

Nuisance to Crisis:
Conceptualizing Terrorism During the Nixon Administration

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

The study of terrorism has gained attention and prominence post-September 11, 2001. Much of the literature on terrorism is teleological, and many authors focus their research on America's involvement with terrorism in the Middle East beginning with the Iran hostage crisis in 1979. Accordingly, the literature fails to highlight the rise of terrorism in the Middle East and the importance of the Middle East to American foreign policy during the Nixon Administration. This study looks at how the American media and the American government conceptualized terrorism during the Nixon Administration, from 1969 to 1974. An analysis of American print media sources demonstrates that terrorism was associated with the Middle East more than other regions in the later years of Nixon's presidency. American government documents reveal that the government linked terrorism with the Middle East after a fundamental shift in the perception of terrorism took place after the Munich Olympics massacre in 1972. In order to understand the contemporary manifestation of terrorism in American life, it is imperative to understand the history of how America conceptualized terrorism.

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Introduction

Shortly after midnight on June 5, 1968, Robert F. Kennedy addressed a crowd in the main ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. The 43-year-old senator from New York had just won the California primary in his campaign for the Presidential nomination of the Democratic Party. Kennedy expressed his thanks to his supporters, his campaign team, his wife Ethel, and in good humour he thanked his dog, Freckles. To the applause of the audience he announced: "And now on to Chicago and let's win there." With several final waves, Kennedy left the podium and a number of people escorted him through the food service pantry to avoid the crowded ballroom. While making his way through the area, a man stepped forward and approached Kennedy, shooting him three times. Five others were shot, but not fatally, in the commotion. The gunman was disarmed and arrested at the scene. Kennedy was taken to hospital and died early the next morning of a head wound.

Kennedy's assassin was 24-year-old Sirhan Sirhan, a Palestinian born in Jerusalem to Christian parents. His family moved to the U.S. when Sirhan was young, and he lived in California at the time of the shooting. Sirhan killed Kennedy because Kennedy supported Israel in the Six Day War, which began exactly a year before the assassination. Sirhan was convicted of first-degree murder in 1969 and was sentenced to death in the gas chamber; however, in 1972 his sentence was changed to life imprisonment when the state of California invalidated all death sentences imposed prior to 1972. He is currently held in California State Prison after repeatedly being denied parole.

After Kennedy's assassination, Americans were so focused on grieving and remembering his achievements that they hardly noticed that Sirhan was a fanatical Palestinian. Surprisingly, Sirhan's nationality was not a big issue in 1968, nor was Kennedy's murder considered as an act of terrorism. This is very telling of the nationwide state of thinking at that time. The 1960s were a complex era of cultural, social, and political change for Americans. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed segregation of African Americans in schools, public places and employment; the U.S. and the Soviet Union came to the brink of a nuclear confrontation in 1962; the Sino-Soviet split threatened Cold War alliances; American youths rebelled against society's conservative norms and the new left, in support of a counterculture, emerged; the U.S. entered the war in Vietnam; and Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, ignited the women's movement. However, by 1968, much of the optimism for hope and change during the 1960s began to fade. Due to America's increased involvement in Vietnam, tens of thousands of young men were sent home in body bags. In April 1968, the leader of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr., was assassinated. Many Americans became disenchanted with society's ills and foreign entanglements in the name of ideological supremacy. Protest movements that were once peaceful turned violent in the face of such despair. Therefore, when President Richard Nixon was inaugurated on January 20, 1969, his immediate concerns included Vietnam, the Soviet Union, China, and domestic unrest.

The assassination of a presidential hopeful by a Palestinian did not register as terrorism in 1968. But what was considered terrorism at this time? From 1969 to 1974 terrorism was widespread in nations around the world, but how did the American media

and the U.S. government conceptualize terrorism in that era? Men and women hijacked planes, kidnapped diplomats, bombed government landmarks and civilian spaces, and assassinated individuals for a number of different political motives, but were all of these acts considered terrorism? The turbulent times of the 1960s spilled over to violent protests in the U.S. against American involvement in Vietnam in the early 1970s. Along with domestic unrest, violence erupted in many other regions, including Latin America, the Middle East, Ireland, Vietnam, Canada, and Africa. What did the media and the government classify as terrorism in each region? And in their view, what regions posed the greatest concerns to international security? It is important to note that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, terrorism was not defined and categorized the way we are familiar with the phenomenon today. Therefore, it is up to the historian to view terrorism in its context during the Nixon Administration to acknowledge that things were very different in the early 1970s.

The study of terrorism has achieved new attention and prominence post-September 11, 2001. The popularity of literature on terrorism and the U.S. coincides with the American public's attempt to deal with the reality of terrorism in the American heartland. Yet scholars have been captivated by the topic since the 1980s. Although much of the literature is teleological and reactionary, some scholars have infused their work with historical content to understand the roots of terrorism in order to analyze its contemporary manifestation. Several authors, including David Farber and Mark Bowden, begin their story on American counter-terror in the 1980s with Reagan's declaration of America's "War on Terror" after the conclusion of the Iranian hostage crisis. Yet, this approach largely ignores the impact of terrorist acts in the early 1970s. Renowned

terrorism and insurgency expert, Bruce Hoffman, attributes the internationalization of terrorism in the late 1960s and early 1970s to the unprecedented prosperity at the time that allowed the luxury of introspection and self-criticism. In *Inside Terrorism* he points to the sharp contrast between the highest and lowest domestic levels of wealth and consumption that was accentuated by the growing disparity between the developed and underdeveloped world. During this time, youthful optimism and social dissatisfaction altered the perception of affluent countries. In *Terrorism's War With America: A History*, Denis Piskiewicz acknowledges that the tragic events of 9/11 began the U.S.'s "War on Terror," but he believes terrorism's war on America began four decades earlier. According to him, although American leaders occasionally spoke of the threat of international terrorism, they failed to implement effective programs to protect the U.S. when it became vulnerable in the 1970s due to its support for Israel. He focuses on the U.S. as the victim of terrorism, rather than the country's general reaction to terrorism at home and abroad.

Historian Robert Kumamoto specifically studies terrorism in three regions: Palestine, Algeria and the Middle East in *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976*. Kumamoto explores the internationalization of terrorism in the early 1970s and he highlights the terrorist acts that affected the three regions he focuses on. He looks at the debates in the UN after the attack at the Munich Olympics in 1972, but to him, the terrorist group responsible, Black September, simply added another new and terrifying group to the Palestinian nationalist movement. Timothy Naftali focuses on the history of American counter-terror with *Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism*. Naftali is a historian and the director of the Richard Nixon

Presidential Library and Museum. In *Blind Spot* he concentrates on how America tried to define terrorism over time; for example, in the late 1960s the term “international terrorism” did not yet appear in the national consciousness. According to Naftali, this concept of terrorism changed in the 1970s when Palestinian hijackers transformed hijacking into a terrifying political act that played out on the world stage. Throughout the book Naftali explains that the American public was rarely on the same page as policymakers dealing with counter-terrorism. This demonstrates that terrorism affected different people in different ways, and thus Americans’ understanding of terrorism was constantly changing. Overall, Naftali addresses the danger terrorism posed in the 1970s, but he insists it remained secondary to other foreign policy endeavours carried out by the Nixon Administration.

All of the authors mentioned above address America’s perception of terrorism in the early 1970s, but very briefly. The works combine to produce fruitful scholarship on the history of terrorism, but they leave an opening for further examination of the various perpetrators, victims, and eras mentioned. The scholarship does not explain how the American government or the media conceptualized terrorism during the Nixon Administration. Naftali addresses the rhetoric of upper-echelon government officials, but he does not give a holistic view of the regions and terrorist acts that shaped America’s perception in the early 1970s. For many authors this era is dedicated only a chapter at most; therefore they come up short of examining the changing trends associated with terrorism during Nixon’s presidency. For example, they fail to analyze the rise of terrorism in the Middle East combined with Nixon’s foreign policy priorities in that area.

While there is ample literature on America and terrorism and much has been written on Nixon's foreign policy in the Middle East, rarely are the two discussed in combination. The literature on Nixon's foreign policy stresses that the Middle East was a major concern because the region became entwined with Cold War politics. The works on terrorism address the violence in the Middle East, but they misjudge the severity of the threat of terrorism from the Middle East combined with the foreign policy entanglements in the region. The scholarship on Nixon's foreign policy examines the urgency with which Nixon addressed the Middle East. Written at the end of the Cold War, George Lenczowski's chapter "The Nixon Presidency" in *American Presidents and the Middle East* emphasizes Nixon's obsession with a possible American-Soviet confrontation in the Middle East. Lenczowski observes that nowhere in Nixon's writings or public statements did he analyze the idea of a likely confrontation with Russia on account of the Arab-Israeli conflict; rather he seemed to accept that confrontation with the Soviet Union was inevitable in the case of an Arab-Israel war.

In *Nixon Reconsidered*, author Joan Hoff explains that Nixon waited too long to focus systematically on the problems in the Middle East. Only in 1973 when he wanted to declare the year the "Year of the Middle East", did he include the region as one of his diplomatic fronts. According to Hoff, when Nixon assumed office in 1968 he was convinced that the key to peace in the Middle East lay as much with the Soviet Union as it did in Syria or Egypt. William Bundy's *A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency* views Nixon's policies in the Middle East as effective overall, especially after the October 1973 War. Bundy, a former member of the CIA and a foreign affairs advisor to John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson reminds his readers that

a lasting peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours had been a U.S. objective since the creation of Israel in 1948. According to Bundy, the Nixon Administration inherited a stalemated and dangerous situation in the Middle East, but left an ongoing peace process to his successors. From the beginning of his discussion on the Middle East in *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power*, author Robert Dallek includes the region among Nixon's major challenges. Throughout the book, Dallek emphasizes the importance of the daunting problem in the Middle East that only increased in intensity during Nixon's presidency. Furthermore, he views finding solutions to the Arab-Israeli problem to be as great a challenge as constructing a graceful exit from Vietnam. Dallek explains that the Nixon Administration saw no way to impose a settlement on warring parties in the Middle East, but at the same time they understood that the U.S. could not publically ignore the problems in the region. At the same time, Dallek acknowledges that Nixon was determined not to allow the Soviet Union to make gains in the Middle East.

The authors discussed above all highlight the Middle East as an important fixture in Nixon's foreign policy. They acknowledge the complications Nixon faced in the region during the depths of the Cold War, when leaders had to move carefully and efficiently within the power structures that affected remote countries and conflicted nations. The Cold War had its opposing superpowers, but at least they played by the rules. Conversely, the Middle East posed a complex and dangerous situation that pitted individual countries and factions against one another. This complicated situation was coupled with terrorism in the region, yet the authors fail to make even sweeping connections between the two. This presents a second conceptual gap in the literature. Authors writing about terrorism highlight the rise of terrorism in the Middle East and

authors writing on Nixon's foreign policy emphasize the importance of the Middle East to international security, yet neither group of authors study the two together.

In the following analysis I use American print media sources and government documents to evaluate how both the media and the U.S. government conceptualized terrorism during the Nixon Administration. In the first chapter, I look at the rhetoric used in media samples to explain how terrorism was perceived in several geographic regions. I focus on where terrorism activity took place, who were considered terrorists, and what acts were classified as terrorism. The study shows that in media reporting, terrorism was not more or less associated with the Middle East than other parts of the world until the later years of Nixon's presidency, from 1972-1974. In the second chapter, I examine how terrorism was referred to in government documents, including the language used to define terrorists and terrorist acts. The chapter is divided chronologically and it is evident that after the attack at the Munich Olympics in September 1972, there was a fundamental shift in the American government's perception of terrorism. The third and final chapter is a case study of the attack at Munich that combines both media and government sources to demonstrate that Munich was a turning point in America's shifting perception of terrorism. The media spectacle that surrounded the event and the government outrage in the wake of the attack illustrate that after Munich, terrorism in the Middle East became a threat to international security.

The perception of terrorism post-Munich is very different than the beginning of Nixon's presidency when the U.S. largely viewed terrorism as criminal behaviour and a nuisance that was not linked to any one region. Sirhan Sirhan's nationality was not a major concern when he assassinated Kennedy in 1968 because Americans were

preoccupied with ailments other than terrorism, and the Middle East seemed very far from the American consciousness. This changed as the frequency of terrorist attacks and the threat they posed to the international community increased during Nixon's presidency. Now we may perceive that the Robert Kennedy assassination was a significant episode in the continuum of terrorist acts over the past forty plus years.

At the beginning of Nixon's presidency, terrorism was linked to a number of different factors, including national liberation. Buzz phrases like "political terrorism" and "international terrorism" emerged in this era. However the term "terrorism" was not fully integrated into the American rhetoric, nor was it defined in stark terms as we are familiar with it today. Still, government officials and the American public pay little attention to America's awareness of terrorism during the Nixon administration. What Americans knew about terrorism before 9/11 was shaped by their previous experiences with terrorism post-1979 Iran, and the images and stories that became part of American culture in the 1980s. However, understanding America's encounters with terrorism in the early 1970s and the perceptions of terrorism at time are essential in order to better comprehend terrorism today.

Chapter 1

Publicizing an ‘International Disease’: Terrorism in the Media from 1969-1974

Shortly after daylight on May 12, 1969, three bombs exploded in the central market area of Saigon, South Vietnam.¹ One of the blasts heavily damaged a pedestrian overpass, killing one man and wounding six others. Nearby a child was wounded as two other explosions went off at a gas station. On March 6, 1970, five armed men from the Rebel Armed Forces in Guatemala kidnapped Sean Holly, a political secretary in the United States Embassy. The members of the extreme left-wing guerrilla organization forced Holly’s car to the curb at a main street and forced the diplomat into one of their cars and drove off.² In protest against the Army Mathematics Research Center and the Vietnam War, Sterling Hall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was bombed on August 24, 1970, killing one man and destroying the research of several others.³ Early Sunday, October 17, 1970, Pierre Laporte, Quebec Minister of Labour and Immigration, was found strangled to death in the trunk of a car after the Front de libération du Québec, an organization of young French Canadians dedicated to Quebec separatism, kidnapped him earlier that week.⁴ On February 19, 1971, police in Johannesburg, South Africa arrested about 20 people (including teachers, lawyers and businessmen who were members of either the Unity Movement or the African Peoples Democratic Union of South Africa, neither of which were banned by the government) in raids throughout

¹ “Shellings, Terrorism: War Heating Up,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 1969, 1.

² Juan de Onis, “5 Guatemalans Kidnap U.S. Aid,” *New York Times*, Mar 7, 1970, 1

³ Trudy Rubin, “Wisconsin Quandary: University vs. Terrorism,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, Oct 5, 1970, 1.

⁴ Edward Cowan, “Laporte Funeral Held Under Guard,” *New York Times*, Oct 21, 1970, 1.

South Africa under the provisions of the Terrorism Act.⁵ At midnight on July 12, 1971, large groups of bombers attacked several prominent shops along Belfast's main street as Protestants were celebrating the anniversary of the triumph of Protestant William II of Orange over Roman Catholic James II.⁶ During the 1972 Olympic Games held in Munich, Germany, eight young Palestinians from the Black September group invaded the Olympic Village and seized nine Israeli athletes as hostages and killed two others in the early morning hours of September 5, 1972.⁷ Later that night all of the Israeli Olympians who were held hostage were killed at an airport on the outskirts of Munich. And in October, 1973, a south-side Chicago mother suffered repeated attacks from a youth gang threatening her after she agreed to testify against two of the teenagers on attempted robbery, and assault and battery charges.⁸

During the American presidency of Richard Nixon (January 20, 1969 to August 9, 1974) terrorism was a growing problem in countries all over the globe. Violent terrorist actions took many different forms, which beg several questions: What was considered terrorism? Who were considered terrorists? What was the difference between political violence, guerrilla warfare, and terrorism? What nations were responsible for perpetuating terrorism? These questions were as prominent and puzzling in the early 1970s as they are today. Although these questions tend to stunt any conclusive study differentiating and defining terrorist acts, they are important to analyzing terrorism in an historical context. In order to contextualize the various regions, forms, and perpetrators of terrorism, the media implicitly address these questions. As terror attacks became more

⁵ "20 Seized in South Africa Under the Terrorism Act," *New York Times*, Feb 20, 1971, 4.

⁶ Robert Nelson, "Escalating Terrorism Perils Ulster," *The Christian Science Monitor*, Jul 13, 1971, 1.

⁷ "Horror and Death at the Olympics," *TIME*, Sep 18, 1972, 22.

⁸ "Gang Threats Terrify Witness," *Chicago Defender*, Oct 13, 1973, 1.

prominent, so did their importance in American news media. To understand terrorism in the early 1970s, one must understand how the media conceptualized terrorism.

The relationship between terrorism and the media has been extensively studied, especially in the post-September 11, 2001 era, by political scientists, sociologists, communications experts, journalists, and media specialists. While the authors writing on terrorism and the media conclude how the two play off one another, while referencing media bias and the use of the media to promote terrorist causes, they fail to historically analyze how the media conceptualized the issue at a particular time. The authors come up short of determining whether the media contributed to an overall statement on terrorism in the early 1970s, or whether the media was influenced by the political tension itself. Several of the authors present case studies, namely on the Gulf War or the War on Terror, which empirically track the use of media and discuss the issues behind freedom of the press, rather than contextualize what is written and scrutinize how the media defined and classified terrorism. This may well be beyond the scope of their research, but it presents a torch that must be carried by historians to examine media sources and how they were intertwined with American policy and the growth of terrorism on a global scale, in order to better explain how terrorism became conceptualized as an international problem.

Although the prominent works on the media and terrorism are not historical, they illustrate how terrorism is framed in the media in terms of the symbolic rhetoric and cultural implications of the term.⁹ The books view terrorism through the lens of

⁹ Other works not mentioned:

Edward S. Herman, *The Real Terror Network: Terrorism in Fact and Propaganda*, (Quebec: Black Rose Books, 1982)

Abraham H. Miller, ed. *Terrorism, The Media, and The Law* (New York: Transnational Publishers, 1982)

sociology and communication trends in order to analyze the impact of terrorism on the media. Going through the works chronologically, the chapter “Characterizations of Acts and Perpetrators of Political Violence in Three Elite U.S. Daily Newspapers,” in the edited collection *Media Coverage of Terrorism*, uses the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post* to consider the characterization of acts of political violence, commonly referred to as terrorism.¹⁰ Published in 1991, the chapter uses charts and graphs to plot the changing issues from 1980-1985 and to characterize terrorism during that time period. The authors, Paul Adams and Robert Picard (professors in Journalism and Communications respectively), focus on the language the media use to characterize terrorism by tracking the use of particular terms, including “hijacking”, “bombing”, “gunman(men)”, and “rebel(s)”. They conclude that media personnel and witnesses tend to use terms that are generally more neutral than those used by government officials, who use words that are more judgmental, inflammatory, and sensational.¹¹ Christopher Hewitt also uses quantitative evidence to trace the attitudes of terrorism among nations. In his chapter “Public’s Perspectives,” in the edited collection *Terrorism and the Media*, he reveals that the media reflect and reinforce public attitudes, and their influence on public opinion depends on the type of public and its prior knowledge of the terrorist group.¹²

Steven Anzovin, ed. *Terrorism*, (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1986)

Bethami A. Dobkin, *Tales of Terror: Television News and the Construction of the Terrorist Threat*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1992)

Brigitte L. Nacos, *Terrorism and the Media* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994)

¹⁰ Paul D. Adams and Robert Picard, “Characterizations of Acts and Perpetrators of Political Violence in Three Elite U.S. Daily Newspapers,” in *Media Coverage of Terrorism*, ed. A. Odasuo Alali and Kenoye Kelvin Eke. (California: SAGE Publishers, 1991),12.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹² Christopher Hewitt, “Public’s Perspectives,” in *Terrorism and the Media*, ed. David L. Paletz and Alex P. Schmid. (California: SAGE Publishers, 1992), 5.

Looking at the Reagan and Bush administrations, Steven Livingston introduces his reader to the idea that terrorism has a special or symbiotic relationship with the news media, because news organizations benefit from the drama of terrorism, while terrorists benefit from the free publicity given to them.¹³ Similarly, Gabriel Weimann and Conrad Winn refer to the TWA flight 847 hijacking¹⁴ as a “miniseries” for T.V. viewers. Their book, *The Theater of Terror: Mass Media*, uses behavioural and content data to quantitatively measure how, why, and with what consequences the media have covered international terrorism.¹⁵ In *Mass-Mediated Terrorism*, Brigitte L. Nachos acknowledges the attention to acts of political violence that the media promotes, specifically in the post-9/11 era. She concludes that the media sanitize reality, which is both a blessing and a handicap, if one considers that understanding the full extent of the horror of a terrorist act may be essential for the determination and patience required to stamp out all kinds of political violence.¹⁶ *The Media and the War on Terrorism*, edited by Stephen Hess and Marvin Kalb, uses candid conversations to illustrate the difficulties of reporting during war, while examining the tension between the government and the press.

Robin Brown’s chapter in *Framing Terrorism*, “Clausewitz in the Age of CNN: Rethinking the Military-Media Relationship”, adds an interesting twist to the scholarship as he applies valuable historical theory to the study of terrorism and the media. He explains that although Clausewitz did not directly refer to the press, he does provide a

¹³ Steven Livingston, *The Terrorism Spectacle* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), xii.

¹⁴ A Trans World Airlines plane flying to London, England was hijacked on June 14, 1985 by the Amal Movement, a war name for the Islamist Lebanese Shia group Hezbollah.

¹⁵ Gabriel Weinmann and Conrad Winn, *The Theater of Terror: Mass Media*, (New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1994), 12.

¹⁶ Brigitte Nacos, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism* (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 197.

way of placing the issue of government-military-media relations in wartime in a broader and more historical perspective.¹⁷ Brown's analysis suggests that the media, military, and government are interdependent in times of conflict. He also recognizes that the extent to which the patterns of media reporting shape the political environment has yet to be recognized by the public, leaders, or scholars.¹⁸ Douglas Kellner, who examines the changing role of the media since 9/11, concludes that media spectacles, constructed to advance political agendas, distract from real issues. Using sociological theory, mass communications research, and qualitative methods, David Altheide concludes that the mass-mediated world must be understood with careful consideration of culture and symbolic construction of meanings.¹⁹ Finally, Henry Giroux's *Beyond the Spectacle of Terrorism*, published in 2006, specifically focuses on the "new media", such as reality T.V., in the post-9/11 world.

The historiography is largely concerned with how terrorism affects media outlets and the reporting of news to the public. The following analysis provides an historical perspective which addresses the media's influence on the conceptualization of terrorism in the 1970s. Instead of quantitatively critiquing the language, I let the language and content convey how terrorism, within particular geographic regions, was conceptualized by the media during Nixon's presidency, from January 20, 1969 to August 9, 1974. To represent the American media, I gathered most of my print media from the following newspaper sources: the *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Chicago Daily Defender*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Times*. I also consulted the

¹⁷ Robin Brown, "Clausewitz in the Age of CNN: Rethinking the Military-Media Relationship," in *Framing Terrorism*, ed. Marion Just, Montague Kern, and Pippa Norris. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 43.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹⁹ David L. Altheide, *Terrorism and the Politics of Fear*, (Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2006), 8.

following periodical sources: *Newsweek*, *TIME*, *National Review*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Américas*, *Science and Public Affairs – Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, and *The Nation*. Using these sources, I divided a substantive sample of articles that refer to terrorism into the geographical regions most represented. I examined when the American media reported on and how it conceptualized terrorist activity in Vietnam, Ireland, South Africa, Canada, Latin America, the Middle East and the United States. My analysis begins with Vietnam, which posed large foreign policy issues for Nixon, and ends with the Middle East and the United States, the regions most reported on by the media in reference to terrorism.

Using this methodology I critically interrogate the media coverage to determine what type of terror acts are taking place, the motives of the perpetrators, the victims, the types of terms used interchangeably with “terrorism”, the difference between state terrorism and organizational terrorism, the prominent years reported on, and finally, how the media defined terrorism in each particular region. I look at the language used to analyze how the media commented on terrorism within the various regions. I use specific American media examples to demonstrate the rhetoric, tone, and implications associated with various terrorist acts. Although the media did not sympathize with those they defined as terrorists, journalists were cautious about supporting legislation that curbed civil liberties in the fight against terrorism. For each region, I give a brief background of the political tensions at the time and then I draw out particular themes brought up in the media coverage of terrorism. Once the setting is established, I use the print media sources to analyze how the American media articulated terrorism within the seven geographic regions in the early 1970s. Throughout my examination of each region, I also

look at the specific time period during the Nixon Presidency in which the bulk of the media reports are focused on. In doing so, I highlight when the media associated terrorism with a particular region. Through an examination of media sources from the early 1970s, I determine how the media conceptualized terrorism within various regions and during specific times.

With hindsight, terrorism can be defined historically by applying elements of the tactics, victims, and perpetrators from today to the past; but, in order to fully understand terrorism as it was in the 1970s, today's rhetoric and comprehension of what constitutes terrorism must not stand in the way of analyzing how the media conceptualized terrorism in the past. To begin to understand terrorism today, we must understand its place in history.

Vietnam

The Vietnam War was fought between North Vietnam (the Communist-supported Democratic Republic of Vietnam) and South Vietnam (the Republic of Vietnam) from 1959 to 1975. In 1965, the United States entered the war as an ally of South Vietnam, and its role was well publicized in the American papers. I draw from dozens of articles that specifically classified violence in Vietnam as "terrorism" in 1969 and 1970. However, U.S. officials used the word in reference to the Viet Cong (South Vietnamese communist rebels supporting North Vietnam) since 1965; therefore, the media also used the word "terrorist" to describe the Viet Cong long before the dates I explore. The media brought into question the notion of total war and civilian vulnerability through the rhetoric it used to describe the war and violence against civilians. In wartime, was killing

an innocent civilian an act of terrorism, or a casualty of total war? The sources tended to refer to attacks on civilians as terrorism, and attacks on troops as acts of war. It may also reference a changing perception of war since the 1940s, when total war presumed the involvement and targeting of civilian centres, whether in London, Hamburg, or Hiroshima.

In February, 1969, allied officials reported that Viet Cong terrorism increased nearly 30 per cent in South Vietnam in the previous month.²⁰ According to the *New York Times*, “terrorists killed 501 South Vietnamese civilians and wounded 1,377 in January...in the previous month, 393 were killed and 844 wounded.”²¹ Terrorism fluctuated from month to month, and media speculations for the cause of the rise included an attempt to influence the Paris Peace Talks, to cripple the accelerated pacification program, or to pave the way for an enemy offensive.²² Deaths due to terrorism were recorded in the media as civilian deaths again in April, 1969, when it was reported that the Viet Cong assassinated 201 civilians in the last week of March.²³

The articles also used both “terror” and “terrorism” to refer to the tactics of the Viet Cong. For example, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported: “The Viet Cong appears to have launched a new terror campaign in Saigon aimed at undermining the South Vietnamese Government.”²⁴ The article continued, saying, “Five terror attacks were reported between 6 p.m. Wednesday and noon Thursday. Five Vietnamese were killed and 43 Vietnamese and six Americans were wounded in the capital’s worst rash of

²⁰ “Vietcong Terrorism Up 30% in January; Allied Forces Prepare for ‘All Possibilities’ at Tet Holiday,” *New York Times*, Feb 5, 1969, 11.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ “Saigon Tells of Terrorism,” *New York Times*, Apr 3, 1969, 3.

²⁴ “The News – Briefly,” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 9, 1969, 2.

terrorism this year.”²⁵ The *Washington Post* published the following headline: “Enemy Switching to Smaller Units, Selective Terrorism, Pentagon Says”, which further integrated the terms “terror” and “terrorism”. The article reported that a Pentagon official “sees a more selective terror program rather than a general increase. There was no dispute on reports that terror seemed to be getting more attention by enemy tacticians.”²⁶ The *Washington Post* clarified that “what the war-watchers mean by selectivity is that enemy terror squads seem to be concentrated on killing or abducting principals in South Vietnam’s self-defense and pacification forces rather than indiscriminate terrorizing, such as burning villages.”²⁷ In this article it was clear that “terror” and “terrorism” were often used interchangeably to explain the death of civilians, but it did not differentiate between the use of terrorism against civilians and a policy of terror normally used in war. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* in May, 1969, made a subtle distinction when it said “the Vietnam war heated up sharply today with an outburst of shellings and ground clashes across the country and a renewed terrorism in Saigon.”²⁸ The headline “Shellings, Terrorism” grammatically separates the two violent forms. This is reiterated as the *New York Times* reported that “battlefield action remained low [on September 25, 1969] but terrorism against civilians continued.”²⁹ *TIME* acknowledged that terrorism by the Communists against South Vietnamese civilians was not carried out at random. Thousands of Vietnamese were killed in well-planned massacres.³⁰

²⁵ “The News – Briefly,” 2.

²⁶ George C. Wilson, “Enemy Switching to Smaller Units, Selective Terrorism, Pentagon Says,” *Washington Post*, Sep 4, 1969, A22.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ “Shellings, Terrorism: War Heating Up,” 1.

²⁹ “Battle Activity Low in Vietnam As Acts of Terrorism Continue,” *New York Times*, Sep 25, 1969, 4.

³⁰ “On the Other Side: Terror as Policy,” *TIME*, Dec 5, 1969, 29.

The American media overwhelmingly reported the terrorism to be the work of the Viet Cong. The victims were portrayed as both South Vietnamese citizens and Americans. The motives of the perpetrators are unique because they were at war; therefore, they killed civilians to weaken the enemy. *TIME* addressed the disbelief of Americans after the My Lai massacre³¹ details were released, admitting that this massacre by American forces paled in comparison to the atrocities reportedly committed by the Viet Cong. “For shocked Americans, what happened at My Lai seems an awful aberration. For the Communists in Vietnam, the murder of civilians is routine, purposeful policy.”³² Furthermore, “terror is part of the guerrillas’ arsenal of intimidation, to be used whenever other methods of persuasion have failed to rally a village or province round the Viet Cong flag.”³³ American media outlets stifled details on U.S. involvement in the My Lai massacre so as to not hinder public-support during the war. It would only be after the full U.S. withdrawal that the atrocities committed by American forces were revealed through the media.

Ireland

Between 1969 and 1974, Ireland continued to face civil violence between the Catholic-Nationalist-South and the Protestant-Unionist-North. The media coverage on the violence was spread between 1969, 1971, 1972, and 1973. Bloodshed in Ireland would continue into the following decades, but the American media sparingly reported on the outbursts in the early 1970s. In August, 1969, dormant tensions were renewed as

³¹ The torture and mass murder of unarmed South Vietnamese citizens in the hamlets of My Lai and My Khe by the U.S. Army forces on March 16, 1968.

³² “On the Other Side: Terror as Policy,” 29.

³³ *Ibid.*

Catholics attacked British troops who landed in Northern Ireland to protect the Catholic minority.³⁴ The media likened the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the post-WWII era to the Viet Cong. One source described the IRA as “a terrorist guerrilla gang of the Vietcong sort, and its depredations in Northern Ireland played a large part in the formation of Ulster’s auxiliary constabulary, the ‘B-specialists,’ whose conduct in the recent riots terrorized Northern Catholics.”³⁵ Likewise, a 1971 *Los Angeles Times* article read: “Like their fellows in Vietnam, the youth of Northern Ireland find release from overwhelming frustration or pent idealism in active hatred.”³⁶ This was a strong comparison for the media to draw, especially during a time in the United States when the Viet Cong was so deeply resented. The media were referring to the similar “guerrilla gang” image and idealistic objectives of the two groups, for the Viet Cong terrorist tactics were used during a war with the U.S. and South Vietnam, whereas the IRA’s bombings and terror were during a civil war infused with religious tensions.

The media coverage of Ireland tended to blur the line between war and terrorism. A January, 1972, *Chicago Daily Defender* article asserted that “total war between the authorities and the I.R.A. erupted in August when the Ulster Government invoked the Special Powers Act and detained 362 suspects.”³⁷ The *Los Angeles Times* in March, 1972, contended that the IRA was “fighting a guerrilla war to wrest predominantly Protestant Ulster from Britain and unite it with the Roman Catholic Irish Republic.”³⁸ As troops were stationed and violence became an everyday occurrence, the media on

³⁴ Robert S. Elegant, “The Children Learn to Hate,” *The Los Angeles Times*, Dec 3, 1971, F12.

³⁵ Edward Aloysius O’Neill, “‘Troubles’ in Ulster Reopen Healing Irish Wounds,” *Washington Post*, Aug 24, 1969, 33.

³⁶ Elegant, F12.

³⁷ Rev. C. Reynolds, “I.R.A. Forced to Flee into the Republic of Ireland,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Jan 22, 1972, 13.

³⁸ “Northern Ireland Asks Dublin for Help in Fighting Terrorists,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar 8, 1972, A1.

occasion used the term “war” to describe IRA violence. The targets of the violence shifted in 1972 to ‘soft’ targets, including pubs, hotels, and shops. Hard targets such as army posts and guarded utilities were increasingly avoided.³⁹ To the media, this shift symbolized a turn to total war where anyone was a target. Using bombing, sniping, fires, and acts of propaganda, the terrorists lashed out at Irish citizens, with only some reports of violence directed against law enforcement officials.⁴⁰

The media defined the terrorists as members from organized factions, specifically the IRA. Their motives were wrapped up in an intense hatred for the opposing side, drawn along religious lines. The media were not sympathetic with the cause of the IRA. An opinion piece in the *Washington Post*, in August, 1972, reported that the IRA’s fight for a free Northern Ireland was a myth, for “the victims of the IRA’s bombs are, overwhelmingly, Irish civilians.”⁴¹ The *New York Times* reported that the IRA had three chief sources of inspiration, which included the Irgun Zvei Leumi, the Jewish terrorists who fought the British in Palestine, the terrorist National Liberation Front in Algeria, and the Cypriot guerrillas who fought British soldiers in the 1940s.⁴² To the media, the IRA found inspiration from such other terrorist organizations and struck out against innocent civilians: it was clear that the media were not compassionate to the cause of a free Northern Ireland. However, this lack of sympathy could be further studied by analyzing the religious backgrounds of the reporters, or cities where their writing was predominantly published. If a reporter or city’s background was Catholic, then he or she may have interpreted the violence of the IRA differently than would a Protestant, or

³⁹ Rev. C. Reynolds, 13.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Northern Ireland and the Terrorists,” *Washington Post*, Aug 2, 1972, A20.

⁴² Bernard Weinraub, “British Quietly Shifting Tactics in Drive on Ulster Terrorists,” *New York Times*, May 28, 1971, 3.

reporter writing for a predominately Protestant audience. The religious tensions that were at the centre of the conflict in Ireland undoubtedly influenced how the American media interpreted the events.

Some media outlets understood that measures to curb IRA violence would be hard to enforce. In order to deal with the rising tide of violence in August, 1971, the Northern Ireland Government announced “emergency powers of internment without trial. The move was aimed at the outlawed Irish Republican Army in an effort to put down the terrorism gripping the province.”⁴³ *Los Angeles Times* reporter Richard Clutterbuck explained that “the problem here is that the offenses which it is necessary to schedule cover extraordinarily wide ground. How does one judge in advance whether a murder was a terrorist murder? Or whether the motives of an arsonist were political or criminal?”⁴⁴ Although the media were clear that the IRA were terrorists, they were still liberal about the slippery slope of curbing civil liberties. While the members of the IRA wholeheartedly believed they were fighting for their country and their independent survival, the media, on the whole, did not empathize with their struggle.

South Africa

South Africa was politically and racially charged in the 1970s. The black African majority suffered under apartheid, legalized racial segregation, enforced since 1948 at the hands of the National Party of the Government, which stemmed from years of Dutch and English colonial rule. The system of apartheid sparked internal unrest among the black

⁴³ Bernard Weinraub, “British Shifting More Army Units to Irish Border,” *New York Times*, Aug 15, 1971, 1.

⁴⁴ Richard Clutterbuck, “Tough New Laws Infringe on Liberties – but the Irish Prefer that to Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jul 18, 1973, B7.

majority in South Africa in the name of liberation, yet it was deemed terrorism by the government. The Terrorism Act was established to give powers of censorship, detentions without trial, torture, and banning political opposition.

Of all of the regions analyzed in this essay, South Africa was least represented in the media. Although the coverage was sparse, the American media mainly reported on terrorism in the region from 1969 to 1973. Much of the media attention on Africa covered the cases that fell under the Terrorism Act, and were not leading news stories. Buried on page 16 in the *New York Times*, an article on February 12, 1969, reported that “Thirteen black Africans, one woman, were charged in the Supreme Court at Pietermaritzburg, Natal...with conspiring to foment terrorism in South Africa.”⁴⁵ The government accused these offenders of attempting to set up a trail for terrorists to enter South Africa from the north border, inciting armed attacks on the republic.⁴⁶ The media addressed the accused as “black Africans”, not as “terrorists.” In regards to this region, the media sympathized with the men and women fighting against apartheid, whereas the Terrorism Act and oppression at the hands of the government was subtly scrutinized

A *Christian Science Monitor* article in July, 1969, highlighted that the death penalty was imposed at an increasing rate in South Africa while there was a worldwide trend towards its abolition.⁴⁷ In South Africa, “offenses liable to the capital punishment penalty include treason, murder, rape, armed or violent robbery, child stealing, and certain crimes under the terrorism and suppression of communism acts.”⁴⁸ The media once again saw the problem of how to differentiate certain offences and define acts of

⁴⁵ “13 Accused in South Africa,” *New York Times*, Feb 13, 1969, 16.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ “South Africa Continues Use of Capital Punishment,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Jul 7, 1969, 7.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

terrorism. It was also clear in the reports that it was the white minority in South Africa which decided what constituted terrorism. The corrupt system was evident in an August, 1970, *New York Times* article that reported that twenty black Africans were charged with activities aimed at the violent overthrow of the government. However, the defendants contended that they were found not guilty in February of the offences “for which they are now charged and that the acts alleged in February to have been committed by them are so substantially similar to the present charges as to make their present prosecution ‘oppressive, vexatious and an abuse of the process of the court.’”⁴⁹ Those charged included the wife of Nelson Mandela, former leader of the African National Congress. The men and women were charged with “being members of banned organizations such as the African National Congress and the South African Communist party in a conspiracy for the violent overthrow of the government.”⁵⁰ The media’s report that the charges were repeated from an earlier arraignment highlighted the tyrannical legal system at work in South Africa. In this case, like others, the black Africans accused of terrorism by the South African government were not considered terrorists by the American media. The system of apartheid and the Terrorism Act, however, were reported as unfair and unjust through examples of unfair accusations and hearings.

A further example that received the most media attention was the case of Reverend Gonville French-Beytagh, the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, under the Terrorism Act, in November 1971, the Dean was sentenced to five years imprisonment after being found guilty under the South African

⁴⁹ “20 Blacks Dispute South African Terrorism Charge,” *New York Times*, Aug 25, 1970, 10.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Terrorism Act.⁵¹ He was accused of 10 offences, including plotting the violent overthrow of the South African government, to which he pleaded innocent.⁵² The following year, the *New York Times* reported that an appellate panel of South Africa's Supreme Court threw out the conviction of Reverend Gonville French-Beytagh, ruling that "the Dean's outspoken opposition to apartheid did not constitute subversion, even under the Terrorism Act. It said his fear that violence would result from racial oppression did not mean he desired or advocated violence."⁵³ The case of the Dean was followed throughout the American media and his detention under the Terrorism Act was scrutinized. The media reflected the growing international uneasiness with the system of apartheid.

Reverend Gonville French-Beytagh was held up as an example in the media that on occasion the Supreme Court of South Africa recognized the injustice of the Terrorism Act. The *New York Times* included a fitting quote by one of the Dean's colleagues who celebrated the not guilty verdict, saying, "The question of the inequality of the Terrorism Act is still with us and we must work toward its repeal."⁵⁴ The colleague and the media offered an important reminder that only eight days earlier, thirteen non-white South Africans had been sentenced to terms of five to eight years under the same infamous law, many of whom testified that they had been tortured in police interrogation.⁵⁵ According to the *New York Times*, the Dean's case "cannot obscure either the barbarities of apartheid or the relentless punishment meted out under monstrous laws to many of those

⁵¹ "South Africa Cleric Gets 5-Year Term," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov 1, 1971, 2.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ "Terrorism Act," *New York Times*, Apr 16, 1972, E12.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

– especially the nonwhites – struggling against the system.”⁵⁶ To the media, although this case stood as a victory, the fight against injustice in South Africa was far from over.

The American media did not refer to the black Africans as terrorists, yet it did not go so far as to controversially tag the white government as conducting state terrorism. The black Africans were fighting for national liberation, but this objective was not clearly highlighted in the media until terrorism was proposed for the United Nations (UN) agenda in the fall of 1972, in the wake of the Black September terrorist attack at the Munich Olympics. The American media made it apparent that Africans “feared that a debate on terrorism would injure the struggles of national liberation movements against white rule in Southern Africa.”⁵⁷ Secretary General Kurt Waldheim “tried to forestall the African moves by telling the committee yesterday that his proposed item was not intended ‘To affect principles enunciated by the General Assembly regarding colonial and dependent peoples seeking independence and liberation.’”⁵⁸ The issue of whether or not black African liberation was classified as terrorism came to the front stage as the UN debated how to globally define and police terrorism. According to the American media, black Africans who reacted to an oppressive white regime did not fall under their definition of terrorism.

Canada

Between 1969 and 1970 the American media covered terrorist bombings in Quebec. The media made it clear that terrorism on Canadian soil stood as an example

⁵⁶ “Terrorism Act,” E12.

⁵⁷ Anthony Astrachan, “Africans Delay Terror Issue on U.N. Agenda,” *Washington Post*, Sep 22, 1972, A20.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

that terrorism could happen anywhere, even in stable, democratic countries. The media was sure to specify that the terrorists were from a particular group striking out at prominent Quebecers and government officials in the name of separatism. This group, the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) was founded in the early 1960s and its violence climaxed with the “October Crisis” in 1970. The FLQ was a Marxist group that wanted to fight against oppressors (English-speaking Quebecers) and for a Quebec independent from Canada. The group likened itself to other liberation causes, such as Cuba and Vietnam. The American media pigeonholed the FLQ as a small, violent minority that created an atmosphere of fear in Quebec for several years.

On June 21, 1969, “hundreds of extra police patrolled Quebec City to guard against more terrorism aimed at disrupting the leadership conference of the National Union, which controls the provincial government.”⁵⁹ Earlier that day, three bombs exploded in parts of the city and a Molotov cocktail was thrown through an open window at the Château Frontenac, but no one was injured.⁶⁰ In 1969 the media did not specifically place blame on any one terrorist group. At the time it was not known whether the attacks were by separatists or the result of a labour dispute. In August, 1969, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that “a bomb heavily damaged a government building in the city of Quebec” and “eight incendiary bombs were discovered in a downtown Montreal branch of Eaton’s department store.”⁶¹ In September, “a terrorist bomb exploded at the home of Mayor Jean Drapeau...less than a week after 24-hour police

⁵⁹ Robert H. Estabrook, “Quebec Terrorists Try to Disrupt Conference of Provincial Leaders,” *Washington Post*, Jun 21, 1969, A19.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ “Terrorist Bomb Guts Montreal Mayor’s Home,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 30, 1969, 18.

surveillance there was discontinued.”⁶² In these examples the terrorists were not named, although the media made it clear that they were the work of either separatists or union workers. However, by 1970, bombings became frequent in Montreal and the media attributed the violence to “separatist extremists.”⁶³

In October, 1970, a series of violent bombings and the kidnappings of British diplomat James Cross and Pierre Laporte became known as the “October Crisis”, and resulted in the Canadian Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, invoking the War Measures Act. These emergency wartime powers meant that the Canadian government had wide powers to arrest and detain suspected terrorists. The American media focused on the details of the events and Canadians’ reactions to the implementation of the act, rather than passing judgment on the curbing of civil liberties. Canada, a fellow democratic state and neighbour, was too close to home to condemn the strong government actions taken by Trudeau to curb the bombings. The media reported on the debates in Canada that surrounded the decision to invoke the emergency measures. According to the media, many politicians defended the action, such as the federal Minister of Regional Economic Affairs, Jean Marchand, who said that “the front had ‘enough dynamite to blow up the heart of Montreal.’ The terrorist organization has thousands of machine guns and rifles.”⁶⁴ According to the reports, the Canadian public and the government acknowledged the need for new federal legislation to replace the War Measures Act. The bill would “devise a new category of ‘crimes against the nation,’”⁶⁵ including “sedition, treason, and conspiracy, which have been some of the weapons of the FLQ terrorists.

⁶² “Terrorist Bomb Guts Montreal Mayor’s Home,” 18.

⁶³ “8 Seized in Quebec In Bombing Linked to Separatist Cause,” *New York Times*, Jun 23, 1970, 12.

⁶⁴ Jay Walz, “Commons Debates Special Powers Used by Trudeau,” *New York Times*, Oct 18, 1970, 3.

⁶⁵ John Walker, “Ottawa Takes Action,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct 21, 1970, 5.

And the legislation would presumably give the government clear but specific powers to deal with future terrorists, urban guerrillas, and advocates of violent overthrow.”⁶⁶

During the October Crisis, the media reported on the adjustment made by Montreal citizens to the presence of armed guards, soldiers, and police officers in the streets. In the four days from the date the wartime powers were put in place to October 21, 1970, the police made “1,628 raids without warrants and, also without warrants, have arrested 334 persons suspected of being members or sympathizers of the front.”⁶⁷ The fear of the unknown power and capability of the FLQ meant that the American media supported the Canadian government’s increase in federal and police powers during the crisis. To the media, the terrorists were a small group of extremists who sought to wreak havoc on a democratic society for an ill-supported objective.

The media frequently gave background information on the FLQ to define them. According to the FLQ manifesto, as quoted in the *New York Times*, “That which we call democracy in Quebec is nothing but the democracy of the rich.”⁶⁸ The FLQ’s members were “largely students in their teens and twenties. The activists among them, the bombers, bank robbers, and kidnapers, perhaps 120 persons, according to a Royal Canadian Mounted Police report, are divided into 22 cells....there are also about 2,000 non-active members.”⁶⁹ Although the FLQ may have seen themselves as freedom fighters, the media described their actions and motives as terrorist.

The American media also touched on the deeply rooted French-English tensions in Canada. The *New York Times* reported that historic French Canadian resentment of

⁶⁶ Walker, 5.

⁶⁷ Cowan, 1.

⁶⁸ “The World: Why and How Quebec Separatists Pursue Their Fight,” *New York Times*, Oct 25, 1970, E4.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

English domination, and the Roman Catholic Church's tradition of respect for authority, explained why some Quebeckers were sympathetic towards the FLQ manifesto, but most applauded the government crackdown.⁷⁰ According to a Gallup poll mentioned in the same article, French Canadians were only slightly less approving of the government measures than all Canadians, which is to say they were heavily in favour of them.⁷¹

Although the crackdown on civil liberties was debated in Canada at the time, the *New York Times* made the comment: "That there was not more criticism might seem remarkable to Americans. Canada, however, has only statutory, not constitutional guarantees of civil liberties and they were suspended by the Cabinet's action. Moreover, most English Canadians are indifferent or hostile to French Canada."⁷² Although the government's increase of power was seen as extreme by some, it was ultimately seen as justified by the majority of Canadians and the American media, given the situation.

Finally, with the release of James Cross, the kidnappers were granted "safe passage" to Cuba as guaranteed by the Canadian government.⁷³ The issue of nations supporting and harbouring terrorists was brought up in the media coverage of the UN proceedings in 1972. The American media allied itself with the many countries in favour of ending terrorism around the world, which was in line with America's political stance on the issue, but this opinion was juxtaposed with countries that would give those defined as terrorists by the American media a safe haven. The media attributed the ills of anti-terrorism to the fact that not all nations condemned terrorism as it was defined by the

⁷⁰ "The World: Why and How Quebec Separatists Pursue Their Fight," E4.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Jay Walz, "Cross Free as Kidnappers Fly to Cuba," *New York Times*, Dec 4, 1970, 1.

West, and therefore the international community had difficulty moving forward in rooting out terrorism.

Latin America

The American media most often referred to terrorism in Latin American with words such as “urban terrorism”, “guerrilla violence”, and “rebel forces.” The most extensive media coverage of the region spanned the years 1969 to 1972. During that time, many countries in Latin America faced terrorism in the form of kidnappings, robberies, raids, fires, bombs, assassinations, and other various forms of violent protest. Terrorists in Brazil were described as left-wing guerrillas and disgruntled former soldiers in the ranks of the urban guerrillas.⁷⁴ Bank robberies were often equated with terrorism in the American media. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that in Brazil in July, 1969, “hardly a week [went] by without a bombing incident. Bank robberies [were] equally frequent, many of them believed to be the work of terrorists.”⁷⁵ Money from bank robberies was used to finance the groups’ operations and to buy arms in preparation for expanded operations.⁷⁶ The flow of money into terrorist organizations from the robberies meant that such criminal activity was labelled as terrorism.

By September, 1969, if there was any doubt about the seriousness of Communist-supported terrorism that was on the rise in Brazil, the kidnapping of United States Ambassador Charles B. Elbrick dispelled it.⁷⁷ The kidnapping of diplomats in Latin

⁷⁴ David F. Belnap, “Terrorist Acts by Red Rebels Rise in Brazil,” *Los Angeles Time*, Jul 6, 1969, 16.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ “Brazilian Guerillas Spread Terror in Government, Business Circles,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Aug 13, 1969, 6.

⁷⁷ James Nelson Goodsell, “Brazilian Kidnapping Marks Terrorist Rise,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Sep 6, 1969, 1.

America received substantial media coverage in the early 1970s. In March, 1970, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that Japanese Consul General Nobuo Okuchi was kidnapped in São Paulo by persons who demanded that the government release five political prisoners.⁷⁸ The *New York Times* ran an article in April, 1970, on the murder of West German Ambassador Count Karl von Spreti at the hands of Guatemalan terrorists.⁷⁹ The media made it clear that the kidnapers' aim was for political ransom and the acts were not directed at the countries of the diplomats. For example, Elbrick's kidnapping by Communist groups was not specifically against him or the United States, but for ransom.⁸⁰ In Brazil, the military junta termed the kidnapping an example of "pure and simple terrorism," as did the media.⁸¹ Holding diplomats hostage was a propaganda victory for the terrorists because the kidnappings were covered throughout American media sources. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, this also proved the ability of the terrorists and suggested that more incidents were likely to follow.⁸²

In Guatemala, terrorism and sabotage were also on the rise in the early 1970s. The *Christian Science Monitor* classified the terrorists there as rebels from both the Left and Right, including members of the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes of the Left and the Mano Blanco of the Right.⁸³ However, media reports largely associated terrorism with left-wing rebel groups resisting right-wing government dictatorships. The term "guerrillas" was often used by the American media interchangeably with "terrorists." The media reported that armed guerrillas attacked police, gunmen killed secret service men,

⁷⁸ James Nelson Goodsell, "Americas Terrorism: New Wave of Kidnapping of Diplomats Seeks Political Ransom of Imprisoned Guerillas," *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar 18, 1970, 3.

⁷⁹ "For Latin Diplomats: Top-Hat and Bullet Proof Vest," *New York Times*, Apr 12, 1970, E3.

⁸⁰ Goodsell, "Brazilian Kidnapping Marks Terrorist Rise," 1.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² James Nelson Goodsell, "Brazil Resists Terrorists," *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct 2, 1969, 15.

⁸³ James Nelson Goodsell, "Guatemala's Guerillas: Terrorists Pose Sharper Threat," *Christian Science Monitor*, Dec 27, 1969, 2

and dozens of stores were hit by fires, all within a two-week span in December, 1969. With this violence, there resulted the suspension of certain constitutional provisions. The media were suspicious of the actions taken by the government that restricted the right of free movement throughout the country, and allowed “the police to make searches and arrests without warrant. Provisions for free speech remain in force, but news media have been warned to tone down reports which might result in disturbances and to give immediate publicity to government announcements.”⁸⁴ The American media were once again troubled by a foreign government’s suspension of civil liberties, namely freedom of the press; however, the actions against terrorists were reluctantly justified because innocent victims, namely American diplomats, were being targeted.

In the same period, the United States found dozens of planes being hijacked to Cuba as a safe haven for American terrorists. This reached epidemic proportions in 1969-1970, though media reports on the incidents were sparse and only overall statistics were available. For example, in 1969 the *New York Times* reported that “worldwide there were 88 attempted hijackings; 70 of them were successful, of which 58 went to Cuba, 12 to other countries; in 1970, 84 attempts, 54 successful, of which 31 went to Cuba and 23 to other countries.”⁸⁵ There were no names of the hijackers or details of the incidents printed in the early 1970s. However, the media commented on the open dialogue between Cuban Premier Fidel Castro and President Nixon to efficiently deal with the common problem in 1972.⁸⁶ The media mentions Cuba’s support for many terrorist actions throughout the world on several occasions, as Cuba viewed the fight for a revolution at any cost as a fruitful effort. The notion of Cuba as a safe haven for

⁸⁴ Goodsell, “Guatemala’s Guerillas: Terrorists Pose Sharper Threat,” 2.

⁸⁵ Paul J.C. Friedlander, “Politics, Economics and Skyjacking,” *New York Times*, Dec 3, 1972, XX47.

⁸⁶ James Reston, “The Cuban Connection,” *New York Times*, Nov 19, 1972, E11.

terrorists frustrated the American media and the Nixon Administration throughout the 1970s, as did Cuba's continued support of terrorism in Latin America and its revolutionary acts throughout the world.

Brazil, Guatemala, and Cuba are only three examples of what the media perceived to be terrorist hotbeds in Latin America. In my sampling, the media also published articles on Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. The American media clearly portrayed Latin American terrorism as the outrageous violence of the extreme left. Some reports referred to right-wing violence, but the media rarely used the term "terrorism" to define the violence committed by right-wing, autocratic governments. Articles briefly touched on counter-terror measures, but with American diplomats at risk, along with the long history of American intervention in Latin America, the media were not quick to point the finger at the oppressive regimes in power in many of the countries in the early 1970s. This attitude changed when the issue of harbouring terrorists threatened the safety of Americans abroad.

The Middle East

In the early 1970s the Middle East was becoming a serious threat to global security as acts of terrorism continued to escalate. The Palestinian nationalist group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), commanded the most media attention of the terrorist groups in the early years of Nixon's presidency. The PFLP opposed a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and felt that land rightfully belonging to the Palestinians was wrongly in the hands of Israel. To the American media, what made the Middle East situation so volatile was that this form of terrorism

involved more countries than those directly involved, namely countries that harboured terrorists, and those that supported Israel. Terrorism in the Middle East was vastly covered by the media during each year of Nixon's Presidency. While a number of articles were published from 1969-1971, the volume of coverage soared with the Munich Olympics in 1972 and continued in 1973 and 1974.

The American media largely spoke out against the Arab cause in the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, which was in line with America's political support for Israel. American foreign policy in the 1970s was protective of Israeli interests, and much of the news media took to Israel's defence against terrorist attacks. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* editorialized in 1969 that "the terrorist groups like to speak romantically of a 'popular war' of 'liberation.' This is nonsense. Their real goal is to provide another war – and if need be another and another after that – between Israel and the Arabs, with the hope of someday destroying the Jewish state."⁸⁷ The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the Palestinian liberation groups were attacking to lure Israel into a massive response, and in turn the retaliations by Israel would act as lightning rods for world condemnation of what the Russians and the Arabs termed 'Israeli aggression.'⁸⁸ Joseph Alsop of the *Washington Post* saw the danger in the escalation of brutal Arab terrorism that would provoke Israeli retaliation "of a much more dangerous kind."⁸⁹ The *Christian Science Monitor* published an article by Arnold Soloway (author of *Truth and Peace in the Middle East*) that was blatantly pro-Israel. Soloway boldly stated that the terrorists' notion that the establishment of "an independent Palestine state would bring an end to

⁸⁷ "Terrorism and Mideast Peace," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb 17, 1969, B8.

⁸⁸ Bertram B. Johansson, "Publicity Ploy in Mideast?" *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb 28, 1969, 4.

⁸⁹ Joseph Alsop, "Terrorism Hurts Arab People More Than It Does the Israelis," *Washington Post*, Aug 27, 1969, A27.

terror and war is lamentably wrong. The one thing the terrorists do not want, what their fanatical horrors are aimed to prevent, is *any* kind of peace or accommodation with Israel.”⁹⁰ He continued, saying the terrorists “will settle for nothing less than the complete dissolution of the state of Israel and the expulsion of virtually all its Jewish inhabitants.”⁹¹ Throughout the article, Soloway continually supported the legitimacy of Israel and condemned Arab terrorists and Arab countries that encourage them.

One article in my survey, printed in the *Los Angeles Times*, gave the Arab view of Israel. William Coughlin reported that Arabs believed that Israel was not “born in struggle and matured into freedom, but that Israel was conceived in deceit, was born in terrorism and matured into arrogance.”⁹² Coughlin does not go as far as to support Arab aggressive actions; rather, he frames them against the usual unquestioned American support of Israel. He explained that the Arabs see an Israel which has “driven Palestinian Arabs from their homeland and turned them into refugees by the hundreds of thousands, basing its claim to their land on a brief occupation centuries ago and ignoring the rights of the people who lived on it for the hundreds of years afterward.”⁹³ After giving the background of the conflict through the lens of the Palestinians, Coughlin concluded that “the Arabs see a militarily powerful and expansionist Israel, backed by the prestige of the United States. Thus the Arabs see an Israel that foments terror and promotes aggression.”⁹⁴ Given America’s general support for Israel, Coughlin’s article stood as an anomaly. Most of the media supported Israel’s actions and condemned Arab aggression.

⁹⁰ Arnold M. Soloway, “Terrorism Against Peace,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Sep 29, 1972, 14.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² William J Coughlin, “The Arab View of Israel: Arrogant State Born in Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 29, 1973, L4.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

According to media reports, terrorism in the Middle East came in various forms, including kidnapping, hijacking, bombings, mail bombs, and other diverse forms of attack. In reports on terrorism in the Middle East, often the region or religion of the terrorists preceded the term “terrorist” in the media’s description. For example, *TIME* magazine reported in 1969 that *Jordanian* terrorists shattered El Al’s downtown Athens passenger terminal with a hand grenade.⁹⁵ That same year, *TIME* reported that four *Arab* terrorists from Lebanon began shooting up an El Al jetliner as it taxied toward takeoff in Zurich.⁹⁶ The American media used similar descriptions to describe terrorists in the Middle East when covering the violence in the early 1970s.

When terrorists in the Middle East began to target Jews from both Israel and foreign countries, the American media painted an even darker picture of the terrorists, particularly the PFLP, as they targeted innocent airplane passengers. After an attempted hijacking of a Trans World Airlines flight from Athens in 1969, the PFLP promised to follow up the attempt and a ‘final warning to tourists’ was published in *TIME*. This warning said: “Do not travel to Israel. Israel is under fire. Do not visit or come near Israeli embassies or offices of El Al Airlines anywhere in the world. Bombs may be waiting for you. Stay neutral. Be safe. Keep away.”⁹⁷ The media emphasized the seriousness of the PFLP in 1969 when its agents forced a Trans World Airlines plane that was headed for Israel to land in Syria, where Syrians imprisoned two Israeli civilian passengers for three months.⁹⁸ After international hijackings made headlines again and again, the American media and voices from around the world called for international

⁹⁵ “The Air,” *TIME*, Dec 5, 1969, 57.

⁹⁶ “Exporting Violence,” *TIME*, Jan 5, 1970, 28.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Francis Ofner, “Air-piracy Law Proposed,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar 2, 1970, 2.

safety measures for Israelis, as well as Jews from different countries, who were considered targets.⁹⁹

The details of the Munich massacre and the global implications of the attack gained much media attention in the fall of 1972. The media made it clear that before any progress could be made in peace negotiations in the Middle East, an international effort had to be made to curb terrorism.¹⁰⁰ Israel and the American media saw the support of terrorist groups such as Black September by other Arab nations, including Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt, as a “new form of warfare” against Israel.¹⁰¹ Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban affirmed that Israel would not sit by and be attacked, saying “it has always been our [Israel’s] policy to hit where we can those who make war against us...it is not our policy or duty to wait for the saboteurs to kill us or our children.”¹⁰² After Munich, Israel took matters into its own hands to covertly assassinate Arab terrorists believed to be involved in the Munich attack. This counter-terror was viewed by the media as “unconventional and unexpected unilateral action by Israel aimed at rooting out Arab terrorist cells wherever they may be on the European continent, and direct action against the interests of Arab states that sponsor or protect terrorist organizations.”¹⁰³ To the American media, this retaliation only stunted any hope of peace talks. However, the media acknowledged that while it was frustration and desperation that drove the Arab terrorists seeking political expression, Israel shared the sentiments while seeking fuller world respect and political comforts.¹⁰⁴ Due to America’s vulnerability because of its

⁹⁹ Ofner, 2.

¹⁰⁰ “Eban Calls for International Effort to Eliminate Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 22, 1972, 2.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ “Israel Finds Little Help in Fighting Terrorism,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Nov 6, 1972, 2.

¹⁰⁴ “An Act of Terrorism in Washington,” *Washington Post*, Jul 4, 1973, A26.

support for Israel and its foreign policy entanglements, Munich was a pivotal turning point in the American media's conceptualization of terrorism. The massacre permanently altered the way the media and the American government viewed terrorism.

In the wake of the attack at the Munich Olympics, the media reported on America's support for Israel as Nixon sought "international action to curb terrorism against Israelis, and began tightening protection of foreign diplomats and others susceptible to terrorist acts in the United States."¹⁰⁵ The media particularly feared further Arab attacks after a number of threats were made against foreign diplomats in the U.S.¹⁰⁶ The Nixon Administration's pro-Israel stance was reiterated in the media, as they supported a major effort to identify Arab nationals in the U.S. and enforce tighter visa requirements.¹⁰⁷ Many news articles called for airline pilots and ground crews to refuse to fly to countries that supported Arab terrorists. As well, the media believed that the United States "should point out to all the Arab states as forcefully as possible how difficult it will be to muster sympathy for non-violent Palestinians when such barbaric tactics are employed in their name."¹⁰⁸ The news media believed that the U.S. should take a stand internationally to curb the rising threat of terrorism.

When framing the perpetrators of Arab aggression, the media emphasized that it was important to remember that the terrorists were not governments, they did not legally control territory, but neither were they unreachable.¹⁰⁹ It was eloquently put by the *Los Angeles Times* in an article in February, 1970, that Arab terrorist organizations "exist and are able to act only with the cooperation of the governments of a number of Arab states.

¹⁰⁵ "U.S. Gives Extra Protection to Israeli Tourists, Foreign Envoys," *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 7, 1972, A1.

¹⁰⁶ "West Acts to Meet Threat of Terrorism," *Washington Post*, Sep 9, 1972, A16.

¹⁰⁷ "U.S. Checks Arabs to Block Terror," *New York Times*, Oct 5, 1972, 97.

¹⁰⁸ "Fighting Terrorism With Sanity," *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 9, 1970, B6.

¹⁰⁹ "Putting an End to Air Terrorism," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb 24, 1970, A6.

It is those governments that must be held accountable for what the terrorists do.”¹¹⁰ The media called for government accountability on this issue. Reporters wanted the Nixon Administration and foreign governments to crack down on the harbouring of terrorists. This notion was exemplified by the coverage of the diversion of flights to Syria for a safe haven, and most prominently by the request of the Munich terrorists for a safe passage to Egypt. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the terrorists at the Munich Olympics “operate under a perverse ethic that is beyond the reach of moral indignation or diplomatic protest. But they do not operate in isolation. They must have havens, they must have friends...without such backing the terrorists could not long function or survive.”¹¹¹ In the wake of the Munich massacre, the media conveyed fears of further Arab attacks as guerrilla threats were made in Arab countries, which demanded the freedom for three Arab terrorists who were captured after their attempt to barter the lives of Israeli hostages.¹¹² The media’s fear of retaliation was exacerbated by reports on mail bombs aimed at Israeli diplomats in late 1972 that fuelled Israel’s cry for revenge.¹¹³

At the UN General Assembly in 1972, terrorism was proposed to be on the agenda following the murders in Munich. The media coverage of the UN debates in 1972 also gave insight into the political tensions rooted in the conflict. The media reported that the Arab bloc immediately sought to keep the question off the agenda and, failing that, made an all-out attempt to divert the discussion from terrorism itself to the conditions that inspire people to commit acts of terrorism.¹¹⁴ Meanwhile, Israel and South American countries backed U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers’ call for an international treaty

¹¹⁰ “Putting an End to Air Terrorism,” A6.

¹¹¹ “Terrorism at the Olympiad,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 6, 1972, OC_A10.

¹¹² “West Acts to Meet Threat of Terrorism,” A16.

¹¹³ “The New Arab Terror: Murder by Mail,” *Newsweek*, Oct 2, 1972, 30.

¹¹⁴ “U.S. Challenges U.N. on Terror,” *New York Times*, Nov 14, 1972, 11.

against terrorism,¹¹⁵ which would “provide for the prosecution or extradition of persons who kill, seriously injure or kidnap innocent civilians in one country for the purpose of harming or obtaining concessions from another country, or from an international organization.”¹¹⁶ Like the African bloc, which feared the UN concession would affect their fight for liberation, the Arab nations believed that Western pressure for any anti-terrorism measures were in effect pro-Israeli and directed against Arab countries.¹¹⁷ The UN did not gain any concrete ground in 1972 in the passing of sanctions against terrorism, and the media acknowledged that the world would continue to be plagued by violence that was not internationally condemned. By 1974, Middle East terrorism continued to increase and, for the American media, a merely domestic perspective of terrorism was inadequate. It was political terrorism that was conspicuously on the global increase and would demand American media attention into the next century.¹¹⁸

The United States of America

Although the U.S. was concerned with international terrorism between 1969 and 1974, the nation also faced terrorism on its own soil. The rising spirit of revolution in the 1960s turned violent from 1969 to 1972. Terrorism in the U.S. was typically reported as bombings (particularly by youths aimed at establishment targets), kidnappings, Ku Klux Klan violence, or gang warfare. Klansmen were described as terrorists by the *Christian Science Monitor*, which reported that “three Klansmen were found guilty of contempt of Congress in 1966 after an investigation by the House Committee on Un-American

¹¹⁵ “No Sanctions,” *TIME*, Oct 9, 1972, 31.

¹¹⁶ “U.S. Challenges U.N. on Terror,” 11.

¹¹⁷ David Winder, “UN Anti-terrorism Thwarted by Arab-African Opposition,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Sep 23, 1972, 3.

¹¹⁸ James Burnham, “Antiterror Problems,” *National Review*, Mar 29, 1974, 365.

Activities into allegations of Klan terrorism in the South.”¹¹⁹ Although few reports focused on the Klan by 1969, they were nonetheless considered terrorists by the *Christian Science Monitor*, albeit a newspaper from the northeastern U.S.

Reports of bombings aimed at American global corporations, government property, and military trucks, among other targets, were rampant in the early 1970s. With the bombings throughout American cities came hundreds of bomb threats that disturbed institutions, government offices, and public places. The American media saw the bomb threats themselves as nuisances more than anything else. Along with each reported bomb explosion, the media mentioned several bomb threats. Reports on bombings were tied to the volatile times of 1969 and 1970. In the early 1960s, protest movements were militant, but not violent. Most of the early movements took after the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King’s non-violent approach. However, by 1968, protest became a global phenomenon and the world seemed to be unravelling. By 1969 people began talking about a revolution and the mood of protests in the early 1970s took a violent turn, as some youths saw violence as the only way to fight what they saw as imperialist and corporate America.

The media attributed the violence to the extreme right and left. For example, in February, 1969, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on members of an extreme-right-wing group, the Society of Man, who were arrested for a siege of bombings and terrorism on the San Francisco Peninsula.¹²⁰ The targets of these bombings were several liberal and left-wing organizations, including the Kennedy Action Corps, a bookstore chain, and the

¹¹⁹ “Three Klansmen Sentenced,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar 15, 1969, 11.

¹²⁰ “9 in Bible Study Group Held in S.F. Peninsula Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb 16, 1969, B.

Midpeninsula Free University.¹²¹ The media gave details of several places where bombs exploded. For example, in New York City in 1969, bombs went off on a United Fruit Company pier, at the Marine Midland Grace Trust Company, the Federal Office Building was hit in October, and in one hour one night, dynamite bombs exploded at three skyscrapers – the Chase Manhattan Building, the new General Motors Building and in the offices of Standard Oil in Rockefeller Center.¹²² The media emphasized that the bombs were aimed at American corporate imperialism in protest against the Vietnam War, not at ordinary civilians. The media described the bombers as white “revolutionaries” who went beyond rhetoric and confrontation to the tactics of outright terrorism.¹²³ With this, the media were not sympathetic to the terrorists’ cause. Although sit-in protests against the war in Vietnam were acceptable, violence was not.

The media reported that the radicals took the issue of corporate corruption seriously, but the majority of the American public did not share this sentiment. The *National Review* reported in 1970 that in the San Francisco-Berkeley area, “a thousand New Leftists and Street People went on a destructive rampage, bombs were thrown at the police station.”¹²⁴ The actions of young leftists were seen as a “destructive rampage”, not actions justified in the name of peace. A journalist for the radical *Berkeley Barb* likened the scene in San Francisco to the Vietnam War, saying, “All the cops around Park Station wear the faces of men at war... The faces at Park Station are the faces of American patrols coming back from a night with the Viet Cong. The face of being stuck with a war where

¹²¹ “9 in Bible Study Group Held in S.F. Peninsula Terrorism,” B.

¹²² “The House on Fourth Street,” *Newsweek*, Nov 24, 1969, 37-38.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ “Week of the Bombs,” *National Review*, Mar 10, 1970, 246.

the natives used to be friendly. But this is a war at home.”¹²⁵ The media made clear that bombs on campuses and those that targeted corporations only resulted in a few deaths, because most of the terrorists did not intend for people to be in the buildings at the time of the bombings. However, there was a growing fear in the media that Americans, especially the government, were under siege by radicals. This is exactly how revolutionary groups like The Black Panthers and The Weathermen¹²⁶ reportedly wanted the public to feel. In 1970, young militants crowded the FBI’s most wanted list.¹²⁷ According to the media, making a revolution became a common denominator for many radicals.

In the early 1970s, newspapers were filled with stories of campus protests, particularly against the Vietnam War, that turned towards violence. The language of “terrorism” was used throughout the media examples on the student violence. For example, the heading of a *Christian Science Monitor* article read: “University vs. Terrorism.”¹²⁸ Riots, vandalism, and terrorism by small groups threatened campuses, and the media saw this violence as withholding from the majority its civil right to education.¹²⁹ President Nixon reiterated this assertion, saying that there can be “no compromise with lawlessness,” and urged university officials to display some “backbone” against campus revolutionaries.¹³⁰ The bombing at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1970 was reported by the *Christian Science Monitor* to have “knocked the romanticism out of revolution. A lot of people never realized

¹²⁵ “Week of the Bombs,” 246.

¹²⁶ The Weathermen were a militant faction of the Students for a Democratic Society who felt that in the violent culture of the U.S. only violence would make a difference.

¹²⁷ “Young Rebels Crowd FBI’s Wanted Sheet,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Oct 19, 1970, 8.

¹²⁸ Rubin, 1.

¹²⁹ “For Campus Order,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar 18, 1969, 18.

¹³⁰ Robert B. Semple Jr., “President Urges Colleges to Meet Disorder Firmly,” *New York Times*, Apr 30, 1969, 1.

experimentally what that position meant.”¹³¹ The media emphasized the volume of the violence, for since the 1970-1971 school year began there had been few mass demonstrations or riots, but not a month had passed without a bombing at some American college or university.¹³²

A 19-year old terrorist named Larry spoke candidly to a *Newsweek* reporter in 1970. The article introduced the young man as a terrorist in the sub-heading: “A 19-Year Old U.S. Terrorist Tells His Story.” This interview indicated that the news media were trying to understand the young terrorist’s justification for violence. Many Americans could not empathize with the young revolutionaries. Larry belonged to a 50-member, all-white, all-male revolutionary terrorist gang. He explained to reporter Karl Fleming that the terrorists “want change now. And nothing is at our disposal but violence. We can’t even demonstrate without getting clubbed and tear-gassed. Well, if we can’t live in peace, then the rich can’t live in peace. There will be an all-out war within a year.”¹³³ The revolutionaries viewed the police, the courts, the government, universities, and the military as symbols of American imperialism in Vietnam. *Newsweek* printed the story in October 1970, and the publication let Larry’s extremist words speak for themselves. Especially prominent was the headline: “We’ll Blow Up the World.”

The media acknowledged that the Nixon Administration saw violence at home as a substantial problem and sought to root it out. However, as the *Washington Post* reported, and the media knew all too well, “the worst reaction to terrorism is panic; and the worst form of panic is indiscriminate repression involving the sacrifice of civil

¹³¹ Rubin, 1.

¹³² “Dealing with Bombs on Campus,” *U.S. News and World Report*, Jan 4, 1971, 25.

¹³³ Karl Fleming, “We’ll Blow Up the World,” *Newsweek*, Oct 12, 1970, 49.

liberty.”¹³⁴ President Nixon supported police action against terrorists by forming government action groups to combat the issue, but to the media he walked the fine line of preserving civil liberties. For Nixon, terrorism was “an international disease, the idea if you have a cause, you use any means to bring about that cause, to accomplish it, and that the cause justifies the means.”¹³⁵ Many of the media sources reported on bombings in protest of Vietnam, mainly from 1969 to 1972, but by late 1970 there were the beginnings “of a wider understanding that morally one cannot in the same breath condemn killing in Vietnam and condone the killing of a cop at home.”¹³⁶ However, the *National Review* reported that in the first four months of 1972 there were 607 bombings (10 killed, 56 injured) in the U.S., of which it is estimated that half were “politically motivated.”¹³⁷ Of the large number of bombings that took place in a mere four months, only a handful was reported in the American media. Political violence in the U.S. in the early 1970s was largely a product of the extreme left and right, and the media highlighted both their dangerous acts and their hypocrisy. Regardless of the legitimacy of their cause, the young radicals did command the attention of the American media and the government during a politically charged time in the U.S.

The overwhelming majority of the articles that mentioned terrorism in the *Chicago Daily Defender*, a large and influential black newspaper, referred to gang violence and race relations. An article went so far as to classify purse snatching from the elderly as a tale of terrorism.¹³⁸ In May, 1969, an article referred to the Ku Klux Klan as

¹³⁴ “Controlling Political Terrorism,” *Washington Post*, Jul 22, 1970, A18.

¹³⁵ Warren Weaver, “President Scores Tide of Terrorism,” *New York Times*, Oct 20, 1970, 1.

¹³⁶ “Toward Halting the Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 13, 1970, A6.

¹³⁷ “Age of the Bomb,” *National Review*, Jun 9, 1972, 629.

¹³⁸ Sidmel Estes and John Gunn, “4 Senior Citizens: Tell of Terrorism,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Aug 11, 1973, 1.

“night riding racist terrorists.”¹³⁹ Another in 1970 reported “a wave of gang terrorism in the black community.”¹⁴⁰ An interesting advice column by Arletta Claire featured two children writing in about their Dad’s radical behaviour. They said “he carries signs saying ‘End Fascist Terrorism in the U.S.’ He’s even professed to be a secret Black Panther...we live in a kind of volatile neighbourhood that always threatens to explode at any time. And usually, whenever it does, my father is behind it.”¹⁴¹ Claire answered the letter saying “I say ‘Right on!’ to your old man and ‘Get hip!’ to you...Learn from your father’s integrity, even when you think his position is wrong. Buy your mother some tranquilizers and help the old man revolutionize the neighbourhood. ‘All power to the people!’”¹⁴² In 1970, Renault Robinson reported that “if you ask anyone in the black community what is the foremost problem in the community today, they will undoubtedly say the problem is what to do about street gangs and the terrorism associated with them.”¹⁴³ The *Chicago Daily Defender* sympathized with black veterans from Vietnam who were especially frustrated with the violence.

The media reported on the desperation of the black victims of violence. With this anxiety, black people in Homer, Louisiana planned to ask the U.S. courts to help stop the “reign of terror against them here and in nearby cities. They have about exhausted possible remedies in the state courts.”¹⁴⁴ Chicago community spokesmen also reached out, saying that they felt an investigation into the violence must be explored as one major

¹³⁹ Joseph L. Turner, “White Hats: Good Guys Or Hardcore Bigots?” *Chicago Daily Defender*, May 7, 1969, 3.

¹⁴⁰ Faith C. Christmas “Hits Terror, Extortion: Daddy-O Bares Gang Threats,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Feb 16, 1970, 1.

¹⁴¹ Arletta Claire, “Kids Worry That Dad Is Becoming Too Radical,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, May 12, 1970, 8.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Renault Robinson, “The Black Watch: Youth Problems Are Ticklish,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Jun 25, 1970, 31.

¹⁴⁴ “Ask U.S. Aid In Terrorism,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Jul 27, 1970, 20.

step “toward the elimination of gangsterism in our neighbourhoods which have led to the slaughter of our youths our neighbours and friends our policemen and the terrorism [sic].”¹⁴⁵ In an opinion piece, Renault Robinson lashed out, saying, “the white oriented racist Chicago Police Department with its condoned brutality and murder of black people, to a large extent, is responsible for much of the violent and hostile conditions in the black community.”¹⁴⁶ It is clear that the *Chicago Daily Defender* included race violence in its definition of terrorism. This is very telling of the audience of the paper and its reporters. Writing to an African-American population about stories and issues that hit closest to them, these reporters classified the product of racial tensions they faced as terrorism. Finally, this called into question how far can the definition of terrorism be stretched? Were racial tensions considered in a different league of terrorism, or did they strike out at innocent victims the same way the PFLP and the IRA did? According to the *Chicago Daily Defender* example, terrorism was violence that struck locally, internationally, and racially.

Conclusion

In 1963, then-editor of the *Washington Post*, Phil Graham, called journalism “the first rough draft of history.” Often journalists do not have the benefit of hindsight or perspective; rather, they write stories as they unfold with the resources and research available to them at the time. From 1969-1974, the journalists reporting on terrorism around the world wrote within a particular place and time. It is only now, decades later,

¹⁴⁵ “Demand U.S. Gang Probe,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Aug 1, 1970, 1.

¹⁴⁶ Renault Robinson, “Black Watch: Blacks are Just Talking,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Aug 29, 1970, 2.

that one can analyze the sources within the larger political, social, and cultural context of the time.

The American media serves as a valuable source to determine when terrorism was prominent within the various regions. For a couple of the regions discussed, such as Ireland and Africa, the 1970s fell within the timeline of a broader conflict. Terrorism was used in those regions by opposing sides in the fight for independence and freedom. For other regions, terrorism was concentrated in Nixon's first term as president. In Canada, Vietnam, Latin America, and the U.S., terrorism was the result of passing political turmoil, and violence was at the hands of those seeking change or revolution. The Middle East stands out in this study as the region in which terrorism rose substantially throughout the early 1970s. The media highlighted the implications of the violence on American security and foreign policy commitments. The Munich Olympics in 1972 gained unprecedented media coverage and the important consequences of this attack on the media and the government is discussed in a subsequent chapter. After Munich, the media revealed the emergence of the Middle East as the primary region of terrorist activity because of the global implications associated with terrorism in the area. In the post-9/11 era, terrorism has certain connotations and associations in the media that were not present in the early 1970s. Now terrorism in the Middle East is unfortunately commonplace, whereas in the early 1970s the conflicts in the Middle East and their connection to the U.S. were just beginning.

My analysis comprises print media from all over the U.S. While many of my conclusions are drawn from a survey of the sources, there are many variables that one must take into consideration when analyzing media sources, as the media outlet that was

publishing the information often shaped what got recorded. For my purposes I used a variety of sources to speak for the American media at the time. However, further studies could require more detail to the variables at play. For example, what was the locale of the paper? What was the ownership of the media outlet? What was the audience of the publication (a left-wing student newspaper or a daily business paper with conservative leanings)? Were the articles reporting, or inserting opinion? Such factors, as well as the framing or the context of an event, play a large part in the analysis of how a particular journalist or paper is reporting.

My survey and analysis only touch the surface of the historical study of terrorism and the media. I have only looked at a specific time period through the lens of a set of media sources. Further work could be done by looking at American television sources or international newspapers to see how they conceptualized terrorism in particular places within a given period of time. I have steered clear of discussions on the publicity of terrorist acts and how bad acts make good news, but this could also be analyzed with a case study on a particular event and the types of media coverage it received. I limited the number of opinion pieces I included in the analysis; however, there are dozens of intriguing opinion pieces that speak about the issues regarding terrorism. The *Chicago Daily Defender* is also just one minority source of many that could be included. The paper was an anomaly amongst my research, but including several race, class, or gender related sources would provide for a rich study. Radical or leftist papers also offer unique views that could be contrasted with the mainstream media's representation, particularly of domestic terrorism and the war in Vietnam. Finally, how did the American government conceptualize terrorism? In the following chapter I examine government

documents to gain a more holistic view of how terrorism was conceptualized during the early 1970s.

In my analysis of media sources and how they conceptualized terrorism in the early 1970s, it is evident that journalism both leads and reflects social change. This paradox is evident even within the same issue of a particular paper. The American media in the early 1970s were largely in line with America's political interests at the time, but it is difficult to distinguish whether this simply mirrored the times. Today the atrocities committed by American GIs in Vietnam are acknowledged, but this was not a reality for journalists reporting at the time. Often changing societal attitudes can be traced through media as some assumptions are not argued or justified or explained, and are thus considered "normal" for the time. Now America recognizes that Israel is not without fault or aggression, but in the early 1970s American foreign policy was closely linked to and protective of Israeli interests. In my analysis it is understood that the journalists were writing within the context of their time, and this case study must be understood within that framework. Over time, societal attitudes changed and what was once an 'international disease' that could be cured, now seems like a dangerous and inevitable part of the international landscape.

Chapter 2

‘Dealing with the Scourge of Terrorism’: How the American Government Conceptualized Terrorism between 1969 and 1974

In the early 1970s, the American public was largely concerned with the Vietnam War, relations with China, and the looming Cold War with the Soviet Union, yet media examples indicate that the public was aware of terrorism in various regions of the world. The increased awareness of terrorism, specifically in the Middle East, is mirrored in the government documents of the Nixon Administration. The sources show that from 1969 to 1970, hijackings to Cuba reached epidemic proportions. These instances of terrorism became no more than an inconvenience to American travellers. Around the same time, the American government faced routine explosions and bomb threats, resulting in few deaths at the hands of mainly student protesters against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. In Latin America, terrorists kidnapped diplomats of various origins, including Americans, throughout the early 1970s. Hijackings, predominantly in the Middle East by the PFLP continued to escalate. When Arab terrorists killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in September, 1972, the world took notice that terrorism was becoming an international problem which was getting increasingly more severe and dangerous. By 1973 and 1974, the Nixon Administration and Congress largely linked terrorism to the Middle East and singled out “Arab terrorists.” For the American government, the origin and seriousness of the terrorists’ threat gradually changed during the Nixon Administration. In the early years of Nixon’s presidency, the U. S. government viewed terrorists as isolated radicals seeking asylum, political ransom or recognition of American imperialism in Vietnam. However, after Munich, and with the increased vulnerability of

Jewish Americans, the U.S. began to consider terrorism as a disease rooted in the Middle East.

Contrary to this sequence of events, contemporary terrorism is emphasized as a post-1979 phenomenon by most historians. The scholarship of American counter-terrorism and foreign relations largely places the beginning of America's involvement with terrorism in the Middle East in 1979, with the Iran hostage crisis. Some historians tend to write teleological, tracing the events of September 11, 2001, back to 1979. For example, Mark Bowden writes that the men and women held hostage in 1979 were the first victims of the "war on terror."¹ Similarly, in *Taken Hostage*, David Farber argues that 1979 was America's first encounter with radical Islam. Farber believes that the U.S. failed to look at the underlying problems in the region, and the government did not consider prevention as a strategy with the Middle East. Although religious motivations for terrorists in the Middle East may have been new in 1979, Arab terrorism was on the rise almost a decade before, which Farber largely ignores in his analysis.

The literature on the history of American counter-terrorism provides an historical perspective of America's encounters with terrorism. Bruce Hoffman uses historical examples to address the origins of terrorism and to contrast those origins with our contemporary definition of terrorism. In *Inside Terrorism*, Hoffman explains that the "internationalization" of terrorism occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s; however he does not attribute it solely to Palestinian influence and success.² He attributes this shift to a combination of societal malaise and youthful idealism, rebelliousness and anti-

¹ Mark Bowden, *Guests of the Ayatollah: The First Battle in America's War with Militant Islam* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 2006), 597.

² Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 80.

militarism/anti-imperialism that was rapidly transforming the collective political consciousness of countries of Western Europe and North America.³

In *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976*, Robert Kumamoto uses three case studies (Palestine, 1945-1948, Algeria, 1954-1962, and the Middle East, 1968-1976) to illustrate American foreign policy in regards to terrorism within certain times and regions. He points out that Palestinian terrorism proved to be a contentious international issue that embroiled the U.S. in a number of disputes and negotiations, most notably at the UN.⁴ Kumamoto acknowledges that the Nixon administration's multi-lateral approach to combating terrorism may have been ineffectual in the long term, but at the time it was the only available course of action, given the administration's concern with other international and domestic problems.⁵ The three case studies used in *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976* thoroughly explore issues in the Middle East in particular, yet they fail to illustrate the changing perceptions of international terrorism coupled with the growth of Arab terrorism in early 1970s.

Dennis Piskiewicz recognizes that today the word "terrorism" is linked with the continual war between the Israelis and the Palestinians.⁶ In *Terrorism's War with America: A History*, he says that because the U.S. supported Israel since its inception, it should be no surprise that the U.S. and its interests became targets of those who were at war with Israel.⁷ Piskiewicz admits that Americans had been victims of skyjackings and

³ Hoffman, 80.

⁴ Robert Kumamoto, *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976*, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999), 192.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁶ Dennis Piskiewicz, *Terrorism's War with America: A History*, (Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 21.

⁷ *Ibid.*

attacks against Israeli targets, but it was easy to imagine them as uninvolved people caught in a cross-fire. However, that notion became harder to accept in the 1970s as American ambassadors to Arab countries and countries with predominately Islamic populations became the targets of terrorists.⁸ Piszkievicz comes up short of fully exploring why and when the shift in America's focus to Arab terrorists occurred.

Timothy Naftali provides one of the most thorough analyses of American counter-terror during the Nixon Administration in his book *Blind Spot*. He asserts that the Nixon Administration was the first in U.S. history to consider international terrorism a national problem, and the U.S. government's response would grow in intensity over the Nixon years.⁹ Naftali acknowledges the new awareness of the lethality of Palestinian radicalism and the possibility of nuclear terrorism; however, he insists that terrorism "remained the annoying little gnat that buzzed around the superpower while it was trying to handle truly dangerous matters."¹⁰ According to Naftali, although the threat of terrorism increased, Nixon's foreign policy team continued to view terrorism as, at most, a secondary problem, as Watergate was about to engulf the Nixon presidency, the U.S. position in South Vietnam was collapsing, and fruitful negotiations with the Soviets were proceeding.¹¹

Naftali downplays the priority of violence in the Middle East on Nixon's foreign policy agenda. This is contradictory to Joan Hoff's observation that Nixon wanted to declare 1973 as the "Year of the Middle East."¹² Although she believes that Nixon

⁸ Piszkievicz, 33.

⁹ Timothy Naftali, *Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism*, (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 33.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹² Joan Hoff, *Nixon Reconsidered*, (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 253.

waited too long to focus systematically on Middle Eastern problems, because by the fall of 1973 he was preoccupied by Watergate and in the early years of his presidency he focused on Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union.¹³ In *Nixon and Kissinger*, Robert Dallek emphasizes Nixon's interest in the Middle East, as he explains that the region and its domestic repercussions were a nightmare from which Nixon saw no likely escape.¹⁴ Middle East difficulties began to test Nixon's patience and, according to Dallek, Kissinger warned Nixon in 1969 that "the situation in the Middle East is now the most dangerous we face."¹⁵ Hoff and Dallek focus on Nixon's foreign policy, not counter-terrorism, yet both emphasize the importance of the Middle East. However, linkages between counter-terror and the Middle East by both authors are tenuous, if non-existent. This presents a conceptual gap in the literature. The works focused on American counter-terrorism underestimate how the American government conceptualized the serious threat of Middle East terrorism, particularly in the later years of the Nixon Administration. Bowden and Farber go as far as to say that the "war on terror" really began years after Nixon's presidency ended. However, Hoff and Dallek assert that the Middle East was a prominent foreign policy issue for the Nixon Administration. These inconsistencies beg the questions: How was terrorism conceptualized by the American government during the Nixon years? Was terrorism a serious threat to American national security between 1969 and 1974? Was Middle East terrorism in particular on the rise during the Nixon presidency? To what extent were U.S. officials linking terrorism to the Middle East and/or Islam at this time? How much of our own understanding of terrorism is shaped by post-9/11 realities?

¹³ Hoff, 253.

¹⁴ Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 179.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 175.

The following analysis provides an historical study of how the American government conceptualized terrorism between January 20, 1969 and August 9, 1974. Using government resources I look at the issues and events given the most attention in the subject years. To represent the American government I have drawn from the *Public Papers of President Nixon*, *Congressional Records* from 1969 to 1974, the *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-1976*, *Department of State Bulletins*, and limited conversations between Nixon and government officials. In this study, many of the resources had abundant entries on terrorism, yet the lack of information in some sources speaks volumes on how terrorism was conceptualized in the early 1970s.¹⁶ For example, “terrorism” is not listed in the *Congressional Record Index* for the 91st Congress, 1st Session (January 3, 1969 to November 23, 1969), the 91st Congress, 2nd Session (January 19, 1970 – January 2, 1971), or the 92nd Congress, 1st Session (January 21, 1971 – December 17, 1971). The 92nd Congress, 2nd Session (January 18, 1972 – October 18, 1972) listed “terrorism,” but directed the reader to “see international.” The 93rd Congress, both 1st and 2nd Sessions listed “terrorism”; however the 2nd session directed the reader to “see also crime.” Similarly, Nixon’s public papers do not list “terrorism” in 1969 or 1971, but “Hijackings, aircraft” and “Hijackings, airplane” are listed respectively. These index listings are very telling of the American government’s shifting perception of terrorism from 1969 to 1974.

The government documents in the early years of Nixon’s presidency tend to separate “hijacking,” “kidnapping,” and “terrorism” as different entities in the indices and texts. This distinction is very telling of the urgency the government attributed to hijacking and kidnapping in 1969 and the early 1970s. Hijackings to Cuba and the

¹⁶ “Early 1970s” is used throughout this study to identify the Nixon presidency from 1969 to 1974.

Middle East in these years were often referred to as violations of civil aviation safety, rather than acts of terrorism. The government documents referred to the kidnapping of diplomats as politically motivated kidnappings. It was not until 1972 that both the *Congressional Record* and the *Public Papers of President Nixon* included hijacking and kidnapping in their reference to terrorism. However, the *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-1976* included hijackings to the Middle East in the U.S. policy towards terrorism, yet the U.S.-Cuba hijacking agreement details were not classified as terrorism. For my purposes, I look at hijackings, kidnappings, and terrorism together in the early years because the rhetoric is combined by 1972.

Relying on indices when researching presents a number of issues, because it is unknown how accurately the listings reflect the content of the documents. Terrorism is widely studied in the post-9/11 era and many scholars have defined it and categorized the actions that fall under the heading. However, in the early 1970s, terrorism was not understood to the extent that it is today. Even when terrorism was brought to the UN in 1972, the term was not defined. Consequently, for my purposes, I mainly researched government documents that were listed under “terrorism,” as well as other topics terrorism listings referred to, such as “crime,” “international terrorism,” “hijacking,” and so forth. However, for the Munich massacre, many of the discussions in Congress were found under the headings “Olympic Games,” “Arabs,” and “Israel,” with only a few references listed under “terrorism” in the index. Valuable research is conducted using indices, but the historian must be aware of their shortcomings while addressing a presently-studied phenomenon in the past.

From 1969 to 1972, the American government was predominately concerned with hijackings, kidnappings in Latin America, and violent protests at home. Middle East terrorism, particularly by the PFLP, was gaining momentum, but it was not until the Munich attack by Black September in 1972 that the documents clearly begin to quote government officials as linking terrorism with Arab and Palestinian nationals. The phrase “Arab terrorists” is reiterated throughout the papers and records, especially in 1973 and 1974. This signifies that the American government conceptualized terrorism as a minor policing problem to be quashed in the early years of Nixon’s presidency, but by September 1972, for Nixon, Congress, and foreign policy officials, terrorism became synonymous with the Middle East. Although America had an oil crisis in the 1970s, it is only with hindsight that we can make the correlation with the importance of the Middle East and America’s growing dependence on oil. However, with the Munich massacre, the increased targeting of Jewish Americans and Middle East diplomats, and the growing Arab aggression against Israel, the American government saw Middle East terrorism as an international problem and reached out for world condemnation of the atrocities.

1969: Inconvenient Detours

When Nixon entered the White House in January, 1969, the hijacking of aircraft to Cuba was a growing problem. In his first five weeks, nine U.S. aircraft and three from other countries, all commercial airlines, were taken to Cuba.¹⁷ The hijackers were not Communists seeking asylum in Havana, rather they were mostly American citizens looking for money and freedom when they landed in Cuba. In the midst of the Cold War,

¹⁷ “Memorandum from the President’s Assistant For National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon,” Washington, February 7, 1969, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45587.htm>

Cuban-American relations were frigid in the 1960s. Fidel Castro did not initially condemn the hijackings and diplomatic talks began only when the landings in Havana became a common concern for both Cuba and the U.S. However, none of the incidents had involved the U.S. in a serious international problem. Washington's main concern was the return of the plane, passengers, and crew to its place of origin. Furthermore, an international code of conduct to this end would ensure that the plane, passengers, and crew were safely returned if detained.

On September 19, 1969, Cuba announced a new anti-hijacking law to deal with the situation. The law provided "for the prosecution or extradition of persons hijacking aircraft or ships, or otherwise violating immigration regulations. Extradition would take place, however, only on the basis of reciprocal bilateral treaties that would still preserve Havana's right to offer political asylum."¹⁸ The preamble to the law rejected multilateral agreements by agencies such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the UN, and it is heavily laden with anti-U.S. propaganda.¹⁹ U.S. Secretary of State, William Rogers, followed up on the hijacking law presented by Cuba saying, "It is our belief that the return of hijackers from Cuba for prosecution in the United States would be the most effective deterrent to future hijackings."²⁰

In a September address before the General Assembly of the UN, Nixon declared that "by any standards, aircraft hijackings are morally, politically, and legally

¹⁸ "Memorandum from Viron P. Vaky of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)," Washington, September 23, 1969, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45588.htm>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "Memorandum from Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon," Washington, October 31, 1969, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45612.htm>

indefensible.”²¹ Nixon called upon nations to condemn hijacking and deny asylum to the terrorists, and although he did not specifically mention any particular countries, it was clear that the U.S. needed Cuba to thwart the inconvenience. He continued, “This is an issue which transcends politics; there is no need for it to become the subject of polemics or a focus of political differences. It involves the interests of every nation, the safety of every air passenger, and the integrity of that structure of order on which a world community depends.”²² Nixon’s speech did not have a sense of urgency to it, nor did it classify the hijackings in 1969 as serious or dangerous for Americans. Hijackings to Cuba were a nuisance that was wrapped up politically in past grievances and Cold War tensions.

Nixon’s 1969 address to the UN also spoke to the tensions in the Middle East and his comments on hijacking were applicable. He said that recent events “point up anew the urgency of a stable peace.”²³ In his speech, Nixon specifically referred to the TWA flight 840 that members of the PFLP hijacked en route to Athens and landed in Damascus in August, 1969. The Syrian government released all passengers and crew except passengers who were citizens of Israeli nationality, which the government detained. Charles Butler of the Department of State saw the failure of the Syrian government to release all passengers as an encouragement of unlawful interference with civil aviation.²⁴ According to him, the matter was of the utmost concern of all nations.²⁵ The Syrians held

²¹ “Address Before the 24th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,” September 18, 1969, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1969_pdf_files/1969_0365.pdf

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ “Telegram 147505 from the Department of State to the Representative to the International Civilian Aviation Organization (Butler),” Montreal, Canada, August 31, 1969, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45249.htm>

²⁵ Ibid.

two Israeli men for the release of two Syrian pilots that landed in Israel by mistake. This incident shocked the American government. Like the hijackings to Cuba, their concern was the safe return of the passengers and crew. With the detention of Israeli passengers, Kissinger recommended intensified efforts to gain the release of the two prisoners. He advocated preventing Syria from being elected to the Security Council, and warning other governments and international organizations that the U.S. was losing patience and seriously considering strong diplomatic sanctions against Syria.²⁶ The detainment of Israeli citizens in Damascus concerned U.S. officials and they sought action in concert with Israel, yet hijacking, although recognized as a safety issue, was still seen as an annoyance in 1969.

1970: The Annoying Little Gnat to be Squashed

By 1970, terrorism was on the rise, but it remained a policing issue for Washington. The government largely associated terrorism with revolutionary leftist groups that needed to be prosecuted as criminals. The government documents highlight three areas of concern for Washington that year: kidnapping of diplomats in Latin America, bombs and disturbances by Americans in protest of Vietnam, and hijackings in the Middle East. By 1970, murder and reprisal had become commonplace in Latin America as terrorists robbed banks and diplomats disappeared with increasing frequency. The U.S. Ambassador to OAS, Joseph John Jova classified the “brutal murder” of diplomats as criminal acts that presented “an anguishing problem, a problem which we

²⁶ “Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon,” Washington, September 21, 1969, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45266.htm>

recognize has no easy solution.”²⁷ Jova urged the OAS to consider the problem of “kidnapping and terrorism.” The OAS resolution “General Action and Policy of the Organization with Regard to Acts of Terrorism and, Especially, the Kidnapping of Persons and Extortion in Connection With That Crime” also grammatically separated the two acts. According to Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration, William Macomber, all of the kidnappings that involved foreign officials (including U.S.) had been carried out by left-wing extremist dissident groups.²⁸ Macomber said that all of the instances seemed to be motivated by three-fold desires: first, to obtain the release of political prisoners (often the kidnapper’s comrades), second, to publicize and gain sympathy for their cause, and third, to embarrass their government.²⁹ He believed that “politically-motivated kidnapping of U.S. officials could occur in virtually any Latin American country where there are extremist groups with the above-described motives.”³⁰

The U.S. position in OAS policy discussions called for a greater emphasis on the international aspects of the problem, which included:

- (a) a specific condemnation of terrorist acts (including kidnapping) against representatives of foreign states; (b) a recommendation that member states facilitate the extradition of terrorists; (c) a provision setting in motion the preparation of an international instrument declaring terrorists acts against representatives of foreign states to be international crimes; (d) a call on world opinion and particularly on countries and organizations that maintain ties with terrorist movements.³¹

²⁷ Joseph John Jova, “OAS Asked to Consider Problem of Kidnapping and Terrorism,” *Department of State Bulletin*, May 25, 1970, 662.

²⁸ “Action Memorandum from Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration (Macomber) to Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson),” Washington, April 2, 1970, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45299.htm>

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “Memorandum from the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Eliot) to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger),” Washington, June 24, 1970, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45302.htm>

Executive Secretary of the Department of State, Theodore Eliot, hoped the last suggestion might serve as a springboard for future consideration by the UN. The safety of American diplomats was at risk in 1970 in Latin America, but the measures sought by American officials largely called on the international community to take notice and heighten security. Americans were not targeted directly because of ideology or origin, but they were caught up in the grievances of extremists.

In 1970, Nixon classified bombings in American cities as terrorism and criminal activity. In March, the administration hoped to bring the crimes under Federal jurisdiction, while not displacing State or local authority. Nixon said the year brought “an alarming increase in the number of criminal bombings in the cities of our country....Clearly, many of these bombings have been the work of political fanatics, many of them young criminals posturing as romantic revolutionaries.”³² In a message to Congress, Nixon called for “powers to control the epidemic of terrorist bombings and nihilist destruction which has suddenly become a feature of American life.”³³ Although Nixon expressed the bombings to be the work of terrorists, the destruction was also the result of criminal activity that needed to be policed. The government specified that these acts included bombs and fires on campuses and in cities, attacks on school buses, the destruction of offices, the seizure and harassment of college officials, the use of force and coercion to bar students and teachers from classrooms and even to close down schools.³⁴

³² “Statement About Legislative Proposals Concerning Explosives,” March 25, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0093.pdf

³³ “Special Message to the Congress on the Administration’s Legislative Program,” September 11, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0289.pdf

³⁴ “Address in the Alfred M. Landon Lecture Series at Kansas State University,” September 16, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0295.pdf

Nixon's public addresses were forceful in asserting that violence and terror, such as bombs on college campuses, had no place in a free society. He went so far as to call the disturbances "the greatest crisis in the history of American education."³⁵ To Nixon, the problem was criminals upsetting the education system. However, he declared that the bombers were a small minority. He told a crowd in Kansas City, Missouri that most students "want an education. They may disagree, but they believe, as you believe, in a system that provides for a method for peaceful change, there is no cause that justifies resort to violence."³⁶

For the American government in 1970, the issue of violent student protest and bombings in cities was a criminal issue that needed to be cracked down on. The national guard did just that when they shot and killed four student protesters and wounded several others at Kent State University in Ohio on May 4. The students were protesting America's invasion of Cambodia. The grievances of the protesters were irrelevant to Nixon when they resorted to any type of violence, including throwing rocks at armed guards as they did at Kent State. The deaths had lasting effects on campuses throughout the country, as students joined in protest against the war in Vietnam. Groups such as the Weather Underground turned militant during this time in the face of what they saw as government oppression. The Weatherman were responsible for a number of bombs that rocked American businesses and government targets during the early 1970s.

Disillusioned with the state of international affairs and their own government, students in

³⁵ "Address in the Alfred M. Landon Lecture Series at Kansas State University," September 16, 1970, Available online.

³⁶ "Remarks in Kansas City, Missouri," October 19, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0368.pdf

1970 turned to protests and some to violence. Although this sort of terrorism was on the rise in 1970, it was no more than a criminal nuisance for Nixon.

Also on the rise in 1970 were hijackings, specifically in the Middle East. Hijackings to Cuba continued, but were on the decline as the U.S. and Cuba worked on a bilateral agreement in the spring of that year. In September, the State Department released a telegram with the details of four hijackings of New York City bound planes by the PFLP. Three of the planes were diverted to Dawson's Field in Jordan, one plane was diverted to Cairo and a fifth hijacking attempt was foiled. At Dawson's Field, the terrorists segregated the crew and passengers and released all but the 56 Jewish passengers whom they kept in custody. Washington sought to arrange rescue for the people aboard the flights and during the crisis it became clear that the U.S. was vulnerable to attack by Arab nationalists because of its support of Israel. In reference to the hostage situation, Nixon announced that "we [the U.S. government] do not accept the proposition that some American citizens shall be treated one way and some will be treated another way, because they happen to have been born in another country."³⁷ He continued to say that once people become American citizens, they are entitled to the protection of the American Government and they will have it every place in the world.³⁸ The American government was more concerned with the segregation and danger of the hostage situation than the hijackings themselves.

During the crisis, Nixon announced a program to combat airplane hijacking in order to deal with air piracy immediately and effectively. This program put specially

³⁷ "Remarks at a Citizenship Day Reception in Chicago, Illinois," September 17, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0296.pdf

³⁸ Ibid.

trained, armed U.S. personnel on flights of commercial airlines. Airlines carrying the American flag extended electronic surveillance equipment to all gateway airports. The program planned for new detection and security measures, including the possibility of metal and x-ray detectors, as well as the extradition or punishment of hijackers in all countries. Nixon called upon all countries to take joint action to suspend services to countries that refused to co-operate in the protection of the lives and property of American citizens.³⁹ In September, Nixon was confident that the U.S. could efficiently deal with the problem of hijackings. He declared that the U.S. “can – and we will – deal effectively with piracy in the skies today.”⁴⁰ Although hijackings in the Middle East were on the rise from 1969 to 1970, Nixon felt that the possibility of reducing hijackings in the future had been substantially increased, because the international community was outraged by the incident at Dawson’s Field.⁴¹

1971: U.S. Entanglements with the Middle East

In 1971, the U.S. was in negotiation for regulations to deal with hijackings to Cuba and a convention to prevent and punish acts of terrorism in the form of kidnappings and extortion, but the majority of government sources referenced hijackings in the Middle East. Throughout 1971, Washington offered limited sources, as the government continued to conceptualize terrorism as hijackings that could be dealt with by enforcing international regulations. In several speeches that year, Nixon made reference to The

³⁹ “Statement Announcing a Program To Deal With Airplane Hijacking,” September 11, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0291.pdf

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Exchange of Remarks with Reporters at Leonardo da Vinci Airport About the Released American Hostages,” September 28, 1970, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1970_pdf_files/1970_0306.pdf

Hague Convention of February 1970, the 1971 Montreal Convention, and the steps the U.S. government was taking to suppress the unlawful seizure of airplanes. The U.S. was forceful about implementing laws in order to constructively deal with the hijackings that endangered Americans. With this, Nixon wanted all countries onboard to deal effectively with this “serious global threat to international aviation. No country or area is immune from this threat.”⁴²

At the beginning of the year, Nixon encouraged countries all over the world to “counter the outbreaks of hijacking and kidnapping.”⁴³ In the same address to Congress in February, Nixon detailed the government’s involvement in the Middle East. Terrorism was still not necessarily associated in the minds of U.S. officials with the Middle East, yet it was clear that by 1971 the Middle East was becoming a prominent fixture in American foreign policy. Nixon stated that “we [the U.S. government] know what our vital interests are in the Middle East. Those interests include friendly and constructive relations with all nations in the area. Other nations know that we are ready to protect those vital interests.”⁴⁴ In 1971, the U.S. government was in the process of dealing with hijacking and kidnapping through diplomatic channels, and American foreign policy was becoming increasingly entangled in Middle East affairs.

⁴² “Message to the Senate Transmitting Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft,” April 15, 1971, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1971_pdf_files/1971_0142.pdf

⁴³ “Radio Address About Second Annual Foreign Policy Report to the Congress,” February 25, 1971, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1971_pdf_files/1971_0073.pdf
⁴⁴ Ibid.

1972: International Terrorism at the Olympics

The language of the government sources in 1972 present more immediacy when they discuss cases of hijacking. The terminology also included hijacking as an act of terrorism. For example, Nixon declared in March that he hoped to prevent air travel from becoming a vehicle for traffic in terrorism. He continued to say that the U.S. would keep its airports, airways, and air travellers safe.⁴⁵ In the same address, he specified three incidents of sabotage and terrorism that were narrowly averted in New York, Las Vegas, and Seattle. With his implementation of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation later that year, Nixon further integrated the two terms when he acknowledged that “the problem of sabotage, armed terrorist attacks, and other criminal acts against aircraft and air travelers pose an increasingly grave threat to civil aviation around the world.”⁴⁶

In a *Department of State Bulletin*, legal advisor John R. Stevenson thought it would be counterproductive to try to define terrorism. Rather, he attempted to identify certain categories of offences that should be condemned by all states, regardless of ideology or alignment. These categories included: first, hijacking and sabotage of civil aircraft; second, the kidnapping and assassination of foreign diplomats and officials; and finally, the export of international terrorism to countries not involved in the conflicts which spawned those acts of terrorism.⁴⁷ Stevenson’s analysis reflected the way the U.S.

⁴⁵ “Statement About Air Transportation,” March 9, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0083.pdf

⁴⁶ “Message to the Senate Transmitting Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation,” September 15, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0300.pdf

⁴⁷ John R. Stevenson, “International Law and the Export of Terrorism,” *Department of State Bulletin*, December 4, 1972, 646.

government conceptualized terrorism in 1972 – including hijacking, kidnapping, and the export of terrorism.

The issue intensified after eight members of a Palestinian terrorist group Black September killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games in September, 1972. The massacre at Munich set off a shock wave throughout the international community. Senator Hugh Scott from Pennsylvania declared: “we must continue to express our deep concern at the increase of terrorist violence and to insure that every effort is made to combat the use of terror by those who would undermine world order.”⁴⁸ Furthermore, Congress passed Resolution 100 which “deplores any act of international terrorism, particularly where innocent third parties are utilized to accomplish such acts.”⁴⁹

Nixon understood that the world was dealing with international outlaws who were unpredictable, and in his opinion the U.S. needed to take extra security measures to protect those who might be targets of this kind of activity in the future (namely Israeli citizens).⁵⁰ Following Munich, the American government seized the opportunity to mobilize governments worldwide to acknowledge terrorism as an international problem. In a telephone conversation between Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Alexander Haig, and Nixon, the President said the U.S. should indicate that they will “break diplomatic relations with countries that harbour any sort of guerrillas. Hell, what do we care about Lebanon. [*sic*] Think we have to be awfully tough...Any nation that harbours or gives

⁴⁸ Hugh D. Scott Jr., “Sanctions Against Nations Harboring Terrorists,” *Congressional Record*, September 28, 1972, vol.118, part 25, 32638.

⁴⁹ “Senate Concurrent Resolution 100 – Sanctions Against Nations Providing Sanctuary to Terrorists,” *Congressional Record*, September 28, 1972, vol.118, part 25, 32651.

⁵⁰ “Remarks to Reporters About the Assault on Israeli Athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany,” September 5, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0287.pdf

sanctuary to these international outlaws we will cut off economic support.”⁵¹ The U.S. government was outraged by the events at Munich and realized that the international community could not stand by without enacting preventive measures for future attacks. Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff admitted in a memorandum to Kissinger that the hard reality was that there was really very little the U.S., or any major power, could do to rectify the situation or make sure that it would not happen again.⁵² The U.S. could attempt to focus world moral indignation and press for tighter international security measures, but it would remain vulnerable to the dedicated extremist.⁵³

In order to pursue international measures, Kissinger recommended that the U.S. go to the UN and see “whether we can get some international rules on harbouring guerrillas and so forth. That is a concrete measure that affects the world. That’s a statesman like thing.”⁵⁴ During the early 1970s, the best option for the U.S. to thwart the threat of terrorism was the implementation of international rules to hold terrorists accountable. After Munich, Kissinger urged Nixon to use the wake of Munich to do something concrete in the UN. Munich also intensified the Arab-Israeli conflict and in Nixon’s opinion “this incident blows any chance at [a peace agreement]” and Kissinger agreed.⁵⁵ Instead of going to the Security Council on behalf of Israel, the U.S. took up

⁵¹ “Editorial Note,” September 5, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45434.htm>

⁵² “Memorandum from Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger),” Washington, September 6, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45435.htm>

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ “Conversation Between President Nixon and the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger),” Washington, September 6, 1972, 8:13 a.m., *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45513.htm>

⁵⁵ “Conversation Among President Nixon, the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), and White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman),” Washington, September 6, 1972, 9:53 a.m. –

the issue as an international problem. According to Nixon, “it will be good to put the goddamn UN on the spot. We want to put them on the spot on this issue, because we think we got them by the balls here.”⁵⁶

In the wake of the Munich attacks, Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim included a debate on terrorism in the 27th Session of the General Assembly. U.S. Secretary of State, William Rogers, strongly encouraged Waldheim’s proposal and believed that the UN could perform a great act by recommending measures to protect fundamental freedoms against terrorist violence.⁵⁷ The U.S. circulated a draft convention at the UN which intended to “single out acts of political violence which occur both outside the State of nationality of the perpetrator and outside the State against which the act is directed.”⁵⁸ The convention intended to prevent terrorism and punish terrorists. To be covered under the convention, an act of terrorism must be directed against civilians rather than members of the armed forces. The U.S. representatives to the UN purposely drew up a narrow convention in order to exclude civil violence in which a national was acting against his own government within his own territory. Therefore, national liberation movements, such as the fight against apartheid in Africa was not considered terrorism.

The purpose of limiting the acts covered increased the chances for agreement. The proposed convention attempted to single out the internationalization of violent acts committed abroad, namely Munich, the assassinations of foreign officials, mail bombs,

12:38 p.m., *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45516.htm>

⁵⁶ “Conversation Among President Nixon, the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), and White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman),” September 6, 1972, Available online.

⁵⁷ “Telegram 167911 from the Department of State to the Mission at the United Nations,” September 14, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45522.htm>

⁵⁸ “Information Memorandum from the Legal Advisor of the Department of State (Stevenson) to Secretary of State Rogers,” Washington, September 22, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45533.htm>

and hijackings. If the UN implemented a strong resolution, Nixon believed it would “further strengthen the hands of all nations in dealing with the scourge of terrorism.”⁵⁹

U.S. Representative W. Tapley Bennett Jr. acknowledged that the draft convention “does not seek to define terrorism or to deal with all acts which might be called terrorism.

Rather, it is a narrowly drawn convention which focuses on the common interest of all nations in preventing the spread of violence from areas involved in civil or international conflict.”⁶⁰

However, the U.S. was unable to convince the African bloc that action against terrorism would not impinge on national liberation movements, because the U.S. convention was aimed at targeting recent terrorist acts in the Middle East. On December 11, the UN’s Legal Committee approved a resolution sponsored by a group of “non-aligned” countries that expressed “deep concern over increasing acts of violence which endanger or take innocent human lives.”⁶¹ According to Rogers, the resolution was “disappointingly weak” and “only asks nations to submit proposals for further action to the UN Secretary-General by June 1, 1973, and creates an ad hoc committee to study them.”⁶² The resolution reaffirmed the inalienable right to self-determination and urged states to devote their immediate attention to finding just and peaceful solutions to the

⁵⁹ “Statement on Signing the Instrument of Ratification of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation,” November 1, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0395.pdf

⁶⁰ W. Tapley Bennett and George H. Bush, “U.S. Votes Against U.N. General Assembly Resolution Calling For Study of Terrorism,” *Department of State Bulletin*, January 22, 1973, No.1-131, 89.

⁶¹ “Memorandum from Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon,” Washington, December 11, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45564.htm>

⁶² *Ibid.*

underlying causes which gave rise to acts of violence which endangered or took innocent human lives or jeopardized fundamental freedoms.⁶³

During the debates, the U.S. compromised to the middle ground and supported the Italian draft which asked the International Law Commission to draw up a draft convention on international terrorism for adoption at the next General Assembly. The weak UN resolution that was approved disappointed American officials and some pointed to the ineffectiveness of the UN, since it did not take concrete actions against what was undeniably an international problem that was of the utmost concern of all nations. For the U.S., the Munich tragedy provided an opportunity to bring the issue to the UN to get international regulations against terrorism which was rampant in the Middle East. The internationalization of terrorism was becoming a growing problem in the Middle East and America began to link terrorism to that region in the wake of Munich.

On September 25, Nixon announced the establishment of a Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism,⁶⁴ to be chaired by Secretary Rogers. The Committee brought together the resources of U.S. agencies to bear effectively on the task of preventing and eliminating terrorism. According to Nixon, the Committee “will consider the most effective means by which to prevent terrorism here and abroad, and it will also take the lead in establishing procedures to ensure that our government can take appropriate action

⁶³ “Telegram 5526 from the Mission to the United Nations to the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,” New York, December 13, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45565.htm>

⁶⁴ Members of the Committee included: the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defence, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Transportation, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs, the Acting Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and such others that the chairmen considered necessary. A Working Group was comprised of personally designated senior representatives of the members of the Committee. The committee was abolished in 1977 and the National Security Council initiated a study to assess U.S. abilities to combat terrorism.

in response to acts of terrorism swiftly and effectively.”⁶⁵ The creation of the committee indicated Nixon’s emerging hard line against terrorism at home and abroad. The Committee was formed shortly after Munich, and was Nixon’s domestic reaction to increase U.S. action against terrorism.

Later that month, due to the rise of terrorist activity, Washington announced stricter visa requirements for visitors entering the country. Only native and naturalized Canadians, British subjects from Bermuda and Mexican citizens with a valid border-crossing card were exempt from the restrictions. In October, the Nixon administration acted on a promise to protect Israeli citizens in the U.S. from terrorist attacks, and began a major effort to screen Arabs residing in the U.S. suspected of planning terrorism, and to screen travellers from Arab nations more carefully.⁶⁶ The government hoped to pinpoint potential terrorists before a threat could be actualized. Surveillance and interrogation operations supposedly targeted members of Black September and other terrorist groups. However, Arab Americans were outraged by the implied assumption that they were dangerous because of their country of origin. This measure demonstrated that the American government associated the Middle East with terrorism, specifically Arabs. Terrorism against Israeli citizens was a serious threat in the eyes of the American government in 1972, and the screening of Arabs went so far as to assume Arab guilt based on nationality.

⁶⁵ “Statement About Action To Combat Terrorism,” September 27, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0324.pdf

⁶⁶ “U.S. Checks Arabs to Block Terror,” *The New York Times*, October 5, 1972, 97.

1973: The Threat of Middle East Terrorism Hardens

By 1973, Cuba and the U.S. reached an agreement to thwart hijackings to Havana. The parties agreed to give serious consideration to extraditing hijackers, to provide continued protection of travellers, to return funds or property obtained illegally, to try, in accordance with national laws, any person or group who conducted air piracy, and to hold the possibility of granting political asylum in some cases where no financial extortion or physical injuries are involved.⁶⁷ Hijackings to Cuba became far less frequent by 1972, and by the time the governments implemented the agreement in 1973, the problem had largely subsided.

By 1973, aside from sparse references to Cuba and Latin America, the overwhelming majority of government sources commented on terrorism in the Middle East and specified “Arab terrorists” or “Palestinian terrorists” for the first time in the texts. Armin H. Meyer, special assistant to Secretary of State Rogers, explained that what the U.S. government was dealing with was “an upsurge, almost an epidemic. It ranges from the killing of Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich and the murder of two U.S. diplomats in Khartoum, on down to skyjackings, kidnappings, and letter bombs.”⁶⁸ Meyer commented that it was hard to break down where the most dangerous places in the world were, but “obviously the Middle East is one of the hot spots.”⁶⁹

In 1973 “Arab Terrorism” assumed a central place in the rhetoric of the American government. Although kidnappings continued to be a problem in 1973 and letter bombs

⁶⁷ “Memorandum from Serban Vallimarescu of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft),” Washington, February 13, 1973, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45640.htm>

⁶⁸ “Foreign Terrorism Spreading to U.S.?” *U.S. News and World Report*, July 16, 1973, 37.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

became another violent tool of terrorists, many of the events commented on by the U.S. government referred to Arab terrorists. For example, the Representative Frank Brasco of New York addressed the House of Representatives saying “Arab terrorism set a new precedent by foully murdering Josef Alon, an Israeli military attaché, in front of his suburban Maryland home.”⁷⁰ Brasco continued to say that “such murders are blazing illustrations of a mentality rife throughout the Arab world. These terrorists are financed, trained, armed, and vocally supported by most Arab governments. They travel and hide because of abuse of diplomatic passports and immunity.”⁷¹ According to Nixon, the murder of two American diplomats, Ambassador Cleo A. Noel and Deputy Chief of Mission George Curtis Moore by Arab terrorists in Khartoum, Sudan underscored, once again, the need for all nations to take a firm stand against the menace of international terrorism.⁷²

In December, the Representative Lester Wolff of New York addressed the House of Representatives in response to Arab guerrilla massacres of unarmed civilians. Wolff commented that the murders reminded the American government “in the starkest terms that elements of the Arab world simply do not believe in the settlement of serious international problems by any method other than murder and terror.”⁷³ He also entered into the record an editorial from the December 22 edition of the *New York Daily News* that listed a chronology of the long series of Arab terrorism. According to the editorial, 1969 lists 10 acts of terror committed by Arabs, 1970 lists nine, 1971 lists two, 1972 lists

⁷⁰ Frank J. Brasco, “The Middle East and the Energy Crisis,” *Congressional Record*, August 1, 1973, vol.119, part 21, 27385.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² “Statement on the Slaying of Two American Diplomats by Terrorists in Khartoum, The Sudan,” March 2, 1973, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1973_pdf_files/1973_0065.pdf

⁷³ Lester L. Wolff, “When Will the U.N. Act?” *Congressional Record*, December 22, 1973, vol.119, part 33, 43427.

22, and 1973 lists 23 so far that year.⁷⁴ It was evident from the chronology that terrorism in the Middle East was on the rise from 1969 to 1974.

Hijackings in particular were continually linked to the Middle East and Arab aggression. The U.S. government continued to deplore such incidents as the Arab terrorist attack at the Leonardo da Vinci Airport in Fiumicino, Italy. According to Nixon, “the perpetrators of such atrocities can only delay the day when peace and justice may return to the Middle East.”⁷⁵ Both the *Public Papers of President Nixon* and the *Congressional Records* made clear references to “Arab terrorists” in 1973. A Representative from Pennsylvania, Robert Nix, declared that “the indiscriminate terrorism by cold-blooded execution and haphazard firing on aircraft in crowded air terminals has accomplished only the refreshing of the disgust of the civilized world with Arab terrorism.”⁷⁶ Nix goes so far as to tie Arab terrorists to the oil crisis. To him, it was not only Israel that was threatened by Arab terrorism, but the U.S. and all of the nations of the Western World.⁷⁷ He continued on to say, “it should also be clear the energy crisis engineered by Arab governments differs only in kind from the motivations of Palestinian guerrillas.”⁷⁸

The U.S. government saw the actions of the Arabs as detrimental to the peace talks, as a Representative from Kentucky, Romano Mazzoli, pointed out: “the acts of brutal terrorism by fanatic Palestinians, the inhumane and illegal actions of Syria

⁷⁴ Wolff, “When Will the U.N. Act?” 43427.

⁷⁵ “Statement About an Arab Terrorist Attack at Leonardo da Vinci Airport, Fiumicino, Italy,” December 18, 1973, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1973_pdf_files/1973_0362.pdf

⁷⁶ Robert Nix, “Nix Denounces the Bestiality of Palestine Guerillas,” *Congressional Record*, December 18, 1973, vol.119, part 32, 42325.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 42326.

regarding POW's are outrageous, because they are crimes against human nature."⁷⁹

Brasco, a Representative from New York, forcefully declared that "everyone bleeds publicly and deplores the sad situation in the Middle East. No one indicates that the terrorists are an establishment subsidized by Arab countries, paid by them, and treated as public heroes in their press."⁸⁰ The language of Brasco's strong condemnation of Arab terrorism speaks volumes to the way the American government conceptualized terrorism in 1973. At this time terrorism, namely hijackings and kidnappings, was clearly the work of Arab terrorists who murdered innocent victims in cold blood and had a vested interest in further bloodshed.

1974: Another 'Guerilla Action,' Another Challenge to All Decent Human Instinct

According to Lewis Hoffacker, Special Assistant to the Secretary and Coordinator for Combating Terrorism, hijacking within the U.S. fell significantly since the beginning of 1973. He did not attribute it to luck, but rather to the rigorous airport security program and the evolution of a bilateral agreement with Cuba.⁸¹ Hoffacker said the American government was concerned with terrorism throughout the world, even if Americans were not directly involved. Terrorism was a new global phenomenon to which everyone was vulnerable and could not be addressed without global attention. He explained that the U.S. approach to counter-terrorism was based on a principle derived from the U.S. liberal heritage, and from the UN Declaration of Human Rights.⁸² However, Hoffacker said "the

⁷⁹ Romano L. Mazzoli, "A Just and Lasting Peace in the Mideast," *Congressional Record*, December 22, 1973, vol.119, part 33, 43524.

⁸⁰ Frank J. Brasco, "More Assassins Go Free," *Congressional Record*, December 22, 1973, vol.119, part 33, 43516.

⁸¹ Lewis Hoffacker, "The U.S. Government Response to Terrorism: A Global Approach," *Department of State Bulletin*, March 18, 1974, 276.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 277.

violence of international terrorism violates that principle. The issue is not war. The issue is not the strivings of people to achieve self-determination and independence.”⁸³ Rather the issue, according to Secretary Rogers, was “whether the vulnerable lines of international communication – the airways and the mail, diplomatic discourse and international meetings – can continue without disruption, to bring nations and people together.”⁸⁴ The U.S. was dealing with terrorism all over the world, but by 1974, the biggest threat was in the Middle East and the American government frequently used the term “Arab terrorists” to describe the perpetrators.

In the 2nd Session of the 93rd Congress, all but a few of the records listed under “terrorism” in the index referred specifically to the Middle East and Arab aggression. The Anti-hijacking Act, which made air piracy punishable by the death penalty,⁸⁵ the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst,⁸⁶ and the murder of Judge Jim Lawless by a letter bomb⁸⁷ are all indexed under “crime.” Hijackings, kidnappings and letter bombs continued to be international problems in 1974, but the *Congressional Records* paid particular attention to “Arab terrorism” in reference to the massacre of Israeli schoolchildren by Arab terrorists in Maalot, a village in the Western Galilee region of Israel.

On May 15, members of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) murdered twenty-two innocent Israeli children in Maalot. The U.S. Congress went on record decrying the violence at Maalot with 324 cosponsors in the House for the resolution that condemned the brutal terrorist attack and urged Nixon to raise the matter

⁸³ Hoffacker, 277.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 278.

⁸⁵ “Antihijacking Act of 1974,” *Congressional Record*, March 28, 1974, vol.120, part 7, 8791.

⁸⁶ Richard Ichord, “Political Kidnapping,” *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1974, vol.120, part 3, 3564-3566.

⁸⁷ Mike McCormick, “Judge Jim Lawless Murdered by Letter Bomb,” *Congressional Record*, June 4, 1974, vol.120, pt.13, 17520.

in the UN Security Council.⁸⁸ The language used in Congress referred to the Arab terrorists as “savages,”⁸⁹ “butchers,”⁹⁰ “fanatics,”⁹¹ “vermin,”⁹² and “madmen.”⁹³ The outrage of the U.S. government in the wake of the attacks was heightened because the terrorists targeted innocent children. A Representative from Pennsylvania, Joshua Eilberg, said the Maalot murders were a crime which could only be compared to the worst atrocities committed by the Nazis.⁹⁴ Illinois Representative Paul Findley asserted that the tragedy “by Palestinian Arab terrorists must rank among history’s most cold-blooded and reprehensible crimes.”⁹⁵ Representative Wolff expressed his disgust when he said: “another black mark of shame and outrage was written into the history books this morning in the Middle East. Another ‘guerilla action,’ another challenge to all decent human instinct. What words can react strongly enough to the mass slaughter of the schoolchildren of Maalot, Israel?”⁹⁶ Such strong language in condemnation of the attacks and Arab terrorists filled the pages of the *Congressional Record*.

The U.S. government was frustrated by Arab governments which repeatedly ignored requests to deny refuge to terrorists. According to Representative Edward Koch, the Maalot massacre was “the worst in a series of Arab terrorist assaults, encouraged by

⁸⁸ Sidney R. Yates, “On the Ashes of Maalot,” *Congressional Record*, May 21, 1974, vol.120, part 12, 15772.

⁸⁹ Bertram L. Podell, “Terrorism and Barbarism,” *Congressional Record*, May 15, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 14762.

⁹⁰ Lester L. Wolff, “Another ‘Guerilla Action Against Israel,’” *Congressional Record*, May 15, 1974 vol.120, part 11, 14966.

⁹¹ Thomas P. O’Neill, “Civilized World Horrified by Actions of Terrorists in Israel,” *Congressional Record*, May 16, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 15015.

⁹² Edward I. Koch, “Terrorist Activity in the Mideast,” *Congressional Record*, May 16, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 15017.

⁹³ Richard S. Schweiker, “The Tragedy at Maalot,” *Congressional Record*, May 20, 1974, vol.120, part 12, 15376.

⁹⁴ Joshua Eilberg, “Massacre at Maalot,” *Congressional Record*, May 16, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 15216.

⁹⁵ Paul Findley, “Tragedy in the Middle East,” *Congressional Record*, May 20, 1974, vol.120, part 12, 15691.

⁹⁶ Wolff, “Another ‘Guerilla Action Against Israel,’” 14966.

countries and effectively sanctioned by the so-called civilized nations of the world.”⁹⁷ Congress urged Nixon to take every possible action to force the governments which provided havens for terrorists to change their policies. Norman Lent, Representative from New York, reiterated that “there should be no hiding place for these international outlaws. There should be no place to which they can flee after executing such hideous plots. I know of no other way in which such acts of terrorism can be stopped.”⁹⁸ Not only were countries harbouring terrorists, but countries freed many terrorists after they committed heinous crimes. According to Benjamin Gilman, a Representative from New York, “of the 150 Arab terrorists arrested in Europe over the past 5 years, only 9 are still being held; the remainder having been set free to pursue other hapless victims.”⁹⁹ The underlying problem of nations glorifying terrorism was not new to the U.S. By 1974, Congress grew restless for the U.S. to take action and call upon all nations to deal harshly with terrorists and pursue a direct course for peace negotiations, which were continually hindered by the terrorist attacks. Representative Mario Biaggi of New York agreed that the most important mission before the U.S. was to work to prevent future terrorist acts.¹⁰⁰

Some Congressmen indicated that the U.S. and the UN were somewhat to blame for the Maalot attack. Representative Benjamin Rosenthal of New York felt that the terrorist attack may have happened anyway, “but the guerrillas certainly must have felt encouraged when the Security Council late last month censured Israel for its raid on terrorist bases in Lebanon but purposely ignored the bloody Palestinian massacre of

⁹⁷ Koch, 15017.

⁹⁸ Norman F. Lent “Arab Terrorism Must Be Stopped,” *Congressional Record*, May 15, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 14953.

⁹⁹ Benjamin A. Gilman, “The Maalot Massacre,” *Congressional Record*, May 16, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 14978.

¹⁰⁰ Mario Biaggi, “Condemns Latest Act of Arab Terrorism,” *Congressional Record*, May 22, 1974, vol.120, part 12, 16239.

innocent Israeli civilians at Kiryat Shemona,¹⁰¹ which prompted Israeli action.”¹⁰² According to Rosenthal, the UN, which had done little to hide its strong anti-Israel bias, once again gave aid and comfort to Israeli enemies. The U.S. was guilty because it failed to get a reference to the Kiryat Shemona attack inserted in the UN resolution, but instead of abstaining on final passage or voting “no,” the U.S. gave its approval.¹⁰³ Jerome Waldie, Representative from California, was weary of the UN’s “seemingly one way street of condemnation of Israel and not the brutal slayers of children.”¹⁰⁴ The guilt felt by the U.S. government, its disappointment with the UN, and the Maalot massacre served only to strengthen America’s resolve to support Israel and condemn Arab attacks.

The *Congressional Record* from January 1, 1974, to Nixon’s resignation on August 9 was very pro-Israel and condemned what it regarded as Arab aggression around the world. The Maalot massacre was a case study that illustrated Congress’ support for Israel and strong condemnation of Arab terrorism. Although U.S. officials continued to combat terrorism all over the world, the Maalot massacre and the rising number of terrorist attacks in the Middle East at the hands of Arab terrorists led the U.S. to view terrorism as synonymous with that region.

Conclusion

There was a sense of urgency in the American government to deal with terrorism as it became a serious danger that threatened to be exported anywhere in the world. In

¹⁰¹ A city in Northern Israel that borders Lebanon.

¹⁰² Benjamin S. Rosenthal, “United Nations, United States Must Share Portion of Blame for Maalot Attack,” *Congressional Record*, May 15, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 14955.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Jerome R. Waldie, “A Resolution of Outrage and Condemnation of Maalot Massacre,” *Congressional Record*, May 16, 1974, vol.120, part 11, 15210.

1972 the UN failed to effectively deal with terrorism, and the world's silence proved only to encourage the terrorists. Early in Nixon's presidency, terrorism was a policing issue that would grow into an international problem. After the Munich Olympics, the government documents began linking terrorism with the Middle East, and by 1973 and 1974 "Arab terrorists" was a common phrase in the House of Representatives. Now, decades later, terrorism is deeply rooted in the Middle East, confirmed by the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979, and more recently brought to America's shores with the 9/11 attacks. However, the problems of today – the grievances, the attacks, and the silence of nations harbouring terrorists, mirror the emerging crisis during the Nixon administration.

I draw my conclusions from the evidence presented in the U.S. government documents themselves, but I only look at a set of documents within a prescribed time period to understand how the government conceptualized terrorism. With that said, terrorism in the subject era must be further studied in order to get a more holistic view of this complicated and important time. For example, I only touch on a few examples of terrorism in Latin America, specifically kidnappings and hijackings to Cuba, but further case studies could be done on terrorism in Latin America to explore the extent of the threat nationally and internationally. Hijacking and international laws dealing with air piracy evolved during the early 1970s. A study on the rhetorical changes and the history of hijacking would strengthen our understanding of this terror tactic. Further research on the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism established by Nixon in 1972 would better frame U.S. efforts to deal with terrorism. A study on the committee's objectives, its accomplishments, members, and abolition would be fruitful. The *Public Papers of President Nixon* refer to terrorism only once in 1974; therefore, a study analyzing

Nixon's priorities during the Watergate crisis and Kissinger's role during that time would clarify the government's actions. A comprehensive examination of Nixon's policy towards Israel and how it reflected American policy on terrorism in the Middle East would further illuminate the complicated picture of U.S - Middle East relations in the early 1970s. This study also begs the question: to what extent do the comments of government officials reflect public concerns? How far ahead of the American Public were members of Congress at this time? Whether the public took heed to the threats posed in the region publicized by the media could be evaluated using available poll data. Finally, further analysis of the Munich massacre in the following chapter proves fruitful to gain a more specific perspective on the event as a catalyst for the media and the government's shifting perception of terrorism. The next chapter is a case study on the Munich massacre which looks at how both the media and the American government conceptualized terrorism at the time of the Munich attack.

On several occasions, Nixon, members of Congress and government officials likened terrorism to a medical illness. During the early 1970s terrorism was referred to as a "cancer," a "virus," and a "disease." Initially, the U.S. government hoped that terrorism could be cured with conventions and agreements. However, in 1972 and for the next two years, terrorism became a deadly ailment. Since nations often praised instead of punished terrorism, the early 1970s spawned a new level of international violence that regrettably remains today. Conventions themselves could not make the world safe from terrorism, but the failure of the world community to condemn acts of terror only encouraged the perpetual cycle of violence.

Perhaps Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union preoccupied Richard Nixon in the 1970s, but his Administration and Congress were aware that terrorism was a growing problem in countries all over world, including, most importantly, the Middle East. The American government attempted on numerous occasions to rally world opinion around the prevention and punishment of terrorist crimes. Nixon and his advisors took a tough line against terrorism by narrowly defining the acts to severely punish the perpetrators. However, what was conceptualized as terrorism by the American government was praised as acts of heroism by other nations who harboured, funded, and supported terrorists. The U.S. knew of no other way at the time to deal with terrorism other than through diplomatic channels, but terrorists were not willing to oblige. The failure of the world community to band together to define and prosecute terrorists in the 1970s would haunt the U.S. into the 21st century. Today, an international agreement on terrorism is still as far from being actualized as it was in the fall of 1972, and the situation in the Middle East is increasingly volatile. Even though the civilized consensus condemns terrorism today, there are many who still see it as a legitimate tactical weapon which they are not prepared to give up by any measure of negotiation or treaty. This recalcitrance can be seen as leading us towards the 40th year of the war on terror, a notion which has only slowly dawned on the U. S., with devastating consequences.

Chapter 3

‘A Tragedy for All the Peoples and Nations of the World’: The Munich Olympic Massacre

The Munich Olympics were supposed to be the “Carefree Games.” The last Olympics on German soil, in 1936, opened and closed with salutes to Hitler. During the 1936 Games, Berlin was adorned with swastikas, barbed wire, and armed troops. However, the Munich Olympics, which began with the opening ceremony on August 26, 1972, were meant to showcase a new Germany in which any form of militancy was purposefully scarce. Instead of armed guards at entry gates, security personnel carried walkie-talkies. The relaxed atmosphere of the Olympic Village, where many athletes were housed during the Games, was a testament to the lax security measures. It was common for security guards to admit anyone wearing an athletic uniform into the village without proper identification. Athletes also frequently scaled the chain-link fence around the perimeter of the grounds after a night out on the town in Munich. From the night-time patrol cutbacks, to the pastel-coloured dachshund mascot called “Waldi,” these Games were meant to rid the world of its ghastly memory of the militant German past. The participation of the Israeli Olympic team was also significant to overcoming the former image of German totalitarianism. Many of the athletes lost relatives in the Holocaust, and the memory of this atrocity was still fresh in 1972. However, the Israeli team hoped to show defiance to the Nazi past by participating in the Munich Olympics.

The sporting jubilee did not go on without a few political issues that are inevitable for the inherently politicized Olympic Games. Days before the opening ceremony, Rhodesia was expelled from the Games because of mounting international pressure,

specifically from African nations who protested against Rhodesia's racist regime. West Germany also tried to smooth relations with East Germany for the event. The teams walked separately in the ceremonies, but both competed under the Olympic flag, instead of the German flag. Relations cooled between the two Germanys as the West grew fearful of its Eastern counterpart's athletic strength and ability to win numerous medals at the Games. However, the Games were also off to an exciting start for many athletes, including American swimmer Mark Spitz who won a record seventh gold medal in the 400-meter relay on September 4.

As Americans celebrated Spitz's achievements that evening, Israeli athletes enjoyed a night out on the town watching *Fiddler on the Roof*. Meanwhile, shortly before midnight, eight Palestinians gathered at a restaurant in the train station. They were each issued a red track suit and a duffel bag adorned with the Olympic rings. The bags were filled with food, a first-aid kit, ammunition, AK-47 assault rifles, Tokarev pistols, and grenades.¹ At about 4:10 a.m. on September 5, the Palestinians arrived at the perimeter fence of the Olympic village.² They remained inconspicuous, because their track suits and gym bags enabled them to blend in with other athletes returning to the grounds. A few of the Palestinians gained access through credentials as employees of the village. The rest were approached by tipsy Americans returning from the pubs. The two groups helped each other over the fence and soon parted, bidding one another a good night. Unbeknownst to the American athletes, they were helping members of the Black September terrorist organization who would go on to storm two apartments used by the Israeli team at 31 Connollystrasse.

¹ Brian Cazeneuve, Alexander Wolff, and Don Yaeger, *When the Terror Began*, "Sports Illustrated," Aug 26, 2002, Vol.97, Iss. 8, 62.

² Aaron J. Klein, *Striking Back* (New York: Random House, 2005), 40.

The terrorists first reached Apartment 1, which housed seven Israeli coaches and referees. The sound of the door awoke wrestling referee Yossef Gutfreund, who stood in the hall to see the armed, masked men facing him. He recognized their intentions early and yelled to his sleeping roommates “Guys, run!”³ Gutfreund succeeded in stalling the terrorists for mere moments, but this precious time allowed weightlifting coach Tuvia Sokolovsky to escape through a rear window. The terrorists soon overpowered Gutfreund, as they entered the apartment and began to herd the Israelis to a second-floor bedroom. Wrestling coach Moshe Weinberg attacked one of the intruders, but a second terrorist wounded Weinberg with a shot through his cheek. Some of the terrorists then stayed with their captives while others forced Weinberg to direct them to other apartments housing Israelis. Weinberg led them to Apartment 3, where the terrorists captured six wrestlers and weightlifters.⁴ On the way back to Apartment 1, Weinberg and weightlifter Yossef Romano attacked the Palestinians, knocking one unconscious and cutting another with a kitchen knife. Weinberg and Romano were shot fatally, but they provided enough of a commotion to allow wrestler Gad Tsobari to escape down a set of stairs to the parking garage. Nine hostages remained alive before the sun began to rise in Munich that morning.

After several noise complaints and reports of gunfire, police and security forces understood the severity of the situation when the terrorists rolled Weinberg’s limp body into the street. Soon the Olympic village became surrounded by police forces, the international media, and curious onlookers. The hostage-takers demanded the release of 234 Palestinian and non-Arab prisoners held in Israeli jails. The deadline was 9:00 a.m.

³ Klein, 43.

⁴ James Coote and John Goodbody, *The Olympics 1972* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1972), 2.

for the prisoners to be released and transported to an Arab country.⁵ If their demands were not met, the terrorists would kill a hostage for the world to see on live television every hour. By 11:45 a.m. the Israeli Cabinet decided not to bow to the terrorists' blackmail and allowed German authorities to use their own method to deal with the situation.⁶ Over the course of the day, as negotiations with German officials continued, the terrorists postponed their deadline in stages until 9 p.m.⁷ Each deadline passed with intense dread while onlookers held their breaths. However, each delay served to increase the already large Television audience involved in the live drama that brought the suspense to life with colour coverage, interviews with weeping friends, and glimpses of masked terrorists.⁸ An estimated 900 million people in at least 100 different countries saw the Munich crisis unfold on TV.⁹

The Games continued. The Israeli hostages sat with their hands and feet bound and a number of assault rifles in their faces. Meanwhile, three thousand fans gathered to watch Japan's volleyball team defeat West Germany.¹⁰ Eventually, due to pressure from Israel, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) halted the Games at 3:30 p.m.¹¹ Later that evening, the terrorists agreed to fly with their hostages from Munich to Cairo. In order to avoid German snipers, the terrorists demanded the transport to be at night by buses in the underground entrance of the building.¹² Helicopters later transported the

⁵ Klein., 49.

⁶ Coote and Goodbody, 2.

⁷ George Jonas, *Vengeance: The True Story of an Israeli Counter-Terrorist Team* (United States: Lester & Orpen Dennys/Collins, 1984), 17.

⁸ Serge Groussard, *The Blood of Israel: The Massacre of the Israeli Athletes* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1975), 78.

⁹ Gus Martin, *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues* (California: Sage Publications, 2003), 294.

¹⁰ Klein, 53.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Coote and Goodbody, 3.

eight terrorists and nine hostages to Furstenfeldbruck, a military airbase outside of Munich. German police were determined not to allow the terrorists to leave Munich with the hostages, as the Israelis were sure to face certain death if transported to Cairo. Egypt had already denied ensuring the safe return of the hostages. At Frustenfeldbruck, a few of the terrorists got out of the helicopters to inspect the empty planes that awaited them. Within minutes, five German sharpshooters opened fire. German authorities expected there to be only five terrorists, so the five German marksmen were outnumbered and a gun battle ensued. Some of the terrorists were hit, while others returned fire. The Israelis sat helplessly tied and blindfolded in the helicopters.¹³ The exchange lasted until about midnight when German authorities decided to storm the helicopters. When the remaining terrorists saw the advance one threw a grenade into one of the helicopters, killing five of the Israelis in the explosion.¹⁴ Two other terrorists opened fire on the remaining helicopter, killing the four remaining hostages.¹⁵ In the end, the police captured three of the terrorists and killed the other five in the gun battle.

An initial report to the press that the hostages had been liberated was a rumour that cruelly mutated into mistaken fact.¹⁶ Wire services sent the misinformation around the world. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, the families of the victims, and Israeli newspapers were all presented with the misleading news. Only later on the morning of September 6, the truth was released that all the hostages were dead. Jim McKay, who

¹³ Jonas, 18.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Cazeneuve, Wolff, and Yaeger, 69.

covered the Olympics for ABC, reported the grim news: “They are all gone. It’s over...I have nothing else to say.”¹⁷

The events at Munich shook the U.S. and much of the world to their core. Although the U.S. was plagued with hijackings, assassinations, and other forms of terrorism, Black September’s actions in Munich made it clear that no international gathering was safe. Before Munich, both the American media and the U.S. government conceptualized terrorism as violence committed by extremists in the hopes of political gain. Terrorism took place in countries all over the world, but for the U.S., the murder of innocent Israeli athletes on German soil by Palestinian terrorists was the climax in a series of terrorist acts committed by Arab extremists. From 1969 to 1972, the U.S. government viewed terrorism as a policing issue more than anything else, but the attack at Munich made the U.S. vulnerable because of its support for Israel. There was also an overwhelming feeling among nations that athletes of any nationality could be the next target. After Munich, both the media and Washington linked terrorism to the Middle East, because the region was a threat to international security.

This significant event has received much attention from scholars writing as early as 1972, and as recently as 2007. The literature on the killings at Munich is divided into several important themes. First, I will look at a group of scholars which focuses on the effect the terrorist actions had on the Olympic Games. Another set of authors looks at the unprecedented media attention that the live drama received. After Munich, many countries, especially the U.S., were apprehensive of Israel’s counter-terrorism in reaction to the deaths of their athletes. Some of the literature is dedicated to Israel’s motivation for revenge and the assassinations of Palestinians, mainly in Europe, involved in

¹⁷ Klein, 80.

terrorism against Israel. The final group of scholars examines Munich's impact on perceptions of terrorism in America in the early 1970s and U.S. - Middle East relations.

Since Black September chose the Olympics as their setting, the massacre that resulted severely impacted the Games. Some authors writing on Munich focus on a chronology of the events as they unfolded, reactions of the athletes, the suspension of the Games, how the IOC dealt with the situation, and the lasting effects the murders had on the Olympics. Published in 1972, and dedicated to the murdered Israeli athletes, James Coote and John Goodbody's *The Olympics 1972* is a limited examination of the events of September 5. Chapter 1, entitled "Murder in Munich," by John Goodbody, gives a brief timeline of murders. The chapters that follow address the Games themselves, from boxing, to judo, to soccer. Chapter 14, "Epitaph to Munich," by James Coote, concludes the book with final remarks on the closing ceremonies. Amid the records and medals detailed in the previous chapters, Coote points out that the 1972 Games concluded with the flag of Israel at half mast in memory of those sportsmen who would never again enter the arena to compete.¹⁸ *The Olympics of 1972: A Munich Diary* is a detailed account of the Games written by cultural historian Richard D. Mandell.¹⁹ He looks at the preparations for the Games, the Games themselves, the hostage situation, and the conclusion of the Games. Mandell was given journalistic accreditation; therefore, his diary is an inside look at the Games, but he only briefly examines the killings. In his concluding chapters he is critical in his evaluation of West Germany's handling of the hostage situation.

¹⁸ Coote and Goodbody, 118.

¹⁹ Richard D. Mandell is also the author of *The Nazi Olympics*, published in 1971.

In a *Sports Illustrated* article, Kenny Moore discusses how athletes responded to the terrorism. “Munich’s Message” highlights various reactions; for example, U.S. runners Jon Anderson, Mike Manley, and their roommates held a vigil on their balcony while tanks, troops, and emergency vehicles assembled nearby.²⁰ U.S. Judoka, Jimmy Pedro, explained that he worked 19 years to get to the Olympics and that of course the athletes would go on.²¹ Moore depicts how several athletes coped with the tense and frightening situation and how they dealt with their compassion, nerves, and grief in the face of competition. In *The Blood of Israel: The Massacre of the Israeli Athletes*, Serge Groussard gives a detailed timeline of the events. He also stresses how unprepared the IOC and West German authorities were for such a catastrophe. He expands on the roots and the motives behind the Palestinian cause. Groussard likens the scene at the Olympic village to that of a war, explaining that the Games versus the Connollystrasse terrorists were equivalent to civilization against the barbarians.²² Brian Cazeneuve, Alexander Wolff, and Don Yaeger provide a detailed account of planning stages, the hostage situation, the massacre, and the aftermath in “When the Terror Began,” published in *Sports Illustrated*. The authors use striking examples to illustrate the ill-preparedness of the German police and the sanctity of what was left of the apartment block at 31 Connollystrasse. In being so careful to shed any hints of their militant past, Cazeneuve, Wolff, and Yaeger suggest that the Munich organizers recalled their past too well, and thereby invited a horror of a different sort.²³ After the murders there were many unknown details in the timeline of September 5 and the days that followed. This group of

²⁰ Kenny Moore, “Munich’s Message,” *Sports Illustrated*, Aug 5, 1996, Vol.85, Iss.6, 30.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

²² Groussard, 257.

²³ Cazeneuve, Wolff, and Yaeger, 71.

authors skilfully clarifies the timelines and they demonstrate how the massacre was included in the narrative of Munich.

Millions of Americans could tune in to live, up to the minute coverage of the hostage situation in Munich. The breaking news was broadcast in colour with vivid images of a terrorist in a mask peering out on the balcony of Apartment 1, and German police on the roof disguised in sweat suits with rifles perched under their arms. Among the hundreds of millions watching Olympic coverage all over the world, the terrorists themselves could view the very same images, for each apartment in the Olympic village had a TV set. With such vast media coverage, several authors have addressed this phenomenon in the literature. In *Terrorism's War with America*, Dennis Pizskiewicz points out that since the events were carried on TV, the Munich massacre was history's most publicly seen act of political terrorism up to that point.²⁴ Gabriel Weinmann and Conrad Winn conclude that media behaviour leads terrorists to choose victims who possess very high media profiles, such as the Olympians in Munich.²⁵ According to Gus Martin in *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*, even when a terrorist unit fails to complete its mission, intensive media exposure can lead to a propaganda victory, such as in Munich where the Palestinian cause was brought into people's living rooms through live TV.²⁶ James W. Hoge argues for the ability of the media to stabilize a terrorist situation, like Munich, by acting as a check on the actions of both the police and the terrorists.²⁷ Bruce Hoffman explains that despite worldwide

²⁴ Dennis Pizskiewicz, *Terrorism's War with America: A History* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 131.

²⁵ Gabriel Weinmann and Conrad Winn, *The Theater of Terror: Mass Media* (New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1994), 124.

²⁶ Gus Martin, 294.

²⁷ James W. Hoge "The Media and Terrorism," in *Terrorism: The Media and the Law*, ed. Abraham H. Miller. (New York: Transnational Publishers, 1982), 96.

condemnation of the terrorists' actions, it became apparent to the Palestinians that Munich was a spectacular publicity coup.²⁸ In *Tales of Terror*, Bethami A. Dobkin, acknowledges that terrorist acts were not limited to Palestinians in the 1970s, yet terrorism, with its media coverage in the 1970s, provided the backdrop for the Iran hostage crisis that would prompt President Ronald Reagan to launch his crusade against international terrorists.²⁹

The third group of scholars looks specifically at Israel's revenge as a result of the Munich massacre.³⁰ This body of literature was popularized by Steven Spielberg's movie, *Munich*. Released in 2005, *Munich* is a semi-fictional depiction of the hostage situation in Munich and the subsequent assassinations of Palestinians by Mossad³¹ agents. The authors portraying Israel's revenge begin with an outline of the events at Munich. Although these events are not their main focus, this group of authors are important to mention because they highlight the outrage felt by Israel and its justification for such counter-terrorist acts. The scholars emphasize the suffering of the athletes and the anger felt by Israel. Lisa Beyer explains that Israel's planned assassinations were not just to punish the perpetrators of Munich, but also to disrupt and deter future terrorist acts.³² Journalist George Jonas,³³ a Jew and supporter of Israel, justifies the acts of revenge, explaining that in terms of moral justification, one can distinguish between acts of war and war crimes. There are standards, and terrorism is on the wrong side of them, yet

²⁸ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 73.

²⁹ Bethami A. Dobkin, *Tales of Terror: Television News and the Construction of the Terrorist Threat* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 14.

³⁰ Known as "Operation Wrath of God."

³¹ Mossad is the national intelligence agency of Israel.

³² Lisa Beyer, "The Myths and Reality of Munich," *TIME* (Canadian Edition), Dec 12, 2005, Vol.166, Iss.24, 49.

³³ Jonas' book *Vengeance*, published in 1984, became the basis for Spielberg's movie *Munich*.

counter-terrorism is not.³⁴ In *Striking Back*, Aaron J. Klein offers an excellent summary of the events in Munich in the first thirteen chapters of his book. The rest is dedicated to the missions undertaken by the Mossad. In his Epilogue, Klein concludes that Munich was the trigger for Israel's thirst for revenge and punishment, and for many years, assassination became a new tool in the war on terror.³⁵

The last group of scholars is the most influential for this case study. This literature focuses on the impact Munich had on terrorism in the early 1970s, as well as America's stance against terrorism and its relations with the Middle East. Robert Kumamoto explains that Munich led to major changes in American foreign policy, and to a new resolve to suppress international terrorism, which the State Department publicly conceded was inextricably linked to its Middle East peace initiative.³⁶ Furthermore, in *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976*, Kumamoto includes a statement by Black September in 1973 that referred to "Zionist and American imperialism and their agents in the Arab world," for by that time Israel and the U.S. existed as one enemy to Palestinian terrorists.³⁷ In a *U.S. News & World Report* article, Dan Giloff quotes Bruce Hoffman as saying that due to the media coverage of the events, Munich was the most consequential terrorist incident in history prior to 9/11.³⁸ Giloff goes on to say that while Palestinians were hijacking planes since the late 1960s, those strikes were viewed as a Middle East problem, whereas Munich was everyone's problem.³⁹ Terry Martin furthers the comparison to 9/11, as he explains that although the

³⁴ Jonas, 352.

³⁵ Klein, 245.

³⁶ Robert Kumamoto, *International Terrorism and American Foreign Relations 1945-1976* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999), 149.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

³⁸ Dan Giloff, "The Meaning of Munich," *U.S. News and World Report*, Jun 14, 2004, Vol.136, Iss.21, 39.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

death toll in Munich was a tiny fraction of that in New York and Washington on 9/11, in a similar way the Munich massacre permanently altered our definition of conceivable evil.⁴⁰ According to Glenn E. Schweitzer and Carole Dorsch Schweitzer, Munich had a lasting effect on Americans because it was a wake-up call for the U.S. government to begin shaping more aggressive counter-terrorism policies for implementation at home and abroad.⁴¹

In *Blind Spot*, published in 2005, Timothy Naftali continues this line of thinking as he explains that after Munich, “counter-terrorism” and “international terrorism” formally entered the Washington political lexicon as the government organized to address the problem.⁴² Furthermore, Naftali points out that the Munich tragedy involved domestic implications for the U.S., a test of U.S.-Israeli relations, a new threat to U.S. security, and a threat to détente. According to Naftali, Nixon blamed the Israelis for creating conditions that made a terrorist attack in the U.S. possible and he resented how the Israelis seemed to use Munich to push their anti-détente agenda in Washington.⁴³ Joseph H. Campos II furthers this argument in *The State and Terrorism: National Security and the Mobilization of Power* (2007), for he explains that despite the historical foundations and applications of the term “terrorism,” it was not until Munich that terrorism entered full force into the consciousness of the U.S.⁴⁴ He qualifies this by saying that it was not until the Iranian hostage crisis that the concept of terrorism, initiated in the Munich massacre, came to the forefront of America’s consciousness as

⁴⁰ Terry Martin, “Munich Massacre Remembered,” *Europe*, Oct 2001, Iss.410, 43.

⁴¹ Glenn E. Schweitzer and Carole Dorsch Schweitzer, *A Faceless Enemy: The Origins of Modern Terrorism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Pereus Books Group, 2002), 29.

⁴² Timothy Naftali, *Blind Spot: The Secret of American Counterterrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 55.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁴ Joseph H. Campos II, *The State and Terrorism: National Security and the Mobilization of Power* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 105.

having specific realities and consequences for Americans.⁴⁵ Robert Dallek agrees, in his book *Nixon and Kissinger*, also published in 2007, that Munich made Arab-Israeli tensions an issue that the American government could not continue to ignore.⁴⁶

In “A Cultural History of the War without End,” published in 2002 in *The Journal of American History*, author Melani McAlister speaks of terrorism as a war without an end in sight, yet one that the U.S. is pretending has just begun. McAlister’s argument has a unique twist, for she asserts that Palestinian terrorism against Israel in the 1970s had a cultural salience far beyond its limited strategic importance.⁴⁷ She goes on to say that Israeli actions in their war against terror mattered in U.S. public culture largely due to internal considerations, not the political influence of American Jews, but the legacy of Vietnam and fears of U.S. weakness.⁴⁸ McAlister picks up on the tension around what is defined as terrorism and America’s actions in Vietnam that was played out in the media in the 1970s.

All of the above themes combine to provide a vast and rich scholarship on the Munich massacre. However, many important arguments lay the foundation for further examination. For example, was Munich simply a backdrop for the Iran hostage crisis as Dobkin asserts, or was it far more than that in the story of terrorism in the 1970s? According to Naftali, Munich had serious implications for the U.S., but did the U.S. associate Munich with the Middle East conflict, as Naftali points out, or did the U.S. link terrorism to the Middle East? Campos says that Munich initiated America’s consciousness of the concept of terrorism; however he does not go so far as to specify

⁴⁵ Campos, 123.

⁴⁶ Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 416.

⁴⁷ Melani McAlister, “A Cultural History of the War without End,” *The Journal of American History*, Sep 2002, Vol.89, Iss.2, 444.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

what the concept of terrorism was defined as. He specifies Munich and the Iranian hostage crisis in bringing about this heightened awareness, but therefore, is the concept of terrorism in the 1970s coming from the Middle East? Dallek looks at American foreign policy, but if one was to link the urgency of the Middle-East conflict he speaks of with the Nixon administration's hard-line against terrorism at the time, is there a connection between the two threats?

The following case study engages these debates by examining both media and government sources. I look at a variety of American print media, including newspapers and periodicals such as the *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, *LIFE*, *The New Yorker*, *The Nation*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *TIME*, and *Newsweek*. I also draw from a number of government sources including the *Public Papers of President Nixon*, *Congressional Records* in 1972, the *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-1976*, *Department of State Bulletins*, and limited conversations between Nixon and his advisors. As demonstrated in the previous chapters of this study, both the media and the government's concept of terrorism shifted focus towards the Middle East at the time of Munich in September, 1972. The following case study will incorporate both media and government sources in order to demonstrate the volume of attention the events at Munich received, the harsh language used in condemnation, the outrage felt towards some Middle East countries at the time, as well as the call for action against such terrorism, and prevention against future attacks. According to the American media and the American government, the Munich attack permanently altered America's definition of conceivable evil, but this evil was based in the Middle East. As evidenced by the language linking terrorism with Arab and

Palestinian nationals, the calls for sanctions against countries in the Middle East, the threat to American Jews and American diplomats, and America's security entanglements in the Middle East, it is clear that after Munich in September 1972, the American media and the government saw terrorism as an international problem rooted in the Middle East.

Munich in the Media

Thousands of journalists, sportscasters, cameramen, and reporters filled various Olympic venues to cover the events of the 1972 Munich Games. When Arab terrorists drew Israeli blood, the media was front and center and provided unprecedented coverage of the events as they unfolded. Many of the articles in the American print media described the security at the Olympic village, the controversy over the continuation of the games, the rescue attempt, the misinformation initially presented, the Israeli victims, the memorial service, and the unprecedented TV coverage. In the aftermath of Munich, articles addressed the protection of Israelis, the boycotts and continuation of the Games, the way the Arabs were received as "martyrs" in Arab countries, Israel's retaliatory strikes at guerrilla bases in Lebanon and Syria, and the new Arab terror of mail bombs. However, for the purpose of this case study, I focus on the way the media spoke about the terrorists, the blame laid on Arab nations for the attack, the response of the Nixon administration, and the effects Munich had on Americans and American foreign policy. I also incorporate comments made in the media linking Munich to Vietnam and the Cold War in order to include a broader perspective of the international backdrop of 1972.

The number of media reports on terrorist attacks by Palestinian nationalists was increasing since the late 1960s. Accordingly, the *Los Angeles Times* described Munich as

the latest in a growing wave of terrorism.⁴⁹ The terrorist acts listed in the article from 1968 to the Munich massacre were all major Arab guerrilla attacks. However, according to Terence Smith of the *New York Times*, the Olympics seemed an unlikely setting for Arab aggression, even though Israeli citizens travelling abroad had been attacked by Palestinians before.⁵⁰ After the Olympics, a *New York Times* article warned that from then on there should be no surprises, because “the Arab murderers in Munich have, in effect, served formal notice on the world that no international gathering for any purpose anywhere is automatically immune from potential attack.”⁵¹ Because of this heightened sense of danger, Munich changed the way the media thought about security and who it considered capable of such acts.

The media referred to the members of Black September who carried out the Munich massacre as “Arab guerrillas,”⁵² “Arab terrorists,”⁵³ “Arab gunmen,”⁵⁴ “Arab fanatics,”⁵⁵ “Arab commandos,”⁵⁶ “Arab murderers,”⁵⁷ and “Palestinian Guerrillas.”⁵⁸ It is clear from such language that, without a doubt, the media linked the terrorist attack to Arabs or Palestinians. Black September claimed responsibility for the attack, but the repetition of “Arab” in the above terms made it clear that such terrorism was synonymous with the Middle East. A *Washington Post* article explained that “the moral depravity of the Palestinian terrorists at Munich is of a piece with their tactical and political

⁴⁹ “Attack at Olympics Latest in Growing Wave of Terrorism,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 6, 1972, A11.

⁵⁰ Terence Smith, “Mrs. Meir Speaks,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 1.

⁵¹ “Frustrating Terrorists,” *New York Times*, Sep 9, 1972, 22.

⁵² “Gate-Crashing at Village Easy Despite the Guards,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 20.

⁵³ John Carmody, “Image of Terror,” *Washington Post*, Sep 6, 1972, F1.

⁵⁴ Alvin Shuster, “After Shooting at Airport, Frantic Hunt for Gunmen,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 19.

⁵⁵ “Murder in Munich,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 44.

⁵⁶ David Binder, “A 23-Hour Drama,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 1.

⁵⁷ “Munich, 1972...,” *New York Times*, Sep 7, 1972, 42.

⁵⁸ “Olympics Tragedy Seen Destroying Arab Cause,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 7, 1972, A23.

clumsiness.”⁵⁹ Arthur Daley observed the terrorists through a World War II lens, as he commented on the danger the terrorists posed, saying, “there is no stopping fanatics with a scorn of death worthy of Kamikaze pilots.”⁶⁰ The media was in disbelief at the barbarity of the attacks, especially since they were featured on the world stage at the Olympics.

LIFE Magazine called the Munich massacre “the most terrible event in Olympic history.”⁶¹ *The New Yorker* began its September 16 article, “Letter From Munich,” with a commentary on the Games’ winners and losers and ironically said that on the day of the massacre “we all became losers.”⁶² Many media reports attempted to rationalize why Black September chose the Olympics for its attack. Jim Murray cleverly wrote: “No one thought, as this Olympics opened, that Terror would be in Lane 1.”⁶³ One opinion for the choice of venue was that “Arab terrorists made it plain that their real target was civilized conduct among nations, not merely Israel or the Israeli athletes captured and killed.”⁶⁴ What made Munich different from past terrorist incidents was that people felt the Olympics were a sacred, peaceful gathering of nations and once that was under attack, all nations felt anxious for their own security. For example, an editorial in *The Nation* noted that the Arabs chose the most outrageously inappropriate time, place, and circumstance for their act of violence.⁶⁵ Repeated throughout the sources is the sense that by committing murder at the Olympics, the terrorists struck out against all of humanity, not just the Israeli athletes. The events outraged people all over the world, but also made

⁵⁹ “An Olympic Tragedy,” *Washington Post*, Sep 6, 1972, A18.

⁶⁰ Arthur Daley, “A Day of Mourning and Sorrow,” Sep 7, 1972, 55.

⁶¹ “Shadow of Death at Munich,” *LIFE*, Sep 15, 1972, 4.

⁶² “Letter From Munich,” *The New Yorker*, Sep 16, Vol.48, 102.

⁶³ Jim Murray, “Blood on Olympus,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 7, 1972, OC_A1.

⁶⁴ “Murder in Munich,” 44.

⁶⁵ “The Olympic Peace,” *The Nation*, Sep 18, 1972, Vol.215, 194.

them feel vulnerable to a similar fate. The Olympics fostered a sense of togetherness and brotherhood, but if athletes from different nations could compete together, they could also die together.

Several news stories articulated the reactions of various heads of government and spiritual leaders from all over the world. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, countries including Britain, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, Poland, and several others, condemned the attacks and called “for governments to end diplomatic or economic relations with some Arab nations.”⁶⁶ The media reported that of the leaders of Arab nations, only King Hussein of Jordan condemned outright the attack on the Israelis. The media juxtaposed the callousness of the Arab nations with the sympathy of other world leaders. The sheer volume of reports on Munich was a testament to the publicity the terrorists gained for their cause. Many Americans could not rationalize how such a horrific attack could take place, especially at the Olympics, but John Cooley from the *Christian Science Monitor* attempted to explain that as irrational as it may seem to outsiders, it was the Arab feeling of outside indifference and callousness which drove groups such as Black September to go to such murderous lengths to attract attention to their cause.⁶⁷

There were several reports that illustrated the relationship between Israel and the U.S. Since the attack targeted Israelis, the U.S. became vulnerable due to their diplomatic, economic, and political support for Israel. During the hostage crisis, Black September released a statement in Cairo. The *New York Times* printed parts of the statement, including a section which termed Israel “an American client state” and said it

⁶⁶ “Olympics Tragedy Seen Destroying Arab Cause,” A23.

⁶⁷ John K. Cooley, “Sadat initiative: First Casualty?” *Christian Science Monitor*, Sep 7, 1972, 1.

posed a permanent threat to the people of the Middle East.⁶⁸ After the attack, the media reported that Mark Spitz, an American swimmer and Jew, was hurried on a flight to London on his way to the U.S. for fears that he too might become a victim.⁶⁹ Steve Evanoff, chief for the U.S. wrestling team, commented to the *New York Times* that the feeling was very tense in the village. He continued, saying: “A lot of Americans realize how closely allied they are with the Israelis and how it could have just as easily been them.”⁷⁰ The media used several interviews with American athletes in order to convey their exposure to terrorism to the American public. The *Washington Post* printed a further example of this with a quote from Dave Wottle, American track and field gold medalist. He said: “As an American, I’m not used to this type of living. I know it goes on in other parts of the world. But to have this type of conflict at the games is disgusting.”⁷¹

The U.S. also felt the effects of Munich at home, especially because of its large Jewish population. Even the stock market was affected by the events in Munich. On September 6, the *New York Times* reported that the Munich attack took a negative toll on U.S. stocks. Alexander Hammer wrote: “Investors’ concern over the Middle East situation was the main depressant in the stock market,” as declines outnumbered advances by more than a two-to-one ratio.⁷² Martin Arnold of the *New York Times* wrote that the New York and American Stock Exchanges stopped all trading at 11 a.m. for a one-minute silent prayer.⁷³ Arnold also reported that the mayor of New York City, John

⁶⁸ “Guerillas, in Cairo, Take Responsibility for Attack,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 19.

⁶⁹ Neil Amdur, “Games Suspended; Rites in Arena Set,” *New York Times*, Sep 6, 1972, 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ William Gildea, “Somber Athletes Talk of Death,” *Washington Post*, Sep 7, 1972, A1.

⁷² Alexander R. Hammer, “Gloomy Market Gives Up Ground,” *New York Times*, Sep 7, 1972, 61.

⁷³ Martin Arnold, “New Yorkers Grieve Over Israeli Dead,” *New York Times*, Sep 7, 1972, 19.

Lindsay, set September 7 as an official day of mourning for the city, and several memorial services were held. As well, there were demonstrations by members of the Jewish Defence League near the Lebanese, Egyptian, and Soviet missions to the United Nations.⁷⁴ In a commentary on the victims, a *New York Times* reporter wrote that one of the murdered athletes emigrated to Israel from the U.S. in 1970. David Berger's body was returned to his hometown of Shaker Heights, Ohio in the days after the attack. This brought the tragedy even closer to home for Americans, as *TIME* Magazine reported that all Ohio state flags were at half-mast the week of the tragedy.⁷⁵

Only a day after the Israelis were taken hostage, the media reported that terrorists received sympathy and praise in Arab nations. Accordingly, a *New York Times* article protested that the primary responsibility for ending these crimes was that of the Arab states.⁷⁶ Another article explained that the basic guilt was that of the Arab nations, except Jordan, who repeatedly gave their approval "either implicitly by silence or explicitly by word and action, to the deeds of the 'Black September' criminals."⁷⁷ Columnist Tom Wicker pointed out that the trouble was that "it is politically difficult for Arab governments to move against Arab guerrillas without calling into question their own commitment to the struggle against Israel."⁷⁸ He continued that the only thing to be done to end Palestinian terrorism "is to find some means of resolving the profound conflict that produces it. Which is to say that the end is hardly in sight."⁷⁹ In the aftermath of Munich, John Cooley reported that blanket Western accusations against all

⁷⁴ Arnold, 19.

⁷⁵ "Horror and Death at the Olympics," *TIME*, Sep 18, 1972, 24.

⁷⁶ "Murder in Munich," 44.

⁷⁷ "Munich, 1972..." 42.

⁷⁸ Tom Wicker, "The Seeds of Terrorism," *New York Times*, Sep 7, 1972, 43.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Arabs for the Munich tragedy appeared to harden opinion in the Arab world in favour of the terrorists and against the West.⁸⁰ The media highlighted the support many Arab nations showed for the terrorists. While this may have given publicity to the Palestinian cause, it also brought negative attention to the Arab countries aiding in the violent attacks.

The Munich massacre surely served the purpose of setting back any prospect for an Arab-Israeli peace agreement. Several media reports highlighted Munich's entanglement in Cold War politics. Tom Wicker commented in his column that the Arab-Israeli controversy reverberated throughout world politics, Soviet-American relations in particular, therefore it was a good deal easier to call for something to be done than to say what the something should be.⁸¹ A piece in the *New York Times* also addressed Cold War politics, saying "the Soviet Union has much to answer for in its unwillingness to disassociate itself from the extremist Palestinians."⁸² Munich inevitably had diplomatic, political, and military consequences for the U.S. Due to its support for Israel and the Soviet Union's support for Arab nations, the Arab-Israeli conflict was slowly drawing the two superpowers to a confrontation.

An opinion piece by Stephen Rosenfeld compared American involvement in Vietnam to the Arab-Israeli conflict. He said: "To condemn the obvious face of terror in Munich is also to continue to blur the less conspicuous face of terror in Vietnam...One could hardly say that Mr. Nixon is any less convinced of the justness of his cause than the Palestinian guerrillas are of theirs."⁸³ In his column in the *Christian Science Monitor*,

⁸⁰ John K. Cooley, "World Blame Forces Arabs Together," *Christian Science Monitor*, Sep 8, 1972, 1.

⁸¹ Wicker, 43.

⁸² "Aftermath of Munich," *New York Times*, Sep 8, 1972, 32.

⁸³ Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Terror a Tactic of Many Aspects," *Washington Post*, Sep 8, 1972, A22.

Charles Yost put it bluntly that “as long as both sides in Vietnam indulge in large-scale terror almost daily, it is hard to see how Palestinians, for example, or Israelis for that matter, can be persuaded that it is immoral for them to resort to terror in the Middle East.”⁸⁴ At the time of the Munich Olympics, the American government was mainly focused on the war in Vietnam and Cold War politics. Critics of Vietnam were all too eager to draw snap comparisons of America’s involvement there to the Palestinians’ fight for their homeland. The media touched on these topics several times, and they indicated the broader perspective of American foreign policy entanglements in the early 1970s.

The media appropriately expressed disbelief and outrage in the wake of Munich. The language used directly placed responsibility for the attacks on the terrorists and Arab nations that harboured and aided them. Due to the extensive media coverage, the public became aware of this support, as well as America’s political entanglements, as a result of Munich. Arab countries had blood on their hands after Munich and American citizens were at risk. According to the media, in September, 1972, terrorism was deeply rooted in the Middle East.

The American Government and Munich

In the aftermath of Munich, Nixon, his advisors, members of the House of Representatives, and members of the Senate all used strong words to let the world know that America would not stand for such violence committed at the hands of Arab terrorists. The sources made it clear that the American government did not classify the perpetrators as part of the civilized world; rather they saw the terrorists as uncivilized and barbaric. The attack on Munich made the U.S. vulnerable to attacks because of its ties to Israel.

⁸⁴ Charles W. Yost, “Forms and Masks of Terrorism,” *Christian Science Monitor*,” Sep 14, 1972, 20.

Due to this threat, the American government called on the international community to not only condemn the attacks, but take action against countries, particularly Arab nations, who harboured terrorists. Like the media reports, several Congressional documents referred to Cold War tensions and North Vietnam's support for Arab guerrillas, which reveal the complexity of the international situation. The U.S. government determined that there should be no hiding place for such men who committed the atrocities in Munich. In the fall of 1972, Arab nations were harbouring terrorists and because of the threat they posed to international security, the American government coupled the Middle East with terrorism.

Although terrorism was occurring in other parts of the world, the attack at Munich was an unprecedented act of international terrorism. After Munich, the U.S. began to primarily focus on terrorism originating in the Middle East. In an interview for Israeli Television, Joseph J. Sisco, U. S. Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, assured reporter Haim Yavin that the U.S. was trying to move on as many fronts as possible because terrorism was a worldwide problem, "though many of the more recent manifestations emanate from the Middle East."⁸⁵ Sisco continued that the problem was being dealt with in a delicate political context whether the U.S. was dealing with other areas of the world or primarily the Middle East.⁸⁶

Munich also etched the Arab-Israeli conflict on the minds of Americans. According to Senator Herman Talmadge, Munich "can only inflame the already highly incendiary situation in the Middle East. It not only is a threat to stability in that part of

⁸⁵ "Assistant Secretary Sisco Discusses Middle East Policy for Israeli Television," *Department of State Bulletin*, Nov 13, 1972, 566.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 567.

the world, but to peace and unity throughout the rest of the world.”⁸⁷ He centered out the Middle East, saying: “So long as insane and dangerously irrational elements of the Arab world are spreading discord and terror, not only in the Middle East but throughout Europe as well, there can never be a suitable settlement of differences in this part of the world.”⁸⁸ Talmadge’s words illustrate that the attack at Munich complicated relations in the Middle East and had repercussions throughout the world. According to Hale Boggs, a Representative from Louisiana, the particular violence at Munich, because it affected the Olympic Games, which attracted international attention, was “brought more forcibly to the attention of the American people.”⁸⁹ Munich made it apparent to Americans that the Arab-Israeli conflict was no longer contained within the borders of the Middle East. Furthermore, the outrage of American officials made it very clear that the Arab world was being held responsible for this and other acts of terrorism leading up to Munich.

Nixon described the Munich attack as a “tragic and senseless act” that perverted all hopes and aspirations of mankind.⁹⁰ In a larger sense, Nixon said “it is a tragedy for all people and nations of the world.”⁹¹ He viewed the terrorists as “international outlaws of the worst sort who will stoop to anything in order to accomplish their goals, and who are totally unpredictable.”⁹² Members of Congress described the terrorist attack as “vile

⁸⁷ Herman E. Talmadge, “Barbaric Raid at the Olympics,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29349.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Hale Boggs, “The Suspension of the Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29391.

⁹⁰ “Message to Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel About the Deaths of Israeli Athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany,” September 6, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0288.pdf

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² “Remarks to Reporters About the Assault on Israeli Athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany,” September 5, 1972, *Public Papers of President Nixon*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1972_pdf_files/1972_0287.pdf

and barbaric,”⁹³ “reprehensible and outrageous,”⁹⁴ “ruthless, irresponsible, unforgivable,”⁹⁵ “Neanderthal behaviour,”⁹⁶ “the ultimate outrage,”⁹⁷ a “dastardly act,”⁹⁸ a “horrifying tragedy,”⁹⁹ and “the most complete act of anarchy we have witnessed in our history.”¹⁰⁰

Similarly, Congress described the terrorists as “outlaws,”¹⁰¹ “bandits and guerrillas,”¹⁰² “craven cowards,”¹⁰³ “maddened fanatics,”¹⁰⁴ and “wild, mad dogs which endanger everyone and everything in their path.”¹⁰⁵ Senator William Proxmire went so far as to say that the attack by Arab terrorists was “a flagrant commission of the crime of genocide.”¹⁰⁶ The government sources referred to the perpetrators as “Arab terrorists”¹⁰⁷ and the root of the problem was the “Arab nations.” Senator Clifford Case echoed the outrage expressed in the government documents when he said: “The heinous conduct of

⁹³ Hugh D. Scott, Jr., “Outrage at Munich Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29307.

⁹⁴ Michael J. Mansfield, “Outrage at Munich Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29307.

⁹⁵ William V. Roth Jr., “Murder at the Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29349.

⁹⁶ Frank J. Basco, “The Munich Horror in Perspective,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 7, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29791.

⁹⁷ Dan H. Kuykendall, “Outrage Committed by Arab Terrorists,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29390.

⁹⁸ Gerald R. Ford, “The Suspension of the Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29391.

⁹⁹ Phillip M. Crane, “International Outrage,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29432.

¹⁰⁰ Jacob K. Javits, “The Tragedy at Munich – Senate Resolution 358, Expressing the Sense of the Senate on the Tragic Killings of Israeli Olympic Team Members of the 20th Olympiad at Munich,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 6, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29440.

¹⁰¹ Robert C. Byrd, “Act of Barbarism by Arab Terrorists in Munich,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29380.

¹⁰² Charles H. Percy, “The Attack by Arab Guerrillas at Olympic Village,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29314.

¹⁰³ Robert W. Packwood, “Savage Barbarism at the Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29349.

¹⁰⁴ Robert C. Byrd, “Where is the Money Coming From?” *Congressional Record*, Sep 7, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29672.

¹⁰⁵ Talmadge, 29349.

¹⁰⁶ William Proxmire, “Olympic Tragedy Forces Consideration of the Genocide Convention,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 7, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29711.

¹⁰⁷ The term “Arab” was often used interchangeably with “Palestinian” in both the government documents and the media sources.

the Palestinian terrorists must be universally condemned. Their mindless violence ranks with history's most despicable acts."¹⁰⁸ Arab terrorists were the perpetrators of what American officials considered one of the most horrific acts in history; therefore, from then on the government associated terrorism with the region that bore such criminals.

The American government classified the terrorist incident as an attack against the civilized world. In this manner they defined the uncivilized world as the Arab countries that supported Black September. Senator Abraham Ribicoff said that the shocking crime in Munich "is more than an outrage against the Olympic Games; it is a direct challenge to civilization."¹⁰⁹ Senator Robert Taft Jr. called the Munich attack "an act of unbelievable criminality which is an outrage to all civilized people."¹¹⁰ It is important to point out that both Conservatives, such as Taft and Liberals, including Jacob Javits condemned the attacks and singled out the Arab perpetrators. Senator Javits from New York said the attack was "piracy against the civilized world."¹¹¹ He continued, saying the act was "designed to thwart the whole world let alone the small nation of Israel. We simply cannot tolerate it."¹¹² Senator Javits pointed out that there was greater loss of life at the Lod Airport massacre,¹¹³ but he insisted that Munich "is a symbol and it involves the feelings and outrage of all mankind when mankind is desecrated and when the lives of youthful athletes are snuffed out with such dreadful barbarism as demonstrated in this

¹⁰⁸ Clifford P. Case, "The Tragedy at Munich – Senate Resolution 358, Expressing the Sense of the Senate on the Tragic Killings of Israeli Olympic Team Members of the 20th Olympiad at Munich," *Congressional Record*, Sep 6, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29442.

¹⁰⁹ Abraham A. Ribicoff, "Olympic Tragedy," *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29327.

¹¹⁰ William Taft Jr., "Terrorism at the Olympic Games," *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29332.

¹¹¹ Jacob K. Javits, "Outrage at Munich Olympic Games," *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29307.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 29308.

¹¹³ A terrorist attack on May 30, 1972 in Tel Aviv in which Japanese terrorists, on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, killed 26 people and wounded 80.

instance.”¹¹⁴ Congress hoped that Munich could be used as the catalyst to act against terrorism, for past attacks that resulted in more deaths failed to arouse world outrage. The American government not only saw the Arab terrorists as uncivilized, but Representative Hamilton Fish likened them to rabid dogs when he said: “Let us act firmly and swiftly as we would to prevent a rabies epidemic. For just as mad dogs cannot be permitted to run loose in the streets, these international mad dogs cannot be allowed to roam out in the world.”¹¹⁵

The repercussions of the terrorist attack in Munich were felt deep within the American Jewish community. In a conversation on September 6, Nixon asked Henry Kissinger if he knew how the American Jewish community would react to the Munich attack. Nixon replied: “It’s going to be the goddamnedist [*sic*] thing you’ve ever saw... You’ve got the Jewish Defense League raising hell and saying we ought to kill every Arab diplomat. What we have to do is enough here, that we’re showing an interest.”¹¹⁶ However, Kissinger warned of the anti-Semitic woes in the U.S., and both agreed it was not in the country’s best interests for policy to be run by the radical Jewish community.¹¹⁷ In order to avoid the pressure to act, Kissinger suggested that the constructive thing to do was to go to the Security Council of the UN not on behalf of the

¹¹⁴ Javits, “The Tragedy at Munich – Senate Resolution 358, Expressing the Sense of the Senate on the Tragic Killings of Israeli Olympic Team Members of the 20th Olympiad at Munich,” 29440.

¹¹⁵ Hamilton Fish, “Acts of Insanity at Olympics,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 6, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29595.

¹¹⁶ “Conversation Between President Nixon and the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger),” Washington, September 6, 1972, 8:13 a.m., *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45513.htm>

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Israelis, but to address terrorism as an international problem.¹¹⁸ Nixon agreed because this was something that affected the international community.¹¹⁹

Members of Congress echoed the Nixon Administration's call for the UN to take action at this important juncture. Representative Mario Biaggi expressed disappointment with the UN's inaction in the past, which gave a green light to Arab terrorists. He said instead of being too quick to condemn Israel, as done in the past, the UN "should be taking a strong stand against Arab intransigence and Arab support for such emissaries of violence as are present in Munich."¹²⁰ The Nixon Administration and members of Congress were sceptical of the UN's ability to come up with concrete action that could be agreed upon by all nations, for it had done little to prevent such acts in the past.

Nixon felt that Americans of Israeli background could be at risk of future attacks. In a statement to reporters he said, "we will do everything we can to protect our own citizens, whatever their background."¹²¹ Senator Abraham from Connecticut feared that at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, it could be members of the American Olympic team, the German team, or the Russian team at risk of an attack.¹²² Munich forced the American government to evaluate the safety of its Israeli citizens, as well as the complex diplomatic situation presented by the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The American government worried about Israel retaliating after Munich because of its political ties to the region. Nixon thought Israel would be better to play the "injured

¹¹⁸ "Conversation Among President Nixon, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), and White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman)," Washington, September 6, 1972, 9:53 a.m. – 12:38 p.m., *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45516.htm>

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Mario Biaggi, "Outrageous Attacks by Arab Terrorists," *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29390.

¹²¹ "Remarks to Reporters About the Assault on Israeli Athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany," September 5, 1972, Available online.

¹²² Ribicoff, 29327.

martyr.”¹²³ His big concern was that he did not want them to go conquer Beirut, but he said “I don’t mind them going in and knocking off a few camps, but even that’s bad right now.”¹²⁴ Nixon and Kissinger assumed the Israelis would react, but they did not know to what extent. American officials knew that in order to stifle violent retaliation by Israel, the nations of the world had to show support and solidarity with Israel. Devoted Liberal Senator Hubert Humphrey from Minnesota agreed, saying, “the tragedy is not Israel’s alone; it is the world’s.”¹²⁵ His view further illustrates that Munich was a strongly bipartisan issue. The American government had high hopes for the world community to use this opportunity to take a stance on terrorism.

In the late hours of the evening on September 5, Nixon told the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs, Alexander Haig, that he thought the U.S. had to be awfully tough and cut off all economic support to any nation that harboured or gave sanctuary to the “international outlaws.”¹²⁶ Samuel Hoskinson advised that the U.S. “will want to do everything reasonably possible to help avert similar tragedies in the future, but should not let our sense of outrage lead us into actions which could jeopardize other important interests we have in the Middle East.”¹²⁷ The Nixon administration had to delicately deal with Munich if it had any hopes of eventually fostering a peace agreement.

¹²³ “Conversation Among President Nixon, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), and White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman),” September 6, 1972, Available online.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Hubert H. Humphrey, “The Tragedy at Munich – Senate Resolution 358, Expressing the Sense of the Senate on the Tragic Killings of Israeli Olympic Team Members of the 20th Olympiad at Munich,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 6, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29441.

¹²⁶ “Editorial Note,” Washington, September 5, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45434.htm>

¹²⁷ “Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger),” Washington, September 6, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45435.htm>

The Senate passed Resolution 358 which expressed “sorrow and alarm at the episode, condemned terrorism anywhere in the world and called for the U.S. to join with the world in combating the menace by all available means.”¹²⁸ Members of Congress echoed this call for action throughout the Congressional records. Illinois Senator Charles Percy urged responsible Arab leadership to assert itself against the senseless acts of terrorism.¹²⁹ If they refused to yield to reason, he suggested grouping “this type of terrorism along with aircraft hijacking and bombing of aircraft, and seek world reprisals against such actions that offer safe haven for terrorists of this kind.”¹³⁰ Senator Percy pointed out the need for world action against the type of terrorism Israelis fell victim to at the Olympics. Colorado Senator Gordon Allott shared this sentiment as he called on all civilized nations, nations who are members of the UN, “not to grant political asylum to criminals and terrorists so that these shameful acts can be stopped.”¹³¹

Such sentiments ran throughout the comments in the House of Representatives as well. Lester Wolff of New York wondered whether the Arab world would evidence in this situation some degree of conscience. He commented that the Arabs “have often in the past glorified in the mindless slayings perpetrated by their own terrorists, but surely now with the weight of world opinion arrayed against them, they will take steps to call a halt to these outrageous acts.”¹³² Furthermore, the failure of the Arab nations to take action would “clearly indicate that they have no sense of decency, no sense of humanity,

¹²⁸ “Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon,” Washington, September 6, 1972, *U.S. Department of State*, [Accessed March 2008], Available online at:

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e1/45519.htm>

¹²⁹ Percy, 29314.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Gordon L. Allott, “Outrage at Munich Olympic Games,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29368.

¹³² Lester L. Wolff, “Further Outrages by Arab Terrorists,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29390.

no respect for peace.”¹³³ In order to stamp out international terrorism, the U.S. turned to the Middle East as the cause and as the main part of the solution to this international problem. Benjamin Rosenthal, a Representative from New York, went so far as to say that condemnation was no longer a sufficient response if this type of violence was to be prevented in the future. He said: “The unwillingness of the international community to respond in a meaningful way to previous incidents of this kind is as responsible for the present tragedy as the madness of the assassins themselves.”¹³⁴ To Rosenthal, the international community was guilty of inaction, thus encouraging the events that took place at Munich.

In order to combat terrorism, the U.S. hoped the Soviet Union would get behind their call for action. Senator Edward Brooke III called for the cooperation of all nations of the world – Communist and free – to band together in concerted action against any and all terrorists, whatever their professed cause.¹³⁵ In a statement to the House of Representatives, Biaggi, a Representative from New York, highlighted that the Arab states, supported by the Soviet Union and the UN, had continued their conspiracy of silence and terrorism.¹³⁶ Dominick Daniels, a Representative from New Jersey, blamed the Soviet Union for encouraging anti-Israel feelings and supplying Arabs with men and munitions for aggression against Israel. He saw Soviet support as “the root of the crisis” saying “it is time for the Soviet Union to put all pressure upon its client states in the

¹³³ Wolff, “Further Outrages by Arab Terrorists,” 29390.

¹³⁴ Benjamin S. Rosenthal, “Munich Olympic Tragedy,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29434.

¹³⁵ Edward W. Brooke III, “Terrorism at the Olympics,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29349.

¹³⁶ Biaggi, “Outrageous Attacks by Arab Terrorists,” 29390.

Middle East to end the reign of terror.”¹³⁷ In the thick of the Cold War, Munich not only involved the Middle East, but also the opposing superpowers.

In the wake of the Munich attack, North Vietnam released statements applauding the terrorist mission. In his remarks to Congress on September 21, Representative from New York, Jack Kemp included a quote from *Nhan Dan*, the biggest Hanoi printed on September 19. The excerpt read:

The peoples of the Arab countries and the entire peace and justice-loving human race have realized that they must unite in support of the Palestinian people’s struggle...Public opinion in the world, and the very acts of aggression in the Middle East, have smashed allegations of the U.S. and the Israeli pirates who are using the bloody event in Munich to make black and white and to sling mud at the just resistance of the Palestinian people. The US-Israeli aggressors are guilty of sabotage of peace. They have caused all the suffering of the nations in the Middle East. They are terrorists. As such, they must be condemned by the whole mankind.¹³⁸

This outraged members of Congress. Kemp explained that any reasonable human being, with even a passing commitment to civility or the sanctity of human life “cannot help but be struck by the callousness, the maliciousness, and the patent condemnation of innocent human suffering by the North Vietnamese.”¹³⁹ Furthermore, he said: “With an appreciation for the North Vietnamese commitment, not only to Palestinian liberation, but also to worldwide terrorist tactics, one can better understand why the U.S. Government weighs, assesses, and deliberates on North Vietnamese peace overtures with such scepticism.”¹⁴⁰ In the eyes of the U.S. Government, North Vietnam was even more

¹³⁷ Dominick V. Daniels, “Vicious Acts by Arab Terrorists at Munich, Germany,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 5, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29417.

¹³⁸ Jack F. Kemp, “North Vietnam and Terrorism,” *Congressional Record*, Sep 21, 1972, vol.118, part 24, 31844.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

of a threat because of its endorsement of Arab violence against Israelis. North Vietnam's support for the Arab cause highlighted its disregard for human life and human rights.

Nixon, Government officials, and members of Congress singled Munich out as a despicable act that demanded the international community take action. The American government viewed the terrorists as inhumane men who were supported by uncivilized Arab nations. Senator Edward Gurney encapsulated the sentiment when he said: "By wantonly killing 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team, eight Arab lunatics have shown themselves to be no less barbaric and no more considerate than those who gave the orders at places like Dachau."¹⁴¹ At Dachau, a Nazi concentration camp that was a mere 10 miles from Munich, a memorial reads: "Never Again." However, Jews were again killed on German soil in 1972. This time eleven athletes were dead, Israelis were in danger, the U.S. was vulnerable, and in the eyes of the American government, Arab nations were to blame.

The Outcome of the Munich Tragedy

Israel was devastated by the Arab terrorist attack on their athletes. After suffering violence at the hands of the Arab nations for decades, Israel no longer trusted the international community to appropriately respond to Munich. To retaliate, Israel launched attacks on guerrilla bases in Syria and Lebanon. As well, Golda Meir and the Mossad planned "Operation Wrath of God," which targeted members of Black September responsible for Munich and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The mission began in the fall of 1972 and continued for over 20 years, as covert Israeli assassination

¹⁴¹ Edward J. Gurney, "Terrorism at the Olympics," *Congressional Record*, Sep 6, 1972, vol.118, part 22, 29443.

units killed dozens of Arabs and Palestinians across Europe. Soon after the assassinations began, Arab nations returned the violence with mail bombs directed against Israeli diplomats. Thus, in the Middle East, Munich proved to heighten tensions between Arabs and Israelis.

After Munich, the American media and the American government had high hopes that the tragedy would encourage the international community to act and take a stand against terrorism. Nixon and Kissinger pointed out that the best way to do this would be to go through the UN, although they doubted the effectiveness of this route. By the fall of 1972, terrorism prompted great emotion with few expectations for concrete action at the UN. Shortly after Munich, Israel retaliated against guerrilla bases in Syria and Lebanon, and Syria requested the UN to intervene. The UN called for an immediate halt to military operations in the Middle East, but the U.S. used its veto because it was impossible to decipher cause and effect of Israel's action, and there was no mention of the Munich attack in the resolution. The UN's partiality towards the Arab nations, as seen from the resolution prompted by Syria, irritated the U.S.

Secretary General Kurt Waldheim succeeded in his call for international terrorism to be added to the agenda of the General Assembly in the fall of 1972. The hope that the international community could combat terrorism was triggered by the events at Munich. At the UN, the U.S. put forward a strong proposal calling for prosecution and extradition of terrorists to prevent and punish acts of terrorism. The U.S. proposal narrowly defined terrorism and called for concrete action; however, the African bloc feared this impinged on liberation movements, and the Arab bloc and the Soviet Union saw this as a pro-Israel measure. After much discussion, the General Assembly's Legal Committee approved a

resolution, sponsored by Algeria and others, that concerned itself with exploring the causes of terrorism rather than drawing up international legislation to stem the acts of terror. The U.S. and other Western countries made a concerted effort to bring about effective action at the UN, but they were outvoted. To the U.S., the UN established an empty resolution that could not mask or excuse its ineffectiveness at such a pivotal time.

Since the UN failed to take concrete action, Nixon was determined to implement strong anti-terror measures within the U.S. In the aftermath of Munich, Nixon put in place extra security to protect American citizens, as well as visiting Israelis, from possible terrorist attacks. Nixon and Secretary of State, William Rogers embarked on diplomatic efforts with foreign governments to form a collective security system against terrorism. The U.S. government also established a special committee composed of FBI, CIA and State Department officials to gather intelligence information on terrorist organizations. On September 25, 1972, Nixon established a Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism. Through it, efforts would be made to prevent acts like the murders in Munich, and establish preparations for the American government to take swift and appropriate action in the event of a terrorist attack. Due to the threat of terrorism, on September 27 the U.S. imposed visa requirements for foreigners in transit through the country. Nixon blatantly targeted Arabs as the source of terrorism that threatened the U.S. when he announced a major effort to identify and maintain surveillance on Arabs living in the U.S. who were suspected of planning terrorism. In order to suppress terrorist activities the U.S. also screened travellers from Arab nations more carefully.

Public opinion polls demonstrate that the American public largely supported Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially in the later years of Nixon's presidency, after

the Munich attack. This indicates that Americans viewed Israelis as the victims and Arabs as the perpetrators of terrorism. The question of support for Israel or the Arab cause was frequently asked of the public by Gallup from 1967 into the late 1980s. The polls show an increase of support for Israel after the wars in 1967 and 1973. The results from the American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup) poll indicate that in January 1969, 50% of Americans sympathized with Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict, while only 5% sympathized with the Arab nations. 28% of respondents answered “neither” and 17% had no opinion.¹⁴² In March 1970, public support for Israel dropped to 44% and support for Arab nations dipped to 3%.¹⁴³ By December 1973, support for Israel reached 54% (the highest support rate measured from 1967 to 1982), support for Arab Nations also rose to 8%, while those answering “neither” totalled 24%, and only 14% had no opinion.¹⁴⁴

While American support for Israel increased in the 1970s, so did concern with the increase in the frequency of terrorism, especially those acts that involved holding hostages. In December 1977, Louis Harris and Associates Limited conducted an opinion poll asking Americans: “How serious a problem do you feel terrorism is in the world, where terrorists kidnap businessmen, hijack planes, and commit other violence – very serious, only somewhat serious, or hardly serious at all?” 90% of Americans answered “very serious,” 9% responded “only somewhat serious,” and 1% said “hardly serious at all.”¹⁴⁵ Evidently Americans were very concerned with terrorism into the later 1970s,

¹⁴² Connie de Boer, “The Polls: Attitudes Towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol.47, No.1, Spring 1983, 123.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Connie de Boer, “The Polls: Terrorism and Hijacking,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol.43, No.3, Autumn 1979, 412.

even before the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979. The poll also asked Americans: “How serious do you feel terrorism is here in (own country) – very serious, only somewhat serious, or hardly serious at all?” 60% of American felt terrorism in America was very serious in 1977, 31% responded only somewhat serious, 7% said hardly serious at all, and 2% did not know or were not sure. By 1977 Americans viewed terrorism as a serious issue both at home and abroad. The same poll indicates that 40% of Americans believed that professional terrorists were trained by Palestinians in Lebanon.¹⁴⁶ Once again, this implies that by 1977 Americans associated terrorism with the Middle East and Palestinian extremists. A Louis and Harris poll conducted in June 1978 also shows that 79% of Americas were in favour of an airline cutting off service to and from any country which allowed terrorists to use that country as a base of training or operations, or which gave refuge to terrorists or lets them go free.¹⁴⁷ After Munich, both the media and the American government pushed for such sanctions, specifically against Arab nations which supported terrorists.

The attack at Munich outraged the Nixon Administration and prompted the U.S. to react. From then on, terrorism was linked to the Middle East, which added the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Cold War. After the UN failed to take concrete action, the American government took strong measures to prevent further attacks, to gather intelligence information on possible terrorists, and to converse with foreign governments to bring about an international effort to combat terrorism. While tensions continued to rise in the Middle East, America mobilized against the threat of Arab terrorists in the fall of 1972.

¹⁴⁶ de Boer, “The Polls: Terrorism and Hijacking,” 413.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 414.

Conclusion

On the morning of September 6, a memorial service was held for the 11 dead Israelis athletes and one German policeman killed at Furstenfeldbruck airport at the hands of Arab terrorists. The Olympic flag flew at half mast, as did the flags of the nations participating in the Games. Even before the ceremony ended there were wild protests from Arab officials because of this. However, the service was broadcast on TV all over the world so that hundreds of millions of people could see the colours of Egypt, Syria, Algeria, and others lowered to the mourning position. As well, not one official or athlete from any Arab country, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia or Poland was present at the memorial.¹⁴⁸ The world watched the memorial assuming that all nations grieved the loss of the Israeli athletes. However, the American media and the American government quickly realized that the insincere gestures of the Arab countries spoke volumes to the politics surrounding terrorism.

To the applause of the crowd, Avery Brundage, the president of the IOC, announced that the Munich Olympic Games would continue that afternoon. The Games would be remembered for the Soviet Union's sweep of medals, for the controversy over inconsistent judging, for Mark Spitz's seven gold medals, and for East Germany's strong athletic showing. Sadly, however, the Munich Games also became synonymous with sorrow and tragedy. The attack outraged leaders and citizens from all over the world, but for America, Munich provided an opportunity to promote strong measures to prevent future acts of terrorism. Long before Reagan announced his "War on Terror," and even before Iranian revolutionaries stormed the American embassy in Tehran, the Munich attack sparked America's fight against terrorism rooted in the Middle East.

¹⁴⁸ Groussard, 440.

The memorial plaque in front of the Israeli quarters at 31 Connollystrasse lists the names of the murdered Israelis and says “Honour to their memory.” Many hoped that the aftermath of the attack would indeed honour the memory of the athletes and serve as a catalyst for good will among nations and spur actions to prevent such acts in the future. However, it has been over 35 years since that fateful day in September, 1972, and the world is still trying to come to grips with violent terrorism that strikes almost daily in some part of the world. Munich made the U.S. aware of the roots of terrorism at the time, but the country was little more equipped on September 11, 2001, than it was then to deal with a threat that the world is still unable to define together.

Conclusion

When members of the Sunni-Islamic terrorist movement, Al-Qaeda, hijacked four planes on September 11, 2001, our perspective on terrorism changed from anything that was familiar before the first plane hit the North Tower shortly before 9:00 that morning. Our understanding of terrorism evolved over the decades leading to that day, but in the post-9/11 era, terrorism became a new form of evil for America. Therefore, studies that seek to improve our understanding of terrorism have become popular in the wake of this shifting awareness. In order to comprehend terrorism today, we must recognize the history of how America conceptualized terrorism.

My analysis of the media and the American government's perception of terrorism during the Nixon Administration illustrates that it was during this time that America first associated terrorism with the Middle East. In the early years of Nixon's presidency, the government viewed terrorism as a criminal annoyance that needed to be policed. For example, Americans did not view hijackings of American planes to Cuba, or violent student protests, as terrorist threats to security. However, Munich in 1972 altered the American consciousness much in the same increment that 9/11 did. The U.S. saw Munich as a catalyst for mobilizing world action to combat terrorism. As well, after Munich, the rhetoric in Washington and the American media changed, as the records link terrorism to the Middle East by specifying "Arab terrorists" or "Palestinian guerrillas." The history of terrorism evolved in the late 1970s and the following decades; however, it is essential to note that the root of the problem in the Middle East in the early 1970s was America's support of Israel. This means that America's association of terrorism with the

Middle East did not begin with the Iranian hostage-taking in 1979, but years earlier during the Nixon Administration.

I analyze America's conceptualization of terrorism during a particular period of time, yet further studies must be conducted to focus on alternate regions or eras in order to gain a more holistic view of how Americans perceived terrorism. I have established that Munich was an important turning point in 1972 and that terrorism continued to be linked to the Middle East into 1974, but where does the story of terrorism pick up after Nixon's resignation? How did America perceive terrorism in the Middle East from 1974 to 1979 and during the Iranian hostage crisis? A number of case studies on how various presidents viewed terrorism and the actions they took to combat it would greatly add to the existing scholarship on terrorism. Reagan's anti-terror policies have been rigorously studied, but what about the way Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter dealt with the menace of terrorism? As well, how was terrorism conceptualized in the post-World War period? A study on terrorism in the 1950s and 1960s would provide important background information to my research. In Chapter 1, I examine terrorism in several regions during Nixon's Presidency, but more in-depth analyses of terrorism in those regions both before and after Nixon would be fruitful. I focus on America's perceptions of terrorism, but a number of countries could be researched in a similar fashion; for example, Britain, Canada, Germany, Israel, and several Arab nations would all make for rewarding studies. Finally, how and when did the shift in focus from Arab nationals to Islamic fundamentalists take place?

The sources in the early 1970s refer to the Arab-Israeli conflict, yet Arabs in relation to Islam was not in the minds of policy-makers. Today we are familiar with

terrorism at the hands of Islamic fundamentalists, but the Arab-Israeli conflict over territory remains the core issue. Now Arabs use the Islamic religion as a tool for Arab nationalism to mobilize against Israel. The U.S. became a target of Arab terrorism not only because of its support for Israel, but also the country's successes in technology and its perceived failures in some moral social standards angered Islamic fundamentalists. By the mid-1980s, political radicalism became reclassified as a religious revival in the Middle East aimed at global Islamic unity. Today experts look at the nature of Islam as the source of the problem rather than the root problem of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Aside from the grievances of Arab nationals, there were a number of international factors at play during the early 1970s that influenced the media and the government's perception of terrorism at that time. Cold War politics complicated international affairs because the Soviet Union supported the Arab nations. This became evident when resolutions on terrorism were put to votes at the UN in the fall of 1972. As well, terrorism in the Middle East had implications beyond grievances that affected only Israel and the Arab nations. Terrorism in the region ran the risk of drawing the two superpowers into a confrontation because of their support for opposing sides in the conflict. Vietnam also complicated the situation because Americans in protest of the war, and the government in Hanoi, classified America's actions in the war as terrorism.

The effects of the Cold War and the Vietnam War provided a unique backdrop to America's conceptualization of terrorism in the early 1970s. Terrorism has evolved over the past few decades and America's perception of terrorism is drastically different now. In 1968 the assassination of Robert Kennedy was not considered terrorism, nor was there much impact in the fact that his assassin was a fanatic Palestinian. Imagine the seismic

shockwaves we would feel today if a Palestinian assassinated a presidential frontrunner. The country would be outraged and the crime would no doubt be deemed as terrorism. However, while much has changed since the early 1970s, it is striking how reminiscent America's past dealings with terrorism are of today's struggles. After the Munich Olympics, for the media and the government, terrorism represented a global conflict of the civilized nations versus the uncivilized. By the end of 1972, airports increased security, armed guards traveled on planes, officials investigated Arabs suspected of being linked to terrorist organizations, and the world refused to come to a consensus on how to define and combat terrorism. This all sounds very familiar to what we are experiencing in the post-9/11 era. However, a great sea change in America's perception of terrorism has occurred. Where for decades terrorist acts were regarded as sporadic criminal activities to be guarded against at home, terrorism is now widely viewed as an ongoing war of numerous battles to be fought around the globe.

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