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Directorate of Intelligence

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Terrorism Review b3

4 April 1991

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Terrorism Review

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4 April 1991

Focus

Middle East: The Postwar Terrorist Threat

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The threat to US interests from Middle Eastern terrorists has declined since the end of the Gulf fighting. A key factor in this is the inability or disinclination of the various state sponsors of terrorism to order attacks while they are involved in postwar maneuvering. The course of the Arab-Israeli peace process will have a major impact on future terrorism, but radical groups with their own agendas make terrorist attacks against Israeli, moderate Arab, and US targets a continuing possibility.

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Highlights

Counterterrorist Center

Articles

Saudi Shia Muslims and the Gulf Crisis:

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Chronology of Terrorism—1991

Counterterrorist Center

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This review is published biweekly by the DCI Counterterrorist Center. Other elements of the CIA as well as other agencies of the US Intelligence Community are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Executive Editor.

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Terrorism Review

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Focus

Middle East: The Postwar Terrorist Threat

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The threat to US interests from Middle Eastern terrorists has declined since the suspension of hostilities in the Gulf, but efforts to resolve regional problems and the militant agendas of extremist groups make terrorist acts against Israeli, moderate Arab, and US targets possible at any time. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Hizballah, and the Abu Nidal organization (ANO) pose the most serious threat to US interests over the next several months.

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The end of the war has removed the immediate catalyst for an anti-US terrorist campaign by Middle Eastern extremists. Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist leaders and state sponsors jockeying for position in postwar negotiations are unlikely to risk alienating potential allies by sanctioning terrorism in coming months.

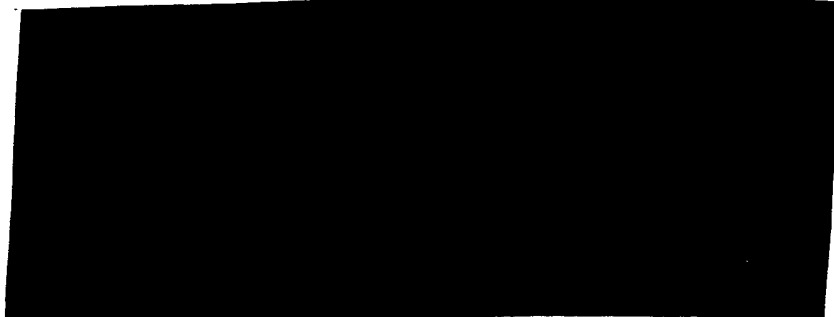
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Sponsors Hold the Key . . .

The restrictions imposed by state sponsors on Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist groups during the war are likely to hold in the near term, dampening prospects for anti-US terrorism. Terrorist groups have been unwilling to violate restrictions because opportunities for alternative support have dwindled as a result of Iraq's defeat, Syria's participation in the coalition, and Iran's ambitions to have a voice in Gulf security planning.

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Iran probably will continue to steer clear of anti-Western terrorism but may encourage additional terrorist operations against Israel as part of its efforts to gain influence over extremist Palestinians.

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Iraq is unlikely to embark on major terrorist adventures as long as Saddam is pre-occupied with reestablishing Arab and Western ties and coalition forces remain in the region, although Baghdad might go ahead with some plans to punish Arab states that opposed him in the war. [redacted] b3

... But Some Groups Still Pose a Threat

Virulent anti-US agendas make militant Islamic groups an ever-present threat to US interests in the Middle East. [redacted]

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[redacted] Hardline Hizballah factions in Lebanon strongly oppose a US presence there and with the return of US Ambassador Crocker may resurrect plans to attack the US Embassy. Hizballah's anti-US fervor is probably being fueled by the growing perception in the region that the United States is allowing Saddam's forces to massacre Shia rebels in southern Iraq. [redacted] b3

The ANO has yet to follow through on its public pledge to retaliate against the United States for the extradition of one of its operatives to Israel last October, but we believe it eventually will. In coming months, however, the group is likely to focus on convincing Western and Arab governments to back removal of Arafat as Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman. [redacted] b3

Catalysts for Terrorism

Prospects for Palestinian terrorism will be most affected by developments in the Arab-Israeli peace process, PLO infighting, and the status of the *intifadah*. Palestinian extremists can be counted on to use terrorism against US, Arab, and Israeli targets to torpedo peace moves that do not call for the quick establishment of an independent Palestinian state, regardless of restrictions imposed by state sponsors. Israeli interests worldwide will be the most likely targets of Palestinian frustration. [redacted]

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[redacted] Arafat's ability to restrain hardline PLO elements from conducting terrorism is likely to weaken in the months ahead as his financial situation worsens and challenges to his leadership develop. [redacted] b3

Terrorists may try to enter Saudi Arabia along with the more than 1 million Muslims expected during the hajj in June to launch attacks in protest of Riyadh's stance against Baghdad during the recent crisis. Islamic fanatics may also attack US interests in Saudi Arabia to protest continued US military presence in the prophet's birthplace. [redacted] b3

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The four terrorists—Donna McGuire, Gerard Harte, Sean Hick, and Paul Hughes—were charged with shooting the Australian tourists in Roermond, the Netherlands, having [redacted] mistaken them for off-duty British soldiers. [redacted]

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[redacted] Germany will probably request the extradition of at least the acquitted members—particularly Donna McGuire. German officials may stand a better chance of securing a conviction because of German laws specifically geared to targeting and convicting terrorists. [redacted]

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Greece

Terrorist Group Changing Tactics?

The rocket attack on 31 March against a hotel by the Greek terrorist group 17 November may signal the start of a terrorist campaign [redacted]

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The 17 November group attempted to hit the Pentelikon Hotel in an Athens suburb with a rocket-propelled grenade. The rocket hit a tree, however, and caused only minimal damage to the hotel. The hotel caters to wealthy tourists, Greek officials, and foreign diplomats. The attack follows a recent 17 November communique threatening American tourists. Exercising his authority under a new counterterrorism law, Greece's chief prosecutor banned publication of the anticipated 17 November communique claiming responsibility for the attack [redacted]

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The 17 November group is virulently anti-US; last month it assassinated a US Air Force sergeant outside his home—the fourth American since 1975. Attacks by the group since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait have included several late-night bombings of US and British banks that service tourists and foreign businesses in Greece.

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Although tourists have not yet been harmed, a prolonged campaign against tourist targets would devastate Greece's tourist industry, almost certainly leaving the country unable to meet its foreign debt payments. [redacted]

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[redacted] bookings have yet to recover from the Gulf war slump. A further plunge in tourism would wipe out the benefits of a recent EC loan, probably triggering a debt crisis. [redacted]

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[redacted] Supporters of the conservative government predominate among tourism company owners, and the terrorists probably see the economic impact as harming its enemies. [redacted]

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Germany

Red Army Faction Terrorist Campaign Continues

The Red Army Faction's (RAF) assassination on 1 April of Detlev Karsten Rohwedder, one of Germany's leading business figures, indicates that senior German political and economic officials involved in unification issues remain among the RAF's primary targets. As chief executive of the Trust Agency—the holding company responsible for privatizing state-owned enterprises in the former German Democratic Republic—Rohwedder had come under increasing fire for eastern Germany's economic hardships and was a logical target for the RAF. He was the third senior German official attacked—and the second killed—by the RAF since the group began its current terrorist offensive with the assassination of Deutsche Bank chairman Alfred Herrhausen in November 1989. ~~_____~~ b3

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Revolutionary Cells Bomb NATO Pipeline

The leftwing terrorist group Revolutionary Cells (RZ) claimed responsibility for the bomb attack on 18 March that slightly damaged a section of the NATO fuel pipeline in Emstek, Germany, near the Dutch border. Aircraft from two nearby German airbases that receive jet fuel from the damaged pipeline section had been deployed to Turkey during the Gulf crisis. In the letter claiming responsibility for the attack, the RZ condemned the presence of "imperialist forces" in the Gulf and expressed solidarity with the Kurdish and Palestinian causes. ~~_____~~ b3

The RZ has remained relatively quiet throughout the Gulf crisis; the pipeline attack was the group's first Gulf-related operation since the bombing of the Victory Column in Berlin on 16 January. Moreover, despite its anti-imperialist philosophy, the group usually conducts attacks in connection with domestic issues, such as antimilitarism, women's and worker's rights, environmental protection, and the presence of NATO forces in Germany. The RZ, like the more violent Red

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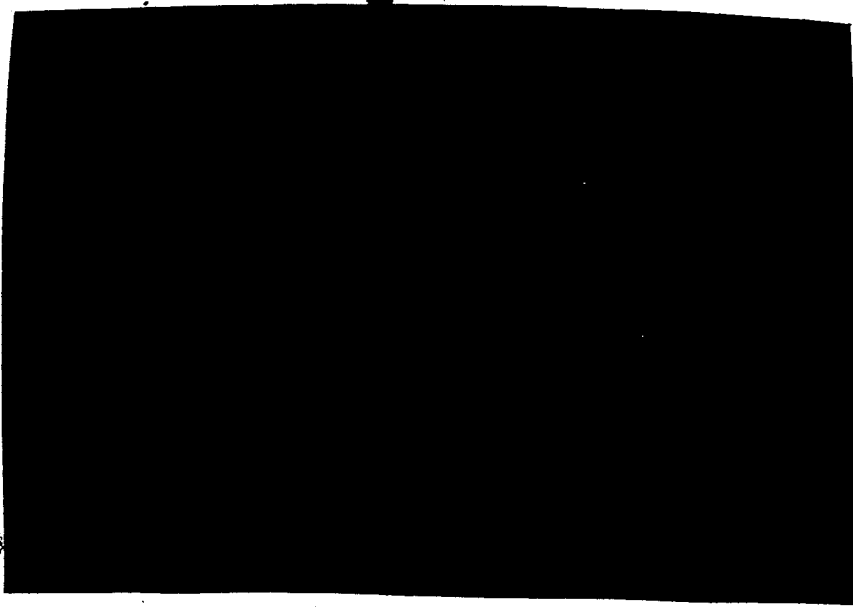
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Army Faction (RAF), probably will carry out more Gulf-related attacks in an effort to garner headlines. Unlike the RAF, the RZ generally conducts bomb attacks designed to attract attention and not to produce injuries; future attacks could, however, result in unintended US or German casualties.

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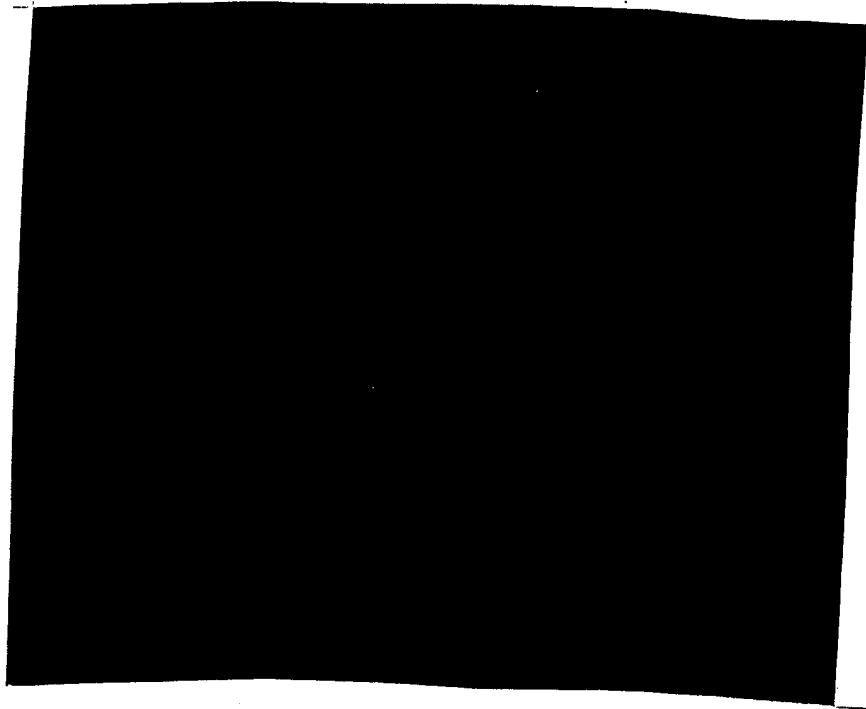
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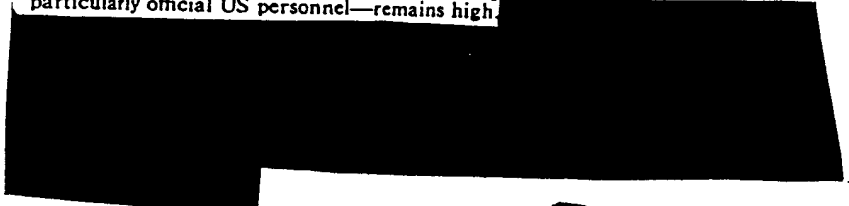
Latin America

Honduras

Threat to US Interests Continues

Anti-US terrorist attacks in Honduras over the past few years have been sporadic and infrequent, but the threat of lethal terrorist attacks against US interests—particularly official US personnel—remains high.

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FPM attacks against US

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interests include a bombing of Peace Corps' offices in December 1988, a bus bombing in February 1989 that wounded three US servicemen, a grenade attack that wounded seven US soldiers in La Ceiba in July 1989, and a bus attack that wounded seven US servicemen in March 1990. [REDACTED] b3

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Both the Cinchoneros and the FPM have received training, weapons, and logistic support from Cuba, the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Movement. [REDACTED]

Colombia

Update On Kidnapping of US Petroleum Engineers

The lives of the three US petroleum engineers held hostage by the National Liberation Army (ELN) may have been endangered with the capture of ELN leader Gerardo Pomar, who is [REDACTED] behind the kidnappings on 25 November 1990. On 22 March, the Colombian Army arrested Pomar, along with several other high-ranking ELN members. [REDACTED]

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The ELN usually releases its foreign kidnapping victims unharmed, but in this case, the arrests jeopardize the lives of the three hostages:

- The ELN, which has not yet made its demands known for the release of the hostages, could decide to use them as bargaining chips to get their leaders released, threatening to kill them unless their demands are met.
- Should the Army determine the location of the hostages, it may decide to attempt a rescue—such attempts in the past have had mixed success, frequently resulting in the deaths of the hostages. A notable recent example is the attempted rescue in January by the Colombian National Police of journalist Diana Turbay, the daughter of former president Julio Cesar Turbay, which resulted in her death and the freeing of several others held with her. [REDACTED] b3

Bolivia

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Small Bombs Near US Embassy Underscore ELN Threat

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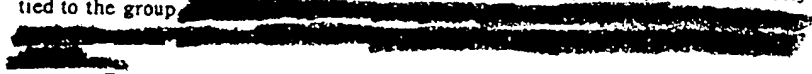
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The ELN is the parent group of the Nestor Paz Zamora Commission (CNPZ), which was responsible for the attack on 10 October 1990 against the US Marine Guard residence. One Bolivian guard died in that attack, another was injured, and there was substantial damage to the residence. The ELN/CNPZ is probably capable of carrying out lethal terrorist attacks, having been supplied and trained by the Peruvian Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), which is closely tied to the group

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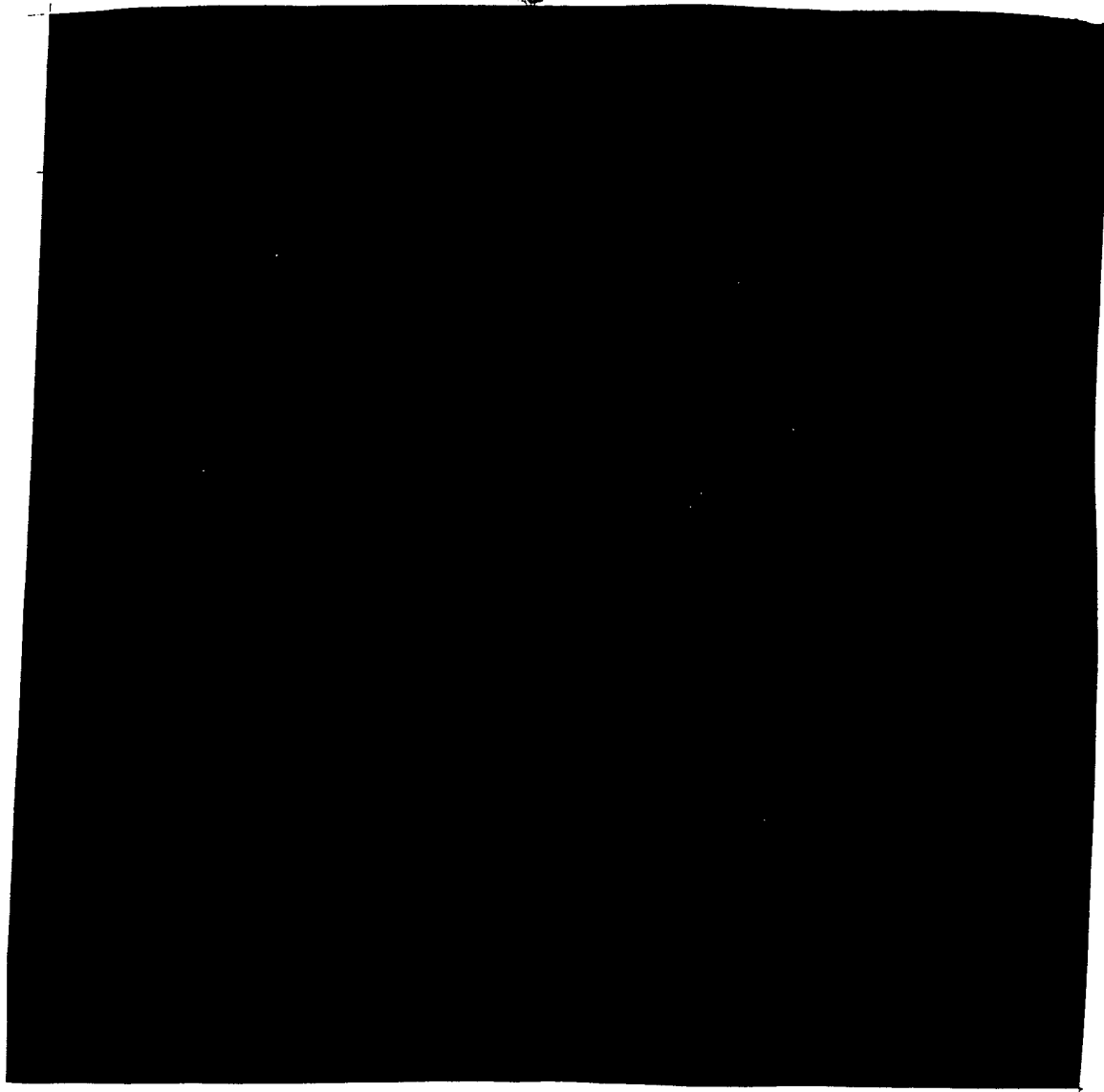
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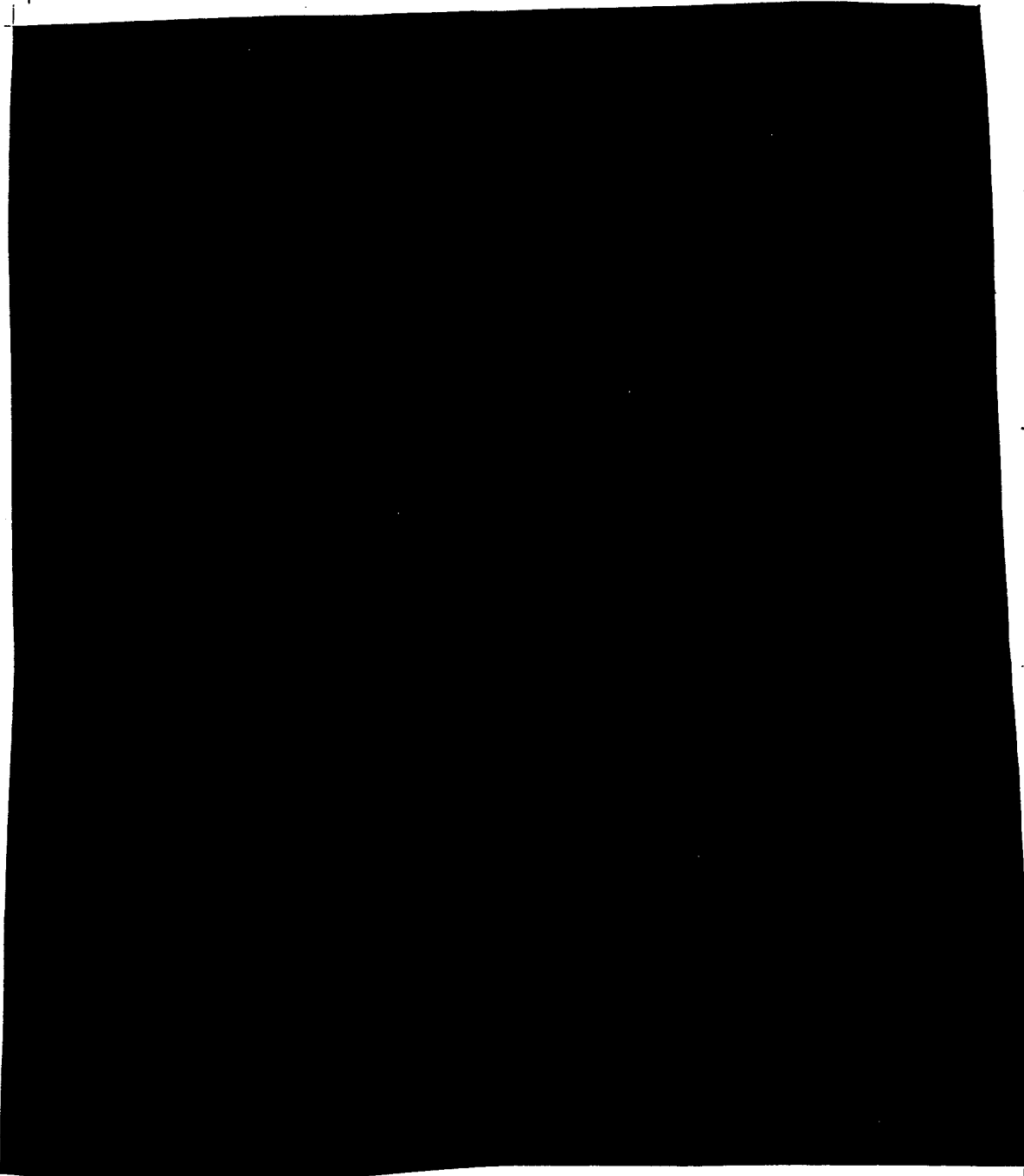
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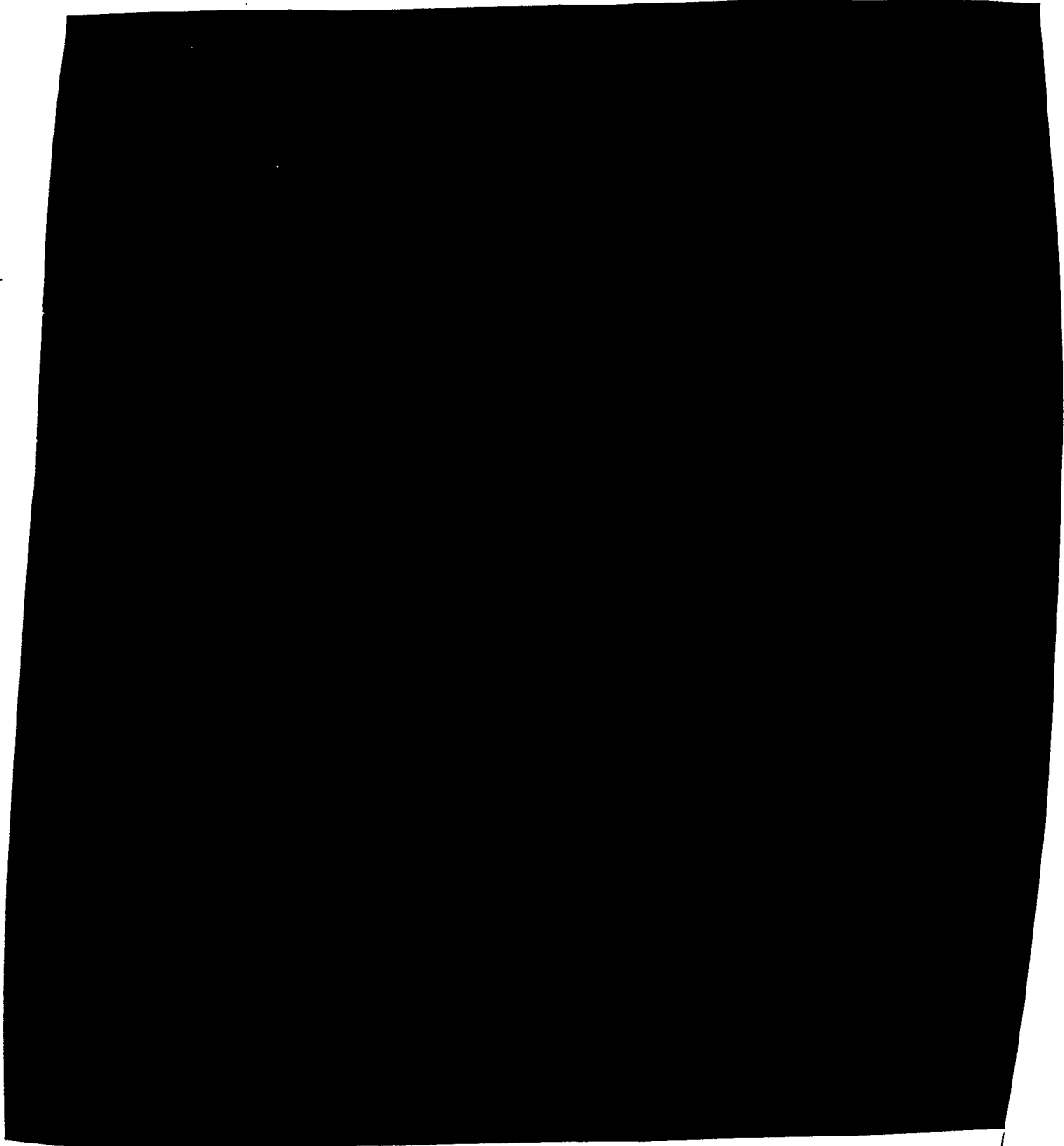


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Divided Islam

Almost from its beginnings in the seventh century A. D., Islam has shown a strong tendency to divide along sectarian lines, primarily over the succession to the leadership of the Islamic community, and, to a lesser extent, over questions of dogma and religious law. These disputes spurred sectarian warfare that has flared repeatedly ever since. Most Muslims belong to two major sects, the Sunni and the Shia, a division that occurred shortly after Muhammad's death over issues that today lie at the heart of Iran's rivalry with Saudi Arabia. [REDACTED]

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Sunni Islam

More than 80 percent of all Muslims belong to the Sunni or orthodox wing of Islam. Sunnis consider the Koran to be God's final revelation and reject clerical mediation between God and the individual Muslim. Sunnis accept no central authority for the interpretation of Islamic law, Sharia. Instead, four schools of interpretation—Hanbali, Hanafi, Shafii, and Maliki, all dating from the eighth and ninth centuries—are considered equally valid, and a Sunni Muslim may follow any one of them. Saudi Wahhabism is based on the conservative Hanbali school of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence and calls for strict interpretation of the Koran and Sunna, obligatory prayer, and rigorous enforcement of the penalties of the Sharia. [REDACTED]

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Sunnis generally hold that the Caliph or Imam, the leader of the Islamic community, need not be in the line of the Prophet's immediate family, although descent from his tribe, the Quraysh, carries a special cachet. [REDACTED]

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Shia Islam

Shia Islam is based on the belief that the legitimate leadership of the Islamic community rests exclusively with the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law Ali, the Fourth Imam. Over time, disputes over the line of succession and doctrine spurred the formation of Shia subsects—the Zayidis of northern Yemen, the Ismailis of Pakistan and East Africa, the Bahais of Iran and the Alawites and Druze of the Levant—that espouse highly diverse and esoteric doctrines. Most Shia, however, belong to the mainstream Ithna Ashariya sect, the so-called Twelvers, who predominate in Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain and form a plurality in Lebanon. Saudi Shia are also Twelvers.

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Shia accept the doctrine of the indivisibility of religious and political decisionmaking in a literal sense. This makes it easy for Shia adherents to accept authoritative figures who interpret all laws—civil and religious—in the spirit of an Imam in the line of Ali. Shia of the Ithna Ashariya sect emphasize the transcendental quality of the Imamate. They believe the 12th Imam (hence Twelvers), a semidivine personage who disappeared in 878 A. D., is alive but hidden and will return to lead Islam. The view represented by the Ayatollah Khomeini that clergy must establish and lead an Islamic government in preparation for the 12th Imam's return probably represents a minority position among most Shia theologians. [REDACTED]

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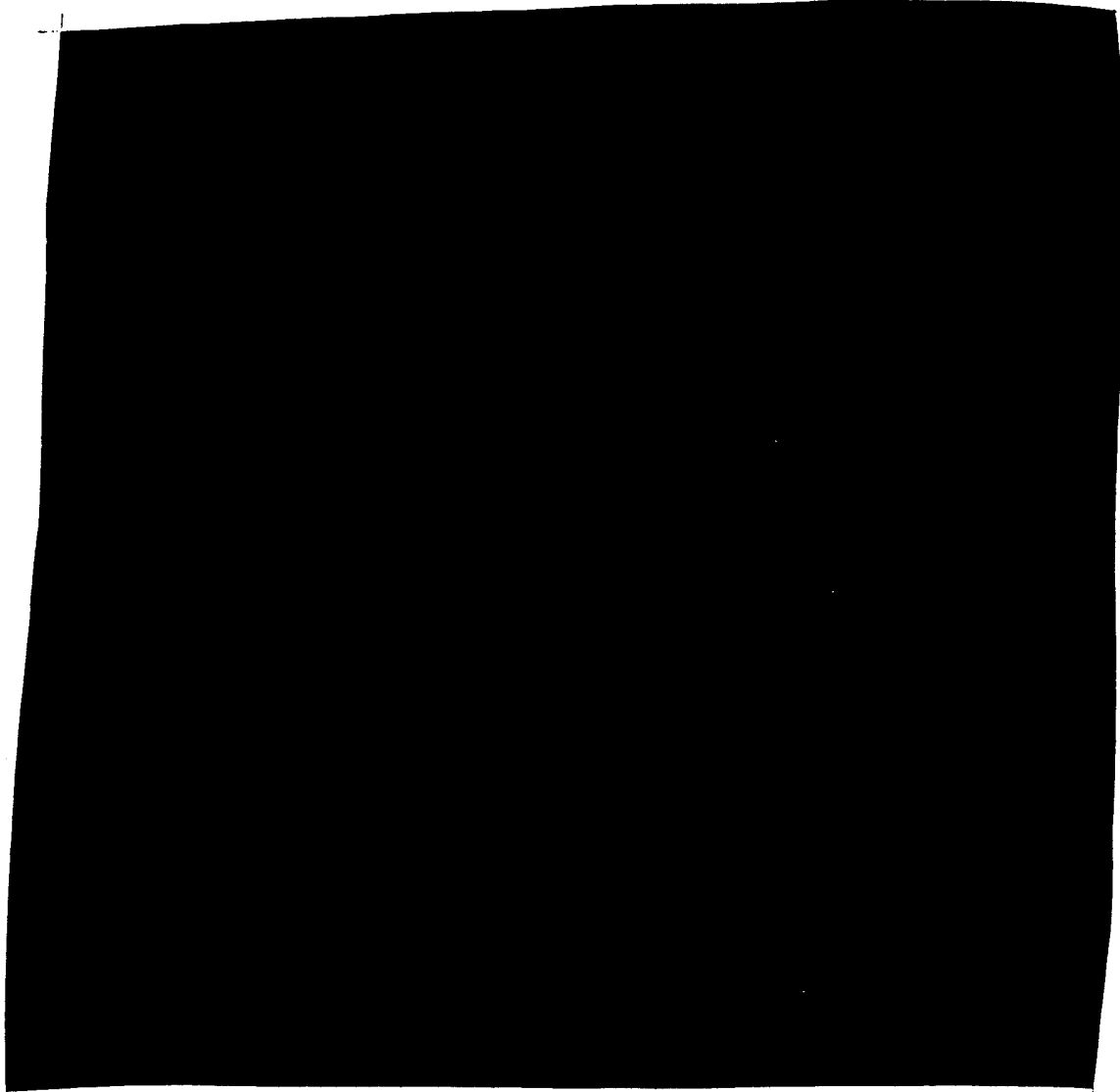
Shia venerate Husayn, the grandson of Muhammad, who was slain by Sunnis in 680 A. D. Husayn's death is commemorated by Twelvers on Ashura, the holiest day of the Shia year, with highly emotional passion plays and processions. These spectacles are marked by self-flagellations of mourners and occasionally turn violent. In recent years, Saudi authorities have banned Ashura processions in the Kingdom. [REDACTED]

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Chronology of Terrorism—1991 b3

Below are described selected noteworthy foreign and international events involving terrorists or the use of terrorist tactics. These events have occurred or come to light since our last issue. In some cases, the perpetrators and their motivations may not be known. Events and developments that have already been described elsewhere in this publication are not included. b3

Europe

26 February

Germany: An individual attacks three US citizens with a handgun and grenade in the Berlin Hotel, injuring one. No group has claimed responsibility. b3

27 February

Italy: Fire damages five vehicles, four owned by US personnel, in the Casole area of Brindisi. No group has claimed responsibility. b3

28 February

Turkey: Two gunmen shoot and wound a US Air Force officer as the victim enters his residence in Izmir. Dev Sol has claimed responsibility. b3

Turkey: Two gunmen shoot and wound a policeman in the Yenimahalle district of Ankara. The victim managed to return fire, possibly injuring one of the terrorists. Dev Sol claimed responsibility. b3

Turkey: Authorities arrest six Kurdish Workers Party members during safehouse raids in Istanbul, seizing weapons, documents, and explosives. b3

Italy: An explosive device detonates outside a Proctor and Gamble distribution office in Padua. No group has claimed responsibility. b3

Spain: Explosive devices damage four electrical towers in three Spanish towns. The Radical Guerrilla Army of the Free People of Galicia claimed responsibility. b3

3 March

France: Two explosive devices at a building of the Electricity and Gas Services damage the building and 12 official vehicles. Iparretarrak is suspected. b3

4 March

Spain: Police defuse a car bomb in a downtown district of Valencia. Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) claimed responsibility. b3

5 March

Turkey: Police arrest 18 members of an Adana cell of Dev Sol. Police believe the cell is responsible for several recent terrorist incidents. b3

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7 March

Spain: A car bomb detonates in front of the Construcciones y Contratos office in Madrid. ETA is suspected. b3

10 March

Turkey: Two separatist terrorists shoot and kill a village headman in front of his residence in southeastern Adiyaman Province. b3

Middle East

10 March

Israel: An arson attack damages a door at the American Library in Jerusalem. Anti-US graffiti signed by the Kach Movement was found nearby. b3

12 March

Israel: Masked men shoot and wound a suspected collaborator near Ashkelon. (U)

Lebanon: South Lebanese Army soldiers discover two rocket launchers along the Galilee Panhandle. The launchers were aimed at Israel. b3

Latin America

3 March

Colombia: An explosive charge damages the Cano Limon-Covenas pipeline in eastern Colombia. The National Liberation Army (ELN) claimed responsibility. b3

13 March

Chile: Molotov cocktails are thrown inside a Mormon church in Valparaiso, causing minor damage. b3

15 March

Peru: A letter bomb explodes in the office of the Independent Commission on Human Rights, seriously wounding one person. b3

Chile: A gunman shoots and kills a police investigative chief outside his home in Concepcion. Three others were seriously injured. The Lautaro Popular Rebel Forces claimed responsibility. b3

21 March

Chile: Police detonate a bomb found in front of the Bank of Boston in Santiago. b3

South/East Asia

12 February

India: A powerful bomb explodes at the police station in Banoor, injuring 18 security personnel. b3

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- 13 February *Pakistan: A bomb explodes in Peshawar at the office of a British-sponsored humanitarian organization for Afghan refugees.* b3
- 14 February *Pakistan: A bomb explodes at a Saudi Airlines office in Karachi, causing minor damage.* b3
- 19 February *Australia: Terrorists attack an Australian-American association building in Sydney with firebombs, causing minor damage.* b3
- 20 February *Pakistan: A bomb explodes near a cinema and mission school in Gujrat, killing three persons and seriously injuring six.* b3
- 22 February *India: Suspected Moslem militants fire rockets at the United Nations office in Jammu and Kashmir. After missing their target, they attacked the building with gunfire.* b3
- 23 February *Japan: Chukaku-ha rebels attack a US Navy housing compound in Yokohama with projectiles.* b3
- 24 February *Pakistan: An improvised explosive device detonates at the offices of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan in Peshawar, killing one employee.* b3
- 25 February *Philippines: New People's Army rebels kidnap the Mayor of Sanchez Mira, Cagayan, and his family. The family reportedly was released later.* b3
- 28 February *Philippines: Quezon City Court sentences suspects to life imprisonment for killing Col. James Rowe.* b3
- Africa
- 10 February *South Africa: A bus ambush near Sweetwaters kills 14 people and injures 11. The African National Congress is suspected.* b3

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15 February

South Africa: Bombs explode at the home of an ANC activist in Klerksdorp and of an ANC lawyer in Soweto. The lawyer was killed. b3

Mozambique: RENAMO shoots and kills a Colombian priest in Luelele, Niassa Province. Another priest and two children were seriously injured in the attack. b3

25 February

South Africa: The National President of the pro-ANC Organization of Chiefs is killed by gunfire outside his home in central Pietermaritzburg. b3

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