more notorious acts:

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- Radical Shia terrorists probably were responsible for the murders of four members of the French observer force in January and February 1985, and the kidnaping of three French diplomats in March. Two of those diplomats still are being held. An additional two private French citizens remain missing. Anonymous callers claimed "Islamic Jihad" was responsible for several of these incidents.

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The Main Targets

Iraq is a primary target of Iranian-sponsored groups. Iran trains and finances several Iraqi dissident groups, such as the Dawa Party, that are dedicated to overthrowing Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. Although the Dawa Party activity inside Iraq declined after security forces penetrated the group's clandestine network and arrested hundreds of its members in 1983, it began to recover in 1985. Dawa Party members carried out two bombings in President Saddam Husayn's hometown of Tikrit and in October engaged in firefights with Iraqi security forces in two communities near Baghdad. [Redacted]

- Hizballah kidnaped three private US citizens last year. Although the Rev. Benjamin Weir was released in September, Hizballah elements still hold at least four Americans. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] If Iran suffers further setbacks in its war with Iraq, Tehran may focus greater effort on terrorism against Iraqi targets. [Redacted]

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Lebanon has been the scene of most of the terrorism perpetrated by groups that have Iranian support. Iran's role in instigating this terrorism, however, became more obscure in 1985. Iran did not play a direct role in the majority of attacks on foreigners in Lebanon. Iran has ties to the radical Shias that have kidnaped foreigners, however, but the nature of these ties—and the extent to which Iran is able to control or direct the Shias' activities—is unclear. There is no indication that Tehran ordered or assisted in the kidnapings [Redacted]

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- Iran was training individuals of various Middle Eastern nationalities late in 1985 to hijack an airliner belonging to a Persian Gulf state. [Redacted] [Redacted] Tehran reportedly obtained and altered Algerian passports for the operation and trained the terrorists in two camps in Iran on an aircraft from its own commercial fleet. [Redacted] [Redacted] Iran explicitly abandoned this tactic after the hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner in December 1984.

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The Persian Gulf

Iran has recently intensified its efforts to cultivate good bilateral ties to the Gulf states, gain international respectability, and expand commercial relations worldwide. As long as these goals are given priority, Tehran is likely to restrict its support for overt terrorist acts in the Gulf. Iran is most likely to support terrorism actively if it suffers a serious setback in the war, or perceives that the Gulf states are increasing their support for Iraq. [Redacted]

- Critical Gulf economic facilities, such as oil facilities and desalinization plants, could be future targets. [Redacted]

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Tehran maintains the capability to resume terrorist activities throughout the Persian Gulf quickly. Shia dissidents from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain continue to receive military training in Iran and then return home to undertake subversive activity. Moreover, discoveries in 1985 of terrorist cells and planned operations against several Gulf states by Iranian-sponsored groups suggest that Tehran is maintaining its terrorist option:

Activities Elsewhere

Pro-Iranian terrorists also operate in Western Europe, and the potential for terrorist operations there remains high, especially against Iranian opposition groups. Tehran recently opened an unofficial office in Barcelona, [Redacted] [Redacted] Spanish authorities closed an unofficial Iranian office in July 1984 after they obtained evidence that the Iranians planned to hijack a Saudi airliner. The Iranians also were charged at the time with illegal possession of arms and explosives. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] an Iranian-sponsored team of Lebanese Shia terrorists was planning terrorist actions directed at Kuwaiti or US interests.

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Iran makes extensive use of its network of diplomatic and cultural missions to support terrorist operations. Many elements of the Iranian Government, including

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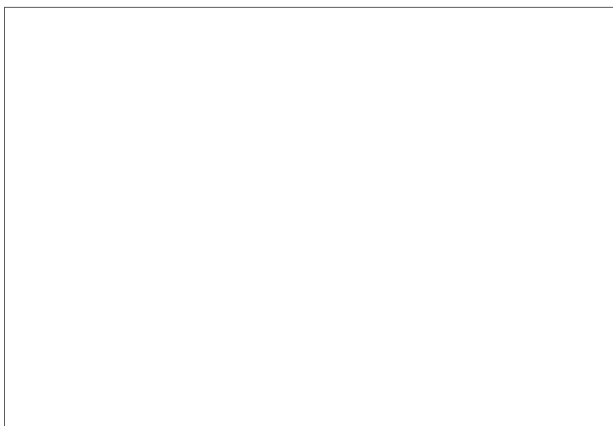
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several senior officials, are directly involved in terrorist activity. For example, direct links between Tehran and terrorist activities abroad have been maintained through the Foreign Ministry and the Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards). Iran also supports cultural institutions and pro-Khomeini student associations in Western Europe, particularly in Italy, West Germany, Spain, and France. These institutions spread pro-Iranian propaganda among the sizable expatriate Iranian and Arab student and worker populations in Europe and may also be involved in recruiting.



Abu Nidal attack on British Airways office in Rome, September 1985.

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and PLO leader Arafat will continue to be the most obvious and accessible targets for the groups supported by Syria.

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President Assad uses terrorist tactics to dissuade opponents and recalcitrant allies from pursuing policies inimical to Syrian interests. Syria is not ideologically committed to the use of terrorism, as are Iran and Libya. Support for terrorist groups costs Syria little but raises the cost to participants of any peace initiative that excludes Damascus and serves to keep Assad's regional rivals off balance.

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Syria

Syria in 1985 continued its role as a significant patron of international terrorism. No attacks involved Syrian personnel directly, but the number of attacks carried out by groups operating with Syrian support increased, compared with 1984. Syrian-sponsored groups have conducted attacks in 15 countries in the last two years. In 1985 these groups were involved in 30 terrorist attacks against moderate Arab (largely Jordanian), US, British, Palestinian, and Israeli targets. Abu Nidal stepped up its campaign of terror significantly and was responsible for nearly two-thirds of the attacks attributed to Syrian sponsorship. Most of these attacks occurred in Western Europe.

Assad probably will continue to encourage the selective use of terrorism when he believes it will advance his political fortunes. The use of surrogates offers advantages that will render the use of Syrian agents almost totally unnecessary. Jordan's King Hussein

Syria instigated terrorist operations against Jordanian officials and facilities and pro-Arafat PLO officials in reaction to rapprochement between King Hussein and Arafat and in an attempt to stymie efforts to build moderate Arab support for peace negotiations with Israel. In the wake of the Palestine National Conference meeting in Amman in November 1984 and the PLO-Jordan accord of February 1985, the number of attacks against Jordanian targets by Syrian-supported groups nearly doubled in 1985, compared with the previous year. Increasing strains in Syria's relations with Iraq, the Gulf states, Turkey, and others could prompt similar terrorist responses.

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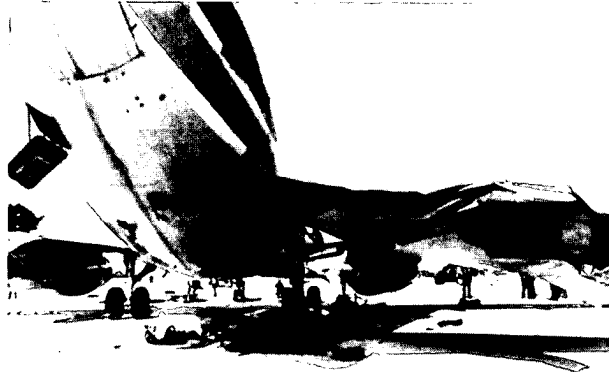
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Syrian Use of Surrogates

The greater use of surrogates by Damascus reflects Assad's desire to mask Syria's role in terrorist attacks and to obtain leverage over the groups he supports. Damascus enables terrorist groups to use Syrian or Syrian-controlled territory for base camps, training facilities, and political headquarters and provides arms, travel assistance, intelligence, and probably money. Palestinians who are largely funded, trained, and armed by Syria include the PFLP-GC, Abu Musa's Fatah rebels, and Saiqa. The degree of control exercised by Syria over its surrogates varies. The Abu Nidal organization appears to maintain a fairly high degree of operational independence and in 1985 sought additional support from Libya. [redacted]



Remains of the Egyptair jetliner that was hijacked by Libyan-linked terrorists in November 1985. The plane was later stormed by Egyptian commandos. [redacted]

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Syrian-supported groups were involved in numerous significant terrorist incidents during 1985:

- The Abu Nidal Group was responsible for the vicious Egyptair hijacking in November 1985 and also attacked the Rome and Vienna El Al ticket counters on 27 December. The three attacks accounted for nearly 200 casualties, including more than 20 Americans.
- On a single day in March, Abu Nidal terrorists bombed Jordanian Airways offices in Rome, Athens, and Nicosia, injuring three people. Black September—an Abu Nidal covername—claimed responsibility.
- A grenade attack on a Rome sidewalk cafe in September injured 38 tourists, including nine Americans. The Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Moslems (ROSM)—another Abu Nidal covername—claimed responsibility for the attack.
- Nine days after the attack on the cafe, police arrested a Palestinian in connection with an explosion at the British Airways office in Rome that injured 15 people. The suspect claimed to be a member of ROSM and was later identified by witnesses as the same man who attacked the Jordanian Airways office in Athens in March.

- Rockets were fired at a Jordanian airliner leaving Athens airport in April, and, one day earlier, a rocket narrowly missed the Jordanian Embassy building in Rome. Black September claimed responsibility for both incidents. [redacted]

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Damascus also supports such non-Palestinian actors as the Armenian Secret Army for Liberation of Armenia, the IFLB, and Iraqi dissidents. The Syrian-controlled JPRP attacked US targets twice in early 1985:

- A bomb defused near a USAID employee's home in Jordan was later discovered to be of JPRP origin. The same day, two bombs were discovered at the Iraqi and the Kuwaiti Embassies in Amman. They too were probably the work of the JPRP.
- An explosive device defused at the American Center for Oriental Studies in Amman also was determined to have been the work of the JPRP. [redacted]

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The radical Lebanese Hizballah movement also received Syrian support in 1985. Shortly after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, Syria allowed several hundred Iranian Revolutionary Guards to set up training and staging bases for

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Hizballah in the Syrian-occupied Bekaa Valley. [redacted]

[redacted]

Iraq

Iraq, formerly a major sponsor of terrorism, continued its lower level of involvement in international terrorism in 1985. Iraqi-sponsored terrorist activity last year was targeted almost exclusively against Syria and Libya in an effort to increase the cost to these states of their support for Iran, dissident Iraqi Shias, and Kurdish rebels. [redacted] Iraq has supported pro-Arafat Palestinian attacks against Syria and provided assistance to Libyan dissidents.

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Cooperation With Other State Supporters

Syria cooperates selectively with the other two major Middle Eastern sponsors of terrorism, Libya and Iran. The three states share a desire to undermine US policies in the Middle East, to "liberate" territory occupied by Israel, and to weaken pro-Western moderate Arab governments. [redacted]

[redacted] Divergent interests and long-standing rivalries among the three make temporary, bilateral, tactical ties on a case-by-case basis the norm. [redacted]

Relations among Libya, Iran, and Syria recently have fallen to a low point despite their continuing interest in a radical "axis." Qadhafi continues to be ignored by Syria in policy calculations that affect Lebanon; at the same time, Tehran has become increasingly concerned about Syrian dominance in Lebanon. Syria, which is least dependent on the other two radical states' good will and less committed to radical unity, has, therefore, suffered least from frictions among the three. [redacted]

Attacks on US Targets

Syrian support for its surrogate groups in Jordan and Lebanon and for Shia groups in Lebanon has made Damascus a party to bombings of US facilities, but we do not know if Syrian officials explicitly approved the attacks. We do not believe that President Assad is intent on targeting US personnel and facilities directly, but we believe that he would take advantage of the anti-American militancy of these groups to encourage attacks against the United States if he perceived they served Syrian interests. [redacted]

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn still approves of attacks by the PLO inside Israel and the West Bank and may be drawn into providing at least indirect support for such attacks. Baghdad significantly increased support to Yasir Arafat in 1985 to counterbalance Syrian domination of the Palestinian movement. After the Israeli raid on Tunis, Baghdad allowed several hundred additional PLO fighters to move to Iraq and [redacted] allowed Fatah's Force 17 to establish offices in Baghdad. Saddam, however, is not eager to host PLO political or military headquarters for fear of Israeli retaliation. [redacted]

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In an effort to protect its relations with the United States, however, we believe Iraq will limit its involvement in PLO operations against Israel and probably will not countenance attacks outside Israel or the occupied territories. Moreover, Baghdad almost certainly will continue to withhold support from radical, non-PLO Palestinian terrorist groups. [redacted]

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In 1985, Iraqi-backed terrorism focused almost exclusively on Syrian and Libyan targets:

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[redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Restraining Radical Palestinian Groups

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In the face of continued pressure from the United States and moderate Arab states, Baghdad in 1985 kept the pressure on to prevent radical, non-PLO Palestinian terrorist groups from operating out of Iraq:

- The PLO's Central Security apparatus has opened three offices in Baghdad, and its leader was coordinating attacks against Syria with Iraqi officials, [Redacted]. The Iraqi Government reportedly halted these activities last fall after it had several contacts with the Syrian Government [Redacted]. Relations between Baghdad and Damascus have not improved, however, and Baghdad may again support Fatah attacks against Syrian targets.

- Iraq withheld its support from the 15 May Organization and inhibited the group from conducting operations. Although two terrorists carrying explosive-laden suitcases were arrested in Rome last October after arriving from Baghdad, we do not believe that the Iraqi leadership was aware of the planned operation. The terrorists claimed they intended to attack US and Israeli targets in Italy.

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- The Libyan and Iraqi press reflect increased Iraqi support for Libyan dissidents after Baghdad broke relations with Tripoli in June 1985. [Redacted]

- The Israelis claim that the activities of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—Special Command (PFLP-SC) operatives in Iraq have been frozen in recent months. The PFLP-SC may soon move to South Yemen (PDRY). [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Other Iraqi-backed terrorist activity in 1985 included:

In our judgment, Iraq will continue to use terrorism primarily to undermine and isolate its Arab enemies—Syria and Libya. Baghdad is eager to end Syrian and Libyan military support for Tehran and for Kurdish and Shia dissidents in Iraq. To this end, Iraq will pursue any reasonable opportunities for reconciliation with the radical Arab states, according to the US Embassy in Baghdad. Nonetheless, in our judgment, Baghdad remains pessimistic about the chances for rapprochement with Damascus and Tripoli in the near term and will continue to encourage surrogate groups—Libyan dissidents, the PLO, and possibly the Muslim Brotherhood—to conduct attacks against Syrian and Libyan targets. [Redacted]

- The assassination of two Iraqi officials in Kuwait and Sweden in March 1985. Iraqi intelligence agents probably conducted these attacks. The motive for the assassination in Kuwait is unclear: the victim in Sweden was an Iraqi defector.
- The arrest of four Iraqi nationals in August in the United Kingdom for attempting to bomb a consignment of war material that reportedly was destined for Iran.
- The granting of asylum in late October to Palestine Liberation Front leader Abu Abbas—the mastermind of the Achille Lauro hijacking—who almost certainly is still in Baghdad. Iraq has refused to extradite Abu Abbas to the United States for prosecution. [Redacted]

Iraq may also reluctantly support PLO attacks against Israel in the near future. The Iraqis strongly oppose Israel but recognize that their support for terrorism against Israel risks Israeli retaliation and would damage their relations with the United States, whose technology and support for the arms embargo

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[Redacted]

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against Iran Baghdad greatly values. Nonetheless, Baghdad believes increased support for pro-Arafat Palestinian factions is necessary to counter Syria's efforts to dominate the Palestinian movement. [Redacted]

Baghdad may not be able to prevent the PLO from using Iraqi territory as a planning and staging area for Fatah attacks in Israel and the occupied territories. Baghdad is likely to more actively discourage PLO attacks against Israeli targets outside Israeli territory. A senior Iraqi official told US officials early in 1986 that Iraq opposes international terrorism as legally and morally wrong and harmful to the Palestinian cause. He distinguished between terrorist acts abroad and those within Israel and the occupied territories. The Iraqis are sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, and Baghdad probably would directly support such operations only if the position of Arafat's moderate faction were seriously threatened. Moreover, Iraq will continue to withhold support from the radical, non-PLO groups like the 15 May Organization and the PFLP-SC. [Redacted]

South Yemen

In 1985 then South Yemeni President Hasani continued his more moderate foreign policy by curtailing Aden's direct involvement with, and support for, insurgent groups from Oman and North Yemen. South Yemen also reduced support for the Palestinians. The PDRY still provides safehaven, passports, training facilities, and other low-level support to some groups. The new leadership in Aden could mean a higher terrorist profile eventually, but, in the near term, the regime will be forced to focus on building up and repairing both the physical and political infrastructure:

- The PDRY provides safehaven for the PFLP-SC, with the understanding that the group will not run operations from South Yemen. The PFLP-SC is headquartered in Aden but has focused its occasional operational activity elsewhere in the Middle East and in Western Europe.

- [Redacted] Bulgaria smuggled weapons to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the PLF through South Yemen, although the degree of Yemeni involvement in the transaction is unknown.

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- Hasani's drive to normalize relations with Oman resulted in greatly reduced support for the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), confined to safehaven and subsistence-level financing. The PDRY reportedly allows Bulgaria to supply the PFLO with arms.

- South Yemen continues its political backing of the PLO, but other support has declined. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Cuba

The Castro regime maintains a large and complex apparatus for subversion that provides backing for many leftist revolutionaries and terrorists. This support ranges from arms and funding to safehaven and training, assistance that is indispensable for guerrilla movements in Latin America. Castro has given logistic and financial support to thousands of guerrillas and has provided them with military training, usually in courses lasting three to six months. These courses cover the full range of insurgent/subversive terrorist skills: underwater demolition, document falsification, communications and cryptography, secret writing, urban and guerrilla tactics, bomb fabrication, small-arms handling, and marksmanship. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Although the bulk of Cuban support goes to the Salvadoran leftist insurgency, Guatemalan and Honduran insurgents also have received Cuban aid. In Guatemala, Havana has provided training and some financial support to three guerrilla factions. Honduran territory is a crossroads through which material is conveyed to the Salvadoran insurgents, while the government has been the target of Cuban destabilization efforts. For example, many of the guerrillas infiltrated into Honduras in 1983 and 1984 were trained in Cuba. In addition, Colombia's M-19 has long- and well-established relations with the Cuban Government. [Redacted]

Castro. Representatives from two Colombian terrorist groups—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN)—and from Cuba attended and reportedly were to undertake terrorist incidents to protest Colombia's foreign debt.

[Redacted]

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Throughout 1985, Cuba maintained its longstanding support to terrorists in countries such as Colombia and apparently has made new initiatives in others [Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Nicaragua

Cuban President Fidel Castro has recently been courting several South American nations diplomatically as part of an effort to ease US pressure on Cuban interests in Central America, to garner support for Havana's position on regional issues such as the Latin American debt, and to gain access to new economic markets. Nevertheless, Havana has not ended its support for subversives in the region. [Redacted]

Nicaragua continues to provide training and support to Latin American guerrilla groups, but evidence linking the Sandinistas to recent terrorist incidents is available in only a few cases. [Redacted]

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We expect the Sandinistas to maintain contacts with Latin American and West European groups that engage in terrorism. Despite the publicity generated by US accusations, international disapproval has not discouraged the Sandinistas from pursuing terrorist ties:

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Some of the major examples of Cuban support for terrorism over the past year include:

[Redacted]

- At least six of the assault rifles used by Colombian M-19 terrorists during the siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogota last November came from Nicaragua. The rifles are the first hard evidence of Nicaraguan arms being used by Colombian guerrillas, although we do not know if the Sandinistas supplied the weapons directly to the M-19.

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[Redacted]

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- A meeting was held at the Colombian/Soviet Institute of Friendship in Bogota in August 1985 to coordinate a series of political actions in support of

- The PRTC, a Salvadoran insurgent group with close ties to Nicaragua, claimed responsibility for the killing of six Americans and seven others in downtown San Salvador on 19 June 1985.

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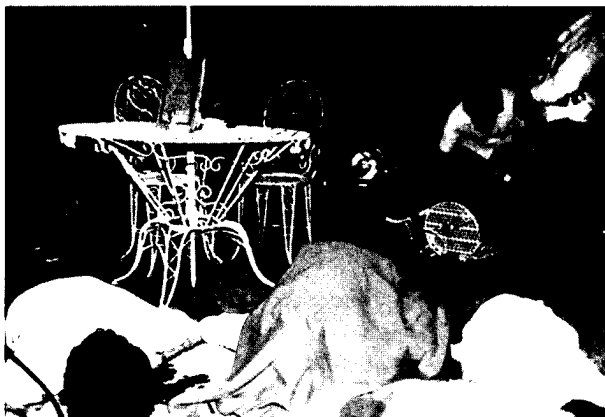
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Bodies of American victims gunned down at sidewalk cafe in San Salvador, June 1985. [Redacted]

- On 31 May 1984, 28 people were wounded and at least four killed—including one US correspondent—when a bomb exploded at a news conference called by Eden Pastora. Nicaraguan sponsorship is suspected because Sandinista radio announced the composition of the explosive device several hours before Costa Rican authorities had even determined its nature, let alone announced it publicly. [Redacted]

Since 1979 the Nicaraguan Government has provided safehaven and training to several Latin American guerrilla groups that engage in terrorist operations. Nicaraguan support has included allowing such groups access to communications centers, safehouses, military supplies, and training courses. El Salvador and Honduras have been the primary targets of Nicaraguan-sponsored violence, but Costa Rican, Colombian, and Guatemalan insurgents reportedly also have received support from Managua. Nicaragua also has had contacts with Italy's Red Brigades and the Basque Fatherland and Liberty. [Redacted]

There is no evidence that the West European terrorists who reportedly received training from the Sandinistas have returned to their countries to commit terrorist acts. In fact, some former trainees may now be serving in the Nicaraguan armed forces. [Redacted]

[Redacted] foreign trainees gain combat experience in Sandinista units, and Italian authorities believe that at least five Red Brigades members became instructors in the Nicaraguan Army. [Redacted]

Managua has become increasingly sensitive to US charges linking Nicaragua to terrorism, and the US publicity probably has prompted the Sandinistas to be more discreet in their training of foreigners. In fact, during the past eight months, activity has decreased dramatically at one Nicaraguan paramilitary camp where Salvadoran guerrillas reportedly were trained. [Redacted]

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North Korea

North Korea in 1985 continued its reduced involvement with international terrorist and extremist groups in the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. We have recorded no North Korean-sponsored terrorist incidents since the October 1983 bombing in Rangoon directed against the South Korean President. [Redacted]

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P'yongyang maintains ties to a variety of foreign extremist groups, however, by providing training and funding and by supplying weapons. North Korea currently has training missions in 16 Third World countries, although most are for conventional military or security training. North Korea also is active in the gray arms market, one element in the circuitous route by which terrorists and radical states clandestinely acquire weapons. [Redacted]

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South Korea remains the primary target of North Korean-sponsored terrorism, and P'yongyang may again become active in its quest to destabilize Seoul. North Korea could seize upon an upcoming opportunity to direct terrorism against South Korea in 1986: the Asian Games that will take place in Seoul this fall. [Redacted]

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Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc

Moscow continues to support various "national liberation groups"—such as the Palestine Liberation Organization and the African National Congress—with the knowledge that some of the persons they have

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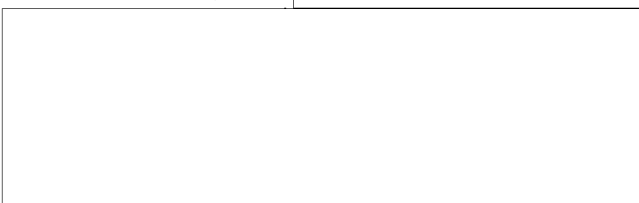
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trained have later committed terrorist acts. The Soviets and their allies provide most of their support indirectly, however, by selling arms on the international gray arms market and to Third World clients who resell or give the weapons to terrorist users. Moscow apparently does not restrict the end use of these weapons. In contrast to Iran, Syria, and Libya, we have no evidence of the Soviets' directly planning or orchestrating terrorist acts by Middle Eastern, West European, or Latin American groups. 


The Soviet Union and its East European allies provide arms directly, however, to a variety of Palestinian groups. Although the majority of weapons sold by the Bloc to the Palestinians have never been employed in terrorist acts, Palestinian terrorists use the man-portable infantry weapons in particular:

- Markings found on the Kalashnikov assault rifles recovered after the December 1985 massacres at the Rome and Vienna airports indicate that the weapons were made in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Bulgaria.
- Handgrenades recovered after the airport attacks and at least two other recent terrorist attacks attributed to Abu Nidal were all manufactured in Bulgaria.
- The weapons employed in the unsuccessful April attack on a Jordanian airliner in Athens by Abu Nidal was an RPG-75—the Czechoslovak version of the RPG-18.
- Silencers manufactured by Czechoslovakia and suitable for use with various small-caliber pistols have been recovered from Palestinian fighters in Lebanon. 

The Soviets' influence over their Bloc allies gives Moscow the leverage to elicit Bloc support for radical and revolutionary groups. 



East European countries' involvement in terrorism varies, with Bulgaria playing the most active role. Sofia has provided weapons and political support to various Palestinian groups, including the radical Abu Nidal faction.  the presence of terrorist training facilities in Bulgaria, where Palestinians, in particular, reportedly receive instruction in the use of tactical infantry weapons, artillery, and weapons. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Romania appear to play a less active role supporting the Soviets. Yugoslavia was the first state to offer initial safehaven to Abu Abbas, the Palestine Liberation Front leader who planned the Achille Lauro hijacking, even providing the aircraft on which Abbas was flown to safety out of Rome. 

The location of the Eastern Bloc renders it a useful safehaven and way station for terrorists traveling between Western Europe and the Middle East. We do not know the extent to which these governments directly support terrorist-related activities, but we believe that, at a minimum, they maintain surveillance on suspected terrorists. 

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