

# AVIATION *security* international

The Journal of Airport & Airline Security

AUGUST 2001 : Volume 7 Issue 4

• GRL781

• LV224



• BA071

DL11

## **Flight Catering** guarding against added ingredients

• RK595

**CCTV:**  
from A to Z

**Globalisation or Xenophobia?:**  
a comprehensive response

**San Francisco:**  
a high security tradition

**BA + QF = ?:**  
the code-share security equation



## Globalisation or Xenophobia?

by Philip Baum

At the recent LE&NS Forum in Edinburgh, Sir Paddy Ashdown, the former leader of the British Liberal Democrat party, expounded on the effects of one of the new geopolitical buzz words: globalisation.

"If there is a market crash in South East Asia, employees lose their jobs in northern Europe. If there is a nuclear disaster in Ukraine, the environmental effects can be experienced on the farms of Snowdonia. And, if the CEO of a German communication company speaks, the economies of the world sit up and listen".

The same is true of international crime. Professor Heisbourg, at the same forum, gave the example of the accidental bombing of the Chinese embassy in Serbia by the United States.

That incident led to the Chinese financing the Serbian regime and the establishment of flights between South East Europe and Asia, which in turn led to an increase in the number of illegal immigrants finding their way to Western Europe (including the 57 people who were discovered by customs officials at the port of Dover having suffocated in a truck as they crossed the English Channel). In more "successful" attempts to find refuge in Western Europe, the "victims" found themselves quickly engaged in forced labour and prostitution.

Amazingly, considering many Europeans fear of the European Union's effect on the sovereignty of individual states (most notable in the debate on the Euro, the single European currency), NATO is nowadays an organisation that, in addition to its traditional defence duties, brings together governments that struggle

not only to defend alien populations in trouble spots, but also for the benefit of their own economies and lifestyles. When NATO went into Bosnia, one of the objectives was to prevent the flow of drugs to schools and prostitutes to the red light districts in Western Europe that result when organised crime utilises, and flourishes in, the state of anarchy created by civil war.

Aviation is, by its very nature, one of the most global businesses around. Yet, in many respects, it is quite insular. I refer not of the commercial aspects as managed by the airports and airlines, but rather the governmental legislative approach.

ECAC has taken steps to establish rules for member states and ICAO, through Annex 17, has established a lowest common denominator for international airport security standards. Yet, if we accept that the threat to the industry emanates from places beyond our control, and that our passengers and crews visit such locations, then perhaps we can liken our efforts to the human being's approach to health. A small minority of us take exceptional care over what we eat, what we breathe and with whom we have contact. The remainder of us take, at best, certain precautions – be it a cholesterol-free diet, or moderated alcohol intake or donning facemasks when cycling streets polluted by car fumes, yet leave loopholes that may or may not be exploited by some indeterminate enemy.

Whilst stopping smoking doesn't stop cancer, it reduces the risks. Whilst cabin baggage screening doesn't stop hijacks, it too reduces the risks.

Airport security programmes are sup-

posedly designed to respond to all perceivable threats but, like so many of the disparities in the world, effective aviation security is linked to wealth. I remember (when studying law many years ago) the phrase that "the courts of law, like the Ritz, are open to all". Legal instruments, such as Legal Aid (in the UK), exist to protect the less fortunate in society, yet they frequently fail to redress the balance. The courts of law are not truly open to all. Nor is the business traveller or holidaymaker who is booked on a ticket from one of the hi-tech airports assured a round-trip secure journey. Ask those who found themselves in the heart of an airport attack by the Tamil Tigers in Colombo in July this year.

In aviation security the ICAO Mechanism similarly exists to protect poorer states, yet even those states that do receive assistance cannot compare the security service they provide with those of the donor states. It is easy to argue that the threat differs and that the economic powerhouses are the prime targets and therefore warrant more comprehensive security measures. Yet I question the morality of taking such a stance. When the likes of Bin Laden target embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, they are attacking the weakest link. Aviation should be viewed in a global context and the xenophobic attitudes of certain governments vis-à-vis the security element of our industry is of considerable concern.

As we become ever more global, aviation will need to respond to an increasing number of seemingly unconnected phenomena affecting planet Earth. Take global warming, for example. Our pollution of



the atmosphere, that has caused the melting of the polar ice cap, is raising sea levels. An increase of just 1 metre in sea levels will displace 300 million people. Whilst some of those will retreat inland, many will migrate – either legally or illegally. One could argue that the short term economic gains enjoyed by polluting states that should know better will have a long term negative economic impact, not only due to ensuing health problems, but through the support of migrating populations.

So whilst we laud the technologies installed, we also need, as a community, to ensure that such safeguards and the resultant standards achieved are available to all passengers, wherever they are around the globe.

Individual airlines do take steps to implement additional security measures at suspect locations. (In the last issue of ASI, David Sterland wrote of British Airways' approach to the stowaway threat.) Yet, as I said earlier, those are the responsible actions of commercial organisations protecting their own assets. But

where is the governmental action?

For all its faults and economic undertones, the Hatch Amendment proposed by the former US administration did go some way towards trying to create a level playing field; standard security, regardless of carrier nationality....providing you are flying to America!

Individual governments do send inspectors on walkabout. In some rare cases action, often politically motivated rather than security-driven, is taken. The response, however, is rarely more than a minor scolding.

We all need to give some very careful considerations to our objectives. If we go to the trouble of highlighting deficiencies, we must also see to it that practical solutions are offered. Solutions come in many forms: training, equipment, advice as well as moral support. If solutions are offered, but not accepted or acted upon, then we must even consider instituting sanctions.

Protecting our own in the aviation industry is not a case of implementing safeguards on our own shores.

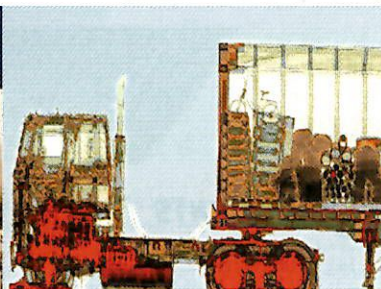
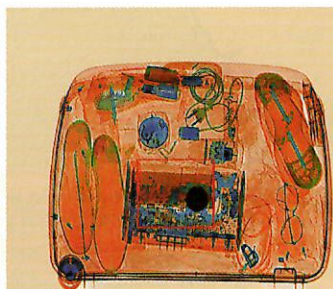
Globalisation means that the problems of one location quickly become the problems elsewhere. Whilst there is little value in having minimum security standards that cannot be met, it is equally unacceptable to have minimum security standards that fail to responsibly address the threat posed.

ICAO can set standards but, in reality, the real power to control states with sub-standard security lies with individual governments. They are the ones who can impose sanctions. Sanctions are a sign of failure on all sides, but they are a necessary evil. They are also an evil that when appropriately applied can bring about better security standards.

How often are they applied? Rarely, whereas we know how often they should be.

So while the affluent in the West go off on their summer vacations to far-flung destinations, they can marvel at their pristine terminals with all the latest gadgetry. As for the return journey... well, I guess we've covered half of the journey, so I suppose we must have reduced the risk. ☺

## Freedom means little without protection.



Global society has become inconceivable without travel and free exchange of goods. With more than 50 years of experience and an installation base of more than 18,000 units worldwide Heimann Systems

is the leading manufacturer of X-ray security systems for the inspection of mail, baggage and freight. Take advantage of the world market leader's technology and know-how.

Heimann Systems GmbH  
Group Headquarters  
Im Herzen 4  
65205 Wiesbaden, Germany  
Tel. ++49 (0)611 9412 0  
Fax ++49 (0)611 9412 229  
www.heimannsystems.com

