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By CC NARA Date 12-9-04DECLASSIFIED
A/ISS/IPS, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
December 18, 2008

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 27, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Combatting Terrorism

The sky-jacking and letter bomb menaces diminished dramatically during the first half of 1973. However, kidnapping in an international context became more virulent. It was the latter form of terrorism which pre-occupied the attention of the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism since its report to you of January 5.

A. Good News and Bad News

1. Sky-jackings. During the past seven months there was only one sky-jacking attempt in the United States. It was unsuccessful. This contrasts with 21 attempts during the same period a year ago, one-third of which succeeded.

Much credit is due the Department of Transportation's tightened screening program. During the first three months of 1973, 4916 weapons were intercepted, boarding was denied to 617 suspicious passengers and there were 573 arrests.

Credit is also due to the closing of safehavens, notably via the United States-Cuba anti-hijacking agreement. The worldwide record is only a little less dramatic (9 attempts with 5 successful).

2. Letter Bombs: Of the more than 250 letter and parcel bombs to date, only 30 were mailed during the past six months; one came to the United States in March.

3. Kidnappings. In addition to the Khartoum tragedy, American diplomats were kidnapped in Haiti and Mexico. Threats of kidnapping and assassination for

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political purposes increasingly endangered the lives of Americans abroad, e.g. the death of a military adviser in Tehran and almost daily harassment of American businessmen in Argentina.

B. Initiatives by the Cabinet Committee

1. Security Abroad. Posts abroad have been supplied with additional Marines, armored cars, alarm systems, and other protective equipment.

In collaboration with OMB a proposal from you to the Congress is being prepared outlining an augmented security program for our officials abroad (in the neighborhood of \$37 million). Congress is already manifesting receptivity.

Shipping officials are being systematically alerted regarding numerous threats to vessels carrying American passengers.

Pamphlets describing measures for personal safety are being circulated to official and non-official Americans abroad.

Based on the experience gained during the Khartoum, Haiti, and Guadalajara crises, new comprehensive procedures for handling such tense situations have been prepared for use both in Washington and in the field.

Briefings on dealing with terrorist threats have been made mandatory components in preparing Ambassadors and other senior officials for assignments abroad.

With a view to developing improved techniques, a major study of incidents like Khartoum is being undertaken. This behavioral research project is jointly sponsored by the State and Defense Departments but will be conducted by a semi-independent commission.

No opportunities are lost in reminding foreign governments of their basic responsibility for protecting Americans and other foreigners in their respective countries. A recent survey indicates that more than half our Ambassadors overseas have special bodyguards supplied by the host governments.

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2. Security at Home. If we are to expect other governments to assure adequate protection for Americans, it is incumbent on the United States Government to provide adequate security for foreign officials in the United States.

Mindful of persistent complaints by the Soviets and others that they consider themselves as inadequately protected as prior to the enactment of PL 92-539, we are seeking to strengthen the federal role in the implementation of that "Act for the Protection of Diplomats."

There was unprecedented inter-agency cooperation providing security for Brezhnev during his recent visit to the United States. While there were a few incidents, none were serious, and overall security was excellent.

In view of the Treasury Department's opposition to the expansion of the Executive Protective Service, a proposal from you to the Congress is being formulated to obtain approval and funds to subsidize the New York Police Department. The purpose will be to furnish protection, in addition to that presently furnished by the New York Police, for United Nations delegations. They are becoming embittered because of an increasing number of unpleasant incidents.

In visa vigilance, 37,000 applications have thus far been specially screened, 157 of which required special investigation, with 12 applicants rejected.

The State Department has initiated a research project to determine the feasibility of computerizing passport services. The ICAO expects its study of automated identification of travelers completed by May of 1974.

In response to an appeal from American airlines which have been disadvantaged financially, an alteration in visa requirements is being made to allow foreign



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passengers to remain in this country without visa for eight hours but in custody of the airline operators.

Appalled by Pakistan's discovery of large arms shipments via the Iraqi diplomatic pouch, we have considered steps which can legally be taken to deal with reports that certain diplomatic missions in Washington might abuse pouch privileges.

The Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms unit of Treasury is making significant progress in "tagging" explosives and weapons with a view to tracking them during shipment.

Since atomic materials could afford mind-boggling possibilities for terrorists, USAEC tightened its security procedures, e.g. the shipment of all radioactive materials is now being escorted by guards.

3. International Cooperation. Despite previous disappointments in the quest for expeditious action at international fora in the combat against terrorism, we are energetically consulting and collaborating with other governments to secure United Nations approval this fall for the "Convention for the Protection of Diplomats." There is reasonable hope.

Less hopeful are the prospects for securing a meaningful UN convention against the "export of terrorism." Nevertheless, with like-minded nations we shall try at the July 16 meeting of an ad hoc UN committee to budge "non-aligned nations" from the position that no measures can be taken until "underlying causes" are resolved.

In the civil aviation field, other nations have not supported our endeavors to achieve an enforcement convention which would envisage international action against offending countries up to and including the suspension of air services. Nevertheless, our unrelenting efforts have kept the subject very much alive. We are now preparing for a world conference in Rome August 28, hopeful that something meaningful in aviation security enforcement can yet be achieved.



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Another full discussion of terrorism took place at NATO in Brussels on April 4. While the spirit of our European allies is willing, their flesh is weak when it comes to taking firm measures to combat terrorism. This is due in large measure to their heavy dependence on the Middle Eastern countries for oil. Nevertheless, some fresh thoughts emerged, particularly from the Belgians, who have suggested an international convention against the seizing of hostages plus an examination by all European governments to determine "legal gaps" through which apprehended terrorists can escape.

Consultations similar to those taking place with our NATO allies are being planned with our CENTO allies.

C. The Future

The life span of an epidemic such as international terrorism depends largely on the response of the international community. When terrorists come to realize that their actions harm only themselves and their cause, the epidemic will subside. This seems to be the case with sky-jacking and letter bombs. Hopefully, it will prove true vis-a-vis kidnapping and assassination threats. The day will be hastened to the extent that other governments share with us the determination to take firm measures, including a no-ransom policy, to assure that such acts of international terrorism are unprofitable.


William P. Rogers