

GENERAL DOZIER

Situation: US Army Brigadier General James Dozier was kidnapped after failing to notice signs of terrorist surveillance.

On December 17, 1981 terrorists of the Italian Red Brigades kidnapped US Army Brigadier General James Dozier from his residence in Verona, Italy. The terrorists entered the Dozier apartment posing as plumbers, and then jumped him. He struggled until he saw the terrorists holding his wife with a pistol to her head.



The terrorists transported him in a large trunk to an apartment in Padua where they held him until his rescue by Italian police after 42 days. The terrorists had performed surveillance on the Dozier residence for at least 30 days while planning their attack. Red Brigade terrorists decided Brigadier General Dozier was a desirable target because he was a senior US official and his routines made it possible to plan an attack.

The terrorists considered three other US generals, but chose Dozier because his personal security was less rigorous. After studying his routines for a month, they were confident they could successfully kidnap him.

You should be alert for unusual activities and individuals in your surroundings. You should also have preplanned rules for controlling access to your residence by strangers.



In 1981 the Red Brigades began a new campaign of terror. They opposed Italian membership in NATO, so they targeted senior US military officers to embarrass and destabilize the Italian government. At that time, BG Dozier was a Deputy Chief of Staff in the NATO Southern Command. He was the first non-Italian kidnapped by the Red Brigades.

The Doziers lived in an apartment building in Verona used by senior US officers for seven years. The building had been inspected, but none of the security recommendations had been implemented. Its only security measure, other than individual apartment door locks, was a buzzer and intercom at the main entrance. An Italian policeman served as driver for BG Dozier, but no other security personnel were assigned.

Several aspects of his personal security made BG Dozier a vulnerable target. Building security at his apartment had been weak for years and BG Dozier maintained very predictable routines. He might have deterred this attack by challenging assumptions about the risks he faced.

Challenge assumptions about your personal security. Consider ways in which your habits might make you more vulnerable.

The terrorists studied the residence for over 30 days. They viewed it with binoculars from across the street and posed as young picnickers, with no children, in a park near the apartment. This should have been suspicious since children accompanied most of the couples. They often stood at a bus stop, looking at the apartment while buses passed, or took a bus and returned a short time later. One of them approached Mrs. Dozier at the bus stop.



The terrorists also visited the Dozier home. A pair posing as utility meter readers made two visits. This was unusual since meter readers normally worked alone. A female terrorist posed as an opinion poll taker. Mrs. Dozier accepted the unscheduled visit and allowed her into the apartment. However, the terrorists did not notice the General jogged each day at 0600 hours.

Red Brigade terrorists studied the Dozier household extensively and in doing so they presented many suspicious behaviors. They became bold and directly approached the Dozier apartment, and were encouraged by the lack of security.

Be aware of the normal routines in your environment. Small deviations from the norm might indicate suspicious activities. Frequently change your routines to be a more difficult target.



One day, three men and a woman parked behind the building in a rented blue van. Two men in coveralls with tool bags rang the buzzer and BG Dozier asked who was there. They said they were plumbers and needed to check his apartment for a leak in the apartment below.

Dozier ignored two warning signs. Visitors usually rang the outside bell before ringing the apartment bell. Also, his landlord had not scheduled the visit; but, the building was old and leaks were common so he let them in. They looked under a sink and saw no leak. They used an unfamiliar Italian word, so he turned his back to look in a dictionary. They grabbed him, put a gun in his face, and pushed him to the floor. Mrs. Dozier was pushed down and a pistol held to her head. General Dozier quit struggling when he saw his wife was threatened.

General Dozier did nothing that surprised the terrorists. After all, they or some of their compatriots had been inside the apartment before. By trusting strangers, he surrendered the last advantage available to him, access to his apartment.

The terrorists put General Dozier in the shipping locker pictured here and carried him to their waiting van. This began his 42 day ordeal as the first kidnapped US general officer.

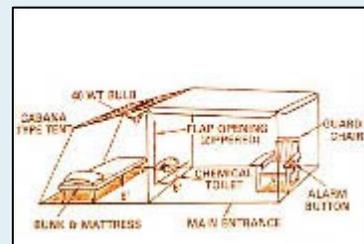
You may feel comfortable in your routine lifestyle and trust the strangers you meet, but you should question what you place at risk when you are not alert to possible dangers.

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The terrorists put the trunk into a cardboard refrigerator box and drove into Verona. They switched to another vehicle and drove about 70 kilometers to Padua where they took BG Dozier to an apartment building over a supermarket.



There, they rode up and down in an elevator to disorient him, and put him in a 6-foot square tent on the second floor. An armed guard sat beyond a partition with an alarm button in case he tried to escape. His left hand and right leg were chained to a cot with enough slack to use a chemical toilet. To isolate him, the terrorists forced him to listen to loud, hard rock music with headphones. He endured this for a week until he convinced them to play classical music at a lower volume. They also kept a 40-watt bulb burning 24-hours a day to disorient him to the date and time.

Hostage takers try to disorient their captives to gain a psychological advantage. Confused and demoralized captives may be more willing to cooperate with their captors.

Stockholm Syndrome is a psychological survival mechanism in which captives identify with their captors. Virtually anyone can succumb to this syndrome within a few days if they believe their captors are willing kill them, yet receive small acts of kindness from captors in the midst of

terror. Isolation from viewpoints other than the captors and the inability to escape contribute to this syndrome.

As a hostage, you should make every effort to remain oriented and objective. US prisoners in Vietnam reported that their religious faith, belief in their country, and hope for eventual rescue were vital to continued mental health and survival.



The terrorists became excited when they read his biography in the press. They had not appreciated his role in NATO. He was not beaten, but was questioned in seven taped sessions about missile installations and counterterrorism units. When he claimed ignorance, they said he did not need to give classified information, trying to learn extent of his knowledge.

During 42 days in captivity above the super market pictured here, General Dozier kept a disciplined routine so the terrorists could anticipate what he would do next, and eventually stop watching him closely. He maintained a dignified demeanor, engaged in nonpolitical conversation, and asked about his wife to get them to see him as a person. His captors later described him as a very disciplined person.

General Dozier demonstrated excellent hostage survival skills. He avoided political topics in conversation so he would not needlessly antagonize his captors. He claimed ignorance during questioning and did not reveal the extent of his knowledge.

Also, he gained the respect of his captors through his personal demeanor, and was eventually seen as an empathetic person, not merely a symbol of their political hatreds. This may have saved his life. The individual guarding him was ordered to kill him in the event a rescue. During the rescue, he pointed his gun at BG Dozier but hesitated and was overcome by police.

General Dozier provides a model of hostage survival methods. Imagine yourself in his situation, exhibiting the same measure of self-control.

One day before noon, Italian police sealed and cleared the area. A bulldozer provided cover noise. The terrorists saw armed men leaving vans, but assumed they were robbers. Ten policemen burst in and seized five terrorists in 90 seconds: Antonio Savasta (31), son of a policeman and murderer of 17 including Aldo Moro; Emilia Labera (28), girlfriend of Antonio; Giovanni Ciucci (31), the guard; Emanuela Frascella (20), who ran guns in the yacht of her rich father; and Cesare Leonardo (22), who subdued the General in his apartment.



Items seized included 5 machine pistols, 7 handguns, 6 packages of explosives stored next to blasting caps, and Red Brigade documents. Information from the raid severely crippled Red Brigade operations Rome.

The successful raid boosted the confidence of the Italian people in their government and strengthened the morale of Italian police, the opposite of the goal of the terrorists.

Lessons from the hostage experience of General Dozier include:

- Act to survive during a terrorist confrontation. The decision to cease resistance is a personal one dependent on many factors.
- Remain oriented and objective while in captivity. Resist the Stockholm Syndrome.
- Maintain a dignified and innocent demeanor. Seek to be seen as a disciplined, reasonable person.
- Sustain belief in your country and faith, and remain hopeful of eventual rescue.
- Stay down during hostage rescue to avoid being hit with a stray bullet.