

THE VIENNA BOMBING

Within a relatively short time of each other, bombs burst: at a Vienna synagogue; in an Iranian government headquarters; at an American government headquarters in West Germany; at the American Embassy in Peru.

Those were just the bombings that were prominently reported in the press. Other terrorist bombings took place. There would scarcely be room in the daily press to report on all the attempts by one set of human beings to butcher another set of human beings on behalf of one political idea or another.

As a result, the public's attention span is selective. The Iranians were mainly concerned about the bombing in Teheran; the Jews were mainly concerned about the bombing in Vienna; and so forth. Now, there's nothing wrong with such a selective attention. If the Iranians did not give priority to *their* bombing problem, who would? The person who is equally concerned about *everybody* is operationally concerned about *nobody*.

There are practical reasons for selective concern. The Jews, for example, are able to see implications in the Vienna synagogue bombings which may have to be pointed out to others. Superficial wisdom has it that if you would only be nice to the PLO, the PLO would be nice to you. The Vienna bombing suggests a more trenchant piece of wisdom: if you're nice to extremists such as the PLO, they will only take that as a signal of more license to practice their extremism.

Some graduate student in psychohistory might some day explore the phenomenon of political leaders who are not actively Jewish but have some well-identified Jewish ancestry. Austrian Chancellor Kreisky and American Defense Secretary Weinberger both seem to have become leading champions of the efficacy of Arab appeasement. But, however entertaining psychohistory might be, the case should be made on its objective merits.

Austria has recognized the PLO, and has led the campaign to recognize the PLO in European capitals. As a delegation from this Jewish community pointed out to the Austrian consular official in this area this week, this official recognition has allowed the PLO to operate more freely -- and the synagogue bombing was not the first PLO attack on the Jews in Vienna. American Jews travelling to Europe might well feel more comfortable if they avoid Vienna, and get their pastry elsewhere.

Of course, Kreisky and others of his conviction hold that the Vienna bombing was not the work of "the PLO," but of an extremist faction thereof. That's where they make their most grievous error. *All* factions of the PLO are tied together by one driving concept, proclaimed again by the PLO representative in Paris, Ibrahim Souss, on August 23: "There is one thing that should be clear to Western public opinion: We shall never recognize Israel." The PLO, as a total entity, will always engender the most extreme terrorism as long as *the* PLO stands for the continuous waging of a no-negotiations war. And, as the Vienna synagogue bombing points out again, this no-negotiations war of the PLO is not just against the state of Israel, but against all Jews.

However, while the Jews have a proper selective concern with the synagogue bombing -- they cannot fail to see the connection between that bombing and the others that took place during the week. To begin with, the tide of violence is rising everywhere; the Jews are not the only victims. If the Jews ignore the fact of generally rising violence, the Jews are dooming themselves.

Imbedded in that general concern, there is a more concrete connection among the acts of violence which took place last week. Anti-American forces were involved in the Iranian bombing, in the Peruvian bombing, in the West German bombing -- and in the Vienna bombing. Indeed, the PLO is a part of that network of forces, witness PLO Security Chief, Abu

Earl Raab  
"The Vienna Bombing"  
Page 3

Ayad, who told the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al-Rai al-Aam*, on August 17: "If we had the capability to sign a treaty with the Soviet Union, we would have signed a thousand treaties; and if we controlled land, we would have allowed the Soviets a thousand bases because we are dealing with a foe stronger than Israel: the United States."

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