

1983

Victims of Terrorism

William R. Farrell

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Farrell, William R. (1983) "Victims of Terrorism," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 36 : No. 3 , Article 20.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol36/iss3/20>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

statistics and references, which will enlighten the professional, the policy maker, and the interested citizen. It provides entry to the literature which should be of use to members of the research community. I recommend it highly.

J. ERIC FREDLAND
US Naval Academy

Ochberg, Frank M. and Soskis, David A., eds. *Victims of Terrorism*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982. 202pp. \$18

This volume is a compilation of 10 articles centering on "human responses to human cruelty," hostage taking during a terrorist attack. As pointed out the hostage, who up to this event has probably led a quiet existence, is suddenly thrown into the most stressful of situations where the threat of death is immediate and ever present. The book draws upon scientific and clinical data in an effort to determine what can be done to reduce the victims' suffering. Actual cases are examined to determine the hostage's psychological difficulties as well as the nature of the relationship between the terrorist and the victim.

Both the editors are psychiatrists with extensive experience in the field, serving as consultants to several government agencies to include the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the US Secret Service. Their contribution is valuable in that, while a great deal has been written concerning how nations and security forces should react to combat terrorism, much less has been devoted to aftermath both in physical and human terms.

As the authors point out terrorism is not going away. Ethnic and nationalist terrorism (i.e., the Irish and Palestinian cases) have existed for years and will

probably be with us for a long time. There has been considerable media coverage of the eroding effect of continuing violence on the residents of Beirut and Belfast. For over a year Americans watched their news programs to see how the victims of the Iranian incidents were faring on day 82 . . . 147 . . . 356 . . . 401, etc. In a sense we all suffered and were ourselves held hostage. (At least one television network, apparently overcoming adversity spawned a profitable late night news program.) The point to be made is that terrorism no longer seems a phenomenon occurring in distant lands. It now has the potential to be "up close and personal."

One of the most interesting aspects examined by one of the authors, Thomas Strenz of the FBI, is the so-called Stockholm Syndrome. Originally named for a 131-hour hostage incident at a Swedish bank, the syndrome consists of three stages: positive feelings of the hostages toward their captors; negative feelings of the hostages toward the police; and reciprocation of positive feelings by the captors. The author points out that this is a coping mechanism which has shown itself in several documented cases. "The hostage identifies out of fear rather than out of love. It would appear that the healthy ego evaluates the situation and selects from its arsenal of defenses (the best) mechanism . . . the law abiding citizen is forced into a life-and-death situation and is unprepared for this turn of events The police, who should help, seem equally helpless. The hostage may feel that the police have let him down by allowing this to happen. It all seems so unreal." There have been cases where former hostages actually began defense funds for their captors; took vacation time to attend trials or visit them in prison, or refused to be inter-

viewed by law enforcement officers. As one former victim explained, "I was alive because they let me live . . . After it was over, and we were safe and they were in handcuffs, I walked over to them and said, 'Thank you for giving me my life back.' I know how foolish it sounds, but that is how I felt."

While the title of the book would indicate that the material is relevant to terrorist cases only, the reader will find worthwhile information useful in understanding the effects of hostile captivity on prisoners of war and criminal victims also.

It may seem far-fetched that such fate may wait any one of us, but as J. Bowyer Bell vividly points out in his work, *A Time of Terror*: "After a decade of dismal terror, there can be few left who are still innocent of the new politics of atrocity and the war waged by tiny 'armies' of fanatics bearing strange devices. All now know the long and grotesque litany of massacre: Lod-Munich-Khartoum-Rome-Athens-Vienna. Now millions are familiar with the luminous dreams of the obscure South Moluccans and the strange Japanese Red Army, with the fantasies of the Hanafis and the Symbionese Liberation Army, and with the alphabet of death—PFLP, FLQ, IRA. Carlos-the-Jackal is a media antihero, and Croatia is now found in the headlines instead of in stamp albums. Anyone can be a victim, can ride the wrong airline, take the wrong commuter train or accept the wrong executive position abroad. While opening mail, passing a foreign embassy, standing in an airport boarding line or next to a car, or attending a diplomatic reception, any of us may draw a 'winning' lottery ticket in the terrorist game."

WILLIAM R. FARRELL
Lieutenant Colonel, US Air Force
Naval War College

Allen, Peter. *The Yom Kippur War*. New York: Scribner, 1982. 310pp. \$17.95

A fairly lengthy subtitle to this book reads, "The politics, tactics, and individual actions by which Israel repelled the Arab invasions of 1973." The book lives up to its cover description with a vengeance. Pastiche can sometimes leave a reader breathless, but Mr. Allen is a disciplined writer who manages with aplomb to carry a reader from the TAPLINE on the Golan and the brute heroism of Task Force "Zwicka" to variously elegant and "civilized" corridors of power around the world. Like Walter Cronkite's "You Are There," there is veracity here that allows the book to succeed as journalism. Unfortunately, as with most journalistic pieces, all audiences cannot be satisfied.

Generally, there is never quite enough detail to satisfy a military reader looking for a discussion of tactics or of operational schemes. In this regard, the paucity of charts and maps is infuriating for a military reader; at least half the battle description is made without recourse to any map. Further, there is insufficient discussion of the political processes, either within Israel or in the international arena, for the book to serve the political-military analyst or political scientist. At best the book serves as a "blow-by-blow" for readers not yet familiar with the Arab-Israeli wars.

One very important exception to the foregoing generality is the discussion of the bridging of the Suez Canal. That operation itself gets ample discussion in General Adan's *On The Banks of Suez*, London: 1980, reviewed by this writer in the March-April 1982 edition of *Naval War College Review*. Mr. Allen, however, goes back before the war to the discussions, planning, and testing of concepts for such an operation in a chapter dedicated to "Bridging the Suez Canal."