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**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL**

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ISRAEL'S COUNTER-
TERRORISM STRATEGY**

by

Jerry D. Smith

March 2005

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| Thesis Advisor: | James A. Russell |
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ISRAEL'S COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS

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Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A., University of North Florida, 1997

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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This thesis analyzes Israeli counter-terrorism strategy and its effectiveness. Because of ongoing suicide attacks from Palestinian and other terrorist organizations, Israel will continue to have an aggressive counter-terrorism strategy. It will study how the impact of past wars, campaigns, and deadly terrorist attacks influenced the thinking of past and current leaders. By gauging the actions, and sometimes non-actions, of the international community, the Israeli government declined to become paralyzed by U.N. and world-wide condemnation of its aggressive counter-terrorism strategies. The Israelis vehemently believe the security of the nation relies on what the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), the Israeli Security Agency (ISA), and Shin Bet do to counter terrorism, not outside governments. The IDF, ISA, and Shin Bet employ three different measures in an attempt to thwart terrorist attacks both in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Defensive, operative, and punitive measures are used in different phases of terrorist attacks in an attempt to protect the lives of Israeli citizens. Of all the three measures used by the IDF and other security agencies, defensive actions have by far been the most effective to date is included.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the rationale and determine the effectiveness of Israel's Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

B. IMPORTANCE

After embracing the tactic of terrorism to speed British withdrawal from Palestine in 1948, the State of Israel has found itself subject to terrorist attacks, especially since the beginning of the Intifada in 1987. Israel's experience has led to a comprehensive counter-terrorism policy, one driven by the critical belief that the country's survival is at stake.

C. MAJOR QUESTIONS AND ARGUMENT

This thesis will seek to answer several questions:

- What is the history between Israel and terrorist organizations, and how have the dynamics from past encounters affected different Prime Ministers' attitudes towards counter-terrorism and security?
- Israel's counter-terrorist strategies break down into "operative," "defensive" and "punitive." What is the relationship among these three strategies, and how effective are they?
- What institutional and operational adaptations have the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and other security agencies made to carry out the strategy?

The Israelis have come to the conclusion that they must concentrate on two areas: motivations of the terrorist groups and operational capacity. Israel's counter-terrorism strategy tries to reduce the motivation and operational capacity of terrorist groups, such as HAMAS, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Al-Aqsa Martyr Brigades, Fattah

Tanzim, and Hezbollah to adopt terrorism as a tactic. The problem the Israelis face is that their tactics often give the terrorist groups even more motivation to attack.

D. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

A brief examination of the Israeli/Arab history from 1948 is the starting point for understanding the events that shaped Israel's current security structure and ideology. The evolution of the relationship between Israel and its Arab neighbors demonstrates that Israel has shifted from a strategy of conflict resolution to one of conflict management. Its focus will be on the effectiveness of operative, defensive, and punitive policies -- specifically the defensive policy, which it has been the most effective.

Israel is a nation created in war, and since 1948, has existed in a state of hostility with some of its neighbors. Whether it is suffering from coordinated terrorist attacks, or large-scale wars, all of Israel's Prime Ministers see their country as one that is under constant threat of terrorism which has played a key role in how the Israelis structure their counter-terrorism strategy.

This thesis utilizes both primary and secondary sources that include Israeli policy statements, high-level speeches, journal articles, and archives. Secondary sources are news sources, books with reference to official and/or declassified documents, personal interviews with Israeli scholars, and official government website references.

II. THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL FROM 1948 - TODAY

We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children... We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us.

-Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir

A. THE ORIGINS OF ISRAEL'S BIRTH

The establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948 was predated by decades of efforts by many prominent Zionist leaders who sought to create a Jewish homeland. To Arab leaders during the time, the failure to resolve the conflict between Jewish immigration and the preservation of Palestinian Arab rights rests with the indecisiveness and bias of the various British governments that held power during the twenty-eight years of the mandate (1920-1948). Others argue that the question is not one of failure but of triumph--the triumph of the Zionist immigrants and their supporters in overcoming Arab resistance, British opposition, and European anti-Semitism to forge the state of Israel against seemingly overwhelming odds.¹

International help for establishing a Jewish state led to the acceptance in November 1947 of the United Nations (U.N.) partition plan, which called for separating the Mandate of Palestine into an Arab and Jewish state. Furthermore, Jerusalem would be set up as an international city under U.N. management. Whether the U.N. plan was fair to both sides is an open question. Immediately after the announcement of the partition plan, clashes broke out

¹ William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2000) p. 233.

between Arab and Jewish communities. Near the end of the mandate, the Jewish community announced their intentions to create a separate state. On May 14, 1948, after Britain had withdrawn from Palestine, a nation was born. The United States, the Soviet Union, and the U.N. recognized Israel as a sovereign nation.

B. THE FIRST ARAB-ISRAELI WAR

On May 15, 1948, just one day after Israel's Declaration of Independence, the armies of five neighboring Arab states invaded the new state of Israel. This is known as the First Arab-Israeli War. On the eve of the pan-Arab invasion, 'Abd al-Rahman Azzam Pasha, the Arab League's secretary general, who for months sounded dubious about the prospective invasion, fearing Jewish power and Arab disunity and incompetence, changed his tune. He declared "This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre, which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades."²

Israel also faced domestic challenges with rogue military units. Although the terrorist organization HAGANAH was integrated into the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), other units such as IRGUN and LEHI operated independently. That would come to an end when a shipment of arms bound for IRGUN is intercepted by the IDF off the coast of Israel. A battle broke out between the two organizations which culminated with the IDF sinking the vessel *ATALENA*. Shortly after their clash and defeat, IRGUN was integrated into its force structure.

² Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2001) p. 219.

The 1948 War increased Israeli territory by 50 percent. Although vastly outmanned, the Israeli had an important advantage over their Arab counter-parts. Superior IDF train and militarily organized. Israel's victory in 1948 was a product of superior military organization, superior social cohesion, and a well-developed network of support from Jews overseas.³ The following year, under the auspices of the U.N., several armistice settlements were negotiated and agreed upon between Israel and her belligerent neighbors Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt.

C. THE SUEZ/SINAI WAR OF 1956

In the Suez/Sinai War of 1956 Israel assaulted the Sinai Peninsula and took over the Suez Canal. In 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasser seized the Suez Canal zone and forced out the French and British establishments. After a series of threats from the Soviet Union and the U.S., Israel, France and Great Britain agreed to a cease-fire. Israel would later withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula. At the end of the Suez War of 1956, Israel not only faced Egypt, but other Arab countries being armed by the Soviet Union.

D. THE SIX-DAY WAR OF 1967

In a quick pre-emptive strike, Israel demolished Syria, Jordan and Egypt's military forces. Although Israel fired the first shot against Egypt, not against Jordan, Israel claimed that Egypt's decision to close the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping was the pretext for the war. Furthermore, Egypt ordered the removal of U.N. troops from the Sinai.⁴ Egypt's President Gamal Abd al-Nasser ordered

³ Daniel Moran, *Wars of National Liberation*, (London, England: Cassell, Wellington House, 2002), p. 176.

⁴ Alan Dershowitz, *The Case For Israel* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003), p. 91.

weapons and nearly 80,000 troops to be sent to the Sinai Peninsula. In addition, Nasser further enraged the Israelis when he blocked the Strait of Tiran to all Israeli shipping (which in effect sealed off the Port of Eilat).

At the IDF general staff meeting on the morning of May 23, Gen. Aharon Yariv, director of military intelligence, declared, "The post-Suez period is over. It is not merely a matter of freedom of navigation. If Israel does not respond to the closure of the Straits, there will be no value to its credibility or to the IDF's deterrent power, because the Arab states will interpret Israel's weakness as an opportunity to assail her security and her very existence."⁵ The Israeli government responded on June 5 by striking positions in Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. The battles lasted for six days, and Israeli forces achieved overwhelming victory.

Ben-Gurion's aide, Shimon Peres had overseen the nuclear program since its inception in 1953 and can be rightly viewed as the father of the Israeli's nuclear program. In May 1967 Peres, then a senior Knesset member, proposed to a small circle of ministers that Israel warn the Arab states by deploying its unconventional weapons. The ministers turned it down.⁶ At the conclusion of hostilities, the Israelis and the Arab armies accepted a cease-fire drafted by the U.N. Security Council. The Israelis, through their victories on all fronts, now commanded the Golan Heights, The West Bank, The Gaza Strip, and the Sinai Peninsula.

⁵ Morris, p. 306.

⁶ Ibid, p. 308.

The War of 1967 brought the Palestinians back into the limelight. Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip reawakened the Palestinians' issues that had been largely dormant since 1949. In the main, the Palestinians had endured the first two decades of exile quietly "living and partly living" in the Arab states on handouts from UNRWA (U.N. Relief & Works Agency), while waiting for eventual deliverance at the hands of Arab armies.⁷

In late November 1967, the U.N. Security Council drafted what could be considered as the first "land for peace" deal. This resolution demanded that Israel remove forces from land seized by them during the six day battle, and that all Arab states involved in the war abstain from belligerency. None of the Arab states who lost territory in the Six Day War were prepared to make peace in exchange for its return.⁸ This war, like the previous Arab-Israeli war, would lay the foundation for additional conflict in the Middle East.

E. THE YOM KIPPUR WAR OF 1973

In a startling attack carried out on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, the holiest day of fasting and prayer in the Jewish calendar, Syria and Egypt attacked Israel. Also known as the October War, assaults were carried out against Israeli posts along the Suez Canal and Golan Heights. At the outset of the war on October 6, Egypt and Syria made considerable advances against Israeli positions. Egypt's forces advanced across the Suez Canal to within miles of the Israeli forces on the Sinai. The Syrian Army also advanced to within miles of Israeli

⁷ Morris, p. 336.

⁸ Moran, p. 185.

positions on the Golan Heights. After the Israeli government issued a call-up of reserves, they proceeded with a counter-attack on the Sinai Peninsula. Egyptian troops were subsequently forced back across the Suez Canal. The Israeli counter-attack advanced to within sixty-five miles of Cairo. On the northern front, the Israeli Army, commanded by Brig. Gen. Rafael Eitan, forced the Syrian Army to retreat off the Golan Heights and advanced to within thirty-five miles of Damascus.

The U.N. brokered a cease-fire with the assistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. Still, it did not bring an end to occasional clashes along the cease-fire lines. Furthermore, and more importantly, the cease-fire failed to lower tensions between the Israeli and Arab militaries. Later Israeli troops pulled out of the Suez Canal, while the U.N. placed a peace-keeping force, known as UNDOF (UN Disengagement and Observer Force), in the Golan Heights. In a strategic move, Israel kept control of the Sinai desert in order to give them a buffer from another attack.

F. THE CAMP DAVID PEACE AGREEMENT OF 1979

The Camp David Peace Agreement of 1979 represented the first Arab agreement with Israel. The foundation of the agreement was when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat took a trip to Israel at the request of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Amidst his two-day visit, Sadat gave a ground-breaking speech at the Knesset.

Sadat outlined the principles for a peace agreement: withdrawal from "the Arab territories," Palestinian "self-determination," and the "right of all states in the area to live in peace with-in. . . secure boundaries. . .[with]

appropriate international guarantees." He then appealed directly to the Israeli people, "Encourage your leadership to struggle for peace."⁹ And probably the biggest surprise came when he publicly recognized Israel's right to exist and stated that he wished to negotiate between the two countries.

Formal negotiations began in 1978 when President Jimmy Carter hosted the two leaders at Camp David, a presidential resort located in Maryland. During this time, Begin and Sadat hammered out a foundation upon which peace could be established between Israel and Egypt. The agreement stipulated that Israel would pull out of the Sinai Peninsula, while Egypt pledged full diplomatic relations with Israel. They also promised safe passage through the Strait of Tiran, the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Suez Canal. A framework was established to correct the West Bank and Gaza problems. Additionally the Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories eventually were to be given full autonomy.

Finally, on March 26, 1979, Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Peace Agreement. President Jimmy Carter and the rest of the world witnessed this historic event held on the White House lawn. In contrast to the cloistered venue of Camp David, back in the Middle East Sadat came under strong and immediate pressure from fellow Arab leaders, internal critics, the Egyptian left, and the fundamentalists.¹⁰ Sadat ventured out on a limb with this peace treaty and later paid for it with his life. An

⁹ Morris, p. 453.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 477.

offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, The Jihad Organization, assassinated the Egyptian President two years later.

G. THE INVASION OF LEBANON IN 1982

In a reaction to constant guerilla attacks by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) carried out from Southern Lebanon, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) stormed into Lebanon in June 1982. Their aim, demolish Yasser Arafat's forces once and for all. At one point, the border with Lebanon was calm in contrast with Israel's other neighbors, but most of the PLO's fedayeen landed in Southern Lebanon shortly after King Hussein expelled them from Jordan in 1970.

Much of the south, and all of the camps, became an armed state-within-a-state. Here, Lebanon's writ ceased to operate. PLO strongholds came to serve as bases of a number of terrorist groups, including Black September, the German Baader-Meinhof Gang, and the Japanese Red Army Faction.¹¹ With this large flow of fighters into Southern Lebanon, clashes along the Israeli border increased substantially. In March 1978, the situation reached a boiling point when a Palestinian terrorist cell penetrated into Israel and carried out a string of terrorist attacks.

In a counter-attack, the IDF moved into Lebanon and over ran the PLO's terrorist bases in the southern portion of the country. The invasion drew condemnation from the Arab world and the U.N. The U.N. Security Council drafted a resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the establishment of U.N. security force to keep peace within the region. After a total of two months of occupation in Southern Lebanon, the IDF withdrew and

¹¹ Morris, p. 499.

allowed the U.N. security forces to come in. Still, even after the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) took over security, they were unable to stop terrorists from filtering back into the region.

Once again, violence increased as the PLO recommenced attacks along the Israeli border. The U.S., wanting to put an end to the violence before it broke out in an all out war, helped broker a cease-fire between the two parties. But the cease-fire didn't last very long. The PLO began violating the cease-fire immediately and continued for nearly a year until the IDF once again invaded Lebanon in June of 1982. Two months later, Yasser Arafat and the PLO withdrew their forces from Lebanon.

Finally, in June 1985, the IDF withdrew the majority of its forces from Lebanon leaving behind a small reaction force to guard against an attack on its northern border. Having set out to destroy the Palestinian threat from Lebanon, the Israelis withdrew. Only later did they realize the Palestinians had emplaced a far more fanatical and efficient foe in the form of the 'Amal and HIZBULLAH (Party of God) military organizations. The latter proved to be far more deadly and determined than the PLO. After the withdrawal, HIZBULLAH (and, to a lesser degree, other Lebanese-based groups) continued to hound and pound the IDF in the Security Zone and, on occasion, on the Israeli side of the international frontier. By the mid-1990s Israeli generals dubbed the guerrilla campaign in the south a "war of attrition."¹²

¹² Morris, p. 559.

H. THE OSLO PEACE ACCORDS

The Oslo Peace Accords were a chain of agreements made between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat in 1993. Rabin and Arafat, who represented the Palestinian people, signed a Declaration of Principles (DOP) on September 13, 1993. The declaration created an ardent set of goals pertaining to a transfer of power from Israel to an interim Palestinian authority.

The two sides agreed to negotiate the establishment of a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for "a transitional period" not exceeding five years. This would lead to a "permanent settlement" based on Resolutions 242 and 338. The DOP provided for free and democratic general elections in the territories (with the Palestinian inhabitants of Jerusalem participating) to elect a "Palestinian Authority" (PA) council during the five-year period.¹³

President Bill Clinton brought together Rabin, Peres, and Arafat to sign the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement at the White House on September 28, 1995. This became known as Oslo II. The conclusion of the DOP made possible the signing of an Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty in October 1994.¹⁴ This historic non-belligerency agreement is witnessed by President Clinton. Rabin faced the same criticism Sadat faced after his peace agreement with Begin in 1979. Rabin, like Sadat, was assassinated by an extremist, a law student at one of Israel's religious universities. Amir had told his interrogators that his aim was to stop the peace process

¹³ Morris, p. 623.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 629.

I. THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT OF 2000

Bill Clinton hosted the Camp David Summit in July 2000 with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat the prime participants. The summit's objective was to arbitrate a final decision on the Israeli/Palestinian contention in accordance with the Oslo Peace Accords. For their part, Israel proposed to the Palestinians in what western diplomats would consider generous concessions, and they turned them all down. Dennis Ross, the chief U.S. negotiator, said that Arafat was unwilling to accept any peace proposal, because for Arafat "to end the conflict is to end himself."¹⁵

In summary, the history of the state of Israel proves that the IDF cannot be defeated conventionally, but terrorism can definitely wreak havoc upon the nation. In the early 1990s, the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee established a sub-committee to examine defense doctrine. As a result, the General Staff reordered the list of priorities, designating WMD and long-range delivery systems as the primary threat, with terrorism and guerrilla warfare listed as second.¹⁶ The fear of conventional war with neighboring armies is now listed third.

National survival dictates the Israeli decision-making process. It is estimated that about 80 percent of the suicide attacks between 1970 and 2000 were directed against Israeli civilians, the rest against various sorts of military targets.¹⁷ Most of the attacks are carried-out by

¹⁵ Dershowitz, p. 118.

¹⁶ Mark A. Heller, *Continuity and Change in Israeli Security Policy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 49.

¹⁷ Walter Laqueur, *No End to War: Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2003), p. 103.

suicide bombing. In Israel, anti-terrorism had traditionally come under the heading of "current security", that is, a concern of less strategic weight than the overall threat of war with Arab armies. But the political effect of terrorism was so striking that some politicians and analysts redefined it as a strategic threat.¹⁸ With this discovery, Israel's counter-terrorism strategy will now become the most important policy in the government.

¹⁸ Heller, p. 26.

III. THE EVOLUTION OF ISRAEL'S COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY & THE RELEVANCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC DILLEMA

Israel's fate would be determined not by what the nations of the world think, but by what the Jews do.

- David Ben Gurion

A. THE EVOLUTION OF ISRAEL'S COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze Israel's Counter-Terrorism Strategy from the governments of Menachem Begin through that of Ehud Barak. Additionally, the chapter will review the impact Israeli counter-terrorism tactics on its society and effects known as the democratic dilemma.

The perception of Israel's national security as one that is unique is important. It deeply influences Israeli politics and policy, including the definition of national interest and of the strategies required to deal with Israel's security problems.¹⁹ Terrorism is a problem that Israel has faced for many years and according to scholars, such as Dr. Zeev Maoz, it has had an effect on Israeli policy. This is mainly due to the effect suicide bombings have on the citizens' psychological state, which translate into a change in Israeli leaders' political positions. These changing political positions forced the Israeli government to alter its national strategy.

Territory plays an important role in the constructed perception of both threat and security. Controlling key locations provides security, while the control of these

¹⁹ Daniel Bar-Tal, Dan Jacobson, and Aharon Klieman, *Security Concerns: Insights From the Israeli Experience*, (Stamford, Connecticut: JAI Press, Inc., 1999) p. 37.

same locations by the other creates threat.²⁰ In the case of Israel, there exists a government that believes it cannot rely upon outside governments to ensure its safety and well-being. Furthermore, the Israeli government also realizes that military action alone will not solve the terrorism issues with its neighbors.

The roots of Arab animosity towards Israel have always been dual - concrete and symbolic. The basic assumption underlying the Israeli political-military doctrine was the understanding that the central aim of Arab countries was to destroy the state of Israel whenever they feel able to do so, while doing everything to harass and disturb its peaceful life.²¹

Knowing this, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) established a counter-terrorism policy that is defensive from a strategic standpoint and offensive from a tactical point of view. Based on its small borders, the IDF believed that it had to pre-empt to move the battlefield to its adversary's turf.

²⁰ Bar-Tal, Jacobson, and Klieman, p. 73.

²¹ Michael I. Handel, *Israel's Political-Military Doctrine* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973) p. 64.



Figure 1. Israel and her neighboring countries (From Magellan Geographic)

As Figure 1 illustrates, Israel lacks strategic depth. The IDF can ill-afford a battle within its borders so they will move the conflict to the opponent's Area of Responsibility (AOR).

B. COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY UNDER BEGIN (1977-1983)

The evolution of how Israel's counter-terrorism strategy evolved begins with a look at the strategy and actions taken under Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Begin, the former leader of Irgun, was known for conducting

offensive actions with regard to criticism. His interest for Israel followed that of Ben-Gurion, who once stated, "Israel's fate would be determined not by what the nations of the world think, but by what the Jews do."²²

A good example of Begin's approach was the 1981 attack on Osirak. Although the *Osirak* incident was not a case of terrorism, Begin was given intelligence by the MOSSAD that Saddam Hussein was developing nuclear weapons. Begin, who knew first hand about the Holocaust, could not imagine himself as the man responsible for failing to take action against what could possibly wipe out the nation of Israel. The prime minister cited an article in the Iraqi newspaper *Al Thawara* on October 4, 1980, that Iraq intended its nuclear facility near Baghdad for use against "the Zionist enemies."²³ These incidents, whether from past wars, or in the case of what Begin saw first-hand during the Holocaust, have had a psychological effect on most, if not all, Israeli leaders. These experiences are key in shaping their attitudes toward security and counter-terrorism.

Referring to the Holocaust, Begin echoes, "Never again, never again" is echoed by Begin referring to the Holocaust and in 1981, he gave the final command to the Israeli Air Force to destroy the Osirak nuclear reactor located near Baghdad. The mission is a success, no pilots were lost, and the reactor is destroyed before it had the chance to go "hot". Begin and the Israeli government are harshly condemned by the U.N. and the international

²² Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 231.

²³ Dan McKinnon, *Bullseye Iraq* (New York: Berkley Books, 1988), p. 5.

community. But those actors did not concern Begin. His sole consideration is how the Israeli people looked at him as their leader.

In reference to counter-terrorism activity, Prime Minister Begin embarked upon two major IDF operations. The first, "Operation Litani", drove PLO positions away from the northern border of Israel and strengthened the power of the South Lebanese Army (SLA). What led to this operation? PLO terrorists came ashore through Haifa, hijacked a transit bus, and proceeded towards Tel Aviv shooting at will from the bus. The IDF killed all nine PLO terrorists but not before they killed 37 innocents. Begin subsequently embarked upon a counter-terrorism policy of direct action against terrorist.

Begin's second counter-terrorist operation was called "Operation Peace for Galilee". This counter-terrorist operation was launched after Arafat-led Palestinian terrorists launched home-made rockets and artillery from Southern Lebanon onto Israeli settlements. IDF troops are ordered to assemble on the northern border. Then, a few days later, a failed assassination attempt on Israel's Ambassador to England was carried out by Adu Nidal. Nidal led a Palestinian terrorist group that attacked and left Shlomo Argov paralyzed for life. This was the final act Begin, would tolerate and the reprisal was an assault on Southern Lebanon to rid it of terrorists, once and for all. The IDF launched Operation Peace for Galilee on June 6, 1982 with orders to expel the terrorists embedded on Israel's northern border.

The initial phase of the operation was successful, culminating in the IDF forcing Yasser Arafat and the PLO to retreat from Lebanon. Yet, due to the cultural and political situation in Lebanon, the operation turned into a drawn out conflict. The counter-terrorism policy under Begin can be summed up as one conducted completely to fit the welfare of Israel and which knew no limits in going after terrorists.

C. COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY UNDER SHAMIR (1983-84, 1986-1992)

Counter-terrorism under Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir became extreme. Shamir believed that strong leadership would decide the fate of the Israelis. Even though Israel defeated the PLO in Lebanon under Begin in 1982, the organization reappeared in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Shamir believed his government should make no concessions with terrorists. The Palestinians and the Israeli government did not begin political negotiations until years later.²⁴

When Shamir took over in 1983, Islamic fundamentalist terrorism began to take root in the Occupied Territories. In addition, Shiite terrorism in Lebanon began to emerge as a problem. Palestinian guerrillas had been returning to Lebanon in small numbers, but the main PLO forces were gone. However, Shiite militias moved in—first, Amal and then increasingly, HIZBULLAH.²⁵

The IDF conducted both small and large operations in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories in an attempt to thwart terrorist attacks. At the same time, the Israeli

²⁴ Morris, p. 587.

²⁵ Martin Van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive, A Critical History of the Israeli Defense Force* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002), p. 303.

government began spending U.S. financial aid to upgrade their defense force. Israel sought an advantage over their potential enemies by pursuing qualitative superiority -- advantages in terms of superior motivation, initiative, tactical proficiency, improvisational skills, and technology.²⁶

Another problem that emerged during Shamir's governance was that of the democratic dilemma. The issue was where to draw the line when it comes to counter-terrorism and the violation of human rights. Are detainees treated fairly while being held? How far does one go in interrogating a terrorist to acquire pertinent information about future attacks? How long does the IDF keep cities sealed off? Does the destruction of a terrorist family and his/her accomplices' home go too far? As the U.S. and the rest of the world intelligence services are finding out, intelligence is the key to counter-terrorism. How far should the government go to attain it?

D. COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY UNDER RABIN (1992-1996)

The Israeli counter-terrorism strategy under Prime Minister Rabin took a new turn. This was mainly due to the Oslo Peace Accords' guiding principle of trading land for peace and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. The Labor's Party assumption of power radically changed the atmosphere in Israel. The party was open to the notion of territorial compromise, and recognized that the Palestinian problem was at the heart of the conflict.²⁷

²⁶ Eliot A. Cohen, *Knives, Tanks & Missiles Israel's Security Revolution* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998), p. 24.

²⁷ Morris, p. 616.

The counter-terrorism strategy under Rabin changed when the peace process and terrorism against Israel were separated. Under the previous Prime Minister, there would be no peace with Yasser Arafat as long as he did not put a halt to the terrorism. Unfortunately, Rabin was being pressured from both the U.S. and the U.N. to make peace with the Palestinians.

The 1994-96 period was the heyday of the suicide bombers. Their leaders favored Israeli cities on Fridays and Sundays, when the IDF soldiers were on their way home for weekend leave or heading back to their bases. (The Islamic Jihad, at this time, as a matter of policy, targeted soldiers; the HAMAS did not distinguish between soldiers and civilians.)²⁸

Counter-terrorism strategy under Rabin was not effective. The Oslo process, and the handover of territory to the Palestinians, had led to a major increase in the dimensions and frequency of terrorism, with the focus shifting from the territories to targets inside Israel.²⁹ It cannot be overstated what Shamir said about the nation of Israel, that "the will of the Israelis would be decided by strong leadership".³⁰ Rabin made threats to Arafat for not curbing the violence carried out by HAMAS and other Islamic fundamentalist groups, but he did not follow-up on those threats. He agreed to put parameters on counter-terrorist activity from the advice of his party (Labor) along with agreements made with the Palestinians.

²⁸ Morris, p. 626.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 627.

³⁰ Interview between Yitzhak Shamir, former Prime Minister of Israel, and Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Quarterly, 27 October 1998.

The Likud Party argued that Rabin capitulated and began to give away territory to the Palestinians. In doing so, the IDF pulled forces out of those areas thereby losing valuable intelligence and resources. The democratic dilemma began to weigh heavy on the members of the Knesset. The Labor Party, not wanting to risk the peace process, restricted the IDF in their handling of counter-terrorism.

Israeli citizens believe Rabin yielded too much to Palestinian demands, and for what reasons.³¹ The terrorist attacks continue with no reciprocity in sight. The actions by the Israeli people proved that they had finally had enough. Terrorism had finally taken its toll on the public morale. Public safety and security was the number one priority, and the people elected the Likud Party, led by Benjamin Netanyahu.

The terrorist attacks, and the responses to them under Rabin, caused the leaders in the Israeli government to change their concept of how they viewed terrorism -- as a strategic problem instead of a tactical one.³² This would further complicate the democratic dilemma. The IDF and Israeli government had the complete backing of the people but had to keep in mind the nation's democratic values.

E. COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY UNDER NETANYAHU (1996-1999)

The attitude towards counter-terrorism and the success of it under Netanyahu's leadership was remarkably different from that of Rabin. Benjamin Netanyahu promised his voters more security, and Israel saw a decrease in terrorist attacks. During the first thirty months of Netanyahu's government, suicide bombings occurred in Tel Aviv and

³¹ Morris, p. 627.

³² Ibid, p. 636-638.

Jerusalem, though they did not have the impact of the earlier ones (1994-96)—partly because of effective countermeasures taken by Israel.³³ Israel understands they cannot completely stop terrorism. The IDF's goal, when it comes to counter-terrorism, is to reduce the amount of civilian casualties. During Netanyahu's three years in power, some 50 Israelis were murdered in terrorist attacks—a third of the casualty rate during the Rabin government and a sixth of the casualty rate during Peres' term.³⁴

As previously stated, Rabin's counter-terror strategy was separated from the peace-process. Politics are not used to assist in the counter-terrorism campaign. With Netanyahu, that was not the case. Political leaders in the Likud party attributed the drop in terrorist attacks to Netanyahu's continued willingness to pressure the Palestinians. The counter-terrorism campaign is also fought using political and economic threats. By these actions, Netanyahu wanted Arafat to realize that terrorism against the Israelis would cost the Palestinians dearly.

The Israeli counter-terrorism strategy during this time was widely supported by both political and military leaders, and included allowing the IDF to zero-in on key leaders of terrorist organizations. Experience showed that when Israel did not respond firmly to Palestinian terrorism, more terrorism followed, and when Israel took appropriate military steps, the number and severity of terrorist attacks were reduced.³⁵ One military step taken

³³ Itamar Rabinovich, *Waging Peace, Israel and the Arabs 1948-2003* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 108.

³⁴ Efraim Karsh, *What Occupation?* Commentary; New York; Jul/Aug 2002. Database on-line. Available at <http://www.palestinefacts.org>. Accessed 17 March 2005.

³⁵ Dershowitz, p. 179.

was that of targeted killing. When targeted killing occurred, the Israelis wanted the terrorists to know they committed the act. The idea was to create psychological pressure and chaos in the terrorist organization and erode their ability to operate.³⁶ Netanyahu believed that he had to pursue terrorism in this manner. If the government did not, he felt it could have a serious impact on the public psyche.

Ehud Barak took over as Prime Minister in May 1999. His policy followed along the same lines as previous Labor leaders. Barak felt that Netanyahu severely crippled the peace process and he intended to finish what Rabin had started. He attempted to do so by handing over 94% of the West Bank and almost all of the Gaza Strip to Palestinian sovereignty. Arafat not only turned this offer down at the Camp David Summit of 2000, he continued to incite violence among the Palestinian people.

Much as Arafat had won the 1996 elections for Netanyahu against Peres, by allowing the dispatch into Tel Aviv and Jerusalem of HAMAS and Islamic Jihad suicide bombers, so he won the election for Sharon on February 6, 2001. Again, it was Arab violence that persuaded the Israeli middle-of-the-road swing vote to move to the right because of the enhanced personal security that it promised.³⁷ Throughout the rule of Israeli Prime Ministers, terrorism has increased and decreased. Terrorism under Rabin and Peres was higher than that of Netanyahu and this was attributed to the way each Prime Minister approached terrorism. Rabin and Peres attempted to negotiate with

³⁶ Interview between Dr. Zeev Maoz, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University and the author, 20 August 2004.

³⁷ Morris, p. 673.

terrorist organizations while Shamir and Netanyahu would not negotiate until Palestinian terrorism was dealt with. When the Israeli citizens realized this, they voiced their opinions through the ballot box.

IV. TODAY'S STRATEGY

The art of war is simple enough. Find out where your enemy is. Get at him as soon as you can. Strike him as hard as you can, and keep moving.

-Ulysses S. Grant

A. ISRAELI COUNTER-TERRORIST ACTIONS TODAY INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at today's counter-terrorism strategy and Ariel Sharon's approach to terrorism. Sharon, promised a swift and decisive solution to the problem of Palestinian terrorism ³⁸and he has supported an aggressive campaign against Palestinian and other terrorist groups. In January 2005, Sharon assured his brigade commanders that their will be no political-handcuffing in their attempt to thwart terrorism.³⁹

This chapter will also examine the three principal parts of Israeli counter-terrorism tactics. As the previous chapters have chronicled, Israel has extensive experience in dealing with terrorist organizations. This led the IDF and government to establish an array of measures to stop terrorist attacks and at least diminish their results.

The Israeli Army, Air, and Naval force make up what is known as the Israel Defense Force (IDF). It is the main organization used to carry out Israeli counter-terrorist actions. As stated in earlier chapters, the IDF's doctrine

³⁸ Zeev Maoz, *Defending the Holy Land. A Critical Assessment of Israel's Security and Foreign Policy, 1949-2004* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2005), p. 26.

³⁹ "Sharon tells military to act against Palestinians without restrictions." *Israeli Insider: Israel's Daily Newsmagazine*, January 16, 2005. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.israeliinsider.com>. Accessed 17 January 2005.

is defensive at the strategic level, while the tactics it employs are offensive. Working along with the IDF is the Israeli Security Agency (ISA) (formally the General Security Service) and Shin Bet. These two agencies work support the IDF by providing intelligence.

The first, and probably most crucial, part of Israeli counter-terrorism strategy is intelligence. As the U.S. has realized, the collection of intelligence is critical in fighting the ongoing war on terror. Intelligence gained from agents within the Occupied Territories provides the IDF information on the terrorists' locations, their infrastructure, cell movements, and plans for future attacks.

Israel has adopted steps to stop terrorism and prevent determined terrorists from succeeding⁴⁰ -- this is exactly what the IDF and the other security agencies have done. The primary goals of Israeli counterterrorism strategy are to prevent terrorists from influencing the national agenda and preserve the psychological resilience of the civilian population.⁴¹ The IDF, the ISA, and Shin Bet employ strategy and tactics with the aim of decreasing the number of terrorist attacks along with lowering direct and collateral damage. These tactics are employed in three key areas of the nation's counter-terrorism strategy: *defensive measures*, *offensive measures* and *punitive measures*.

The first two measures used by the IDF and other security agencies can be identified from each other by

⁴⁰ Dershowitz, p. 179.

⁴¹ Jonathan B. Tucker, Strategies for Countering Terrorism: Lessons from the Israeli Experience. Homeland Security Journal, March 2003. Available from <http://www.homelandsecurity.org/journal/Articles/tucker-israel.html>. Accessed 27 December 2004.

their utilization during separate levels of a terrorist attack. Terrorist organizations do not carry out terrorist attacks without going through some sort of planning and training. The goals of *offensive measures* are to stop the materialization of planning in its early phase or thwart the training phase of a terrorist attack. *Defensive measures*, on the other hand, are intended to disrupt the terrorists who are proceeding to a target. Lastly, *punitive measures* punish the perpetrators, the architects, and the supporters of the terrorist attacks. It is the employment of these three measures by the Israeli government that has brought about condemnation from the international community.

B. ISRAELI OFFENSIVE MEASURES

The offensive measures used by the IDF and the ISA are designed to pre-empt attackers. When Sharon came into office, he brought along a success rate in fighting Arab terrorism that was virtually unmatched. In Gaza in 1971, he had reduced the number of attacks from thirty-six in June to one in December.⁴² The Israeli offensive strategy is very popular domestically.⁴³ However, external constraints have prevented the IDF from applying this strategy as often as desired. The terrorist attack of September 11 on the United States changed the Bush administration's fundamental approach to terrorism, and consequently, some of the external constraints on the Sharon-Mofaz offensive conception were removed.⁴⁴

⁴² Anita Miller, Jordan Miller, and Sigalit Zetouni, *Sharon, Israel's Warrior-Politician* (Chicago, Illinois: Academy Chicago Publishers, 2002), p. 339.

⁴³ Interview between Dr. Zeev Maoz, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University and the author, 20 August 2004.

⁴⁴ Maoz, p. 26.

Once the Prime Minister makes a decision to go after terrorists infrastructures, military leaders have an array of options at their disposal: air barrages, ground invasions, naval raids, and surgical attacks against the head of terrorist organizations. Due to their nearly unmatched aerial capability, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) is the vehicle most used for offensive measures. They are readily available and do not need any complicated, advance build-up. The IAF have many aircraft at their discretion to help carry out their war on terror.

The F-15 and F-16 fighter jets are the prime choice when it comes to aerial barrages. These two aircraft made their mark originally back in 1981 with the raid on the Osirak Nuclear Facility near Baghdad. More recently, the targets the IAF have attacked the nerve centers of HAMAS, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Al Aqsa-Martyrs Brigade. Over the past several years the IAF has destroyed these terrorist groups' command posts, training facilities, living complexes, weapon depots and staging positions.⁴⁵

Direct action via ground attack is executed when the Israeli government acknowledges air barrages alone will not accomplish the mission. Many terrorist groups have adapted to IDF tactics and attempt to blend in with the community. To prevent a high amount of civilian casualties, the IDF sends in ground troops in an attempt to draw out the terrorists. Also, areas that are well-protected, and have a fair amount of surface to air artillery, may lead to a ground invasion.

When the IDF sends in ground troops, it enables the liquidation of a terrorist or terrorist cell that is hiding

⁴⁵ Miller, Miller & Zetouni, p. 395.

among a dense area of people. This was the case in two separate incidents late December 2004, when IDF Special Forces liquidated a terrorist arms dealer in the West Bank. Wa'el Riyahi furnished arms to terrorist cells in the West Bank and was also coordinating shooting attacks around Nablus. When IDF troops attempted to arrest him, he opened fire at them in which they returned fire killing him.⁴⁶

In another recent event, ground troops were used to apprehend Tahu Abu Kamal, deputy commander of Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade.⁴⁷ After IDF troops surrounded the house where the terrorist was hiding, soldiers asked the other occupants to leave. Once the civilians had left the house, IDF troops attempted to talk the individual out, but he also opened fire. The troops returned fire and eventually used anti-tank missiles to destroy the house killing Abu Kamal. Ground invasions are carried out in an attempt to reduce civilian casualties situated around terrorist cells.⁴⁸ Additionally, unlike an air barrage, where the mission involves putting weapons on target and returning to base, a ground invasion can turn into a more prolonged engagement.

Naval raids have also been quite successful. While during the 1980s, sea infiltration by PLO terrorists presented the most immediate naval threat, the Israeli

⁴⁶ "IDF kills Nablus arms dealer." Jerusalem Post. Database on-line. December 27, 2004. Available from <http://www.jpost.com>. Accessed 27 December 2004.

⁴⁷ "Israeli troops bury wanted Palestinian terrorist under rubble." Israeli Insider: Israel's Daily Newsmagazine, December 25, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.israelinsider.com>. Accessed 27 December 2004.

⁴⁸ Barry Rubin and Thomas A. Keaney, *Armed Forces in the Middle East: Politics and Strategy* (London, England: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), p. 162.

defense planners accorded the navy the lowest priority among the IDF's three arms.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, a perfect example of this was displayed in January 2002 when IDF naval commandos intercepted a merchant vessel carrying a large amount of weapons destined for the Palestinian Authority.

AH-64A Apache helicopters accompanied the commandos for cover with additional F-15A fighter jets. Operation "Noah's Ark" took place near the outer edge of the Arabian Peninsula onboard the *Karine A*, a 4,000-ton Palestinian operated cargo carrier. The seizure netted over 50 tons of weapons, including long-range rockets and missiles.⁵⁰ As part of the Israeli counter-terrorism strategy of utilizing offensive measures, the IDF naval raid accomplished its mission by disrupting the flow of arms to a terrorist organization.

Targeted strikes against terrorist leaders have increased over the past several years. The IDF relied principally on its Precision Guided Missiles (PGMs), launched from attack helicopters, to hit Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity.⁵¹ Ahmed Yassin, the founder of HAMAS, and Abdel Aziz Rantisi were both targeted and killed in air strikes in early 2004. Along with those key figures is the assassination, over a period of two months, of the rest of the leadership of HAMAS in the Gaza Strip. This tactic seeks to prevent future terrorism by

⁴⁹ "Israel's Navy." Global Security. December 20, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org>. Accessed 20 December 2004.

⁵⁰ Miller, Miller & Zetouni, p. 539.

⁵¹ Maoz, p. 26.

incapacitating those who are planning to carry it out but are beyond the reach of other methods of incapacitation, such as arrest.⁵²

Going after the head of a terrorist organization requires accurate intelligence and detailed planning. In Israel, the decision regarding who is an appropriate target is generally made by high-ranking government officials with political accountability.⁵³ In Israel's case, that would be Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. And as previously stated in this chapter, he has given IDF commanders his full support.

International law prohibits assassinations both in times of peace and in times of war. Furthermore, infringement on the sovereignty of other nations, especially by the imposition of extrajudicial punishment on their citizens, is a gross violation of international law. But the law also specifies that countries should not allow their territory to be a safe haven for terrorists who might bring harm to another country, since terrorists are considered to be common enemies of humankind, and that sovereign countries should prosecute them regardless of their agendas.⁵⁴

Targeted killing is a policy where the Israelis want their opponent to know they committed the act. The idea is to create psychological pressure and chaos in the terrorist organization and erode its ability to operate.⁵⁵ The

⁵² Dershowitz, p. 174.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Gal Luft, *The Logic of Israel's Targeted Killing*, *The Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2003, Vol. X. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.meforum.org>. Accessed 17 March 2005.

⁵⁵ Interview between Dr. Zeev Maoz, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University and the author, 20 August 2004.

Israeli's notion is to decapitate the snake in order to stop its movement. In September 2004, Izzedin Subhi Sheik Khalil was targeted and killed by the MOSSAD, Israel's top intelligence agency. Khalil was a senior HAMAS operative in Damascus in which he helped plan major suicide attacks in Israel and was responsible for smuggling arms into the Gaza Strip from Egypt. A bomb was placed under his car by the MOSSAD, and he was the only victim. The MOSSAD believe HAMAS leaders operate freely in Syria. Deputy Defense Minister Zev Boim stated that Syria is responsible for terrorism against Israel and will not be immune to our counter-terrorism activities.⁵⁶

There is little doubt that the removal of a terrorist leader strikes a severe blow to the group's stability and morale. Many times after a leader is removed there tends to be an internal, and sometimes fatal, struggle among the heirs. Furthermore, groups will tend to spend more time and resources to stay alive than it will concentrating on committing terrorist attacks. Leaders have continued to go underground, switch cell phones, cars, homes, and many will not even appear in public.

HAMAS canceled its 17th year anniversary rally after extensive preparations had been made due to the fact they feared an air strike from the IAF. They are afraid the IAF would target one of their leaders in response to a previous fatal suicide attack on an army outpost in Gaza. Under any reasonable standard, the Israeli policy of targeting "ticking-bomb terrorists" does not deserve the kind of

⁵⁶ "Israel Credits Mossad for Death of Hamas Leader in Damascus." Special to World Tribune, September 27, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.worldtribune.com>. Accessed 28 September 2004.

condemnation it is receiving, especially in comparison with other nations and groups whose legal actions are far less proportionate to the dangers they face.⁵⁷

C. ISRAELI DEFENSIVE MEASURES

Israeli defensive measures are barriers put in place to impede terrorists in their attempt to carry out attacks within Israel. The goal is to stop terrorists at the very beginning of an attack while they are en route. The Israelis understand that they cannot protect everything, because of constrained resources. The most influential defensive measure put in place has been the *Security Fence*. It was designed to prevent suicide attacks from occurring on Israeli citizens. Interestingly enough, the idea to build the security fence did not come from within the government, it came from the bottom up -- the people.⁵⁸ Israeli citizens wanted a stop to all the Palestinian terrorists crossing over from the Occupied Territories into Israel.

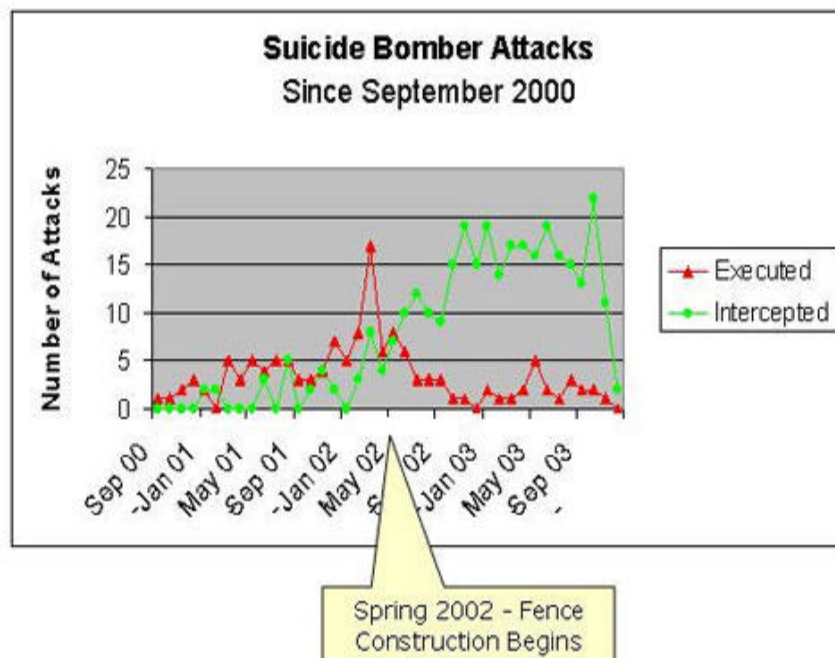
The Gaza Strip is already surrounded by an electronic fence. This is the reason why suicide bombings rarely originate from that area.⁵⁹ The security fence between Israel and the West Bank is an extended structure that runs from just northeast of Tel Aviv to south of Haifa. It is composed of barbed wire and electrical metal with a tall concrete wall hoisting lookout towers and snipers. To date, the fence has been quite effective. The following figures illustrate the success the fence has provided.

⁵⁷ Dershowitz, p. 175.

⁵⁸ Interview between Dr. Zeev Maoz, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University and the author, 20 August 2004.

⁵⁹ "The Security Fence/Security Barrier/Separation Barrier." Global Security. 26 December 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org>. Accessed 26 December 2004.

Effectiveness of The Fence



Source: IDF, 18 Dec 2003

Consulate General of Israel in New York Department of Media and Public Affairs



Figure 2. Number of suicide attacks executed versus intercepted from September 2000 thru September 2003 (From IDF December 2003)

Victims of suicide attacks before & after Security Fence

* Attacks in Israel originating in Judea & Samaria *

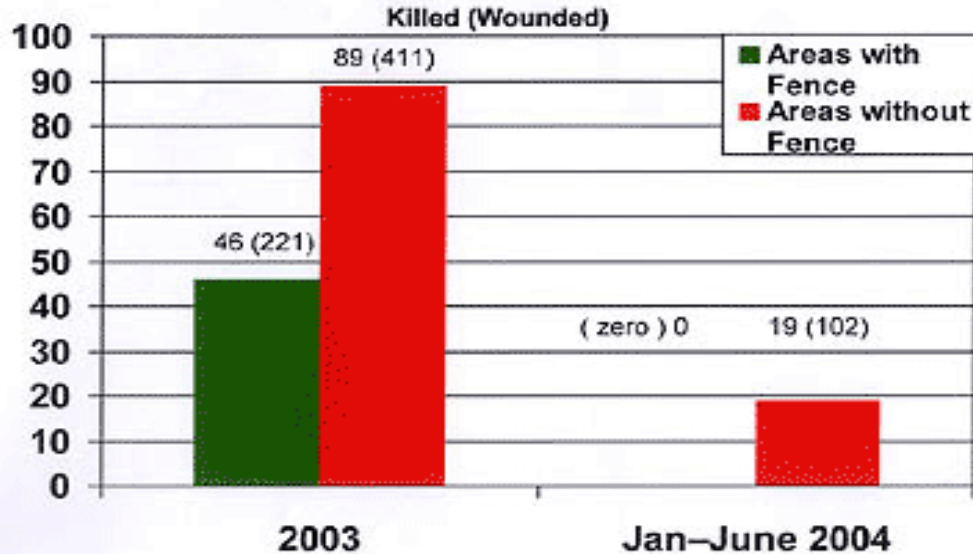


Figure 3. Number of attacks occurring in areas with/without the Security Fence (From the Jewish Virtual Library)

In 2004, the security fence is cited by the IDF as being a key factor in the 45 percent drop in the number of people killed in terrorist attacks compared to 2003. A senior IDF officer attributed the improvement in fighting Palestinian terror on the security fence, highly improved human intelligence, and tighter cooperation between IDF, Police, and Shin Bet agents.⁶⁰ The number of Israelis killed in 2004 was 117 compared to 214 in 2003.

From the numbers shown, the security fence is making head-way. It is not a cure-all, but it is an important tool used by the IDF to keep terrorists out of Israel. As stated earlier in this chapter, the idea of Israeli

⁶⁰ Arie O'Sullivan. "IDF boasts success against terror." *Jerusalem Post/ Breaking News from the Middle East and the Jewish World*, 29 December 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.jpost.com>. Accessed 29 December 2004.

defensive measures is to put obstacles in the way of terrorists trying to infiltrate the country. Besides the security fence, other terrorists are apprehended at roadblocks.

Finally, the IDF stated that there are indications that motivation among Palestinians to conduct terror attacks is on the decline. The reason, a senior officer said, was the difficulties in carrying out a successful attack.⁶¹ The IDF still has a tough road ahead of it, but the security fence has definitely forced terrorist groups to rethink their tactics.

D. ISRAELI PUNITIVE MEASURES

The punitive measures that the IDF and the Israeli Supreme Court institute are considered illegal actions by the U.N. and the international community. Nevertheless, the Israelis consider these punitive actions as methods aimed at discouraging future terrorists. Punitive measures punish the perpetrators, the architects, co-conspirators, and anyone else involved in terrorist attacks. Interestingly enough, there is a difference between the punitive system carried-out within Israel and the one carried-out within the Occupied Territories.

In Israel, punitive measures are aimed at discouraging Israeli citizens from aiding and spurring terrorism. This includes punishing left and right-wing Israeli groups for their acts of terrorism. As discussed in the previous chapter, one example is the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin by Yigal Amir. A right-wing, pro-settlement activist, Amir considered Rabin a traitor for signing the Oslo Peace Accords and giving away parts of the land of Israel. Amir

⁶¹ O'Sullivan, p. 2.

is tried for murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. His brother, Haggai, and close friend, Dror Adani, are subsequently convicted of conspiracy and received lesser terms.⁶² Margalit Har-Shefi, another friend is also tried and convicted for not coming forth when she became aware of his plans.

Within the Occupied Territories, the punitive system is quite different. Laws established guarantee that individuals involved in terrorist groups will receive the harshest penalties possible for crimes against Israel. The Israeli punitive system within the West Bank and Gaza Strip permits the capture, imprisonment, and exile of terrorists. Another issue that infuriates the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world is the destruction of houses.

It is a common and recurring practice in the Occupied Territories that the Israeli Army demolish or seal the houses of persons who have committed offences or who are suspected of having committed such. In particular, the homes of persons who have carried out suicide bombings within Israel or against settlers or soldiers are always demolished in the aftermath of such attacks.⁶³ While Israeli soldiers ensure that the homes are vacated before they are razed, there have been occasions where people were killed.

Whether it is wise or unwise, the Israeli policy of demolishing houses that are used to facilitate terrorism or owned by people who assisted terrorists is an economic

⁶² Morris, p. 635.

⁶³ AL-HAQ, West Bank affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, *Israel's Punitive House Demolition Policy*, by Shane Darcy, p. 5, 2003.

penalty for complicity with murder.⁶⁴ Up until February 2005, Israel continued this policy even though it is not as effective as other measures. One reason why the policy of demolishing homes is not effective is that they are reconstructed. HAMAS continues to pay people whose houses are destroyed enough money to build a bigger house.⁶⁵ Other reasons why this policy is not effective is the fact that it gives other terrorists incentives for attacks stimulated by vengeance. Finally, there is the public relations disaster. When the rest of the world sees an Israeli soldier razing a house with a family standing nearby crying, the justification behind the razing is lost.

Overall, Israeli counter-terrorism measures have been effective in thwarting terrorist attacks. Approximately 75 percent of the suicide bombers who attacked targets inside Israel came from across the border where the first phase of the fence was built. During the 34 months from the beginning of the violence in September 2000 until the construction of the first continuous segment of the security fence at the end of July 2003, Samaria-based terrorists carried out 73 attacks in which 293 Israelis were killed and 1,950 wounded.⁶⁶

In the 11 months between the erection of the first segment at the beginning of August 2003 and the end of June 2004, only three attacks were successful. All three occurred in the first half of 2003. Since construction of the fence began, the number of attacks has declined by more than 90%. The number of Israelis murdered and wounded has

⁶⁴ Dershowitz, p. 166.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 171.

⁶⁶ "Israel's Security Fence." Jewish Virtual Library, 27 December 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>. Accessed 27 December 2004.

decreased by more than 70% and 85%, respectively, after erection of the fence.⁶⁷ This proves the security fence to be a successful, non-violent tool used to protect Israeli citizens from terrorist attacks. The question now is what tactics will the terrorists resort to in order to bypass these counter-terrorism measures. Only time will tell.

⁶⁷ "Israel's Security Fence." Jewish Virtual Library, 27 December 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>. Accessed 27 December 2004.

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V. GROUPS, MOTIVES, TACTICS

Zionist leave this land. We will not stop our operations as long as their remains an occupier on our land.

-Al Aqsa Martyr's Brigade

There are many terrorist organizations operating within the Occupied Territories. This chapter will analyze five specific groups that carry-out suicide attacks within the territories and Israel. Furthermore, it will look at what motivates these groups to terrorism, what tactics they use to carry it out, and why Israel must concentrate on these two areas in order to have an effective counter-terrorism strategy.

A. GROUPS THAT ISRAELI COUNTER-TERRORISM MEASURES TARGET

Israeli counter-terrorism measures take aim at several different groups that attempt to carry-out terrorist attacks within Israel and the Occupied Territories. Spectacular suicide terrorist attacks have been employed by Palestinian groups in attempts to force Israel to abandon the West Bank and Gaza.⁶⁸ So who are these groups?

First, there is HAMAS, which stands for the Islamic Resistance Movement. It must be stated that elements within HAMAS perform many political and social activities. These activities by far outshine those provided by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) within the Occupied Territories. This allows the organization to be described by some academics and foreign leaders as a legitimate social organization. Still, in its founding covenant, HAMAS calls for the

⁶⁸ Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3, p. 343, August 2003.

destruction of Israel. Furthermore, as some academics continue to describe HAMAS as a social movement due to its social and political work, the terrorism that it carries out (in the form of suicide attacks) cannot be disregarded. In the international community, the terrorist attacks committed by HAMAS overshadow the charity work done by some of its members. HAMAS is considered by the U.S. State Department as a radical, Islamic fundamentalist, terrorist group.

HAMAS came into the picture during the initial stage of the first intifada. Before they emerged, the situation on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is relatively calm from the end of the Yom Kippur War until 1987. There are sporadic terrorist attacks between Palestinians and Jewish settlers, and many riots, but nothing major.

The intifada, meaning the "shaking off" in Arabic, erupted on December 8, 1987. The intifada-the Palestinians' "war for independence from Israel" -is a political struggle. It started as a mass protest against unbearable economic conditions, which in turn were largely a result of political realities.⁶⁹ It is at this time when members of the Muslim Brotherhood saw a perfect opportunity to form a political-military action group.

The Islamic Resistance Movement emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood like a butterfly from a cocoon.⁷⁰ From the outset its founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, approved of violent tactics, including terrorism, in an effort to rid the Occupied Territories of Israeli forces. He later declared, in 1995, that suicide attackers acquiring

⁶⁹ Morris, p. 561.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 577.

blessings from a Muslim sheikh are to be martyred. While many scholars point to the fact that HAMAS is merely a charitable organization carrying out social functions throughout the community, HAMAS cleverly uses this avenue of charity as a means to recruit terrorists.

HAMAS is the Palestinians' biggest Muslim fundamentalist movement. To this day, they continue to be the most persistent opponent of the Israeli/Palestinian peace process. One of the main reasons this group continues to garner support from the Palestinian citizens is due to its social services. HAMAS has become an Islamic substitute for the more secular Palestine Liberation Organization, and its terrorist attacks against Israeli soldiers' only gives it more prestige.

Their main base for organizing and coordinating terrorist attacks is in the northern West Bank, particularly in Nablus. HAMAS, due to the defensive measures put in place by the IDF, had difficulty infiltrating Israel from the Strip. Furthermore, it is easier for them to smuggle arms and people into the West Bank from neighboring Jordan. This marked the beginning of waves of suicide attacks in both the Occupied Territories and Israel. The first of which took place from early 1993 through 1996.

During this period of time, terrorist attacks seemed to follow significant events that affected either Israelis or Palestinians. The first attacks occurred in the fall of 1993 after Rabin and Arafat signed the Oslo Peace Accords. HAMAS, upset with the agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, carried out numerous strikes against Israel. The day after the

signing, a nineteen-year-old HAMAS supporter blew himself up in the Israeli police post inside Gaza's Shati refugee camp, but no one else was hurt. Between October 24 and December 25, twelve Israeli soldiers and settlers were killed in a series of terrorist attacks.⁷¹

The second string of irruptions by HAMAS followed the storming on a Friday morning Muslim worship service by Baruch Goldstein in February 1994. Even though Baruch is overcome and beaten by survivors in the Mosque, it did not prevent retaliatory strikes on Jewish settlers and Israeli outposts. The final incidents during this period occurred in January 1996 after the IDF assassinated a bomb-maker for HAMAS.

Yihye Ayyash, also known in the West Bank as the Engineer, is killed when his cell phone exploded. Shortly after this period, and before the outbreak of the second intifada, there is a decline in terrorist assaults. This is attributed to the IDF, and surprisingly, the Palestinian Authority (PA) police force counter-terrorist activity.

Another surprising factor that helped quell recent HAMAS activity is the assistance from other Arab countries. The respected London based "Arabic daily *Al Hayat*" reports that an Arab intelligence agency is cooperating with the MOSSAD. The alleged agency is providing MOSSAD with significant and sensitive information about HAMAS, especially its international activities.⁷² The Arab country that is believed to be assisting Israel in their counter-terrorism activity is Egypt. This strategy is based on the

⁷¹ Morris, p. 622.

⁷² Itamar Inbari, "Al Hayat: Arab County Assisting Israel Against HAMAS." *Maariv International*, 25 September 2004. Database on-line. Available at <http://www.maarivintl.com>. Accessed 26 September 2004.

assumption that Cairo can eventually wean Damascus and the Palestinian terrorist organization from their alliance with Iran.⁷³

HAMAS took a serious blow when their senior leaders in the Gaza Strip, Ahmed Yassin and his chief deputy Abdelaziz Rantisi, were killed in the spring of 2004. While this is a devastating blow to HAMAS, it opened up another problem for Israeli counter-terrorist planners. The loss of the HAMAS senior leadership in Gaza opened the door for its leaders in Syria to personally take over. It furthermore provided Hezbollah an opportunity to be more hands on in the Strip.

The *second* terrorist group Israeli counter-terrorist measures are aimed at is the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ). While the PIJ is less organized and much smaller than HAMAS, they can possibly be considered the most radical group in the Occupied Territories. This theory is drawn from the fact that the group's ideology is taken from that of Ayatollah Khomeini. The co-founder of the PIJ, Dr. Fathi 'Abd Al-Aziz Shiqaqi, believes Khomeini is the rightful ruler of the Muslim world. In that regard, Iran became the group's greatest sponsor.

The PIJ has cells in both the Gaza Strip and West Bank, with the senior leadership residing in Syria. In contrast to HAMAS and Hezbollah, the PIJ does not provide any social service to the community. However, they do share their themes of Israeli destruction, and the creation

⁷³ Itamar Inbari, "Al Hayat: Arab County Assisting Israel Against HAMAS." *Maariv International*, 25 September 2004. Database on-line. Available at <http://www.maarivintl.com>. Accessed 26 September 2004.

of an Islamic-Palestinian state. Another important factor they share with HAMAS is that they both receive support from Iran.

The United States State Department placed the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade on its list of foreign terrorist organizations after it carried out a deadly bombing in the spring of 2002. This group appeared on the scene after the outbreak of the current intifada which took place in the fall of 2000. It is composed of a small group of militias from the West Bank, and is associated with former PA leader Yasser Arafat's Al-Fattah group. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade is also not as politically-oriented and structured as HAMAS and Hezbollah. Their cause is anchored in nationalism. At the outset of its establishment its members only targeted Israeli soldiers, but now have taken to targeting Israeli citizens -- mainly settlers.

The terrorist group FATAH Tanzim is created in the mid-nineties as the militant wing of former Palestinian Authority Leader Yasser Arafat's FATAH group. Like most of the terrorist groups in the Occupied Territories, it is not easy to pinpoint how many members exist. Its goal falls along the same lines as the previous groups, which is to establish a state for the Palestinian people. On occasion, they will work with HAMAS and other Palestinian terrorist groups in order to carry out a suicide operation. Along with the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, FATAH Tanzim has committed some of the deadliest suicide bombings of late.

The last, and probably the most formidable terrorist group Israel contends with, is HIZBULLAH. Like HAMAS, HIZBULLAH is involved in a wide variety of social activities in Lebanon. And, just as HAMAS is touted by

some as a social movement, so is HIZBULLAH. Many academics believe HIZBULLAH is more of social movement than HAMAS. Still, their social and political activities in Lebanon did not stop the U.S. State Department from labeling HIZBULLAH a terrorist group -- something the European Union (EU), France in particular, failed to comply with.

HIZBULLAH, which means the Party of God, is another extremely radical group that is created after Israel invaded Lebanon in the early eighties. This group is by far the most organized and funded of all these terrorist organizations. They are extremely hostile towards Israel and lately have been linked to Al-Qaeda. Hezbollah is heavily financed by the Iranian and Syrian governments.

The IDF's, and other security agencies', encounters with HIZBULLAH normally occur in northern Israel near the Lebanese-Israeli border. The IDF advised Prime Minister Sharon to order a major military operation against HIZBULLAH. Military sources said the General Staff concluded that HIZBULLAH has embarked on a campaign of sustained tactical strikes against military and civilian targets inside Israel.⁷⁴

On January 8, 2005, HIZBULLAH guerrillas set off a road-side bomb killing an Israeli officer. This area had been quiet for the later of part of 2004, but the recent attack seems to have captured the government's attention rather quickly. This may be due to Israeli military intelligence reported last summer. Israel's Cabinet is briefed by Israeli military intelligence on the leading

⁷⁴ *"Israeli military calls for war on Hezbollah."* Special to World Tribune, July 21, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.worldtribune.com>. Accessed 22 July 2004.

military threats to the Jewish state. The threats are said to be Iran's nuclear weapons program and the missile arsenal of HIZBULLAH and Syria.⁷⁵

The IDF and other security agencies are also aware that with the loss of senior leadership in the Gaza Strip, HIZBULLAH has now aligned itself to fill that power vacuum. Now, with an even tighter alliance with HAMAS, financing, training, and supplies, HIZBULLAH is increasing its military actions against Israel. HIZBULLAH undoubtedly believes they can continue to use the terrorist organizations in the Occupied Territories as lethal proxies against Israel.

An Israeli government report stated that HIZBULLAH paid its operatives between 5,000 and 6,000 shekels [\$1,200 to \$1,380] per attack. The report cited that Jihad operative, Ahmed Hassin, captured in late 2004, received 10,000 shekels (or \$2,300) from HIZBULLAH to prepare a suicide bombing.⁷⁶ Finally, along with the financing, HIZBULLAH is believed to be establishing themselves in the Occupied Territories likewise as the Palestinians terrorist organizations. This is being done to keep themselves indistinguishable from the other terrorist organizations.

B. MOTIVES - WHAT MOTIVATES THESE GROUPS

There is not going to be any successful negotiations or peace without an end to terrorism.

-British Prime Minister Tony Blair

⁷⁵ "Israeli military calls for war on Hezbollah." Special to World Tribune, July 21, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.worldtribune.com>. Accessed 22 July 2004.

⁷⁶ "Hezbollah paid \$1,200 for attacks, \$2,300 for suicide strikes." Special to World Tribune, January 11, 2005. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.worldtribune.com>. Accessed 12 January 2005.

The last chapter laid out Israeli counter-terrorist measures and why the military and government employ them. For the Israeli counter-terrorism strategy to be effective, the government must take into account these groups' motives. With all these obstructions in place, what motivates terrorists to continue? For starters, probably the most prevalent motivation has to do with a personal vendetta or revenge.

When a member of your family is killed, or your family is somehow hurt, you want to seek revenge. The largest percentage of people who commit suicide attacks are people whose relatives are either killed or wounded by Israeli security forces.⁷⁷ Second, the leaders of these terrorist groups all have one thing in common, a political objective. Most state the reason for their acts as politically motivated.

HAMAS, FATAH Tanzim, Palestine Islamic Jihad, HIZBULLAH and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade cannot function without political motives. All, except HIZBULLAH, want a Palestinian state, and without a cause of this sort, they would be seen as nothing but down-right criminals. Another point is that all these individuals carrying out bombings at checkpoints, buses, and marketplaces are considered martyrs.

In addition to martyrdom, the individual's family can reap some benefits as well. In the past, Saddam Hussein, members of the royal family in Saudi Arabia, and other terrorist groups would contribute financial aid to the terrorist's family. Praise and honor is also heaped upon

⁷⁷ Interview between Dr. Zeev Maoz, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University and the author, 20 August 2004.

them for giving their loved one for the cause. But more importantly, the individual is not only promised paradise, but a substantial (seventy) amount of virgins once he arrives. Lastly, they have been assured to forever reside in the presence of Allah.

To the rest of the world, blowing one-self up is unimaginable, but to terrorists it is considered the highest honor. These individuals feel that martyrdom will be obtained while attempting to undue the injustice towards their people. Israel's counter-terrorism strategy will be more effective once they prove these groups are not being unfairly repressed. Over the years, the international community has harshly condemned Israel for its tactics against terrorist organizations. Once the "repressed and unjustly treated" label has been stripped away, the IDF can pursue terrorists without fear of legal action. (One must point out that Israel is currently carrying-out this policy.)

Unfortunately, even with all these measures in place, suicide terrorists will continue. The sense of achieving a greater calling will continue to captivate suicide bombers. The combination of a religious/nationalistic - type of ideological belief system will continue to embolden people to give themselves to the cause.

C. TACTICS - WHY TERRORISTS RESORT TO SUICIDE BOMBING

Although terrorist organizations in the Occupied Territories and outside of Israel have resorted to launching short-range rockets, suicide terrorism is still the preferred lethal weapon. In general, suicide terrorist campaigns seek to achieve specific territorial goals, most often the withdrawal of the target state's military forces

from what the terrorists see as national homeland.⁷⁸ The suicide attack is a tactic that is used by educated and privileged leaders, because it has been proven successful. It is, in essence, a punishment strategy that does two things: it delivers instantaneous punishment against its target, and it forewarns of future punishment.

Recent research conducted by Robert A. Pape, an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, has provided some interesting results. Pape states that terrorist organizations are increasingly reliant upon suicide attacks to achieve major political objectives. In the *American Political Science Review*, Pape discusses the *Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. His study analyzed every suicide-terrorist attack around the world from the eighties until 2001. The data included one hundred and eight-eight international suicide attacks spanning the region from Israel to Lebanon, Sri Lanka to Kashmir, and Afghanistan to Turkey. Pape's analysis attempts to explain how suicide terrorism operates, and, more importantly, why it developed into a sprouting business since 1980. For example, spectacular suicide terrorist attacks have recently been employed by Palestinian groups in attempts to force Israel to abandon the West Bank and Gaza.⁷⁹

Another key issue that Pape pointed out in his research was that most of the suicide attacks he accounted for in his study are instigated against a democracy. HIZBULLAH was used by Iran and Syria to run the United States out of Beirut in the early eighties. The Chechen

⁷⁸ Robert A. Pape, *The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, *American Political Science Review*, August 2003, Vol. 97, No. 3, p. 344.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 343.

rebels continue to clash with Russia, the Tamil Tigers used suicide attacks against Sri Lankan forces, and there are continuous attacks by Kashmir militants against India. In Israel, suicide attacks have been the most common tactic since the intifada. There have been over 350 attempts with roughly 100 being successful. So what are some advantages of suicide attacks by terrorist groups?

- Suicide bombers generate mass casualties and create major damage.
- Suicide bombers captivate the global media, lending a means to advertise their cause.
- Suicide bombers need no contingency plan. If intercepted while en route to the target area, the suicide bomber can still detonate the bomb killing everyone in the area.
- Finally, the cases where suicide bombers survive their missions are rare. This eliminates the threat of attackers being caught and grilled by authorities for intelligence.

Pape's point is that all these terrorist groups realize one thing, suicide terrorism works. Interestingly enough, Pape's belief on how to contain suicide terrorists falls along the same lines as Israel's offensive and defensive measures. He states the most promising way to contain suicide terrorism is to reduce terrorist confidence in their ability to carry out such attacks on the target society.⁸⁰

Pape is not the only one with this analytical conclusion. Ehud Sprinzak also subscribes to this logic. Sprinzak, Dean of the Launder School of Government, Policy, and Diplomacy at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, states the following, "The key to countering suicide

⁸⁰ Pape, p. 344.

bombers, therefore, is to make terrorist organizations aware that this decision will incur painful costs."⁸¹

Before recent Israeli counter-terrorism successes against these terrorist groups, the terrorists resorted to a new tactic -- the use of women and children. Within the Occupied Territories, there have been eight women who have carried out suicide attacks. The first known terrorist attack by a woman occurred in January 2002 in Jerusalem. Wafa Edris, a nurse, blew herself and another Israeli up on a crowded street in Jerusalem. What has been discovered by the IDF and other security agencies is that terrorist groups train the women to dress in western-style clothes in an attempt to hide their intentions. Another ploy is to have them dress in maternity clothes. With the IDF and other security agencies' awareness now heightened due to past attacks, many female suicide bombers have been captured.

Children have also come into play as a tool to counter Israeli defense measures. Israeli military sources stated Palestinian insurgency groups have employed children as young as eight to support insurgency attacks against Israeli targets. The youngsters have been asked to smuggle explosives, weapons, or bomb components for such groups as the ruling FATAH movement, HAMAS, and Islamic Jihad.⁸² Finally, Israeli forces have heightened their awareness to such tactics used by terrorist organizations and have shown remarkable resilience.

⁸¹ Ehud Sprinzak, "Rational Fanatics", Foreign Policy, September/October 2000, p. 72.

⁸² "Palestinians have increased use of children to beat Israeli security." Special to World Tribune, August 18, 2004. Database online. Available from <http://www.worldtribune.com>. Accessed 20 August 2004.

In summary, the terrorist groups mentioned above are not going away anytime soon. In order to have an effective counter-terrorism strategy, it is important for the IDF to understand not only the goals and motives of these groups, but also their tactics. This understanding, in the end, will further the effectiveness of Israel's counter-terrorism strategy.

VI. CONCLUSION

Unless important advantages are to be gained from hesitation, it is necessary to set to work at once. By this speed a hundred enemy measures are nipped in the bud, and public opinion is won most rapidly.

-Carl Von Clausewitz

This thesis has analyzed the Israeli counter-terrorism strategy and its effectiveness. It examined the continuing factors in the Occupied Territories and Middle East which cause Israel to pursue a very aggressive counter-terrorism strategy. The tactics the IDF and other security agencies employ today do indeed create further animosity among the Palestinians and Arab community. However, the security and confidence of the Israeli citizens is what is at the forefront of the government concerns. What the Sharon-led government is attempting to avoid is the same mistakes made by previous Israeli governments.

The issue of personal security and public opinion drive Israeli counter-terrorism strategies and tactics. When a suicide attack occurs, the Israeli citizens want action to be taken. Yes, targeted killings do create a blow-back effect in the Arab world and in international opinion generally. However, the Israeli government sees it as an opportunity to solve two problems at the same time. They can take out the senior or key figure of the terrorist organization responsible for the attack, while also giving the victims' families some sense of justice. In this way, Israeli policy not only is aimed at terrorist organizations, but also at the Israeli public. As is pointed out in Chapter Four, when the public lost faith in

the ability of Prime Minister Ehud Barak's government to protect it from terrorism, they turned to a party that was more hawkish on the issue. Much as Arafat had won the 1996 elections for Netanyahu against Peres by allowing the dispatch into Tel Aviv and Jerusalem of HAMAS and Islamic Jihad suicide bombers, he likewise won the election for Sharon on February 6, 2001. Again, it is Arab violence that persuaded the Israeli middle-of-the-road swing vote to move to the right because of the enhanced personal security that it promised.⁸³

Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin realized the importance of public opinion right before his assassination, when he stated that Palestinian terrorism had to be looked at as a strategic threat. Rabin's point is that suicide bombings pose a strategic threat since it influenced the perception of personal security in Israel. Research conducted by Haifa University in late 2004 reported that one out of every five Israeli Jews has lost a loved one to the current Palestinian terrorist campaign.⁸⁴

Despite United Nations and international criticism, the Israeli government will continue to pursue current counter-terrorism strategy. Several factors point to this. First, since September 11, 2001, counter-terrorism is at the top of the priority list of most of the major governments around the world. Whether it is the Beslan attack in Russia or the Madrid train bombings in Spain, Islamic terrorism can no longer be consider a national problem only for Israel.

⁸³ Morris, p. 673.

⁸⁴ "Terror has touched one in five Israeli Jews." Jerusalem Newswire Editorial Staff, October 31, 2004. Database on-line. Available from <http://www.jnewswire.com> Accessed 1 November 2004.

And here lies the second reason Israel will continue its current strategy. Now that many governments have joined the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), many past critics no longer are in a position to criticize Israel for its tactics. Take Russia for instance. While President Vladimir Putin received harsh criticism from portions of the media on how he handled the terrorist situation in Beslan, in the end, the Russian people support his hard-line concept.

Furthermore, after the tragic incident in Beslan, Putin went so far as to ask the Israeli government and their military for advice on how to deal with the terrorist group. Putin realized that if he is going fight terrorism in his country, he might as well get expert advice from Israel's counter-terrorism thinkers.

In summary, this thesis has determined that the Israeli government will continue its counter-terrorism strategy because it has been effective. One would have to measure the Israeli counter-terrorism strategy by the extent it is capable of reducing the level of terrorist attacks in Israel. It is hard to take credit for things that do not happen. The reason they do not happen is due to good intelligence and military intervention which is not always made public.

Finally, suicide attacks have gone down forty-five percent since 2003 following the erection of the security fence. The security fence, in addition to other IDF and security agencies actions, has minimized the number of killings inside of Israel. These tactics used by the IDF

are not the cure-all, but they do decrease Israel's vulnerability and inflict the strongest possible retaliation against terrorist organizations.

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