

Countering Terrorism: The Reagan Record

by
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INTRODUCTION

Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980 at least in part because of President Carter's perceived failure to deal effectively with the Iranian hostages issue that had plagued the final months of his single-term presidency. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's National Security Advisor, conceded in his memoirs that, "largely because of the economy and the Iranian issue, the public lost confidence in Carter's leadership."¹ Theodore White, the noted chronicler of presidential campaigns, concluded that Carter's political future "probably died on the desert sands of Iran with the eight brave soldiers who gave their lives trying to free the American Hostages."²

In greeting the returning hostages at the beginning of his first term in office, Reagan vowed: "Let terrorists be aware that when the rules of international behavior are violated, our policy will be one of swift and effective retribution."³ Four years later, after US aircraft intercepted and forced the surrender of the *Achille Lauro* hijackers, who had killed an American citizen on board the ship, President Reagan asserted that "terrorists may run, but they cannot hide."⁴

Illustrating the administration's intended emphasis, the *Public Report of the Vice-President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism* stated in 1986 that, "one of the first things we discovered is that Americans view terrorism as one of the most serious problems facing our government, ranking it alongside such issues as the budget deficit and strategic arms control."⁵ Two years earlier the president's second Secretary of State, George Shultz, had stated: "We cannot allow ourselves to become the Hamlet of nations, worrying endlessly over whether and how to respond."⁶ Given these tough, public positions, it is legitimate to examine critically the Reagan administration's record in countering terrorism. This essay will attempt to do so, by evaluating the effectiveness of the administration's policies and actions in terms of its own publicly-stated criteria.

According to the Office of the Ambassador-at-Large for Counterterrorism, in its 1988 report, "the first element of our counterterrorism policy is that we do not make concessions of any kind to terrorists." In addition, it stated that "we vigorously encourage other countries to be firm with terrorists, for a solid international front is essential to overall success." This policy of no concessions was instituted because "to accommodate terrorist demands ... would only lead to more terrorism."⁷

According to the Reagan administration, "the second element of our strategy is to make state sponsors of terrorism pay a price for their actions." This could be accomplished either through military, political, diplomatic, or economic means.⁸

“Third, the US Government has developed a program of action based on practical measures ... to bring terrorists to justice, to disrupt their operations, and to destroy their networks.” This anti- and counterterrorist strategy “includes aggressive measures, working with our friends and allies, to identify, track, apprehend, prosecute, and punish terrorists by using the rule of law,” as well as “measures designed to protect U.S. citizens abroad by strengthening security and research toward developing equipment to prevent terrorist incidents.”⁹

In the following pages the Reagan administration’s effectiveness in managing some of the major counterterrorism policy issues will be analyzed in terms of these three policy goals it set for itself. First, however, it is essential to determine how the Reagan administration got to these positions in the first place.

BACKGROUND

From the outset, the issue of terrorism was not merely a foreign policy or military matter for the Reagan administration. It was also perceived as a major domestic political issue that would influence the president’s image and chances for reelection in 1984.¹⁰ This approach was in stark contrast to those of previous administrations which, until the Iran hostage crisis, had treated terrorism as a policy issue of secondary priority.¹¹ However, by elevating the matter of terrorism to such an important position, the president raised expectations for action and results which would be very difficult to deliver. Accordingly, the Reagan administration tuned down its initial rhetoric by late 1981.

In those first years the administration was preoccupied with Central America. It felt that the USSR was presenting a major challenge in Nicaragua, and it did not want to permit communism to spread any further in the Western hemisphere.¹² The CIA covertly launched actions against the Sandinistas by funding the Contras, a group of Nicaraguan expatriates trained by Argentine military advisers. A great deal of effort was also expended in trying to win the war against the leftist rebels in El Salvador.¹³

In June 1982, however, Israel invaded Lebanon, an action that ultimately would redefine the American role in the Middle East and alter the direction of the administration’s policy on terrorism. By invading Lebanon, Israel temporarily solved some of its most serious terrorist problems, but, in effect, created new ones for the United States.

When the Israeli invasion led to a stalemate in August 1982, the US deployed marines to Lebanon first to assist in the peaceful removal of the PLO and second, after the massacres at the Sabra and Chatilla refugee camps in Beirut, to help stabilize the country. The second marine deployment was part of a multinational peacekeeping force that included troops from France, Italy, and Britain. Secretary of State George Shultz tried to devise a policy by which the multinational force would pacify the situation to a degree sufficient to permit the withdrawal of the Israeli soldiers and the restoration of a Lebanese Christian/Muslim coalition

government.¹⁴ Unfortunately for this policy, the Lebanese army the US Marines were supporting was dominated by a Christian minority that had no tradition of acting as an unbiased national force. In time, therefore, the Muslims came to distrust the US role and wanted the Americans out.

On 18 April 1983, the US Embassy in Beirut was partially destroyed by a car bomb that killed 86, while wounding 100. Among those killed were several of the CIA's best Middle East intelligence officers who had been in Beirut for a meeting. In the succeeding weeks the marines began to receive sniper fire and grenade attacks. The marines responded first with fire from their own weapons, and later received naval gunfire support from ships offshore. In September 1983, the shelling of the nearby Muslim-populated hills by the US Navy, carried out to prevent the defeat of the Lebanese Army, convinced the Lebanese Muslims that the US had joined the Christian side in the civil war. This, and the casualties from the naval bombardment, made the marines a logical target for revenge.¹⁵

On 23 October 1983, as the Reagan administration was preparing its invasion of Grenada, a lone Muslim terrorist drove a truckload of explosives into the marine headquarters at the Beirut airport killing 241 of them. It was the greatest loss suffered by the marines on any single day since World War II.¹⁶

Outrage and grief swept the nation, but against whom could the administration strike back? Impeded by the killing of some of its best Mideast experts in the April bombing of the embassy, the intelligence community was unable to come up with any certain identification of who was responsible. The president was beginning to learn the same lesson that his predecessor had learned in Iran, the limitations of US power. How can you retaliate against terrorists who have no known address?¹⁷

The marines' deaths in Beirut proved to be the major watershed in the development of the Reagan administration's counterterrorism policy. They led to the president's approval of National Security Decision Directive 138 (NSDD 138) on 3 April 1984. This directive constituted a decision to expand the range of US counterterrorism options. The options approved under NSDD 138 included: overt and covert intelligence operations to predict, deter, and respond to terrorist attacks; military operations to retaliate against those responsible for attacks against Americans; efforts to strengthen US criminal laws regarding those perpetrating terrorist acts against Americans; diplomatic actions to encourage greater international cooperation; and economic sanctions against regimes aiding terrorists. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Noel Koch claimed that NSDD 138 represented "a quantum leap in countering terrorism."¹⁸

Secretary of State Shultz elaborated on this new policy in a major address before the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York City on 25 October 1984. Praising the activist Israeli record, he declared that "no nation had more experience with terrorism than Israel, and no nation has made a greater contribution to our understanding of the problem and the best ways to confront it." He argued that "we

should understand that terrorism is aggression and, like all aggression, must be forcefully resisted.” Therefore, “our responses should go beyond passive defense to consider means of active prevention, preemption, and retaliation,” and “our goal must be to prevent and deter future terrorist acts Experience has taught us over the years that one of the best deterrents to terrorism is the certainty that swift and sure measures will be taken against those who engage in it.”¹⁹

Shultz went on to emphasize that “there is no question about our ability to use force where and when it is needed to counter terrorism,” and even added that “the public must understand *before the fact* that occasions will come when their government must act before each and every fact is known.” Although he admitted that “we may never have the kind of evidence that can stand up in an American court of law,” the Secretary of State argued that “a great nation with global responsibilities cannot afford to be hamstrung by confusion and indecisiveness.” In language reminiscent of John Foster Dulles’ policy of massive retaliation, Shultz also argued that “we will need the flexibility to respond to terrorist attacks in a variety of ways, at times and places of our own choosing.”²⁰

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, however, opposed Shultz’s activist approach, arguing that “preemptive ... retaliation would be analogous to firing a gun in a crowded theater in the slim hope of hitting the guilty party.”²¹ During the following four years, Weinberger continued to oppose the employment of US military forces against terrorists because of the “post-Vietnam syndrome,” the fear within the Defense Department that military force would lead to a lengthy involvement like the Vietnam War that would alienate public opinion. Barely one month after Shultz had called for force against the terrorists, Weinberger declared that US forces should be committed to combat only as a last resort when vital US national interests were at stake and when there was a “reasonable assurance of support by Congress and the public.”²²

In opposing Shultz on this issue, the Secretary of Defense also might have asked what type of terrorism the Shultz doctrine would be employed against: state, state-sponsored, insurgent, radical fundamentalist, or mere random acts wherever they occurred? If the target was the state-sponsored variety, such strikes might be illegal, and would even stamp the US itself as a “terrorist” state. Indeed, later revelations that the CIA had trained and funded the Lebanese intelligence officers who set off a car bomb that killed 92 people in Beirut in March 1985,²³ indicated the dangers inherent in pursuing the policy that Shultz was advocating.

What is more, the Shultz doctrine did not adequately deal with a state such as Lebanon whose territory was being used by terrorists, but was itself not supporting their activities. Was Lebanon responsible for the terrorism carried out by the PLO against Israel or that unleashed against the US marines on its territory? To assert that it was and punish it accordingly, would obviously be wrong and lead to the deaths of innocent civilians. Once again, the administration felt itself unable to act. The complexities apparent in the Lebanese situation also plagued US

counterterrorism policy as a whole. The essay will now examine three of these in greater detail.

NO CONCESSIONS

In its review and evaluation of current policy and programs, the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism declared that "the U.S. Government will make no concessions to terrorists," because "to give in to terrorists' demands places even more Americans at risk. This no-concessions policy is the best way of ensuring the safety of the greatest number of people."²⁴

Nevertheless, declaratory policies inevitably require caveats. The Task Force Report stated that under certain conditions, negotiations leading to understandings that defuse the situation may indeed be appropriate.²⁵ It is in this light that the Reagan administration under pressure to "do something" about the Americans taken hostage in Lebanon, probably decided to negotiate with Iran,²⁶ the very nation that had held US diplomats hostage for 444 days and later was believed to be involved in the attack on the US Marines in Beirut.

When the arms for hostages deal was exposed, the Reagan administration's actions looked hypocritical. Not only had it vowed never to make concessions to terrorists, but it also had criticized its allies for doing so.²⁷ The administration's behavior angered and confused audiences at home and abroad, and undermined confidence in the administration's antiterrorist policy. Nothing could destroy the credibility of the president more than his administration's violation of its own supposed standards.

Furthermore, the Iran affair demonstrated a policy making process in which junior officials of the National Security Council Staff were able to formulate and implement an antiterrorist policy completely outside the established laws and procedures.²⁸ Reagan's inability adequately to explain his subordinate's behavior fostered accusations of presidential incompetency. Critics took the view that if he did not know what was going on, he should have.²⁹

Although the present analysis has suggested that it is not entirely fair to blame the Reagan administration for the Iran-Contra concessions to terrorism, the public verdict has. Musing over what had happened, Morris D. Busby, the Coordinator of Counter-Terrorism in the Reagan administration, agreed: "the Iran-contra affair ... was a mistake, but for the past 3 years we have made crystal clear our steadfast commitment to the 'no deals' principle."³⁰

The hard line taken by the administration on Libya and the *Achille Lauro* incident (discussed below) may be seen as an affirmation of this position of "no concessions." A similar view may be taken of the administration's decision in 1985 to support a treaty with Britain designed to make it easier to extradite suspected IRA terrorists.³¹ As British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said: "What is the point of the United States taking a foremost part against terrorism and then not being as

strict as they can against Irish terrorism which afflicts one of their allies?"³² The treaty was ratified in 1986.

STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM

Soviet Union

The first days of the Reagan administration witnessed public statements accusing the Soviet Union of directing a so-called international terrorist network. Commentators such as Claire Sterling, as well as Ray Cline and Yonah Alexander, tried to prove a "persistent strategic pattern of international destabilization and terrorism assisted by, if not always controlled by, Moscow."³³

These accusations were reminiscent of those made earlier by Ladislav Bittman and Jan Sejna former, high-ranking communist officials who had defected to the West. Both had maintained that the Soviet Union decided to support the terrorist activities of a wide variety of anti-American states and organizations, as a long-term method of defeating the West.³⁴ Moreover, as late as 1985, in a speech to the American Bar Association, the president himself implied that the Soviet Union encouraged a "confederation of terrorist states," comprised of Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba, and Nicaragua, which formed "a new international version of Murder, Incorporated."³⁵

In an attempt to substantiate the allegations, the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Judiciary Committee took up the issue, but its evidence was questionable at best.³⁶ Indeed, in its ideological insistence on the Soviet role in fomenting terrorism, the Reagan administration created doubts about the ability of the US intelligence community to analyze objectively information on the subject. Several years later this would come back to haunt Robert Gates, before his appointment to be the new Director of the CIA was finally approved by the Senate in 1991.³⁷

In the long run, the Reagan administration would have been better served by appreciating the more complex nature of international terrorism. It is clear that the Soviet Union had ties to state sponsors of terrorism such as Syria, and assisted groups such as the PLO, and thus, was not averse to fishing in troubled waters. However, it is equally true that if the USSR had ceased to exist, as indeed it did at the end of 1991, terrorism would have continued, as indeed it has. The Soviet Union's role, therefore, was less central than the Reagan administration believed it to be.

More cautious scholarly research has illustrated the problems in acquiring, verifying, and interpreting evidence regarding the Soviet role here.³⁸ Classic works, such as Ted Robert Gurr's analysis of relative deprivation, Samuel P. Huntington's study of the process of modernization, and Frantz Fanon's investigation of the role of violence in ridding colonial peoples of their inferiority complexes still offer profound insights into the multicausal nature of international terrorism.³⁹

As the reform process initiated by Gorbachev began to take effect in the Soviet Union and the Cold War “thawed,” the Reagan administration, to its credit, reduced and then ceased its rhetoric about the Soviet sponsorship of international terrorism. Ironically, however, it is possible that the Reagan administration’s propaganda offensive, even if it did overstate the case, played a role in undermining the seemingly impregnable Soviet Union.

Libya

The most visible action taken by the Reagan administration against a state sponsor of terrorism was the bombing of Libya by US aircraft on 4 April 1986. The air raid killed 37 civilians and wounded almost 100. Secretary of State Shultz justified the strike as an act of self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter, which states that:

Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self defense if an armed attack occurs against the Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.⁴⁰

The Reagan administration argued that the following series of violent terrorist acts – which it claimed had been aided and abetted by Libya over the previous several months – constituted such an “armed attack” and thus justified “self-defense”: the attacks on the Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985; the planting of a bomb on a TWA flight from Rome to Athens in April 1986; and the bombing of the La Belle discotheque in West Berlin filled with US servicemen in April 1986.⁴¹

Although there can be no doubt that the Qaddafi regime had sponsored numerous terrorist outrages, the legal question was whether, from the point of view of international law such acts, if indeed sponsored or aided by Libya, constituted an “armed attack” by Libya, thereby legitimizing “self-defense” by the US. Legally, the American case was less than certain. Moreover, the tangible evidence that supposedly linked Libya to these acts were never made public, supposedly for reasons of national security.⁴² Given the willingness of the Reagan administration to mislead the American public by employing a disinformation campaign against Qaddafi later in 1986,⁴³ one might reasonably query the validity of the evidence claimed at the time of the air raid. Although this deception did not mean necessarily that the evidence was tainted, it may have undercut the legal arguments presented by the US. Subsequent evidence that pointed to Syrian, rather than Libyan, involvement in the disco bombing⁴⁴ cast further doubt on the legal validity of the American charge that Libya had carried out an “armed attack” against the US. Ironically, it was the US itself that clearly had carried out the kind of attack envisaged in Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Was the US attack on Libya then a legal exercise of “self-defense” as the term is used in Charter Article 51? International law prescribes that two basic require-

ments be met before “self-defense” can justify the usage of military force: first, actual necessity, and second, proportionality. The first provision means, as Secretary of State Daniel Webster so eloquently put it in 1841, that “it will be for that government to show a necessity of self-defence, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation.”⁴⁵ Judged by this criteria, the US action remains open to question.

As for the principle of proportionality, international law requires that “one should certainly consider as excessive, and thus illegal, reprisals out of all proportion with the act which motivated them.”⁴⁶ Even if all the alleged Libyan terrorist acts had actually been perpetrated, a point which remains unclear, it is difficult to argue that the American air raid, which wounded and killed innocent civilians, was a proportionate response. Thus, the US action demonstrated the willingness of the Reagan administration to handle the issue of state-sponsored terrorism outside the strict bounds of international law.

It also gambled that such an attack merely would not incite Libya to further acts of terrorism in revenge thus, inducing escalating cycles of strikes and counterstrikes in the Israeli fashion. Indeed, the American hostage Peter Kilbourn, held in Lebanon, was reportedly executed by Qaddafi’s orders as a retaliation for the American attack. Moreover, Libya later was implicated in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, an act believed to have been a reprisal for the air raid.⁴⁷

Finally, the American position left it open to charges of hypocrisy, when one month after the air raid it condemned South African raids on three African states in which members of the African National Congress were based. It is difficult to discern any substantive differences between these attacks and the American raid on Libya.

On the other hand, it is also clear that the raid on Libya illustrated the political resolve of the US to deal with the problem and was popular with the American people. In 1988 L. Paul Bremer III, the Ambassador-at-Large for Counterterrorism, declared: “We believe that as many as 35 attacks planned by Libya were averted within weeks after the attack.”⁴⁸ The previous year he had emphasized the political gains arising from the attack:

Most important, the political environment was shifted. The Europeans at long last had taken decisive action against a terrorist state. That was a major breakthrough in the development of a Western counterterrorist strategy.⁴⁹

ANTI- AND COUNTERTERRORIST MEASURES

In response to the increasing threat posed by terrorists to American diplomats and their posts, the Secretary of State appointed the former Deputy Director of the CIA Admiral Bobby Inman to chair a blue ribbon Advisory Panel on Overseas Security. The 1985 Inman Report was highly critical of the State Department’s

handling of diplomatic security and terrorism, and recommended major improvements in its intelligence, threat analysis, and alerting procedures. Most seriously, it found that numerous US embassies were vulnerable to terrorist attack and urged that many of them be rebuilt or relocated to make them safer.⁵⁰ In response, the Reagan administration successfully implemented a major program to upgrade diplomatic security abroad. Using other recommendations from the Inman Report, the State Department also overhauled its counterterrorist structure. The Office for Counterterrorism and Emergency Planning, the Office of Security, and the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Security were all replaced by the Office of the Ambassador-at-Large for Counterterrorism, the Director of Diplomatic Security Service, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, thus creating a greater distinction between security and counterterrorism functions.⁵¹

On 9 December 1985, the UN General Assembly – with strong US support – passed its first unequivocal resolution condemning terrorism, by a consensus vote. Later that month the Security Council adopted a resolution initiated by the US which condemned unequivocally all acts of hostage-taking and urged the “further development of international cooperation among states to facilitate the prevention, prosecution and punishment of hostage-taking as international terrorism.”⁵² Although these resolutions did not contain any enforcement procedures, they still were important because they were evidence of the developing international consensus that terrorism was an unacceptable mode of behavior.

Important anti- and counterterrorist measures were also taken in the areas of aviation and maritime security. In June 1985, TWA Flight 847 was hijacked to Lebanon and one of the passengers, US Navy diver Robert Stethem, was murdered. Following this unfortunate event, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) quickly began to upgrade its “Standards and Recommended Practices” for airport and aircraft security. In February 1988, the Reagan administration joined other ICAO members in signing in Montreal the “Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation.” This new treaty supplemented and extended the purview of the Montreal Convention of 1971 by including acts committed at airports even when they did not endanger the actual safety of aircraft in flight.⁵³ In June 1988, the ICAO Council adopted by consensus a resolution on a “no take-off” policy which urged “each contracting state to take measures, as it may find practicable, to ensure that an aircraft subjected to an act of unlawful seizure which has landed in its territory is detained on the ground.”⁵⁴

Following the seizure of the liner *Achille Lauro* in October 1985, the International Maritime Organization, at the initiation of the Reagan administration, began efforts which led on 10 March 1988, to the signing in Rome of the “Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation.” This measure was designed to offer greater protection for the passengers and crews aboard ships.⁵⁵

Unfortunately, problems remained with the anti- and counterterrorist capacities of the US. During the hijacking of TWA 847 in June 1985, for example, the Reagan administration apparently was unable to mount a hostage rescue operation because of helicopter deficiencies. In addition, the US lacked an adequate military option during this incident because there were no crews qualified to fly night missions assigned to the 67th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, the only unit equipped with the helicopters required to perform a rescue operation, but stationed in Woodbridge, England.⁵⁶

Despite its rhetoric of "swift and effective retribution," more than four years after the failure of the Iranian hostages rescue mission, the US still lacked the required, counterterrorist special operations aircraft. Because they were few in number, special operations aircraft were expensive, and thus a threat to the conventional military budget. When they were needed, therefore, they were simply not available. According to US Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia, "the primary culprit in this sad story, unfortunately, is the Air Force."⁵⁷ On the other hand, two US counterterrorist actions undertaken during the second Reagan administration succeeded because of timely and accurate intelligence. First, US planes were able to intercept the terrorists who had hijacked the *Achille Lauro* in international airspace because of intelligence collected by the National Security Agency and the Israelis and the navy's ability to find and track the aircraft carrying the fleeing terrorists.⁵⁸ This operation proved to be one of the Reagan administration's principal successes. Second, Fawaz Younis, a Lebanese terrorist involved in at least two hijackings, was apprehended off the coast of Cyprus because good intelligence enabled the FBI to lure him away from his safe house to what he thought was a drug deal. He is now serving a thirty-year sentence in the US for hostage-taking, air piracy, and conspiracy.⁵⁹

CONCLUSIONS

This article has analyzed the Reagan record in dealing with terrorism in terms of its own stated criteria of success: first, not making any concessions to terrorists; second, making state sponsors of terrorism pay a price for their actions; and third, developing anti- and counterterrorist measures to bring terrorists to justice. Judged by these criteria, the overall Reagan record in dealing with terrorism is mixed. Policies and actions that appeared to produce success included: a greater US public awareness of terrorism; a shift from international tolerance of terrorism to revulsion against it; an increased ability to alert Americans to potential terrorist threats that prevented a number of possible incidents; improved intelligence capabilities, which prevented hundreds of potential incidents and permitted the authorities to apprehend some perpetrators; the closing of statutory loopholes which enabled more terrorists to be apprehended; the actual apprehension, prosecution, and punishment of terrorists; and finally, unilateral US actions against terrorists, such as the hijackers of the *Achille Lauro*.⁶⁰

On the other hand, the number of anti-US terrorist incidents continued to increase during the Reagan years. Indeed, the president's final full year in office

proved to be the bloodiest ever with incidents in 1988 increasing by three percent over the previous year. The bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 made it the worst year for American casualties since the Beirut bombings of 1983.⁶¹

Although the Iran-Contra affair clearly undermined the stated policy of no concessions to terrorists, this article noted that under certain circumstances, negotiations leading to understandings that defuse the situation may actually be appropriate. Indeed, it was in this light that the Reagan administration probably decided to discuss arms for hostages with Iran. The Reagan administration later confessed that its policies on Iran had been in error, but maintained that it had learned from its mistakes and had subsequently held firm in its commitment to the principle of no concessions. The tough position taken on the *Achille Lauro* incident may be seen as an affirmation of this commitment.

Regarding the criterion of making state sponsors of terrorism pay a price for their actions, this article faulted the Reagan administration on the grounds that the US bombing of Libya could not be justified as self-defense and was not proportional to Libya's original offense. Nevertheless, the actions against Libya did illustrate the political resolve of the US to deal with the problem and were popular with the American people.

With regard to the Reagan administration's third criterion of success, this article illustrates a number of important anti- and counterterrorist successes and failures. The former included measures to upgrade diplomatic security, and implement political and legal protections. Improved intelligence collection also enabled US planes to intercept the terrorists who had hijacked the *Achille Lauro* in international space, although the subsequent standoff at Sigonella Airport between US and Italian forces over which state would take jurisdiction over the terrorists almost fractured Italo-American relations. Other problems included difficulties in mounting successful rescue missions and gathering effective intelligence in Lebanon.

Nevertheless, when Ronald Reagan left the White House in January 1989, the public perceived him as having successfully dealt with the terrorist threat. Although the legacy which he passed on to his successor George Bush actually was mixed, it still held many positive lessons for anyone who was willing to learn from past experience.

Endnotes

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17. Martin and Walcott, *Best Laid Plans*, pp. 132-33, 137-38.
18. Quoted in "Secret Policy on Terrorism Given Airng," *Washington Post*, 18 April 1984, p. A1.
19. Quoted in "Terrorism and the Modern World," pp. 4-6.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Quoted in Christopher C. Joyner, "In Search of an Anti-Terrorism Policy: Lessons from the Reagan Era," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 11 (1988), p. 32. The Israeli experience, among others, had demonstrated that most conventional weapons and munitions were too indiscriminate to be used against discrete targets sited within civilian populations.
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23. Martin and Walcott, *Best Laid Plans*, pp. 219-20.
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33. Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981). Ray Cline and Yonah Alexander, *Terrorism: The Soviet Connection* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1984), back cover. In this genre, also see Uri Ra'anan et al., *Hydra of Carnage: International Linkages of Terrorism, The Witnesses Speak* (Lexington, MA: Lexington, 1986); Roberta Goren, *The Soviet Union and Terrorism* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1984); Shlomi Elad and Ariel Merari, *The Soviet Bloc and World Terrorism* (Tel Aviv University: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 1984); Benjamin Netanyahu, *Terrorism: How the West Can Win* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986); and Neil C. Livingstone and Terrell E. Arnold, eds. *Fighting Back: Winning the War Against Terrorism* (Lexington, MA: Lexington, 1986).
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35. Address by President Reagan before the American Bar Association, Washington, DC, 8 July 1985, as reprinted in "The Network of Terrorist States," *Terrorism: An International Journal*, 9 (1987), pp. 101, 107.
36. See, for example, the testimony of Aydin Yalcin in *Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate on Turkish Experience with Terrorism*, Serial no. J-94-43, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981.
37. Martin and Walcott, *Best Laid Plans*, pp. 50-56; Mark M. Lowenthal, *U.S. Intelligence: Evolution and Anatomy*, 2nd ed., (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), pp. 94-97; see also, John A. Gentry, *Lost Promise: How CIA Analysis Misserves the Nation - An Intelligence Assessment* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), pp. 83-94.
38. See, for example, Walter Laquer, *The Age of Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), pp. 270-80, 295-97; Michael Stohl, *The Politics of Terrorism*, 3rd ed., (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1988), pp. 20-22; and Martha Crenshaw, "Is International Terrorism Primarily State-Sponsored?" in Charles W. Kegley, Jr., ed., *International Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990), pp. 163-69. Although it is intended as a polemic against Claire Sterling's *The Terror Network*, see also Edward S. Herman, *The Real Terror Network: Terrorism in Fact and Propaganda* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), pp. 54-63. It should be noted, however, that these works were published before the collapse of the Soviet and East European regimes yielded documentary and other evidence of support for international terrorism.
39. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970); Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).
40. United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, Article 51.
41. Brian L. Davis, *Qaddafi, Terrorism, and the Origins of the U.S. Attack on Libya* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1990), pp. 78-80, 83, 110, 115-18, 138-39.
42. Bob Woodward and Patrick E. Tyler, "Libyan Cables Intercepted and Decoded," *Washington Post*, 15 April 1986, p. A1. The evidence is discussed in considerable detail in Davis, *Origins*, pp. 115-18, and has since been confirmed by evidence found in the East German *Stasi* (secret police) files: *Boston Globe*, 12 July 1990, p. 8.
43. Davis, *Origins*, pp. 163-65; Martin and Walcott, *Best Laid Plans*, pp. 317-21.

44. *Washington Post*, 13 January 1988, p. A16. As Davis, *Origins*, pp. 116-18, points out, the evidence regarding Libya or Syria is not simply a question of concluding that one or the other country was involved; both could have played a role.
45. "Note from Daniel Webster, United States Secretary of State, to Henry S. Fox, British Minister to Washington," 24 April 1841, as cited in Edward Collins, Jr., *International Law in a Changing World: Cases, Documents, and Readings* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 336.
46. "Armed Reprisals: Naulilaa Incident Arbitration," as cited in Collins, *International Law in a Changing World*. Reprisals are illegal by definition under modern international law, but the principle of proportionality is still well stated by this classic case.
47. US Department of State, *Fact Sheet: Additional Information on the Bombing of Pan Am Flight 103* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 18 November 1991), pp. 854-58; "Lockerbie's Murderers," *Economist*, 16 November 1991, p. 51.
48. US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, "Terrorism: Myth and Reality," *Current Policy*, no. 1047, 4 February 1988, p. 3.
49. US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, "Counterterrorism: Strategy and Tactics," *Current Policy*, no. 1023, November 1987, p. 2. The Europeans took a number of measures against Libya, including the closure of its embassies and expulsion of its diplomats. See Davis, *Origins*, pp. 160-61.
50. *Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Overseas Security*, Admiral Bobby Inman, USN (Ret.), Chairman, (Washington, DC: US Department of State, June 1985).
51. Celmer, *Terrorism*, p. 37.
52. *Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism*, pp. 12-13; and *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1988*, pp. 6-7.
53. John F. Murphy, *State Support of International Terrorism: Legal, Political and Economic Dimensions* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989), p. 27, n. 19.
54. *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1988*, pp. 6-7.
55. Natalino Ronzitti, *Maritime Terrorism and International Law* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1990), pp. 69-71, and Appendix 1, pp. 141-52.
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57. Quoted in James Bennett, "Mission Improbable," *Washington Monthly*, (June 1990), p. 26.
58. Martin and Walcott, *Best Laid Plans*, pp. 242, 244, 247-50.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 367; *Los Angeles Times*, 15 March 1989, p. 1.
60. Yonah Alexander, "Fighting International Terrorism: What Does and What Does Not Work," *The World & I*, (March 1989), pp. 105-111.
61. *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1988*, p. 1.