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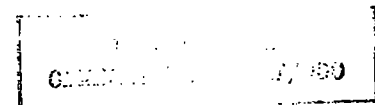
Weekly Situation Report
on
International Terrorism

DO WSRIT 76-018

4 May 1976

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WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT

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Niehous Muddle Continues With Issuance of New Communique

The circumstances surrounding the abduction of William Niehous continue confused despite the issuance to the media on 28 April of a new communique by Niehous' abductors. In the new message, the terrorists have seemingly backed off from a previous ransom demand, saying that they "have not sought a ransom at any time." They went on to say, however, that they had imposed "a sanction on Owens-Illinois" through the bonus the company was forced to pay its employees and through a demand for an unspecified sum of money as a means of complying with their unmet demands. The terrorists warned Owens-Illinois that if it "continues its maneuvers, it will be responsible ultimately for Niehous' fate." On the other hand, the terrorists indicate that should the company adopt a position which will permit the case to advance in a favorable manner, "matters will take care of themselves." In another part of the communique, the terrorists charge that the pressure being put on them by the Venezuelan security services is a plot by the Venezuelan government to provoke Niehous' death. Finally, the terrorists state that they are prepared to hold Niehous indefinitely.

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This latest communique may be an effort on the part of Niehous' abductors to bring the incident to a favorable conclusion. Significantly, they did not mention their previous demand that their first communique be published in the local press. This may represent a compromise move on their part, although it is not clear because of the ambiguous wording of the communique. This latest message also casts doubt on the authenticity of a 15 April message in which the terrorists demanded US \$3.5 million for Niehous' release. (See the 27 April issue.) There seems little doubt about the authenticity of the 28 April communique, since the kidnappers attached a photograph of Niehous together with photocopies of 21 documents from the Owens-Illinois files.

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