

Terrorism's home base

Bombing Libya, as this week showed with horrifying effect, has not made the world safe from terrorism. Scores of innocents were slaughtered in Karachi, Istanbul, and Paris. Other outrages occurred in the Philippines and West Germany. Some observations ought to be drawn from this international olympics of mayhem.

First, it was no coincidence that the despicable attacks against civilians in Karachi and Istanbul occurred at precisely the same time that the PLO's chief, Yasser Arafat, went public with an important new peace plan. Arafat accepted, for the first time, UN Resolution 242 as a basis for negotiations. His previous refusal to accede to 242 — which relegated Palestinians to being mere "refugees" — had been a major obstacle to peace talks.

In fact, this week's murderous attacks duplicated last fall's airport massacres at Rome and Athens. Both were designed to produce so much outrage that peace talks would become impossible — and they succeeded. It appears that all of these terror assaults were staged by the Abu Nidal group as a means of thwarting negotiations between the mainstream PLO and Israel.

While no one can yet say for sure where these madmen came from, one point is painfully evident: Almost all recent Mideastern terror attacks have had, as their return address, Beirut, Lebanon. Also clear is that terrorism will continue to mount until the powers — who make such a fuss about wanting to combat terrorism — finally do something about its primary source, Lebanon.

In simplest terms, Lebanon is a madhouse infested by demented killers. And small wonder. For the past 11 years, this little nation of 4 million (of whom 500,000 are Palestinians) has been wracked by war, slaughter, anarchy, crime and unspeakable cruelty. Lebanese of various factions have managed to kill over 350,000 of their neighbors, the Syrians around 3,000 and Israel, in its 1982 invasion, killed another 15,000 civilians. Today, Christians slay Christians while Muslim Shiites massacre Muslim and Christian Palestinians.

Most of the mad dog terrorists we see today, young men in their late teens or early 20s, have spent their entire lives after the age of 12 in conditions of war and anarchy. Many are illiterate orphans who joined street gangs or local private armies after their parents were killed. Among them the use of drugs is widespread. Infused with acid hatred for the nations on whom they blame their misfortunes — the U.S. and Israel — these young thugs fall easy prey to political groups who manipulate their anger.

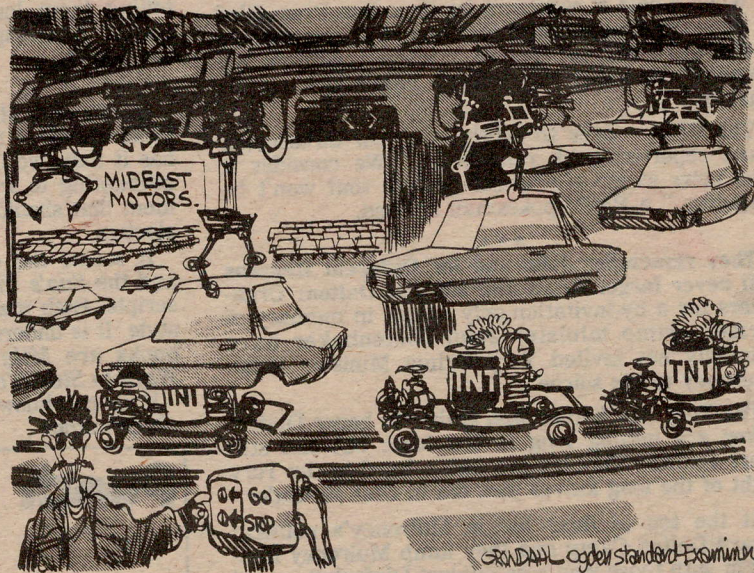
The most single effective measure that can be taken against terrorism is to impose peace and

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order on Lebanon. But to do so will require ending that nation's civil war and forcing the outside powers that keep it going to relent. This means the U.S., Israel, Syria and its ally, the USSR, will all have to agree on a hands-off policy for Lebanon by halting the covert aid to their factions that fuels the civil war.

Difficult yes, but not impossible. Just about everyone by now is sickened by Lebanon's interminable violence. The next step would be to impose a lasting peace on that nation's murderous sects by sending in a large and nasty neutral military force. I don't mean polite Canadians or friendly



Fijians. What Lebanon needs is a dose of the no-nonsense Turkish Army. Or perhaps a mixture of Turks, Gurkhas from India, Moroccans and perhaps some Chinese.

Anarchic Lebanon, like a septic wound, is now poisoning the rest of the world. It must be cauterized, and soon, by international agreement. Closing down Lebanon's terror factories will do much to end the present scourge we now face.

Bombing Libya, Syria or Teheran will do nothing to reduce terrorist attacks. Nor will huffing and puffing by Washington, nor will more Israeli bombing raids on Lebanon. Clever diplomacy, followed by tough police action, is what's needed. Alas, cleverness is a quality singularly lacking in U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, the very person who made much of the current mess in Lebanon, and the one who will also have to solve it.