

## IN THIS ISSUE

More than a year has passed since the American bombing of Libya, and the lull in major incidents of international terrorism directed against U.S. targets continued into the Spring of 1987. Yet, even if it does not capture daily headlines and television coverage, terrorism continues unabated in many parts of the world: India, Sri Lanka, Lebanon and South Africa, just to name a few. In Northern Ireland, British security forces inflicted a major defeat on the Provisional IRA early in May. Across Europe, an evolving pattern of events suggests that "Euroterrorists" may have selected the SDI programme as a target for attack. All of this makes terrorism a subject of continuing relevance, and therefore appropriate as the central theme of this issue. The three articles published here were originally presented as papers at the Aberdeen University conference on terrorism research in April 1986.

Since the seizure of power in Iran by Islamic militants in 1979, western analysts have been trying to understand the nature of "fundamentalist" Islam and its relationship to political violence. Richard Martin sheds considerable light on this issue in his examination of the concept of "Jihad." In the United States, attention is currently focused on the Congressional inquiry into private, official and semiofficial involvement in providing aid to the Nicaraguan "Contras." Michael McKinley's article reminds readers that the "Contras" are not the first foreign rebels to have benefitted from American largesse. He describes in detail the financial and other assistance rendered to the Provisional IRA from American supporters, and concludes that such support, albeit entirely from individual American citizens, represents a significant factor in the continuation of the violence in Northern Ireland. Security forces and strategic analysts share a consensus that the development and exploitation of intelligence is central to effective counter-terrorism policies and measures. But in liberal democracies, intelligence operations can pose threats to individual liberties and democratic principles. Whether the requirements both for liberty and security ever can be rationalized is a matter of considerable controversy. Kenneth Robertson tackles this thorny issue and argues that, at least in respect of terrorism, the intelligence target and procedures can be defined with discrimination sufficient to reduce the risks to individual and societal freedoms. It is an argument likely to stir further debate.

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