

A New Perspective on

# TERRORISM

## Security Is a Family Affair

### Gunmen kidnap Saudi consul

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Gunmen kidnaped the Saudi Arabian consul from his home in west Beirut today. The kidnappers got a woman's face, Embassy, Mana kidnap radio

**'Bomb' Hostages Freed Unharmed**

DALLAS (AP) — Three "very business-like" gunmen forced their way into a bank president's home Friday and wired him and his teen-age daughter with "bombs" they threatened to detonate if he didn't drop off an undisclosed amount of money, police said.

Two hours later, both were freed, unharmed, by FBI agents and police. Investigators refused to say whether the bombs were real, how much ransom the bank-er left or whether the money had been picked up.

The FBI said Friday afternoon it was pursuing several leads, but "no arrests were imminent."

The trio, wearing military fatigues and masks, pushed way into the home of Robert Bigham at 10 a.m. Friday, opened the back door, let his dog out, and his wife, who is president of the National Bank of Commerce, a one-branch suburban bank with assets of \$100,000,000.

The gunmen then

but gave no other information. Ambassador Ahmed was reported safe in his car. Driver, Abdullah el-Hadi, was injured for facial cuts by bullets, state

mediate claim of the kidnapping. In Riyadh said "we were under Saudi and to obtain the

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calmly wired the device to Bigham's 18-year-old daughter. Shaw said daughter's wife, were by side. The real but

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Two gunmen shot the president of American University of Beirut today near his campus office, killing him with a bullet through the head, authorities said.

About four hours after the assassination of Malcolm Kerr, 52, a Beirut-born American, an anonymous telephone caller told the Beirut office of Agence France-Presse, the French news agency, that "Jihad Islami," or Islamic Holy War, was responsible for the shooting.

Speaking in Arabic, the caller said Kerr was "a victim of the American military presence in Lebanon," according to the news agency.

The caller also claimed the group was behind the abduction by gunmen on Tuesday of the Saudi consul in Beirut, and said the diplomat "is being tried according to Islamic law and we will soon throw out his body."

FBI leased his daughter.

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### Gunmen Slay General, Injure Wife in Attack

MADRID (AP) — Gunmen firing submachine guns from a car slayed a general and injured his wife as she was walking from a church service the capital Sunday. Lt. Gen. Quintana La-



slaying of a high-ranking military officer blamed on the ETA since Socialists won in national elections in October 1982. Maj. Gen. Victor Lago San Roman who headed

### Two gunmen shoot leader of university

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By STEPHEN SLOAN

The word "terrorism" often conjures up an image of heavily armed and masked perpetrators holding defenseless hostages in captivity. To most of the public, this image is often a fleeting electronic one to be viewed as a fragment of one of the many stories on the evening news.

While there may be both a sense of fascination and revulsion when we see the results of a hostage taking or car bombing, acts of terrorism are usually perceived to be part of a distant drama since they happen to other people in other places.

Yet, at times, the events break through our insularity, and the threat becomes salient to our experience. When we regularly vacation overseas, the bombing of a bus in Jerusalem or a store in London be-

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comes more than an abstract news event. We breathe a sigh of relief and think, "There but for the grace of God go I."

While most of us will never directly experience acts of terrorism, we still should place the threat in perspective. On one hand, the image of the masked gunman should not be made larger than life, for such a projection can lead to unnecessary concern in an already pressurized world. Yet, on the other hand, the threat cannot be totally disregarded in a world where highly mobile terrorists have a capacity to strike at targets of opportunity on a global basis.

How can one "think the unthinkable" without either over-reacting or ignoring a form of violence that has real meaning on the streets of Paris, Rome and other strife areas?

The required level of awareness and consequent degree of preparation to meet the threat is dependent on a number of factors including who we are, what our positions are, and where we are living. This article will relate these and other considerations in order to assist individuals and their families in realistically evaluating if they are in danger of a potential threat and, consequently, to help them take the proper security measures to meet it. The following is directed at the family as a security unit — for security is, indeed, a family affair.

Families, as a security unit, should start by assessing if there actually is a threat. Yet, even if the likelihood of an incident of terrorism is remote, the acts of violence we see around us should be discussed. To ignore the carnage that is often displayed on the evening news is to ignore reality.

Even youngsters are not immune from the anxiety that may be stimulated by misunderstood events. An informal discussion between parents and children of the whys and wherefores of terrorism can break down the stereotyped images that are created by both the perpetrators and the media. Fruitful discussion can lead to a sense of awareness which helps explain this fact of international life in a way which is neither overstated nor ignored. Understanding the rudi-

ments of terrorism is simply one more means by which a family can share and develop a knowledge of current affairs.

But this level of awareness must be increased if a systematic assessment reveals a potential threat. If a husband or wife is pursuing a high visibility career as an executive or a governmental official or if either must travel a great deal in the conduct of his or her work, prudence dictates that the family as a unit recognize the need to develop the correct security profile.

In part, the development of this profile is nothing more than the utilization of basic aspects of crime prevention combined with common

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sense. The family should not advertise that they are leaving town on assignment. A discussion of plans with strangers or in social columns should be avoided. Accumulation of newspapers outside a home can be a signal to a thief or extortionist that the family is vulnerable at home and one of its members might be vulnerable abroad.

Developing the correct security profile is particularly important when the executive and his or her family are traveling. Terrorists look for the high profile victims — the ones who by speech and appearance announce their value as potential targets and advertise their vulnerability. Learning to keep a low profile is easy, and yet this important precaution is too often ignored as the following story indicates.

A number of years ago, I was flying back from the West Coast where I had attended a conference on terrorism and other forms of violence. I was sit-

ting in the first class section next to an individual who displayed the dress and jewelry of someone who apparently had "arrived" financially. His Rolex watch, gold rings and expensive suit marked him as an individual of some wealth and importance.

When the plane reached cruising altitude, he ordered a couple of drinks and introduced himself. (I simply indicated that I was a teacher; I did not indicate my area of specialization.) In the next hour he told me that he recently had completed a multimillion dollar deal in West African oil, that it was to be culminated and the final agreement signed at an Oklahoma City hotel at eight that evening and that he was proud of his wife's new boutique which had just opened in Los Angeles.

As the plane started its descent, I told him that one of my specializations was personal security and showed him my University faculty card to establish my identity. I then suggested that had I been a monetarily or politically motivated criminal, I could have seized him at the hotel, asked an exorbitant ransom and threatened to bomb his wife's store if he did not comply with my request. He turned white, but I hope a lesson was learned. It does not pay to advertise — the members of the family must learn the value of keeping a low security profile.

The need for security awareness obviously will be increased if the executive and his or her family travel extensively in disturbed areas. In this situation more active security measures may be required. It should be an obligation of the executive and the family to be aware of the threat environment they may find themselves in. Information concerning political threats by region can be obtained from the U.S. departments of state or commerce or from the company's security office if the executive works for a large corporation. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

The family should discuss the threat and take measures to deal with it. Each member should know who should be contacted in the law enforcement community in the event of an incident. In addition, a preplanned

network of friends and relatives should be established to offer vital emotional and logistical support if a loved one is seized. The family also should know who to contact in the corporation in reference to handling such complex issues as ransom demands and the media. The planning should start long before a threat becomes a reality, not after a call comes from a stranger in the early morning hours.

In addition to planning, common sense dictates that personal affairs always should be kept in order. Power of attorney should be prearranged because it may become necessary for the family under stress to have it. Furthermore, such basic data as blood type and the general health of all family members should be placed on file to assist authorities. If one is not familiar with such information during normal times, chances of acquiring it at the outset of an incident are minimal.

All this planning will help the victim. Time and again former hostages have stated that they were more concerned about their families than themselves during the period of captivity. The knowledge that adequate measures were taken before a crisis, helps the captive in a "people's prison" to adjust more readily to the strains of incarceration.

Still, it must be recognized that, all too often, none of this planning takes place because the "macho" factor exists in many male executives, military personnel and governmental officials, who "don't want to disturb the little woman" by discussing potential threats. Such an attitude reflects an irresponsibility on the part of the male. How damning it will be if "the little woman" has no preparation when she receives the midnight call.

Even further active measures should be required if the family as a unit is assigned to a troubled area, where family security takes on added meaning. In addition to having proper physical security in one's home or office, every member of the family can act as an early warning sensor of potential threats.

Viewed in a more conventional manner, we think nothing of warning

our children not to get into a stranger's car or to report unusual events in our neighborhoods. Carried to a logical conclusion, these same children, living in a troubled area, may help prevent an incident if they are trained to recognize changes in the local environment. The sighting of a strange car may alert the family to possible surveillance prior to a kidnap attempt or a car bombing in the making.


Youngsters are particularly good at playing this game. Their natural curiosity can be positively channeled to protect themselves and other family members.\* They can, in essence, practice what the military calls "operational security" and the intelligence community calls "indicators and warnings."

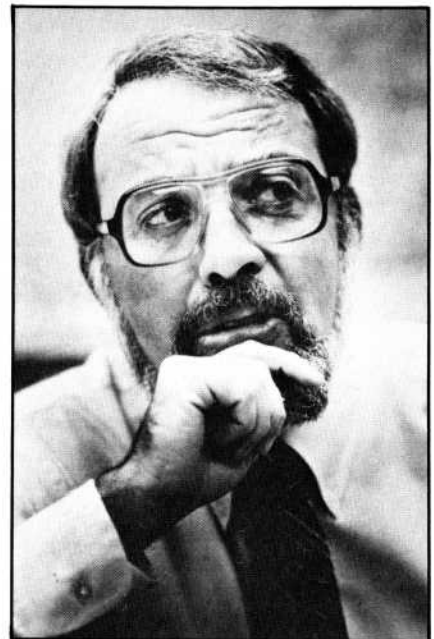
Yet, despite all of these measures, an incident might occur. It is, however, more likely to be directed at those who are "softer targets" since they normally do not practice basic security. If it does happen, it is vital for the captive to "keep the faith" and recognize that despite any lies told by the captor, everything possible is being done to secure release. It is also essential that the family, which also is held hostage by the event, recognize that everything is being done to secure the safe release of the hostage. Again, adequate preparation can fortify this belief.

Of course, even if the incident is resolved successfully and the loved one returned safely, the emotional scars may remain. Being victim is a primal experience, and it is imperative that the family avail themselves of proper psychological counseling to help them recover from the trauma. They should not try to "go it alone." Seeking competent professional help is a sign of common sense, not weakness.

While the odds against becoming a victim of terrorism are far greater than being involved in an "ordinary" crime, it is essential that the family still recognize the reality of the

threat. Understanding and discussing terrorism can help to lessen the anxiety that may result if we attempt to ignore a form of violence that is forced on our consciousness by the media and the press of events. It is best to verbalize concerns that, in the final analysis, we cannot ignore. Ignorance is not a protective cloak.

Beyond understanding the threat, it is vital that the family as a unit take appropriate measures to meet the challenge based on who they are, what they do, and where they are living. Such self-help can make a difference in a world where terrorists often have proclaimed that they are engaging in a war that recognizes no noncombatants. 



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** An OU professor of political science, Dr. Stephen Sloan specializes in security administration for the public and corporate sectors. Sloan has conducted more than 15 simulations of terrorist incidents for military, police and corporate security units, both in the United States and abroad, and has served as a consultant for military, governmental and corporate offices dealing with the threat of terrorism. He is the author of three books on political violence and terrorism; the latest, *Simulating Terrorism* (1981), is published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

\*Author's Note: My thanks to Dr. Poul W. Toussien, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences and associate professor of psychiatry in pediatrics, University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, whose insight in reference to how children cope with threatening situations was very valuable in the preparation of this article.