

Chapter 3 Croatian terrorism challenges security policy structures

3.1 Terrorism becomes a policy problem

When the radical student and New Left movements swept over most of the industrialized world in the mid/late 1960s, terrorism was not a particularly salient issue for Swedish policymakers. Säpo, for example, did not even have a counter-terrorism department until the early 1970s (Frånstedt 2003), and the term 'terrorism' is not indexed in parliamentary publications until 1971. As we have seen, subversive forces were the greater concern for the Swedish security services.

At the same time as the radical movement challenged law enforcers at large-scale demonstrations, a new type of crime emerged on the Swedish and international scene. In the late 1960s, an inspector at Säpo, Folke Axman, began taking an interest in crimes committed between immigrants from Yugoslavia, who harassed and killed each other in Sweden and elsewhere. Within Säpo, Axman advocated investigating these deeds more carefully, although his calls fell on deaf ears. Reportedly, he himself began mapping out these cases and realized that the conflicts involved Croatian separatists and Serb-Yugoslavian nationalists. Counter-terrorism activities at this time were pretty much a one-man show: "There was one more guy in our Gothenburg section that I could

talk to” (Axman 2004). His activities constituted a forerunner to Säpo’s counter-terrorism unit.

The skirmishes that Axman had taken an interest in included an air-gun shooting against the Yugoslavian ambassador’s residence in Stockholm in 1968, the December 1969 assassination of the leader of a Serb exile organization in Gothenburg, and the detonation of a plastic mine in a Yugoslavian club in Malmö in May 1970 that killed one woman. Similar events took place in Denmark, Norway and West Germany at this time (Ibid.). However, it would not take long before the violence escalated.

On 10 February 1971, two Croatian separatists occupied the Yugoslavian consulate in Gothenburg for about 24 hours. They demanded that a Croatian be released from Yugoslav imprisonment. On 11 February they surrendered and were brought before the Swedish criminal justice system. The two-man group said they belonged to ‘Jadran’ or the Black Legion. The Yugoslavian ambassador to Sweden said they were part of ‘Ustasja’ – a Croatian movement that had collaborated with the Germans during World War II – and urged the Swedish police to look more seriously at terrorist activities (Dagens Nyheter 11/2/1971). The Croatian separatists were henceforth referred to as Ustasja in the Swedish debate.

Only a few months later, on 7 April 1971, two other Croatian separatists broke into the Yugoslavian embassy in Stockholm, where they shot the ambassador Rolovic dead and wounded a secretary. The two intruders/killers were caught in the act; three others who had taken part in the planning were also apprehended. Together with the consulate occupiers, seven Croatians served time in different Swedish prisons; the two that murdered the ambassador received life sentences.

Up to this point, the Swedish experience with terrorism was confined to Croatian separatism. However, in the surrounding world PLO activists and other Palestinian factions had begun talking the language of terror after the Arab defeat in the 1967 Six Day War. Palestinian terrorists were even more active in Western Europe than the Middle East, with their operations including a large amount of skyjackings (Chalk 1996: 28-31). The climax of Palestinian terrorism in Europe was the massacre at the Munich Olympics in 1972. On 5 September, a Palestinian group called Black September killed nine members of the Israeli Olympic team. The all-day drama was televised and broadcast live around the world (see Reeve 2000).

The so-called New Left, the radical movement that became the dominant political force at university campuses in the industrialized world, sympathized with disadvantaged and oppressed people in general and with the Palestinian and Vietnamese peoples in particular. By the end of the sixties, the New Left started to fade out as a political movement. A few of them almost simultane-

ously, and inspired by each other, chose to “go illegal”. Therefore the West-German Red Army Fraction (RAF) and 2 June Movement, the Italian Red Brigade, the English Angry Brigade, the American Weathermen, the French Action Directe and the Japanese Red Army emerged within a short time period around 1970. These groups often made common cause with each other and also with Palestinian terror groups (Laqueur 1987; Becker 1977; Chalk 1996).

In June 1972 the West German police had managed to capture the hard core of RAF. Their imprisonment, however, caused other radical forces to rally to their cause. Around West Germany, so-called torture committees emerged that fought to improve the imprisoned RAF members’ allegedly inhumane treatment (Aust 1990). Between 1970 and 1972 the West-German police had been looking for 40 people, but within a couple of years that amount had risen to 300. The number of sympathizers was in 1974 estimated at around 100,000 (Ibid.). Activists outside West Germany also sympathized with the RAF prisoners, and the torture committees were met with understanding in the liberal and left press (Ibid.). In Sweden, Säpo knew that radical individuals sympathized and communicated with RAF members (Persson 1998; Frånstedt 2003) and as early as 1972 the Swedish Security Service had in fact perceived a potential threat against the West German embassy in Stockholm (RPS 1975a).

Säpo’s interest in radical groups gradually shifted during this period from the threat of Soviet instigated subversion to that of collaboration with RAF and other terrorist organizations. The Croatian separatists were however totally dissociated from the radical left, since they essentially fought the socialist Tito regime in Yugoslavia. Below we will in some detail follow the first skyjacking drama on Swedish soil, which was perpetrated by Croatian separatists in an effort to gain the release of their imprisoned comrades. The skyjacking took place on 15 September 1972, only ten days after the massacre at the Munich Olympics.

3.2 Crisis case one: The Bulltofta skyjacking

3.2.1 Introduction

On Friday 15 September 1972, three Croatian men boarded flight SK 130 to Stockholm-Arlanda at Torslanda airport in Gothenburg. A few minutes after departure, shortly after 4:30 p.m., two men stood up with drawn guns. A third man, armed with two guns, advanced to the cockpit. One gun was pointed at a cabin attendant while the other pointed through the doorway to the cockpit (Andersson and Gudmundsson 1974: 152). The man explained that the plane was being hijacked and ordered the captain to turn the plane with its 86 passengers and four crew 180 degrees and instead head south towards Malmö

(Persson 1990: 232). The skyjackers demanded that seven Croatians be released from prison and brought to Malmö. They also demanded safe-conduct out of Sweden for themselves and the released inmates. If these demands were not met, the skyjackers threatened to detonate an explosive device they had brought with them.

3.2.2 Dilemmas

At 4:55 PM the superintendent on duty at the Malmö police communications center received a message that SK 130 had been hijacked. The police frantically started to prepare for the landing at Bulltofta airport. The police had to gather troops at the airport and prepare for all eventualities. However, the strategy was clear: the police would do everything to minimize the use of force. No police were allowed to increase the risk of violence against the passengers and crew by provocatively showing their weapons; officers could only use their weapons after being ordered to do so (Andersson and Gudmundsson 1974: 156).

The threats from the skyjackers were taken seriously from the outset. At about 6:20 cabinet minister Carl Lidbom called justice minister Lennart Geijer, who was at his summerhouse in Ystad, only a few kilometers away from Bulltofta. After having been informed, Geijer called the permanent under-secretary of state Ingvar Gullnäs and told him to call for a cabinet meeting that night. All available ministers were called in to the chancellery, creating something of a crisis cabinet.⁸ But justice minister Geijer went to Bulltofta airport after which he called Prime Minister Olof Palme and the rest of the crisis cabinet in Stockholm. Several from the National Police Board soon arrived at the airport at the behest of director-general Carl Persson (Welander 1999).

Carl Persson (together with his souschef) joined the crisis cabinet, which decided to proceed with caution: The use of force should be avoided as far as possible. Their strategy instead called for tiring the skyjackers out through protracted negotiations.

The first dilemma that the crisis cabinet had to manage was the issue of releasing the Croatian inmates from prison. The skyjackers gave the authorities eight hours to meet their demands and specified which Croatians they wanted set free. It was the seven who had been involved in the murder of the Yugoslavian ambassador in 1971, and those that occupied the Yugoslavian consulate in Gothenburg earlier that year. Considering the crimes committed, the

8 To rapidly gather a quorum was problematic. All members of the government had stopped for the weekend. There did not exist any lists of addresses and telephone numbers to the ministers and in many cases uncertainty prevailed on how to reach them. Initially a lot of time and energy was spent on this (Welander 1999). At about 7 p.m. all but four ministers came to the chancellery.

threat frame became more severe: The Croatian separatists were known to make good on their threats.

Between 10–11 p.m. the crisis cabinet decided that the seven inmates should be brought from four different prisons to Bulltofta by the police with military assistance. This step was deemed obvious. The lives of the passengers and crew outweighed the principle of not complying with terrorists (Gullnäs 2004). At this time rumors spread that the skyjackers were Serb enemies of the Croatian prisoners, and that the latter would be liquidated as soon as they boarded the plane (Andersson and Gudmundsson 1974: 160). Nonetheless, the crisis cabinet decided to take that risk in order to save the hostages (Welander 1999), under the condition that the prisoners would first have a chance to talk to the skyjackers. It was hence not a question of forcing prisoners onboard against their will.

At midnight the police leadership at Bulltofta received a telegram from Stockholm, which said that Palme, Geijer and two other ministers would be killed if the Cabinet complied with the skyjackers' demands. The murder threat was taken seriously and special measures were taken to protect these people (Malmö police 1972a).

Between 1:35-2:10 a.m. the prisoners arrived at Bulltofta airport, where they immediately were brought to the police command center. Via a Yugoslav interpreter they were informed about the situation and about the demands of the skyjackers. The second dilemma the decision-makers faced related to the organization of the exchange. Justice Minister Geijer explained that it was unclear if the skyjackers were friends or enemies of the prisoners. The latter were reluctant when asked if they were willing to go along with the exchange, first wanting to see or talk to the skyjackers. Only one, Miro Baresic – who had murdered the ambassador – declared that he would allow an exchange even though he wanted to talk to the skyjackers first. This happened at 2:12 a.m. Baresic seemed to know the man he was talking to. The other prisoners also talked to the skyjackers, but remained reluctant. Baresic persuaded all but one to agree to an exchange (Malmö police 1972a).

An agreement on how to organize the exchange had still not been made, and everyone involved was well aware that the deadline had passed more than an hour earlier. At 3:02 a.m. police leadership decided that 1) the unwilling prisoner would not be exchanged, 2) superintendent Lewijn would handle the practical arrangements and be in command of the transport to the aircraft, 3) the inmates should be transported two at a time in cars with police escort, and 4) thirty passengers should be released first, after which two prisoners could board the plane. Thirty more passengers should then be released before the next two prisoners could board. The rest of the passengers and the two cabin attendants should thereafter be released before the two last prisoners could

board the plane. The decision was made unanimously by the police leadership at Bulltofta, having conferred with the crisis cabinet at the chancellery. They were aware of the importance “not to play all their cards at once with the prisoners” (Welander 1999).

When the police leadership a few minutes later delivered the last point, the skyjackers countered with a new demand: all prisoners should be onboard before any of the hostages were released. The aircraft would be blown up unless this demand was met. A new contact was established soon after and the captain of the aircraft conveyed to the police leadership at Bulltofta that he thought the skyjackers were serious with their threat. This caused new deliberations and new contacts with the cabinet. The police suggested that the skyjackers should release half of the hostages for three prisoners, and then the rest of the hostages for three more prisoners. The skyjackers replied immediately: when three prisoners were onboard, half of the passengers would be allowed to leave the plane; the flight attendants would be released after the three remaining prisoners boarded the plane. The police and cabinet accepted the offer (Malmö police 1972a).

The first part of the exchange took place as agreed at 4 a.m. Three inmates were exchanged for thirty passengers. Five minutes later the next three prisoners boarded the plane, but the remaining hostages were not released as agreed, leading to the third dilemma of the crisis. At 4.08 a.m. the skyjackers demanded that the aircraft be refueled before any more passengers were released. After new deliberations, justice minister Geijer, who was on scene with the police, complied with this demand.⁹

The news that all prisoners were released while fifty passengers and the entire crew remained onboard hit like a bomb in the chancellery. With six well-rested prisoners able to take command of the situation on the aircraft, the responders were back on square one (Persson 1990: 239). At 4:48 a.m. the plane was refueled. After that, the newly boarded prisoners made a new demand: they wanted one million Swedish crowns. Otherwise the hostages would not be released.

This demand was rejected since it was not included in the prior agreement. In addition, the police command said it would be practically impossible to get hold of such an amount of money at that time. The skyjackers replied by asking for half a million crowns, which they thought could be easily delivered. If not, they would take the hostages along to their unnamed destination. At this stage the leadership on the scene was utterly keen on solving the conflict and conveyed that they would take their demand into serious consideration. They reminded the Croatians that bringing the money could take a long time, since

9 Whether or not this decision was taken by Geijer self, or in consultation with Palme, is unclear. According to Carl Persson, Palme refused to talk about it after the event (Persson 1990: 240).

it was a Saturday and the banks were closed. Arguing that a new and rested crew would assure a safer flight, Geijer made them promise to release the crew (Andersson and Gudmundsson 1974: 182).

At 5:45 a.m. the county governor (who was also at the airport) made a request for 500,000 crowns within an hour to the director of Kreditbanken, who replied that the earliest he could be at Bulltofta with the money was 7:30 a.m. When the Croatians were informed of this (at 6:56 a.m.), they expressed their intent to wait for the money before leaving Bulltofta (Ibid.: 183).

The money arrived at the airport at 7:29 a.m. Two police officers volunteered to deliver it to the plane, although it had not been agreed on how this should be done. The skyjackers and prisoners wanted the money onboard before releasing any hostages, but the police refused. The threat picture was a bit different at this stage, since the threat of blowing up the plane had not been reiterated. The uncertainty rather had to do with what destination the skyjackers had in mind. There was however still a palpable threat. If the hostages were not released before take-off, a risky rescue operation would likely take place in another country. When an agreement could not be reached, the aircraft's engines were started and the crew was given the departure information from air traffic control. As the plane was about to taxi out for take-off, a new bid came from the skyjackers that more or less corresponded with what the police had suggested. The exchange started at 8:28 a.m. and by 8:35 the last passenger left the plane. The cabin attendants were not released (Ibid.:187-190).

The Croatians headed for Spain. At 11:30 a.m. the captain asked for permission to land at Madrid Barajas. The Spanish emergency command sounded the catastrophe alarm and all available firefighters and ambulances drove to the runway. Two hundred police surrounded the airport. Upon landing, the plane taxied away from the arrival hall, where the police had surrounded it (Malmö Police 1972a).

Mediated by an English-speaking technician, the head of the airport, together with a Norwegian SAS employee, were allowed onboard the plane. They successfully negotiated an immediate release of the crew (Andersson and Gudmundsson: 191-192).

The Spanish authorities declared that they would not let the plane leave and at 2:47 p.m. the skyjackers surrendered. The skyjacking drama was over. The nine Croatians spent one year in a Spanish prison.

3.3 Policy change patterns

Only after the Croatian occupation of the Yugoslav consulate in Gothenburg and the assassination of the Yugoslavian ambassador did counter-terrorism become a politically salient issue. On 23 April 1971, Prime Minister Palme

debated three parliamentarians who had forwarded questions and interpellations after the embassy incident (Protocol 1971:69 § 8). The chairmen of the Communist and Liberal parties and an MP from the Center party wanted to know what actions the Cabinet would take after the murder of the Yugoslav ambassador. Olof Palme said the Cabinet proposed that Parliament increase in the penalty for unlawful possession of weapons and explosives. Immigrants committing such crimes would, according to the proposition, be deported after having served a prison sentence.

Until the summer of 1972 the policy debate on terrorism was rather calm. In two different parliamentary debates (Protocols 1972:62 § 3 and 1972:87 § 9) a Communist MP held justice minister Geijer to task for not doing more to protect Yugoslavians residing in Sweden from Ustasja terror, and not declaring Ustasja illegal. Geijer referred to the severe punishments meted out for crimes committed by Ustasja as being the best deterrent in an open society; he also noted the ongoing surveillance and intelligence operations.

3.3.1 Terrorism legislation: A policy innovation

After the killing of their ambassador, the Yugoslav government expressed its dissatisfaction with the way Sweden handled terrorism. Their deputy foreign minister flew to Sweden and urged that the culprits receive the death penalty or else be sent back to Yugoslavia for execution (Peterson 2002: 170–171). After the Bulltofta skyjacking, the Swedish Cabinet was again severely criticized by Belgrade for having complied with the skyjackers (Leijon 1991: 135; Peterson 2002: 170–172). The handling of the skyjacking was however seen as successful, as no one was killed and all hostages were released. With the Munich massacre fresh in mind, the outcome of the Bulltofta incident was a major relief, not least for the Cabinet (Peterson 2002: 172).

However, the event called for reflection. A working committee in the chancellery was already dealing with terrorism issues; Bulltofta made the matter topical, and the working committee became a commission with the addition of a few members of Parliament. Cabinet minister Carl Lidbom headed the commission, which presented a report on 8 December 1972 (Ds Ju 1972:35). The main conclusion was that Sweden needed a Terrorist Act. In the background description of the document, the commission referred to the alarming tendencies of terrorism around the world and in Sweden. According to the report, measures should be taken against certain foreigners deemed as security risks. For instance, it should be easier to deport or refuse entry to foreigners suspected of belonging to a group that might engage in politically motivated violence, or use threat or coercion in pursuit of their goals, in Sweden. Under certain conditions, these foreigners should be subjected to special investigative measures,

such as domiciliary visits, body searches, wire tapping, and the monitoring of post, letters and other sealed documents.

Carl Lidbom outlined the terrorism commission's report before Parliament on 11 December 1972 during an interpellation debate on Säpo's political opinion monitoring activities (Protocol 1972:136 § 8). By 19 January 1973 the Cabinet had already presented a proposition regarding the Terrorist Act (Proposition 1973:37). The act was due to be time-limited and in effect from 15 April 1973 and 14 April 1974. The proposition led to some parliamentary activity in the form of debates and motions from various MPs.

The major debate in Parliament on the Terrorist Act took place on 6 April 1973, bringing the different motions and considerations from the Parliament Justice Committee to the fore. The session ended with a vote on the various aspects of the proposition (Protocol 1973:64 § 6). Despite lengthy and sometimes lively discussions, Parliament passed the proposed Terrorist Act with a broad majority.¹⁰ It would apply from 1 May 1973 to 31 April 1974.¹¹

One year later on 25 April 1974, when the Terrorist Act was prolonged for the first time (Protocol 1974:67 § 10), the Cabinet's main argument was that the law had so far not jeopardized the integrity and legal rights of innocent citizens or foreigners. Cabinet minister Lidbom, representing the Cabinet, declared that only 60 people were put on a watch list that made it possible to turn them away at the border (although none to the knowledge of the authorities had attempted to enter Sweden). The police estimated that ten foreign residents in Sweden should fall under the Terrorist Act's jurisdiction, but the Cabinet had only permitted three (who could not be extradited because of the political situation in their home country) to be subject to the Act's aforementioned intrusive measures, such as wire tapping, etc.

The Terrorist Act was certainly a policy innovation, the intended purpose of which was to demonstrate resolution against politically motivated violence on Swedish territory. The Act also allowed law enforcement authorities – particularly Säpo – to use new methods for monitoring foreigners.

10 The law was divided in 15 different points. The voting result of the first point, if the proposition about the law was necessary, gave: yes 254, no 22 and 5 abstained. Only two points were decided upon by secret ballots.

11 On 25 April 1974, the Parliament voted to prolong the Terrorist Act until 30 June 1975. 19 MP's voted against, 4 abstained and 288 voted for a prolongation (Proposition 1974:55; JuU 1974:12; Protocol 1974:67 § 10).

3.3.2 The Hague and Montreal conventions: Routine maintenance on air transport safety

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, air transport proved to be particularly vulnerable to terrorist assaults. Hijacks and attacks at airports became something of a global plague. For counter-terrorism policy, this reality forced policymakers to bring Swedish practices in line with international norms and treaty obligations in order to meet domestic challenges.

Parliament ratified the Hague Convention in March 1971. The UN, the European Council and other supra- and international organizations had urged legal action. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) developed a draft for the convention, which was ready for ratification in The Hague on 16 December 1970. Fifty countries, including Sweden, signed on. The main idea of the convention was to increase the severity of punishment for hijacking aircraft and to guarantee that legal proceedings against skyjackers be held in the country where the crime had been committed, or that the culprits be extradited. For Sweden, no major changes in the existing Criminal Code were necessary and the ratification was uncontroversial (JuU 1971:9).

In 1973 the Swedish Parliament ratified a complement to the Hague Convention called the Montreal Convention that broadened the former to also include acts of sabotage on aircrafts. There was no opposition to the convention in Parliament's justice committee. Like with the Hague Convention, the penalty for committing crimes against civil air transport was a maximum of ten years (JuU 1973:21). The two conventions were seen as effective means for combating crimes within civilian aviation (Ibid.). On 22 May 1973, Parliament ratified the Montreal Convention based on the justice committee's recommendation.

The ratification of The Hague and Montreal Conventions can be described as "routine maintenance" insofar as they merely increased the penalties for already punishable crimes.

3.3.3 Säpo subject to symbolic gestures

The emergence of Croatian terrorism in Sweden led to internal reprioritizations at Säpo. A counter-terrorism unit took shape, pulling resources from the counter-subversion unit. In terms of working methods, however, counter-terrorism did not essentially differ from counter-subversion: Uncovering potential links between subversive elements and hostile states had to be extended to finding ties to terrorist organizations. The sphere of activity for both counter-subversion and terrorism was more or less the same (Frånstedt 2003).

Just after the Bulltofta skyjacking, the Cabinet issued new open instructions amending the 1969 law on Säpo's personnel monitoring activities (see chapter 2). When it became publicly known that Säpo had been monitoring the annual conference on military conscripts in 1972, the Cabinet felt it needed to intervene in Säpo's working methods. On 22 September that year, the Cabinet assumed authority from the National Police Board on interpreting the 1969 law (SOU 1988:16 p. 48).

On 27 April 1973 the Cabinet issued new classified instructions (HT 17) to Säpo regarding their monitoring activities. Surveillance criteria needed to be broadened to provide sufficient protection for the defense sector. However, the list of organizations to be monitored was reduced while a few right-wing extremist organizations were added (SOU 2002:87 pp. 571–572).

Terrorist groups were placed on a list along with subversive organizations that allowed Säpo to pursue coercive measures against suspected members. When the Terrorist Act went into effect in 1973, the Croatian Ustasja, the Japanese Red Army Faction and the Palestinian Black September were the only organizations on the Cabinet terrorist list (Frånstedt 2003; Leijon 1991: 140). The Cabinet decided which organizations, groups and individuals should be included on the list, and then the National Police Board made a register of persons not allowed to reside in Sweden (Persson 1990: 389).

The internal policy changes within Säpo after Bulltofta were instrumental adaptations. But the most visible change in policy came on 22 September 1972 when the Cabinet assumed the right to direct the execution of the Law on Personnel Monitoring. This, however, was not related to Bulltofta or terrorism and bore the characteristics of a symbolic gesture. The open instructions do not correspond to the secret (HT 17) instructions in such a way that would give substance to the programmatic means of the former.

3.3.4 Routine maintenance of law and order policing

In August 1973 a hostage situation transpired during a bank robbery in central Stockholm. For five days the perpetrator and an inmate he succeeded in having released from prison held four bank employees hostage in a vault. This drama gave name to the so-called "Stockholm Syndrome", as it was observed that the hostages and the hostage-takers bonded in ways that made it difficult for the culprits to harm their captives. Several policemen were wounded during the standoff by gunfire from the robbers. The issue of confronting dangerous individuals therefore became a priority for the police (Nylén 2004; for a deeper description, see Hansén and Hagström 2004).

The issue of creating a counter-terrorism force was absent from policy discourse in the first few years after the nationalization of the police. However,

one has to bear in mind that before nationalization, there existed no uniformly-equipped police at all. The parish constables did not necessarily wear a uniform and were seldom armed; in larger cities, they sometimes carried a pistol instead of a saber after dark (Nylén 2004; Persson 1990). Gradually and with experience, body protection and equipment improved, especially as encounters with dangerous persons increased. This period was marked by an unparalleled re-equipping of the police (Persson 1990; Falkenstam 1983; Welander 2003) that was driven by the need to establish acceptable working conditions for all police officers, and not for the purpose of creating a special unit. The first years of the national police era have been described as 'the golden age' because of the enormous resources allocated to equipment purchases (Falkenstam 1983).

The Bulltofta incident was the first truly difficult test for police preparedness in the face of terrorism.¹² The commissioner on duty during the skyjacking reported on police shortcomings: They had no contingency plans, insufficient weaponry and equipment, and high-ranking officers were poorly trained in leadership. Sensitive to the spirit of the time, he ended his report (Malmö police 1972b) by stating that:

It should again be underlined that what has been suggested under this headline does not aim at increasing the use of violence on the part of the police in situations like this or in everyday circumstances. The intention is only, if possible, to create resources for the police to meet and subdue violent crimes with a maximum effect and without unnecessary and undesired injuries to culprits or others.

Director General Carl Persson took an interest in the matter and reportedly advocated the creation of a specially trained and equipped police unit; he later claimed, however, that he was repeatedly rebuffed by the Cabinet (Persson 1990: 258; 1998).¹³

Large-scale manifestations that became out of hand were still in the 1970s the most common extraordinary challenge for the police. This created a need for buying equipment and developing tactics for crowd control, for which Swedish police looked toward other European countries, especially England. Representatives from the Swedish National Police Board closely monitored the experiences of their European colleagues. Gradually, a strategy for crowd control took shape at the National Police Board (RPS 1975b).

12 The consulate occupation and the murder of ambassador Rolovic indeed took place before the Bulltofta skyjacking, but none of them turned out to be particularly challenging for the police as it were.

13 There are no documents corroborating this claim, but some interviewees suggest that it may well have happened informally in corridor chats (interviews with Fränstedt 2003; Welander 2003).

The worrisome developments in air transport safety called for increased preparedness at international airports. The organization of airport police in Sweden's three metropolitan areas (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö) therefore became an issue. Did they have the capacity to meet the new demands? The largest airport in Sweden, Arlanda – some 40 km north of Stockholm – did not belong to the Stockholm police district, but to a small suburban district. The same was true for Gothenburg, where a new airport was built (Landvetter) outside the Gothenburg police district.

In 1973, the National Police Board suggested to the Cabinet that a special airport police belonging to the Stockholm and Gothenburg districts be created (instead of the smaller suburban districts – Sturup airport already belonged to the Malmö police district). These forces would be at the disposal of the National Police Board. Such reorganization would promote efficiency and rationality (JuU 1974:36). In 1974, this suggestion was forwarded to the Parliament Justice Committee by its chair, conservative MP Astrid Kristensson (Motion 1974:383). The motion was however rejected by the standing committee, since it was unclear how a centralization of airport police would enhance efficiency. The problem of increasing air traffic combined with its increased vulnerability would however be further investigated (JuU 1974:36).

The Bulltofta drama together with international conventions on air transport safety bred new policy ideas in the law enforcement sector. But up to this time, no changes took place, and old routines remained.