


# A Loose Alliance of Terrorists Does Seem to Exist

By R. W. APPLE Jr.



LONDON — Is there an international organization that coordinates hijacking and other acts of terrorism? Is the whole thing run by some warped mastermind out of a secret headquarters? Are the kidnappings and assassinations carried out according to a standard manual and financed from a common fund?

Those questions were much discussed in Europe last week, in the wake of a hijacking by Japanese terrorists, the kidnapping and subsequent killing of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, presumably by German radicals, and another hijacking by Arab guerrillas.

The answers are far from clear, but experts in the study of violence and subversion in Britain and on the Continent believe that a loose and shifting alliance exists. To describe the phenomenon, they use the phrase "transnational terrorism," and some of them believe that terrorists are trying to establish more formal ties.

If there is an international organization, and it seems very likely," says Richard Clutterbuck of Essex University in England, "it's very informal at the moment. To call it a terrorist syndicate or something like that is to overstate the case. What we seem to have is fraternal contacts among young terrorists of different nationalities, who hope to build something more stable."

Dr. Clutterbuck, a specialist in terrorism, suggested

R. W. Apple Jr. is chief of the London bureau of The New York Times.

that much of the drive toward a central organization may be coming from former leaders of the Revolutionary Coordinating Junta, a Latin American group founded in 1974 by revolutionary groups in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. The junta was designed to provide joint funding, strategy and tactics. According to Dr. Clutterbuck, the junta was heavily underwritten by the Argentine Revolutionary Army, which he believes to have raised \$30 million in 1973, mostly from ransoms. But the junta has fallen on hard times, and some of its leaders are thought to have fled to Europe. That is as much as Dr. Clutterbuck and his fellow students of terrorism know.

The Times of London reported last week, however, that the junta has set up a headquarters in Paris that "has become a kind of clearing-house for international terrorism." The paper said that the headquarters raises funds, some of them from Cuba, forges passports and identity papers and publishes elaborate training manuals, dealing with such subjects as guerrilla warfare, urban terrorism, bomb manufacturing and the endurance of torture. In overall command of the junta in Europe, The Times said, is a man named Fernando Luis Alvarez, known in the movement as "Pelado." He is said to be married to Anna Maria Guevara, sister of Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the legendary Latin American revolutionaries. The paper went on to say that there were relationships between the junta and an unnamed "left-wing group" in Britain, the Irish Republican Army and even the storied terrorist named Carlos Martinez and known to European newspaper readers as "Carlos the Jackal."

But The Times account gave no evidence of explicit links between the junta's alleged activities and those who have carried out recent terrorist attacks. It may well be that the junta's European headquarters, if there is one,

is just another back-streets tract factory, where romantic youths plot more than they act.

A German counter-terror official said he believed that the junta's European activities were largely within the law and consisted primarily of propaganda. British security officials also doubt that there is any command and control structure, although, as one of the officials said, "I am quite sure a lot of these blokes are friends of friends." French sources are equally skeptical. One official said tartly: "It's just that the Germans cannot imagine people acting without

someone giving orders down a hierarchy." A prominent French investigative reporter said he believed that most of the recent terrorist attacks had been carried out by "small, autonomous groups of no more than 10 people, designed to avoid detection."

Even if the role of the junta has been overblown by those who have seized upon its purported European operations as evidence that much of the current wave of international terrorism is coordinated by leftist activists of many countries, there is no question that there are substantial communities of interest.

The Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany (also known as the Red Army Faction) was obviously in touch with the Arabs who pulled off the hijacking of the Boeing 737 belonging to Lufthansa Airlines. For the release of their hostages, the hijackers demanded, among other things, the release of the Baader-Meinhof leaders who remained in jail.

Baader-Meinhof activists have described themselves for years as agents of "the oppressed peoples of Africa and Asia." Similarly, the Japanese Red Army, despite its roots in purely Japanese grievances and traditions, has posed as a friend of the underdeveloped world.

The group headed by Carlos the Jackal, who was born in Venezuela as Illich Ramirez-Sanchez, is perhaps the classic example of international terrorist cooperation. It includes Germans, Latin Americans and Arabs, and it has been involved, according to British security officials, in Vienna (the seizure of the oil ministers), the Netherlands, Britain and France.

Both the Japanese and the Germans, as well as the Latin-Americans, share a contempt for all modern states, including China and the Soviet Union. The efforts of those states to combat them will inevitably push them toward more concerted actions.