

TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

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"Sooner or later it will happen to you." Many European officials have predicted that the United States will be hit by the kind of terrorism Western Europe experienced during the last decade and is still experiencing. Their reasoning derives not from any particular piece of intelligence that the United States is about to become a new theater of terrorist warfare, but from less specific indicators. Some of these European observers believe that the prominent American role in the Middle East will make the United States a target for terrorism if Palestinian aims are not satisfied. Some believe that Europe's terrorist groups will inspire American imitators. If there were an imminent domestic terrorist threat, these Europeans fear we would not know about it. They are dismayed by what they perceive as the deliberate destruction of the American intelligence apparatus abroad and in the United States. They believe that a nation of 200 million has more potentially dangerous subversive groups than the few now being monitored under the new stringent rules governing domestic security investigations.

In the past one occasionally also detected irritation on the part of some European officials at what they perceived as a cavalier attitude of the American government toward the problem of terrorism, which U.S. officials tended to see as a European disease, rather than as a problem affecting all modern, democratic, and comparatively affluent industrialized societies. In the European view, we in America simply did not take the problem seriously enough. If there was an underlying someday-you'll-get-yours resentment, the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran probably wiped it out. Prior to that event, however, there was a feeling abroad that neither the American government nor the American people fully appreciated the extent to which a single terrorist incident could mesmerize a nation and thoroughly divert its government. The Israelis during the Entebbe incident, the

Dutch after South Moluccan terrorists seized a hundred school children, the Germans after the kidnapping of Hans Martin Schleyer and the Lufthansa hijacking, or the Italians after the kidnapping of their former premier Aldo Moro could have told us.

U.S. NOT IMMUNE TO TERRORIST VIOLENCE

Actually, the perception that little terrorism has occurred in the United States is misleading. Statistically, the United States is at or near the head of the list of nations most affected by terrorism. According to a chronology of incidents of international terrorism compiled at The Rand Corporation, ten countries suffered 58 percent of the 1,166 incidents recorded during the eleven-year period from 1968 to 1978. The United States leads the list with 144 incidents. If this seems surprising, the explanation in part is that this particular chronology includes only incidents of international terrorism in which terrorists cross national frontiers to carry out their attacks, select victims or targets because of their connections to a foreign state (diplomats, executives of foreign corporations, embassies), attack airliners on international flights, or force airliners to fly to another country. It excludes the considerable amount of violence carried out by terrorists operating within their own countries against their own nationals, or acts of terror by governments against their own citizens. It would, for example, not include the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro.

The levels of domestic terrorism would be reflected somewhat more accurately in a chronology of 5,529 incidents of terrorism from 1970 to 1978 compiled by Risks International, a private firm in Alexandria, Virginia.¹ On the basis of the Risks International chronology, ten countries account for 71 percent of the recorded incidents. With 583

¹Risks International, Inc. (120 South Royal Street, Alexandria, Va. 22313), a private firm, provides statistical information about terrorism on a subscription basis. The information is based upon its computerized data base of 5,529 significant terrorist actions from 1970 to 1978. Other statistics used in this article are drawn from The Rand Corporation's chronology of incidents of international terrorism and statistics published by the FBI Bomb Data Center.

incidents, the United States still places third on the list, right after Italy and Spain.

However, all incidents have the same value in such chronologies. There is no weighting for severity of individual acts. A rough measure of severity of the terrorist situation in a particular country can be obtained by counting only incidents with casualties. But counting only the incidents with casualties in the Rand chronology does not very much alter the composition of the list of countries experiencing the most terrorism although it changes the order somewhat. The United States drops to fifth place if we look only at incidents with casualties.

If, as these figures suggest, the United States has not been immune to terrorist violence, how then do we account for the impression that it has? Terrorism is, of course, very much a matter of impressions. Our perceptions of the severity of terrorism in a country are determined not by statistics but rather by spectacular acts, and there have been few spectacular terrorist incidents in the United States. The kidnapping and subsequent saga of Patty Hearst qualified as a national media event. So did the 1976 hijacking of a TWA airliner out of New York by Croatian separatists and the 1977 takeover of three buildings in Washington by Hanafi Muslims in 1977; but that is about it.

Another reason why it may seem we have less terrorism in the United States is that foreign terrorists have rarely operated here. We have witnessed nothing comparable to the takeover of the West German embassy in Stockholm or the seizure of the OPEC headquarters in Vienna.

Terrorist violence in the United States has also been less lethal. Most of the bombings--the primary form of terrorist activity in the United States--are directed against property, not persons. In terms of the total number of casualties, the United States with 72 deaths resulting from terrorist attacks between 1970 and 1978, ranks roughly with the United Kingdom with 68 deaths (not counting Northern Ireland), ahead of the Federal Republic of Germany with 44 deaths, behind Italy which had 108 deaths. During the same period, 321 persons were killed in terrorist actions in Argentina, 280 were killed in Spain, and 182 in Israel.

The number of fatalities as a result of terrorist attack per million persons, or of terrorist incidents per square miles, does not reflect the actual level of terrorism; it is the quality of the incidents that counts. A single spectacular incident may cause widespread alarm. Therefore it does not seem appropriate to adjust the totals for population. Nevertheless, the size of the United States affects our perceptions of the dimensions of the problem. Adjusted for population, Germany has suffered twice as many fatalities in terrorist incidents as the United States; Italy, five times; Spain, 22 times; Argentina, 35 times; and Israel, 148 times. To express that more graphically, Israel's 182 terrorist killings scaled to U.S. population figures would be the equivalent of more than 10,000 deaths over the nine-year period. Although that would amount to only about half of the annual number of homicides in the United States, such a level of political violence in the United States would be regarded as horrendous.

The high level of violent crime in the United States overshadows the comparatively low level of political violence. With 20,000 homicides a year and thousands of armed robberies, an average of 60 or 70 terrorist incidents a year with eight deaths hardly seems significant or frightening.

Radical critics of the American political and economic system would argue that much of what is regarded as ordinary criminal violence in the United States is in fact hidden political violence. America's high crime rate, according to this view, reflects economic and racial opposition inherent in American society. Studies of criminal motivations, however, reveal little evidence of political consciousness among criminals.

ETHNICITY AND IDEOLOGY LESS POWERFUL IN AMERICA

In a society so heavily armed and apparently so prone to personal violence, why is there comparatively so little political violence? Ideology motivates Latin America's terrorists and European groups such as Germany's Red Army Faction and Italy's Black Order and Red Brigades. Although sometimes espousing various forms of Marxism, Basque terrorists in Spain, Breton terrorists in France, the Irish Republic Army, and

the various Palestinian groups can be appropriately described as ethnically-based; Croatian terrorists are also ethnics but historically have tended to come from the right-wing of the political spectrum.

Although numerous ethnic minorities make up the population of the United States, and ethnic consciousness in the United States has increased during the last 25 years, ethnic-based separatist movements have not been a feature of American history. For one thing, setting aside Indian reservations, inner-city ghettos, and perhaps the ethnic neighborhoods of some large cities, America's ethnic minorities do not live in geographically-discrete regions. Americans also are more mobile than historically-entrenched separatist groups in other countries. There are few locally distinct cultures and histories that could give rise to separatist tendencies, nothing comparable to Spain's Basque provinces or a Northern Ireland. Puerto Rican separatism has been the basis for continuing terrorist actions in the United States.

Neither has ideology been a powerful force in American history. Beyond such vague labels as "more liberal" or "more conservative," it would be extremely difficult to define America's major political parties in ideological terms. Frontier society and the individualistic nature of American society did not lend themselves to class consciousness. There are no distinct accents that mark social origin. Somehow the United States escaped the great ideological contests that divided countries in Europe and Asia in the twentieth century. Marxism never took root in America's labor movement. The country has never experienced a general strike. Fascism has never been more than a costume party for a handful of misfits to disguise their personal failures or anxieties.

Although its adherents spoke in Marxist rhetoric, the New Left of the 1960s was not so much ideologically motivated as it was oriented on a single issue: the war in Vietnam. The abolition of the draft and the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam deprived the handful of bomb throwers within the movement of a constituency. They remained a handful.

The political system in the United States also deserves credit for reducing the potential for terrorist violence. The system has a tremendous capacity to co-opt. The widespread anti-Vietnam War,

anti-Establishment sentiments of the late 1960s helped to bring about the end of conscription, the ultimate withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, the extension of the vote to 18-year-olds, and a drive by both political parties in 1972 to increase the participation of youth in the political system. One political observer was heard to complain that the only reason the violent demonstrations that accompanied the Democratic Party's convention in Chicago in 1968 were not repeated in 1972 was that most of the demonstrators had by then become delegates. Although the story is apocryphal, it is true that the Party's platform had accommodated some of the earlier anti-Establishment slogans. One finds no evidence that all of these moves were part of a conscious national strategy designed merely to undercut the Weather Underground or other potential terrorists. The political system simply works that way.

There is then an American style of violence that reflects American society. Historically Americans have readily turned to guns or bombs to resolve individual quarrels or to express themselves on broader issues. In a highly individualistic society, political violence in America also is highly individualistic. The person who throws a bomb to protest a perceived grievance against the political system joins the person who throws a bomb to settle a personal score and becomes a small part of a larger spectrum of criminal violence. Political violence in America is oriented on specific issues rather than ideologically motivated. Violence has accompanied almost every major economic, social, or political movement in the twentieth century. The labor movement in the early part of the century, the civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam war movement, all spawned on their fringe tiny groups determined to use violent means. In each case, the political system co-opted the movements' programs, leaders, and members, depriving the bomb throwers of potential sympathizers from which active support and future recruits might be drawn. As a result, terrorist organizations have tended to be short-lived, unable to increase their permanent membership beyond a single cohort of entrants.

The United States has experienced little terrorism from abroad. Most terrorist groups operate close to home. They create international incidents by their selection of targets or by hijacking airliners to

another country, not by crossing national frontiers to launch their attacks. The Palestinian groups are an exception. More incidents of Palestinian terrorism take place outside the Middle East than in the Middle East. Thus when we talk about terrorist groups operating abroad, we are talking primarily about Palestinian terrorist groups. Palestinian terrorists have rarely carried out attacks in the United States. Outside of the Middle East, the Palestinians generally operate in Western Europe.

There may be several reasons for their preference. In addition to Europe's proximity to the Middle East, there are large Arab student and guest worker populations in Western Europe where the terrorists may find support and potential recruits. Until the last few years, security in Europe was light; once in Western Europe they could travel easily from country to country without close scrutiny. Dependent on Arab oil and not eager to hold Palestinian terrorists and risk retaliation, some Western European governments were allegedly willing to look the other way at the local activities of Palestinian terrorist organizations. A number of the leaders of the Palestinian groups themselves attended European universities. They were familiar with European cities and had made contacts with dissident European students, some of whom traveled to the Middle East and later launched their own terrorist campaigns.

In contrast, the United States is geographically remote from the Middle East. The local Arab population is small. Except in a few cosmopolitan cities, a group of Arabs would be conspicuous. Security, particularly at American airports, was much stricter than at those in Europe and at least during the early part of the 1970s, it was not difficult to deny entry visas to those who, authorities suspected, might engage in subversive activities; such denials have now become harder to impose. Members of Palestinian groups appear not to have developed any durable relationships with American dissidents. Finally, the Palestinians appear to have adopted a political strategy aimed at wooing American support rather than alienating American public opinion by attacks on U.S. soil. These factors may explain America's comparative immunity to terrorism from abroad.

BOMBING THE PRINCIPAL TACTIC

Bombings represent about 84 percent of all terrorist incidents in the United States. The high percentage of bombings reflects the fact that most terrorist groups in the United States are small and relatively unsophisticated. A bombing requires little technical expertise; instructions and materials are readily available. It entails little risk and requires little organization; it can easily be a one-man operation. Few terrorist groups in the United States have been able to successfully carry out more complex operations such as bank robberies, seizures of facilities or kidnappings which require planning skills, proficiency in arms, hideouts, and other attributes not present in most American terrorist groups. An exception was the Symbionese Liberation Army which carried out the only successful political kidnapping in United States history. The Vietnam experience of some of the group's members and Donald DeFreeze's criminal skills may have propelled the group to higher levels of violence and more sophisticated operations. It is noteworthy, however, that during the period Patricia Hearst was a captive, before she converted to membership, the group was unable to carry out any other operations. Guarding her while keeping ahead of the police demanded the little group's full-time attention.

Because it is so easy and involves relatively little risk, bombing is a fairly common crime in the United States. The number of actual and attempted bombings in the United States has declined since the mid-1970s when the FBI was recording 2,000 incidents a year. There were 1,301 actual and attempted bombings in 1978, about the same number that occurred in 1977. Few could be described as politically-motivated. Most of the bombers are individuals settling personal scores. Before 1977, politically-motivated bombings might appear in FBI statistics under the headings "Anti-Establishment," "Extremist," "Political," or "Foreign Political." Since 1977, the categories of "protest," "publicity," and "subversion" have been used. Together these politically-motivated bombings represent an average of only about six percent of the total number of bombing incidents for each year.

REMNANTS OF THE SIXTIES

A handful of groups account for a majority of all terrorist incidents recorded during the last decade. These include the Weather Underground, the New World Liberation Front, various anti-Castro Cuban organizations, Puerto Rican separatists, the Jewish Defense League and its successors. Together these groups account for 356 bombings and other terrorist actions that occurred between 1970 and 1978. (The FBI currently monitors about a dozen groups which advocate and practice terrorism.)

A number of small terrorist groups emerged from the more extreme elements of the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements of the 1960s. These espoused Marxist rhetoric and a commitment to violent revolution. Beyond these shared attributes, there were some interesting differences. Street-wise blacks and ex-convicts made up the membership of some groups like the Black Liberation Army. Some middle and upper class whites, feeling guilty, perhaps, for not having been born among the truly oppressed of the world, led groups like the Weather Underground and Symbionese Liberation Army.

Only a few of these groups presently remain active if by that we mean they carried out operations in the past year or two. Ten years have passed since members of the Weather Underground began to wage guerrilla warfare against the economic and political establishment of the United States. The group claimed responsibility for 45 bombings between 1970 and 1977, the date of their last action. For the most part, the group focused on national and international issues as was reflected in their targeting. Arrests and voluntary surrender have sapped the group, although its leaders, now in their mid-30s, remain at large. Recently, Federal fugitive charges against six members of the group including Bernadine Dohrn, once on the FBI's most wanted list, were dropped.

The New World Liberation Front claimed responsibility for approximately 70 bombings in the San Francisco Bay area between 1974 and 1978. (In addition to these, the group was credited with 26 bombings in other cities of northern California, and may be associated with a number of bombings in other western states.) Although similar to the

Weather Underground in its rhetoric, the NWLF concentrated more on local issues. Bombings were carried out to protest high utility rates, slum housing, and prison conditions in the Bay area. The group coupled its communiques with specific demands for improvements, a crude form of extortion that sometimes worked. In 1978, NWLF's aboveground spokesman announced that the group had temporarily suspended its bombings campaign while it reexamined the effectiveness of its tactics. He implied that the group might adopt the tactics of terrorist groups in Italy and Germany--violence directed against persons not property. However, the group has not claimed credit for any operation since early 1978. None of the group's estimated dozen to several dozen members has ever been identified.

The Red Guerrilla Family and Symbionese Liberation Army, both operating in the Bay area of northern California, and the George Jackson Brigade, which operated in Washington State, have remained inactive since 1978. On the East Coast, the Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit carried out its last bombing in February 1979.

The bombers of the left emerged during a turbulent period in American history. It was a decade of the drug culture and the sexual revolution. It was a time when passion left romance for politics. It was a time for commitment to causes. Events at home and abroad generated a peculiar national fascination with guerrilla warfare. Threatened in Latin America and Southeast Asia, Pentagon specialists and presidential advisors pored over the writings of Mao, Debray, and Marighella as if they contained new secrets of political power. Undergraduates were inspired by them. Che became a cult hero on campus; liberation, a mission. Guerrilla warfare became the *lingua franca* of White House memoranda and college term papers. If the local imitators of the Tupamaros lacked genuine support for violent revolution in America, they at least had an interested audience.

The political atmosphere has changed since then. The American withdrawal from Vietnam removed the principal cause of domestic strife. No current issue has the same clarity, urgency, or apparent justification for violence, as did the war. People are no longer interested in "traditional" guerrilla warfare. It seems outmoded. Governments

are now being threatened by other tactics--hostage taking, for example. There never was support for revolution; now there are not even spectators.

Events could occur at home or abroad that might again stimulate political violence in the United States. U.S. military intervention overseas would almost certainly produce echoes of domestic dissent and possibly acts of violence for whatever the circumstances; some would inevitably see it as another Vietnam. As an example of what could happen, the crisis in Iran quickly inspired an attempted kidnapping, possible building seizures, an aircraft bombing, and a number of bomb threats by local Iranian supporters of the embassy takeover. One group opposed to possible American military intervention invaded a National Guard armory to warn the Pentagon "to keep its bloody hands off Iran." On the other side, anti-Iranian elements threatened violent action against the local Iranian elements.

Domestically, the nuclear debate is the only issue that has come close to generating the fervent opposition aroused by the Vietnam war. Like the anti-war movement, the anti-nuclear movement comprises diverse elements and motives. Some relate only to fears of what is perceived as a dangerous and unnecessary technology. To others, nuclear programs symbolize the perversities of the American economic and political system. Although the anti-nuclear movement has emphasized non-violence, continuing protest, if it leads to repeated confrontations with police, arrests and injuries, could eventually radicalize its membership and spawn on its extremist fringe groups dedicated to continue their campaign by means of violence. Some militant anti-nuclear groups have already endorsed the destruction of property if necessary to halt nuclear programs, stopping short of violence against people. However, casualties caused by a nuclear accident could add a sense of urgency and, for some, justification for more extreme acts to halt nuclear programs and prevent further casualties.

FOREIGN CAUSES

Coming from a different dimension are the ethnically-based groups that have used terrorist tactics against foreign governments. Included

in this category would be the anti-Castro Cuban exile groups, Croatian and Serbian emigrés, and the Jewish Defense League and related groups. They are unlike the American revolutionary groups in that they do not seek to overthrow the U.S. government or alter the political system in the United States, although they sometimes attack U.S. government targets to register opposition to a particular government policy. They generally regard the U.S. government as well-meaning, although sometimes naive and misguided in its willingness to establish good relations with political foes abroad. At times, they sense betrayal; they may even believe that the American government has permitted Yugoslav or Cuban counterintelligence agents to operate against them on U.S. soil, or in the case of the JDL, that the failure of the government to protect Jews or support Israel (to its full expectations) reflects attitudes consistent with the deep-rooted anti-semitism its members perceive. They often cannot understand why the American public does not support their attacks on communist regimes or other foreign foes that oppose the United States and violate human rights, but since they do not count the American public within their constituency, this lack of popular support does not deter them. In that sense, they are unassimilated. They reside and operate outside of American society and politics. They are truly more fanatic than the issue-motivated terrorists in the mainstream of American political violence. Their intense hatred also enables them to more readily accept casualties and direct their violence more frequently against persons as opposed to property.

Unlike other terrorist groups in the United States, the ethnically-based groups also have succeeded in recruiting new generations of members. The anti-Castro groups and the JDL are now in their second decade of operations; Croatian emigrés have been at it even longer. Finally, the ethnically-based groups differ from their American counterparts in the international character of their operations. Cuban exiles have carried out attacks in at least ten countries besides the United States. Croatian emigrés have been active throughout the world. Groups similar to, if not actually connected with the JDL, have carried out attacks in Europe as well as in the United States.

The anti-Castro Cuban exile groups have been active in the United States since the mid-1960s. In the past ten years, they have claimed responsibility for nearly a hundred bombings and several assassinations. Some of this violence appears to be no more than settling scores among the various exile political factions, and some of it appears to fall in the domain of racketeering, but much of it is politically-motivated. These actions are aimed at toppling Castro, preventing Cuban-American rapprochement, or at the very least keeping the cause of resistance alive among the exile community. Exile groups have attacked the Cuban mission to the United Nations, the Soviet and Latin American missions, and corporations doing business with Cuba. In 1976, Cuban exiles carried out the assassination of a former Chilean cabinet minister at the behest of the Chilean secret service. Also in 1976, a Cuban exile group claimed credit for placing a bomb aboard a Cuban airliner, causing the deaths of 76 persons. In 1979, Omega 7, currently the most active of the Cuban groups, claimed credit for several bombings and one murder. Terrorist activity by anti-Castro Cubans can be expected to continue.

Croatian and Serbian emigrés have carried out sporadic terrorist operations in the United States during the past 10 years. Croatians were responsible for the hijacking of a TWA airliner in 1976, the seizure of the Yugoslav mission in New York in 1977, and the seizure of the German Consulate in Chicago in 1978. Some of the most recent incidents of violence directed against members of the Croatian community appear to be related to a plot to extort money from the emigrés. Both Croatians and Serbians carried out operations in 1979, and can be expected to continue their activity.

The Jewish Defense League was founded in 1968 on the premise that the situation of Jews in New York's ghettos was analogous to the situation of Jews in Nazi Germany. Vowing that Jews will "never again" (the JDL's motto) lie down and be trampled on, the JDL operated in its early years as a vigilante group, guarding Jewish shopowners and residents in "frontier neighborhoods" where older Jews were often victims of terror and violence by black and Puerto Rican hoodlums. Later the JDL turned to international causes: the plight of Soviet Jews and the defense of Israel. Since then, the JDL and a number of similar

organizations such as the Jewish Armed Resistance and the Jewish Action Movement, which may be different pseudonyms used by the same persons or entirely separate groups, have claimed responsibility for more than 50 bombings and other terrorist actions in the United States. Their targets include the Soviet and Arab missions and commercial establishments. They also have mailed letter bombs to members of neo-Nazi groups in America.

PUERTO RICAN SEPARATISM

Terrorism on behalf of Puerto Rico's independence currently poses the most serious problem for the United States. Puerto Rico is an exception to the general observation that the United States contains no geographically-discrete ethnic groups of distinct history and culture. Puerto Rican nationalism can be traced back to the nineteenth century, and separatist sentiments have been a persistent cause of terrorism at least since the mid-1930s. In 1950, two Puerto Rican nationalists eager to assist a separatist movement on the island tried to assassinate President Truman. Four years later, a group of four Puerto Rican nationalists wounded five American Congressmen in an attack in the House of Representatives. Various groups have emerged over the years to continue the campaign.

In the late 1960s, members of the *Comandos Armados de Liberación (CAL)* and *Movimiento Independencia Revolucionario Armado (MIRA)* claimed credit for numerous bombings in Puerto Rico and New York aimed at U.S. companies that owned property in Puerto Rico and seeking to discourage American tourism to the island. Reportedly, MIRA had Cuban connections and received support from the Castro government as a possible counter to U.S. sponsorship of anti-Castro Cuban exile groups. The bombings stopped after a series of arrests. The surviving members reorganized themselves and returned as the *Fuerza Unida Revolucionaria Pro Independencia Armada (FURIA)* which renewed its bombing campaign in 1972. In 1974, FURIA's members reorganized themselves again and reappeared this time as the *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN)*, which since its appearance has claimed credit for over 60 bombings in Puerto Rico and on the U.S. mainland, primarily in New York and Chicago.

The most deadly bombing occurred in 1975 when the FALN detonated a bomb at noon in the Fraunces Tavern, a popular Wall Street restaurant. The explosion killed four and injured 53. This bombing was justified by the FALN as an act of revenge for the deaths of two persons as a result of a bombing at a restaurant in Puerto Rico frequented by pro-independence groups which the FALN claimed had been ordered by the CIA. In 1977, another two bombings in New York killed one and injured seven persons. Telephoned bomb threats following the two explosions caused the evacuation of 100,000 persons from downtown office buildings. In 1979, three small pro-independence groups claimed credit for the ambush of a U.S. Navy bus in Puerto Rico that left two U.S. sailors dead and 10 wounded. Like the Fraunces Tavern bombing, this action was also said to be retaliation for the deaths of three advocates of Puerto Rican independence, two of whom had been killed by police in Puerto Rico, the third allegedly having committed suicide while in a Federal prison.

Although pro-independence parties generally receive less than six percent of the vote in Puerto Rico, and few of the advocates of independence endorse violence, the pro-independence terrorists probably do have a measure of popular support. Recently granted clemency by President Carter, the four surviving Puerto Rican nationalists who participated in the attacks on President Truman and the House of Representatives warned of a Nicaraguan-style revolution if Puerto Rico does not gain independence. Statements like this were greeted with cheers at rallies for the four in Chicago and San Juan.

For its part, the FALN is technically far more competent than its predecessors and may receive support from the Cuban government which supports Puerto Rican independence. On the other side, the current governor of Puerto Rico is committed to statehood, as are both President Carter and Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan, and has promised to hold a plebiscite on the issue in 1981 if he is reelected. With the battle lines so clearly drawn and so much attention focused on the issue, further violence seems inevitable.

THE KLAN

No survey of political violence in America would be complete without some reference to the Ku Klux Klan. From the earliest years of the Klan, immediately after the Civil War, its hooded members used fear and violence to maintain white supremacy. The Klan dropped out of sight in the late nineteenth century but reappeared in the 1920s, when the new Klan expanded its targets to include not only Blacks, but Catholics, Jews, evolutionists, pacifists, radicals, adulterers, and bootleggers. School desegregation and widespread activism on behalf of civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s again provoked violence, much of which was attributed to secret terrorist groups within the Klan like the "Silver Dollars." Public revulsion at the murder of three civil rights workers in 1964 and aggressive action by the Department of Justice and the FBI caused Klan membership to decline but recently it has begun to increase. The new Klan (actually there are several Klans) is politically more sophisticated and certainly more media conscious than its predecessors. Klan leaders officially disclaim any hand in violence, but persons identified as members of the Klan allegedly have been involved in a number of shootings in the last couple of years, the most recent one occurring in Greensboro, North Carolina, where four anti-Klan demonstrators were killed on November 3, 1979.

Summing up, there does not appear to be a major terrorist threat in the United States at the present time, if by that we mean something comparable to the level and persistence of the terrorist campaigns waged in Spain, Italy, or Northern Ireland during the 1970s. A possible exception is terrorist violence on behalf of Puerto Rican independence which has persisted for decades and could increase during the next year or two as a result of foreseeable political developments. Independent of the Puerto Rican issue, politically-motivated violence probably will persist in the United States at least at the levels seen during the last decade. Ample causes exist. Croatian emigrés, anti-Castro exiles, Jewish, Black, Indian or feminist extremists, racist and nativist groups could find justification in their perceived grievances or claimed goals for terrorist violence. Controversial issues such as nuclear power or abortion could generate acts of violence. Events may occur

abroad that will inspire domestic campaigns of terrorism. U.S. military intervention in the Middle East or elsewhere could provoke the kinds of anti-war violence seen during the Vietnam War. Reports that some religious cults are acquiring arms suggests a possibility of terrorist actions from that quarter. Finally, we also must unfortunately anticipate the irrational violent acts of individuals who seek to solve their personal problems by hijacking airliners, seizing hostages, or assassinating public officials.

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