

SOVIET SUPPORT FOR

INT'L TERRORISM

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The Soviets are deeply engaged in support of revolutionary violence worldwide. Such involvement is a basic tenet of Soviet policy, pursued in the interests of weakening unfriendly societies, destabilizing hostile regimes, and advancing Soviet interests.
- The USSR pursues different policies toward different types of revolutionary groups that conduct terrorist activities (that is, hijackings, assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, and the victimization of innocent civilians).
- Whether terrorist tactics are used in the course of revolutionary violence is largely a matter of indifference to the Soviets, who have no scruples against them. The Soviet attitude is determined by whether those tactics advance or harm Soviet interests in the particular circumstances. Revolutionary groups that employ terrorist tactics are simply one among the many instruments of Soviet foreign policy.
- There is conclusive evidence that the USSR directly or indirectly supports a large number of national insurgencies<sup>1</sup> and some separatist-irredentist<sup>2</sup> groups. Many of these entities, of both types, carry out terrorist activities as part of their larger programs of revolutionary violence. A notable example of Soviet involvement is the case of El Salvador, where the Soviets have coordinated and directly participated in the delivery of arms to revolutionary groups that use terrorism as a basic tactic.
- Some revolutionary groups that employ terrorism do accept a measure of Soviet control and direction, but many do not.
- The International Department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party has primary responsibility for managing contacts with movements in opposition to established govern-

<sup>1</sup> *National insurgencies* are broad-based movements which seek to transform the fundamental political orientation of a society by armed revolutionary means. Examples of such groups which the USSR supports or has supported are SWAPO (in Namibia) and ZAPU (in the former Rhodesia).

<sup>2</sup> *Separatist-irredentist movements* believe that they constitute nations without states and seek to assert their national autonomy or independence. Examples of such movements which the USSR supports or has supported are several of the Palestinian groups.

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ments. The KGB, the GRU, and the 10th Directorate of the Soviet General Staff provide a broad range of military and paramilitary training to members of revolutionary groups, in various camps in the USSR and elsewhere, and provide arms and other assistance to a wide spectrum of revolutionary groups in the world, particularly Palestinians, Africans, and Latin Americans.<sup>3</sup> Much of this support is readily utilizable in terrorist activities.

- The Soviets support certain allied or friendly governments and entities—notably Libya, certain Palestinian groups, East European states, South Yemen, and Cuba—which in turn directly or indirectly support the terrorist activities of a broad spectrum of violent revolutionaries, including certain of the world's nihilistic terrorist groups.<sup>4</sup>
- The USSR accepts these support actions of its allies and friends. It does so on occasion because these actions also serve Soviet interests and on other occasions because they are part of the price to be paid for maintaining and increasing its influence with allies and friends. The USSR has not made its backing for them contingent on their desisting from aiding nihilistic terrorists or other violent revolutionaries. In this sense, Moscow is wittingly providing support, albeit indirectly, to international terrorism.
- With respect to Soviet policy toward nihilistic, purely terrorist groups, available evidence remains thin and in some respects contradictory, even though the human intelligence collection programs of the United States and its friends have been giving this problem close scrutiny for some years.
- The activities of some of the nihilistic terrorist groups are carried out by individuals trained by Soviet friends and allies that provide them with weapons; such terrorists have sometimes transited Soviet Bloc nations. Yet the terrorist activities of these groups are not coordinated by the Soviets.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See annexes A and B for details.

<sup>4</sup> *Nihilists* are small groups, with little public support, which rely almost exclusively on terrorist acts to destroy existing institutions to make way for new ones. Leading examples are the Baader-Meinhof group in Germany, the Japanese Red Army, and the Red Brigades in Italy, which profess the view that Western institutions are their major antagonists.

<sup>5</sup> Following is an alternative view of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps; and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force. They believe that the Soviets do provide some coordination to nihilistic terrorists either directly through the contacts of Soviet advisers with these terrorists in training camps in Middle Eastern countries, or elsewhere, or indirectly through East European countries, Cubans, Palestinians, or other entities through which the Soviets work.

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- The Soviets have on occasion privately characterized certain nihilistic terrorism as "criminal," and have urged other revolutionary groups to cease and desist from terrorist acts the Soviets considered "self-defeating."\*
- Public protestations by the Soviets that they do not back terrorism are compromised by the indirect Soviet support received by certain nihilistic terrorists, as well as by the direct support the Soviets afford to national insurrections and separatist-irredentist movements which conduct terrorist acts.
- The Soviet policy of differentiated support of various kinds of revolutionary violence benefits Soviet overall interests at low risk or cost, and without significant damage to Soviet prestige. It is therefore likely to continue.
- There is no basis for supposing that the Soviets could be persuaded to join the West in genuine opposition to international terrorism as a whole.
- The broader phenomenon of revolutionary violence is a more significant and complex issue for the United States than is its terrorist component per se. The severe instabilities that exist in many settings in the Third World are chronic, will not soon be overcome, and in many instances would continue to exist regardless of the USSR.
- There is no simple or single solution to these problems because of the variety and complexity of circumstances leading to revolutionary violence and terrorism. In every case, the indicated measures include a mixture of three approaches: reduction or elimination of external support, police and/or military action to combat violence, and the opening of channels for peaceful change.

\* Following is an alternative view of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps; and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force. They believe that this judgment is misleading. Moscow has not supported terroristic activities which it considers counterproductive. The holders of this view note, however, that, as stated in the fourth Key Judgment (page 1), on other occasions "the Soviets have coordinated and directly participated in the delivery of arms to revolutionary groups that use terrorism as a basic tactic."

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