

Washington Merry-go-round

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WASHINGTON — In the aftermath of the Hanafi Muslim siege in Washington last month, federal officials are bracing for the possibility of more hostage-taking by dozens of violence-prone groups.

Law enforcement experts from the State, Treasury, Justice and Defense Departments have been meeting recently to devise methods to thwart future takeovers. Three special anti-terrorist units, the CIA's "Critical Collection Problems Committee," Justice's "Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security," and the "Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism," are also trying to come up with solutions.

As in the Hanafi case, the intelligence experts have no idea where or when the terrorists will strike next. Some officials at the meetings have grumped that without illegal mail covers, wiretaps and break-ins, adequate data cannot be gathered. Such tools have largely been abandoned since Watergate and recent revelations of CIA-FBI abuses.

To replace these unconstitutional methods, some of the federal agencies are turning to sophisticated anticrime technology, but the results have been limited. The Customs Service, for instance, has set up a Terrorist Data Base

containing 2,000 names and 5,000 passport numbers. Some suspects have as many as seven aliases.

The system helped identify an alleged Japanese terrorist in Honolulu last month, shortly before Japanese Prime Minister Takao Fukuda arrived in the United States. The suspect was thoroughly searched, briefly detained, then put under surveillance. The computer also enabled agents to lock up a man who had threatened to kill Queen Elizabeth on her American visit last year.

Classified intelligence bulletins cite militant Puerto Rican nationalists and anti-Castro Cubans as the most likely groups to commit violence in the immediate future.

The Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional of Puerto Rico (FALN) reportedly was behind the bombing last month of a New York building that housed an FBI field office. The same group blew up New York's historic Fraunces Tavern in 1975, killing four people and injuring 53. Meanwhile, the revolutionary Puerto Rican Socialist Party may soon be taken over by Florencio Merced Rosa, a young hothead who, say intelligence sources, had ties with an

FALN "bomb factory" discovered last November in Chicago.

Some anti-Castro Cubans, headquartered in Miami, already are suspected of killing Chilean exile Orlando Letelier and many others. One anti-Castro group, the Frente de Liberacion Nacional de Cuba, according to an intelligence report, "is known to possess a large amount of C-4 explosives, which it may use against pro-Castro and Soviet targets... if relations with Cuba appear to be improving."

The infamous Weather Underground is still considered a threat, as are the tiny Japanese Red Army, the violent wing of the Irish Republican Army, the leftist New World Liberation Front, and the Red Guerilla Family.

More exotic terrorist groups are also named in the intelligence bulletins.

The Rastafarians, a Jamaican-based religious sect that defies the late Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, now has 3,000 members in the New York city area. While many are law-abiding, some preach "the ways of the white man are evil," says a confidential report, and "terrorism has been increasingly associated with this group." The report urges "extreme caution" in approaching members of the group, who are also called "Dreads," "Rude Boys" and "Beardsmen."

Federal agents are also worried over possible terrorism by elements of the "Front de Liberation du Quebec," which seeks independence from Canada. "Members... are believed to have connections with a number of European and Mideast terrorist groups," says a classified bulletin.

KIDNAP CAPER? — A former Justice Dept. undercover agent secretly planned to stalk fugitive Robert Vesco, zap him with a tranquilizer gun and kidnap him from his Costa Rican hideout.

Ex-Marine pilot Larry Blaine Jividen boasted several times that he would be

aided in the bizarre plot by the CIA, which once concocted the brilliant scheme of using a potion to make Fidel Castro's beard fall out.

Although some intelligence sources described the former Marine captain as a "big talker," he does have some cloak-and-dagger credentials. In 1972, federal narcotics agents arranged a phony Marine discharge for Jividen so he could act as an undercover operative in a big heroin deal between Morocco and the United States.

Although the operation fell through, Jividen received a formal commendation signed by Justice official Richard Kobakoff, formerly a CIA agent. The episode apparently whetted Jividen's appetite for a life of intrigue.

He made an appointment to see Kobakoff in November, 1974, with his sights set on a more daring adventure: the kidnapping of Robert Vesco from Costa Rica. American officials repeatedly have failed in attempts to extradite the financial scofflaw from his palatial island villa.

Jividen tried to recruit Vesco's former pilot, Capt. A. L. Eisenhauer, by saying that an unnamed "sponsor" would provide aircraft and a clandestine plan.

Jividen would use a false identity to secure a plane, he explained. Then a go-between who knew Vesco would try to trick the financier into boarding the airplane where he would be laid low with a tranquilizer gun. CIA operatives in Central America would be available for support, Jividen insisted.

Eisenhauer acknowledged that he was contacted about the kidnap caper, but refused to participate. A spokesman for Kobakoff said the meeting, proposed by Jividen, never took place. Kobakoff vehemently denies that he knew about or sponsored any plan to kidnap Vesco. Jividen, reached in London, declined to comment.