

EDWARD PIMENTAL

Situation: A soldier falls victim to a politically motivated terrorist plot.

An Army Specialist was seeking an entertaining evening in Wiesbaden, West Germany, but became a hapless victim in a sophisticated terrorist plot. On 7 August 1985, US Army SP4 Edward F. Pimental left a nightclub with a German girl. His body was found the next morning and his ID card was missing.

That same morning, 8 August, a car bomb exploded in front of a US Air Force headquarters building at Rhein Main Air Base killing two and injuring 19. Terrorists gained access to the air base using Pimental's stolen military ID and falsified vehicle license plates.

Terrorists may use elaborate schemes to defeat US military security measures. False or stolen identification cards, vehicle license plates and base decal stickers should be reported immediately. Every DoD member, of any rank, makes decisions critical to U.S. security.



Pimental, aged 20, arrived in Germany in June 1984. On the evening of 7 August 1985 he left his barracks at Camp Pieri on Wiesbaden to relax for a few hours at the Western Saloon, a favorite hangout of U.S. service members. He had a drink with a dark-haired woman dressed in blue jeans, who appeared to be with a tall man she called Jeff. Pimental left with the couple.

His body was discovered at 6:00 AM on 8 August in a wooded area known to locals as "Lover's Lane" approximately six miles north of Wiesbaden. He had been struck on the head three times prior to his death and shot in the back of the neck. His pants pockets had been emptied and his wallet along with his ID card was missing. However, an expensive watch was left on his wrist.

In 1996, a member of the German Red Army Faction,

Brigit Hogefeld, was convicted of Pimental's murder by a German court and given three life sentences for various acts of terrorist violence.

Pimental might not have become a victim had he observed a "buddy system" to stay safe. Be suspicious and cautious when strangers express an unusual degree of interest and try to influence your judgment.

A little more than an hour after Pimental's body was found, a terrorist car bomb exploded at 7:19 AM in the parking lot in front of Headquarters, 435th Tactical Airlift Wing, Rhein-Main Air Base, six miles west of Frankfurt. The bomb blast killed Airman First Class Frank Scorton (who was TDY), and a dependent, Becky Jo Bristol. Seventeen US personnel were injured in the blast as well as two German citizens. Thirty-two vehicles were destroyed or damaged, and several buildings received structural damage.



The bomb was concealed in a green 1976 Volkswagen Passat bearing false U.S. Forces license plates. The authentic looking plates were made with sheet metal covered in white plastic with letters and numbers glued to the surface. The plate number belonged to a Dodge passenger vehicle owned by another service member that was stored in the long-term parking lot. The Passat was bought on 28 July 1985 at a public auto sale by Sigrid Sternsbeck, a known hard-core Red Army Faction member.

Installation security measures are vital. Protect your personal identification and vehicle registration materials and bumper stickers.



The explosive was loaded in five propane gas canisters and used railroad lug nuts as shrapnel. The detonator was a homemade device made from an alarm clock. According to witnesses, two men initially parked the car at 6:55 AM but departed briefly and returned to leave it in its final position at 7:13. They escaped just moments before the blast produced a crater one meter deep and two meters wide.

On 13 August, the Frankfurt office of the Reuters news agency received a copy of a letter from the Red Army Faction, a West German terrorist group, and the French extremist organization Direct Action claiming responsibility. This was the first time that these groups claimed to work together, something

previously suspected of but not confirmed. The incident signaled a shift in RAF tactics from attacking only high-level targets, such as industrialists or military chiefs, to targeting junior ranking personnel as well. The envelope also contained Pimental's green military identification card. The letter did not state that the ID card was stolen to gain access to the base, but that was the implication.

Security personnel conduct careful security checks to protect US personnel and facilities.
Cooperate fully with them.