

# Will the United States answer the challenge of terrorism?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

No one summed up the situation more clearly than President Ronald Reagan himself, speaking before a convention of the American Bar Association in Washington, D.C. on July 8:

Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua—continents away, tens of thousands of miles apart, but the same goals and objectives. I submit to you that the growth in terrorism in recent years results from the increasing involvement of these states in terrorism in every region of the world. This is terrorism that is part of a pattern, the work of a confederation of terrorist states. Most of the terrorists who are kidnapping and murdering American citizens and attacking American installations are being trained, financed, and directly or indirectly controlled by a core group of radical and totalitarian governments—a new, international version of Murder, Incorporated. All of these states are united by one, simple, criminal phenomenon—their fanatical hatred of the United States, our people, our way of life, our international stature.

And the strategic purpose behind the terrorism sponsored by these outlaw states is clear: to disorient the United States, to disrupt or alter our foreign policy, to sow discord between ourselves and our allies, to frighten friendly Third World nations working with us for peaceful settlements of regional conflicts, and finally, to remove American influence from those areas of the world where we're working to bring stable and democratic government. In short, to cause us to retreat, retrench, to become "Fortress America." Yes, their real goal is to expel America from the world.

As the President was speaking in July, 39 Americans, seized by Islamic terrorists aboard TWA Flight 847 on June 14 in Athens, were still being held hostage in Shi'ite radical safehouses spread all over the Beirut area. The world waited to see whether the President's strong words would be matched by equally forceful deeds.

As 1985 drew to an end, the world was still waiting.

Even as the President was delivering his toughest statement ever on the role of the Soviet Union and its surrogates in steering a deadly terrorist international, the seeds of a

fatal compromise were visible to the informed eye. Glaringly missing from the President's ABA speech was any mention of the Syrian regime of Hafez Assad, Moscow's most deadly ally in the terror wars. Indeed, it would be through a U.S. State Department stage-managed compromise with the Assad regime that the American hostages would eventually come home. That compromise proved to be the fertile soil from which a series of follow-on terrorist outrages were launched, each drawing the United States deeper into a state of paralysis that carries into the new year.

In Moscow, as well as in the Western capitals, the burning question for 1986 remains: Will the United States break free from the grips of that paralysis and launch the kind of international war against terrorism that President Reagan advocated in that Bar Association address, when he concluded, "These terrorist states are now engaged in acts of war against the government and people of the United States. And under international law, any state which is the victim of acts of war has the right to defend itself."

## A Soviet strategic instrument

The year 1985 commenced with a bloody Moscow-ordered terrorist offensive targeting the nations of Western Europe, most particularly the Federal Republic of Germany. As the result of that offensive, which peaked with the Jan. 25 assassination of French Gen. René Audran and the Feb. 1 assassination of BRD military industrialist Ernst Zimmermann, European counterterror officials confirmed that a tightly organized infrastructure existed servicing the Baader-Meinhof/Red Army Faction, Direct Action, and the Communist Combatant Cells, as well as Iranian- and Libyan-sponsored assassination squads.

As abruptly as the terrorist offensive began, with the announcement of a hunger strike by West German imprisoned RAF terrorists, it ended. European specialists concluded—correctly—that the terrorism had been ordered from Moscow as part of a "strategy of tension," and was, in part, aimed at demonstrating a fingertip control over the terrorist scene by *spetsnaz* and other Soviet intelligence units. The terrorists' targeting betrayed an access to NATO top-secret intelligence, including personal data on key military officials

and blueprints of mobilization plans and military-industrial "choke points." When a top-ranking West German counter-intelligence official, Joachim Tiedge, defected to East Germany later in the year, the connections between East bloc espionage networks and the Euro-terrorists was confirmed with a vengeance.

While the terrorist battering of military and corporate targets in Western Europe continued as an unabated "low-intensity war" throughout the year, by the spring, Moscow set its strategic sites on the Middle East.

It would be in the Middle East theater that the integration of the terrorist "low-intensity warfare" within the overall Soviet Ogarkov Plan would find its most graphic expression.

The signal activating the Soviet drive was an article published in early May on the front page of the *Washington Post*, blaming the CIA for a March 8 car-bomb attack against Hezbollah head Hussein Fadlallah in a Shi'ite section of Beirut that killed 80 people. That incident, and the *Washington Post's* fingering of the U.S. role, set the basis for the TWA hijacking. Behind the scenes, the Israelis were conducting furious negotiations with the Lebanese Shi'ite community, paving the way for a "post-U.S." Lebanon.

Through the personal involvement of Undersecretary of State Richard Murphy—the architect of the emergence of Syria as the new power center of the Arab world—Syria was credited with the "saving" of the American lives. To perpetrate this fraud, the State Department went to great lengths to cover up the fact that Syrian intelligence fingered CIA Beirut station chief William Buckley for kidnapping by the Hezbollah, and that Buckley died from torture at the hands of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Teheran in April of this year.

When the Reagan administration attempted in late summer to revive the Jordan-Egypt-PLO peace initiative, Libya and Israel joined hands in a succession of destabilizations of Tunisia, America's strongest traditional ally in North Africa, culminating in the Israeli bombing raid, which President Reagan initially endorsed.

Before the scandal had subsided around the PLO-Tunis affront, the Greek cruiser *Achille Lauro* was hijacked by radical Palestinians, the U.S. intercepted an Egyptian commercial airliner carrying the captured terrorists, thus bringing about the temporary collapse of the Craxi government, and half of the moderate Arab world decided that it was time to build distance from Washington.

By year's end, the failure of the United States to respond effectively to the terrorist onslaught had translated into a near collapse of U.S. ties with such traditional allies as Tunisia, Egypt, Kuwait, and Jordan. What's more, Israel, traditionally painted as America's "most favored" ally in the eastern Mediterranean, emerged—with the bombings near Tunis, with the Pollard affair, and with the Mossad-directed murders of Tscherim Soobzokov and Alex Odeh, both American citizens associated with moderate Arab causes—as an open partner of Syria and Libya, and as an emerging Soviet asset in both espionage and terrorist actions.

Terrorism thus fully emerged in 1985 as one of the most powerful geopolitical arms in the Russian drive to consolidate a global empire.

Since 1983, *EIR* has been on record as warning that the United States is a prime target for international terrorism. As part of the evidence supporting that estimate, we identified the Revolutionary Communist Party, a spinoff of the Weathermen wing of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), as part of a significant terrorist underground that had successfully carried out a string of murders and other violence in the United States, including the assassination of Gen. Robert Ownby, a senior U.S. Army Reserve commander.

In November of this year, the RCP emerged at the very center of international terrorism when it sponsored a 350-person rally in Paris in support of the Peruvian narco-terrorist *Sendero Luminoso*. RCP formally announced that Sendero was a member of the Revolutionary International Movement, a collection of over 30 communist groups operating in every major drug-producing country in the world. Now, European security specialists have confirmed that the RCP-RIM—

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whose European leadership is made up predominantly of exiled American radicals—is running the underground behind the 1984-85 terrorist offensive.

In the United States, the same RCP has established deep ties with the Nation of Islam sect of Louis Farrakhan, a black Muslim movement that has received over \$30 million in covert support from Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi this year, according to well-placed Arab diplomatic sources.

The threat of surgical terrorist actions on behalf of Moscow's accelerating drive for world power prompted the French conservative publication, *Minute*, on Dec. 16 to declare French Interior Minister Pierre Joxe a Soviet agent bent on butchering the opposition to the socialist Mitterrand government and supporting the Sendero drive to destabilize Peru.

This sign of recognizing reality coming from the Gaullist circles in France may serve to unseat Paris as the undeclared capitol of international terrorism. However, as we go into the new year, that same reality must invade the corridors of power in Washington, D.C. with respect to the terrorist issue. If Washington doesn't wake up quickly, 1986 may very well be remembered as the Year of the Terrorists.