

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
REGARDING SENATE BILL AGAINST TERRORISM, January 27, 1978

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PREFACE

The testimony presented in this paper was given before the United States Senate's Governmental Affairs Committee at their request and in consideration of Senate Bill No. 2236 against terrorism.

The views expressed are those of the author although various agencies of the Federal Government have sponsored Rand's research in the area.

The author concludes the testimony with the judgment that the fight against terrorism will remain a continuing task and that governments, above all, must demonstrate that they and not the terrorists are in charge.



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This is my second opportunity to address a Senate Committee regarding defense against terrorism, and I thank the members of this committee for inviting me to testify in consideration of Senate Bill 2236.

I would like to preface my comments by stating that, although the research carried out by The Rand Corporation in this area has been funded by various agencies of the Federal Government, the views expressed here are entirely my own and are not necessarily shared by Rand or any of its research sponsors.

Let me begin with a brief historical survey that will give us some insights into what the future of terrorism holds, and what measures may be required to defend against it. As you know, views on that subject are divided: Some think more needs to be done, others do not.

Some observers perceive today's terrorism as the outgrowth of unique political circumstances prevailing in the late 1960s: the Israeli defeat of the Arabs in the Six Day War of 1967, which caused Palestinians to abandon their dependence on Arab military power and turn to terrorism; increasing emphasis on urban guerrilla warfare in Latin America, and with it, the resort to terrorist tactics; and the widespread anti-Vietnam War and anti-government demonstrations in Western Europe, Japan, and the United States which led to bloody confrontations with police. These confrontations resulted in injuries, arrests, and further violence, a radicalizing process that ultimately spawned terrorist groups such as the Baader-Meinhof Gang in West Germany and the United Red Army of Japan.

According to this view, terrorism will decline as political circumstances change, as original problems such as the Middle East conflict are solved, as governments effectively combat terrorism, and as remaining terrorist groups are destroyed.

There is some cause for such optimism. Many urban guerrillas responsible for past terrorist incidents have been wiped out. Since the civil war in Lebanon, the number of serious incidents that can be traced to the conflict in the Middle East has declined. Terrorist groups operating in Europe are under increasing police pressure. And historically, terrorism has tended to be episodic. Those who subscribe to this view, then, feel present organizational arrangements are adequate.

If, on the other hand, the current wave of international terrorism is seen as the result, not only of unique political circumstances, but also of recent technological developments--international travel giving terrorists worldwide mobility; improved mass communications providing them with almost instantaneous access to a worldwide audience; the increasing availability of weapons, explosives, and other munitions; and new vulnerabilities in a society increasingly dependent on complex systems and other fragile technology--or if terrorism is believed to be the latest step in the evolution of political violence, a new set of tactics whose use inspires and instructs other groups, then terrorism is likely to continue. Those who believe terrorism will continue criticize the current lack of preparedness to deal with really serious incidents, or even to competently handle the same kind of incidents that have occurred in the past. I want to emphasize that this second view does not depend on a forecast that terrorism will necessarily get worse, or that terrorists will ultimately escalate to acts of greater violence.

My own view is that the use of terrorist tactics will persist as a mode of political expression, of gaining international attention, and of achieving limited political goals. Although few terrorists have reached their stated long-term goals--and in that respect terrorism may be considered a failure--the use of terrorist tactics has won them publicity and occasionally some political concessions. Their

actions have also had considerable subsidiary effects, such as the diversion of manpower and money into security functions, and the effects that terrorist violence has had on political life and society in many nations of the world. To terrorists, who tend to be politically short-sighted anyway, these limited tactical successes may suffice to preclude the abandonment of terrorist tactics.

Terrorists will remain mobile, able to strike targets anywhere in the world. They appear to be getting more sophisticated in their tactics, their weapons, and their exploitation of the media. They will continue to emulate each other's tactics, especially those that win international publicity. Terrorist groups appear to be strengthening their links with each other, forming alliances, and providing mutual assistance. One result is the possible emergence of multinational free-lance terrorist groups that are willing to carry out actions on behalf of causes they sympathize with, or to undertake specific campaigns of terrorism on commissions from client groups or governments. Nations or groups unable or unwilling to mount a serious challenge on the battlefield may employ such groups or adopt terrorist tactics as a means of surrogate warfare against their opponents.

Even though we may foresee an era of formal peace between nations (at least insofar as the major powers are concerned), free of open warfare except for brief periods, at the same time we may be entering an era of increased political violence at lower levels as intermittent "nonwars" rage between nations, subnational entities, national liberation fronts, guerrilla groups, and terrorist organizations, some of which are linked together in vague alliances, some perhaps the proteges of foreign states.

Is the U.S. government adequately prepared to deal with the threat? Whether or not the U.S. government is in fact adequately prepared to deal with one or more serious terrorist incident is a bit like arguing whether or not its arsenal is sufficient to successfully wage a nuclear war. You will never really know without a nuclear war. Until that time, if ever, U.S. capabilities may be judged adequate or inadequate depending on one's point of view. It can be argued, of course, that the world has never seen a nuclear war, but we have witnessed incidents

of terror. True, elsewhere. The United States has not yet been tested by a sustained campaign of terrorism or by a major incident in which the lives of American citizens hang in the balance, demands are made on the U.S. government, and terrorists have demonstrated their resolve to kill. The seizure of hostages by Hanafi Muslim extremists at three locations in Washington, D.C., last year is about the closest we have come to a serious domestic incident. Other incidents include the multiple hijacking of three airliners to a desert field in Jordan in August 1970. In that incident, terrorists held over 300 passengers hostage, many of them Americans. The seizure of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Khartoum in 1973 was another serious incident. In that instance, the terrorists demanded the release of Sirhan Sirhan, the convicted assassin of Senator Robert Kennedy. When their demands were not met, they murdered three of their hostages including two American diplomats. Another serious incident was the hijacking of a TWA airliner in September 1976 by Croatian extremists who demanded the publication of their communique in several newspapers.

Fortunately, with the exception of the tragic outcome at Khartoum and the deaths of a newsman in Washington and of a policeman who was attempting to defuse a bomb planted by the Croatians, the incidents ended without disaster or major concessions, which may be equally important. At the same time, the handling of these incidents revealed certain deficiencies in coordination, communications, response capabilities, and media relationships. If we all agreed that either a sustained campaign of terrorism waged in the United States or against the United States abroad, or a serious incident of terrorism here, was imminent, we could probably agree that some further organizational steps would be necessary.

Combatting terrorism poses a number of unique problems. The terrorist adversary does not act according to any established rules of warfare or diplomacy. Diplomats and generals know--at least they think they know--what to expect from other governments and how to deal with them. But coming to grips with a band of terrorists is an altogether different matter. Because terrorists do not limit their attacks to any particular class of targets or to any specific locale,



or to any period of time, defense is difficult and costly to provide. Terrorists have fewer compunctions about killing or injuring persons who have nothing at all to do with their struggle. Because they have no borders, no cities, no populations to protect, terrorists have fewer vulnerabilities. Retaliation in kind is a meaningless threat. Deterrence requires apprehension and punishment; with regard to international terrorism, the record is not good.

Another problem is that terrorists operate in the cracks, between organizational boundaries and missions. There is no single department, agency, or office in the U.S. government with responsibility for combatting terrorism that has the authority and means to do so. Everybody seems to share some part of the responsibility. A single episode may cut across several bureaucratic domains, making coordination difficult. Individual satrapies are jealously guarded, and there is no clear line of authority. Each incident may be handled by different lead departments. Circumstances may determine who takes charge initially. Changes in the situation can bring in new departments and agencies who then compete for leadership.

Each terrorist incident is unique. The location and political circumstances in which the incident occurs, the identity, ideology, and objectives of the terrorist group, the nature of the target, the identity of the victim or victims, all vary. Lessons can (and should) be learned, contingency plans formulated, but there can be no prescribed course of action based solely upon precedents established in previous episodes. There are no fixed solutions or requirements. Customary modes of operation may not work, a fact that drives bureaucrats up the wall. Each incident must be dealt with ad hoc. To do so successfully requires a flexible policy, good communications, total cooperation between jurisdictions, retrievable information that can be assembled rapidly, and earlier development of special expertise.

The unique character of each episode, however, should not preclude efforts to accurately reconstruct how each one "went down." Each episode should be carefully examined for any lessons that might be learned. The lack of an institutional memory is one of the major problems. Given the normal rotation of personnel, any new incident will

involve a new set of players who have no personal recollection of the problems that arose in past incidents. They will have instead a vague memory, often secondhand and incorrect, of how solutions were reached in past incidents, and the specific steps necessary to deal effectively with an incident. In this regard, I see a continuing need for detailed case studies of major terrorist incidents, whether or not they involve the U.S. government, as a means of better preparing ourselves to handle any future incidents.

The intermittent nature of terrorism itself poses another problem. Except for places like Belfast or Buenos Aires where terrorist activity is almost constant, most countries experience only sporadic terrorist problems. The amount of terrorist violence in the world compared to the world volume of violence is miniscule. The world's terrorists have killed fewer persons in the last decade than are murdered every year in the United States; annual losses from shoplifting in the United States alone exceed the total amount of property damage caused by terrorists worldwide. Faced with other pressing international problems, it is easy to see why government officials may consider terrorism a relative nuisance.

However, as we have seen in The Netherlands, Japan, and most recently in West Germany, a single incident of terrorism may suddenly become an issue of considerable national importance and one that commands the attention of officials at the highest levels of government. Terrorist incidents have virtually paralyzed governments for days or even weeks. While everyone's attention is riveted to the event, normal business halts. National leaders may perceive their political survival or stature determined by decisions they are compelled to make on very short notice. There is little time to sound out the views of others, little time to build a consensus within the government or among the public. How the decisions will be received by the public cannot be predicted. The risk of tragic outcome is great.

Characteristically, every serious incident is followed by an enormous amount of media attention, denunciations, debate, and verbal retributions which usually wane rapidly. Between spectacular episodes, the problem of terrorism usually reverts to a remote and nonpressing

issue. (Although attention to it in the United States has increased in recent weeks despite the lack of major incidents.) Committees set up to deal with the problem seem to have no function. Special military units seem a waste of money. For example, before the successful rescue of hostages at Mogadishu, some in West Germany questioned the utility of the special commando unit that the German government established in 1972 to deal with terrorist incidents. I imagine there is little argument in West Germany now concerning its worth. (But there may be again a year from now.) Because terrorism receives only spasmodic attention, attempts aimed at more formally organizing efforts to combat it have been hampered. Terrorism is simply not regarded as an issue of major importance within the U.S. government. The United States has not suffered the kind of terrorism that has recently erupted in West Germany or Italy. With a few exceptions, foreign terrorists have not operated in the United States. American government officials and executives of American firms abroad have often been targets of terrorist attacks, but the kidnapping or assassination of a diplomat or businessman in South America or North Africa, although shocking and tragic, does not directly touch the American public, or elevate the problem to a level of concern within the American government.

A further obstacle to efforts aimed at better organizing the U.S. government to combat terrorism is the idea that combatting terrorism is an unavoidably unsavory business. To those who hold this view, governmental efforts aimed at combatting terrorism, and organizations created to deal with the problem, recall the counterinsurgency programs of the 1960s, the USAID Public Safety Program which, as alleged by its critics, involved U.S. advisors in the questionable terrorist suppression activities of foreign police, illegal intelligence gathering by the Department of the Army, and by the White House during the Nixon Administration. Although not widespread, this attitude does exist in government and plays a role in keeping the effort minimal.

Terrorism provokes overreaction. I think we can detect some of that in the results of a recent Harris Survey. According to the survey, 90 percent of Americans view terrorism as a very serious world problem. Seventy-six percent of those questioned about the causes

that have stimulated the growth of terrorism in recent years feel that "terrorism is growing in the world because the countries of the world have been too soft in dealing with terrorists." By 55 to 29 percent, Americans would support the organization of a "special police force which would operate in any country of the world and which would investigate terrorist groups, arrest them, and put their leaders and members to death"; 55 to 31 percent favor the death penalty for those caught committing acts of terror. Terrorism creates an atmosphere of alarm and fear that causes people to exaggerate the strength of the terrorists and the importance of their cause. That perhaps is the greatest threat posed by terrorists. If a government appears helpless or incompetent in dealing with a terrorist incident, public alarm will increase and so will the clamor for draconian measures. And so, perhaps, will terrorist acts increase. Frightened people seem inclined to accept, and may even demand that government take measures ordinarily regarded as repressive.

Given its ability to create highly visible crises and public emotion, terrorism itself may become a political issue that can easily be exploited. Some may see it as easy political capital. Who would not go on record against terrorism? There are also those with less benign motives who would exploit public alarm and trade on fear to advance their own ideologies or political agendas.

Terrorism can no more easily be eradicated than murder or war. However, certain types of terrorist attacks can be prevented by improved security, and certain categories of targets can be put beyond demonstrated terrorist capabilities. That will not solve the entire problem for, as we have seen, to terrorists everything and anything represents a potential target. If diplomats are effectively protected, businessmen may be kidnapped. If businessmen improve their own physical security, terrorists may abduct children as they did in Djibouti and Holland, or nuns as happened recently in Argentina. It is impossible to protect everything and everyone.

We can try to anticipate terrorist campaigns and attacks through better intelligence and information systems. But intelligence about terrorist groups is hard to obtain. Knowing what is going on inside a terrorist group is mainly a matter of human intelligence work--

infiltrators and paid informants--but most terrorist groups are small, tightly knit, and difficult to penetrate. Such efforts require months or years of patient work. In some cases, the chances of preventive action may be so low that the costs and risks are not worth the effort, or, on the domestic scene, the invasion of privacy that may result.

However, to what extent might recent legislation and directives impose unintended and unwarranted restrictions on intelligence gathering regarding terrorist dangers, and on the sharing of intelligence information by government agencies? Without reversing the intent of these restrictions, to what extent can and should exceptions be made?

Perhaps more can be done with respect to an analysis of the available information. How the relevant information can be rapidly assembled and communicated to decisionmakers in an actual crisis situation should be explored. When a terrorist incident occurs, there is little time to comb through files or read several hundred pages of reports. Too much unprocessed information stuffs up decisionmaking.

The government can try "crisis management" to improve its ability to respond effectively to incidents of terror that may occur. This function has been the subject of considerable government-sponsored research recently, for it pertains not only to terrorist incidents but to a broad range of political and economic problems that arise. The "management" of serious terrorist incidents is a complicated affair that, depending on the incident, may involve the formation of special task forces within government; the mobilization of relevant information and of legal experts; area specialists, psychologists or psychiatrists, intermediaries, or other human resources. In some cases, special equipment will be needed as well as the mobilization of military assets. The need to consult with leaders or representatives of the political opposition, communication and negotiation with other governments and possible communication with terrorists will be required. Relations with the news media may be difficult.

We must not peremptorily dismiss military action in dealing with terrorism as a measure of last resort. An incident may occur at any time in which a band of political extremists seizes a large number of American hostages on foreign territory, negotiations fail, the captors

appear at the point of killing the hostages, and the local government is unwilling or unable to protect the potential victims.

Public pressure would not permit political leaders to stand by while Americans are shot. The government would either have to yield to the terrorists' demands or risk the use of military force. At stake will be the lives of the hostages as well as the standing of the U.S. government.

At a State Department conference in March 1976, I offered the forecast that "confronted with terrorist violence emanating from abroad, and frustrated by the lack of international cooperation, national governments are more likely to take direct military action...." In fact, of 29 international hijackings, and barricade and hostage incidents that occurred in 1976 and 1977, 13 were forcefully concluded by specially-trained police or commando units.

As in the case of the U.S. government's capabilities to manage a terrorist-caused crisis, it is a matter of some debate whether the capability of a military rescue operation with some reasonable expectation of success exists. Certainly that option should exist. However, details of the nature and state of readiness of such U.S. military capabilities should probably not be discussed at a public hearing.

It will be difficult to fully develop capabilities and coordinate activities in these four functional areas--security, intelligence, the management of government response to incidents, and military action--without an organizational structure that will provide some impetus. The Interagency Working Group does not do this. I will come to the reasons for that belief in a moment.

As I read it, the proposed legislation is intended to generate a higher level of concern and impart a greater sense of urgency in the Executive Branch by creating organizations within the Executive Office of the President, the Department of State, and the Department of Justice, and by mandating specific sanctions against countries that aid terrorists.

Terrorism is but one of several problems that cut across responsibilities and functions of many agencies and departments. A common solution has been to create a cabinet committee or interagency working

group representing all concerned agencies. However, all such groups tend to share the same weaknesses. The chairman is often viewed as little more than a representative of his own agency, and has no real power beyond persuasion over the other representatives who report to their own bosses. And, neither the chairman nor the group as a whole has the authority to back up any decision reached by the group. The meetings, which may take place once a week, or once a month as in the case of the Interagency Working Group on Terrorism or once in five years of its existence (as was the case of the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism), merely provide a means of keeping in touch with one another, a useful but inadequate exercise. Real decisions, if any, are made back in the individual department or agency.

I do not want to portray a picture of quarreling bureaucrats. This certainly is not the case with the Interagency Working Group. The representatives to this group are, for the most part, genuinely concerned with the problem, and get along well with one another. It is simply that, given the lack of lateral incentives, the vertical parochialism of line agencies and departments dominates. As a result, the individual representatives themselves may swing little weight within their own department or agency and the group itself has very little power. A related problem is lack of staff backup, some group to continuously monitor developments and activities.

The Council to Combat Terrorism called for in the Bill is, in its membership, and in most of its functions, a re-creation of the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism that was abolished last year. I am not certain what more the new Council will do than the present Interagency Working Group on Terrorism does, or its smaller executive committee established by Presidential Review Memorandum 30, other than prepare the list of countries aiding terrorists that is called for in sections 105 and 107 of the Bill.

The proposed Council to Combat Terrorism may not meet frequently. Between meetings, no continuing attention will be devoted to the problem except that provided by the present Interagency Working Group on Terrorism, the Department of State's Office to Combat Terrorism, and similar offices or ad hoc committees in other departments, or that

which may be provided by the proposed new Bureau for Combatting Terrorism in the Department of State and the new Office for Combatting Terrorism in the Department of Justice.

I suggest you consider providing the Council with its own small permanent staff. The creation of such a staff within the Executive Office of the President might even obviate the need for creating new offices in the Department of State and Department of Justice. A permanent staff could give its full-time attention to developing and maintaining U.S. capabilities for anticipating, preventing, and combatting terrorism, and increase government effectiveness in dealing with serious incidents of terrorism that may require the attention of the Federal Government.

As a permanent body with a White House perspective, the staff will be able to identify and promote needed capabilities. It will be able to monitor and coordinate the activities of the line agencies and departments. It will be able to identify potential problem areas such as jurisdictional conflict and bring them to the attention of the Council. It will be able to identify special resources inside and outside of government that may be mobilized in an actual incident. This would include persons with specialized skills, or individuals with unique contacts or relationships. It would pull together current intelligence and ongoing analyses and research efforts. It would monitor trends in world terrorism and examine potentialities for more serious incidents. It could identify potential kinds of terrorist incidents, develop core scenarios, formulate contingency plans, and engage in gaming and simulation exercises (hopefully involving the same senior officials who would have decisionmaking responsibilities in an actual crisis). It would, in sum, see to it that the necessary resources and capabilities are there when they are needed. And, in an actual crisis, it could function as a small "battle staff," assembling relevant information, assisting decisionmakers by providing them with alternative courses of action, and monitoring the implementation of their instructions. These functions of such an expert, up-to-the-minute staff are particularly important, as a serious terrorist incident may bring in a set of officials unfamiliar with the problems of terrorism.



The staff would not replace the Interagency Working Group on Terrorism or duplicate the work of special offices in the cabinet departments. The staff's relationship with these other offices would have to be worked out. There would be a clear division of responsibility. Its principal task should be to encourage the development of needed capabilities in the line agencies and departments, with the staff in the Executive Office playing a catalytic and coordinating role, as well as doing the necessary overall planning.

The creation of even a small permanent staff, perhaps something between 6 and 12 members, and its location in the Executive Office of the President poses certain problems. In recent years, it has become common practice to solve all problems that require coordination among several cabinet departments and agencies by creating new offices in the Executive Office of the President. As a result, there has been a growth of both the power and the size of the Executive Office. Periodic reorganizations of the Executive Office result in such entities being dismantled or pushed out. A staff dedicated to the problems of combatting terrorism, no matter what its size, would be particularly vulnerable to elimination in the absence of any major terrorist incident to justify its existence. If that happened, the expertise and capabilities that had been developed would be wiped out.

Recognizing this problem, some advocates of a permanent government entity to deal with terrorism have proposed placing it within a larger office with broader responsibilities for crisis management, for example, making it a component of a new Office of Emergency Preparedness. Another possible approach would be to merge the functions of the staff dealing with terrorism with those of a staff that would be concerned with handling low-level conflicts and crises just short of war, such as the Mayaguez incident. This would be something roughly equivalent to the Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) that was abolished in 1976. It would differ from the WSAG in that it would be a permanent staff able to do some advance thinking as opposed to a high-level group called upon only after a crisis had developed.

The possibility of learning from foreign experience should not be overlooked. The government of Canada has a special unit within its

Solicitor General's office to deal with major incidents of terrorism in Canada. Its staff consists of approximately a dozen professionals with backgrounds in law enforcement, military operations, and the social sciences. West Germany's recent trying experience with terrorism produced some interesting organizational solutions from which the United States might profit.

A further problem with both the Council proposed in the Bill, and the addition of a permanent staff suggested in my testimony, is that concern cannot be legislated. Congress cannot impose any organizational arrangement upon an unwilling Executive Branch and realistically expect it to work as intended. Critics of the organizational arrangements created by PRM-30 call it a "bureaucratic paper shuffle" that does nothing to consolidate anti-terrorist activities, solve jurisdictional problems or impart a sufficient sense of urgency. However, some of those involved in the preparation of PRM-30 argue that the present arrangement was the most that could be achieved. It reflects the current level of concern about the issue in the White House and is compatible with the President's own style of decisionmaking. Presidential involvement in terrorist incidents is certainly not desirable. Political extremists ought not (in a figurative sense) to be able to get into the Oval Office through kidnapping and bombing. Some have objected to the creation of any machinery in the Executive Office of the President as tantamount to involving the President too visibly in terrorism. Others have argued that given the lack of adequate coordinating machinery in government, and given the jurisdictional disputes that may arise in an actual incident, the President will inevitably be drawn in to resolve conflicts. The fact is, whether or not the President gets involved will not be determined by the existence or absence of any organizational structures. In some instances, presidential involvement is inevitable. Only he will be able to make certain decisions. In some cases, the President may simply choose to become involved, as have other heads of governments in such incidents. He will want to be seen as being in charge. This depends on presidential personality and style. It cannot be legislated or necessarily controlled.

An unfortunate feature about the existing as well as the proposed organizations charged with combatting terrorism is their name.

Clearly some machinery is necessary to coalesce and coordinate government efforts in this area, but the word "terrorism" in their title elevates and may even exaggerate the problem. I do not know if it makes sense to try to substitute some white-washed platitude or a cryptic acronym for the task of combatting terrorism, but it troubles me to see terrorism so visibly institutionalized at high levels of government. Terrorists seek this kind of attention. And they ought not to receive it.

With regard to the proposed sanctions against countries aiding terrorists, caution should be exercised so that the issue of terrorism itself does not inadvertently determine American foreign policy. At times, foreign policy objectives may be judged more important than the question of whether a particular nation supports a certain terrorist group. Neither should any requirement to impose sanctions foreclose options that may be used to conclude a terrorist incident. To give you an example, in the recent Lufthansa hijacking the government of Somalia permitted West German commandos to land at Mogadishu and rescue the hostages. It has since been reported that in return for Somalia's cooperation, West Germany provided a no-strings loan to the Somali government; that loan is currently being used to buy arms. Without questioning the accuracy of these reports or the merits of such an arrangement, note that if West Germany, before this incident, had passed legislation such as that proposed here, would this option have been open? While we share the desire that nations actively supporting terrorists be punished, the very nature of terrorism requires that maximum flexibility be preserved in dealing with terrorist incidents, terrorist campaigns, terrorist groups, and even the countries that support them. Sanctions should be imposed but they ought not to be mandatory.

Even the compilation and widespread publication of lists of countries that aid terrorists and dangerous foreign airports in my opinion will be useful, and by itself may have some effect. It could well discourage American business from operating in these countries, and American tourists from visiting them. It could also increase airline, business, and travel insurance premiums, which may act as a further deterrent to commerce and travel. The lists could also be considered in renewals of landing rights and used to persuade countries to improve

airport security. A combination of threatened U.S. government sanctions, economic pressure through loss of tourist dollars, and possibly plain embarrassment at being publicly identified as a nation with inadequate airport security, may bring about some improvements.

None of these will solve the problem of terrorism. Terrorism is not a problem that can be solved, and we ought not to think of it that way. Government can try to ameliorate the conditions that may lead to terrorist violence. We can attempt to contain terrorism within tolerable limits. We can try to deter or prevent the more heinous terrorism actions. It can equip itself to respond effectively to terrorist incidents that do occur. I have chosen these verbs carefully. None of them imply a final solution, but rather reflect an enduring problem and suggest a continuing task. There will be no ultimate victory in the war against terrorism.

By design of the adversary, terrorism is a highly theatrical, visible and emotional mode of conflict. In this contest, governments must above all demonstrate competence. If governments can't always win, they must at least show that they, and not the terrorist, are in charge.

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